THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Dreamcast

Dreamcast

ISSUE 18 • APRIL 2001 • £4.99 www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

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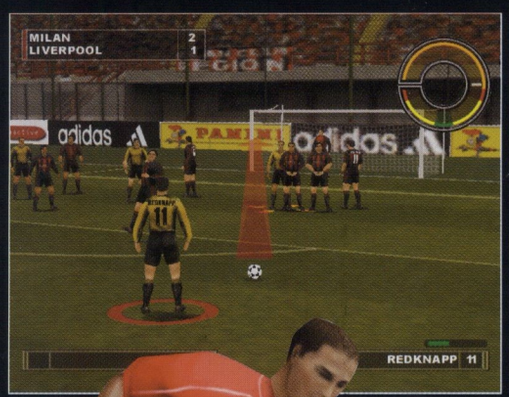


EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

It's Owen and Fowler against Shevchenko and Costacurta, as Liverpool travel to Italy to play AC Milan in the San Siro stadium.

Up to four players can enjoy this timed demo of *European Super League* (*ODM* #17, 7/10) that lets you play for five minutes as either team and with a choice of arcade or simulation controls.

There's no commentary, but there are plenty of impressive sound effects, especially from the crowd. Each stadium has been built using designs of the real buildings and the crowd noises are stadium specific, having been sampled from each ground.

Try holding down the L trigger button and press either A, B, X or Y to perform a variety of cool ball tricks.

JET SET RADIO

CLASSIC PLAYABLE DEMO

For those who missed it the first time, a classic demo of a fantastic game. Manga Dimension, the graphical technique that gives *Jet Set Radio* (*ODM* #14, 8/10) its unique look, is possibly the real star of the show here but luckily there's a very tasty game to match the amazing visuals.

Jet Set Radio is all about cool music, graffiti battles with rival gangs and escaping from the local law enforcement. Before you enjoy the first level, there are two small tests to pass first. They involve learning how to tag (spray objects) and performing tricks on your rollerblades.

Complete these tasks and you'll not only be able to play as the main character Beat, but try out the different attributes of Gum and Slate, two more of the colourful characters from the wild and wacky world of *Jet Set Radio*. Paint the town red!

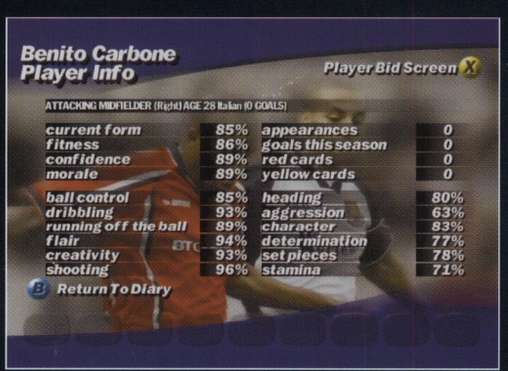
GIANT KILLERS

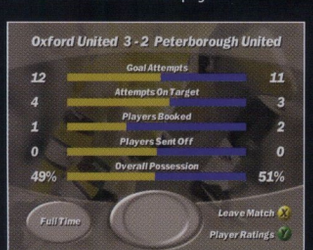
EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

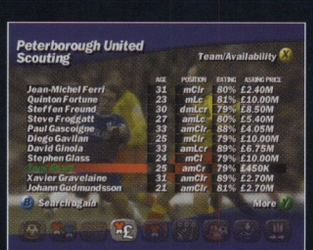
Dreamcast finally gets a football management simulation and this demo lets you have a pretty long look at it, allowing you to manage a team for half a season. There's also £25 million in the kitty to persuade even the most talented players to join the club.

There are plenty of options to tinker with, whether you're choosing a formation and style of play, or selecting the squad for the next match. In the full version, you'll be able to train players – essential for clubs who can't afford to buy the best.

You can even change the amount of text that is displayed as the action unfolds. Keep an eye on your tactics – sometimes it's better for a direct style rather than trying to play a passing game. *Giant Killers* is reviewed on page 62.







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MOVIES

CONFIDENTIAL MISSION

EXCLUSIVE MOVIE

Confidential Mission is an arcade shooter that places you in the middle of a *James Bond/Mission Impossible* style plot of terrorists fighting a familiar-looking hero, complete with regulation tuxedo!

This stunning shooter has barely been in the arcades two minutes, but already Sega have announced that a Dreamcast version is in the works. Want proof? Well how about a movie of the DC conversion? See page 41 for more details.

SURF ROCKET RACERS

EXCLUSIVE MOVIE

Race around famous locations such as Sydney, New York and the Niagara Falls in a jet ski racer for up to two players that allows you to perform tricks and er... race?

Surf Rocket Racers (*ODM* #17, 2/10) is one of the lowest scoring games ever to appear in *Official Dreamcast Magazine*. Watch the movie and see if you can guess why.

SONIC SHUFFLE

EXCLUSIVE MOVIE

Sonic has always been famous for running very fast, but in *Sonic Shuffle* he's almost slowed to a crawl to play a number of board games with his friends.

The gang's all here for what can be best described as a *Sonic* party – a collection of crazy mini-games for Sonic and pals to enjoy again and again. *Sonic Shuffle* is reviewed on page 66.

PROJECT JUSTICE

EXCLUSIVE MOVIE

Capcom's latest beat 'em up leaves the stars of *Street Fighter* behind for a return visit to the world of *Rival Schools*.

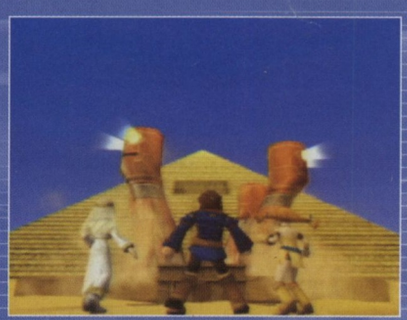
The toughest kids from local schools get to slug it out in a team battle that can also include their teachers! The movie demonstrates the quirky range of characters and some of the unbelievable special attacks. *Project Justice* is reviewed on page 58.

GRANDIA II

EXCLUSIVE MOVIE

Another look at Ubi Soft's appealing role-player that will thrill you with an intelligent combat system and amaze you with some spectacular magic attacks and set pieces.

It's a more traditional adventure than most, with quests to complete and a large world to explore. But it's the colourful cast of characters that should make completing the adventure a memorable experience. *Grandia II* is reviewed in full on page 52.



SKIES OF ARCADIA

EXCLUSIVE MOVIE

It's difficult to make a playable demo of a role-playing game that can give you a good idea of what to expect from the full adventure, especially as they more often than not take a few hours to really get going and are usually story driven.

Lucky, then, that there are excellent movies like this that preview one of the most incredible adventures to be unleashed on the Dreamcast to date. It's a pirate adventure unlike any you've seen before. It's also one of the best game trailers ever.

08.03.01

EVERYTHING WE DO...

WELL HELLO. It's hardly surprising given last month's bombshell from Sega (come on, you *must* have heard by now), but we've been absolutely inundated with reader queries over the last few weeks. Hopefully you'll find the answers to all your pressing questions – on everything from the future of Dreamarena and online gaming, to the availability of peripherals and Sega's plans for other consoles – in this month's issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*.

Naturally the most important issue concerns future Dreamcast releases. While we don't know an exact number, we can promise you that there are dozens and dozens of titles in production that are set for release in the UK. And never mind the quantity, just look at the *quality*. How do *Sonic Adventure 2*, *Crazy Taxi 2*, *Virtua Tennis 2*, *Jet Set Radio 2* and *Shenmue II* sound for starters?

Of course, it's very easy to get excited about these particular titles because they're sequels to fantastic games that we all know and love. But what about brand new, original titles? Well, believe me, there are plenty of those coming to Dreamcast too.

One such game is *Headhunter*. Until recently, relatively little was known about this big budget action-adventure, but we sent our man Dan to investigate and he came back with the full scoop. Check out our feature starting on page 8. Also this issue we have early looks at two more forthcoming Sega titles, *Outtrigger* (page 43) and *Confidential Mission* (page 41), the latter of which can also be seen in action on this month's cover disc.

We look forward to revealing more details on these three games and all the others in development – including the many games that have yet to be seen outside Sega's HQ – in future issues of *ODM*. And while we're on the subject of this magazine (ahem), I need to ask a favour...

In order that we can tailor *Official Dreamcast Magazine* to meet your needs in the future, we need to know a little bit about you and what you currently like – and dislike – about the magazine. As such, we'd really appreciate it if you could take the time to fill out the reader survey on page 97 and send it to address given – you don't even need a stamp.

By way of an incentive we've got some prizes up for grabs – either £150 cash or two passes for Sega's executive box at Highbury to see Arsenal versus Leeds United on Saturday 5 May. And, hey, representatives from Sega will be there, so you'll have the chance to ask them questions about Dreamcast face-to-face! Best wait 'til half-time though, eh?

Take it easy,

WARREN CHRISMAS
Editor

PS: SUBSCRIBE TO *ODM* AND YOU'LL GET THE MAGAZINE DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR EACH MONTH, OFTEN DAYS BEFORE IT REACHES YOUR NEWSAGENT – AND YOU'LL SAVE SOME DOSH! TURN TO PAGE 50 FOR DETAILS.

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△ *Confidential Mission*: first look at the DC conversion of the arcade hit.

△ *Evil Twin*: a trek through the twisted imagination of a very disturbed child. Sounds like a barrel of laughs…

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41 CONFIDENTIAL MISSION
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▷ Find out what this is on page 28!

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WHO DOES THIS STUFF?

SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE*

VANESSA HARDS

Production editor Vanessa is in charge of making sure the magazine runs on time and generally whipping us all into shape. And against the odds it seems to work. She's also the resident office metalhead (that's guitar-based music, kids) and is still glowing from meeting Marilyn Manson at a recent signing in London. "He's actually a very nice bloke," she claims. "Honestly." She kickboxes too, so we're not arguing.

ROSANNA NEGROTTI

Freelance sub-editor Rosanna is responsible for transforming our ramblings into coherent English, something that would try the patience of a saint although she manages to remain cheerful through it all. And she comes back every month too, even though her healthy diet of fruit and smoothies sits uneasily with the *Official Dreamcast Magazine* approved deadline menu of sweets, cakes and crisps.

TIM MACDONALD

Although freelance, Tim spends more time in our office than many of the full-time staff. His designing talents have been used on sister mags *PC Zone* and *PC Gear* and this is his second stint on *ODM*. He won't be drawn on which is the best magazine to work on but reckons "It's a lot quieter on *ODM*." Despite this he remains loyal to PCs for his gaming, claiming somewhat pathetically that joypads hurt his thumbs.

GARETH RAMSAY

Gareth runs *ODM*'s online wing but is spared the honour of sharing our basement bunker, preferring the sunny offices of the online department where he's been joined by new arrivals www.computerandvideogames.com. "I always suspected they nicked our stories for their site," he jokes. "And here they are sitting next to me! I'll be keeping my eye on them!" Over a year on he still rates *Soul Calibur* as his favourite Dreamcast game.

NEED SOME HELP OR ADVICE?

A GUIDE TO THE TELEPHONE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

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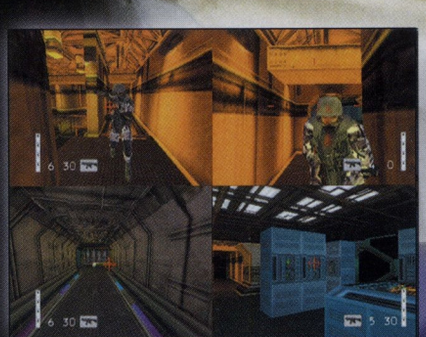

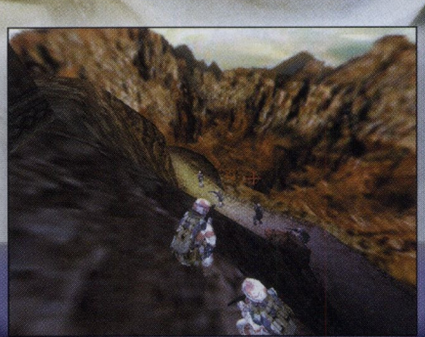

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Virgin INTERactive

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PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

HEADHUNTER

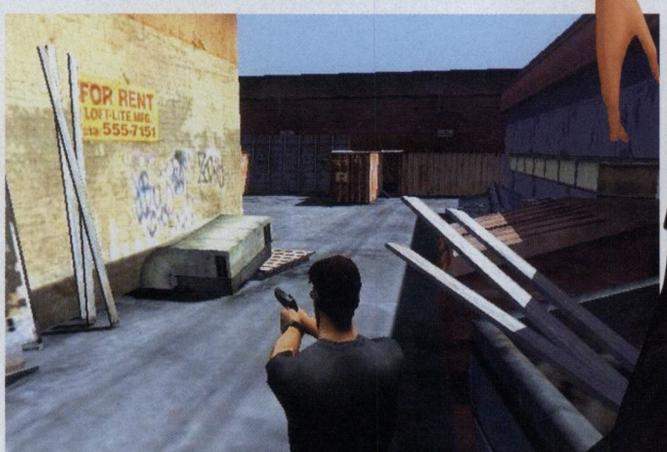
DUE OUT: **AUTUMN**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **AMUZE**

IT'S BEEN SHROUDED IN SECRECY AND IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST GAMES DEVELOPED OUTSIDE OF JAPAN, UTILISING MOVIE EXPERTISE TO TAKE GAMES PRODUCTION TO A NEW LEVEL OF REALISM. **DAN TRENT** PREPARES TO SHARE AND ENJOY

SUN-BLEACHED STREETS, a mysterious bearded man astride a powerful motorbike – to date this is pretty much all anyone has seen of *Headhunter*, along with tantalising glimpses of the aforementioned black-clad biker striding, gun at the ready, through glamorous Hollywood houses. Sure, it looked amazing, but what's it all about? And what's with that beard? Information has certainly been scarce about the game, bar a few screenshots and some tantalising footage shown at Sega's Leicester Square Premiere event last October (see *ODM* #13). As desperate for more information as everybody else, the best response we could get from anyone at Sega was a smile and a "Wait and see!"

Fast-forward a couple of months and we can reveal all about this incredible-looking game. All? Okay, not *everything* but, thanks to a face-to-face meeting with developers Amuze and an exclusive peek at the work-in-progress game, we can now safely say this is going to be at the top of a lot of most-wanted lists for the long months before its release this autumn. Think *Resident Evil* in daylight. Think the *real* successor to *Metal Gear Solid*. Think *Shenmue* (*ODM* #14, 10/10) with guns – think what you like, but this is one game you need to pay attention to.

▲ Murky warehouses are a gaming standard...

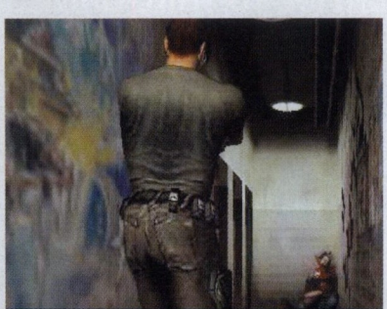


▲ ...but much of *Headhunter*'s action takes place in the Californian sun.

▲ "Beards are very under-represented in the action genre," claim developers Amuze.

It's an ambitious project for Sega, involving an unknown developer and closer collaboration with the film industry than has ever been attempted before. We're not talking a second-grade film tie-in here – *Headhunter* takes the link between traditional game development and movie production to a new level, utilising the skills and experience of respected scriptwriters, sound designers and other behind-the-scenes specialists to make the world that's being created as plausible and immersive as possible. The ingredients are all there: an enigmatic star, more action than a John Woo film, shadowy organisations battling for your conscience, revenge, betrayal, illegal street racing, the reappearance of facial hair as prerequisite for extreme hardness – all you could ask for, and more!

We met up with the development team at the recording of the game's soundtrack (see 'Music To Your Ears' on page 13) and, between studio sessions, pressed them for as much information about the game as we could.



▲ The action in *Headhunter* will be frequent and realistic...

Present were Amuze founder and overall project director John Kroknes, design team leader Johan Lindt, Sega Europe producer Mark Horneff and scriptwriter Philip Lawrence, along with other members of the Amuze team.

LIGHTS, CAMERA...

One word you're going to be hearing a lot of in relation to *Headhunter* is 'cinematic', and not without reason – the whole approach to the making of the game has been more akin to that of a movie. John Kroknes views it as a simple case of horses for courses.

"It's about working with the best of the best," he says. "Our focus at Amuze is, we like to think, vertical rather than horizontal – meaning that we go deeper into what we know best rather than spreading out over what we don't." Hence the involvement of companies like Dom Gibbs's Noisebox (see Talent on page 34) who provide the sonic sparkle to match Amuze's graphical flash. "Dom's a dedicated guy," says John, "and he likes the challenge and the concept. It's a

new area for him and the games industry is getting more like the film industry, so we can now share resources and expertise."

The drafting in of *X-Files* scriptwriter Philip Lawrence is another example of the expertise Amuze are making use of. Philip is currently filming the cut-scenes that will keep you in tune with what's going on in *Headhunter*'s narrative as well as setting the overall tone for the game, making sure they are a cut above the cheesy norm. With more than 60 minutes of dialogue to be included, this a major part of the game.

Production aside, the cinematic theme extends through every aspect of the game from story to graphics. The setting for *Headhunter* is that sci-fi staple, the near future, in a fictional Californian setting that more than resembles present-day Los Angeles. "Everything is much as it is today," explains John. "But there have been certain advances in technology that make new things possible..." As for exactly what these 'advances' are, we aren't really at liberty to say right now. Let's just say that there have been

I AMUZE YOU

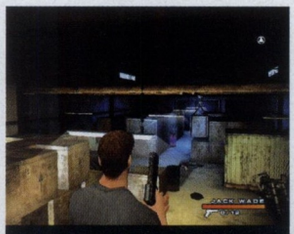
***HEADHUNTER* IS THE FIRST GAME BY SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT HOUSE AMUZE, BUT WHO EXACTLY ARE THEY?**

▲ Amuze head John Kroknes (top) and designer Johan Lindt.

FORMED FOUR YEARS AGO by John Kroknes and Stefan Holmqvist, Amuze have secured a huge amount of backing from Sega through their '1.5 party' development programme. Impressive stuff for a team working on their first big console title – so what makes them different?

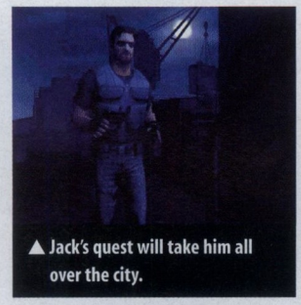
John would like to think a fresh outlook on the way games are developed is a significant factor. "The games industry now is very much like the movie industry in the '20s and '30s," he reckons. "It's still in the early stages and can go much, much further. An important thing for us is to create a synergy between other creative industries like film, TV and music. We have a lot to learn from them."

This willingness to look outside the gaming world for specialist help goes hand in hand with a fierce determination to make the game work at every level. As he says, "It can't fail in any department – it's got to be a total package..."



▲ Amuze might be unknown but they've got the graphical skills.

"ONE WORD YOU'RE GOING TO BE HEARING A LOT IN RELATION TO *HEADHUNTER* IS 'CINEMATIC', AND NOT WITHOUT REASON"



▲ Jack's quest will take him all over the city.

▲ It's not all sneaking about – the bad guys come thick and fast.

▲ Ah, ah, ah, ah, stayin' alive, stayin' alive… [repeat to fade]

▲ Environments scream attention to detail.

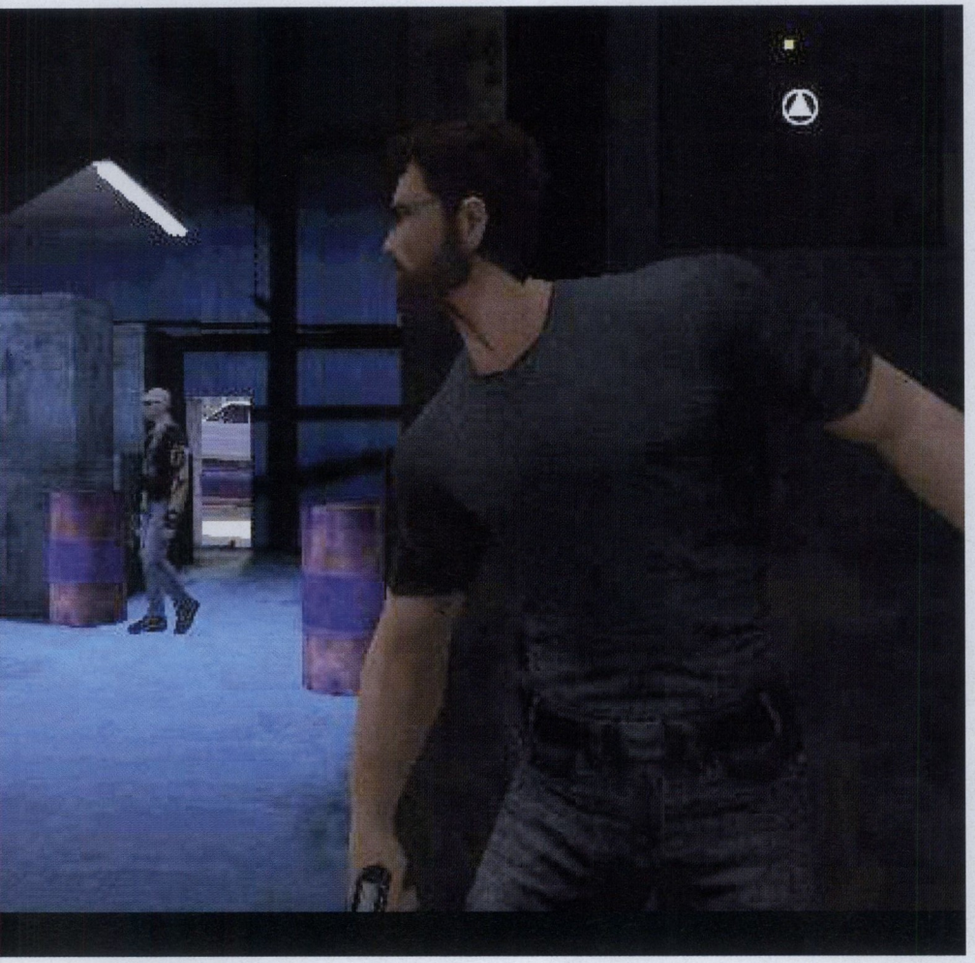
sightings of some suspiciously cyborg-like characters in *Headhunter*'s world. Controlling everything is a mysterious, neo-fascistic government which enforces the law in strictly monetary terms.

"People are thought of as dollars," says John. "And committing a crime means you owe a debt to the state. If you can't pay then body organs are considered currency, and they are used to enhance the lives of the rich." Enforcing the law are the so-called Headhunters who work for the Anti-Crime Network (ACN) and seem to be winning the war against organised crime until their commander, Mr Stern, is murdered at his desk. Enter Headhunter Jack Wade, the shades-wearing hero, who at the behest of Stern's daughter Angela is employed to track down the killers and find out what's going on…

ANCHORMAN

Sticking with films, John is clear about the influences on the game. "If you're familiar with the films of Paul Verhoeven – like *Robocop* and *Starship Troopers* – it's along those lines," he says. "Obviously we look at a lot of movies like *The Matrix* and things like that, but overall it's like a Verhoeven-style satire on society." The aforementioned cut-scenes will drive this back story and involve the main characters, but scriptwriter Philip has also been working on newsflash-style breaks as a means of setting the scene. "It's partly a linking device and a way of going from one stage to the next," he explains. "At one level it keeps the player in touch with the narrative but at the same time it gives a sense of the game world while weaving in lots of humour and some satirical swipes at what LA might become."

These are currently being filmed with 'real' actors and while there isn't going to be a huge *Shenmue*-style cast, they will sit comfortably alongside the game characters. "This is more like a movie cast where you have the main characters and then you have supporting characters who help you along the way," says John. "The way *Shenmue* is built there aren't many characters who are actually part of the story but there are lots there along the way supporting you. We've opted for a more direct approach and it will be much more in-your-



face and action-oriented. There will be the driving sections but there will be a lot of action there too…"

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

While nobody could tell us exactly how big the game area will be eventually, it's safe to say there's going to be plenty to explore. "It's big enough that you need a bike to get from location to location," says producer Mark Horneff. "The script takes in a variety of environments too." Design director Johan Lindt took a team over to California to gain inspiration for the game's fictional city.

"We went for a couple of weeks and took lots of photographs!" jokes Johan, although he insists it was a vital part of the research. "We had to get the right lighting and the sense of what it's like." John explains further, "We took quite a similar approach to the developers of *Metropolis Street Racer* (*ODM* #12, 9/10), although it's not a real city. We've taken parts of San Francisco and parts of Los Angeles to make a sort of virtual city – there's a lot of creative freedom in there."

Don't expect to be able to just hop off the bike wherever you feel like it, though. As John puts it: "It's a transitional thing and there are target locations where you'll be able to get off and explore. The detail of these locations is very high and it would be impossible to maintain it everywhere." The bike will play a very big part of the game (see 'Four Times The Fun', right) and getting to know the game area will pay off in the multiplayer game.

BRAWN AND BRAINS

Many exact gameplay details are still being kept secret for now, but from the video presentation and live demo of the game it's clear – off the bike at least – that it follows on from the *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* (*ODM* #8, 9/10) and *Metal Gear Solid* schools of thought. Action is fluid – as is the camerawork – and plentiful, if what we saw is a reflection of the final content of the game. While there will be times where sneaking about will be necessary, you'll also be expected to wade in and trade brains for brawn at times. That's not to say the game isn't cerebral – expect to be taxing

FOUR TIMES THE FUN

▲ Frederik Sjöö (top) and Stefan Holmqvist; Amuze's online gurus.

AMUZE CO-FOUNDER STEFAN Holmqvist and head of programming Frederik Sjöö took some time out from the presentation to tell us a bit about the online section of *Headhunter* and the part it will play in the game as a whole. "We had a strong story-led single-player game," explains Stefan. "But we wanted to have a network section that was familiar to the single-player game too, so we took a part of the single-player game and tweaked it to fit."

The section they chose to focus on was the impressive-looking motorbike that Jack Wade uses to get from location to location in the main game. "We identified it as being the most fun section to make a multiplayer game out of," says Frederik. "There are two different game modes: the first being the checkpoint race where you race against opponents to the checkpoints and get to the finish first, and then we have the flag battle." All straightforward stuff, which he admits was a deliberate decision. "For the online stuff we have gone for the tried-and-tested formulas to keep everybody happy."

Fair enough, although Frederik is keen to point out there has been a great deal of deliberation about how the online game will work within the main game. "It's a compliment to *Headhunter*, and it's integrated into the single-player game," he says. "From LEILA you can go into a network game to earn some rewards for the single-player mission, but it also stands alone as fun to play."

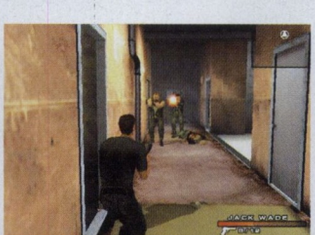
With customisable colours for the riders and a 'quick connection' option that seeks out the quickest server and guides you into the game with the minimum of fuss, this aspect of *Headhunter* is shaping up to be a whole load of fun in its own right.

▲ "Hi, my name is Jack and I like to jog around secret laboratory complexes at the dead of night."

▲ Camera angles will be very cinematic...

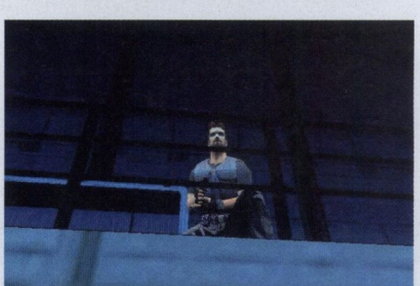
▲ Rogue motorbikes are high on Jack's hitlist.

▲ No, it's not *Shenmue II*...



▲ Those bad guys'll just keep coming.

▲ It's all about creating atmosphere.



▲ The rugged independence, the determination...

those grey cells from time to time with puzzles although, again, the team are still remaining tight-lipped about exactly what form they will take.

As far as the controls go, John is keen to make sure the game is simple and intuitive. "One focus is that it must be fun to play," he told us, "so the controls are based around the pad and make full use of the analogue features. If you're familiar with *F355 Challenge* [*ODM* #13, 8/10] you'll know how sensitive the shoulder buttons were in that, and we've gone for a similar feel with the bike sections. The same with the normal character control – it's sensitive but still very playable."

BACK TO SCHOOL

An important part of both the single and multiplayer aspects of *Headhunter* will be the training area. This is known in the game as LEILA (standing for Law Enforcement, Information and Licence Approval, apparently). LEILA provides not only a gateway to the multiplayer side of the game but is also a chance for Jack to increase his attributes by upgrading his Headhunter licence. As graphics whiz Stefan Holmqvist explains, "It's a kind of test mission that our hero Jack Wade goes through to advance through the game." He continues, "Until you've passed some tests you can't get on in the game. What we want to do is to use this to get people online and battling against human opponents. By doing so Jack will gain more skill and abilities, which in turn will make it easier to pass the LEILA tests in the normal game."

While going online will enable you to get more out of *Headhunter*, it won't be compulsory, as John was quick to point out: "There will be some equipment and areas that you can't do without having done the training, and there will be some Internet-enhanced areas which you can't do without having been online. But those aren't crucial, they're more of a bonus."

Speculation that an RPG-style character power-up system will be used was denied by John. "*Headhunter* is not like a role-playing game," he says. "It's more like an action-adventure where you get different ratings with your player, and there are particular things where you'll need a certain rating in order to get them or access new areas."

REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

Headhunter is proof that Dreamcast owners have plenty to get excited about over the coming months and that commitment to producing great triple-A titles is still very much part of the Sega game plan. As Sega's Mark Horneff points out: "It's the biggest title Sega Europe have put together so far. This is the most cinematic game that we've done – it almost rivals *Shenmue* for production values and is a massive production for a game by any standards."

John Kroknes admits to being surprised at the amount of hype that has been generated off the back of the very limited amount of material that has been released until now. "We've been amazed! But we're playing our

cards very close to our chests because on a day-to-day basis it makes it easier to just get on with making the game."

Certainly we can't wait to get our hands on a more complete version of the game and, after reading this we're sure you'll be in the same situation. We'll be keeping a very close eye on developments and, rest assured, as soon as we know more we'll bring you the full lowdown…

▲ Jack's motorbike will play an integral part of both the single- and multiplayer games.

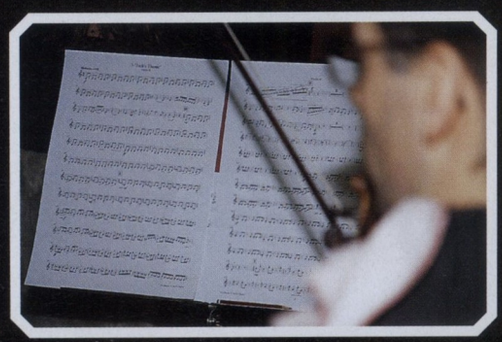
▲ The weather effects look superb, although Jack seems to have trouble with wet surfaces.

▲ Every detail of the locations has been given loving care and attention.

"THE INGREDIENTS ARE ALL THERE: AN ENIGMATIC STAR, REVENGE, BETRAYAL AND MORE ACTION THAN A JOHN WOO FILM"

MUSIC TO YOUR EARS

FOR THE FINISHING TOUCH TO THE CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE, *HEADHUNTER*'S MUSIC WAS RECORDED BY A FULL ORCHESTRA IN THE FAMOUS ABBEY ROAD STUDIOS



NO EXPENSE IS BEING spared in *Headhunter*'s production and this includes the music, which was recorded by a 67-piece orchestra scored by Sega Europe's resident musician, Richard Jacques. As well as providing original music for games like *Metropolis Street Racer* (*ODM* #12, 9/10), Jacques has had tunes featured in games as diverse as *Jet Set Radio* (*ODM* #14, 8/10) and *Snow Surfers* (*ODM* #2, 6/10). More accustomed to recording all the music himself, working with a full symphony orchestra was the realisation of long-held ambition for Jacques.

Indeed, the London Session Orchestra themselves are no strangers to providing scores for films and list *The World Is Not Enough* and *The Mummy* as two of their recent accomplishments. Abbey Road Studios, as well as being known for its connection with The Beatles, has been the venue of choice for film composers like John Williams who used the same studio that *Headhunter* was recorded in for soundtracks to cinematic classics like *Raiders Of The Lost Ark* and *Star Wars*.

"I would say the music is like an emotional heart [to the game]," says *Headhunter* director John Kroknes. Combined with the expertise of sound designer Dominic Gibbs (see page 34), *Headhunter* is promising to take games to a sonic level unknown before now.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN TRENT

SEGA

SONIC TEAM

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SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON CO-OPERATION, BECAUSE IN THIS ADVENTURE FOUR HEROES ARE BETTER THAN ONE.

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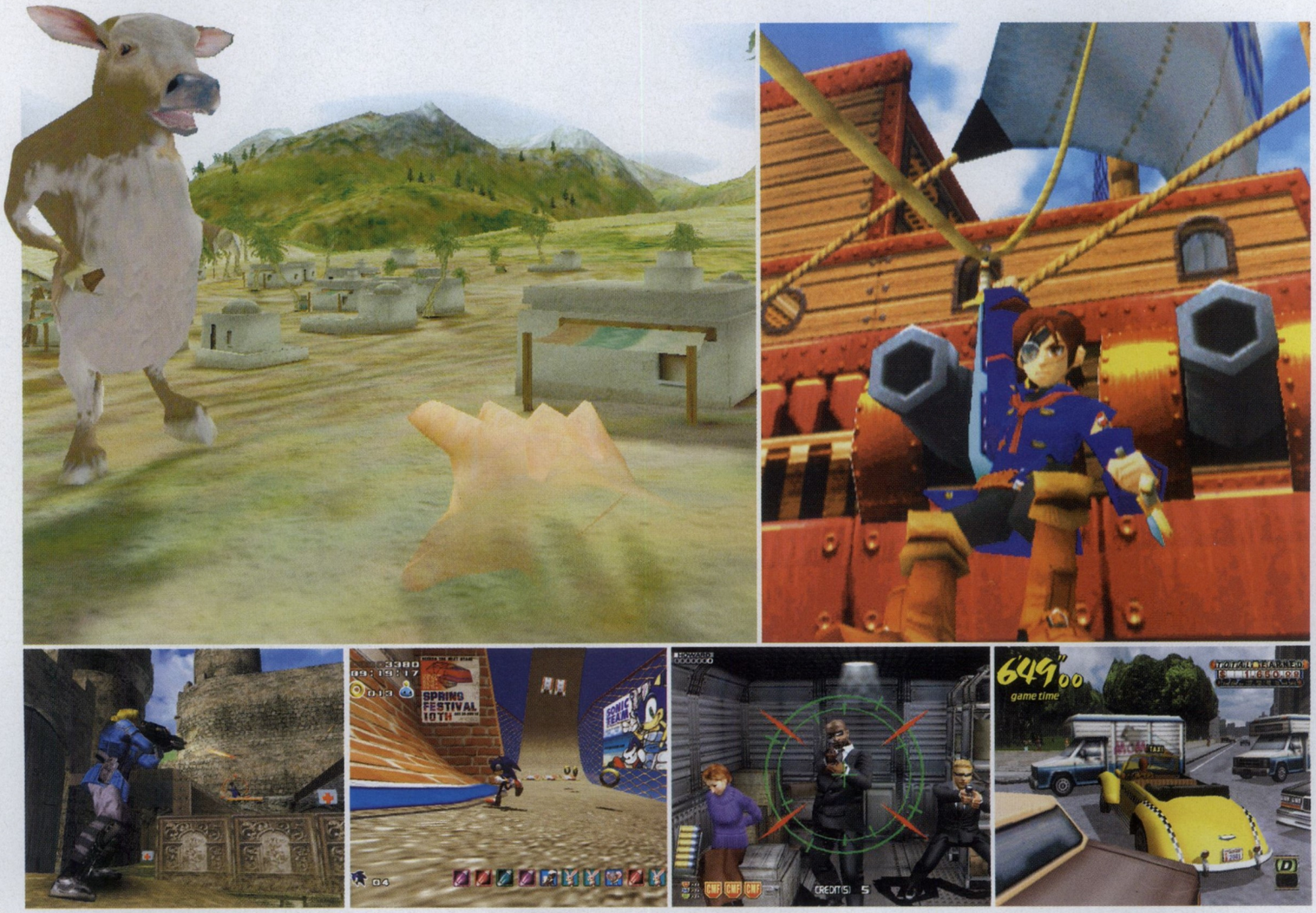
THE GAME'S NOT OVER

Yet more new Dreamcast titles announced and a commitment to attract even more



△ **There are plenty of big Dreamcast titles still scheduled for release, including (clockwise from top) *Black & White*, *Skies Of Arcadia*, *Crazy Taxi 2*, *Confidential Mission*, *Sonic Adventure 2* and *Outtrigger*.**

SEGA MAY BE CEASING production of Dreamcast hardware, but they're still announcing new titles and are looking to attract new developers of software for the console.

Following a wave of new games announced in Japan last month – including *House Of The Dead III*, *Victory Goal 2001* and *Dynamic Golf* (see *ODM* #17) – Sega of America have revealed a number of new DC titles which are in production. These include *Jet Set Radio 2*, *Daytona 3* and a beach volleyball game from AM2 called *Beach Spikers*. A Sega of America spokesman also confirmed that a sequel to *Phantasy Star Online* (*ODM* #17, 9/10) is in the works.

Meanwhile, Sega of Japan have announced a restructuring of the third-party game-development process which should encourage third parties to support Dreamcast. According to Tetsu Kayama, the company's corporate chief operating officer, changes include reduced development licence fees and more flexible proposal and review stages. Sega are promising a flexible outlook regarding technical issues and disclosure of Dreamcast's architecture.

They also plan to make the low-end development tools, Ninja and Shinobi, PlayStation 2-compatible, making it easy for software companies to port Dreamcast titles to Sony's console. Kayama also spoke of a Dreamcast expansion card for PCs and plans to build DC architecture into networked terminals.

We contacted a number of developers and publishers to comment on their Dreamcast development plans. This response from Infogrames, publishers of *Le Mans 24 Hours* (*ODM* #14, 8/10), best reflects the current commitment from the industry.

"Infogrames had largely anticipated the change in Sega's Dreamcast strategy," a spokesperson for the company told us. "We do have titles in development for Dreamcast, but do not plan to develop new titles exclusively for the system.

"It's important to note, however, that there is still a strong installed base, and a large inventory at a lower price point that should continue to sell in lieu of Sega's change in production plans. As such, our upcoming Dreamcast titles still have potential to do well at retail and until that installed base changes, we will continue with the production of our current Dreamcast line-up."

As far as we are aware, no developers have cancelled forthcoming Dreamcast games since Sega announced that they are to cease production of the console. We'll keep you informed of any future developments.

PACE MAKE A DREAMCAST

It's a digital TV decoder! It's a PVR! It's a Dreamcast! But it's not aimed at you!

BRITISH MANUFACTURER PACE Micro Technology have demonstrated a working version of their forthcoming 'Dreamcast-compatible' digital set-top box which we revealed last month (*ODM* #17).

The unit, which has been in development for over a year, is similar to Pace's existing range of digital terrestrial, cable and satellite television decoders. However, the new "digital TV home gateway" also includes hard disk-based personal video recorder (or PVR) functionality similar to TiVO machines and, yes, 100 per cent compatibility with Dreamcast software.

The box does not, however, include a GD-ROM drive or, indeed, a CD mechanism of any kind. Instead, users will access Dreamcast games by downloading them on to the unit's internal hard disk drive via broadband connection (satellite, cable or digital subscriber line).

According to the manufacturer, game downloads should take just a few minutes, and they can take place while the user watches a live television transmission and/or views or records a programme off the hard drive.

A demonstration model, shown at a press conference in London in February, was fitted with a 40Gb hard disk, said to be capable of storing around 60 Dreamcast games, but the capacity of the drive in the retail product has yet to be determined.

Pace claim to be having "detailed discussions" with a variety of digital television operators in both Europe and America, but companies such as BSkyB, ONdigital, Telewest, NTL and Comcast have yet to actually sign the technology.

Until they do, we won't know how games will be distributed (whether pay-per-play, pay-per-download or on a monthly subscription basis). Nor do we know how much the device will cost (Pace claim it will be priced only a little higher than a standard PVR), or when it will become available (although the middle of next year is likely).

Several other factors need to be determined. Will the set-top box get the support of all third-party Dreamcast software publishers? Will any developers go back to re-code games to take advantage of the advanced online functionality? Will it prompt the release of brand-new games for the Dreamcast console? Which broadcasters are likely to get involved in creating games channels? Will users be able to buy game manuals?

One thing *is* clear, however – Pace's digibox is not aimed at people like you. "We're creating what you might call a games jukebox, which sits in the home feeding console-quality games to a TV," said Andrew Wallace, marketing director, at Pace Micro Technology. "The target market is the group of people that *don't* buy online consoles."

Watch out for more news in *Which Set-Top Box Zone Monthly* – and yeah okay, *Official Dreamcast Magazine* – over the coming months.

GOING DOWN

Now they're almost giving them away!

SEGA CHOSE VALENTINE'S Day to set a new recommended retail price for the Dreamcast in the UK, with consoles now available for only £99.99.

The official change follows Sega's recent decision to leave the hardware market, with the reduced price expected to clear remaining stocks of the console.

"The new £99 price point for Dreamcast is a great buy for the gaming public," said Kazotoshi Miyake, COO of Sega Europe. "Our software schedule for the next year also maintains Sega's position as the world's finest developer and confirms our status as the most consistent and innovative content providers in the gaming world."

Our advice – if you haven't already got a Dreamcast, grab one while you can!

NEWS ANALYSIS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY ALEX HUHTALA

SPACE RAIDERS

THE NEW ERA of online console gaming that was heralded with *Phantasy Star Online* (*ODM* #17, 9/10) has spawned an entrepreneurial underbelly few could have predicted (see page 21). Designed for co-operative and peaceful play, where international borders and language barriers are a thing of the past, a criminal element has entered the online world.

Offering cut-price goods like the illegal perfume traders who frequent London's Oxford Street, or dodgy geezers who offer you damaged items from the back of a lorry, the *Phantasy Star* traders have set up shop in Internet auction sites, selling plundered riches to players who want to buy their way to glory.

Having not personally spent much time in the *PSO* world myself – something I aim to rectify as soon as this issue goes to press – I couldn't honestly tell you the benefits of owning a Double Saber +19. In fact, I don't even know what it is [er, there's a guide starting on page 86 – ed]. Whatever it is, though, it's important enough for 'deceptic(1)' to want to buy one for $21.50 (£14.80).

Likewise, I know nothing about Level 200 mags but somebody calling themselves 'mcowan' has already offered $29.76 (£20.50) for such an item and, at the time of writing, he's bidding against 13 other people with three days of trading still left.

The two above examples may have been acquired legally by competent players, who either don't want to return to the online adventure and are selling up, or probably, because they have better items in reserve.

△ ***Phantasy Star Online*: resist the cheats!**

There are some traders offering 999,999 Meseta, the maximum amount of the game's currency you can own at one time. If you're tempted by this you'll probably be able to afford any item you could possibly want during your adventure, but you'd be spoiling the fun, wouldn't you?

I'm sure when Sonic Team created *Phantasy Star Online*, they didn't envision a world of entrepreneurial players, going from location to location effectively pillaging and plundering the best items just to get rich financially.

Whatever next, players hanging around the mothership, whoring themselves to the highest bidder? Online pimps and dealers standing in dark corners saying they know where they can hook you up?

Through fair means or foul, people are playing in ways that weren't intended, but can you hate them for trying? Not really. An online world may offer utopian environments but put human players in them and you'll get a reflection of what we're doing to the real world. Spoiling the natural riches and ruining things for future generations.

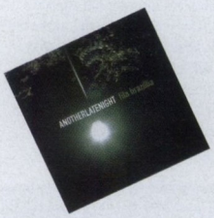
That was all a bit deep, wasn't it? I guess that's the beauty of Sonic Team and their ability to create. They have a habit of making games that appear simple on the surface but are built with a deep level of love and an almost spiritual belief in making the world better.

To really enjoy *Phantasy Star Online*, find a bunch of hippy friends who abide by the peace, love and sharing ethos and enjoy. If you want to spend time online breaking things, go play *Quake III Arena* (*ODM* #15, 9/10). Hey, I believe there's room for both!

HEAR THIS!
DA BEST NEW MUSIC

SOUTH FROM HERE ON
MO'WAX

The long-awaited debut album from the London trio who apparently named themselves South because they're sick of the dominance of northern bands – more than a little ironic given that they sound like The Charlatans and, in particular, the Stone Roses… with a touch of The Beatles. The influence of producer James Lavelle is very obvious on the three-parted *Broken Head* (a kind of cinematic hip-hop track), but the rest of the album is gorgeous, contemporary indie rock. Shoe-gazing is back! Probably. *WC*



VARIOUS ANOTHERLATENIGHT
TREACLE/AZULI

So you've been out 'til the early hours and it's back to yours. You're in. Now, what do you throw on the hi-fi? Well you could put on the Ministry of Sound's ubiquitous *Chillout Session* but that's far too obvious. Instead you opt for this cooler-than-cool collection from Fila Brazillia featuring laid-back tracks from the likes of David Holmes, The Beta Band and Mr Scruff. Now you're *definitely* in. Keep it down though, eh? Don't want to wake the parents. *WC*

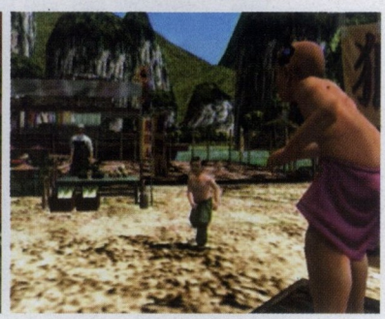
VARIOUS I LOVE 80s
VIRGIN

Any excuse, eh? Tied in to the popular Saturday night BBC TV series, this compilation features 42 tracks ranging from the brilliant (Prince's *Kiss*) to the excruciatingly bad (Rick Astley's *Never Gonna Give You Up*). The worst tracks can provide the best entertainment (see: *The Power Of Love* from Huey Lewis and The News), although, of course, there's nothing particularly amusing about *The Riddle* by Nik Kershaw. If you remember the 80s… you're getting old. *WC*

SHENMUE II UPDATE

△ Kowloon features high-rise tower blocks.

△ The streets of Wanchai are incredibly detailed.



△ Keirin: one of the many new locations.

HONG KONG TWO-EY

AM2 reveal new features of *Shenmue II* plus information on two brand new characters, Joy and Kaoru

WE'VE SCORED NEW images of *Shenmue II* and details on some features that should make it even better than the original game.

The sequel sees Ryo continue his quest to avenge the murder of his father. Much of the action will take place in Hong Kong, with four distinct areas of the city recreated. These are Aberdeen, a vast harbour where people live on boats; Wanchai, an area with a Japanese heritage; Kowloon, a slum area with massive housing complexes and Keirin, which developers AM2 simply describe as a peaceful town.

The major difference in the world of *Shenmue II* will be the ability to advance time – a feature that is sure to please those who got tired of waiting for events to happen in the original *Shenmue* (*ODM* #14, 10/10).

Getting from A to B and making your way to new locations should also be less painful as Ryo will be able to purchase maps, making it easier to navigate the many streets of Hong Kong.

Finally, load times are planned to be reduced, with AM2 aiming to keep all in-game loading under two seconds, making transitions between map areas appear more seamless than before.

Shenmue II is scheduled for release in Europe early next year. We'll have more news and character details in the next issue of *ODM*, due in shops on Thursday 5 April.

JOY
She looks dangerous but is kind-hearted. She's often misunderstood due to her selfish and blunt nature. How far will she get involved with Ryo?

KAORU
An extremely trustworthy 15-year-old girl who works in a temple. She looks a bit like a grown up Megumi from the original *Shenmue*, don't you think?

△ A VM unit, as seen in shops last week.

△ A Dreamcast controller, yesterday.

SEGA ANSWER CONCERNS

Hey, don't panic! There's no shortage of peripherals and online services will continue

FOLLOWING LAST MONTH'S announcements regarding the future of Dreamcast (see *ODM* #17), we now know that Sega will cease production of the console at the end of March. But what many of you are more concerned about is whether Sega will continue to support Dreamcast, not only with new software, but with peripherals and online services.

"We have sufficient stock of peripherals to last through the Dreamcast's lifespan," Sega Europe informed us when contacted about the situation after a complaint from readers who were having difficulty finding stock.

"The talk of shortage is nonsense. Providing there is demand for Visual Memory units and controllers, they will continue to be sold on the high street. If people are really struggling [to find them] they can always try the Dreamarena shop."

We visited a number of high street shops and, as Sega suggested, have found no difficulty finding supplies. Online retailers such as Amazon.co.uk also seem to be well stocked with controllers and VM units. In fact, the VM is one of Amazon's best selling Dreamcast items.

Sega Europe are also quick to quell any fears regarding the future of online services. "There seems also to be an unnecessary panic about Dreamarena," a spokesperson told us. "We have several online games in the pipeline. It wouldn't really make sense if all the servers were switched off before they were released, would it?"

And what about the new version of the Dreamkey web browser, which was originally intended for release last year. "We are still looking at releasing a new version of Dreamkey," said the spokesman. "But how and when the browser will be distributed is as yet undecided."

Rest assured that should Sega change their stance on any of the above matters, we'll make sure you're the first to know. Watch this space.

STAR MAKER

If you thought Ragol was just a fantasy, think again

SEGA HAVE MADE the world of *Phantasy Star Online* (*ODM* #17, 9/10) a little closer to reality, by purchasing a star and naming it after the fictional planet where the groundbreaking role-player takes place.

The new star, christened Ragol at the International Star Registry, is just beneath the Orion constellation. Players of *Phantasy Star Online* should recognise the name straight away – it's the planet you must explore, following a mysterious explosion on the surface that has caused a communications blackout.

Phantasy Star Online has also been causing a storm on the Internet auction site Ebay. Players of Sonic Team's role player have used the auction site to sell large amounts of Meseta, *Phantasy Star*'s currency. Powerful weapons, such as Double Sabers and Dragon Slayers, are also doing a roaring trade.

For more information about International Star Registry visit www.starregistry.co.uk. Ebay can be found at www.ebay.co.uk.

△ Who needs TV adverts when you can see a Sega star every night? Providing it's not cloudy!

△ Just to prove that Ragol can stand up in a court of law.

GAMES NEWS

JAM HOT

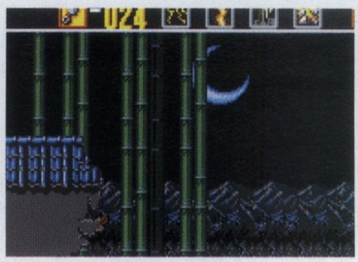
Sports Jam, the arcade hit from Sega's Wow Entertainment (see *ODM* #17) is heading to Dreamcast. The title offers mini events based on a variety of popular sports, including football, tennis, basketball, ice hockey, golf and cycling. It's due for release in Japan this April but there's no word yet on a UK release date. We'll let you know should the situation change in a future issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*.

AND THERE HE GOES

Infogrames have confirmed again that hit PC title *Geoff Crammond's Grand Prix 2000 Season* will be released on Dreamcast later this year. Regarded as being the most technically proficient racer in existence, it will be the first time a title from the respected series has appeared on a console. We'll bring you more info and the first screens as soon as we receive them.

DREAMCAST GOES POP

Despite announcing a withdrawal from hardware production, Sega have revealed a new Dreamcast Internet Karaoke peripheral that goes on sale in Japan at the end of March. The add-on allows Karaoke songs to be downloaded from the Internet, with Sega planning to release 100 new songs every month. Music-lovers rest assured – the device is highly unlikely to be released outside of Japan. Phew!



GOLDEN OLDIES

Sega Europe are looking to release a Mega Drive compilation pack for Dreamcast this year – their own variation of the similar American Smash Pack compilation that features classic titles *Revenge of Shinobi* (shown above), *Streets of Rage 2* and *Golden Axe* among others. Due to licensing issues, Sega Europe's compilation will most likely feature a different line-up of classic games.

BREWSTER'S MILLIONS

To help Sega make a financial recovery and to finance the loss made by Dreamcast's new price drop, Chairman and President Isao Okawa has donated his entire 12.53 per cent personal stake of the company back to Sega. According to the Bloomberg news service, this amounts to 19.8 million Sega shares, worth 36 billion Yen (£215 million). Not exactly small change, eh?

SONIC 2 DAY?

Sega are strongly hinting at a simultaneous worldwide release for *Sonic Adventure 2*, released to coincide with Sonic's tenth anniversary. Sega Europe are planning a late June release, while the American release date is scheduled for June 21. Coincidence?

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON VHS

MISSION TO MARS
OUT: MARCH 5 • CERT: PG • £14.99

In 2020 the first manned mission to Mars suddenly goes horribly pear-shaped – leaving one survivor. On receiving jittery mayday calls, NASA scrambles together a crack team of astronauts – one recently widowed husband, a married couple and a cheeky whizz-kid – who head out on the long journey to rescue their mate and find out what unknown entity is lurking on the craggy red planet. Far fetched? Not 'arf. But once you've hung your disbelief from a very tall tree you'll find that this mega-budget, SFX-laden, sci-fi actioner is a real nail-biter. *CE*

ME, MYSELF & IRENE
OUT: MAR 5 • CERT: 15 • TO RENT

Jim Carrey returns to his loony roots in this laugh-fest directed by the Farrelly brothers who brought you *There's Something About Mary*. He plays Charlie, a super-nice Rhode Island state trooper who one day discovers that he's got a Multiple Personality Disorder. If he forgets his medication out pops Hank, his beer-guzzling, foul-mouthed alter ego. Enter Irene (Renée Zellweger), a babe on the run. When Charlie falls for Irene, he must battle Hank for her affections – giving Carrey twice the opportunity to trigger an onslaught of laughs and cringes. *CE*

NURSE BETTY
OUT: MAR 26 • CERT: 18 • TO RENT

The increasingly popular Renée Zellweger is excellent as a bored Kansas housewife who's only respite is a TV soap. While watching that day's episode, she witnesses her creepy second-hand car salesman husband being gruesomely topped by two strangers in the next room. Delusional from shock, she becomes convinced she's the ex-fiancée of her soap idol and runs off to LA to find him, with the assassins – Morgan Freeman and Chris Rock – hard on her tail. Not a chick's flick – but an alternately hilarious and chilling road movie. *CE*

SEGA SPREAD IT ABOUT

Full steam ahead as Sega's multi-platform plans are revealed… and you may well be surprised!

△ The year-old *Crazy Taxi* is heading to PS2 without any changes.

△ Sega have hand-picked *Space Channel 5* for PS2 – that'll get 'em dancing!

SEGA HAVE OUTLINED their software-only future by announcing titles that form part of their multi-platform development plan.

The first company set to benefit from Sega's new vision will be Nintendo. Sega's long-time rival releases their highly anticipated Game Boy Advance in Japan at the end of March. *ChuChu Rocket!* is set to be a launch title for the new handheld, with *Sonic the Hedgehog Advance* and *Puyo Puyo* (AKA *Dr. Robotnik's Mean Bean Machine*) also in production and set for release later in the year. Sonic Team are developing all three titles.

The Game Boy Advance version of *ChuChu Rocket!* will boast some minor improvements over the Dreamcast original (*ODM* #9, 9/10), with the planned inclusion of 2,500 levels designed by Dreamcast players and the ability to customise the graphics.

Sega have also revealed that they plan on converting a large number of Mega Drive titles on to Nintendo's new handheld. They originally planned to put famous Saturn titles on to Game Boy Advance, but found the memory capacity of the handheld too small for their ambitions. The new home for Sega's Saturn hits looks likely to be the PSone. In an interview with Japanese *Famitsu* magazine, Sega's new Corporate Chief Operating Officer, Tetsu Kayama, revealed that the company plan to revisit Saturn titles that didn't sell as well as initially expected. Sega plan to release PSone conversions of Saturn titles in America and Europe, where sales of Sony's ageing console are still high. Although no titles have been announced yet, Saturn classics *NiGHTS* and *Burning Rangers* are hotly tipped for appearance on PSone.

Sega are also moving ahead with development of games for Sony's PlayStation 2, with Sega of Japan announcing the titles they currently plan to release on the console. The biggest of these is *Virtua Fighter 4*, formerly known as *Virtua Fighter X*, a conversion of Sega's forthcoming arcade game.

A conversion of *Space Channel 5* (*ODM* #13, 8/10) is also planned, along with *Sakura Wars* (Sega of Japan's long-awaited role-player) and *Let's Make a Pro Soccer Club* (although the latter two are unlikely to appear outside of Japan).

Sega have also confirmed a long-rumoured deal with Acclaim that allows the American publisher to release PlayStation 2 versions of the original *Crazy Taxi* (*ODM* #5, 9/10), *Zombie Revenge* (*ODM* #6, 7/10) and *18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker* (due on Dreamcast in June).

These aren't the only platforms Sega titles will be appearing on, as Sega have recently announced a deal to provide game content for Palm V and VII PDAs. Sega titles for Xbox and Nintendo Game Cube may not have been revealed yet, but Kayama has confirmed that they are coming. Titles for these two platforms will be announced at a later date.

Sega's aim is to be the world's leading publisher of interactive entertainment. On January 31 they announced the company would be restructured to focus solely on videogame content. "Sega has always been an industry innovator," said Kazutoshi Miyake, Chief Operating Officer of Sega Europe. "Our new strategy will allow us to put our content across a variety of platforms, keeping Sega at the forefront of gaming."

△ Sonic the Hedgehog is rumoured to be sprinting to PSone later this year.

△ Stars of the original, like Courier and Pioline won't be making the transition to *Virtua Tennis 2*. Shame.

WHERE'S ANNA KOURNIKOVA?

Russian missing from *Virtua Tennis 2* line-up. Please say it isn't so!

THE SEQUEL TO *VIRTUA TENNIS* (*ODM* #12, 9/10) will boast a vastly improved roster of real tennis stars when it's released later this year, with Sega announcing they've signed two of the sports' hottest properties, Venus and Serena Williams, to promote and star in the tennis hit.

"Sega Sports is thrilled to work with Venus Williams and Serena Williams, two of the most dynamic athletes in sports today," said Martha Hill, head of sports marketing at Sega of America. Further licensed players will also feature, with the full line-up to be revealed at a later date.

It is believed Sega are negotiating with the top ten male and female tennis players in the world. We've received word that 'Pistol' Pete Sampras is another star to have already signed on.

However, despite reports on the Internet to the contrary, tabloid favourite Anna Kournikova (who is currently ranked outside the top ten female players), is not likely to appear in the game.

Sega are staying tight-lipped over any further details, including the anticipated online play. *Virtua Tennis 2* is scheduled for an autumn release in the UK.

HAVE YOUR SAY...

Vote for the best up-and-coming Dreamcast games and you could be heading for a free Visual Memory unit!

THERE ARE PLENTY of Dreamcast games in development, but which ones are getting you most excited? Let us know and courtesy of Sega, you could win a VM unit (worth around £19.99).

To vote, all you need to do is email us at vote@dreamcastmag.co.uk using the subject heading 'Vote DC!'. Please include, in order, a list of the five games you're most looking forward to, with the most keenly anticipated at the top. Placing them in order of preference is vitally important, with different points awarded for each place. You must also include your name, age and full postal address. Note: these details will not be passed on to anyone else.

A couple of rules: it doesn't matter if a release date for a particular game has yet to be set (they rarely are until the last minute), but you can only vote for games which have been released on DC abroad, or confirmed as forthcoming DC releases.

There's no closing date as this is an ongoing competition, with the winner drawn from the very expensive virtual hat each month. Only one entry from each reader will be accepted each calendar month; anyone submitting more than one will be disqualified from the competition, or forced to play *Surf Rocket Racers*. For logistical reasons we can only accept votes by email.

This month's winner is Jawad Khan from Leyton, in East London. His top choice is *Shenmue II*, followed by *Headhunter*, *Unreal Tournament*, *Daytona USA 2001* and *Sonic Adventure 2*. Thanks Jawad, your VM unit is in the post. Thanks to everyone else who voted, keep 'em coming!

YOUR MOST WANTED

THE DREAMCAST GAMES WHICH YOU, THE READERS, SIMPLY CAN'T WAIT TO PLAY

1 (1) SONIC ADVENTURE 2 (SEGA)

FIRST 15% | TOP 5 64% | ETA JUNE

Sonic extends his stay at the top of your chart, but only just, as *Shenmue II* is quickly scaling the ladder. Want to know how many votes won it for Sonic? Let's just say that every vote counts... Will the 'hog be so lucky next time?

2 (4) SHENMUE II (SEGA)

FIRST 24% | TOP 5 52% | ETA 2002

As more of you play and complete *Shenmue*, more of you see the need for Sega to hurry up and release the next chapter. Sega are starting to release info and screenshots on the sequel, and we plan on bringing you every ounce of it.

3 (3) HALF-LIFE (HAVAS)

FIRST 10% | TOP 5 45% | ETA APR

No change on the *Half-Life* front. It holds on to the third spot quite comfortably, but we still haven't seen a completed version of the game. Will it make its April release date, or eclipse *MSR* as the DC's most delayed release?

4 (6) HEADHUNTER (SEGA)

FIRST 8% | TOP 5 32% | ETA SEPT

It's on the cover, we've got an exclusive eight-page preview and yes, it's looking mighty fine. Sega have been slowly sneaking out tasty morsels about their big autumn adventure, waiting for us to bite, and we have.

5 (5) DAYTONA USA 2001 (SEGA)

FIRST 7% | TOP 5 27% | ETA APR

An update of a seven-year-old coin-op with quite a lot of improvements. Our personal favourite is changing the "Gentlemen, start your engines" screen to "Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines". That's progress.

6 (9) UNREAL TOURNAMENT (INFOGRAMES)

FIRST 2% | TOP 5 23% | ETA MAR

Dreamcast owners should soon be spoiled with what the PC crowd consider the best shooter on the block. No, not *Quake III Arena* (*ODM* #15, 9/10), but *Unreal Tournament*, promising eight-player online deathmatches. Where do we sign up?

7 (-) SKIES OF ARCADIA (SEGA)

FIRST 3% | TOP 5 18% | ETA APR

Get ready for a title that's already taken Japan and America by storm. *Skies of Arcadia* is a pirate adventure that's set in the air. Sounds strange – but then what RPG doesn't? Check out the movie on this month's cover disc. Not bad, eh?

8 (7) BLACK & WHITE (SEGA)

FIRST 3% | TOP 5 18% | ETA AUG

News may be quiet about Peter Molyneux's latest strategy/dancing cow title, but rest assured it's still coming. We've even found out a new release date: how does summer grab you? Could be better than the beach.

9 (8) GRANDIA II (UBI SOFT)

FIRST 1% | TOP 5 20% | ETA MAR

More role-playing thrills are promised with *Grandia II*. An epic adventure set in a strange land – being an RPG there's probably a young homeless boy who turns out to be a prince, and a mythical sword to collect too. Which is nice.

10 (10) 18 WHEELER APT (SEGA)

FIRST 1% | TOP 5 10% | ETA JUNE

Here's a big-rig truck racer that shares a few similarities with *Crazy Taxi* (*ODM* #5, 9/10). Hauling cargo across the good ol' US of A may not sound all that, but the arcade original was a blast and the Dreamcast conversion should be the same.

TBC = to be confirmed

FIRST	Percentage of voters placing the game at the top of their Most Wanted lists
TOP 5	Percentage of voters including the game in their Top 5 Most Wanted lists
ETA	Estimated time of arrival (release in UK)

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON DVD

THE TERMINATOR: SPECIAL EDITION
OUT: MARCH 19 • CERT: 15 • £24.99

One of the best sci-fi flicks ever makes its DVD debut. For those on Planet Zorg, it's the one where Arnie is the indestructible cyborg sent back in time to terminate Sarah Connor whose unborn son will eventually save the world. It's bundled with loads of goodies: Arnie and director James Cameron chat about how it was made, stacks of artwork/special effects stills and photos, and a DVD-ROM where fanatics can access the original, fourth and final draft scripts. Still as stonking as when it was first released in 1984. *CE*

HOLLOW MAN
OUT: MARCH 26 • CERT: 18 • £19.99

Kevin Bacon heads up a team of white-coats working on a secret invisibility formula. When it works successfully on animals he decides to try it on himself – but on discovering it can't be reversed goes a tad schizoid leaving his unfortunate colleagues to contend with a see-through, axe-wielding maniac. The well-worn plot is more than made up for by sizzling SFX and lashings of leap-off-the-sofa moments. Extras wise, there's two how-did-they-do-it documentaries, storyboards, feature-length commentaries plus the usual trailer/filmography gubbins. *CE*

SCREAM TRILOGY
OUT NOW • CERT: 18 • £49.99

Quick recap Part 1: college prep Sidney Prescott is being stalked by a murderous masked nutcase. Intrepid TV reporter Gale Weathers is on the case. Part 2: Sidney is now a drama student. Gale has written a best-seller about the events which has been turned into a movie, *Stab* – and, wouldn't ya know it, the murders start again. Part 3: just as Sidney settles into a life of seclusion the killer starts editing the cast of *Stab 3*. The franchise that launched 1000 imitators comes in a box set with extra footage, outtakes and a special booklet. *CE*

ARCADE SPECIAL

△ "Can someone lend me £10,000? I want one!"

△ Proof that even men in suits can't drive Ferraris very well.

COINING IT IN

A showcase of the arcade treats of 2001 – **ALEX HUHTALA** visits London's ATEI show

HELD ANNUALLY, THE ATEI (Amusement Trades Exhibition International) gives the European arcade industry a chance to see some of the coin-op highlights of the year ahead. More importantly, it gives arcade operators the opportunity to get hands-on with the games. And even more essentially, everything is on free play!

The show, which was held at Earls Court, London in January, featured plenty of surprises and treats. Our first order of business was to visit the Sega stand, naturally. It may not have been that lavish, but it was by far the biggest stand there and was packed with a strong line-up of quality games, including a growing number of sports titles.

Amid the banks of cabinets of *NASCAR* (*ODM* #14), *Confidential Mission* (*ODM* #15), *Sega Strike Fighter* (*ODM* #16) and *Sports Jam* (*ODM* #17), were Sega's latest offerings, including *Club Kart*, *Wild Riders*, *Air Trix* and *Ferrari F355 Challenge 2*.

Running on the Naomi 2 board, *Club Kart* was Sega's hottest attraction, perhaps due to the fact that there were only four of the machines at the show. As you can guess from the title, *Club Kart* is a karting sim with a variety of circuits and can be linked up for multiplayer games.

If you saw the games running side by side, you'd see a marked improvement in graphical quality over *F355 Challenge* but, given the power of the new board, it doesn't quite look as spectacular as you'd expect. It's a solid, if slow (due to the limitations of the karts themselves) racer, that is most enjoyable when racing on shorter, winding circuits.

The main innovation of *Club Kart* is the card system it employs to store player data. The device allows you to select preferences and personalise the game, including details such as your name and colour of the kart and helmet. The card

△ *Air Trix*: Sega revisit *Top Skater*.

△ *Club Kart*: Naomi 2-powered racer.

△ *Police 24/7*: Konami's revolutionary shooter.

△ ***MTV's Drumscape*: hello Cleveland!**

△ ***Wild Riders* attracts some dull players.**

then records your performance, allowing you to return at a later date and compete in a new division if you're good enough.

The card itself is a very thin and flexible piece of plastic, the size of a credit card. It's a good idea, just a pity that Sega didn't implement it a few years ago when they unveiled the Dreamcast's VM unit and promised similar arcade data-storage. But the *Club Kart* card is undoubtedly a lot cheaper to manufacture than a VM unit.

Air Trix is a sequel to Sega's fantastic, but dated, skateboarding game *Top Skater*. It still boasts an effective control method (a wheel-less board that you stand on) that improves over the original with a new spinning ability, but it's less enjoyable than the original now the action is restricted to half-pipes and performing tricks.

Ferrari F355 Challenge 2 may appear to be a sequel to the hit racer, but in truth it's really a remix that offers new courses seen in the Dreamcast conversion of *F355* (*ODM* #13, 8/10). It's being made available to arcades soon, as an upgrade kit to existing *F355* machines.

The final coin-op on Sega's stand was *Wild Riders*, unveiled in our March issue (*ODM* #17). Another Naomi 2-powered title, it's a motorbike chase through a city, with a biker gang trying to avoid capture from the local police in pursuit.

The police set up roadblocks at every available opportunity and these can be avoided by either steering around them or, if there's an available ramp, jumping over them by pulling back on the cabinet-mounted handlebars. You'll also be required to slide under barriers and trucks, by pushing forward on the handlebars. Avoiding obstacles increases the gap between you and the police. Interestingly, there isn't a timer or checkpoints. It's a fun game that looks great, with a comic-book appearance similar to *Jet Set Radio* (*ODM* #14, 8/10). There's only one criticism – it's too easy.

Away from Sega's stand, other highlights included Namco's gun games *Ninja Assault* and *Vampire Night*, the latter a collaboration between Sega, Wow Entertainment and Namco, it's clearly inspired by *House Of The Dead*. Star of the show was *Police 24/7* from Konami – yes, another gun game. This one boasts spectacular motion-sensing technology that allows you to dodge bullets to avoid being hit. This is going to be massive in the arcades but a home conversion could prove too costly to manufacture. So that's another excuse to go drop some more coins in the slots, then!

△ **Stop hogging that machine!**

SPIDEY SWINGS ABOARD

The famous web-slinger prepares to save the day

Marvel's most celebrated latex-wearing superhero is heading to Dreamcast this spring in a conversion of the hit PlayStation game by Activision – *Spider-Man*.

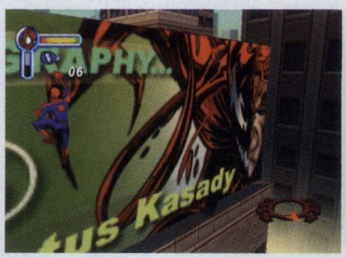
The pages of the comic book will come to life in a 3D action-adventure where players get to control the amazing Spider-Man in a bid to save New York from a plague of crime. Spider-Man is set to face a rogues' gallery of famous villains including Dr Octopus, Rhino, Venom and Mysterio as he tries to clear his name of a crime he didn't commit.

All of the superhero's famous abilities will be included in the game, with Spider-Man able to shoot webs to trap enemies or form a protective shield and swing from building to building. The web-slinger will also get to use his famous spider-sense, an alert that is triggered when he's seconds away from danger. Plus he'll be crawling up buildings at every available opportunity.

"*Spider-Man* for the PlayStation wowed both gamers and critics alike by capturing the true essence of the comic-book series," says Larry Goldberg, executive vice-president at Activision. "The swift action of the web-slinging hero will translate well on to Dreamcast with its 128-bit graphics capability."

With more than 34 levels, *Spider-Man* looks set to provide plenty of action with a diverse range of missions that rely on stealth and quick reflexes. Potential highlights include being chased by police helicopters, a bank robbery that needs to be averted, hostages to save and bombs waiting to be diffused.

Developed by Neversoft, *Spider-Man* is scheduled for release this spring. We'll bring you a full preview in an upcoming issue.



△ **Crawling up buildings is a neat Spidey trick.**

△ **Spidey will face plenty of foes. Here's Venom.**

△ **There goes that spider-sense.**

△ **Spidey, just hanging around on a skyscraper.**

RELEASE DATES
MARCH/APRIL 2001

△ *Surf Rocket Racers*: avoid!

Here's a list of all the games coming out in the next two months, compiled with the help of Sega Europe, retailers and the game publishers themselves. Note that all of these are subject to change.

MARCH 2
Ducati World (Acclaim)
European Super League (Virgin)
Project Justice (Virgin)
Surf Rocket Racers (Ubi Soft)

MARCH 9
Giant Killers (AAA Games)
Sonic Shuffle (Sega)
Starlancer (Ubi Soft)
Vanishing Point (Acclaim)

△ *Worms World Party*: for real?

MARCH 16
Fighting Vipers 2 (Sega)
Worms World Party (Virgin)

MARCH 23
Championship Surfer (Learning Company)
Exhibition of Speed (Titus)

MARCH 30
Stupid Invaders (Ubi Soft)

APRIL
Evil Twin (Ubi Soft)
Half-Life (Havas)
Heroes of Might & Magic III (Ubi Soft)
Matt Hoffman Pro BMX (Activision)
NBA Hoopz (Midway)
Pro Pinball: Trilogy (Empire)
Skies of Arcadia (Sega)
The Mummy (Konami)
Unreal Tournament (Infogrames)

△ *Half-Life*: ready or not?

THE PLAYLIST
ED LOMAS PICKS HIS FAVOURITE TITLES FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

1 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE
SEGA • *ODM* #17, 9/10

My first online game of *PSO* was the most enjoyable gaming session I've had in years, and I'm now completely hooked. The single-player game is a tad repetitive, but I can't stop playing because I want to build my character up for my next online quest. Sonic Team are magic!

2 QUAKE III ARENA
SEGA • *ODM* #15, 9/10

Again, it only took one online game of this to have me hooked. The buzz of snatching a one-frag victory right at the last minute just can't be beaten, especially when it's against a bunch of cocky clan members. It's fun to meet up with people you've played against before, too, especially if you're evenly matched skill-wise.

3 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2
ACTIVISION • *ODM* #15, 9/10

This enables me to live out all my pro-skating dreams. The control system is amazing – the physics feel fantastic, and learning how to do the tricks is easy. It's all down to your skill and imagination, working out how to do the most impressive moves and combos on the scenery.

4 VIRTUA TENNIS
SEGA • *ODM* #12, 9/10

Everyone loves *Virtua Tennis*. Four-player games of this are unbeatable no matter what time it is, thanks to the controls being so simple. Anyone can learn to play in five minutes and be utterly addicted straight away. It almost makes me think that real tennis could be interesting, even though I know it's as dull as sports come.

5 SAMBA DE AMIGO
SEGA • *ODM* #15, 8/10

To be honest, I always thought *Samba De Amigo* was a bit sad, but after playing it at Christmas I really got into it. Downloading the extra tunes from the website helped, as it means I can play along to tracks from favourite games like *Sonic CD* and *NiGHTS*. I don't play it on my own, though – I'd just like to make that clear…

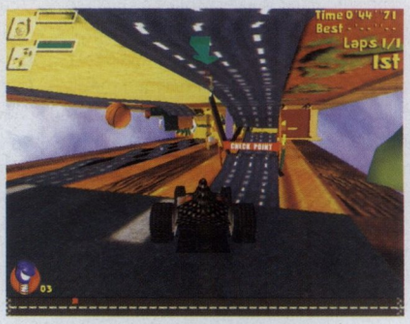
6 NBA 2K
SEGA • *ODM* #5, 8/10

I have no interest in basketball whatsoever, but *NBA 2K* is one of the best sports games ever made. The amount of detail is stunning – the graphics, sound, tactics, and controls all make for a brilliantly skilful and enjoyable game. It's great with four people, too. And the commentary's the best I've heard anywhere.

THE ChartTrack TOP TWENTY
ELSPA

POS	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RATING	REVIEWED IN ISSUE
1	(1)	TOY RACER	SEGA	6/10	17
2	(2)	SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	9/10	0
3	(3)	SHENMUE	SEGA	10/10	14
4	(6)	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX	VIRGIN	4/10	17
5	(4)	TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION	EIDOS	7/10	6
6	(7)	SEGA RALLY 2	SEGA	8/10	1
7	(-)	RECORD OF LODOSS WAR	VIRGIN	7/10	16
8	(8)	QUAKE III ARENA	SEGA	9/10	14
9	(5)	VIRTUA TENNIS	SEGA	9/10	12
10	(9)	TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2	ACTIVISION	9/10	15
11	(10)	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	3/10	2
12	(13)	HIDDEN & DANGEROUS	TAKE 2	7/10	13
13	(14)	SEGA BASS FISHING	SEGA	7/10	1
14	(15)	DEAD OR ALIVE 2	ACCLAIM	8/10	11
15	(11)	METROPOLIS STREET RACER	SEGA	9/10	12
16	(12)	SEGA GT	SEGA	5/10	15
17	(-)	MR DRILLER	VIRGIN	7/10	15
18	(-)	CHICKEN RUN	EIDOS	6/10	16
19	(-)	TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING	UBI SOFT	8/10	10
20	(16)	F355 CHALLENGE	ACCLAIM	8/10	13

UK sales for week ending February 10th 2001. Compiled by Chart Track (c) ELSPA 2001



△ *Toy Racer*: still top of the charts – probably because it only costs £4.99.

CHART ANALYSIS

NOT MUCH CHANGE in the chart this month, with *Toy Racer* still holding on to the top spot.

Mr Driller makes a long overdue appearance, although it seems most Dreamcast owners couldn't care about this fantastic puzzler. Never mind, at least it managed to outsell a tie-in based on one of the biggest cinema releases of 2000. *Chicken Run* was gold dust at the box office, but is chicken feed on the game charts. A surprise, as unlike most film tie-ins, the game was actually pretty good. What other title boasts the gameplay of *Metal Gear Solid*, but instead of playing with a moody headband-wearing soldier, you get to control a chicken? Anyone want to bet against *Phantasy Star Online* being number one next month?

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO... D2?

We discover the whereabouts of DC games that have seemingly disappeared without a trace. This month: Warp's long lost adventure...

LAST MENTIONED: ***ODM* #7**
ORIGINAL RELEASE DATE: **N/A**
NEW RELEASE DATE: **N/A**

IT MAY HAVE NEVER had a UK release date, or a publisher, but that hasn't stopped a number of you enquiring about the whereabouts of *D2*, Warp's long lost horror adventure that was one of the first titles announced for Dreamcast.

Released in Japan just after the launch of the console in Christmas 1999, *D2* is the sequel to the PC, 3DO, PlayStation and Saturn adventure *D*.

The original *D* (as in 'Dracula') starred a blonde heroine named Laura who was searching for her strange father in what seemed to be a haunted house. It was a simple but effective game, that made extensive use of pre-rendered cut-scenes. It played more like a full motion video adventure than the original action-packed *Resident Evil* that was released around the same time – as a result it didn't sell very well.

Instead of being restricted to exploring pre-rendered movie footage, Laura is given far more freedom in *D2* thanks to the real-time environments provided by the power of Dreamcast. Indeed, the sequel seems a million miles from the original. The creepy interiors of the haunted mansion are replaced by the vast open spaces of a snow-filled Alaskan landscape, and a stronger storyline is added with a plane crash that puts Laura in the middle of this wilderness.

Action fans looked to be well served with Laura able to ride a snowmobile, hunt wildlife and engage in gunfights with grotesque alien enemies. Upon first appearance it looks to be just as impressive as *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* (*ODM* #8, 9/10) and *Shenmue* (*ODM* #14, 10/10), with similarly lavish production values. So why hasn't it been released in Europe?

Unfortunately no publishers are prepared to release it. One of the reasons behind this decision could be the negative reviews that greeted D2 upon release in the US, due in part to having a very elaborate plot, with a slow pace that explains even the smallest story elements. D2 also arrived on four GD-ROM discs, probably making it too costly for a third-party publisher to release.

We asked Sega Europe to shed some light on *D2*'s European situation. Their answer should make anyone still anticipating its arrival spend their pennies elsewhere: "*D2* was being touted around to third parties around the same time as *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* was causing a stir in Europe. Quite why nobody picked the game up in Europe where survival horror games have such a fan base is still a mystery. Without a publisher the game is simply stuck in limbo – until somebody takes a chance on it – but the more time goes by the less likely we are to see it."

△ Laura relieves the frustration of not getting a Euro release.

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EAT THIS!
VARIANTS ON A THEME

WISPA BITE
CADBURY'S • 35p

With the deliciously smooth chocolate of the traditional Wispa, and the bonus caramel of the Gold variety, the addition of the biscuit definitely makes this the better of the three. It may not be as loud as Ant and Dec would have you believe, but your taste buds will be screaming out for more! Fully loaded, as a cheesy car salesman might say… *VH*

KIT KAT MINT
NESTLÉ • 40p

Kind of like a KitKat but… minty. Obvious really, but then what were you expecting? To be honest, this is no improvement over the standard KitKat and considerably more sickly. Now the dark chocolate version is another matter altogether – a much missed limited edition that trounces its minty brother for taste and class! *DT*

CRUNCHIE LEMONADE
CADBURY'S • 35p

Something of an also-ran even after the days of 'Thank Crunchie it's Friday', Cadbury's are attempting to brighten up the Crunchie's world by introducing endless new variants. If you can identify the lemonade bit you're doing well but it's all good, clean fun. Look out for the champagne and orange Tango versions too if this tickles your fancy. *DT*

INSPECT-A-GADGET

A set of rubber band-flinging pistols, a corrugated camera and an Allen key-and-screwdriver necklace are among this month's technological trailblazers

CASIO REMOTE-CONTROL WATCH

Somewhere in the development of home-entertainment systems, something went horribly, horribly wrong. A task as mundane as changing channels can require a frustrating shuffle through a huge heap of remotes, only to find that the one you really wanted was stuffed down the back of the sofa all along. To the rescue come Casio, with a programmable remote control that doubles as a handy, portable timekeeping device. Whether you'll take to the '80s styling is debatable, but for the ultimate edge in the channel-hopping wars it's truly unbeatable…

Price: £45 **Contact:** Casio
Tel: 020 8450 9131 **Web:** www.casio.com

RUBBER BAND GUN DUEL KIT

There's always some joker, be it in the office or the classroom, who's a demon shot with the old rubber-band-around-the-finger routine and mighty annoying it is, too. If you're sick of being on the receiving end, then this rapid-fire, laggy band-hurling toy might well do the trick. Sold as a pair in the finest tradition of antique duelling pistols, each gun will hold ten rubber bands, which you can twang about to your heart's content. Naughty but nice…

Price: £19.99 **Contact:** Iwantoneofthose
Tel: 0870 421 1066 **Web:** www.iwantoneofthose.com

KONICA REVIO II

While the benefits of the APS film format are debatable, the wave of sleekly designed cameras it's inspired has to be a good thing. Canon's IXUS range pioneered the teeny metallic look and Konica's Revio II takes a pleasing corrugated twist on the theme. There's nothing revolutionary about it – it simply does the job required with the minimum of fuss and looks good while doing it, although the handy pop-up mirror is a great innovation for those who simply can't bear being left out of their own photos. Classy!

Price: £130 **Contact:** Konica
Tel: 020 8751 6121 **Web:** www.konica.co.uk

U-TURN SPORTS TOOL

Jewellery designer William Prophet has made an unusual diversion into the macho world of multi-purpose mini-tools – a bold move considering the market tends to prefer a military heritage to appear bona fide. Leaving that aside, this is a neat little thing designed to hang around your neck and carry out emergency repairs to your bike, board or blades. With only 3mm, 4mm and 5mm Allen keys and Phillips and flat-blade screwdrivers it's hardly a Swiss army knife, but it's tiny, cute and convenient.

Price: £18 **Contact:** Iwantoneofthose
Tel: 0870 421 1066 **Web:** www.iwantoneofthose.com

ERICSSON R380S

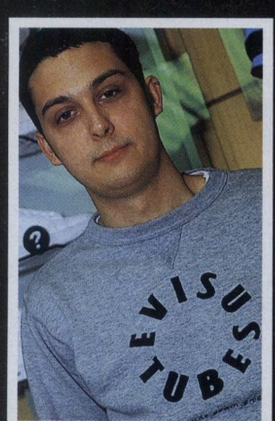
In the battle to cram the most features into the humble handset, Ericsson have turned to the handheld PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) as inspiration for their R380S. By day it resembles a fairly mundane-looking phone, but flip the front and it reveals a huge screen through which you can access WAP sites and email as well as a diary and organiser. Texting and mailing is a cinch thanks to an on-screen keyboard and/or scratch pad that turns your handwriting into type, and if you really want to make the most of the Web through your phone it's an excellent package.

Price: £300 approx – depends on contract **Contact:** Ericsson
Tel: 08705 237237 **Web:** www.ericsson.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: **FOTO THEME**

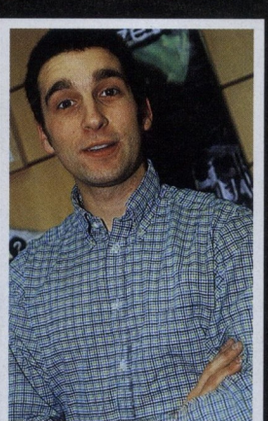
SNEAK-ER PREVIEW...

SONIC'S ALWAYS BEEN A BIT OF A FOOTWEAR FANATIC, SO **DAN TRENT** TOOK A DEMO OF *SONIC ADVENTURE 2* FOR A RUN AT SIZE?, LONDON'S TRENDY TRAINER EMPORIUM



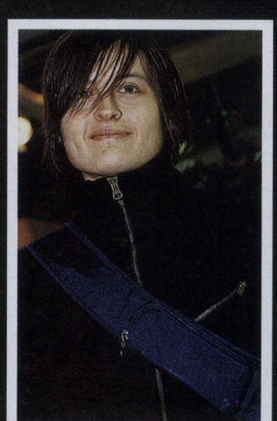
GAVIN, 23
WORKS IN PR

Played a *Sonic* game before?
I upgraded from a Master System to a Mega Drive for *Sonic*!
What did you think?
Interesting, there's a lot of variety... it looks very good.
Coolest thing about Sonic?
Speed and that haircut... very Japanese!
Most you've spent on trainers?
I get them free!



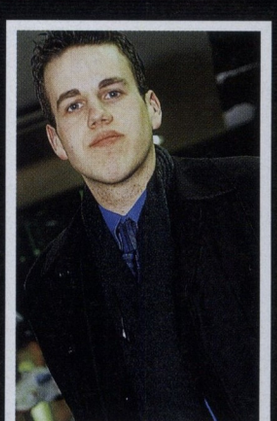
JAMES, 24
WORKS AT SIZE?

Played a *Sonic* game before?
Never! I prefer fighting games.
What did you think?
Well, you need to be quick! It's certainly very addictive.
Coolest thing about Sonic?
The graphics flow and he wears trainers!
Most you've spent on trainers?
£90, and that's my limit... but never again, though!



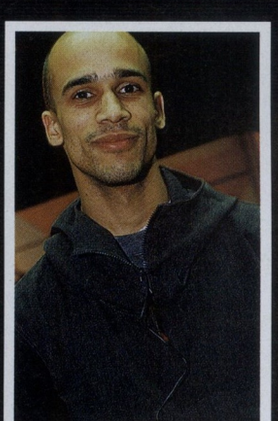
MARIE, 25
STUDENT IN PARIS

Played a *Sonic* game before?
Non!
What did you think?
I really, really like it because it's very simple to play and the graphics are excellent!
Coolest thing about Sonic?
He's fast!
Most you've spent on trainers?
1000ff I think... about £100.



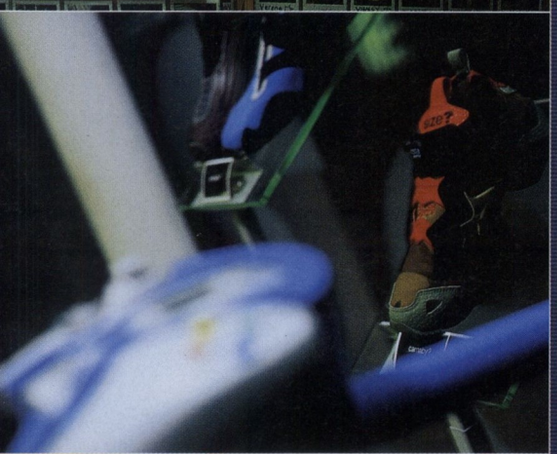
MARTIN, 22
WORKS IN INSURANCE

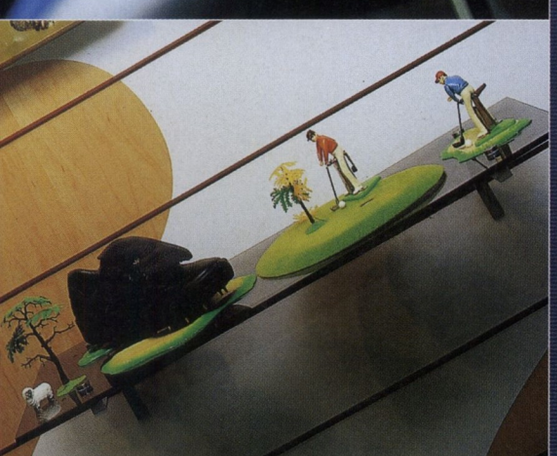
Played a *Sonic* game before?
Oh yeah! Dreamcast, Mega Drive... and all the others.
What did you think?
It's a bit slower than *Sonic Adventure*, but still very cool.
Coolest thing about Sonic?
He's faster than Mario!
Most you've spent on trainers?
£90.



KEVIN, 29
WORKS FOR REISS

Played a *Sonic* game before?
Yeah, I can't remember what on, though...
What did you think?
I liked the boarding bit and the different camera angles.
Coolest thing about Sonic?
He's crazy!
Most you've spent on trainers?
Ooh... about £20! Not really, $120 on a pair of Adidas.





...OF SONIC ADVENTURE 2

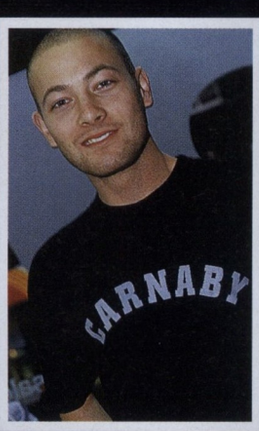
AS ANY GLOBAL SPORTSWEAR megabrand would gladly tell you, to run quickly you're going to need the right sort of footwear. Admittedly this is of passing concern to Sonic having, as he does, the luxury of being able to bend the laws of physics to suit his tastes. That's not to say the blue spikey one isn't interested in staying one step ahead of the footwear game, though. Indeed, last year saw an online competition based on a level of *Sonic Adventure* in which you had to seek out the five pairs of hidden Reebok trainers.

For our exclusive preview of the long-awaited *Sonic Adventure 2*, we took our trusty demo pod down to shoe fetishist's Mecca, Size?, to get the skinny on what the trainer junkies make of Sonic's latest outing. While the full game is currently under wraps, we gave a few lucky people the chance to play the exclusive demo that comes bundled with Yuji Naka's futuristic RPG *Phantasy Star Online* (*ODM* #17, 9/10), a full month before the game hit the streets. The demo sees Sonic leaping out of a helicopter and surfing the streets on a board before taking to his feet and doing what he does best...

• Size? has branches in London's Carnaby Street (020 7287 4016), Brighton (01273 728 113) and Manchester (0161 839 8086).

KATIE, 21
SHOP ASSISTANT

Played a *Sonic* game before?
I played the older ones, a long time ago.
What did you think?
I really liked it. The graphics are cool and it's very easy to get into.
Coolest thing about Sonic?
Erm... when he goes off on his own and it goes mad.
Most you've spent on trainers?
This is embarrassing. Probably about £30!

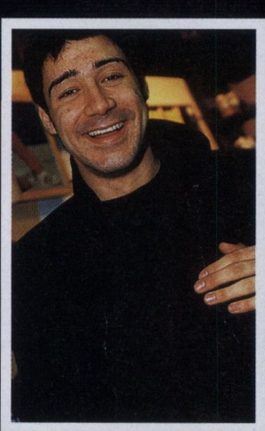


PRESTON, 24
WORKS AT SIZE?

Played a *Sonic* game before?
Yeah, on the Mega Drive years ago – and I loved it!
What did you think?
The graphics are crazy!
Coolest thing about Sonic?
Sonic, man! He's cool – his hair!
Most you've spent on trainers?
Erm, roughly aus$250 – which is about £120, I think.

IAN, 22
INTERIOR DESIGNER

Played a *Sonic* game before?
I used to have a Mega Drive when I was ten, so yeah.
What did you think?
Brilliant graphics and really fast too.
Coolest thing about Sonic?
He's been updated and is smoother, but he's still got his spikes!
Most you've spent on trainers?
£120.



JAVIER, 32
STUDENT

Played a *Sonic* game before?
No.
What did you think?
It's really nice... and the graphics are amazing...
Coolest thing about Sonic?
The speed and the colour!
Most you've spent on trainers?
I think it was about £180. They're only £70 now!

MEGAN, 18
STUDENT

Played a *Sonic* game before?
Years ago on the Mega Drive... when it was the thing!
What did you think?
I liked the skating bit and there's loads of places to explore.
Coolest thing about Sonic?
He's a classic!
Most you've spent on trainers?
Um, £150 or something.

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

HAIL TO THE KING, BABY!

HE TOOK ON THE UNDEAD THREE TIMES AND SURVIVED. **ED LOMAS** SPOKE TO BRUCE CAMPBELL JUST BEFORE HE WENT BACK FOR MORE

"HI THERE!" BOOMS A GRINNING Bruce Campbell, crushing our puny digits with a painfully enthusiastic handshake. He's wearing a ludicrous brightly coloured Hawaiian shirt instead of a mess of blood-stained rags, but other than that looks exactly like his infamous *Evil Dead* alter ego Ash, right down to the unnaturally perfect designer stubble.

You don't need to have seen any of the ultra-gory, ultra-funny *Evil Dead* trilogy to understand Ash. He's basically the blueprint for almost all videogame heroes: square jaw, gravelly voice, great selection of witty one-liners, and no qualms about chainsawing heads off screeching zombies. And now, with THQ's *Evil Dead: Hail To The King* nearing completion on Dreamcast, the original cooler-than-cool hero is about to enter virtual reality for the first time.

"The game will give fans of the movies the chance to actually be the character at last," Bruce told us enthusiastically. "Until now you'd have to sit back and play drinking games, and *watch* the movies, but you couldn't jump in there and make Ash do stuff. Now you can inhabit the essence of Ash!"

In recording "bagfulls of voice stuff" for the game, Bruce got to reprise the role of Ash, which he first took on back in 1979. Although he's been in countless movies since (including such 'classics' as *Maniac Cop*, *Congo*, *Escape From LA* and *Assault On Dome 4*), and has made as regular TV appearances as Autolycus in *Xena: Warrior Princess*, it's as Ash that Bruce is best known. "It's fun to go back into that world as that character," he commented, "only I don't really have to get bloody this time!"

Being in a comfortable sound-recording studio rather than a ramshackle cabin full of gore in remote woodland would, one might think, make acting terrified a bit difficult. Not so for a seasoned pro like Bruce. "It's not all that different, because acting in the *Evil Dead* movies we did a lot of stuff in front of a blue screen where I never even saw the creatures. You're really just inhabiting the character – it's all in your head anyway."

Having done voice-overs for four or five other games before working on *Hail To The King*, Bruce has also learned a few useful tricks. "Your voice wears out, so you can only do so much per day," he told us. "At least, *my* voice wears out… That's why we save all the screaming stuff for the end of the session!"

Evil Dead's massive cult following around the world has been praying for a fourth movie in the series, but unfortunately things aren't looking promising. The series' director and writer – as well as close childhood friend of Bruce's – Sam Raimi, is currently hard at work on the all-new big-budget *Spider-Man* movie plus, as Bruce himself puts it, "financing for a fourth *Evil Dead* film isn't forthcoming…

"The game will serve as a temporary *Evil Dead 4*," he added. "It's got everything the diehard fans wanted. For them, it'll be like putting on a comfortable pair of shoes," he said, grinning. "Albeit bloody shoes…"

• ***Evil Dead: Hail To The King*** **is previewed on page 48. Bruce Campbell's autobiography, tentatively called *Confessions of a B-Movie Actor…* is due out later this year.**

PHOTOGRAPHY: **PICTORIAL PRESS**

PROVIDER OF SOUNDS AND MUSIC FOR THE FILM WORLD, DOMINIC GIBBS HAS TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO GAMES WITH *HEADHUNTER*. **DAN TRENT**, ER, SOUNDS HIM OUT...

HEAD OF SOUND

IF YOU'VE EVER SEEN the shoot-out in the film *Heat* you'll know about the difference good sound can make to a movie scene. The gunfire echoing off the skyscrapers and bullets whizzing past in glorious surround sound gave cinema-goers a terrifying insight into the feeling of being caught in the middle of a gunfight.

It's this feeling that Dominic Gibbs is hoping to bring to your living room in *Headhunter*, due out on Dreamcast later this year. According to him, games have a lot to learn from the film industry he's more accustomed to working in.

"Footsteps are a good example," he jokes. "They're always at one level in games – loud! Sometimes that's important when you need a reference to time your jumps or whatever, but it's just not realistic when you can hear your footsteps over loud traffic. It just needs a little thought."

Dominic's work as music editor on films like *Tomorrow Never Dies* and *The World Is Not Enough*, and sound designer on numerous TV adverts, makes him well-placed to offer his expertise to *Headhunter* developers Amuze.

"I do effects and sound design on adverts," he explains. "Which is a bit more abstract than film at times. For instance, you might have someone putting a glass down and want it to sound like it's the size of a mountain when it crashes down!"

Dominic is only too aware of how important the sound can be to the overall effect and he's recently enjoyed getting back into games as part of his 'research' for *Headhunter*.

"I used to be big gamer," he says. "When they asked me to do this I found myself jumping back into it. I played a bit of *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* [*ODM* #8, 9/10] which impressed me, and I got very excited about *Shenmue* [*ODM* #14, 10/10]."

The freedom to experiment away from the structured world of film-making has been one of the major draws to the project for Dominic too. "I wouldn't be taking this much interest if I didn't believe in it."

• **For more information on *Headhunter*, turn to our exclusive preview on page 8.**

"IT'S NOT REALISTIC WHEN YOU CAN HEAR FOOTSTEPS OVER LOUD TRAFFIC. IT JUST NEEDS A LITTLE THOUGHT"

SKY'S THE LIMIT!

FANCY YOURSELF AS A BIT OF AN ALL-STAR? WHAT ABOUT THE RAF, THEN?

YOUR ADRENALIN'S PUMPING, the crowd's going wild. Fists are waving in the air and your team is cheering you on. With only 13 seconds on the clock this is it: your big chance. You're working the ball around the court, dribbling your way to the hoop. You go for the dunk, wipe your brow, wait... and it's in, you've done it, you've sunk the winning shot! Game over.

For hoop fans who can apply their dazzling Dreamcast skills on the court for real, a career in the Royal Air Force is well worth thinking about. The star qualities of a great basketball player – like determination, team spirit and plenty of get-up-and-go – are all essential for a career with the RAF.

If, like propulsion technician and RAF basketball player Gerry Armstrong (26), you want to keep shooting to score and still have a fulfilling career to boot, then the RAF could be for you. Not only does the RAF sponsor England Basketball National Junior and Cadet Leagues, but it also boasts its own top-rank team, too.

So how does Gerry's real life sporting talents compare to slam-dunkin' in *NBA 2K* (*ODM* #5, 8/10)?

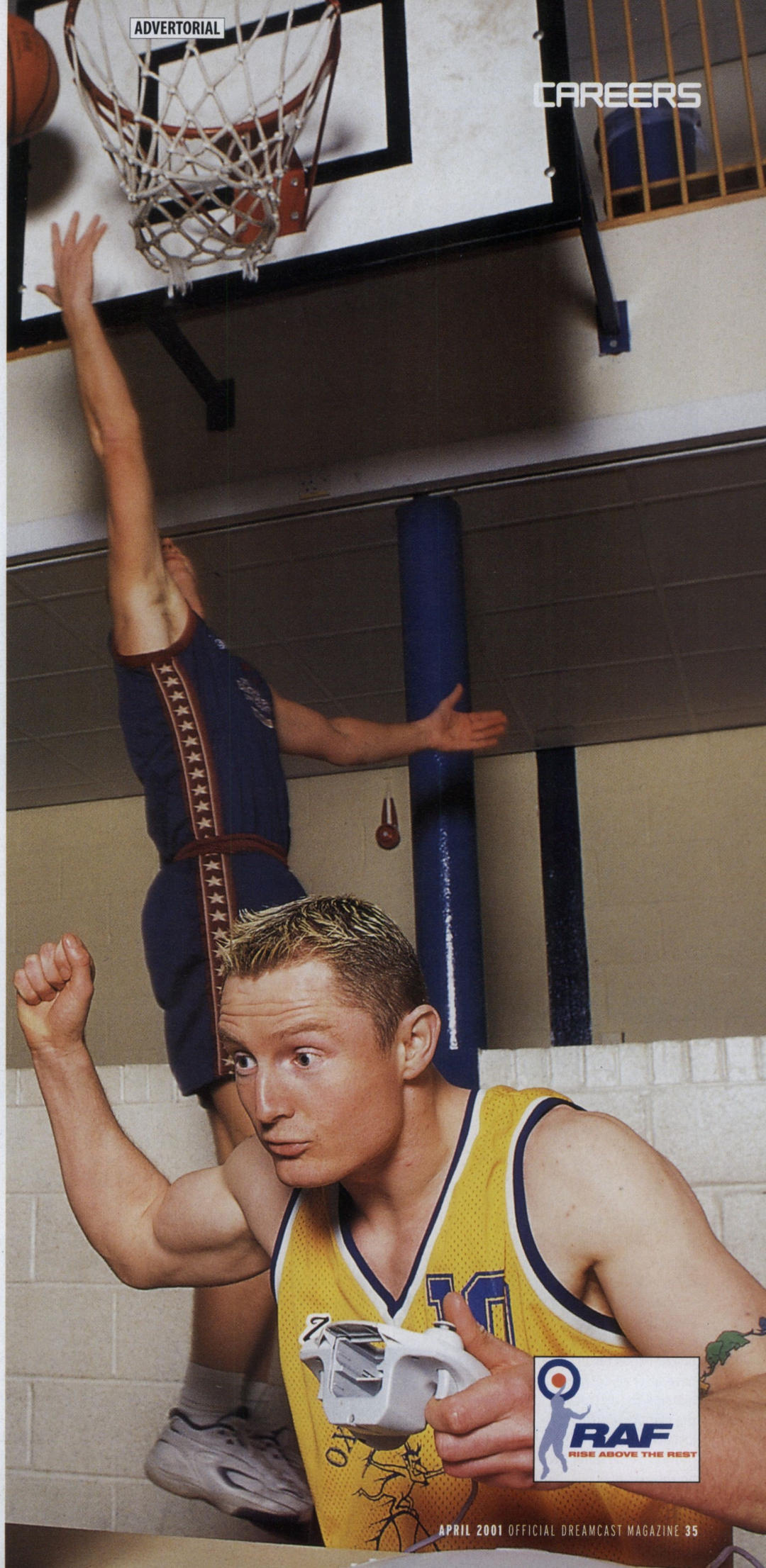
"It's a fun basketball experience and pretty accurate, too", enthuses Gerry. "It features real players, teams and arenas which look so lifelike. But you don't really get that feeling of team spirit and camaraderie, like you get playing a real-life basketball game in the RAF."

Whilst in real life he might not get to play basketball against aces like Shaq and Kobe Bryant as he can on *NBA 2K*, the rewards of playing RAF Basketball League are plentiful, as Gerry will vouch. "It's a real buzz when you're playing the sport you love as part of your career," he says. "The RAF can let you do just that – it helps you develop skills for life and allows you time to play sport as well as having a rewarding job."

Because the RAF is a modern, flexible employer it will support you to play sport at whatever level you achieve, from local team to international heights.

If you're tempted to check out the young basketball talent of this year's season, get yourself along to the RAF Finals Fours on April 21-22 at RAF Cosford. This is the big event of the year for the RAF Careers-sponsored National Junior and Cadet Basketball Leagues and a cool chance to see what makes a top-notch basketball player.

If you're happy to stick with *NBA 2K* but fancy your chances of having a career in the RAF, ring 0845 605 555 quoting reference BB/DC/1, or visit www.rafcareers.com.



△ Super-Cyp, a leaping, cavorting, dark side to your own psyche, and thankfully blessed with the requisite super powers.

EVIL TWIN

A great title for an intriguing game. **STEVE OWEN** proves that he's evil enough for the both of him

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **IN UTERO**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Huge and varied worlds and creatures
- A superhero alter-ego with powers
- Quite like *Super Mario 64*...
- But nowhere near as cuddly, thank God!

WHEN YOU COME UP with an idea for a television series and the mighty French channel Canal+ tells you that it's too expensive and you should make it into a videogame first to see if it takes off, you've got to at least think about it. That you've never actually created a game before needn't really be an issue. You have, after all, created posters, marketing material, music, videos and 3D tools for the games industry for six years. In fact, just about the only thing you don't provide all the other publishers is the finished product.

That's how it was, and will be, with Paris-based developers In Utero until they release *Evil Twin* in the next couple of months. It's been some four years in coming, although the idea for a game was only actually suggested two and a half years ago.

"The idea for the television series was to explore fear in the eyes of a child," says David Legrand, In Utero's head of design. "We were thinking about fear of the dark, what's lurking under your bed, what's in the cellar... and it all went from there really.

"But we were a team of creators. We had technology and we had an idea, but then we realised we didn't have a writer."

Fortunately, Legrand was friends with Guillaume Eluerd, who just happened to be a television writer. He was brought in to give flesh to Legrand's bones, and they soon had the story that has, so far, failed to become a television series.

"After Canal+'s suggestion, we just went to an arcade to try and think what to do," admits Legrand. "3D games were just getting started – we played the original *Tekken*, and then we played *Mario 64*, and we knew that was the direction we had to take."

TWISTS AND SHOUTS

And so begins In Utero's shameless homage to *Super Mario 64*. You could think of the company as Nintendo's own evil twin. While Mario was an adult in a cuddly and colourful land, *Evil Twin* will star a child finding his way through the dark twists of his own terrifying imagination. Cyprien is an orphan, whose harsh life experiences force him into his own twisted world in which he has to

△ The Demis are a strange race of half-people, and will also form part of the tutorial.

△ As you would hope, there will be end-of-level baddies to take care of, too.

△ Cyprien's slingshot will be defence enough against the weaker foes.

△ Insectophobes might prefer to play *Evil Twin* from behind the sofa and with the lights on.

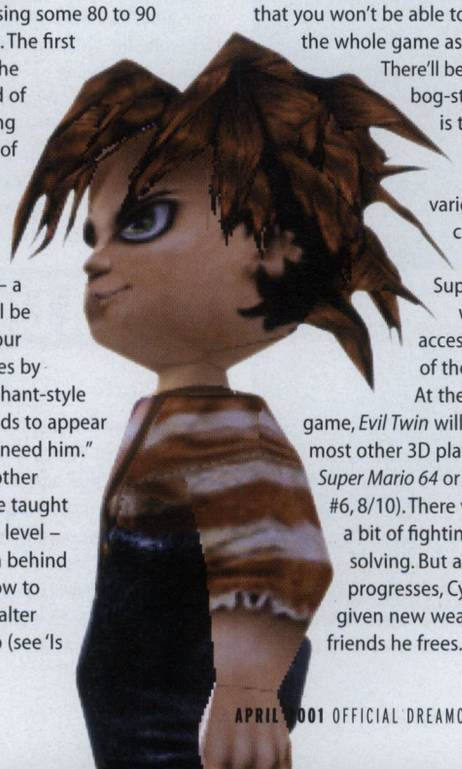
△ The 90 minutes of cut-scenes will use the in-game engine in real-time instead of video sequences.

"HARSH LIFE EXPERIENCES FORCE CYPRIEN INTO HIS OWN TWISTED WORLD"

rescue four friends trapped in the varied and complex worlds of *Evil Twin*.

"There will be eight different islands in the game," explains Eluerd, *Evil Twin*'s writer, "comprising some 80 to 90 different levels. The first island will be the smallest, a kind of tutorial teaching you the basics of the control mechanism and how to use your first, basic weapon – a slingshot. You'll be taught all of your signature moves by Wilbur, an elephant-style friend who tends to appear just when you need him."

One of the other aspects you are taught in the opening level – and the reason behind the title – is how to summon your alter ego, Super-Cyp (see 'Is it a bird? Is it a plane?' over the page). This dark superhero-style character will give you special fighting moves, weapons and powers, but his aloof attitude means that you won't be able to play through the whole game as Super-Cyp.

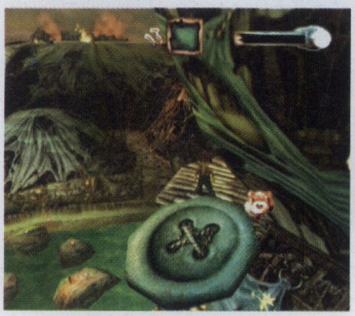


There'll be times when the bog-standard Cyprien is the only way to communicate with the various non-player characters, and times when Super-Cyp's powers will provide access to other areas of the level.

At the start of the game, *Evil Twin* will be similar to most other 3D platform titles like *Super Mario 64* or *Rayman 2* (*ODM* #6, 8/10). There will be jumping, a bit of fighting and problem solving. But as the game progresses, Cyprien will be given new weapons by the friends he frees. Joey, Steven, ▷

△ You start by just lobbing stones, but upgrades will improve your aim and power.

△ Each of the eight islands has been designed in a very particular style.



△ Cyprien's dreams involve giant buttons...

△ The bigger they come, and all that.

△ Interact with more than 100 characters.

△ The dark worlds of *Evil Twin* will match the tense atmosphere. You just know that there's going to be something scary around the corner.

▷ Vinny and David's freedom from their imprisonment by the Master, will be rewarded by not just a new power-up for your slingshot, but a new defensive mode too, while the weapons and defences are linked to the theme of each friend's level. Vinny, for instance, will give you a weapon that binds your enemies with the fronds of plants, and it can also be used to fire into particular parts of levels to provide an anti-gravity lift to access previously out-of-reach areas. Joey's attack will put enemies inside a bubblegum bubble, which you can control. It will mean that you can flick switches or burst enemies over bottomless caverns. You will also be able to protect yourself inside the bubble. Steven's will involve remote-control paper aeroplanes, while David's power-up will provide temporary platforms over lava.

ISLAND HOPPING

"This won't be a linear game," explains Guillaume Eluerd. "Although there are 80 or so levels, you will actually be able to approach the islands in any order, although, obviously, some places will be inaccessible until you've earned the particular power-ups. We will also be offering four different Visual Memory unit games, which are rewards for completing the four islands that won't have friends to rescue."

When we played *Evil Twin* at In Utero's Paris development house, we were struck by how similar it was to

IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE?

No, it's Super-Cyp, Cyprien's foolishly clad alter ego

Just like any little kid (who's been drawn into his own depression-induced fantasy world, that is), Cyprien sometimes imagines himself as a superhero, benefiting from gradually learned superpowers. For instance, he can turn a fall from a great height into a gentle, controlled glide. He can beat up his foes, or speed through areas.

But like so many superheroes, Super-Cyp is a tortured soul seething with self-hatred. Which not only makes his face resemble Harry Enfield's teenager Kevin, but also ensures that he is incapable of carrying on a normal conversation with anyone else in the game. So, if you want to be friends with anyone, you'll need to change back into civvies at an opportune moment.

△ Super-Cyp is your best bet against the game's creatures.

△ There'll be plenty of old-skool platforming.

△ Good old familiar platforms to leap on to.

△ One of the less dark and depressing levels.

"DARK AND OMINOUS, A POTENTIALLY TERRIFYING VIDEOGAME"

previous platform games. There's plenty of timed jumps, traps to be avoided and linked platforms to navigate. Creatures will need to be killed or avoided, switches will have to be switched and objects will have to be collected. But it's the atmosphere of the game that they hope will most engage you. Dark and ominous, it's a potentially terrifying videogame. Almost finished, *Evil Twin* is just a bug-test away from hitting the shelves. Be afraid, be very afraid.

RAINBOW SIX ROGUE SPEAR

Get stealthy with **DYLAN DAVIES** and the latest Tom Clancy spin-off

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **SWING!**
DEVELOPER: **RED STORM**

AFTER PLAYING *QUAKE III ARENA* (*ODM* #15, 9/10) for a couple of months, you may be thinking that you're God's gift to first-person shooters. How wrong you are, child, for the real thinking man's maiming lies in the strategic ambush festival that is the *Rainbow Six* series.

Rogue Spear is the follow-up to the 'love it *and* hate it' PC and Dreamcast title Rainbow Six (*ODM* #17, 4/10). It looks pretty much identical to its PC cousin, but we can forgive that because it's still one of the more absorbing games of recent years. Some might say even more absorbing than a sponge the size of Nepal.

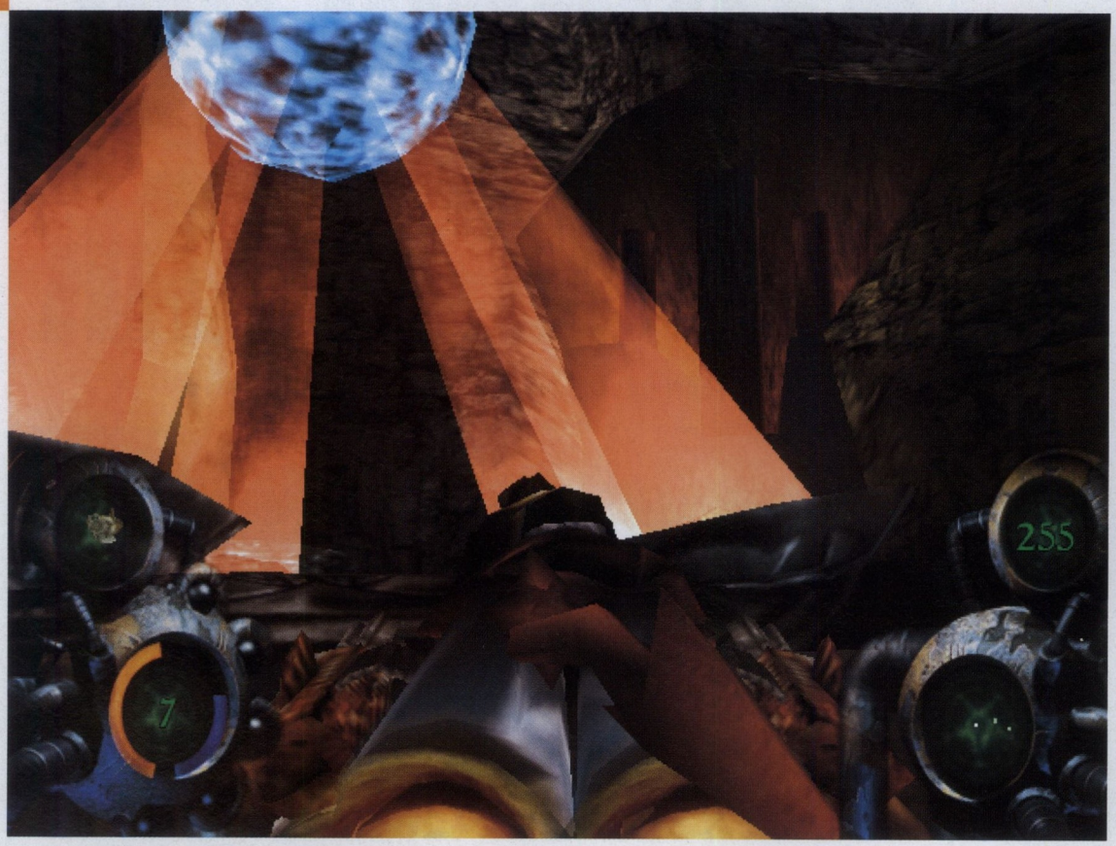
The premise of the game is anti-terrorism, and it's your job to organise teams of tooled-up-hardcore-war-faced squaddies to solve the problem without killing any innocents. The game revolves around a fine blend of strategy and action. Your first job is to survey the schematics of the situation and pick a team, according to skills, to deal with this efficiently. Then you must lay down routes and plans for up to four different teams to follow. Once you're convinced this is the right

△ Hostage women love a man in uniform. Unfortunately, our anti-terrorist friend is more a fighter than a lover.

strategy for you, it's time for the action part of the pudding. The game now becomes first-person *à la Quake III Arena*, however, should you run around like a maniac you'll very quickly die like a maniac. It's tactics that will win this game. Stealth and communication between your various colour-coded teams is your ticket to death-free success.

That's the *Rainbow Six* series put simply. It has masses of tactics and features – too many for a preview feature – but also a lot of gameplay to justify the head-scratching. *Rogue Spear* is currently looking quite complete and thankfully already has keyboard and mouse control for those of us who have trouble memorising 101 commands on a joypad.

△ One of the squad brought the wrong uniform. Can you guess which?



△ They say the Devil has all the best tunes, and hell certainly seems to have the best disco lights.

△ Nice flags, but the room needs a lick of paint.

△ Oooh, stained glass. Now that's classy.

HELLGATE

A shoot 'em up based on *Dante's Inferno*? With Hell's Angels? From Wales? **STEVE HILL** is confused

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **SUMMER**
PUBLISHER: **TBC**
DEVELOPER: **JESTER INTERACTIVE**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Demonic storyline
- Flying motorbikes
- Blood and guts
- From the makers of *Music* on PlayStation

IT MAY BE THE natural habitat of the mullet and stone-washed denim, but North Wales is also home to Jester Interactive. While not yet a big noise in the world of games, the Mold-based developer's primary contribution to joypad-grapplers has been the award-winning music creation titles, *Music* and *Music 2000* on PlayStation. They are currently making inroads into gamesville though, and have a number of projects on the go, including *Hellgate*, which at the time of writing is residing on the 'publisher required' list.

As the name suggests, hell plays quite a sizeable part in the game, which is actually a rather ambitious rewrite of *Dante's Inferno*, albeit with heavily armed hover bikes. And if you're not familiar with *Dante's Inferno*, suffice to say the 13th-century Italian poet's rambling opus isn't exactly a laugh-a-minute short story. Jester Interactive have thankfully taken a degree of poetic licence though and, as *Hellgate*'s lead designer Mark Whyte says, "It's based on *Dante's Inferno*, but we begged, borrowed and stole from Greek mythology, as well as medieval stuff. And we just liked the Hell's Angels angle as well."

Oh yeah, the Hell's Angels. Look, let's just start at the beginning. The game's protagonist, Marv, is leader of the Nevada chapter of the Hell's Angels. One night, they're cruisin' around, drinking cheap liquor, listening to Hawkwind, doing Hell's Angels kind of stuff. Imagine their surprise then, when the entire chapter (bar Marv) is mercilessly butchered by a firm claiming to be the real Hell's Angels, in that they're actually from hell, and indeed mighty annoyed at some earthbound slackers using their name. During the ensuing scuffle, Marv kills a demon, steals his bike and follows the real 'Angels' into hell to avenge his buddies by retrieving their souls. However, guided by Dante himself, there's a hidden agenda in that Marv has actually been earmarked to kickstart Armageddon by killing a host of demons and opening the gates of hell.

Fortunately, Marv's new bike is a step up from the leopard-skin Harley he's been used to, and as such can hover forwards and backwards, strafe, and hold machine-guns, Gatling guns, grenade launchers, rockets and so on. Clearly, the phrase 'shoot 'em up' springs to mind, but according to its designer, "I don't think you can peg it for any one thing. It's quite quick in a shoot 'em up way, but it's also story-based so you can follow the cut-scenes, and there's also an

"A REWRITE OF *DANTE'S INFERNO*, WITH HEAVILY ARMED HOVER BIKES"

△ Astrith, Baal's missus. Quite a demon, eh?

△ Now *that's* what you call a bike.

△ If that's hell's teeth, we can recommend a good orthodontist.

element of figuring stuff out as you go through. There's a number of different ways of playing it, all of which work."

Having seen it with our own eyes, we can certainly vouch for the speed, and the handling. Lead programmer Jason Fielder concurs, "It's very twitchy. The bike is capable of high speed for the speed sections, but the idea is to be able to control the bike and not just go round at massive speed. We basically wanted to be able to get to maximum speed practically instantly and to stop again, but we want people to use the analogue throttle to get around carefully."

Killing demons is always a good concept, particularly when they explode into giblets of freshly cooked meat, roping great arcs of hot blood over the walls and ceiling, something that any prospective publisher will have to take into consideration. The game certainly has a chance, and allied to an array of multiplayer modes, including eight-way Internet play, it could be worth looking out for. If they get it right, it might just be the best thing to come out of North Wales since the road to Chester.

CONFIDENTIAL MISSION

Go shake your Martini elsewhere, Bond. **ED LOMAS** is the new spy superhero

△ In true *James Bond* style, the bad guys have every kind of vehicle at their disposal.

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **HITMAKER**

ON THE CD

HAVING ONLY RECENTLY appeared in arcades (see *ODM* #15), *Confidential Mission* is already well on its way to Dreamcast. As you can tell from the exclusive movie footage on our cover disc, it's an impressive-looking light-gun game.

You'll play as either Howard Gibson (tuxedo-wearing James Bond-alike) or Jean Clifford (sexy-but-deadly Scully clone) as they shoot their way through various terrorist-infested locations.

Like Sega's classic *Virtua Cop* arcade series, green targets appear to show you where the bad guys are, as well as how long you have before they shoot at you. If the lines around the edge meet and the target turns red, you're in trouble! The emphasis is on speed as large numbers of enemies often jump out at once, so you'll have to put a bullet in each of them as quickly as possible. It's not all ultra-violence, though. Again like the *Virtua Cop* series, shooting a bad guy in the hand so he drops his gun counts as a Justice Shot, earning you extra points. A new Dreamcast-only training mode is also being included so you can practice your shooting skills on cardboard people and flashing lights beforehand.

△ Spot the innocent guy crawling away in the background?

The game is looking very tasty already, with graphics just as good as those in the arcade game. We'll bring you a full preview in *ODM* very soon.

△ Oh dearie me. Looks like you'd better get your trigger finger moving in overdrive!

△ And... er... here's a table from a strange angle. You really have to play it for the full effect.

△ A genuine, wild pinball. With traditional shiny markings and distinct round feel.

△ My car has no nose. How's it smell? Like a car!

△ "My goodness!" she said. "Those tentacles are real gems!"

△ This is the *Crazy Taxi* level. Notice the meter on the bottom left isn't working. Typical.

PRO PINBALL: TRILOGY

If simulation is life, why not recreate the corner of a dank pub by recreating pinball? **DYLAN DAVIES** sups ale and flips balls

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MARCH 30**
PUBLISHER: **EMPIRE INTERACTIVE**
DEVELOPER: **EMPIRE INTERACTIVE**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Promises more realism than you'd expect a real pinball table to have
- Promises more detail than you'd expect a real pinball table to have
- Promises more plot structure than most real pinball tables have
- It doesn't need old ten pence pieces

THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS pinball player is undoubtedly Tommy from The Who's rock opera of the same name. Despite being blind, deaf and apparently dumb, he was a genius with the paddles (though this is considered a negative representation of the disabled community), whooped all-comers and even got groupies.

So that we may try and achieve his level of success, Empire Interactive have been kind enough to simulate the thrills and skills of the pinball table. That way, we can practice in private.

Originally a PC title created by pinball fanatics, *Pro Pinball: Trilogy* aims to be the most physically accurate paddle-and-ball game available – ever. As producer Nick Clarke puts it: "It's going to as real as it can get – it's no fudge job." At present the game is about 80 per cent finished, it just needs a bit of industry-standard 'tweaking'. The simulation is aiming to be so accurate it's hard to think of an aspect that isn't there – even details such as the ball hitting the glass on a fast ricochet have been included.

"The physics engine is definitely the most advanced there is," says Nick. "All the balls are modelled with a realistic three-dimensional spin system. And the graphics are photo-realistic and modelled to a high level of detail – we even let the player zoom into the table with sixteen-times magnification, just so they can see how crazy we've been".

Being of PC parentage, the game will contain a smorgasbord of customisable options to highlight its 'realness'. Not only does this involve cosmetic characteristics like table view and motion blur, but shockingly these options involve table-ageing characteristics, such as making the surface lose some of its purchase and affecting the ball's spin.

Don't be perturbed by the detail of this simulation – Empire intend this to be for all-comers and not just hardcore pinballers. "Anyone who likes pinball, or who is looking for a game they can just pick up and play for a few minutes will love it," says Nick. A broad audience intention indeed.

The game will feature three extraordinarily detailed tables. Each has been designed to be not just a flashy

△ The green thing up top becomes the time machine. HG Wells would find it a bit small.

△ If you go slightly up from the left flipper, is that chap Prince Naseem?

ricochet cabinet, but a plot-driven game in its own right. As Nick explains: "Players can either try to get points by playing basic modes and features, or can focus on advancing the story [which you can see unfold on the dot-matrix display] to score even bigger points."

First of the levels is Big Race USA, which is vaguely reminiscent of a Dreamcast taxi game – a crazy game whose name escapes us. You play a taxi-driver who must hit different and more obscure parts of the board as requested, to gain multi-figure bonuses. The second level is called Time Shock, where you must control your ball through four time zones and make a funky time machine. However, the most stylish-looking board so far is Fantastic Journey, a Jules Verne-inspired adventure *à la Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. Here you battle the antique-sounding Professor Steam and use the ball to collect different parts of machinery to make a vehicle. Once collected, you can make submarines, boats and other equipment by shooting them into the 'boiler'. No kidding, a stylised boat rises out of the board and you go on a video adventure on the dot-matrix video scoreboard!

Empire seem proud of their work on the game. "Everything you'll find on a real table is here," says Nick, "down to the diodes on the switches, and the operator's menu which gives you dozens of options to tweak the game to your taste." We suppose the biggest-selling point will be the price difference between three real pinball cabinets and a Dreamcast game.

We'll bring you a full review in the next issue of *ODM*.

OUTTRIGGER

Sega Japan enter the deathmatch arena of shooters. **ED LOMAS** is in the firing line

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **JULY**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **AM2**

△ A remarkable amount of detail is kept even when using the four-player split-screen mode.

YOU MIGHT THINK that Dreamcast has enough deathmatch-based first-person shooting games already, and with stuff like *Unreal Tournament* on the way (see preview in *ODM* #16), Sega's own arcade-style shooter *Outtrigger* may seem a little pointless. But there are a few signs that point to it being very much the opposite.

First and most obvious of these is the way it looks. These Dreamcast shots show just how much detail is packed into the arenas and characters, as well as how smart the weapon effects are. Even when four people are scrapping at once in the split-screen mode there's an enormous amount going on, and it already runs at a solid speed. With the multiplayer side of the game being the most important aspect, it's good to see that full online support is being planned on top of the split-screen options.

Outtrigger will also have masses of cool weapons to play around with, thanks to the main characters being members of Interforce, an international counter-terrorism squad. Machine-guns, flamethrowers, mines, grenades, rockets and photon torpedoes are just some of the toys you'll get to use as you attempt to blow everything up. In the one-player game, a full training mode will help you get used to the weapons before you tackle the bad guys in free-roaming deathmatch arenas.

With the practically-unavailable-in-the-UK arcade original using a joystick and trackball control combination, mouse and keyboard support for the Dreamcast is looking very likely. It already works well enough with the standard joypad, however, and has been successfully demonstrated to us with a third-party stick/trackball controller which should be available soon.

We'll have a detailed preview feature on *Outtrigger* when a more complete Dreamcast version is available.

△ Beautiful special effects and that unmistakable Sega arcade look. Yum!

△ Candy is saving for a sex change. As you do.

△ Goldorak's secret lair is accessed by the toilet.

△ Hey, it's Bud on the roof.

△ If you count six aliens on the sofa, bear in mind that one of them has two heads.

STUPID INVADERS

With a title like this there's only one man you can assign the job to. **STEVE OWEN** puts on his dunce's cap

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **XILAM**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Great cartoon-quality animation
- Professional voice-overs and scriptwriting
- Dreamcast's first point 'n' click adventure
- There's always something blowing up

YOU'VE SEEN *SPACE GOOFS*, haven't you? That wacky kids' space cartoon with the five *craaaazeee* aliens? No, neither have we. Which, according to Ubi Soft, is probably no bad thing.

Stupid Invaders is, apparently, loosely based on this cartoon. Or rather, Xilam, the animation house responsible has taken its own five characters and given producer Sebastien Hamon the job of giving them their own game.

"The cartoon is really for children, so there's no adult themes or bad language," claims Hamon. "Originally one of the characters, the little green guy, was sexually confused, and it was cut out of the cartoon. But we are able to keep these elements in the game. We're obviously aiming the game at adults, but it's not smutty or overly sexual."

The cartoon link is more than just Xilam farming out its own products. *Stupid Invaders* is the company's first videogame, although their art and animation work have been used extensively by other publishers.

"The best thing about our game is that we're new to this," suggests Hamon. "The two scriptwriters had never played a videogame until they started on *Stupid Invaders*, and the designer had never even touched a computer."

The benefit of this is that *Stupid Invaders* is going to be the nearest thing to original that you get in games these days. Sure, it's a point 'n' click adventure, and the PC has had those since God stopped shaving, but these kinds of adventures aren't about the programming. It's the script, the animation and puzzles that matter the most. *Stupid Invaders* looks likely to have a great script – the original French story has been tinkered with rather than translated by one of the writers of *Ren & Stimpy* and *Tiny Toons* – while the visuals have been storyboarded and meticulously drawn in 2D and 3D by a team of traditional animators. But even Hamon is careful about describing the game's puzzles in great detail.

"THE NEAREST YOU GET TO ORIGINAL IN GAMES THESE DAYS"

"I think that people who have played through LucasArts' adventures might find this a bit too short, and maybe too easy at times. But we aren't aiming for those people so much. They will enjoy the animation and set pieces, but less hardcore adventurers will appreciate that you're never having to solve obscure tasks, or walk from the end of one location to the extreme of the other."

Despite the game's apparent brevity, it will actually arrive on two GD-ROMs, squeezed like the contents of an incorrectly sized brassiere. Alongside over an hour of animated video there's also going to be some truly tremendous music, most of which has come straight from the cartoon, and the rest of which has been slipped in by the same musicians. Just like in the film and television industry (and unlike most games), the musicians were sent videos of the cut-scenes so that the music will fit the action perfectly. It's all in keeping with the professionalism of the voice acting, using the original cast, many of whom have also worked on *The Simpsons* and *Futurama*.

Translated directly from the PC version, which has just come out, Hamon is in awe of the Dreamcast version.

"There's just one guy working on it. Jayson Lee-Steere is a Dreamcast god. He helped to create many of the tools for Sega when it was first produced, and he's managed to keep up with our development. He's even cured some of the bugs from the PC version, while videos run at double the frame-rate."

So, yes, adventure games are traditionally limited to the PC, but using your controller won't be much harder than a mouse (which *Stupid Invaders* supports if you've got one). Certainly adventure games aren't to everyone's taste, but if you want to convince your console-shy partner that it's not all "macho bullshit", this, dare we say it, interactive cartoon could be the kind of thing to change their mind. We'll find out how it plays in our full review in a future issue of *ODM*.

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

Hey kids, do you like violence? **ED LOMAS** takes a look at the sickest game yet

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **JUNE**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **RAVEN**

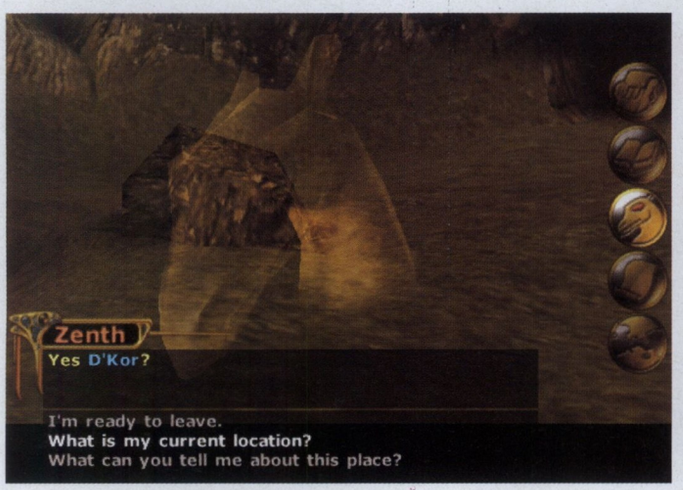
WITH *QUAKE III ARENA* (*ODM* #15, 9/10) showing how well high-speed first-person shooting games can be translated from PC to Dreamcast, titles such as *Solider Of Fortune* are made all the more exciting. Released on PC around a year ago, it got loads of attention mainly because of its incredible amount of violence. In fact, it's widely accepted to be the most sickeningly gory, twisted, and outright brutal game ever made. Shoot someone in the leg and they'll fall over, screaming. Then you can take a shotgun to their arm, blowing it clean off before putting a bullet in their head. And then you can go to work at the various body parts on the floor with a knife…

Not nice stuff – particularly not because of the dead-pan serious nature of the game and its settings. Instead of battling through futuristic bases or space ports, *Soldier Of Fortune* is based in realistic locations around places like Africa, New York, Iraq and Kosovo, all with loads of lifelike enemies to kill. The main character is John Mullins, a Vietnam vet and experienced mercenary who's trying to track down Dekker, a crazy terrorist who's got hold of some nuclear weapons and is planning to do bad things with them. Cue hundreds of cannon-fodder cronies just waiting to be mutilated.

Although the Dreamcast version still has a lot of work to be done on it, the first screenshots show that it's already coming along very nicely. We expect all of the PC version's features to be in the final Dreamcast game – including the extreme violence and, hopefully, the multiplayer deathmatch games. We should be able to bring you an in-depth preview feature soon.

△ **Thanks to *Soldier Of Fortune*'s violent content, you can blow this bearded freak to bits for wearing that Harley t-shirt.**

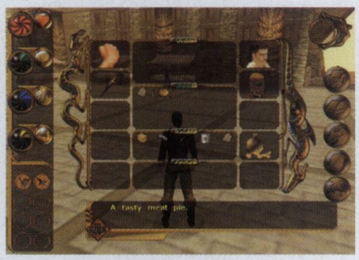
△ "This is your captain... we will shortly be arriving in Pern. Thank you for flying Dragon."



△ Lonely? Depressed? Confused? Your dragon is there to help, thanks to a telepathic link.

△ "Where to, guv?" Your dragon is there to help you get around as well as give you advice.

DRAGONRIDERS CHRONICLES OF PERN



△ The menu will help you keep track of weapons, skills, clothing and everything else you need.

One huge fantasy adventure with flying lizards? Coming right up, as **DAN TRENT** discovers

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **UBI STUDIOS**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Based on the popular book series
- Immersive world with lots of characters
- Variety of gameplay
- Rich environments

ALTHOUGH IT'S QUITE possible you've never heard of them, Anne McCaffery's books, on which *Dragonriders: Chronicles of Pern* is based, are huge sellers in the fantasy market. Bigger in the US than Europe, she has nonetheless sold well over 25 million books since the first was published in 1967. While the series is much loved, this game is set to be the first graphical representation of the world of Pern beyond the covers of the books. The developers, Ubi Studios (formerly Grolier Interactive), have consulted McCaffery at every step of the way to ensure the game world matches her original vision.

To find out more, we talked to Ashley Pannell, designer at Ubi Studios, who started by telling us about how the game will work. "We didn't think either the format of adventure or RPG on their own would be suitable," he says. "It's a very difficult licence to do because the books are based on politics and character rather than fighting and combat. That's what the fans like, so we thought a blend of the two was the best way to go."

In other words, not unlike *Shenmue* (*ODM* #14, 10/10), *Dragonriders* will pitch you headlong into an adventure through which you must piece together the story by talking to the other characters and slowly gain an understanding of what's going on. You'll be expected to fight from time to time too, but this isn't a major part of the story. It is one of the areas of the game that has a definite RPG influence though, as Ashley explains. "You'll see ratings for all your stats and

△ Locations are certainly varied, as this sub-mission involving a lost child demonstrates.

"*DRAGONRIDERS* DOESN'T FIT NEATLY INTO ANY ONE GENRE"

△ "You *slaaaag*!" Brush up on those fighting skills or you'll have to resort to girly slapping!

△ Expect the scenery to vary considerably between the different locations in the game.

△ The world of Pern is being lovingly created for the first time outside of the written word.

△ You'll be able to indulge in mini-games, such as target practice, to build up your skills.

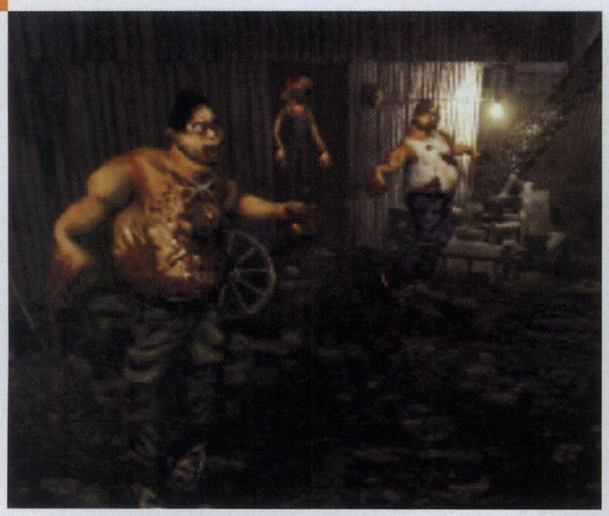
stuff," he says, "and they can all be upgraded during the game by doing any number of mini-games and puzzles along the way." These can involve anything from taking part in archery competitions to completing sub-missions such as rescuing a child from an underground labyrinth, or settling a dispute between characters.

Faithfulness to the McCaffery books is all very well for the fans who know the elaborate world she has created, but Ashley is keen to point out that knowledge of the books won't be compulsory to get the most out of the game. "It can only be a help but then again it is a story in its own right," he assures us. "The themes are pretty universal and the game has a library with information about the history and characters so you'll be able to learn all about Pern and what you're doing."

According the story, you have a telepathic link with your dragon, so he can be called upon to keep you in touch with what's going on, and transport you from one area of the game to the other. As Ashley puts it: "This is not a game about flying your dragon about and burning houses because that wouldn't be faithful to the licence. The dragons actually teleport as they do in the book, so the dragon is like a super-big taxi, in a way."

The game is currently in the final stages of development and the world of Pern looks like it will be very crisp and expansive. There'll be plenty of locations, some outside and some inside, so variety shouldn't be a problem, and there will be plenty of people to chat to and keep you entertained. In fact, there's around five hours of sequences lined up for the game featuring, among others, representations of the development team scanned in from digital photographs. Ashley himself has a part too. "I work in the kitchens back in the Weyr [the Dragonriders' village]," he jokes. "I almost save the day but die in the process so I get a cool death scene!"

While it doesn't fit neatly into any one genre, *Dragonriders* aims to be immersive and involving and could prove an interesting variation on the role-playing theme. Pern devotees should certainly find much to entertain them, but it remains to be seen whether it's going to grab the attention of the rest of us. Look out for a full review in *ODM* soon.



△ One of the occasional FMV scenes – chucking-out time at Weight Watchers.

△ The cast of *Ally McBeal* hang out in the woods behind your house.

△ Flying creatures with human skulls? Bet you can't name them, Bill Oddie!

EVIL DEAD: HAIL TO THE KING

A lonely cabin filled with grotesque freaks. **TOM GUISE** visits *Official Dreamcast Magazine*'s offices to play this game

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**
DEVELOPER: **HEAVY IRON**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

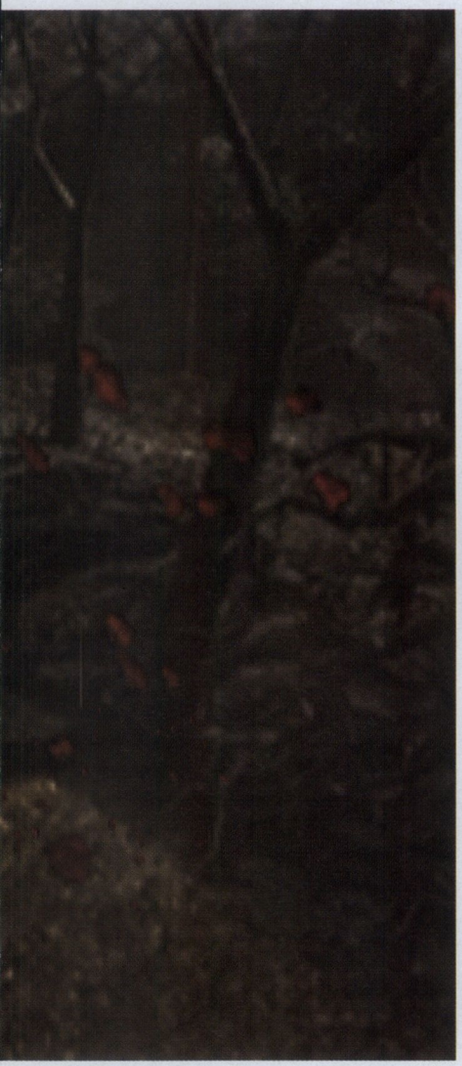
- A follow-up to the cult *Evil Dead* movies
- Voice work from actor Bruce Campbell
- *Resident Evil*-style gameplay
- You have a chainsaw instead of a hand!

IMAGINE IF YOU WILL, a book so vile, so despicable, that it was never meant for the world of the living. A book bound in human flesh and inked in blood. Its innards filled with descriptions of unspeakable acts and unholy deeds. Written in an archaic text that if read aloud would awaken something dark, something terrible. Something utterly evil. Anyway, enough about our rival publications, we're here to talk about the *Evil Dead* game. Let's go!

If you've never seen the three *Evil Dead* movies – which is highly probable, since they're low-budget horror flicks which until recently had been pretty much banned – they revolve around a book called the Necronomicon – or The Book of the Dead. It contains instructions on demon resurrection, and it just so happens a professor holed himself up in a woodland cabin to attempt translating these texts. Enter a group of hapless students including our hero, Ash. When they play the professor's tapes, incanting the book's passages, an unknown evil is awakened in the woods around the cabin.

What followed in the first two *Evil Dead* movies was something film censors deemed so satanically corrupting, it had to be banned for 20 years. In fact it was some of the most innovative movie horror ever seen. As demons take over each kid, the others are forced to hack their friends to

"THQ ARE BILLING THIS AS THE GENUINE FOURTH INSTALMENT OF *EVIL DEAD*"



△ Get that undead tramp kid off my chainsaw.

△ A tasteful period hill-billy shack.

△ Wouldn't get too near that fire Bruce – it looks like you're made of wax.

bits in an attempt to stay alive until dawn. There's eyeball-swallowing, beheading with a spade and self-amputation with a chainsaw. All followed by a trip to the Middle Ages in the third and final film, for a battle with a horde of skeletal demons. Perfect fodder for a videogame – so how come it's taken so long?

Truth is, it hasn't. Games like *Doom* and *Resident Evil* have long been homages to the *Evil Dead* series, but only now, with the films finally considered acceptable (and in our minds, hilarious and highly recommended), has the chance come to make a game. And with fans clamouring for another *Evil Dead* film, it's exciting for two reasons. It features the star of all three films, Bruce Campbell, as Ash (see page 32). And THQ are billing this as the genuine fourth instalment of *Evil Dead*. "It's not a rehash of the films but rather a continuation of *Evil Dead*," explains Scott Krager, executive producer at THQ. "The story is set eight years after the events in the last film and continues the saga of Ash and the Necronomicon."

So it kicks off with Ash returning to the cabin from the original movies, and accidentally reawakening the demons. What follows is the chance for gamers to explore accuarate recreations of the *Evil Dead* scenery, as Ash again attempts to find pages from the Necronomicon. "The game includes several cool elements seen in the films, but also adds to its existing mythos," says Scott. Moments that pay homage to the movies include Ash spearing a monster on his chainsaw before blowing its head off with his boomstick, the fancy name for his double-barrelled shotgun. All while uttering "Swallow this!"

ASH TALK

Which brings us to fan-favourite Campbell's contribution. "Bruce recorded the initial Ash voice-over," Scott explains, "but his biggest contribution was a long list of one-liners which were very cool." Aside from adding humour, these wisecracks can be effective, scaring off monsters, or riling them into a frenzy.

But Bruce's aren't the only one-liners. The *Evil Dead* monsters, known as Deadites, get their shuffle-on speaking parts too. "There's a wide variety of Deadites," continues Scott. "They move quickly and have personality. Like in the films, many Deadites will even verbally taunt you. It won't be just a string of encounters with slow-moving zombies." He also hints at what's to come. "The second half of the game is set in ancient Damascus. Ash travels back in time through a vortex to when the book was written. There he meets the author of the Necronomicon and uncovers secrets behind its origins, as he tries to stop his evil half from carrying out his mission."

As the pictures show, the game's look and action/puzzle-solving mix resembles a certain other *Evil* games series. "Sometimes it is difficult to use film conventions because gameplay is negatively affected," explains Scott. "The pre-rendered 2D backgrounds allowed us to create very detailed environments that not only recreate some of the *Evil Dead* settings, but also make for moody environments."

But is Scott worried about the pressures of appealing to fans when the game is released in April?

"Our mission was to make a great game that remained true to *Evil Dead* and provided fans with a worthwhile gaming experience. And the chance to assume the role of their square-jawed, shotgun-toting, chainsaw-armed hero, Ash… one-liners and all."

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re:views

LEVEL UP! ATA +3, DEF +5, POW +1. YOU GAINED NEW SPELL 'SPLENDO-BANG'. NOW YOU CAN USE 'SPECTRAL PULLOVER'

AFTER WAITING AGES FOR a decent role-playing game to turn up on Dreamcast – *Evolution* (*ODM* #3, 8/10) wasn't enough to keep anyone entertained for long – we've suddenly reached a point where fans are going to have a hard time keeping up with releases. Sonic Team's brilliant *Phantasy Star Online* (*ODM* #17, 9/10) is now on sale and taking up every last second of many people's spare time. This month we also see Game Arts' beautiful *Grandia II* coming out (see page 52), and next month we'll have Sega's epic *Skies Of Arcadia*, which is also looking fantastic.

The thing is, these are more than just 'good' role-playing games which will appeal to long-term fans. They're actually some of the smartest ever made, and each have touches of genius that make them stand out from the usual RPG crowd. Every Dreamcast gamer should do themselves a favour and become an RPG fan, even if it's only for long enough to appreciate these three very special games to the full.

I use the same excuse as half the world for not being particularly into role-playing games: "I just don't have the time to play them." The thing is, once you start playing a good RPG you find you can – and will – make the time. Tidying up and eating can wait, expensive nights out can quite happily be swapped for cheap nights in, and you can always catch up with your friends in a few weeks' time. At the moment, it's *Phantasy Star Online* that's making me a virtual recluse. And even when I do occasionally meet up with real people, they only end up smiling politely as I rant on about how my Mags are evolving, or how funny it was when one of my online team-mates used a certain spell on some monsters.

It's also a little worrying that I'm often happier to spend three hours in the company of a level 37 android from San Diego than an old friend from the end of the road. And I'm not a fan of RPGs, remember. I just don't have the time to play them.

Even a much more 'traditional' role-playing game, *Grandia II*, has had me absolutely transfixed recently. If you read the review starting over the page, you'll find that it does a lot of the same things as classic 16-bit RPGs, only in a beautifully thought-out – and stylishly executed – 128-bit way. An early look at next month's *Skies Of Arcadia* has convinced me that I'm going to have to free up even more time I "just don't have." It adds a *Pokémon*-style team collection side to the adventuring, as well as a fantastic storyline based around flying galleons and floating islands.

So, in true British tradition, we've waited ages for a good RPG, and then three spectacular ones have turned up practically at once. The weather outside's still not great, so we strongly recommend you stay indoors, get stuck right into all of them and by the time you're finished you should be just in time to catch the tail end of the summer.

And don't go saying you don't have the time. Make it!

Clunk, click – every trip.
Ed Lomas, Reviews Editor

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SONIC SHUFFLE (SEGA)	66

ODM RATINGS

A guide to *Official Dreamcast Magazine*'s stringent scoring system. If we say a game is no good, then it ain't worth buying. If it is, it is. Simple, really

10 PERFECT! A GAME WHICH EVERYONE *MUST* OWN. 9 AN ESSENTIAL BUY. GET IT, GET IT, GET IT! 8 EXCELLENT STUFF. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. 7 A GREAT GAME WITH A MINOR PROBLEM OR TWO. 6 GOOD BUT WITH AT LEAST ONE MAJOR SHORTCOMING. 5 STRICTLY AVERAGE, RUN-OF-THE-MILL STUFF. 4 BELOW AVERAGE. PLAY BEFORE YOU BUY! 3 OH DEAR, OH DEAR. THIS REALLY ISN'T VERY GOOD. 2 THE GAMING EQUIVALENT OF CARLISLE UTD. 1 NOT WORTH THE PLASTIC IT'S PRESSED ON!

GRANDIA II

How many cakes would you like for your tea? "Gran, dear – two." **CASPAR FIELD** gets fat on Game Arts' classy role-playing game

ON THE CD

IF IT WASN'T FOR EVIL, good would have a pretty meaningless existence. Not much point standing as a force of light and kindness if everyone's being a damn good chap, is there? Where, then, for the powers of the Church, libertarians, librarians, and all the other do-gooders of the world? Far more importantly (well, ish), role-playing game designers would be high and bloody dry if the great struggle between good and evil wasn't around to inspire them.

Which, in a rather vague sort of way, leads us to the subject in hand: Game Arts' new role-playing game for Dreamcast, *Grandia II*. Taking the core gameplay of its Saturn and PlayStation forebear (which hit the Saturn first, Sega fans), but casting aside its characters and plot, this sequel's plot takes the great struggle between dark and light as its central theme.

The background story goes something like this: way back when, the great, good Lord Granas fought an almighty battle with Mr Evil himself – Valmas. Granas struck down Valmas with his mighty Granasaber, scattering the dark lord's body to the seven winds. Somewhat clumsily, he sank his sword right through Valmas and into the world below, striking a deep canyon into it, subsequently named the Granacliffs by the world's inhabitants. ▷

△ Some of the language veers dangerously toward being cheesy...

△ ...but the beautiful visuals will take your mind off that.

△ Elena's alter-ego is this fiery minx, Millenia, who definitely has the hots for hero Ryudo.

▷ Valmas' spirit, however, wasn't completely vanquished, and the inhabitants of the 'Cursed Land' live in fear of his vengeful return, the fabled and cornily titled Day of Darkness. As with any plot-driven game, it's damn hard to explain how you play without giving away too much of the story, but doubtless you won't be surprised to learn that the coming of this day underpins pretty much the whole of *Grandia II*'s action.

You take the role of a young Geohound (kind of a mercenary, not-as-bad-as-he-seems, Han Solo type) called Ryudo, who is called to a church at the village of Carbo, deep in the forest. There he is tasked with guarding a Songtress of Granas, a fair and pure maiden named Elena, as she journeys through the woods to a secret ceremony at a mysterious tower.

Suffice to say, things don't quite go to plan, leaving you to guide Ryudo and his trusty (if slightly sarcastic) fowl Skye as they travel with Elena through the vast game world. And it *is* vast, with around 50 hours of gameplay contained on one shiny disc – although someone's bound to write in and say they whipped through it in five hours. Along the way, new members join your intrepid crew, increasing its battle strength, and bringing new storylines to the fore.

Since the earliest days of paper-based games such as the seminal Dungeons & Dragons, characters in role-playing games have been defined a set of statistics. These stats map out how smart, strong, agile, tough, and so on the player's character is, and *Grandia II* makes use of the same basic system. Through winning battles, gaining new weapons and armour, and by finding special items, Ryudo and the gang's powers are increased, until they're as hard as proverbial nails.

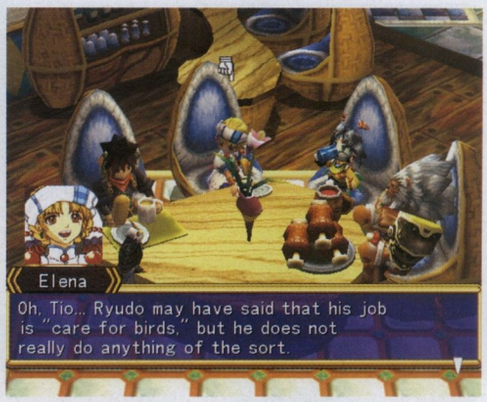
Fantasy role-playing games of this sort tend to live or die by a few key elements. One is the depth of the game's plot, one more is the quality of the dialogue between its characters, another is whether it has mind-blowing graphics, and a real biggy is how well its battles are fought. *Grandia II* largely succeeds on all these fronts, but in particular the way Game Arts have designed the fight sequences is superb.

MONSTER MASH

Grandia II eschews the deeply irritating random battle system so favoured by industry RPG behemoths Squaresoft (makers of the successful *Final Fantasy* series), wherein unseen enemies appear out of nowhere and start (unavoidable) fights. Instead, *Grandia II*'s main journey view shows exactly what monsters are around as you walk Ryudo's crew through the Cursed Land. This is then used to enhance the battle system – if you see an enemy ahead, you can wait for it to turn its back and rush in with a surprise attack. Equally, turn your back on a foe and it can spring an ambush on you.

Once a fight is picked, the screen blurs then reappears in a much closer angle, ready for combat to commence.

△ This is the 'Howl' spell, slicing down on a few baddies.



△ Some conversations are not exactly essential.

△ Mareg's 'Beast King Blast' boasts stunning graphics.

△ This 'Fiora' spell blocks your magic attacks.

"DESPITE IT BEING TURN-BASED, THE FIGHTS FEEL WONDERFULLY FLUID AND THRILLING"

SPEAK OUT

HIROYUKI KOYAMA, MAIN PROGRAMMER AT GAME ARTS IN JAPAN, ANSWERED A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT *GRANDIA II*

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
I think it is that we can have the virtual experiences in the game.

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?
***Phantasy Star Online*. Actually, I'm playing *American McGee's Alice* on the PC most right now...**

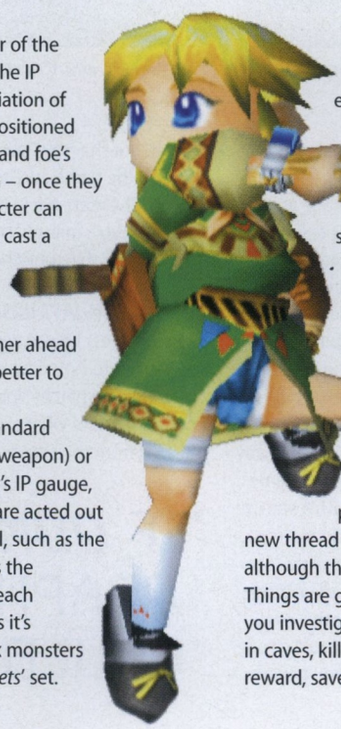
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HEADHUNTED?
No!

WHAT'S THE MOST VIOLENT GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED?
***Doom*. The whole purpose of this game is to kill and hurt the other players.**

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE SPELL IN *GRANDIA II*?
Millenia's 'Heel Crash'. It's a very uncommon spell.

In the bottom right-hand corner of the screen is a progress bar, called the IP gauge, with IP being an abbreviation of Initiative Point. Along this are positioned icons representing your party's and foe's relative readiness to take action – once they travel just over halfway, a character can choose to either attack, defend, cast a spell, or use an item. Depending on whether you're the ambusher or the ambushed, your character(s) are placed either ahead or behind on the IP gauge. It's better to be ahead, of course.

Some attacks, such as the standard 'combo' (strike with a standard weapon) or 'critical' (which resets an enemy's IP gauge, preventing them from action), are acted out swiftly. Conversely, a major spell, such as the industrial-scale barbecue that is the Hellburner, will take longer to reach fruition. Which is fair enough, as it's capable of wiping out five or six monsters quicker than a fire on the *Muppets*' set.



What's really impressive about the *Grandia II* combat system is that despite it being essentially turn-based, with each combatant selecting an attack as they climb the IP gauge, it manages to make the fights feel wonderfully fluid and thrilling. There's a real sense of learning the system – almost like a 'proper' fighting game – knowing when to drop which spell or special move into the mix, when to block, and when to counter, sending an enemy reeling.

LOTIONS AND POTIONS

As Ryudo, Elena and the others travel through the Cursed Land, they stop off in towns to rest and purchase new lotions, potions and weapons. Inevitably, there's also a new thread of the game's plot to tangle yourself in, too, although the knots are never very tricky to unravel. Things are going wrong for some/all of the inhabitants – you investigate by battling through lots of little monsters in caves, kill a big monster, get cool new stuff as a reward, save the inhabitants, and move on. ▷

△ Equipping Elena with a fire spell boost means even the basic Blast attack inflicts huge damage.

△ Ousted by his peers, little Aira's life isn't going well.

△ Certain weapons and spells have a limited range.

△ Boom, and indeed, boom. But not all the jokes are this bad.

△ In the Field view, it's usually made obvious what to do.

△ Conjuring a massive attack is pretty damn satisfying.

▷ What stops this process from becoming overly routine is the addictive nature of collecting experience, skill and magic points, which are used to upgrade your team's powers (see 'Playing With Power' opposite for more on this). Killing the bosses, which are represented as the scattered parts of Valmar's body, results in a new Skill Book and/or Mana Egg being made available. These allow new skills and spells to be brought to bear in combat. The neat bit, however, is that which powers are chosen – and which character can use them – is entirely up to you, meaning that no one will play exactly the same game.

Giving you a sense of control and freedom is vital in any role-playing game, because these are story-based games, and stories by their very nature are linear – with a start, a middle and an end. It's not like Ryudo can suddenly lop off Elena's head and go for a pint. The customisable power-ups in *Grandia II* are a fine antidote to alleviating any sense of treading a tightly defined plot path.

As far as the plot itself goes, certainly the whole good-versus-evil-thing is so old hat your mum wouldn't even wear it, but the way Game Arts have woven the theme through the game and its characters is reasonably well crafted. There are a few moments where you'll see events coming from a mile off, but even those aren't unwelcome. It's a good story – one that you're keen to see to the end.

TURNING UN-JAPANESE

The characters have survived the translation from Japanese into American remarkably well. And although there are only patchy voiceovers at certain key moments, enough sense of what each protagonist's attitude is can be gleaned from their speech boxes. Ryudo has some good one-liners, Skye teases him to the right extent, and Elena subtly blends from innocent village kid to seasoned traveller. Another character, Mareg, can be quite hard work to follow, speaking in a classic Tolkein-esque tongue. And while some conversations can drag, most hit a good pitch.

Visually, *Grandia II* has some stunning moments – most of them coming after major spells and special moves have been set in motion. There's a reassuringly solid appearance to the entire game, from its flashy explosive effects to the slightly clunky animation of the characters.

Of a matching standard to *Grandia II*'s graphics is its audio, which never intrudes on, only complements the

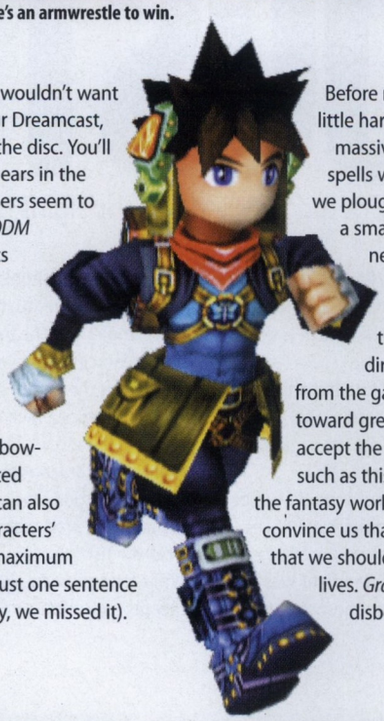
"IF *ODM* GAVE SEPARATE MARKS FOR GRAPHICS AND SOUND, *GRANDIA II* WOULD DESERVE A NINE FOR EACH"

△ Just when things were going well, Ryudo encountered a tricky double entendre.

△ In this (too) rare mini-game, there's an armwrestle to win.

action on screen. Although you wouldn't want to listen to them away from your Dreamcast, there are some classy tunes on the disc. You'll find them dancing around your ears in the way that only Japanese composers seem to know how to make happen. If *ODM* gave separate marks for graphics and sound, *Grandia II* would deserve a nine for each.

Flaws in Game Arts' gem can be seen if you hold it up to the harsh light of day, though. Part-way through playing *Grandia II*, we realised that the conical, rainbow-hued save points which are dotted around the adventure sections can also be used to 'recover' all your characters' health and magic levels to the maximum possible (this fact is detailed in just one sentence on page 36 of the manual. Oddly, we missed it).



Before realising this, the battles had seemed a little hard, but never unfair. Able then to scatter massive firebomb, earthquake and lightning spells with no fear of running short of energy, we ploughed through foes in little time. Maybe a small point, but it sapped a lot of the skill needed to win fights which previously had been a good challenge.

While the plot and visuals are good, there are points where the artistic direction of the two somehow loses you from the game. Some might argue that the trend toward greater realism in games makes it hard to accept the fantastical worlds of traditional RPGs such as this. However, it seems more likely that the fantasy world makers have to work a little harder to convince us that these alternate realities do exist, and that we should care about the characters and their lives. *Grandia II* will almost suspend your disbelief – but not quite.

PLAYING WITH POWER

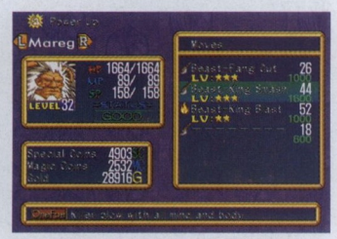
Options screens are not overly exciting to look at, but *Grandia II*'s equipment and power-up system is almost a game in its own right. And an enjoyable one, too, with a ton of weapons, magic, items and skills to carefully build across your team of adventurers.

Each character have statistics which define their skills and strengths, linked to an overall 'Level'. This Level is gradually increased as battles are won – the stronger the foe, the greater the experience points gained. Skill points and magic points are also awarded, which can then be 'spent' in the options screens to increase the powers of each character – their spell attacks, their special moves, and their sexual magnetism (okay, the latter's a fib, but it's a nice idea). Special moves, such as Ryudo's 'Tenseiken Slash', can be built to increasingly destructive levels, capable of wiping hundreds of hit points from a foe in a single swipe.

Further powers can be assigned to characters from Skill Books, which are rewarded after whupping the various bits of Valmar's body. Again, skill points are used to 'buy' skills in the Books, which are then assigned to a particular character. These can add up to 50 per cent to a chosen statistic, such as agility or mental power.

Spells become available once a Mana Egg has been won in combat, and this time it's magic points which are used to buy increasingly powerful spells. These can become ferociously destructive, annihilating hordes of monsters in a single blast. Which is cool.

△ Equip the characters with various items.



△ Special coins power-up special moves.

△ Maxed-out spells are immensely powerful.

△ Skills are used boost characters' powers.

VERDICT

SEDUCTIVE ADVENTURE VEERING BETWEEN MAGICAL AND MUNDANE

UPPERS
DC's only good, traditional RPG • Customisable power-up system • Some beautiful graphic details

DOWNERS
It's good versus evil. Again • Gameplay can become repetitive • The recover points are unnecessary

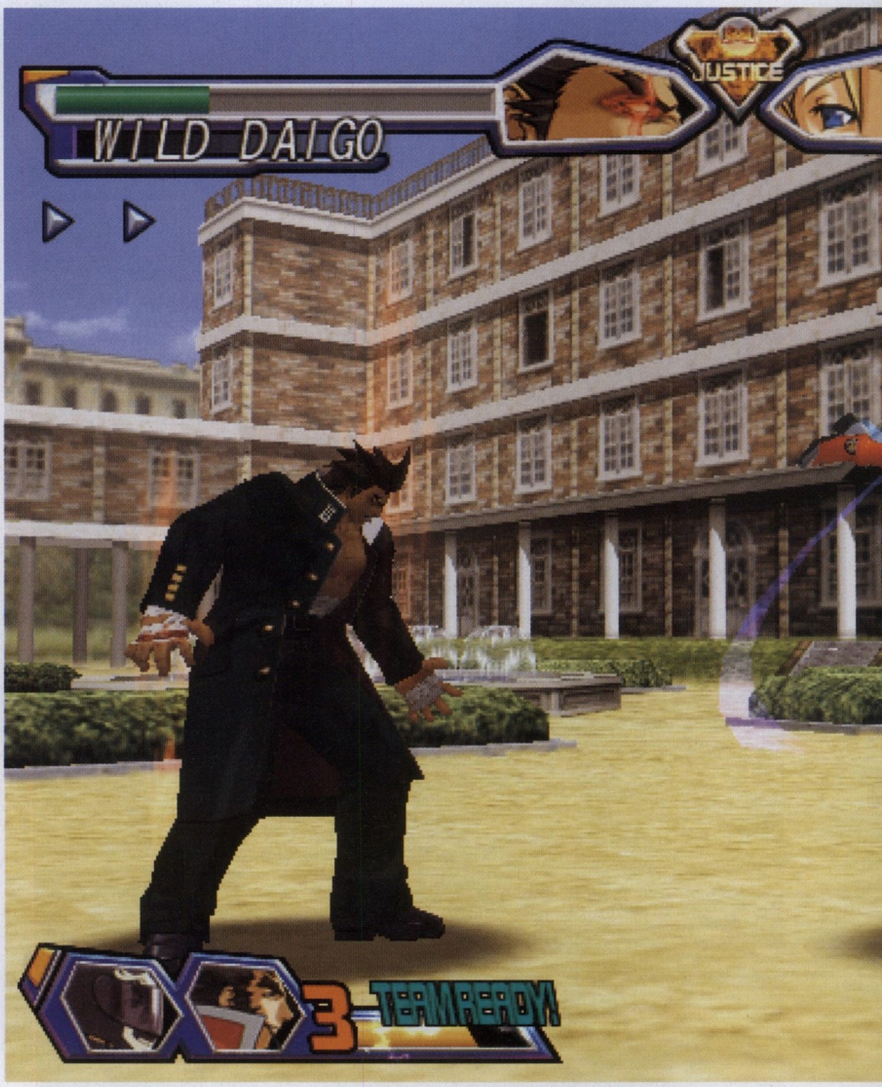
IN ONE HOUR We'd read half of the manual. And then chucked it
WEBSITE www.grandia2.com
CHECK OUT Tabletop RPGs – real man's games
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
8
VERY GOOD

PRICE: £39.99 • PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT • DEVELOPER: GAME ARTS

△ There are 12 'hidden' classmates that aren't playable in Arcade mode. Here's two of 'em.

△ Edge is so damn tough, he only takes his hands out of his pockets when he's stabbing someone. And to do his hair, presumably.



△ That get-up can't possibly be regulation school uniform. It's detention for you, young lady!

PROJECT JUSTICE

A beat 'em up with a sense of humour… though to **ANTHONY HOLDEN**, getting bullied by schoolgirls is no laughing matter

ON THE CD

IT IS KIND OF FITTING that Capcom's latest fisticuff-laden outing is based around brawling schoolkids, because this is one fighting game that has clearly been to class and learned all the right lessons. Many years of dutiful study at Beat 'Em Up High have obviously gone into producing a game so fluent in the language of pugilistic gameplay. There's nothing radically innovative here, just a shrewd combination of proven elements from the genre, put together with all the assurance you'd expect from our old chums at Capcom. But far from being a production line effort, *Project Justice* oozes style from every heavily bruised pore, with loads of charm and humour courtesy of a superb line-up of characters. The result is an effortlessly enjoyable fighting experience that's sure to put a smile on the face of even the most jaded beat 'em up aficionado.

Project Justice is the third title in a fighting franchise out to prove its mettle against the old guard of the genre, the first two in the series having (dis)appeared on PlayStation under the moniker *Rival Schools*. While graphically miserable, the earlier games had an undeniable charm, introducing a host of endearing animé-styled characters and a few nice twists on the traditional fighting formula. But the most inspired ingredient was the simple yet irresistible premise: the toughest students from six rival high schools slug it out for schoolyard supremacy (and eventually unite against a common enemy). Cooler yet, the teachers get in on the action too.

The Dreamcast follow-up takes the concept and finally does it the justice it deserves, with glorious cartoony graphics, brilliant character animations and all the other bells and whistles you'd expect from a Capcom brawler. The characters themselves are the most righteous selection of school toughguys, nerds, jocks, cuties and irate staff members ever to curl their fingers and call it a fist.

While lead character Batsu is something of a Ryu *Street Fighter* protégé, with his fireball and flaming uppercut, the

△ By 'animé-styled', what we *actually* mean is that there are lots of panties on display. Huh-huh-huh!

△ Ganging up may be against the code of the schoolyard, but it sure gets the job done quickly and efficiently.

△ Yeah, yeah, so you won. Big deal. But your hair's turned grey in high school, tough guy.

△ Finish your opponent off with a flourish. It's so much more infuriating and humiliating that way.

"OOZES STYLE FROM EVERY HEAVILY BRUISED PORE, WITH LOADS OF CHARM AND HUMOUR"

range of crazy special moves among the less conventional characters gives the game much of its charm. For humour value, there is no beating the swimming star, whose attacks include a synchronised swimming routine, butterfly stroke and rib-cracking CPR session. Then there's Ran, photographer for the school magazine, who likes to stun her challengers before taking a series of snaps of them in compromising poses. But despite the nicely off-beat sense of humour that shows through in some of these crazier moments – the chiropractic session and lesson in sensitive strike points are other favourites –

Project Justice is at heart a serious beat 'em up. The fighting is never obscured by the chaos of its own pyrotechnic excess, as too often occurs in Capcom offerings such as *Marvel Vs Capcom 2* (*ODM* #10, 7/10) and *Power Stone 2* (*ODM* #13, 7/10). What's more, the initial laugh factor is backed up by some seriously deep gameplay.

SCRAP, SCRAP, SCRAP, SCRAP!

Project Justice features a flawless fighting system, rendered in stunning 3D, but with all the functionality of an old-skool *Street Fighter*. The characters are locked on to always face each other, ensuring a practicable face-off, with a sidestep function added to take advantage of the third dimension. This function is not merely a tip of the hat to full 3D, it's an essential tactical element of the game. Dodging special attacks is a vital technique against some of the more relentless characters, and at close quarters a sidestep allows you to swing around behind your foe for an unexpected goosing. The camera swings and shifts dynamically throughout, accentuating the action while remaining essentially unobtrusive.

△ Only when the villain's point of view has been played are all the gaps in the story filled.

IT'S STORY TIME...

The game's narrative has had some real thought put into it. Each of the six rival schools can be played in Story mode, each viewing the events from their own perspectives, with slightly different outcomes for each. The story is played out through comic book frames in between bouts of fighting, and the events determine which fighters are to do battle in the next round. When each story is played through successfully, not only are extra characters unlocked, but the final chapter emerges – the villain's point of view. It's a fantastic concept, providing great replay incentive and giving more shape to the proceedings and fleshing out the characters. It's just a shame the story stinks.

"WHAT'S MORE, THE INITIAL LAUGH FACTOR IS BACKED UP BY SOME SERIOUSLY DEEP GAMEPLAY"

The familiar Capcom power gauge makes an appearance in the form of a 'guts' bar, but with more than the usual number of unique ways of using, or dropping, your guts. The 'team-up' function introduced in *Rival Schools* persists, allowing you to call upon your team-mates for a super joint attack, and a triple-team or 'party-up' feature *à la Marvel Vs Capcom 2* has also been added. Most of the signature attacks and super moves are performed with the hoary old quarter joystick rolls and double rolls that will be known to anyone who has played a Capcom fighting game in the past ten years. The uniformity of button-joystick combinations across every character makes the game highly accessible for the beat 'em up newbie, but is more than a little unadventurous. Cancels and counter-attacks add a degree of tactical depth, as does the extensive combo system, with its emphasis on huge, gravity-defying aerial attacks. But the deadliest combo dished out by *Project Justice* is the irresistible mix of absurdity and considered, balanced gameplay.

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

In fact, *Project Justice* is such an accomplished package that it's difficult to identify a flaw of any real substance. Of course it's an arcade beat 'em up, so the usual criticism could be made about a lack of depth, but the game actually copes with this problem better than most in the genre. The extensive range of modes includes a handy Training mode, League and Tournament modes, Versus and Arcade as well as the central Story mode. The Story mode is a very learned addition to the game, implemented around multiple story strands, each applying to one of the six school gangs. The idea itself really can't be faulted – the only problem being that the story is predictably weak and esoteric, and will probably only be comprehensible to those who have played the previous two games. With the inspired background of rival school gangs as a starting point, a simple and compelling story should have written itself. Instead, the script stumbles along with its secret societies, demonic transformations and other malarkey that's not only extremely uninteresting, but completely ignores its schoolyard foundations. There's also a bit of a hole where there should be a convincing boss character for us to focus our rage on. M. Bison, where are you when we need you?

AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION

Capcom offer additional reply value in the form of extra costumes, unlockable characters and mini-games. But it's the atmosphere and character of the game that will keep you coming back more so than this sort of gimmickry.

SPEND IT WISELY

There are several ways to unleash the power in your 'guts' gauge once it's powered up, and you must decide which is the most tactically sound at any given moment… or alternatively, whichever looks the coolest! Take your pick from Burning Vigour Attacks, Team-up, Party-up and Break-up attack techniques, and choose your moment well.

△ **Burning Vigour Attacks: these super special signature attacks cost one bar of the power gauge. They take a little time to pull off, and can be cancelled by a well-timed interruption, or even sidestepped.**

△ **Team-up: call one of your pals in with these attacks, which cost two bars of power. Easy to perform, powerful, and often hilarious, you have to be quite close to initiate these. Many are defensive, topping up your life or guts bar.**

△ **Party-up: the ultimate attack, calling the whole team into the fray for an awesome gang move. These cost all five tiers of the power gauge, and can be blocked or cancelled with a well-judged interruption, so time them carefully!**

△ **Break-up: pull off a team-up move just as an opponent does the same and you could initiate a five second break-it-up opportunity. Call in one of your pals to whack the enemy team member about to assist, thus cancelling the attack.**

△ **Pink pants now, to match the burns from those special attacks.**

△ **The sporty characters tend to have the funniest special attacks.**

△ **Baseball bats: the most abused piece of sports kit ever devised.**

△ **Remember kids, just 'cos you're whupping someone's ass doesn't mean you can't look good too. Just mind the hair!**

The only other minor concern is that the game suffers from a slightly lazy PAL conversion, in which no translation has been done on the many taunts and other pieces of spoken dialogue. So if you don't speak Japanese, tough, although Story mode and other vital bits are thankfully all in English. The flipside to this is that the speech is of a consistently high quality, and we can be grateful that it hasn't been replaced by a cack-handed translation job. Coupled with the distinctive animé stylings, the original dialogue provides an even greater sense of atmosphere for the dedicated Japanophile.

It's no news to anyone that Dreamcast is the greatest ever console for fighting games – almost to the detriment of its overall reputation – and in the light of an already comprehensive selection of triple-A beat 'em up software, games like this are simply spoiling us. But with its unique fighting dynamics, wonderful sense of humour and unbeatable charm, *Project Justice* can stand happily alongside the brilliant *Capcom Vs SNK* (*ODM* #15, 8/10) and the fantastic *Dead Or Alive 2* (*ODM* #11, 8/10) as a seriously polished, compulsively playable fighter. Straight 'A's all round.

△ **Got him right in the crotchet.**

△ **You'd never catch Ryu singing karaoke.**

△ **Two of the multiplayer-only characters.**

VERDICT

REJUVENATES THE GENRE WITH A FRESH, HUMOROUS APPROACH

UPPERS
Instantly likeable characters • Well-balanced and unique combat system • Fantastic special attacks

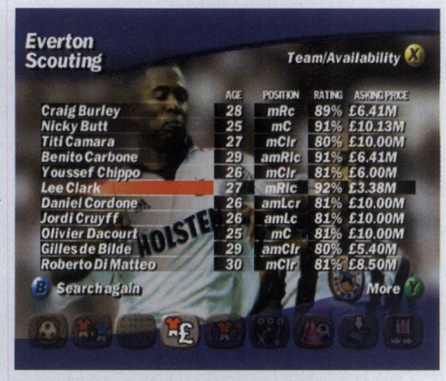
DOWNERS
Dismal plot in Story mode • Controls are a bit samey for each character • Unsatisfying bosses

IN ONE HOUR Achieved competence, but by no means mastery, with several characters
WEBSITE www.capcom.com
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz, full-screen 60Hz option, VGA compatible

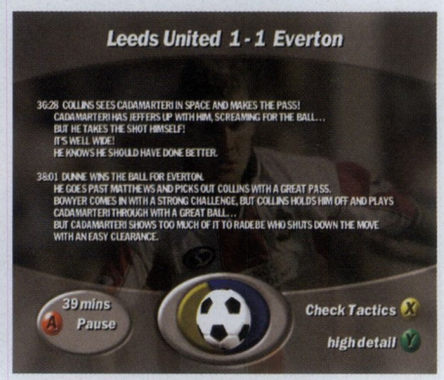
ODM RATING OUT OF 10
8
VERY GOOD

PRICE: **£39.99** • PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM** • DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**

△ Champ-ion-es, Champ-ion-es! One loss and 38 wins is quite an impressive season, no?



△ Finding players like Lee Clark, who has a very high rating and is cheap, is vital to your success.



△ Almost everything is described in great detail.

GIANT KILLERS

Tired of the endless running around in football simulations? **STEVE KEY** hangs his boots up for a stint in the dugout

ON THE CD

AS MORE AND MORE OF today's top players become media-trained gormless bores, the entertainment spotlight these days is on the managers. The quips, one-liners and vaguely controversial statements are more likely to leave the mouths of the sheepskin-wearing gaffers than the shaven-headed hotbed of intelligence that is David Beckham. Messrs Strachan, Gregory and Redknapp are the few remaining people in the game that are quick-witted enough to throw stupid questions back at interviewers and come up with quotes that stay with them to the grave. From the one-time King of Quotes Ron Atkinson came a prime example: "I never comment on refs, and I'm not going to break the habit for that prat." Marvellous. Now, we're assuming that most of you reading this are fairly intelligent but sadly not gracing the Premiership with your silky football skills – so now is your chance to prove to yourselves that you have the talents to make the grade in the world of football management.

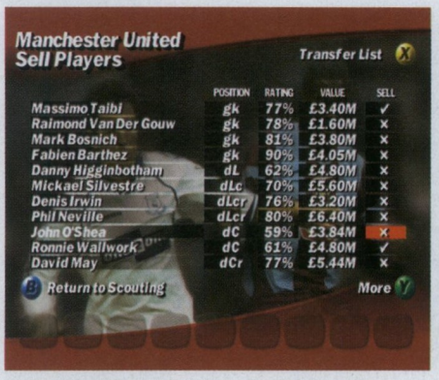
Giant Killers is something of a rarity for Dreamcast in that it's the only football management game available on the machine. It's strange, considering how popular this type of game has been on other formats. The basic aim is simple. Choose a team from the four main leagues in England or the non-league Conference and guide them to glory using a combination of tactical nous, shrewd dealings in the transfer market and the vital ingredient that all managers need now and again – luck.

If you've never played a football management game before, then this is the perfect way to ease yourself into the manager's hot seat. There are three skill settings you can choose at the beginning and it's of vital importance that you pick the right one if you want to get the most from *Giant Killers*. Selecting Easy will give you a guaranteed starting pool of £25 million, while the Medium setting gives all of the clubs in the league the same £25 million windfall, as well as you. This way you won't be so potent in the transfer market as all of the clubs can afford to snap up the best players.

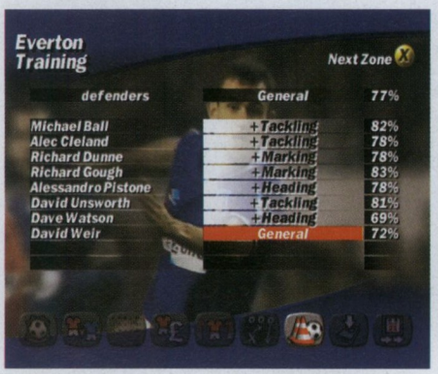
The Hard setting is certainly the most challenging – providing you don't plump for one of the top five clubs in the country – as you'll get a relevant amount of funds for the club you choose. Picking someone like Millwall or Brighton & Hove Albion will give you a little money, but the onus is on you to hunt out the real bargains once a player becomes a free agent. One other thing worth noting, is that you can't use the training option in Easy mode as it's all done for you, so you should only pick that if all you want is the most basic of experiences. Everyone else should start on the Medium setting, at least if they want any sort of fun from *Giant Killers*.

WHEELING AND DEALING

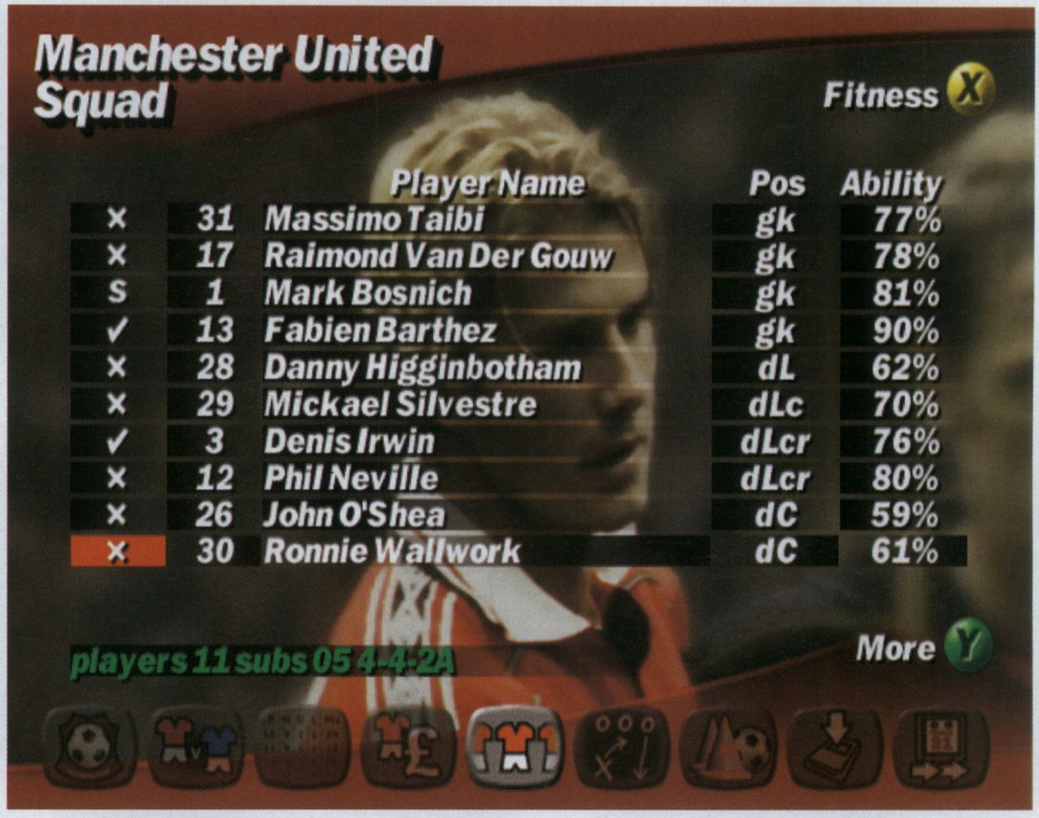
You begin a couple of weeks before the season starts, but with no friendly matches it really is straight in at the deep end. One of the best aspects of *Giant Killers* is the navigation system. Hitting either of the trigger buttons will move you along the icons at the bottom of the screen giving you access to the options. And that's it.



△ Would you have the bottle to off-load some of these well-known United stars?



△ Some of these mules need all the help they can get!



△ Taibi is still in the squad? Rubbish – he's going straight on the transfer list!

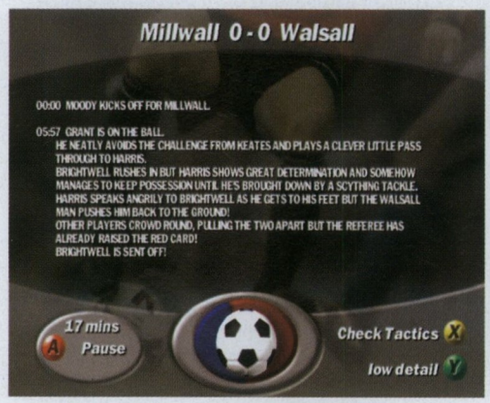
"YOU REALLY FEEL THE PINCH WHEN PLAYERS ARE INJURED"

There are on-screen prompts – once you're trying to set up a transfer, for example – but nothing that will confuse and bamboozle as much as you might expect.

The Diary section is where you'll be kept in touch with the bulk of the day-to-day running of the club. You'll get messages from the directors telling you how happy they are with what you're doing, when players' contracts are about to run out, or when they are about to sack you (pray you don't have to read the last one). You'll also get bulletins telling you when players from all clubs are injured, suspended, out of contract or on the transfer list, so it's worth reading most of the messages. More often than not, this is the place where you can snap up an unsettled player almost as soon as they emit a hint of dissent at their club. One excellent point is the way you can bid for them straight from the diary screen – it saves messing about searching for the specific player in the game's database. However, if you move on to the next day without reading one of your messages then you can't go back and check it, which can be frustrating at times.

The second place you should be paying a lot of attention to is the transfer market. The fact that the squads are not based on the most up-to-date teams is a big disappointment. Players are at the wrong clubs and some aren't even in here (the editor's disappointment when he realised that Brighton hotshot Bobby Zamora wasn't even in the game cannot be described in words). To counter this you'll probably end up wasting a large portion of your transfer funds trying to get your favourite team as it is now in real life! There also seems to be an incredible bias towards certain teams' players in terms of their ability. For example, a large bulk of the Tranmere and Bradford defenders have ratings of 80 per cent and over for their overall ability, whereas future England starlet Wes Brown only manages to just scrape over the 75 per cent mark. No disrespect to Clint Hill, but he's not exactly catching the eye of Sven Goran Eriksson in the same way Brown is.

That's not the end of it though – trying to prise these players away from Prenton Park and Valley Parade is even tougher. We were offering nearly three times the asking price and were prepared to double the wages of the players, but the teams weren't even considering the offers. Playing as Millwall in Division Two and staying in the top four all season (and eventually winning the championship) still wasn't enough to lure some first-division players down a league, which is very frustrating indeed. In the end you give up going for players that will strengthen your team and plumping for those ▷



△ Only six minutes in and already a red card! Off, off, off!

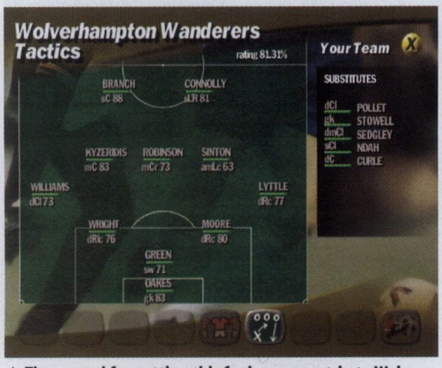
△ One-sided is an understatement – County had one shot on goal!

ROMANCE THE CUP

A quick look at how Millwall's cup run went under the command of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*...

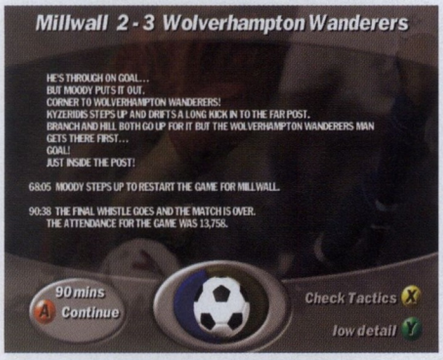
After the fantastic exploits of the so-called Minnows in the FA Cup this season, can the mighty Millwall go any way to recreating the success of Dagenham & Redbridge and Kingstonian? After squeezing through the first round, an easy draw against Halifax gave the Lions the possibility of landing a plum draw in the next round. Halifax were promptly dismissed with a comfortable 2-0 victory and the reward for Millwall's efforts? Wolves. Away. Great.

After a battling 0-0 draw at Molineux, the Wanderers were forced to the Den for a replay. Millwall stormed into a two-goal lead and the dreams looked set to live on. But in a stunning comeback, Wolves hit three goals in 15 minutes to snatch the game and knock the Lions out. Bugger.

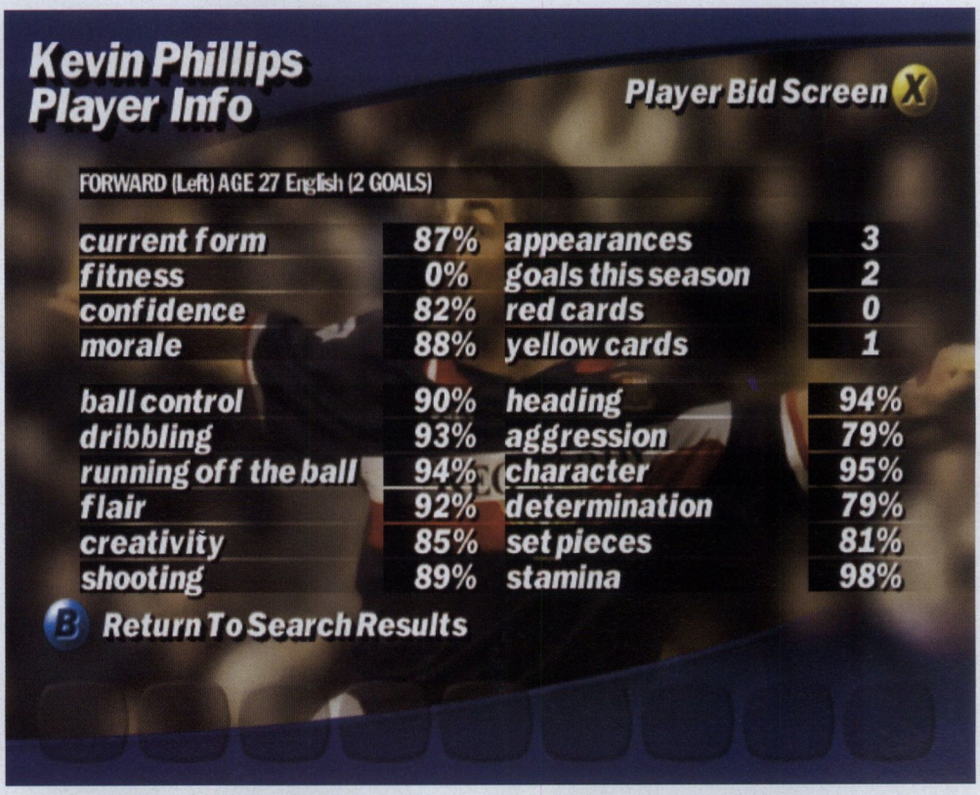


△ The reward for getting this far is an away trip to Wolves. Not as good as we were hoping...

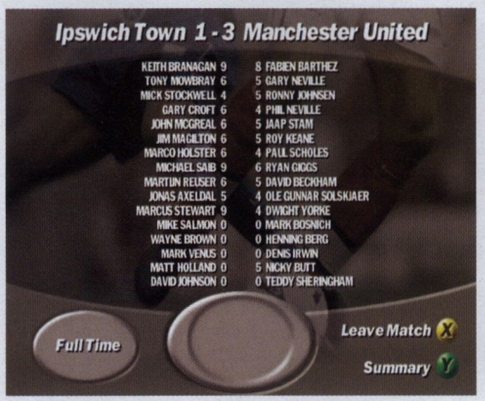
△ Again the Lions dominate. Not a single shot on target for the Molinuex boys. Feeble.



△ Bugger. The replay at the Den turned into a farce. 2-0 up, 3-2 down. Concentrate on the league, eh?



△ It's always a good idea to get some info on a player before you try and buy them.



△ United play rubbish and romp to victory. At least it's realistic.

△ Strange game at Portman Road. 6-3?

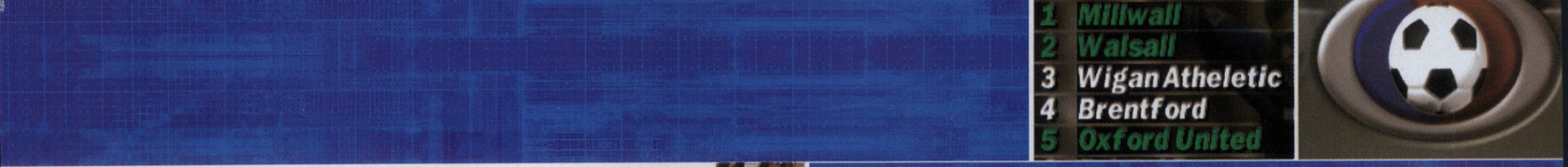
▷ who will warm the bench until they're needed. In some respects this is a good thing because it means you can't instantly bring David Beckham to Leyton Orient with the £25 million starting fund, but it doesn't make sense with certain other players.

Once you start buying a few players in, it's paramount that you stick some of the remaining people in your squad that have become surplus to requirements straight on to the transfer list. It doesn't matter if you flog them for a pathetic fee because your wage bill will take a nosedive and you'll start earning even more money.

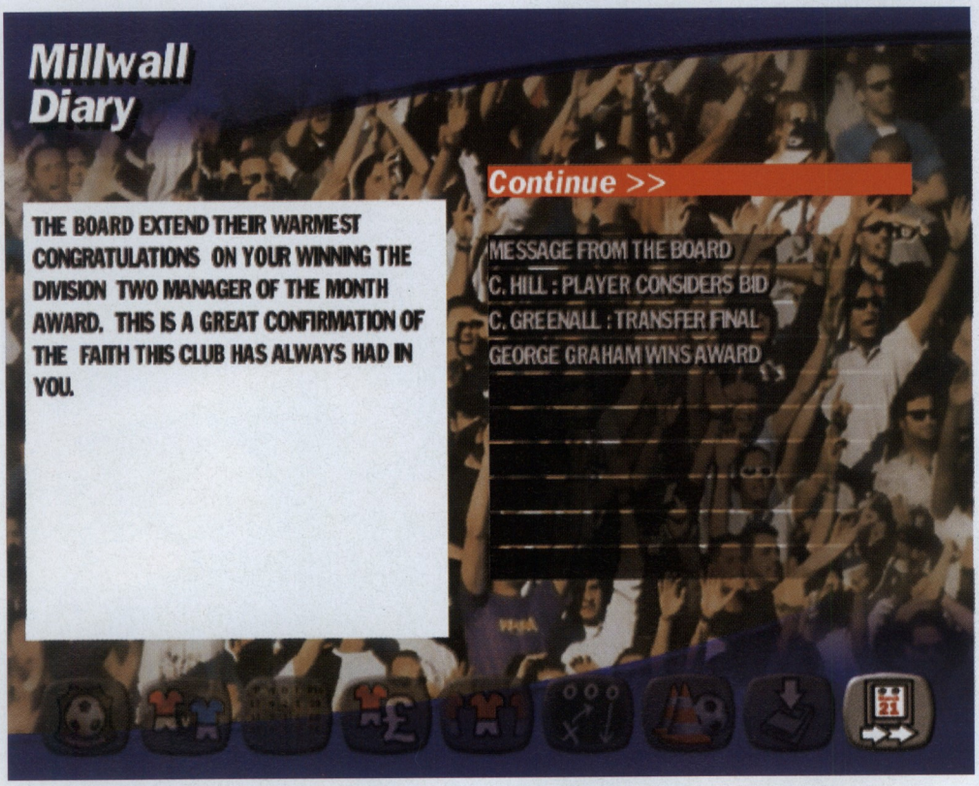
BECKS, YOU PLAY IN GOAL TODAY

With the squad in place, it's on to the tactics and this is another of the areas of *Giant Killers* that's incredibly simple to use. The most important thing to look at on the tactics screen is the team's 'overall ability' percentage above the pitch diagram. This goes up as you bring in better players and also when you switch to a formation that best suits the starting eleven. Likewise, it'll decrease when a player is suspended and you're forced to bring in one of the mules you have sitting on the bench. Quickly working out the best formation for you is easy as you can flick through the pre-set formations to see which one gets the best out of your team. It's also possible to customise the players' positions more accurately so you can attempt to mark the opposition's star men out of the game.

As the season progresses, you can begin pinpointing areas of the side that need strengthening. Then the feeling of satisfaction creeps in as your team start to gel, the haggling of wages with the transfer targets gets a little more tense, and you really start to feel the pinch when players are injured or suspended. It takes time, but *Giant Killers* is ultimately very satisfying once you've got a couple of months into the season. Once your new multi-million-pound striker hits his tenth goal in as many games, you get a feeling of part smugness and part relief that the money proved to be well spent.



"A GOOD, SOLID MANAGEMENT GAME" **GIANT KILLERS**



△ **Oh yeah, right. Like the board have ever had any faith in a muppet like you anyway!**

When it comes to watching the matches, you don't actually see any action – more like a written account of what's happening. Imagine the vidi-printer from *Grandstand* telling you about everything instead of just goals, and you're some way there. This can also be customised, as there are three levels of detail you can go into. The lowest is obviously the quickest as the only descriptions that appear involve goals, penalties, sendings-off and injuries – so it's not the most exciting of ways to get a feel for what's going on. The higher the detail, the more things are described to you, but the longer the games go on. It's nice to add some tension by turning up the detail for the big games, but normally you'll get a bit bored reading everything. When you're 1-0 up in the FA Cup with only stoppage time preventing you from pulling off a shock upset, the nervousness you get when a description of the opposition's last chance is being detailed on screen is excellent.

For a first Dreamcast football management game, *Giant Killers* does exceptionally well at providing those with little or no experience of this type of title with an instantly accessible and enjoyable experience. There are some excellent touches and a great deal of satisfaction is garnered from seeing your team climb their way up the table. It's still a way off from being a must-have purchase though, and while the simplicity is good to begin with, things can get repetitive as you find yourself going through a routine of the same things every game week. Little things like the squads not being current to this season's leagues are annoying and detract from the overall experience, too. But generally, it's a good, solid management game that sticks to what these games need to be about – managing a team. If you've any interest in football then you should definitely check this out one way or another – you might just like it.

"WITH NO FRIENDLY MATCHES, IT REALLY IS IN AT THE DEEP END"

VERDICT

EASY-TO-USE MANAGEMENT GAME THAT'S GOOD FUN TO PLAY

UPPERS
Simple navigation system • Creates feeling of tension well • Once you're into it, it's very addictive

DOWNERS
Can get repetitive • Doesn't have up-to-date squads • Buying players can be laborious

IN ONE HOUR We got to fourth in Division Two with Millwall after 15 games
WEBSITE www.on-line.co.uk
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

7

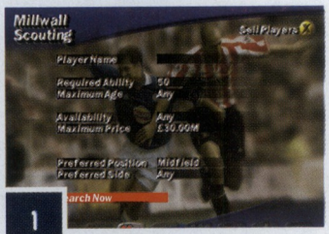
GOOD

PRICE: £39.99 • PUBLISHER: AAA GAMES • DEVELOPER: SMOKING GUN

WALKTHROUGH

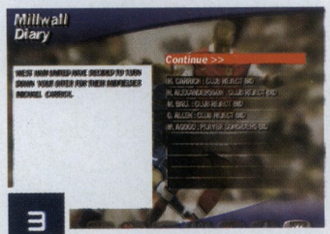
TRANSFERS

Trying to persuade the best players to drop down a couple of divisions is tough. It takes the right offer and also the right wages.

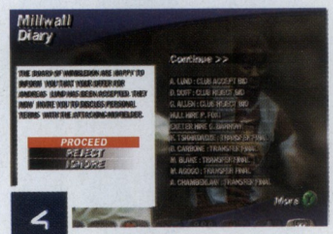


1 △ First specify the type of player you're after. Indicate a maximum fee or no players will be shown in the final results.

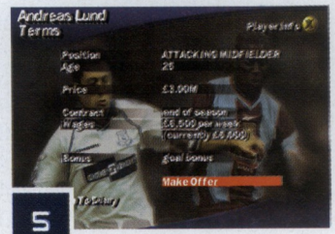
2 △ Check the player's value before submitting a bid, otherwise the club will dismiss you instantly.



3 △ Be prepared for untold knock-backs. Millwall couldn't entice Michael Ball to the club due to his stage commitments.



4 △ Success! Wimbledon have accepted an offer for Lund. Now all you have to do is make him an offer he can't refuse…



5 △ A raise of £1,500 a week (which is a lot more than it sounds in this game) and a goal bonus should be enough.

△ In a determined effort not to become roadkill, the mighty hedgehog takes to the air. Up, up and away! Is that fogging in the distance?

SONIC SHUFFLE

Sega's famously fast mascot trades his trainers for a pair of comfy slippers. **ALEX HUHTALA** puts his feet up

ON THE CD

"WHAT EVIL INVENTION SHOULD I use this time?" It's not up there with "Colonel Mustard in the study with the rope." Or "You've sunk my battleship!" And certainly not a patch on "Go directly to jail, do not pass Go, do not collect £200." But give it a couple of months, and "What evil invention should I use this time?" could become just as popular in people's homes as "Left hand, green."

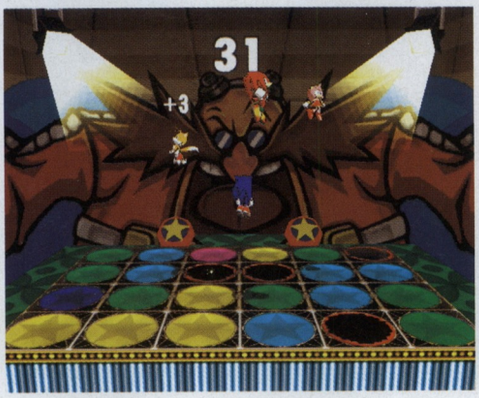
What are we talking about? *Sonic Shuffle*, Sega's attempt to bring all the fun of a board game to Dreamcast. It stars Sonic, of course, and his gang of friends – Knuckles, Tails and Amy Rose. Plus there's the villain formerly known as Dr Robotnik – here going by his original Japanese name Eggman – who gets to pick the evil inventions to hinder the progress of Sonic and his friends.

If you think the fusion of board and videogame is a disaster waiting to happen, then you're wrong. Nintendo have already invented and almost perfected the blend with the *Mario Party* series for Nintendo 64. Now Sega, not wanting to miss a good opportunity, think Sonic can do the same. They've even hired members of the *Mario Party* design team to help them do it.

Sonic Shuffle plays like most of the board games you've probably still got stored on top of a wardrobe gathering dust. But it also has plenty of tricks up its sleeve to make it worth playing on a console, rather than sitting around a table at Christmas with a tin of Quality Street.

Each player chooses a character to control, then moves around the adventure board with the aim of winning gems known as Precioustones. While doing this,

△ Eggman, resorting to Acme gags circa 1954, flies in.



△ Bounce! C'mon bounce! Eggman commands you.

△ Amy gives the boys a taste of her latest mix.

△ Tails comes a cropper to the crabs on the beach.

△ Sonic's greatest foe is reduced to this. Terrible.

△ Eggman has a cunning plan to make you lose more rings...

"PLAYS LIKE MOST OF THE BOARD GAMES ON TOP OF THE WARDROBE"

SPEAK OUT

MARK FISHER, EUROPEAN PRODUCT MANAGER AT SEGA, ANSWERS SOME QUICKIES ON *SONIC SHUFFLE* AND OTHER STUFF

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
It looks fab. Sega have again utilised the cell-shading technique as seen in *Jet Set Radio* and to good effect too.

WHAT DREAMCAST GAMES ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?
I'm spending far too much time playing *Phantasy Star Online* – it's just too good to put down!

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HEADHUNTED?
Yes... for the local Sunday League team.

WHAT'S THE MOST VIOLENT GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED?
I'd say it has to be *Ultimate Fighting Championship*. Full-on unarmed combat, up close and personal the way it should be!

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE REAL-LIFE BOARD GAME?
Monopoly stands head and shoulders above all other real-life board games. I mean, where else can you buy Mayfair for £400?

you also get to collect rings and compete in mini-events and games. There are five unique boards to play on, eight characters to choose from, plus 32 mini-games.

APPALLING STORY BIT

Why do you want to collect Precioustones? To help Lumina Flowlight and Maginaryworld, of course! The villain of the game, Void, has shattered the giant Precioustone into many pieces, and these are scattered within the five boards. In each board there are seven pieces of Precioustone to be gathered, as well as a number of special stones that are awarded at the end of each game for collecting the most rings, winning the most mini-games or completing a hidden quest. Collect all the pieces of Precioustone and you'll restore peace and harmony to Maginaryworld and return each board or level to its original state. Got that? Okay, moving swiftly along...

Being the caring souls that Sonic and friends are, they've naturally agreed to help Lumina. In return she acts as a guide through Maginaryworld, helping you to understand the mechanics of each board (each one has unique features). Lumina is also available for quick gameplay tutorials if you get tired of explaining to friends how to play.

The pieces of Precioustone appear one at a time on each level, causing a race between players to get there first. Once a Precioustone has been won, Lumina appears to reveal the location of the next piece. Although Sonic and his friends want to help Lumina restore harmony, for the benefit of gameplay they're competing against each other to collect the most Precioustones. Collecting the most Precioustones on each board in the Story mode opens up a new level.

Unlike most board games, *Sonic Shuffle* doesn't use dice to dictate the players' movement. Instead, a deck of cards is used which manages to add a simple level of strategy to proceedings. Each character is dealt six cards at a time and these can have a face value of one to six, be a Special card, or an Eggman card. As you've probably guessed, selecting a card with a face value of four, for example, allows your character to move four spaces on the board.

The Special card can be used in three different ways. The first is to spin the card. Like a slot machine, this gives you a chance to select any value between one and seven, providing you stop the spinning card in the correct place. The two other ways of using the Special card allow you to steal cards, or to swap your hand of cards with another player.

The Eggman card is one to avoid. It's a Joker in the pack that can cause whoever plays it all kinds of problems. Select it and Eggman turns up and says his now famous "What evil invention should I use this time?" line. A roulette wheel then appears on the screen and you're forced to stop it, choosing the method of your destruction. However his deviousness is not up to his usual standard, and the best it seems he can conjure ▷

▷ up to thwart you is stealing coins or swapping you with another player on the board.

The clever part of the card system is that you can choose to play a visible card from your hand, or gamble by playing a card from another character's hand. The system works well as all cards are dealt face down. When playing against computer characters, only your hand appears on screen. When playing with a group of friends, everyone's hand is only visible on a VM inserted in their controller. That's if you've all got VMs. If not, they're displayed on screen for all to see, detracting from the fun a bit.

△ Tails and Amy in skipping-game shocker!

△ Void is the villain here, tempting the kiddies. Tut tut.

△ Would you buy a ticket from this man?

△ Shadow Tag – this is one of the better mini-games.

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT

As players get closer to each Precioustone, they'll be more inclined to use the specific card required to reach the goal. But if the player doesn't have that card in their hand, then they face the dilemma of trying to pick the card they need from those dealt face down to rival players. This is where the Eggman card comes to the fore, as if it's not in your hand, someone else must have it and you really don't want to be the player who picks it up.

There are plenty of other important spaces on the adventure board apart from the Precioustone locations. The most common of these are ring spaces. These are either red or blue. Land on a blue symbol and you win rings, land on red and you lose them. Land on ring spaces on subsequent turns and you earn a combo multiplier, resulting in many rings being won or lost.

Other specific parts of the board are shop spaces, where magical gems can be bought in exchange for rings. Gems are useful for gaining an advantage as they have a variety of uses depending on what type you have. They can vary from allowing you to select more than one card at a time, and moving at the combined face value of the cards, to teleporting all other players to the same space as you. There are a large variety of gems on offer, and discovering the best time to use each of them will take some time.

There are also battle spaces. Here you get a chance to win a gem, but only if you defeat the monster that inhabits that space. To battle monsters you use the cards again. When a monster appears, a card above their head shows their strength. Either match that strength or play a higher value card to defeat the creature. There's one danger here though – when you play a card it scrolls through different face values like a slot machine, starting at one and going up to the value of the card. Timing is important. Select a card that has a lower value than the monster's and you'll lose rings.

MINI HA-HA

The real meat and potatoes of *Sonic Shuffle* though are the mini-games. These are activated whenever a character lands on an event space, indicated by an exclamation mark on the adventure board. Selected randomly by the computer and split between mini-games and mini-events, events are story-like sequences where one character has a chance to win rings or gems by answering a simple question. If you give the wrong answer, you could lose rings, gems or miss a turn.

All characters play mini-games at the same time. There are 32 different games in total, each with different rules and controls that, despite their simplicity, can take a while to learn what you're meant to be doing. Sometimes you don't even have time to figure things out, as you can be eliminated seconds after they've started.

You may also be forced to team up with another player during a mini-game. In some games you'll be playing on your own against three other players, others might be two-versus-two or even all-against-all. A typical one-versus-three event is Eggbot's Attack, where one player sits atop one of Eggman's inventions – a pair of giant mechanical legs – and must chase after the other characters trying to stamp on them before the timer reaches zero.

"THE MINI-GAMES CAUSE THE MOST PROBLEMS WITH *SONIC SHUFFLE*. THEY'RE TOO SIMILAR AND THERE'S NOT ENOUGH OF THEM"

A two-versus-two even game requires teamwork. In Shoddy Work, which is a bit like *Tetris*, one member of the team stands atop scaffolding, while the second player stands below with a palette and the outline of a shape that must be filled with the assortment of blocks that are being dropped from above. The team closest to the original shape when Eggman comes to judge both efforts win.

There's plenty of variety in the mini-games on offer, and as you'd expect some are better than others. Zero G Snapshot is one of the best ideas present, with each character trying to get in the centre of a photograph that's about to be taken – the fact that they're in zero gravity makes things kind of tricky. Number Jump however is an extension of the number-jump platforms in *Sonic Adventure* (*ODM* #0, 9/10). The invention worked fine in *Sonic Adventure*, but it makes a weak mini-game, and is one that's far too quick to complete.

It's these mini-games that cause the most problems with *Sonic Shuffle*. There just don't seem to be enough of them. Far too many are similar, and none come close to matching some of the best mini-games witnessed in *Mario Party*. Unlike *Mario Party* they're also played only when a character lands on an event square, not played at the end of each turn as in Nintendo's game.

The other problem with mini-games is purely technical – they can take an age to load. Then, once they've been played, it takes another long pause to return to the board. The card movement-system and adventure board manages to create more tension and excitement than the mini-games offer. Ideally, it should be a perfect balance of both, but after a few hours play you'll find the mini-games get in the way of the board

△ **Hmmm, this looks familiar! Tails gets caught up in a *Shenmue*-like moment.**

△ **Try and collect rings inside the centre of a hurricane.**

△ ***The Wrong Trousers*, Sonic-style.**

part, and that the board part actually becomes less impressive the further you get in the Story mode.

Sure, *Sonic Shuffle* looks great. Using a similar cell-shading technique to that seen in *Jet Set Radio* (*ODM* #14, 8/10), the characters are rendered as flat, cartoon-like versions of their famous selves. But long-time Sonic fans would be well advised to stay away from here like the Plague.

Not wanting to sound like the Comic Book Guy from *The Simpsons*, but… Dr Robotnik/Eggman would never be reduced to such minor meddling as seen in *Sonic Shuffle*. Surely he has a grander scheme to thwart his nemesis than to shake a can of fizzy drink, place it in a dispensing machine and force Sonic and friends to choose a can each, while he hides in nearby bushes and watches. Oh, he just did. Our mistake! Actually, come to think of it, that is kind of funny.

There will be Sonic fans that will get this expecting *Sonic Adventure*-like thrills, and they will be severely disappointed. Providing you know what you're getting there is some fun to be had, but regardless of Sonic's involvement, *Shuffle* needs a larger variety and better pedigree of events to really appeal to all.

VERDICT

PARTY GAME THAT MIGHT HAVE YOU AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS

UPPERS
It's Sonic, Sega's mascot! • Excellent cartoon-style graphics • Good fun with friends

DOWNERS
What happened to the planned online play? • Mini-games are similar and often dull • Long loading times

IN ONE HOUR Computer opponents wouldn't stop stealing our cards!
WEBSITE www.dreamcast-europe.com
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 50Hz, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
6
PRETTY GOOD

PRICE: **£39.99** • PUBLISHER: **SEGA** • DEVELOPER: **SEGA**

WALKTHROUGH

BEFORE YOU PLAY

The worst part about playing any new board game is reading through the rules – and *Sonic Shuffle* isn't any different.

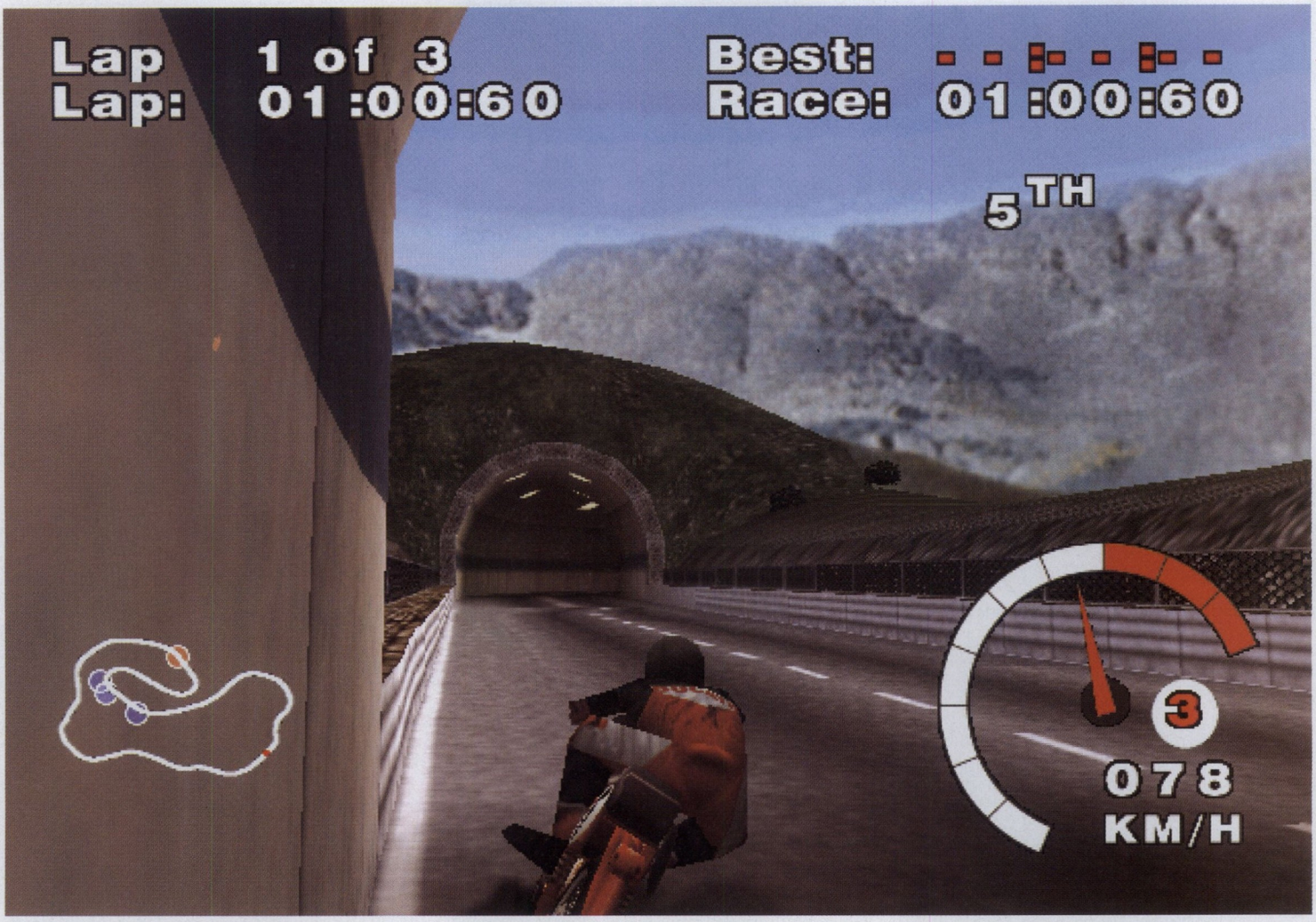
1
△ The aim on each board is to collect the most Precioustones, either by travelling to spaces or won at the end of play.

2
△ Move about the board by playing cards. Select one card to be played each turn. Only you can see your hand.

3
△ Win rings by landing on blue ring spaces. Lose them by landing on red. Rings allow you to buy magic gems too.

4
△ Landing on an event space – displayed as an exclamation mark – can trigger either a mini-event or a mini-game.

5
△ If you win the most mini-games you get a Precioustone, once the board is completed.



△ Oh my goodness... Look! Tunnels and mountains and everything! Whatever will they think of next?

DUCATI WORLD

Think once, think twice, think bike! **STEVE HILL** buffs his helmet and squeezes into his tight leather trousers

IT'S FAIR TO SAY that the Dreamcast has more driving games than anyone could reasonably be expected to play during a normal lifetime. All whims are catered for, encompassing every variation of four-wheeled fun, from street racing to off-road buggies to Formula 1. It's a different story when it comes to two wheels though, and bike fans, while not exactly storming the gates of Sega with pitchforks, have a right to feel mildly aggrieved at the paltry fare on offer.

It's an open road for *Ducati World* then, arriving with a minimum of publicity and a largely superfluous licence. Ducati might be a household name for bearded bikers with one too many Meatloaf albums (ie: one), but to the average slack-jawed gamer it's probably fairly meaningless. The Italian firm's heritage isn't in doubt though, and they have been manufacturing motorcycles for more than half a century, the entire range of which appear here – a total of more than 40 road stallions. They are presumably all accurately modelled, and certainly look the part, although the only noticeable effect on the game is that the older bikes are slower than the newer ones. This is taken to ludicrous extremes, and the first of the 1950s models is farcical, trundling along at barely walking speed, making races more a battle with boredom than with the complexities of riding a pretend motorbike.

Things soon pick up though, as the game takes you on an interactive trawl through five decades of motorcycling. Success on the crap bikes soon reaps its rewards, with a slew of more modern models becoming available, along with some eight unique tracks. The Quick Race mode is an ideal starting point, and a leisurely afternoon can be spent winning races in both Vintage and Monster classes, which then opens up further bikes and tracks. Leisurely it may be on Normal difficulty, but crank it up to Hard and the difference is marked.

IT'S MY LIFE

It's at around this stage that you'll be tempted to try the Ducati Life section, a career mode which sees you set out with a pocket full of balls and wallet full of cash, intent on

"SUCCESS IS GENERALLY BASED ON RIDING FAST WITHOUT FALLING OFF" **DUCATI WORLD**

△ Remember to lean the right way, or you'll look stupid.

△ Carnage ensues as an opponent embeds himself into the wall.

△ Spectacular crashes are commonplace, but this is extra special.

△ One licence discipline: ride in a straight line and stop here.

△ A monster bike, apparently, of which there are loads.

procuring even more through the medium of motorcycle racing. Ten grand doesn't go far these days, so you'll have to start by flicking through the classifieds for an old banger to begin with. Win some money and you can soon start upgrading it, eventually building up a stable of vintage and modern bikes, and selecting races at your leisure, bedecked in the helmet and leathers of your choosing. You can accept head-to-head challenges from other riders, providing you can put the money up, or alternatively you can gamble one of your bikes on the outcome. Certain races demand specific licences as an entry requirement, and these are only obtained after completing some mildly stringent tests. This is a vaguely entertaining diversion in itself, and one that will be familiar to fans of *Gran Turismo* on PlayStation, a game that *Ducati World* is essentially attempting to be the two-wheeled version of.

However, unlike *Gran Turismo*, the graphics of *Ducati World* are a disgrace. The game is marred by washed-out colours and chronic pop-up. How this has been allowed to happen on a next-generation console is a mystery, and one that smacks of provincial sloppiness. Whether you let it ruin your enjoyment of the game depends on how important you consider these things, but suffice to say that it does nothing to enhance the experience.

CAMERA MAN

Which is a shame, as the game is actually phenomenally fast, once you've progressed to the half-decent bikes. If anything, it's almost too fast, with the scenery becoming a blur, and staying on the track a challenge in itself. Of the three camera options, the behind-the-bike view is by far the most manageable, even if it does look as though the bike is being held on a stick in front of a giant screen. Inevitably, most players will default to this view, which dynamically is comparable to driving a two-wheeled car.

The handlebar view offers a far more exhilarating experience, as the bike leans violently into the corners, causing you to lurch all over your futon like a simpleton, embarrassing if alone, humiliating in company. At least the appearance of the handlebars and dials does actually remind you that you're supposed to be astride a bike. In the first-person view, the pace of the game, allied to the exaggerated cornering, could easily convince a casual observer that you were playing some kind of futuristic racer, the effect consolidated by an entirely inappropriate (and mainly leaden) techno soundtrack. As for the races themselves, close contests are rare, and success is generally based on a cunning strategy of riding fast without falling off. Opponents are fairly scarce, with usually no more than five to a race, and you often only see them when they're scraping themselves off the tarmac.

Ducati World is a flawed affair then, with a decent structure sullied by the actual riding mechanics. For all the intended authenticity, seeing your bike mount a wall and continue almost horizontally does tend to raise questions. There is some value in the career mode, but ultimately it's let down by ropy handling and dodgy graphics. Anyway, motorbikes are for idiots. Get a car.

"CHRONIC POP-UP DOES NOTHING TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE"

△ Buy and sell bikes in the career mode.

△ The smell of leather on tar isn't included.

△ An old bike. Actual speed shown.

VERDICT

RIDDLED WITH PROVINCIAL SLOPPINESS

UPPERS
Phenomenally fast action • Well-structured career mode • Lots of bikes

DOWNERS
Choppy graphics • Rank music • No headlights • Twitchy handling

IN ONE HOUR Comfortably winning races on Normal level
WEBSITE www.acclaim.com/games/ducatiworld
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz, full-screen 60Hz option

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
4
BELOW AVERAGE

PRICE: £39.99 • PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM • DEVELOPER: ATD

"FUN FOR AN ENTIRE MINUTE OR TWO" CHAMPIONSHIP SURFER

△ Had the developers put a little more effort into *Championship Surfer* it could have been fun. But they didn't. So it isn't.

△ Is that a ramp or a wave he's hit?

△ Mine? What mine? Oh, that one.

CHAMPIONSHIP SURFER

Experienced (web) surfer **CASPAR FIELD** wobbles unnervingly out into digital blue stuff

AFTER THE NUMBING AWFULNESS of *Surf Rocket Racers* (*ODM* #17, 2/10), another wave of effluent-bearing videogame wateriness has crashed down upon our Dreamcasts. The Beach Boys may have harmonised, "Catch a wave and you'll be sitting on top of the world," but even they'd be off-key following a stint playing Krome Entertainment's new surfing game, *Championship Surfer*.

You'll probably have guessed from its name that in *Championship Surfer* you control a gnarly surfer dude (or dudette), and take part in gnarly surfer dude competitions. Fair enough, it's not a bad concept – *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2* (*ODM* #15, 9/10) has proven how brilliant extreme sports videogames can be – but oh how wide the gulf is between Neversoft's skating supremo and this waterlogged mess.

Out of the initial game options (Championship, Arcade, King of the Waves, Rumble, Trick Attack and Free Surf), the developers have cunningly made all but Free Surf either wilfully frustrating or impossible to play. Take Championship mode – you might think that this would be a more serious counterpart to the Arcade option. But just like the Arcade mode you have to contend with the usual, day-to-day surfer problems. Like high-explosive mines right in the path of the wave you must catch.

In all the modes you start with your chosen dude floating around on his board in the big blue stuff, with a wave fast approaching from up the screen. (Make sure you've picked the right camera, though, as most conspire to hide minor items like the waves and mines from you.) Pushing Up on the d-pad sets your dude paddling, then press A when the wave arrives and he'll stand up. Now, if you're lucky, he'll stay on the board long enough for one of around, er, three or four tricks to be performed.

Pick Free Surf mode and the mines are removed, giving you the space to experiment and discover that – annoyingly – the game could have been reasonably good fun, with a little more effort from its developers.

Once 'mastered', *Championship Surfer* can be fun for an entire minute or two at a time. Shortly thereafter it dawns on you that this game is a total waste of time, money, plastic, electricity and paper – including the paper you're reading this on now. Sorry.

"A TOTAL WASTE OF TIME, MONEY, PLASTIC, ELECTRICITY AND PAPER"

VERDICT

TONY HAWK'S THE ONE WITH THE STUNTS. STAY OUT OF THE WATER!

UPPERS
The Free Surf mode is mildly diverting • Some of the water looks okay

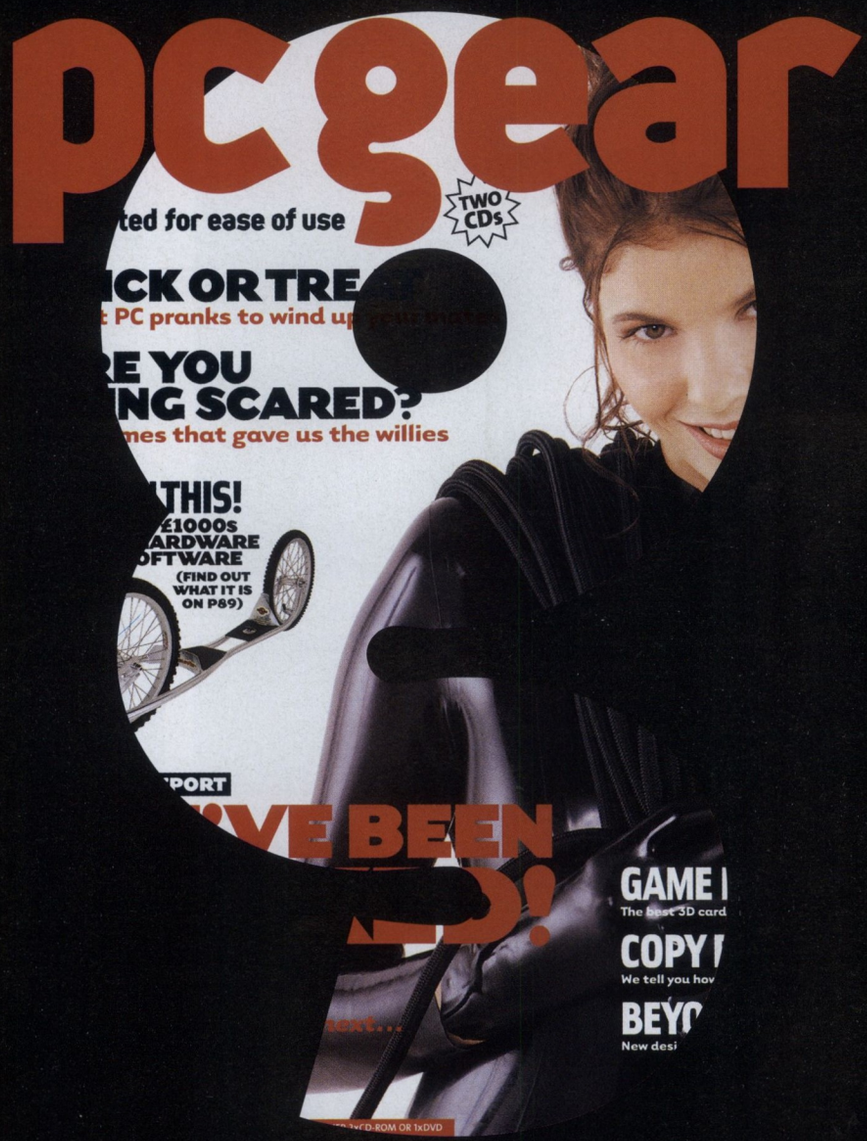
DOWNERS
Is real surfing this boring? • Ridiculous obstacles in water • Limited range of tricks

IN ONE HOUR We'd considered drowning ourselves in the bath
WEBSITE www.kromestudios.com
CHECK OUT All the things you could spend £40 on that aren't this
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
2
RUBBISH

PRICE: £39.99 • PUBLISHER: MATTEL • DEVELOPER: KROME STUDIOS

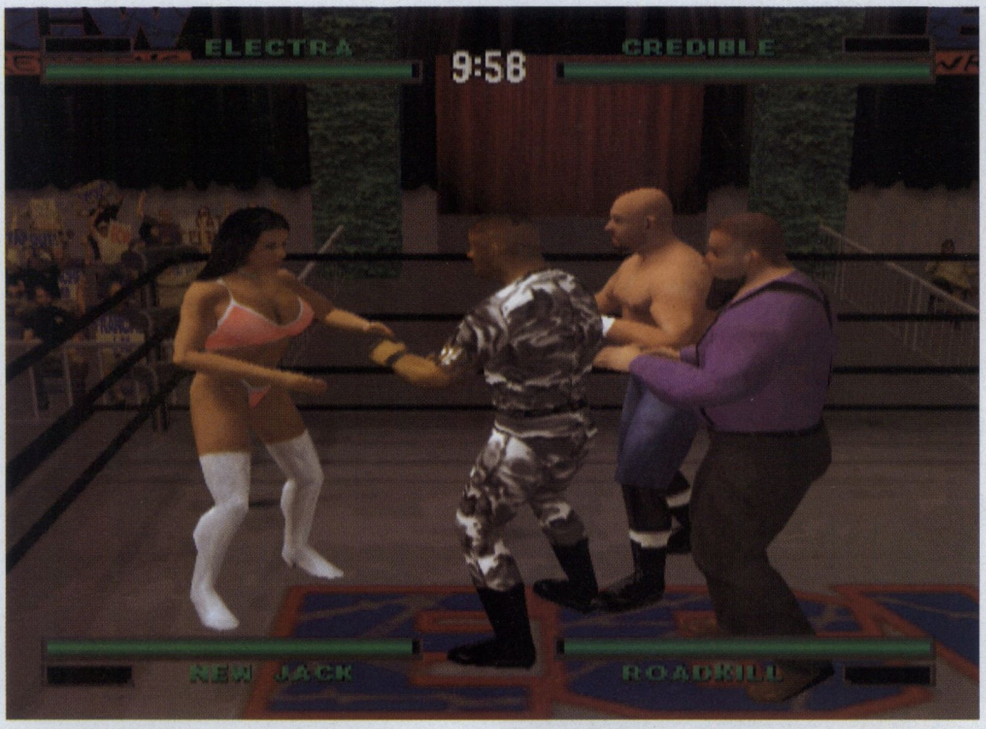
○ THE HOTTEST GAMES ○ THE COOLEST KIT ○ THE WACKIEST WEBSITES



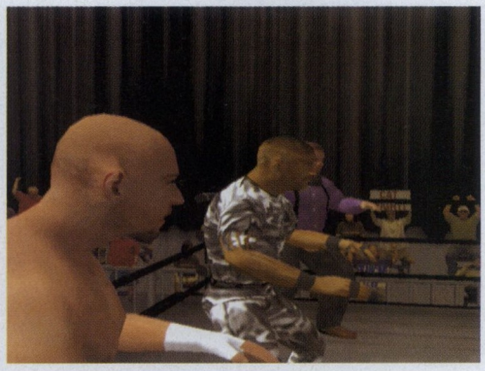
for the PC generation

Out now

NEW!



△ It looks like the ECTS videogame trade show. Monsters nervously sidling towards a bikini-clad chick.

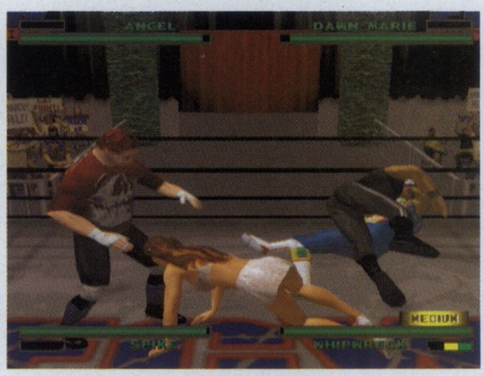


△ Oh dear, the auditions for the boy band are going badly.

"A TRULY AWFUL GAME. IT SHOULD BE AVOIDED LIKE MALARIA SANDWICHES"

△ Dawn Marie selflessly tests Big Sal for Right Guard.

△ Feeble attempt at a gratuitous cleavage shot.



△ Some day all parties will be this swinging. Was that your wife?

ECW ANARCHY RULZ

'Dangerous' **DYLAN DAVIES** puts on a leotard and mullet for his wrestling debut. But why is the referee allowing this?

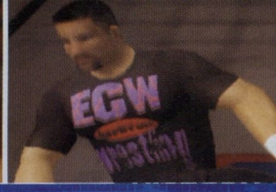
WRESTLING. A SPORT WHERE rules are scarce and steroids are rife. Strangely though, through satellite TV saturation this ballet of violence has become something of a phenomenon and made millionaires of these meat bags. Now, the idea of developing a game dedicated to this farce is a weird one, as the fights aren't fixed in advance – thus making it nobler than the original it imitates. Can ultra-violent grappling fun be replicated through a Dreamcast controller? Or should we just take steroids and play Twister instead?

ECW stands for Extreme Championship Wrestling. It's the same kind of thing as the WWF, but where wrestlers fight (or fighters wrestle) with even less regard for gentlemanly conduct than normal. Barbed wire, stepladders and house bricks are implemented to add to the playful gore. The fighters have colourful names such as Sandman and RVD (surely to defeat RVD all you need is antibiotics?) and the arenas include barbed wire ropes, fighting in cages and even outside in the car park. Though it may sound like Macclesfield on a Saturday, it's a recognised sport in the land of cholesterol (America).

Fighting styles aside, this is a remould of the tragic *WWF Attitude* (*ODM* #2, 3/10) and more recent – yet equally cack – *ECW Hardcore Revolution* (*ODM* #7, 3/10), celebrating a more violent and slapstick version of wrestling. Yes, *ECW Anarchy Rulz* is what happens to old WWF games when they lose their licence.

MIKEY WHIPWRECK

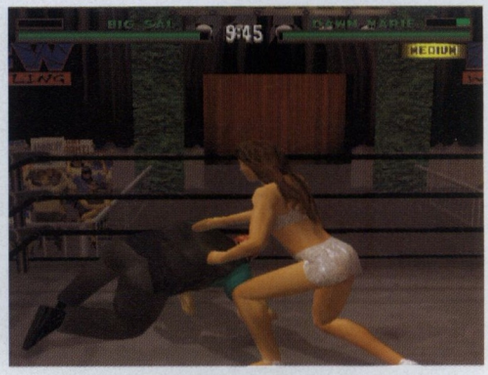
The first thing you'll notice about this game is the poor, poor, *poor* graphics. It's obviously a PlayStation conversion, but so is *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2* (*ODM* #15, 9/10). In most conversions the developers make extra effort to exploit some Dreamcast features, such as better textures, slicker animations and backgrounds. Strangely, in a quest for PlayStation authenticity, the developers here



"BAD GRAPHICS ARE JUST AN INDICATION OF WHERE THIS GAME'S HEADING" **ECW ANARCHY RULZ**

△ This is just a great picture of girls wrestling. Go on!

△ It looks like an episode of *Ricky Lake*.



△ Dawn Marie, moments before picking Big Sal's pockets.

△ Whipwreck gets kicked so hard the foot goes through him, while Dawn Marie looks for action in the back of Spike's pants.

have avoided using these tools in favour of poor textures, clumsy animations and sparse backgrounds. It's the lowest-tech jiggery pokery around. Even the menu screens are so pixelated it appears that the cable that links the Dreamcast to your TV has become detached so you're left with fuzzy interference to squint at.

Unfortunately, bad graphics are just an indication of where this game's heading. The gameplay is hilarious, accidentally reflecting the farce of the original sport. For those of you unfamiliar with 'video-grappling', we'll explain. The object is to pin your opponent to the floor for three seconds. Sounds easy doesn't it? Well, you have no chance of subduing trained athletes like these until you've knocked all the wind out of them. The simplest way of doing this is by hitting the punch and kick buttons until their energy bar drops to danger level. It's appalling to watch grown videogamers having to do this. It's pure button-mashing as the computer's artificial intelligence has little defence for a kick in the family jewels, and away you go – just hitting the 'kick family jewels' button for most of the round until they're weak enough to be pinned down.

This tactic worked for a disturbingly long time in the Championship mode for us. There are combinations of grabs, pins and counters which the instruction book makes sound very advanced, but are frustratingly slow to be implemented. It's like you aren't playing at all – like watching a badly orchestrated fight on TV. Oh, just like wrestling, then! When a game comes out with "All new control system" emblazoned on the box, you have to ask 'Have the developers learnt from past games? Do they now provide a skilful and intuitive interface that exploits a game's potential to the fullest?' The answers are both no – surprisingly. The controller seems unconnected from the game and the moves are poorly explained. It just seems that the game doesn't actually work properly.

BALLS MAHONEY

One thing *ECW Anarchy Rulz* cannot be criticised for is a lack of game options. There seem to be hundreds of styles that read like a porn video catalogue. Apart from the usual Versus mode, you can indulge your grappling pleasure with Two- and Three-On-Ones, Tag Team, plus Three- and Four-way 'every man for himself'. Different win styles can be implemented, such as first fighter to draw blood wins, or first fighter to go over the ropes wins. Further features such as ring style can also change the events of play – like the barbed wire ropes that cause a player to start bleeding to death should they foolishly attempt any rope-a-doping. Weapons like chairs and ladders can also be used to maim, but it's hardly *Power Stone* (*ODM* #1, 8/10). You can even create your own Pay-Per-View TV show. Variety is interesting, but it doesn't matter how many routes you walk a dog – it'll still stink like it's been rolling in crap.

One enjoyable thing about *ECW Anarchy Rulz* (and we're clutching at straws here) is the 'create your own wrestler' function. It won't radically affect the gameplay, as the statistics will be based on another player's. It will tickle your creative talents though, as you can create some absolute monsters with girl's voices. Name them after your friends and show them.

ECW Anarchy Rulz is not the worst game ever. It is, however, a truly awful videogame that should be avoided like malaria sandwiches. It's no fun to control, it looks terrible and it's based on a niche wrestling league no one watches. The design of the game is so dated as to look pre-PlayStation – not something modern gamers need or deserve. Our only hope was that the referee would stop this horror at some point. He didn't. This game is truly, truly dire – leave well alone.

VERDICT

A TERRIBLE GAME HITTING NEW LOWS IN WRESTLING CASH-INS

UPPERS
Lots of options • The packaging is waterproof • It's summer soon

DOWNERS
Diabolical controls • Dire graphics • Who are these people anyway? • They expect you to pay for it

IN ONE HOUR Completed most of the championship by kicking gonads (then lost to a girl)
WEBSITE www.anarchyrulz.com
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz, full-screen 60Hz option

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
2
RUBBISH

PRICE: **£39.99** • PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM** • DEVELOPER: **ACCLAIM**

"THE THAMES LOOKS LIKE AN ADVERT FOR EVIAN" **AQUA GT**

△ *Aqua GT* is hardly realistic. Note the total lack of shopping trolleys in the water – ridiculous!

△ "And on your left is a very shabby Houses of Parliament…"

△ That catamaran up ahead really looks like a Jumbo Jet…

AQUA GT

A driving game with powerboats! **PHILIPPA NORMAN** tries her hand at water sports

ROAD RACING'S BEEN DONE to death already – Dreamcast's got car games coming out of its ears. Surely there's a type of motor racing that's not yet been fully exploited game-wise… water, perhaps? *Hydro Thunder* (*ODM* #1, 6/10) and the atrocious *Surf Rocket Racers* (*ODM* #17, 2/10) have tried and failed already, leaving the waterway clear for Take 2's powerboat racer, *Aqua GT*.

The game features three modes: Championship, Arcade and Two-player. Championship mode is the main one, but tends to become boring after a while. It involves a single-lap qualifier that determines your grid position for the feature race but to be honest, this doesn't really make much difference where you start, so you'll probably soon end up skipping it. To get through the Bronze Championship you've got to do well enough in three feature races to come out as overall winner – if you don't get enough points, you've got to go through it all again. This is all very well, until you reach Silver league and the number of feature races doubles. By the time you've got through the Gold and Champion's leagues you'll no doubt be thinking of taking up a career in watching paint dry, it gets so tedious.

Arcade mode involves racing against tight time restrictions, but apart from that it serves as a good training area for the main Championship mode. Basically, the two-player game is the preferable option if you want to keep tedium at bay.

WET 'N WILD

The selection of boats isn't bad – there are 20 in all, 15 of which have to be unlocked. There are five different types with varying abilities in speed, acceleration and handling – as you'd expect – as well as automatic and manual transmissions. It's easier to go for the automatic option, but manual makes life a bit more interesting by giving you more overall control of your boat. Tracks are set in recognisable cities around the globe – they just seem to have suddenly developed the cleanest waterways the world has ever seen. That stretch of toxic bog that we know as the Thames looks like an advert for Evian in *Aqua GT*. Each track professes to offer different challenges, but gameplay is pretty much the same throughout. You can race at high or low tide, and during the day or night on each course, which does add a little variety to things.

There's really not much more to *Aqua GT*, though. Your rear view helps to block other boats and ram them as they try to pass, but even the novelty of this hilarious activity soon wears off. Maybe some crash damage, open-water courses or decent graphics could have been included to improve the game. Once the Championship mode has been completed there really is nothing to go back for, making *Aqua GT* pretty much redundant. Ah well, at least it's better than *Surf Rocket Racers*.

VERDICT

REASONABLY PLAYABLE BUT YOU'LL SOON GET BORED OF IT

UPPERS
20 different boats • Two-player mode • It's short, thank goodness!

DOWNERS
Very repetitive • No replay value • The waterways are laughably clean • Boring

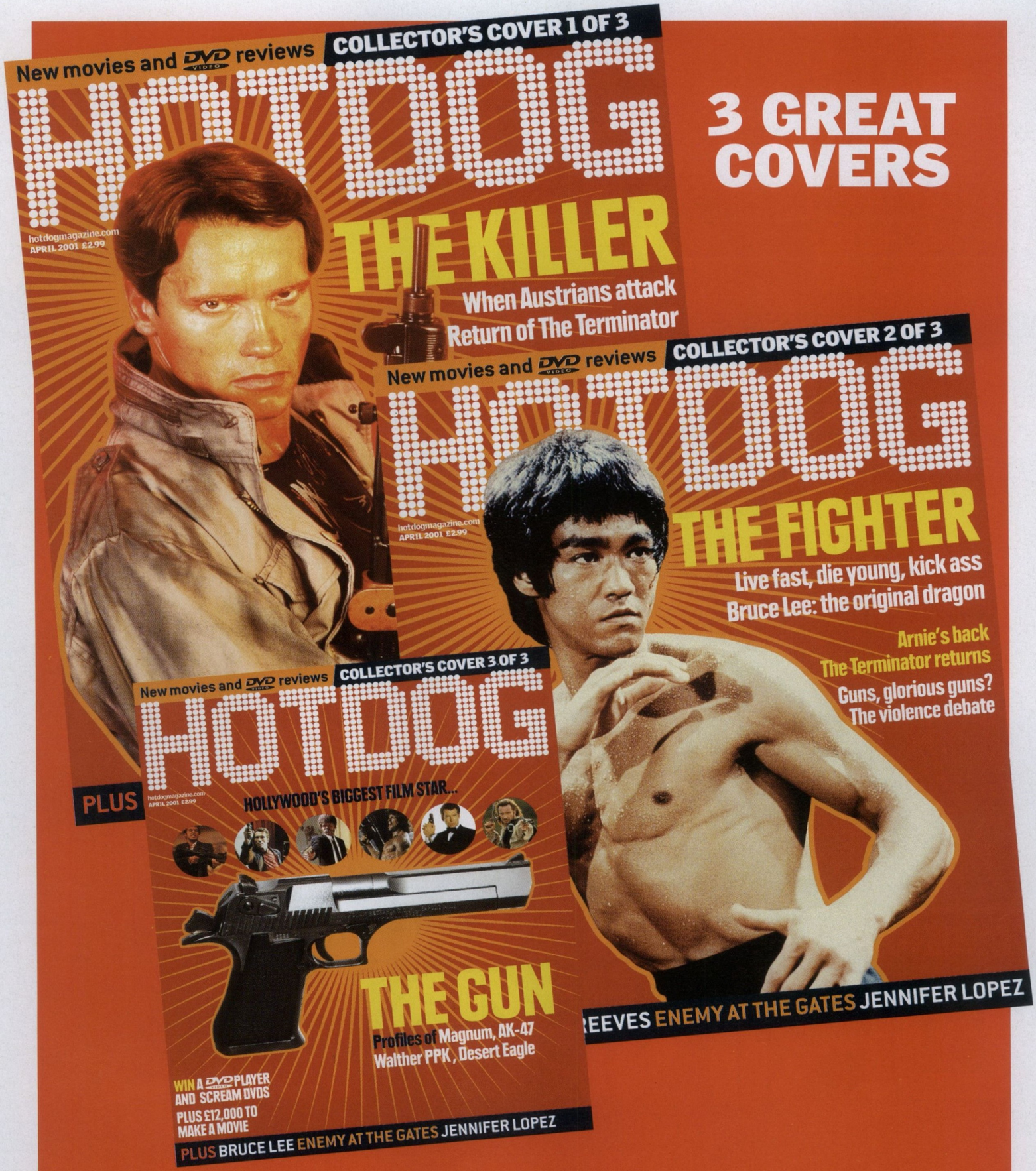
IN ONE HOUR Got through to Silver league, woke up briefly
WEBSITE www.take2games.com
CHECK OUT A different game
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz, full-screen 60HZ option

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

3

POOR

PRICE: **£39.99** • PUBLISHER: **TAKE 2** • DEVELOPER: **EAST POINT SOFTWARE**



3 GREAT COVERS

HOTDOG THE VIOLENCE ISSUE ON SALE NOW

iFG

REVIEWS ROUND-UP

DRINKING...

IT'S GOOD TO TALK, OR SO THEY SAY. EVEN BETTER IF THE TALK IS OF GAMES, AS IT OFTEN IS ROUND AT **DAN TRENT**'S HOUSE, VENUE FOR THIS MONTH'S DISCUSSION

MUCH AS WE WOULD like to think we're above lazy stereotypes about North London being full of roll-neck jumper wearing media types, a good number of the *ODM* team actually live there and yes, we have been known to wear roll-necks on occasion. And so it came to pass, that this month's discussion took place over cups of tea and coffee in *ODM* staffer Dan's house which he shares with, among others, *ODM* reviewer Dylan Davies and the lovely Gemma who ran around us in fluffy slippers topping up our cups and force-feeding us cake.

Up for discussion this month is a mixed bag of stuff, ranging from the amusingly poor to the competent but confused. In case you're wondering why we've missed *Phantasy Star Online* (*ODM* #17, 9/10), we'll be turning our attention to it next month when we've all had a chance to really flex its muscles in the way God, or at least Yuji Naka, intended...

PHOTOGRAPHY: **JOHN MILLAR**

UP FOR DISCUSSION

THE *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* TEAM TAKE SOME TIME OUT OF THE OFFICE TO DISCUSS FIVE RECENT RELEASES. THIS MONTH...

1 VANISHING POINT

2 STAR WARS DEMOLITION

3 FIGHTING VIPERS 2

4 EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE

5 SPAWN: IN THE DEMON'S HAND

VANISHING POINT

(*ODM* #17, 7/10)

A smooth-looking, arcadey racing game with a somewhat confusing time trial based racing system, *Vanishing Point* nonetheless looks the part with loads of real cars and an entertaining stunt mode.

DAN: I like the stunts... cunning stunts... sorry!
ED: They're good fun but the actual racing isn't, because the tracks are a little bit like the old days – just like one long line.
DYLAN: Where you just occasionally hit left or right...
ED: The ones where you don't get any sensation of it being a circuit, you don't feel like 'Here's a sharp corner, I'll have to slow down for that bit'. It's just like you drive along and turn every now and then.
DYLAN: Like an undulating snake!
ED: Like *Out Run* or something like that.
DAN: I didn't think the time trial system worked that well – it wasn't immediate enough.
ED: It's just confusing racing cars that aren't really in a race with you.
ALEX: You'd understand it if it were a rally game where there weren't any other cars on the screen, but it seems silly that overtaking a car doesn't necessarily move you up the rankings. A strange idea that doesn't really work.
DYLAN: And it's so fundamental to the game as well. It's a shame they didn't just think 'We've got a nice little arcadey racer, so let's just stick to what we know'.
DAN: It's quite difficult to drive the cars well – they just wobble about.
ED: And if you try to drive it like an ordinary driving game you just end up all over the place.
ALEX: You're always having to compensate .
ED: The way to do it is to steer to swing the car round and then let go of the steering rather than just try and get it back on line.
DAN: It's like there's a big dead spot in the steering and you're always having to overcompensate and drive with your arms swinging about all over the place.
DYLAN: It just doesn't do anything new though, there doesn't seem to be much point to it.
ED: I dunno, you can see it... the stunts are really cool, although there is a limit to the points you can get, so once you've got the maximum there's no incentive to go back and do them again. And you can usually get max points after only a little practice on each one. If you look at *Crazy Taxi* [*ODM* #5, 9/10], in the Crazy Box mode there's no top score, so you can always go back to it and see if you can beat your last effort. That's what that mode could have been, making you always want to do it a little bit better or faster but you can't – once you've beaten the top score, that's it.
DAN: It's a shame the racing isn't more enjoyable, because it's all very solid and the tracks and cars look really good. There's no pop-up or anything like that.
DYLAN: Wasn't that the whole reason it was called *Vanishing Point*? Something to do with it having the amazing draw distance or something.
DAN: There's that wicked film as well, the one Primal Scream based the *Vanishing Point* album on...
DYLAN: But the game doesn't involve a lone guy racing across America, does it?
ALEX: That could make a cool game!
ED: Yeah, but the music in this one...
DYLAN: It's real tweaky acid driving rock!
ED: There's that really weird track that starts off all ambient and then goes off on one with this massive abstract techno thing.
DYLAN: I liked that! I was genuinely listening to it as I was playing the game thinking, 'This is cool!'

ALEX: It's a good tune but it doesn't suit the game.
DAN: The cars look good, they certainly look like the cars they're meant to be and all that...
ED: You're right, the presentation is all good.
DYLAN: A lot of cars on the screen too...
ALEX: And I like the rock formation textures! And the unnecessary background animations.
ED: It's a shame that it's like a road going from one place to another that twists a little bit in the middle with some nice scenery. It doesn't feel like a circuit.
DYLAN: It doesn't have much character.
DAN: If this is the sort of driving game you're after, you're better off sticking with *4 Wheel Thunder* [*ODM* #8, 8/10]. It's a fairly old game, but better than this...
DYLAN: It reminded me of that too.
ED: Errrrrrm, I guess it is... Not so many cars on the track in *4 Wheel Thunder*, though.
DYLAN: That's the good thing about *Vanishing Point*, you can have eight or so cars around you at any given point. Sadly, the racing isn't exciting enough to make the most of it.

STAR WARS DEMOLITION

(*ODM* #17, 4/10)

As appropriate a title as you'll ever find for a game, *Star Wars Demolition* sees you taking control of minor-league *Star Wars* vehicles for some mindless scrapping in unconvincing surroundings. Another disappointing waste of a good licence? You bet it is.

DAN: The best game ever!
ED: The worst game ever!
DYLAN: It's too good for the public to play. Quite frankly, if games this good ever got out it would destroy all other consoles and machines... No, it's quite depressing, actually. The same thing with all LucasArts games – it's just the *Star Wars* badge stuck on a below average game.
ED: The thing you need to do, and the only thing you *can* do if you're into *Star Wars*, is just laugh at it. Otherwise it's too depressing. It's just like a comedy take on *Star Wars* that destroys anything good about it.
DAN: It's a bad use of the vehicles, it doesn't handle, it's not fun, it looks rubbish...
ALEX: I can't believe anyone would have gone to see the *Star Wars* films and thought they would like to take one of the minor vehicles from the film and then battle a rancor monster and a couple of other ships.
ED: There could be some possible way of doing it... it could be alright...
DAN: But with the films being as good as they are there is so much you could do with a game.
ED: The trouble is the developers Luxoflux just do the same old games...
DYLAN: Vehicles with guns.
ED: Exactly, and they're all shite. Crock of nuts. Rubbish. And this one is terrible. It's horrible seeing...
DYLAN: It's horrible seeing bad games full stop, but seeing a brand abused is the worst. I can't remember a good *Star Wars* game ever.
ED: Oh yeah?! *Dark Forces*, *X-Wing*, *Tie Fighter*...
DAN: *Pod Racer* in the arcade...
DYLAN: Okay, there's a large list of retro games.
ED: But it's quite baffling how they could do some of those things. Like in Cloud City, you drive into a big white light and get thrown really slowly into the air, fall into a big dish thing and then pop out of a door. It doesn't make any sense at all, it's just annoying and slow and crap. The whole thing has no relation to *Star Wars* at all and it's just a cash-in.
DYLAN: But I don't even think *Star Wars* fans would buy it. More likely it would be the friends and relatives of fans who would think 'Oh, they like *Star Wars*, so they'll like this...'

"IT'S A SHAME THE RACING ISN'T MORE ENJOYABLE, AS IT'S ALL VERY SOLID AND THE TRACKS AND CARS LOOK REALLY GOOD"

– DAN ON *VANISHING POINT*

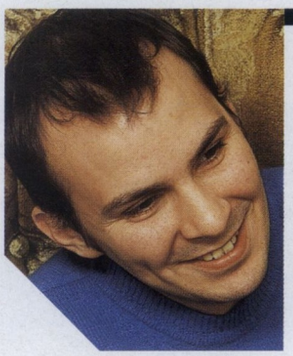
ED: But the only possible way to play this game and not go mad afterwards is to laugh at it because it is actually hilariously bad.
DAN: I can't think of a single redeeming feature about it at all and that's quite rare. Usually you can find something about a game that's okay, but with this...
DYLAN: I like the intro!
ALEX: The intro movie is funny. If you actually wanted to make a game like this, that's what you'd want it to look like.
DYLAN: Always a sign of a game's status, judging it on the gap between its FMV [Full Motion Video] promise and the reality of the gameplay. Okay, this is the vision, what have we got?
ALEX: But even with the box art it looks quite exciting: Boba Fett fighting a scout walker and it looks amazing, but when you play it he's about a millimetre tall.
DAN: Conclusion then?
ED: Rubbish!
DYLAN: A poo sandwich without the bread!

FIGHTING VIPERS 2

(*ODM* #17, 6/10)

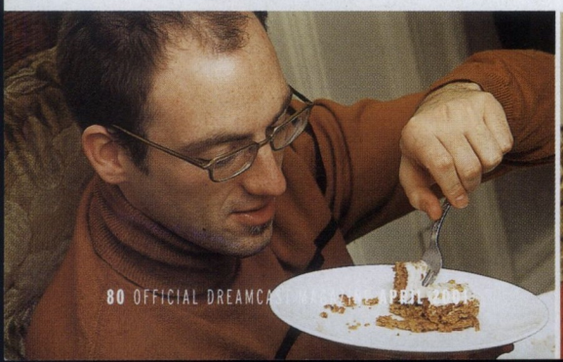
A blast from the past filled to the brim with *ker-razy* moves and outrageous character design, this game sits in the slightly uneasy middle ground between flashy 'newcomers' like *Soul Calibur* (*ODM* #2, 10/10) and old-skool classics like the *Street Fighter* series. If you simply can't get enough fighting action, this could be the game for you...

DYLAN: The guy on the BMX is the best character I have ever seen! He reminds me of the big clown guy from *Tech Romancer* [ODM #8, 6/10] who shoots trains out of his arms. I like to see that kind of thing, that is great character design. It makes me laugh.
ED: It's nice enough, but...
ALEX: It's three years too late.
ED: It feels so dated now because the first *Fighting Vipers* was so exciting and crazy. The whole thing was really smart, I mean we were all getting into *Virtua Fighter 2* at the time and that was really smart...
DYLAN: And this is just a progression from it.
ED: Yeah, similar controls, a lot of the play was the same but it had the cages and it was amazingly fast for the time.
DAN: This doesn't feel quite quick enough.
ED: No, it really doesn't. It just feels really dated. I can't remember if it's slower than the arcade one or not, because I only played it a couple of times in Japan and I never saw it here. I was amazed by how it looked then and I don't know if it's just that we expect more these days or what.
DYLAN: Especially when you have things like *Soul Calibur* and *Dead Or Alive 2* [*ODM* #11, 8/10], which are fantastic.
DAN: And then if you want the retro thing there's 101 versions of *Street Fighter* to choose from.
ED: And the other thing is, whereas the *Virtua Fighter* games each had something new, this just doesn't seem to have progressed.
DYLAN: So you're saying it's the same, but better.
ED: I'm not even sure about that.
ALEX: It doesn't feel any better, in fact now it almost seems worse because other games have surpassed it, you know your *Dead Or Alives* or your *Power Stones*.
DYLAN: Oh yeah! Running about with mallets and everything... great fun!
ALEX: But on this I don' t think it works because you can't move around the character, even though it's 3D it still works on a 2D plain.
DAN: It's not really 3D though, is it?
ED: I tell you what's really odd, though: when *Fighting Vipers* came out on Saturn they had the Original mode which added 3D dodging and stuff like



"YOU CAN'T MOVE AROUND THE CHARACTER, EVEN THOUGH IT'S 3D IT STILL WORKS ON A 2D PLAIN"

– ALEX ON *FIGHTING VIPERS 2*



"THE WAY THE ACTUAL PLAYERS MOVE IS TOO SLOW FOR ME... EVEN SWITCHING PLAYERS IS A PROBLEM HERE"

– ED ON *EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE*

that – it was one of the first fighting games to do it. Then when they made *Fighting Vipers 2* for the arcade they didn't include it – you'd have thought they might have, because it worked really well.

DYLAN: The character design is great though, absolutely fantastic...

DAN: And there's some great moves in there.

ED: There's a lot of good stuff if you're into your fighting games, like the floating combos and picking the best time to counter. It certainly has plenty there.

ALEX: I like AM2 games but I wouldn't rate this at all. It was big in its day, well actually it wasn't really *that* big in its day but, I don't know...

DAN: Bit of a curio really.

DYLAN: It's funny!

ED: I almost think *Fighting Vipers* on Saturn is more fun even though it looks awful. It's a shame really, but this looks a bit flat.

EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE

(*ODM* #17, 7/10)

Football fans awaiting a football game of the calibre of other Dreamcast sports titles like *NBA 2K* (*ODM* #5, 8/10) or *Virtua Tennis* (*ODM* #12, 9/10) aren't going to be satisfied with *European Super League*, but that's not to say there isn't plenty to enjoy. Detailed stadiums and some inventive features ensure fun till the whistle goes...

DAN: I think it's crap 'cos I'm rubbish at it! Only joking!

DYLAN: Rubbish shooting – there's no *TWAAANG*!

ED: You should try playing it on Simulation mode though, it's quite different with the shooting because you have to aim it a lot more.

DAN: It's like they're running in wellies full of water.

ED: Hmm, you really like it though, don't you Alex?

ALEX: I don't *really* like it, there's a few faults in it. Things like when you're playing a through ball and you're playing past the last man and it seems to freeze up. Players are a bit hesitant to pick up the ball sometimes and offsides can be iffy.

DYLAN: Don't you think it seemed a bit slow?

DAN: That's what I was saying...

DYLAN: Yeah, passing from player to player just doesn't seem fast enough and then when you make a break you think 'Great, I'm running in the open and it's like a slow motion hit! Strike!' Like a bad money shot, it just dribbled!

ED: I like the controls... but I don't like the *control*. I like the ideas, like the tricks and the dummies. The control set-up is quite sensible and you can do a lot quite easily, but the way the actual players move is too slow for me. In football games I want the players to move around really fast, and as soon as I want them to do something they'll do it. Even switching players is a problem here.

DAN: It's just not intuitive enough.

ED: But it would be if they were just quicker.

ALEX: I thought it was okay. If I was running and saw someone I wanted to get the ball to I could, although it took a little playing around with to get the hang of it.

DAN: It's hardly the killer footie game the Dreamcast needs though, is it?

ALEX: No, but I'd say it's the best one on Dreamcast.

ED: *Nnnno*...

DYLAN: That hardly goes to the credit of the Dreamcast, does it?

ALEX: But it's not known for having a really great football game.

DYLAN: Which is the tragedy of it all!

ALEX: I'd say this and *UEFA Striker* [*ODM* #1, 8/10] are the best football games on there at the moment.

ED: I'd say *UEFA Dream Soccer* because it's fast and funnier. It's rubbish but it's funny.

ALEX: Having a football game that racks up scores like 18-16 isn't funny... it's rugby scores.

ED: I think it is. If you're going to play a 'not very good' football game you might as well play one that is funny and not very good... although this one *is* good until you start getting fed up with the sluggishness.

DYLAN: It's too slow, way too slow. You know where you get a dead ball and you're all running towards it... everything takes just a bit too long...

ED: I like the power bar thing on the free kicks. But a mixed one overall, then.

DAN: I wouldn't buy it...

ALEX: I've played worse than this.

DAN: That's hardly a recommendation, though, is it?

SPAWN: IN THE DEMON'S HAND

(*ODM* #17, 6/10)

Based on the Todd McFarlane comic of the same name, *Spawn* is actually a *Power Stone* (*ODM* #1, 8/10) style beat 'em up/shoot 'em up full of over the top action. Multiplayer action is split-screen, but for fans of the character there should be plenty to enjoy even it if it isn't the most inventive use of the franchise.

DYLAN: Ooh, nice character design again. It's all very funky and great, and just running around and shooting things looks like fun, but there's no real game to it.

DAN: I'd rather play *Power Stone* myself...

ED: I think it's trying to be a *Quake III Arena* [*ODM* #15, 9/10] type game. But the whole thing of the first- or third-person arena based shooting game is looking for people and trying to shoot them. You need really good, fast control but in this there's no side-stepping and no shooting from the first-person view.

DAN: You wouldn't want to play *Quake* in the third person view though, even though you can on the Dreamcast version.

ED: You can do it. It wouldn't be sensible really, but it could be done. With *Spawn* though, you can't dodge, you can't hide behind a wall, pop out and shoot and...

DAN: The camera is all over the place too, it swings about all the time. It's difficult to see what's going on.

ALEX: It's like *Quake* for the arcade. Battle modes with three minute timers are supposed to just make for really fast moving carnage. But it doesn't really work.

ED: The odd thing about it is in the arcade it has the multiplayer thing in separate cabinets all linked up and you have a screen to yourself so it's great fun and then they don't make this online. It doesn't make sense.

DYLAN: That would make all the difference.

ED: Exactly, it would be a bit of a novelty.

ALEX: Why have they used *Spawn*, though? Surely there's better games to make out of the *Spawn* licence rather than just running around shooting things.

DYLAN: It's like fun in the same way as *Power Stone* and it looks like it's going to be fun to use but ultimately it's a bit dull if you can't go online. You could make like an adventure thing out of it. You know, where you get games which are fun to use but you don't get to do anything fun... and then you get really fun adventures which are really dull to actually play...

ALEX: What's the key word here?

ALL: [laughs]

DYLAN: It's er, um, it didn't approach either of those!

ED: Boring. It bores me. Too basic and it doesn't have a selling point like a good arcade conversion should have. It's not snappy, it's not fun, it doesn't have any online stuff and the four-player game is too small.

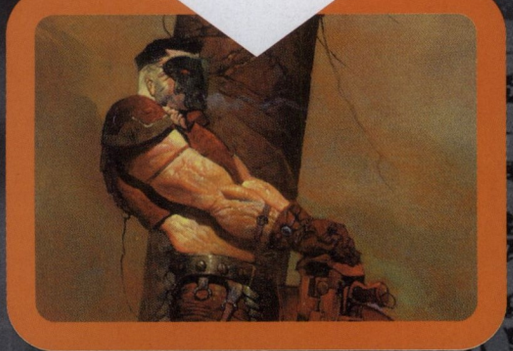
DYLAN: It doesn't feel solid enough.

ED: That's the cameras. It looks really nice when you stop and look but the camera is so hyper you never get to appreciate it. Nice but boring. Like Alex.

ALEX: Cute.

"JUST RUNNING AROUND AND SHOOTING THINGS LOOKS LIKE FUN, BUT THERE'S NO REAL GAME TO IT"

– DYLAN ON *SPAWN: ITDH*



IN THE HOT SEAT

WITH RASTER PRODUCTIONS

AARON SEELER, MANAGING DIRECTOR AT RASTER PRODUCTIONS, THE TEAM BEHIND THE FANTASTIC DREAMCAST CONVERSION OF *QUAKE III ARENA*, ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

COMING UP: NEXT ISSUE WE'LL BE PRINTING THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS YOU PUT TO THE DEVELOPERS OF *TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2*

△ It's action all the way in *Quake III Arena*, with three- and four-way shootouts like this commonplace. Think fast!

PROFILE

With the original developers of *Quake III Arena* (*ODM* #15, 9/10), id Software, not available to answer your questions, we instead put them to the team responsible for bringing the game to Dreamcast – Raster Productions. Based in Mesquite, Texas, they are a relatively new company, but have already proven their skills with two top-quality conversions – *Quake II* on Nintendo 64, and the fantastic *Quake III Arena* on Dreamcast.

Aaron Seeler, managing director at Raster, and one of the main men involved in getting *Quake III Arena* running so well on Dreamcast, answers your questions.

RIVAL RESPECT

What other first-person shooters have you enjoyed playing?

ANTHONY HERSCHELL, VIA EMAIL

Aaron Seeler: *MDK 2* on the Dreamcast is pretty cool, although that's not really a first-person shooter…

ADD-ON, AND ON, AND ON

Are you going to release any add-ons for *Quake III Arena* on Dreamcast?

MDK, VIA EMAIL

AS: Not at this time.

ABSENT FRIENDS

Can you please tell me why you missed out some excellent arenas, such as Grim Dungeons and the Nameless Place?

HAPPYADD, SWANSEA

AS: The arenas chosen for the Dreamcast were based on their popularity and desired performance.

CHEATS NEVER PROSPER

How do you feel about players messing with the servers and using console commands to alter the game to their own liking, which generally spoils the game for other online players?

IAN WALKER, VIA EMAIL

AS: It's impossible to be all things to everybody in a client/server relationship. We attempted to restrict the console 'tweak' commands to provide more stability for novice users. We don't feel that any gameplay is sacrificed by having a variety of servers with differing parameters. There is no viable way to stop

△ High-speed online play is one of the game's many highlights.

△ Playing with the joypad isn't as tough as you might imagine.

△ The graphics of *Quake III Arena* on Dreamcast are identical in terms of detail to those of the original PC version.

determined cheating. I would guess that at some point, cheaters end up playing against other cheaters, so it's back to whoever has the skills.

QUAKE VS UNREAL

What are your opinions on *Unreal Tournament*?

FRANCO, VIA EMAIL

AS: Nice try, Cliffy! We are anxious to see if the Dreamcast version of *Unreal Tournament* lives up to the ads.

PC PERFECT

I can hardly see any differences between the Dreamcast and PC versions of *Quake III Arena*. Are there actually that many?

CHARMAINE CHING, VIA EMAIL

AS: The differences are not in the visual or audible areas. These were designed purposely to match closely to the PC counterpart. Some of the larger vast arenas are not present in the Dreamcast version, but other than that it's pretty much the same.

JOYPAD JOY

Quake III Arena has the best joypad control of any first-person shooter I've ever played. Did it take long to get it right? How did you go about translating the keyboard and mouse control?

ELLIOT GOLDNER, VIA EMAIL

AS: Thanks! We tried a few different techniques (smoothing, accelerative, and so on). The Dreamcast controller has a good response. In the end, we settled on the current layout with 'lookspring' [so the view springs back to normal when you let go of the analogue stick].

COME BACK SOON

Having done such a fantastic job with *Quake III Arena*, are you planning on working on the Dreamcast again?

N. PHILLIPS, TROWBRIDGE

AS: The Dreamcast is a fine piece of hardware with some great games. We are hoping it stays in the marketplace for a while.

FAVOURITE PLACE

What is your favourite map in *Quake III Arena*, and why?

YAS, VIA EMAIL

AS: The split-screen maps are all my favourites due to their simplicity. I like the clean, stark architecture. Plus, they load fast.

COMING NEXT

What game (or games) are you working on next?

JOHN MUIR, ABERDEEN

AS: We're currently working on an original next-generation console title. More information about this will become public in a few months.

LOST IN SPACE

Why do players get teleported back into the arena when they fall off the edge of the space-based maps? In the PC version they'd die instead.

TOM PATERSON, VIA EMAIL

AS: That was to balance the lack of agility novice players experienced when using a controller. It was felt that this would be a reasonable and fair handicap for players instead of a penalty.

THE ORIGINAL

What are your feelings about someone else converting the original *Quake* to run on Dreamcast? Do you think it should be released so everyone can play it?

ROB TAYLOR, STOCKPORT

AS: Jayeson (from developers Titanium Studios) did a fine job. I think it should be included on a demo disc or at least for some ridiculously low price. I would like to see Dreamcast have a successful life cycle. The more games, the better!

HIGH-SPEED CONNECTION

How come *Quake III* runs so quickly online when something as simple as *ChuChu Rocket!* runs slowly?

SIMON LAWRENCE, VIA EMAIL

△ Aaah, carnage – what a beautiful sight!

AS: I believe *ChuChu Rocket!* had the disadvantage of being the first online title. There were driver issues that needed to be resolved. *Quake III Arena* and the other later online titles had the advantage of enhanced network drivers from Sega.

DEATH TO ALL

Why did you decide to make *Quake III Arena* a deathmatch-only game?

ALI TATHAM, VIA EMAIL

AS: *Quake III Arena* on the PC was strictly a deathmatch game, as that's the way most people enjoyed previous *Quake* games. The Dreamcast version was meant to be the same game, just available on the Dreamcast platform.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR TEAM 17, THE DEVELOPERS OF *WORMS WORLD PARTY*?

Team 17, the developers of *Worms Armageddon* (*ODM* #3, 8/10) and *Worms World Party* (*ODM* #15, 8/10), as well as the forthcoming *Stunt GP* will be answering any questions you want to ask them about the games and their development. Send them to us as soon as possible at questions@dreamcastmag.co.uk, or Team 17 In The Hot Seat, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF.

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If at first you don't succeed... then cheat, of course!

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PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

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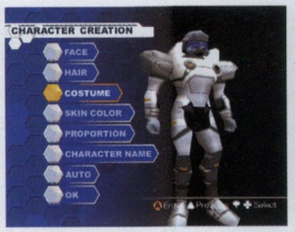
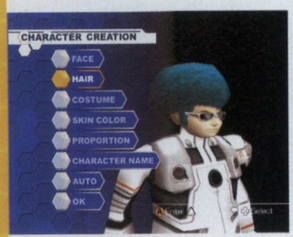
CHARACTER CREATION

The three groups of characters in *PSO* suit different styles of play – some are best with weapons attacks, some with magical powers and the rest fall somewhere between the two. For newcomers to the game, it pays to try out all three to see which fits your playing temperament the best.



△ **RAMAR** (male, Ranger type)
Good for: likes his guns. Attack Techniques.
Bad for: close-range combat. Impressive Techniques.

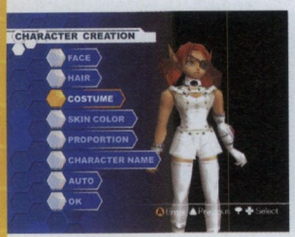
△ **FOMAR** (female, Force type)
Good for: balanced growth potential. Great with Techniques.
Bad for: taking damage. Not great at close-range combat.



△ **HUMAR** (male, Hunter type)
Good for: close-range combat. Recovery and attack Techniques.
Bad for: not much – basically a good all-round character.

△ **RACAST** (android, Ranger type)
Good for: hard as nails. Highest attacking power.
Bad for: can't use any Techniques. Not very agile.

△ **FONEWM** (male, Force type)
Good for: strongest Force type. Can use any Technique.
Bad for: still not too tough. Stupid platform shoes.



△ **HUNEWEARL** (female, Hunter type)
Good for: balance between Techniques and regular attacks.
Bad for: lower HP level.

△ **RACASEAL** (android, Ranger type)
Good for: takes a lot of damage. Great evasive power.
Bad for: can't use Techniques.

△ **FONEWEARL** (female, Force type)
Good for: higher defensive power. Great with Techniques.
Bad for: close-range combat. Lower HP.

△ **HUCAST** (android, Hunter type)
Good for: strong attacks, and has the highest HP level.
Bad for: can't use Techniques.

WEAPONS

There are at least a dozen different types of weapon in *PSO* – even we haven't discovered them all yet! Some only become available as your character develops, and some aren't available to all character types. Here's some of the best:

△ **Daggers:** Only available to Hunter types, the Daggers are a pair of blades that combo quickly for devastating attacks early in the game.

△ **Autogun:** The Autogun is a small, accurate photon weapon that fires quickly in combo attacks and doesn't leave you frozen after an attack.

△ **Mechgun:** Twin photon machine-guns. Powerful, but it's hard to get the timing right for combos, and you're unable to move just after firing.

△ **Gigush:** A massive sword that can hit several enemies at once. It's fairly slow to swing, but essential if you're surrounded by bad guys.

△ **Wand:** This weapon is only available to Force types, and is basically a big magic stick that shoots things and boosts your Mind energy.

△ **Slicer:** A throwing blade that attacks multiple enemies. A handy long-range weapon for character types who don't get on with guns.

NEW THREADS

Enter the relevant code as your name to unlock extra costume colours for each character class. You'll hear a tone to tell you it worked – after that you can rename your character to whatever you like.

Humar	KSKAUDONSU
Hunewearl	MOUEOSRHUN
Hucast	RUUHANGBRT
Ramar	SOUDEGMKSG
Racast	MEIAUGHSYN
Racaseal	NUDNAFJOOH
Fomar	DNEAOHUHEK
Fonewm	ASUEBHEBUI
Fonewearl	XSYGSSHEOH

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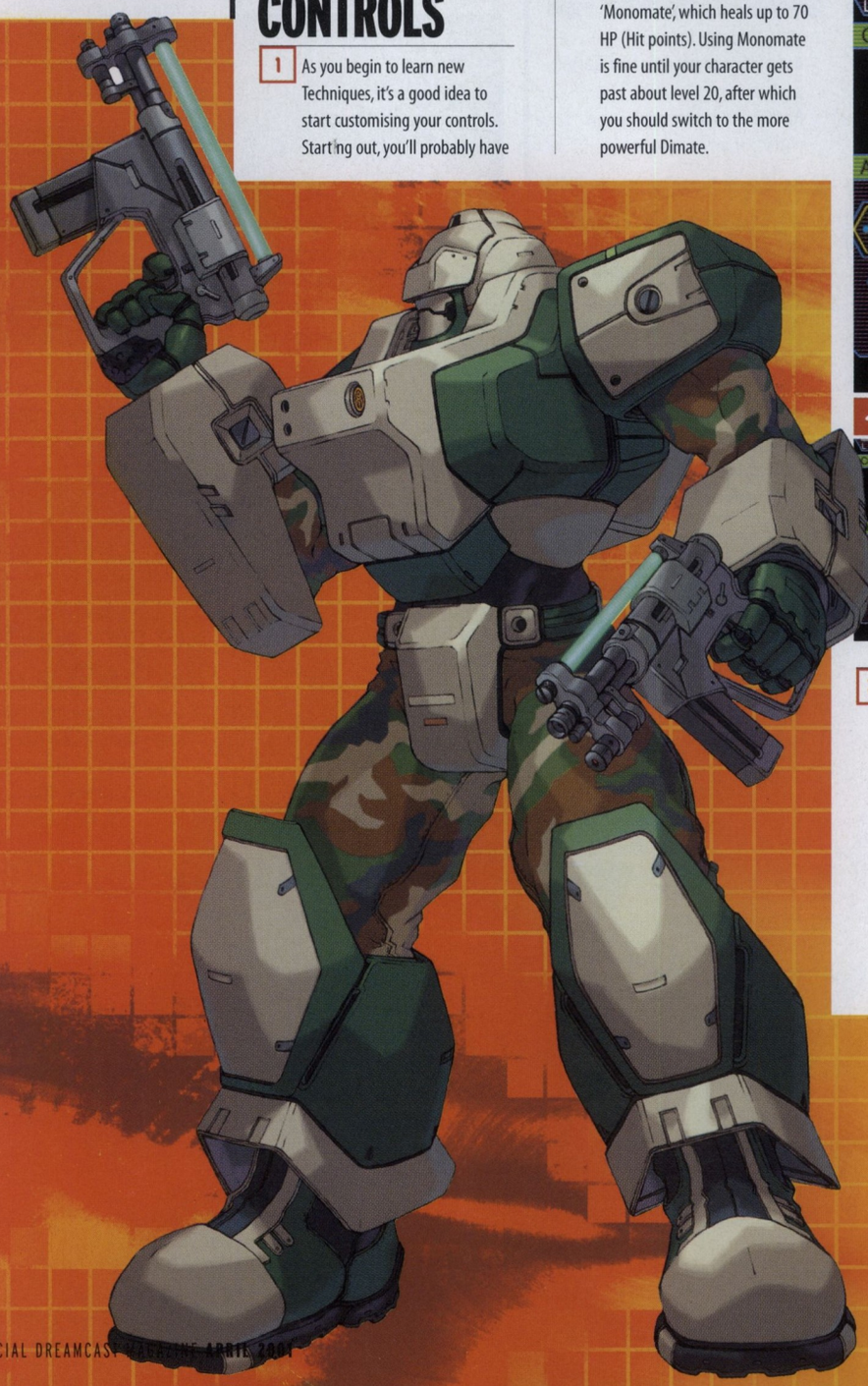
CUSTOMISING CONTROLS

1 As you begin to learn new Techniques, it's a good idea to start customising your controls. Starting out, you'll probably have the X and A buttons set to Strong and Normal attack, and B set to 'Monomate', which heals up to 70 HP (Hit points). Using Monomate is fine until your character gets past about level 20, after which you should switch to the more powerful Dimate.



2 The alternate menu, accessed by holding the R trigger, has an extra three slots for attacks or Techniques. Frail Force type characters will want to map these to Technique attacks pretty quickly, because their close-combat moves leave them open to attack. It also helps to have a button for Monofluid, which recharges up to 70 TP (Technique points).

3 Specific situations call for custom control set-ups. Make sure you have a button for 'Antidote' when playing the Caves levels, since the poisonous plants down there can easily overwhelm you. When taking on a stage boss it's sensible to set the back menu to include 'Resta', a healing move, and 'Shifta', which enhances your attacking power for a short period.

4 Android characters are unable to use Techniques, but there are still uses for the alternate menu. If you've got an enhanced weapon equipped, set one button to the Special attack so you can actually use its extra power. Another button could be set to 'Telepipe', or even the 'Moon Atomiser' to quickly resurrect dead comrades in online games.

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ATTACKING TECHNIQUES

In the right hands, Techniques make awesome weapons. They're arranged in three elemental types, getting progressively more powerful as your character develops. You'll also find that Technique attacks are more effective if you're playing as a Force type character, but remember that androids can't use them at all.

1 **FIRE.** Starting with a quick flaming attack (foie), you then get a more potent ring of fire (gifoie) that attacks any enemies surrounding you. The final fire attack (rafoie) is a massive air-burst explosion that will damage just about anything in the room.

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2 **ICE.** The first attack (barta) sends out ice in a straight line, hitting anything in its path. The next level (gibarta) is a spread attack, hitting any nearby enemies ahead of the player. The last ice attack (rabarta) launches arrows of ice to freeze nearby enemies.

3 **LIGHTNING.** The initial lightning attack (zonde) only zaps a single enemy, but you can use it from a distance, which is handy for Force types. The next level (gizonde) is a chain attack that moves from enemy to enemy as long as they are close together. The final upgrade (razonde) is a wide-ranged attack similar to a high-level fire Technique.

EVERY HIT COUNTS

1 If you're playing with an online group who are at a much higher level, make sure you get at least one hit in on each enemy – even one that does no damage (not a miss) is good enough. This ensures you score the experience points when they get whacked. Try and tag along to the Caves or Mines with friends you trust to level up quickly using this technique.

2 When playing offline in a quest with a non-player character, you can also level up by playing the first couple of missions over and over again and using this technique. They don't take long to get through, but when you return to Pioneer 2 you should go straight to the Guild desk and cancel the job instead of speaking to your client. Now try it again for easy extra experience points.

TELEPIPES

1 It might seem to be the coward's way out, but there's nothing wrong with using a Telepipe to nip back to the Pioneer 2 if you're running low on supplies. Low-level Force characters going up against tough enemies might even want to consider mapping the Telepipe (or Ryuker technique, which performs the same function) to a controller button in case it all goes a bit wrong. Bear in mind, though, that using a Telepipe will wipe out any charge your Mag might have built up, meaning you have to time your 'end-of-level boss supply runs' carefully.

2 Another handy Telepipe tip is that they last until the creator travels both ways through them. So, in a multiplayer game several players can lay Telepipes and they'll stay open as long as the teams use each other's pipes to move about. It's also polite to drop a Telepipe near your position if a new player joins the game, allowing them to catch up with the minimum of fuss.

MAGS

1 Although you eventually get prompted by a non-player character a few quests into the game, it's a good idea to start feeding items to your Mag right from the start. Go to the Item Pack, select Mag and then Give Items. Each one evolves and learns a new Photon Blast when it reaches levels 10, 35 and 50. To begin with you can feed it pretty much anything to make it grow, but after the first evolution you can tailor its development based on what it eats. After level 35, some items actually detract from its power levels, so you'll need to experiment and find out what works best for your Mag.

2 Once your Mag has gained a Photon Blast, it will gradually charge up (keep an eye on the yellow circle next to your HP meter). Killing enemies adds one point to the charge, but getting hits powers up your Mag faster. Once it reaches 100, you can use a Photon Blast. The 'R' menu changes to display your Photon Blasts, so you can use any moves that are programmed there while you're charged. A full charge also gives you a short period of invincibility.

EXTRA HELP

1 **KILL EVERYTHING!** This might seem obvious, but be sure to kill every monster you encounter, and smash open every crate while you're at it. Killing a wave of monsters will often unlock the door to the next area, and can also unlock remote areas before you reach them – saving you from having to backtrack later. A lot of crates are empty, but you'll often find valuable unidentified weapons or weapons that are particularly effective on certain types of enemy. Grey crates are hit-and-miss, but gold ones will always have something inside and are therefore often placed behind forcefields.

2 **RADAR.** An essential tool in your arsenal is the radar in the top right-hand corner of the screen. Keep an eye on it as you enter each room, as the radar always shows the positions of nearby monsters. Since they also have a nasty habit of teleporting in waves, it gives effective advance warning of ambushes, too.

3 **NON-STOP.** Don't forget that you can't pause the game, even when you're playing offline. To get around the problems this causes (say your mobile rings, or you need the toilet), you can retreat to the previous room or area and the monsters won't follow you, and can't even attack through the doorway. This is also handy if you're in combat and getting overwhelmed because, once you leave a room, monsters will generally shamble back to their starting positions, giving you a little breathing space.

4 **CHECK YOUR WEAPON.** When you buy or pick up a new weapon, be sure to check out its stats screen in your Item Pack to see if it has any specific powers. There's a listing for the four main types of enemy: Native, A. Beast, Machine and Dark, and some weapons offer extra power against a specific type. Be careful though, because some can actually have a negative effect.

5 **WEAPON ATTRIBUTES.** You'll also collect weapons which have a third, Special attack. These range from Ice, which naturally freezes bad guys, to Draw which steals a percentage of an adversary's hit points, to Dim which can strike enemies down in one hit. The Special attack does have drawbacks, however, since it takes a long time to charge up and is extremely inaccurate. 'Unknown' items are always weapons with extra attributes, but they'll be classed as '???????? [type of weapon]' until you have them examined by a Tekker.

6 **HINTS ON PIONEER 2.** Always look around on the main deck of Pioneer 2 after you've accepted a quest. A lot of the people hanging about there will change with each mission, and speaking to them often gives you hints for the upcoming quest – or even pointers towards hidden weapons and items.

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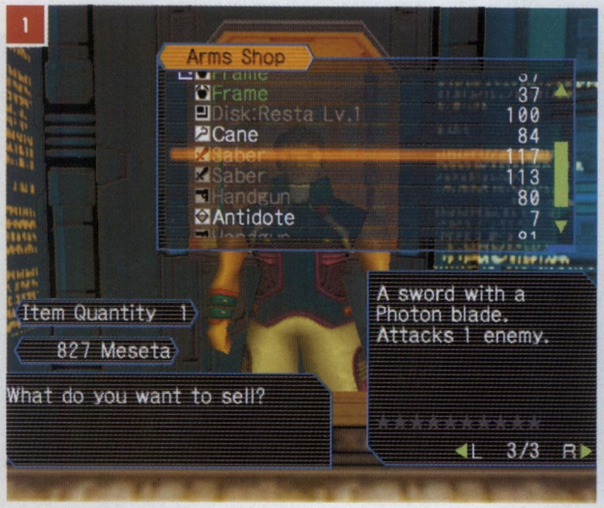

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HOW TO MAKE MONEY

With a bit of effort, it's easy to make more money than you spend in *PSO*, and this certainly comes in handy for when you need that 32000 Meseta for some Hyper Frame armour. Enterprising players might also want to try catching, training up and then selling extra Mags.

1 SELL EVERYTHING. Every time you return to Pioneer 2, flog everything you don't need. Spare weapons, lower level Technique discs you've already learned, equipment your character class can't use… the works. This enables you to splash out on useful new stuff, and you'll almost always have change left over to go in the bank.

2 UNKNOWN ITEMS. On later levels you'll start to pick up Unknown items, which are labelled as '???????? [type of weapon]'. These can't be equipped until you return to Pioneer 2 and get the Tekker in the shop area to examine them. Unless it's something you really need, sell it straightaway because its value once identified is usually a lot more than the 100 Meseta you forked out to have it examined.

3 CRATES. It might get tedious breaking them all, but quite simply, crates equal cash. The most common item you'll find inside crates is Meseta, and on later levels the amounts you find each time get enormous.

4 BANK IT. Finally, don't forget to visit the Check Room to deposit loose change after every mission, or whenever you use a Telepipe. If you die, you lose any cash you were carrying at the time and, while you can go and find it again, it takes ages to trawl back through the level and if you're playing online other players may nick it. There's no limit to the amount of Meseta or Items you can store in the Check Room.

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ARMOUR ACTION

1 SPEND SPEND SPEND! Always buy the best armour you can afford. While you will find some lying about on Ragol that will boost your Defensive power by a couple of points, the serious stuff is always in the shop. The armour you can wear depends on your character's level, so go back to the shop when you level up to see if new types are available.

2 SLOTS OF FUN. Some kinds of armour also have up to three 'slots', which let you plug in Reinforcing units. These have a range of effects, from boosting your HP level to increasing your agility or your resistance to certain types of attack. Pay attention to the slot count on new armour, because logically you can't carry across Reinforcements if your new set doesn't have any.

That's it for this month. Watch out for the second part of our *Phantasy Star Online* guide in next month's *ODM*, on sale Thursday 5 April.

QUAKE III ARENA

WEAPONS GUIDE

ONE OF THE COOLEST THINGS ABOUT *QUAKE III ARENA* (*ODM* #15, 9/10), IS THAT EACH WEAPON IS USEFUL IN ITS OWN WAY. **ED LOMAS** GIVES YOU A BRIEF RUNDOWN OF RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR THEM ALL

1 GAUNTLET

Offensive: Really only a last resort, the gauntlet should be left until you have run out of ammunition for any of the real weapons, or you know that another player is nearly dead and you want to finish them off in the most humiliating way possible. Each hit from the gauntlet does about 50 points of damage though, so it's not as weak as you might expect.

Defensive: If you see another player using the gauntlet, it almost certainly means they have no other weapon. Simply keep your distance from them and let rip with whatever you've got. If they try to run off to get more weaponry, give chase and finish them off as quickly as possible.

2 MACHINE-GUN

Offensive: The standard machine-gun is surprisingly handy in certain situations, but you shouldn't rely on it in a proper firefight. Track down a real weapon as soon as you can, and don't take on any player with a more powerful gun until you've done so. The only time you should go straight into a fight with the machine-gun is when you know a player is already weakened – if you're killed in a violent scrap and reappear near your injured enemy, for example.

Defensive: The only way the machine-gun can do a worthwhile amount of damage is if it's kept pointing at a player for a few seconds. Keep moving and shooting back when there's someone firing a machine-gun at you, and don't run away in a straight line – they'll follow you, shooting in your back to gradually wear your health down.

3 SHOTGUN

Offensive: As the shotgun fires a spread of shots, it's most effective at close-range. Don't even waste your time firing from a distance, as you'll do practically no damage even if you're lucky enough to hit someone. With the shotgun, run at your opponent as quickly as possible and stick it right in their face before firing. They'll almost always back off, shooting defensively as they go, giving you the chance to force them into a corner. A point-blank blast from the shotgun can kill an armour-less opponent in one hit.

Defensive: When facing someone with a shotgun, simply keep your distance and fire back at them with something more powerful. If they run at you, stay calm and aim carefully rather than firing wildly. Remember that the shotgun is slow to reload, giving you enough time to dodge out of their line of fire between shots.

4 GRENADE LAUNCHER

Offensive: As the grenade launcher is a relatively rare weapon in *Quake III Arena*'s deathmatch levels, you really should take some time to practise with it before playing online. Once you understand how the grenades fly, you should be able to aim as accurately as with the rocket launcher at mid-range foes. Use the grenade launcher to surprise enemies in corridors and around corners, as well as to cause chaos below when you're on a high ledge. Simply lob as many as you can into rooms full of battling

enemies, bouncing them in as many different ways as possible to cause complete chaos.

Defensive: Many people are frightened to use the grenade launcher to fire at a single enemy, so rush straight towards anyone carrying one, firing as you go. Chances are they'll try to change weapon, giving you a second or so advantage. If you're in a room and find grenades bouncing all over the place, don't look for the person firing them – get out of there as quickly as possible and wait for them to run out of ammo.

5 ROCKET LAUNCHER

Offensive: The rocket launcher is one of the most valuable weapons because it doesn't require a perfect aim to do damage. Make sure you collect every bit of rocket ammo you see, even when you don't have the rocket launcher – partly so you've got lots when you eventually do get the weapon, and partly so the other players run short of rockets. The rocket launcher is most effective from a distance, particularly when there's a group of players battling it out together. Repeatedly fire rockets into the fray and you're bound to come out with a frag or two. Avoid using the rocket launcher at close-range unless you've got a lot of armour and are finishing off a pesky weakened opponent. And it's not advisable to use it when you've got the Quad Damage power-up unless you're taking long-distance shots.

Defensive: The rocket launcher is surprisingly easy to counter if you just stay calm. Never stand next to a wall when someone's firing rockets at you, as even a bad shot will do damage if you're caught in the explosion. Because of the wide area of damage that a rocket does, players are often loathe to fire them at close-range. As such, you should pick a good close-range weapon such as the shotgun and run at them, dodging from side to side to avoid their rockets. You can quite easily make your way right up to someone using a rocket launcher without being hit once, thanks to its relatively long reload time, and then finish them off with a few embarrassing close-range shots.

6 LIGHTNING GUN

Offensive: The lightning gun works like a powerful version of the machine-gun, in that it needs to be aimed at an opponent continuously to finish them off, particularly when playing online. This means predicting which way they're going to turn and pointing your crosshair there a split-second beforehand. If anyone dares to run away from you, give chase while firing the lightning gun and they'll be dead in a matter of seconds.

Defensive: As lightning gun ammo is fairly thin on the ground, and the weapon flies through the stuff, keep moving as unpredictably as possible and they'll soon be forced to switch guns. Just keep your distance, constantly returning fire. Don't run away down long corridors as it only takes a second or so of concentrated shooting and you're dog food.

7 RAIL GUN

Offensive: The rail gun is the most skilful weapon in the game, as it requires pin-point accuracy. In return it does masses of damage, finishing off enemies in just one or two shots. It's the ideal sniping weapon if you can find a safe vantage point – even more so if you've got a key set up as your 'zoom view' button. Take your time when using the rail gun, making sure you've got a good aim before pressing the fire button. It's tricky to use against fast-moving opponents when online, but with a bit of practice you can learn to predict their movements, making you look extremely cool indeed.

Defensive: Because of its long reload time, it shouldn't be any real trouble to run at someone using the rail gun, dodging side to side to make yourself a tricky target. Look out for the tell-tale coloured laser trail to work out where a rail gun user is hiding, then go get 'em!

8 PLASMA GUN

Offensive: The plasma gun is probably the most useful weapon in *Quake III Arena*, especially when playing online. Its rapid firing rate means it's relatively easy to hit an opponent with a spray of shots, and each of the plasma balls does a surprising amount of damage. There's no special strategy to the plasma gun – just keep stocked up on ammo and keep firing as much as possible. Remember to stay away from walls though, as you can hurt yourself if you're not careful!

Defensive: As with the machine-gun, don't run away in a straight line from someone using a plasma gun. It only takes a few hits in a row to turn you into a pile of mush. Keep facing them as much as possible and dodge from side to side to avoid their shots as best you can, while either trying to sneak round a corner or fire back with one of the more powerful weapons. Let them run out of plasma ammo, then rush straight in and finish them off.

9 BFG 10K

Offensive: The BFG 10K rarely appears in deathmatches, making it a bit of a prize catch. Firing as quickly as a plasma gun with shots as powerful as rockets, it's pretty much unstoppable, especially when used against a room full of players. All you need to be careful of is shooting people or scenery too close to you, or running out of ammo. Just keep stocked up at all times and have fun!

Defensive: Unless you know someone using the BFG is low on health, just get away from them. Ammo is scarce, so they'll soon run out and have to hunt for more, giving you time to take them out.

ROCKET JUMPING

The rocket jump is an extremely useful technique that lets you bounce yourself far higher than a normal jump. Using the rocket launcher, you simply need to look at the floor and press both the Attack and Jump buttons at the same time. You should end up jumping just before your rocket hits the floor, making the ensuing explosion send you flying into the air.

Naturally, you need to make sure you're well stocked up on armour and health before trying it, otherwise you'll look like a real twat. If you have no armour, a rocket jump will take off almost 50 health points. Rocket jumping is useful for surprising opponents, as it lets you instantly get up to high ledges without taking stairs or lifts. Also, valuable items such as red armour and Megahealth packs are often placed on hard-to-reach ledges – it's almost always worth taking the little bit of damage from a rocket jump to get to these goodies as quickly as possible.

It's also possible to use the BFG 10K in exactly the same way to jump even higher. It does pretty much the same amount of damage to you as a rocket jump.

HELP!

FEAR NOT. NO MATTER HOW STUCK, STUMPED OR STRANDED YOU ARE, WRITE IN (CONTACT DETAILS BELOW) AND WE'LL TRY TO SOLVE YOUR GAMING WORRIES. **STEVE KEY** ANSWERS YOUR QUERIES

△ ***Shenmue*: clean out the slot machines at the You arcade!**

SHENMUE

1) How do you get the cherry, the mini-pool table, the mini-jukebox and the mini-slot machine?
2) I cannot seem to win any prizes from Abe Store even though I have spent over 3,000 yen in there!
3) Lastly, is there any way of killing that damn cat, as I desperately want to see that Megumi cry?

JOHN W, VIA EMAIL.

1) You need to head to the slot house and use the tokens on the machines. You win the prizes you've mentioned by getting specific wins on certain machines. You need to get three sevens of the same colour to win one of the prizes. Here are the machines the items are won from:

1 Bet Machine – Cherries
5 Bet Machine – Mini-pool
10 Bet Machine – Mini-slot machine
20 Bet Machine – Mini-jukebox

2) You have no luck. Sorry
3) Again, no.

I'm stuck on disc two of *Shenmue*. I've got the Sword Collar from the Antiques shop, but I put it in wall of the Dojo instead of in the long box, on the floor of the Dojo. Now that I know it should go in the box, I can't get the Sword Collar out of the wall and there seems to be nothing that I can do. Can you please help?

BEN SMITH VIA E-MAIL.

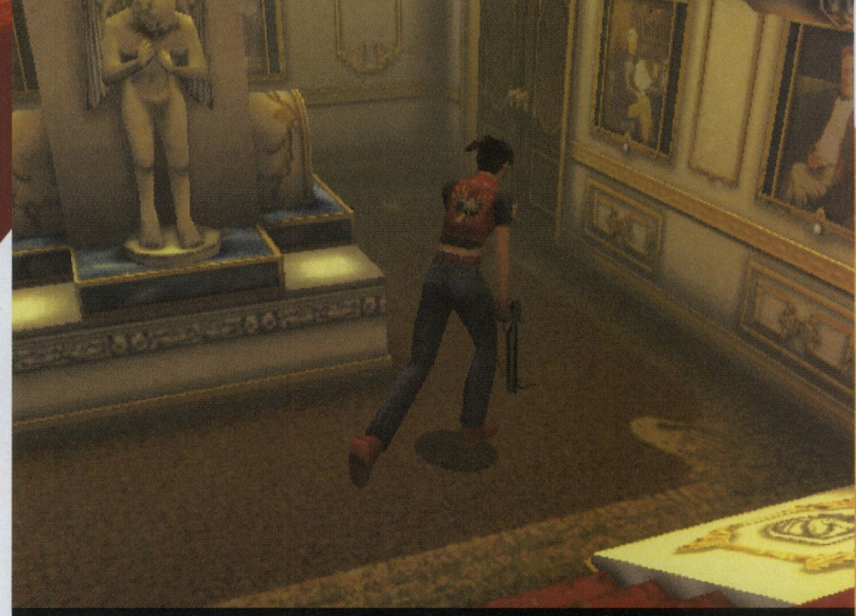
The reason you can't get the collar out of the wall is because you've put it in the right place! You need to use the Mysterious Key found in the black box in Iwao's room to open the long box thus revealing the sword. Fit that into the other hole next to the one with the Collar in it and you'll open the entrance to the secret basement.

QUAKE III ARENA

I have completed the single-player game and have unlocked the accompanying cheat, but in split-screen multiplayer mode not all the levels are included. Is there any way to play with the missing levels in split-screen? Also, how can I change the colour of my name when I'm playing?

TOM LAMB, VIA EMAIL.

We've had quite a few letters like this and we're afraid to say that what you see is what you get – there are none of the levels you mention in this version of *Quake III Arena*. You can, however, change the colour of your name but we don't know how to do it using the controller – yet! Go to enter your name in the Player Setup in the normal way, but press one of the following F keys before you enter a letter or word to change the colour: F1 – Grey, F2 – Red, F3 – Green, F4 –Yellow, F5 – Dark Blue, F6 – Light Blue, F7 – Purple, F8 – White, F9 – Blinking.



△ ***Resident Evil Code: Veronica*: solve the painting puzzle with ease.**

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

I have reached the stage on disk one where I have found the golden key and unlocked the last door in the palace. I'm in a room with seven paintings on the walls of the Ashford family. I have figured out a family tree and associated objects from the information received, but after trying numerous combinations I am stumped as to how I can solve this puzzle.

GRAHAM DEARING, VIA EMAIL

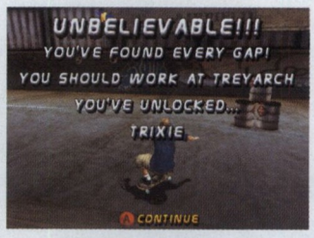
You have to approach the paintings in the following order and press the buttons beneath each one: 1) woman, 2) man with babies, 3) man with tea set, 4) man with plate, 5) man with book, 6) man with candlestick, 7) big picture. Once you've got the vase, check it and look inside and you'll find the red ant.

TIMESTALKERS

Please help me! I'm stuck on *Timestalkers*. How do you beat the fifth boss – the magician in the shrine? I'm getting hammered!

GREENEY, VIA EMAIL.

There are two ways to do this. If you have a high rank, you should concentrate on killing the enemy with the Heal Spell first, because then the boss will be that much easier to pick off. However, there's an even easier way of finishing this dungeon, and that's to simply capture the three enemies that accompany the boss leaving the main man all alone.



◁ ***Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2*: earn Trixie the hard or easy way.**

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

I've been playing *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2* for a while now and I've got all of the secret characters and levels, apart from Private Carrera. Could you please tell me how to get him?

STEVEN DAVENPORT, VIA EMAIL

It seems that Private Carrera has been replaced in the Dreamcast game with a new character called Trixie. To get her you have to clear every single gap in the game! Or you can enter the Unlock All Gaps cheat shown over the page.

DRAGON'S BLOOD

On level five, I can't get past the bit where you have to meet the dead guy in his tomb with some Holy Incense. I have the Incense but the tomb in the catacombs needs a key and I can't find it.

ALLAN MACMILLAN, SCONE.

This is actually incredibly simple. Once you have the Incense all you have to do is return to the 'dead guy' called Freyoc and use it on him. Then he opens his tomb and you can continue on.

NEED SOME HELP?

Then send your gaming problems to us at: Help!, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Alternatively email us at tips@dreamcastmag.co.uk with the subject heading 'Help!' and the name of the game you need help with. Please note: each month we print a selection of questions and answers in *ODM* but we regret that we are unable to provide personal replies.

CHEATS

PSSST! YOU AIN'T SEEN THESE RIGHT? OUR BOYS (AND GIRLS) BRING YOU SOME MORE TOP QUALITY CHEATS TO HELP BUST YOUR GAMES WIDE OPEN!

△ *Jedi Power Battles*: why beat up the Dark Side when you can beat up each other?

JEDI POWER BATTLES

POWER BATTLES MODE

While playing a two-player game, press A+B+X+Y+R all at same time. If you do it right, you will see Power Battles mode float up between the players in white letters. This allows you to inflict damage on the other player with your saber. To turn off, repeat the step.

STAR WARS DEMOLITION

UNLOCK SECRET CHARACTERS

From the main menu, select Options then Preferences. Press L and R triggers together and you'll get the Password Entry screen. Enter these passwords for various results:

WATTO_SHOP – Extra characters
SLOW_MO_ON – Half speed
LO_GRAV_ON – Less gravity
NO_BADDIES – Select zero enemies in Battle mode
ITS_A_TRAP – Enemies attack three at a time
RAISE_THEM – Invincibility
NO_PEEKING – Random enemy and stage selection
MOVIE_SHOW – See all Victory movies
SAD_MOVIES – See all Losing movies
MULTI_CARS – Two players can choose same vehicle
BFM_FEELIT – Vehicle's mass increases
THROTTLEUP – Vehicle's speed increases
EXTRABUTTS – Alternate button configuration
FIRERATEUP – No weapon delay

◁ *Star Wars Demolition*: unlock secret characters and watch movies!

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

INSTANT SICK SCORE

Pause during the career mode and hold the L trigger. Press X, B, Right, X, B, Right, X, B, Right.

DISCO LIGHTS

Again, pause the game and hold the L trigger. Now press Down, Up, X, B, Up, Left, Up, A.

STRANGE MOON PHYSICS

Slightly longer code this time, but you still have to pause and hold the L trigger. Then press Left, Up, Left, Up, Down, Up, X, Y, Left, Up, Left, Up, Down, Up, X, Y.

INFINTE BALANCE

Pause, hold the L trigger and then press the following: Right, Up, Left, X, Right, Up, X, Y.

QUICK $5000

This comes in very handy when playing the career mode. Pause and hold the L trigger. Now press A, Down, Left, Right, Down, Left, Right.

JET PACK MODE

To enter this extremely bizarre new cheat, pause the game and hold the L trigger before entering the following button combinations: Up, Up, Up, Up, A, X, Up, Up, Up, Up, A, X, Up, Up, Up, Up. Now continue the game normally and press A to gain altitude and let go of it to float down. While you're airborne, press and hold Y to activate the jet pack! The L and R triggers will strafe you in the relevant direction. To cancel this cheat, simply re-enter the code.

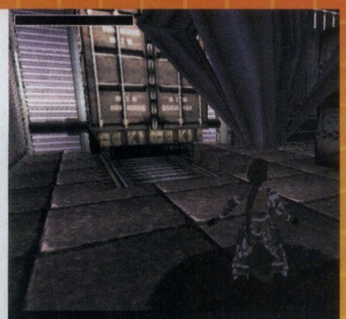
KID MODE

Same again. Pause and hold the L trigger. Now hit these buttons: B, Up, Up, Left, Left, B, Up, Down, X.

UNLOCK ALL GAPS

Press Start again and hold the L trigger once more. Now press the following: Down, Up, Left, Left, B, Left, Up, Y, Y, Up, Right, X, X, UP, A. This cheat will also unlock Trixie as a playable character.

◁ *Gunbird 2*: they just couldn't resist putting in some familiar faces!



△ *Tomb Raider Chronicles*: skip chapters!

SHENMUE

WIN LUCKY DIPS

You must be working at the harbour to do this. When it's your lunch break, go to the Tomato Mart in the Harbour Lounge. When your lunch break is just about up around 1:55pm, buy a cassette tape. As a result you will automatically pick a winning ticket.

70 MAN BATTLE TIME ATTACK

First complete the game. Now insert Disc 3 into your Dreamcast. Go to the Options and select the new option at the bottom of the screen. Select the cleared file as the resume file gets wiped for some reason. Press A to start the time attack or press R to see the list of moves. You don't have to beat all 70 men – just the third boss to complete the battle.

TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

CHAPTER SKIP

At the main menu screen, press and hold the L and R triggers, then repeatedly tap or hold Up to skip to the last chapter. Alternatively, tap or press Left to go to the third chapter and tap or hold Down to advance to the second chapter.

GUNBIRD 2

SELECT MORRIGAN

On the character select screen, move the cursor over the question mark and press Up.

SELECT AIN

On the same screen, move the cursor over the question again, but this time press Down.

KNOW SOME GOOD CHEATS?

Well don't keep them all to yourself – send them in to help other gamers out and to show off your greatness. Send your Tips to: Tips, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Alternatively email them to us at tips@dreamcastmag.co.uk. Thanks this month to Mike Groves, DaveMaul, Andrew Burton, Paul Thompson, Perry Digweed, Peter Ward, Samuel Lane, Marcus Wells, Matthew Forrester, James Crane, Vincent Masters and countless others we couldn't fit in. Sorry we can't name you all.

PHONE FOR HELP

Having trouble with a game and can't wait to see a reply in these pages? Then you need to check out...

THE OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE TIPS HELPLINE

09064 664477 (UK)
01580 924606 (EIRE)

OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, 8AM-11PM
On the rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team who guarantee to find you an answer within 24 hours.

△ Get that sinking feeling with *Ecco*?

△ Flummoxed by *Fur Fighters*?

△ Still stuck in *Code: Veronica*?

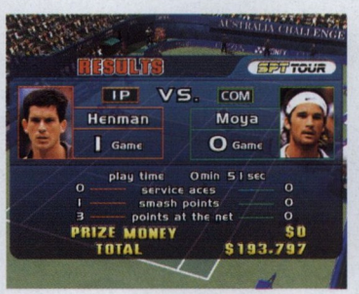
• Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In the case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155 (UK); +44 870 800 6155 (Eire).

CHALLENGES

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO IMMORTALISE YOURSELF ON THESE VERY PAGES. TOP ONE OF OUR CHALLENGES AND WIN A GAME IN THE PROCESS

THIS MONTH

Finish top in any of these demo challenges (from Dreamon 18, free with *ODM* #17) and win a game of your choice from Sega Europe! (Please read the rules below very carefully!)



△ *Virtua Tennis*: how quick can you be?

VIRTUA TENNIS (DEMO)

Arcade Mode, Singles, play as Henman, win game in quickest time

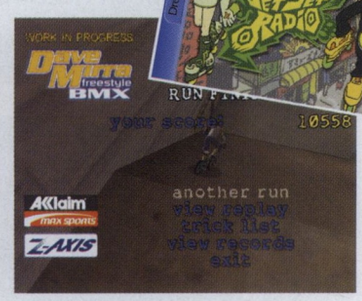
You have to be quick here – not only by winning in the fastest time, but also to get a shot of this screen. Be quick with the camera because the screen doesn't stay there for long.

△ *Ducati World*: can you set the fastest lap?

DUCATI WORLD (DEMO)

Fastest Lap

This is a constant running demo, so after a few laps of getting to know the course, you should be able to start shaving chunks from your time. Once you've got a good time, take a pic of the top right corner of the screen and send it into us.



△ *Dave Mirra*: show us some moves!

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX (DEMO)

Highest overall score

Give us your best spins and tricks to try and earn yourself a free game. Start the demo mode, and in the 1 minute 30 sec time limit amass the highest score you can. Then send us a pic of this screen.

RESULTS

Did you enter a contest in our January issue (*ODM* #15)? Well here's a list of the top ten entries for each of the challenges in that issue. Congratulations to the winners, who each win a game of their choice from Sega Europe.

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

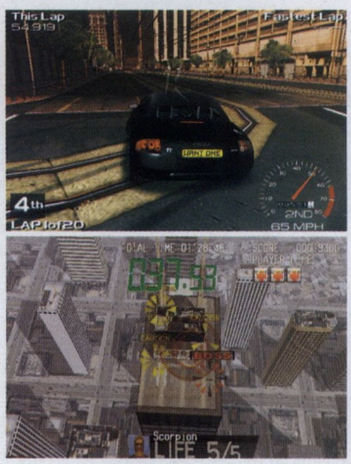
Fastest lap, Time Attack, using the MGF, St Martins North II circuit in London

1.	20.251	STEVE DOVEY, HERTS
2.	20.403	SHAUN LOCKER, NORTHUMB.
3.	20.465	M. CASEY, BARTON-UPON-HUMBER
4.	20.800	J. DANIEL MORGAN, WOLVES
5.	21.681	G. CHALLAND, MILTON KEYNES
6.	21.756	ROSS COWE, SCOTLAND
7.	22.325	RICHIE HULME, SHROPSHIRE
8.	22.648	MICHAEL BULLEN, GRIMSBY
9.	22.890	ROBERT FIELDING, ANDOVER
10.	22.943	MICHAEL MELDREW, BRIGHTON

SILENT SCOPE (DEMO)

Finish the demo in the fastest time

1.	00'56"70	LEE COURT, HERTS
2.	00'58"50	M. CASEY, BARTON-UPON-HUMBER
3.	01'01"42	STUART MCDOWELL, GLASGOW
4.	01'03"88	JAMIE KING, CHELMSFORD
5.	01'04"63	S.J. ALLEN, ESSEX
6.	01'06"03	MASSIMO CATTANEO, ITALY
7.	01'11"53	GRAEME PIPER, EXETER
8.	01'18"66	EDWARD SUSSEX, LUTON
9.	01'26"30	ALEX TULLOH, HERTS
10.	01'29"56	STEVE AUREL PAULE, LONDON



△ *MSR* (top) and *Silent Scope* (bottom): were you quick enough to rank in these challenges?

HOW DO YOU ENTER?

Play the given game with your camera at the ready. When you get your score/time quickly take a picture (it's a good idea to darken the room and turn the flash off). Now post your photo along with your name and address and name of the game you'd like to win (you can choose any game published by Sega except *Samba De Amigo*), to: Challenges, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London, W1P 5FF. Note: please do not send digital photographs, print outs of digital photos, videos or VM units to confirm your scores – they will not be returned to you and you will not be included in the competition. *ODM* regrets that it cannot return photos. The closing date for these competitions is Thursday 12 April.

THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST MAGAZINE READER SURVEY 2001

WHO ARE YA?

Win a pair of top-class tickets to Arsenal vs Leeds United or £150 cash... by telling us what you think of this magazine!

TO MAKE SURE THAT we make *Official Dreamcast Magazine* as good as it can possibly be, we need to know what you think of your magazine. This survey is your chance to give us some feedback and to let us know a little more about your life and your gaming habits.

Your opinion will help to shape future issues of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*. To thank you for your time and input, all returned surveys will be entered into a free draw to win two premium tickets to see Arsenal vs Leeds United at Highbury, courtesy of sponsors Sega Europe. Watch these two titans of the Premiership battle it out on Saturday 5 May, in what will be the last home game of the season for the Gunners.

With both teams fighting for a place in Europe, it will unquestionably be one of the most important ties of the season. What's more, you'll get to see the game from Sega's swish executive box, with pre-match lunch and all the trimmings thrown in.

Don't like football that much? Well, you can opt for a £150 cash prize instead to spend on whatever you like (please indicate your choice of prize at the end of the survey). What are you waiting for, eh?

HOW TO ENTER

Send in your completed survey by Thursday 5 April 2001 to ensure your chance of winning a prize. You don't even need a stamp – simply write the Freepost address given at the end of the survey on your envelope and post. Note: if you do not want to cut these pages from your magazine, we are happy to accept a photocopy.

Please read the magazine and then answer the questions by ticking the appropriate boxes. The numbers next to the boxes are for our use in analysing the results, so please ignore them. For ease of reference, *Official Dreamcast Magazine* will be referred to as *ODM* throughout this survey.

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

1 About how long have you owned a Dreamcast console?

<3 months	☐ 1 (6)
3-6 months	☐ 2
6-12 months	☐ 3
More than 12 months	☐ 4

2 Why did you buy this issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine* (*ODM*)? (Please tick all that apply)

Attracted by cover disc	☐ 1 (7)
Read/heard about it	☐ 2
Impulse purchase in shop	☐ 3
Recommended by friend	☐ 4
To read the games reviews	☐ 5

3 Where did you buy your copy of *ODM*?

I am a subscriber	☐ 1 (8)
Newsagent	☐ 2
Supermarket	☐ 3
Software store (eg HMV)	☐ 4

4 If bought in a shop, how easy was it for you to find your issue of *ODM*?

It was on display in the first newsagent I visited	☐ 1 (9)
It was in the first newsagent, but I had to ask for it	☐ 2
I had to visit a number of shops before I found it	☐ 3

5 What is your overall opinion of *ODM*?

Like it a lot	☐ 1 (10)
Like it a bit	☐ 2
Unsure	☐ 3
Don't like it much	☐ 4
Don't like it at all	☐ 5

6 Which of these different *ODM* covers do you like the most?

☐ 1 (11)

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

Please mention below any reasons that made you particularly prefer this cover:

_____

_____

_____

7 What do you think of the overall layout and design of *ODM*?

Excellent	☐ 1 (12)
Good	☐ 2
Average	☐ 3
Poor	☐ 4

8 How important is a cover disc to you when considering which console magazine to buy?

Very important	☐ 1 (13)
Quite important	☐ 2
Neither important nor unimportant	☐ 3
Not important	☐ 4
Not at all important	☐ 5

9 Would you consider buying *ODM* without a cover disc if it was a lower cover price?

Definitely	☐ 1 (14)
Probably	☐ 2
Unsure	☐ 3
Unlikely	☐ 4
Definitely not	☐ 5

10 In general how do you rate the contents of *ODM* cover discs?

	Excellent (15)	Good (16)	Average (17)	Poor (18)
Full playable demos	☐ 1	☐ 1	☐ 1	☐ 1
Exclusive games (ie *Sega Swirl*)	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Game movie footage	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Movie trailers (ie *Shenmue*)	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4

11 Would an exclusive preview or review make you more likely to buy any of the console magazines?

	Preview	Review
Yes	☐ 1 (19)	☐ 1 (20)
No	☐ 2	☐ 2
Don't know	☐ 3	☐ 3

12 How many other people besides yourself, read your copy of *ODM*?

None	☐ 1 (21)
One	☐ 2
Two	☐ 3
Three	☐ 4
Four or more	☐ 5

13 About how long did you spend reading this copy of *ODM*?

Less than 1 hour	☐ 1 (22)
1-2 hours	☐ 2
2-3 hours	☐ 3
3-4 hours	☐ 4
4 hours or more	☐ 5

14 What will you do with your copy of *ODM* after you have finished reading it?

Keep the whole copy	☐ 1 (23)
Keep parts of it	☐ 2
Pass it on to someone else	☐ 3
Throw it away	☐ 4

15 How would you rate the following sections of *ODM*?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
The cover	☐ 1 (24)	☐ 1 (25)	☐ 1 (26)	☐ 1 (27)
Disc information	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Contents	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Who Does This Stuff? (Page 6)	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
Cover feature (*Headhunter*)	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
News	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6
Music/movie reviews	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7
Whatever Happened To...	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8
Your Most Wanted	☐ 9	☐ 9	☐ 9	☐ 9
Arcade Test	☐ o	☐ o	☐ o	☐ o
The Playlist	☐ x	☐ x	☐ x	☐ x
Gadget reviews	☐ v	☐ v	☐ v	☐ v
Vox Pops	☐ 1 (28)	☐ 1 (29)	☐ 1 (30)	☐ 1 (31)
Talent (interviews)	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Previews	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Reviews	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
Drinking & Thinking	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
In The Hot Seat	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6
Player guides	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7
Help!	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8
Cheats	☐ 9	☐ 9	☐ 9	☐ 9
Challenges	☐ o	☐ o	☐ o	☐ o
Games Directory	☐ x	☐ x	☐ x	☐ x
FAQs (Page 103)	☐ v	☐ v	☐ v	☐ v
Readers' Fives (Page 104)	☐ 1 (32)	☐ 1 (33)	☐ 1 (34)	☐ 1 (35)
ODM Recommends	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Reader Reviews	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Website reviews	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
The Big Debate	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
Letters	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6
Ask Sega	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7
End Game (back page)	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8

16 Would you like to see more or less coverage of the following sections in *ODM*?

	More	Same	Less
News	☐ 1 (36)	☐ 1 (37)	☐ 1 (38)
Music/movie reviews	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Previews	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Reviews	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
Interviews	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
Features	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6
Player guides	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7
Cheats and hints	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8

17 Based on your experience of buying games after reading reviews in the magazine, what do you think of *ODM*'s scoring system?

Too harsh	☐ 1 (39)
A bit too harsh	☐ 2
Fair	☐ 3
A bit too lenient	☐ 4
Too lenient	☐ 5

18 In general how do you find the games coverage in *ODM*?

Too detailed	☐ 1 (40)
About right	☐ 2
Not detailed enough	☐ 3

19 Would you like to hear more or less views and opinions from the following people in *ODM*?

	More	Same	Less
The *ODM* team	☐ 1 (41)	☐ 1 (42)	☐ 1 (43)
Industry figures	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Celebrities	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Other readers	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4

20 Would you like *ODM* to feature news on Sega games on platforms other than Dreamcast?

	Yes	Don't care	No
Sony PlayStation	☐ 1 (44)	☐ 1 (45)	☐ 1 (46)
Sony PlayStation 2	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Nintendo Game Boy Advance	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Nintendo Game Cube	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
Microsoft Xbox	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
Other (ie mobile phones)	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6

OTHER THINGS YOU READ

21 Which of the following types of magazine do you read and how often?

	Regularly (47)	Occasionally (48)	Never (49)
Any computer magazine	☐ 1	☐ 1	☐ 1
Any internet magazine	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Any console magazine	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Any music magazine	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
Any sport magazine	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
Any car magazine	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6
Any men's lifestyle magazine (eg *FHM*, *Maxim*)	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7

22 Which of the following specific magazines do you read and how often?

	Regularly (50)	Occasionally (51)	Never (52)
DC:UK	☐ 1	☐ 1	☐ 1
Dreamcast Magazine	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Computer & Video Games	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Edge	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
Video Gamer	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
Official PlayStation Magazine	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6
PC Zone	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7
PC Gamer	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8
PC Gear	☐ 9	☐ 9	☐ 9
Digitizer (on Teletext)	☐ 0	☐ 0	☐ 0

THE INTERNET

23 Do you currently access the Internet?

	At home (53)	At work (54)
Yes – from a computer	☐ 1	☐ 1
Yes – from my Dreamcast	☐ 2	☐ 2
No	☐ 3	☐ 3
Plan to in next year	☐ 4	☐ 4

If "No", please go straight to question 29.

24 Have you accessed the *ODM* website (www.dreamcastmag.co.uk)?

Yes	☐ 1 (55)
No	☐ 2
I didn't know it existed	☐ 3

25 If you have accessed the *ODM* website, what do you think of it?

Very good	☐ 1 (56)
Good	☐ 2
Average	☐ 3
Poor	☐ 4

26 Have you registered on Dreamarena?

Yes	☐ 1 (57)
No	☐ 2

27 About how many hours a week do you spend online?

Less than 1 hour	☐ 1 (58)
1-5 hours	☐ 2
5-10 hours	☐ 3
10-15 hours	☐ 4
15-20 hours	☐ 5
20 hours or more	☐ 6

28 What do you use your Dreamcast for online?

Email	☐ 1 (59)
Online gaming	☐ 2
Online shopping	☐ 3
Browsing web for news	☐ 4
Browsing web for reviews	☐ 5
Browsing web for 'naughty' pics	☐ 6

YOUR GAMING HABITS

29 How many hours a week do you spend playing games on your console or PC?

Less than 4 hours	☐ 1 (60)
4-10 hours	☐ 2
10-20 hours	☐ 3
20-30 hours	☐ 4
30-40 hours	☐ 5
40+ hours	☐ 6

30 How often do you visit an arcade?

Regularly	☐ 1 (61)
Occasionally	☐ 2
Never	☐ 3

31 Which type of games do you play?

Driving/racing games (ie *MSR*)	☐ 1 (62)
Action-adventures (ie *Resident Evil 2*)	☐ 2
2D beat 'em ups (ie *Marvel Vs Capcom 2*)	☐ 3
3D beat 'em ups (ie *Soul Calibur*)	☐ 4
Sports sims (ie *Virtua Tennis*)	☐ 5
Platform games (ie *Rayman 2*)	☐ 6
Strategy/puzzle games (ie *ChuChu Rocket!*)	☐ 7
Role-playing games (ie *Evolution*)	☐ 8

32 Which of the following Dreamcast games do you own/have you played offline/online?

	Own	Played offline	Played online
ChuChu Rocket!	☐ 1 (63)	☐ 1 (64)	☐ 1 (65)
Quake III Arena	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Planet Ring	☐ 3	N/A	☐ 3
Phantasy Star Online	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 4

33 Which of the following games consoles do you own or intend to buy?

	Own	Intend to buy
I do not own/intend to buy any	☐ 1 (66)	☐ 1 (67)
Sega Dreamcast	☐ 2	☐ 2
Sony PlayStation/PS one	☐ 3	☐ 3
Sony PlayStation 2	☐ 4	☐ 4
Nintendo 64	☐ 5	☐ 5
Nintendo Game Cube	N/A	☐ 6
Nintendo Game Boy/Color	☐ 6	☐ 7
Nintendo Game Boy Advance	N/A	☐ 8
Microsoft Xbox	N/A	☐ 9
Other games console	☐ 7	☐ 0

34 About how many new Dreamcast games...

a) have you bought in the last 3 months?
b) do you plan to buy in the next 3 months?

	a)	b)
None	☐ 1 (68)	☐ 1 (69)
1-3	☐ 2	☐ 2
4-6	☐ 3	☐ 3
7-9	☐ 4	☐ 4
10 or more	☐ 5	☐ 5

35 Which of the following influence your decision to buy a game?

Reviews in specialist games mags (ie *ODM*)	☐ 1 (70)
Reviews in other mags	☐ 2
Reviews online	☐ 3
Advertising in specialist games mags	☐ 4
Advertising on TV/radio	☐ 5
Advertising online	☐ 6
Word of mouth	☐ 7
Demo on CD covermount	☐ 8

36 Where do you buy your games from?

Specialist games store	☐ 1 (71)
Other shop	☐ 2
Mail order	☐ 3
Online	☐ 4

OTHER THINGS YOU OWN

37 Which of the following items do you own or intend to buy in the next 12 months?
(Please tick all that apply)

	Have/Own	Intend to buy
All in one hi-fi	☐ 1 (72)	☐ 1 (73)
Hi-fi separates	☐ 2	☐ 2
MiniDisc	☐ 3	☐ 3
Satellite dish	☐ 4	☐ 4
Digital TV/cable	☐ 5	☐ 5
Widescreen TV	☐ 6	☐ 6
MP3 player	☐ 7	☐ 7
DVD player	☐ 8	☐ 8
Watch	☐ 9	☐ 9
Camera	☐ o	☐ o
WAP phone	☐ x	☐ x
Personal Computer	☐ v	☐ v
Bike	☐ 1 (74)	☐ 1 (75)
Sports/fitness equipment	☐ 2	☐ 2
Computer software and games	☐ 3	☐ 3
Pension	☐ 4	☐ 4
Personal finance packages	☐ 5	☐ 5

38 Which of the following Dreamcast peripherals do you own or do you intend to buy in the next 12 months? (Please could you indicate whether any products you own are Sega brands or from some other manufacturer?)

	Own (Sega)	Own (Other manufacturer)	Intend to buy
Extra joypad	☐ 1 (76)	☐ 1 (77)	☐ 1 (78)
Memory card	☐ 2	☐ 2	☐ 2
Vibration pack	☐ 3	☐ 3	☐ 3
Keyboard	☐ 4	☐ 4	☐ 4
Mouse	☐ 5	☐ 5	☐ 5
Light-gun	☐ 6	☐ 6	☐ 6
Fishing rod	☐ 7	☐ 7	☐ 7
Steering wheel	☐ 8	☐ 8	☐ 8
Arcade stick	☐ 9	☐ 9	☐ 9
Microphone	☐ o	☐ o	☐ o
Maracas	☐ x	☐ x	☐ x
SCART lead	☐ v	☐ v	☐ v
VGA box	☐ 1 (79)	☐ 1 (80)	☐ 1 (6)

ABOUT YOU

39 What sex are you?

Male	☐ 1 (7)
Female	☐ 2

40 How old are you

701	Under 15	☐ 1 (8)
702	15-17	☐ 2
703	18-24	☐ 3
704	25-34	☐ 4
705	35-44	☐ 5
706	45-54	☐ 6
707	55-64	☐ 7
708	65 +	☐ 8

Please specify your actual age here:.....(9-11)

41 Which of the following best describes your occupation ? (Please tick one only)

601	Owner/board director	☐ 1 (12)
601	Senior managerial/professional	☐ 2
602	Managerial/professional	☐ 3
603	Executive	☐ 4
604	Clerical	☐ 5
605	Work from home/self-employed	☐ 6
606	Manual	☐ 7
607	Unemployed	☐ 8
608	Retired	☐ 9
609	In full-time education	☐ o
610	Other	☐ x

42 Are you:

Married or living with partner	☐ 1 (13)
Single	☐ 2
Widowed, divorced, separated	☐ 3

43 Do you live...

With your parents	☐ 1 (14)
With partner/family	☐ 2
With friends	☐ 3
Alone	☐ 4

44 About how much do you earn a year?

801	Under £10,000	☐ 1 (15)
802	£10,000-£14,999	☐ 2
803	£15,000-£19,999	☐ 3
804	£20,000-£24,999	☐ 4
805	£25,000-£29,999	☐ 5
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GAMES DIRECTORY

THE LOT. A SUMMARY OF EVERY DREAMCAST GAME REVIEWED IN *ODM*

GAME	PUBLISHER	MAX PLAYERS	ONLINE	VIDEO	ISSUE	RATING
102 DALMATIANS: PUPPIES TO THE RESCUE	EIDOS	6	NO	50/VGA	16	5
Movie tie-in aimed firmly at the kids. Here you've got to rescue puppies that are hidden on each level. Mini-games, including crazy golf that six can play at once, add to the fun.						
4 WHEEL THUNDER	MIDWAY	2	NO	50/60/VGA	8	8
Race nitro-guzzling monster trucks around a variety of long and short tracks, improving your vehicle as you collect prize money. Good fun with strong multiplayer modes.						
4x4 EVOLUTION	TAKE 2	4	YES	50/60/VGA	16	6
Competent multiplayer off-road racer that works well online but suffers from weak course design and poor collision detection. Too dull for single-player sessions.						
ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES	3DO	4	NO	50/60	16	3
Mission-based action starring the famous plastic toys. The main emphasis is on combat with a variety of weapons. Shame the graphics, sound and levels are all so mediocre.						
AEROWINGS	CRAVE	1	NO	50	1	6
Take to the skies in an aerobatic flight sim. There's no bullets, just the test of flying in formation… which is surprisingly rewarding as you can save replays to a VM.						
AEROWINGS 2: AIR STRIKE	CRAVE	2	NO	50	11	6
More aerobatic missions, now with the added attraction of weapons and two-player dogfights. Good if you like flight sims although the missions are a bit limited.						
BANGAI-O	VIRGIN	1	NO	50/60	14	7
Action-packed 2D blaster with some very extravagant explosions. The '80s-style gameplay is simple and addictive, but lack of a two-player mode is a bummer.						
BLUE STINGER	ACTIVISION	1	NO	50	0	7
Save an island from a bunch of freaky mutants. Decent *Resident Evil*-inspired adventure thrills but a badly-paced story, poor controls and awkward camera positions let the side down.						
BUGGY HEAT	SEGA	2	*YES	50	2	4
Weak off-road racer starring dune buggies and trucks, although with slow speed and dull tracks. Downloading the driving style of other players to race against is a neat idea, though.						
BUST-A-MOVE 4	ACCLAIM	2	NO	50	9	7
Latest edition of the classic puzzler, boasting simple but extremely addictive multi-coloured bubble-bursting challenges. Easy to pick up – hard to put down.						
BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND	ACTIVISION	1	NO	50/60/VGA	17	7
Typical platform game structure, with the star of *Toy Story* on a galaxy-wide quest to stop the evil Emperor Zurg. Good but a little too easy in places.						
CAESARS PALACE 2000	INTERPLAY	4	NO	50/60	12	3
Large but uninspiring collection of gambling games. Slow computer decisions and unnecessary animations make even a hand of blackjack drag on. The computer cheats too!						
CAPCOM Vs SNK	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60/VGA	15	8
Years in the making superbout between the two biggest 2D fighting dojos. The action doesn't disappoint. Pity about the character sprite resolution, though.						
CHICKEN RUN	EIDOS	1	NO	50/60/VGA	16	6
Fun film tie-in that borrows the sneaking around gameplay of *Metal Gear Solid*. The easy difficulty setting is a pain but the humour and mini-games add variety.						
CHUCHU ROCKET!	SEGA	4	YES	50/60/VGA	9	9
Frantic cat and mouse puzzle action. Easy to play and learn and with full online (although with a slight delay) features. Now only available with new Dreamcasts.						
CRAZY TAXI	SEGA	1	NO	50/60/VGA	5	9
As a cabbie driving through a virtual city you have to ferry people to their chosen destination before the timer reaches zero. A must-have arcade gem with a clever bonus system.						
DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX	ACCLAIM	2	NO	50/VGA	16	4
Perform BMX tricks in this *Tony Hawk* wannabe. There's good level design and loads of tricks to perform but overall it's too simple and almost impossible to fall off the bike.						
DEADLY SKIES	KONAMI	1	NO	50	4	5
Arcade-style air combat with you out to make money flying planes and there's a wide range of fighter planes to pick from. The action is fast and furious but soon gets repetitive.						
DEAD OR ALIVE 2	ACCLAIM	2	NO	50/60	11	8
Pretender to *Soul Calibur*'s crown that is better looking (if you can believe that) but doesn't feature as wide a range of fighters or moves. Interactive arenas are impressive.						
DEEP FIGHTER	UBI SOFT	1	NO	50/60/VGA	10	6
Inventive mission-based blaster set underwater in a mini-sub. Let down by slow action, caused in some part by the snail's pace and responsiveness of the sub.						
DINO CRISIS	VIRGIN	1	NO	50	15	6
Capcom survival horror on a remote island, with dinos instead of zombies. There's more strategy than the *Resident Evil* series but it still looks like a PlayStation game.						
DISNEY'S DINOSAUR	UBI SOFT	1	NO	50/60/VGA	15	5
Guide the dinosaurs to safety in this based-on-the-movie adventure. Switching between characters is clever, but there's not enough variety to keep you interested.						
DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK	UBI SOFT	1	NO	50/60/VGA	16	7
Colourful cartoon platform adventure starring Disney's famous duck. Good use of the character and imaginative structure but could do with some more levels.						
DRAGONS BLOOD	VIRGIN	1	NO	50/60	10	6
Fantasy-themed hack 'n' slash affair where the creatures you fight have different personalities – this adds a degree of challenge but sadly every other aspect is mediocre.						
DYNAMITE COP	SEGA	2	NO	50/VGA	2	5
Kick, punch, throw and shoot your way past terrorists who've taken control of a cruise ship. Save the passengers in this arcade conversion. Trashy fun while it lasts, but far too short.						
ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE	SEGA	1	NO	50/60/VGA	9	9
Underwater epic based on the exploits of a young dolphin out to save Earth. Long-lasting challenge that features amazing sounds and graphics. Tom 'Dr Who' Baker narrates!						
ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50	7	3
Successor to Acclaim's *WWF Attitude*, using the same poor game engine but substituting the WWF stars for ECW. Unresponsive controls kill any enjoyment.						
EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE	VIRGIN	4	NO	50/VGA	17	7
Competent football sim with 16 of the best European clubs included. Let down by some dodgy artificial intelligence and poor refereeing.						
EVOLUTION	UBI SOFT	1	NO	50/60	3	8
Should keep fans of role-playing games happy, with a rewarding storyline and simple, intuitive controls. Looks cute but is quite challenging thanks in part to random elements.						

GAME	PUBLISHER	MAX PLAYERS	ONLINE	VIDEO	ISSUE	RATING
F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP	VIDEO SYSTEM	2	NO	50/60/VGA	17	6
Another attempt to bring the excitement of F1 to Dreamcast. The old driver/car statistics and twitchy, unrealistic handling of cars makes this an also ran.						
F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX FOR DC	SEGA	2	NO	50/60/VGA	2	8
Great driving sim with gorgeous graphics and plenty of features. Real drivers, teams and courses are on offer, plus a competent two-player split-screen mode.						
F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX II	KONAMI	2	NO	50/60/VGA	13	7
Superior sequel that offers improved handling and graphics, with plenty of behind-the-scenes enhancements and updated drivers and circuits of the 1999/00 season.						
F355 CHALLENGE	ACCLAIM	2	YES*	50/60/VGA	13	8
The most serious driving game ever. Essentially a simulator of the F355, with optional driver assists to give you a hand. Very, very challenging but stick with it and reap the rewards.						
FIGHTING FORCE 2	EIDOS	1	NO	50/60	4	3
Hawk Manson is a man on a mission in this weak port of a drab PlayStation title. Poor selection of fighting moves, lots of guns and explosions but it's just not fun.						
FIGHTING VIPERS 2	SEGA	2	NO	50/60/VGA	17	6
Long-lost coin-op resurfaces after years in the wilderness. A decent beat 'em up, but it should have appeared on DC long before *Soul Calibur* if it really wanted to impress.						
FUR FIGHTERS	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50/60/VGA	9	7
Cartoon animals carry handguns in this cute-looking adventure/shooter. Good multiplayer modes but the puzzling and shooting don't quite fit together properly.						
GAUNTLET LEGENDS	MIDWAY	4	NO	50/60/VGA	10	4
Eighties classic gets a 3D revamp, pity the gameplay hasn't been updated too. The result is a repetitive and frustrating hack 'n' slash adventure that never seems to get going.						
GIGA WING	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60/VGA	14	3
Old-style 2D shooter with a nice deflector shield weapon but also big ugly sprites and too many moments of unavoidable death. Would have been average ten years ago.						
GTA 2	TAKE 2	1	NO	50/60	8	7
Steal cars and cause chaos in a futuristic city where nearly anything goes, providing you follow the missions. Not as controversial or appealing as the original but still worth a look.						
GUNBIRD 2	CAPCOM	2	NO	50/60	17	6
Old skool, horizontally scrolling 2D shoot 'em up, proving they do make 'em like they used to. Except they're not quite as fun to play these days.						
HIDDEN & DANGEROUS	TAKE 2	1	NO	50/60	13	7
Control the SAS on covert ops into enemy territory during World War II. Equal parts strategy and action. Great missions but a pity about the fiddly controls and it's only single-player.						
HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA	2	NO	50	1	9
Presently the only game to support the light-gun peripheral. *HOTD 2* is an arcade treat with hordes of zombies waiting to become your cannon fodder and a thrill at every turn.						
HYDRO THUNDER	MIDWAY	2	NO	50	1	6
Race extremely fast powerboats, making best use of the scattered power-ups and short cuts to finish first. Simple in looks and play. Fun, but no cigar.						
INCOMING	RAGE	1	NO	50/VGA	1	6
Mindless shoot 'em up where you face a relentless barrage of enemies, who attack you in a variety of vehicles. Fast-paced, with some gorgeous graphics but the action is too repetitive.						
INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD	KONAMI	4	NO	50/60/VGA	13	8
Classic button-basher is updated for Dreamcast, featuring 12 sporting events ranging from the 100m sprint to clay pigeon shooting. Great fun in multiplayer. A little dull by yourself.						
JEREMY McGRATH SUPERCROSS 2000	ACCLAIM	2	NO	50/60/VGA	15	3
Simple motocross racer with no long-lasting appeal. Races can be close, but with dull graphics and unrealistic handling you probably won't stick around to find out.						
JET SET RADIO	SEGA	1	YES*	50/60/VGA	14	8
Perform tricks on your rollerblades and tag objects with graffiti, but look out for rival gangs and police. *JSR* is yet another stunning DC exclusive. If only it could be a little longer.						
JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/VGA	1	7
Realistic recreation of pool and snooker. Intuitive controls, great ball physics and to complete the pub atmosphere there's a bonus game of darts and a working jukebox too!						
JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60	7	5
Crazy animé-inspired 2D fighter from Capcom, providing frantic action. Appealing thanks to some incredible combos, but not on the same level as some of their other fighters.						
KAO THE KANGAROO	TITUS	1	NO	50/60/VGA	15	6
Platform game for younger players with good level design but nothing we haven't seen before. Kao's slow pace and a distinct lack of enemies makes the larger levels drag on.						
KISS PSYCHO CIRCUS	TAKE 2	1	NO	50/60/VGA	16	4
By-the-numbers first-person shooter that is based on the comic book of the same name. Large number of enemies can appear on screen but everything else is dull and repetitive.						
LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER	EIDOS	1	NO	50/VGA	6	7
As the undead Raziel, you're faced with a massive quest through the physical and spiritual planes. Large adventure with big levels, plenty of puzzles to solve and enemies to battle.						
LE MANS 24 HOURS	INFOGRAMES	4	NO	50/60/VGA	14	8
Wide variety of circuits and cars means there is lots to come back for, but best of all is the ability to really race for 24 hours, saving your progress to VM whenever you make a pit stop.						
LOONEY TUNES: SPACE RACE	INFOGRAMES	4	NO	50/60/VGA	14	7
Take to the stars in an intergalactic space race that is a cartoon reprise of *WipEout*. Simple to play but the Acme weapons can easily frustrate as there's no way of avoiding them.						
MAGFORCE RACING	CRAVE	4	NO	60/VGA	14	3
Race magnetic vehicles that can stick to ceilings! Another futuristic racer that looks to *WipEout* for inspiration. Unfortunately this one forgets to borrow the good bits.						
MAKEN X	SEGA	1	NO	50/VGA	11	5
First-person slasher. You wield a large sword possessed by the mind of a young girl – yep, it's as bad as it sounds. Has a weak plot and confusing cut-scenes that drag on for hours.						
MARVEL Vs CAPCOM	VIRGIN	4	NO	50/60	2	5
Heroes and villains from the coin-ops of Capcom's biggest hits and the pages of Marvel comics face-off in a 2D tag team battle royal. Good, but already dated when it arrived on DC.						
MARVEL Vs CAPCOM 2	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60/VGA	10	7
Another bout, with a bigger roster of fighters, enhanced pyrotechnic effects and some impressive 3D backgrounds. Overwhelming at first – but fans will soon be getting their kicks.						
METROPOLIS STREET RACER	SEGA	2	YES*	50/60/VGA	12	9
Stunningly recreated city streets, including London, are only the start. Fantastic handling, over 250 circuits and novel gameplay additions make *MSR* one of the best racers ever.						
MDK 2	VIRGIN	1	NO	50/60/VGA	7	6
Inventive action adventure combining shooting, role-playing and puzzle elements starring three unique characters. It's big too, with lots of aliens to battle.						
MIDWAY'S GREATEST HITS VOLUME 1	MIDWAY	2	NO	50	10	3
Retro coin-op compilation featuring *Defender*, *Robotron* and *Joust*. Considering the age and simplicity of the titles, you should get hundreds of golden oldies – not just six.						
MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE	RAGE	2	NO	50	0	7
Mindless shoot 'em up in the *Commando* and *Ikari Warriors* mould. Easy to pick up and play but too simple for a modern audience with little variety beyond the first few minutes.						
MOHO	TAKE 2	4	NO	50/60/VGA	15	3
Escape from a futuristic prison by winning gladiatorial-style challenges, but with balls instead of legs it's not easy… especially when it's as dull and boring as this.						
MONACO GRAND PRIX RACING SIMULATION	UBI SOFT	2	NO	50/VGA	1	6
Another F1 sim, this time without an official licence. Not bad in its day, but there's other racers, namely *F1 World Grand Prix II*, that do the same thing but better.						

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

VISUAL MEMORY

WHAT'S A VM?

A VM (Visual Memory) is a memory card that plugs into your Dreamcast controller and enables you save game data. It's absolutely essential for titles like *Shenmue* and *Metropolis Street Racer* where you want to save your game position. The official Sega Visual Memory unit costs £19.99.

WHY DOES IT HAVE AN LCD SCREEN BUILT INTO IT?

To show additional information (hit ratios in *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*, player data in *NBA 2K*, for example) when you're playing games. Also, when the VM is unplugged from a controller you can play mini-games (for example the Tamagotchi-style *Chao* game from *Sonic Adventure*). These are 'downloaded' via Dreamcast games or direct from the Net, and are stored in memory.

HOW MUCH INFORMATION DOES A VM HOLD?

128k, divided in 200 'blocks'. In other words, enough to store data from several titles and/or a mini-game.

HOW MANY BLOCKS DOES EACH GAME USE?

It depends on the game, but here are some examples: *Shenmue* (80 blocks), *Metropolis Street Racer* (68), *Virtua Tennis* (2), *Rayman 2* (2 per save plus 2 for configuration).

WHY DOES MY DREAMCAST BEEP WHEN IT STARTS UP?

The beeping is your DC telling you that the VM unit's batteries have run out.

WHERE CAN I GET NEW BATTERIES FOR IT?

Try Tandy if there's one near you, or any similar electronic retailer. The model number is CR2032 and they cost about £4 for a pair.

WILL I LOSE MY SAVE GAMES IF THE VM'S BATTERIES RUN OUT?

No. You won't be able to play mini-games on it, but it will still work as a memory card.

I'VE HEARD OF A VM ANIMATOR FOR PCS. WHERE CAN I GET ONE?

You can download the animator and loads of sample animations from Booyaka (www.booyaka.com) and Planetweb (http://dreamcast.planetweb.com/ community/vmu/).

WHAT'S THE POINT OF VM ANIMATIONS?

There isn't a point as such, it's just a bit of fun. *Ghostface* (based on the movie *Scream 3*) is our favourite. Others well worth a look include *Star Wars: Episode II*, *Alien Encounter* and *The Great Battle*.

WHICH DC TITLES INCLUDE VM MINI-GAMES?

Try the likes of *Sonic Adventure*, *Trickstyle*, *Power Stone*, *Zombie Revenge* and *Tech Romancer*. *Sega Rally 2* also has a high-score browser, which is a game in theory but isn't actually very entertaining.

CAN I DOWNLOAD MINI-GAMES OFF THE NET?

Yes you can, although there aren't many about yet. Sega America have released an American football game (see www.sega.com), and Sega Europe are expected to release something similar in the future (er, hopefully). You can find some other bits and pieces at Booyaka and Planetweb (site addresses above).

• Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know about Visual Memory, email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk

READERS' FIVES

NAME YOUR FAVOURITE GAMES

MARK DAVID LONDON

1. **SHENMUE (SEGA)**
"It's like nothing you have ever experienced before."
2. **RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA (EIDOS)**
"Incredibly atmospheric and real-time 3D graphics."
3. **METROPOLIS STREET RACER (SEGA)**
"The best driving game I have played since *Gran Turismo*. Superb!"
4. **SONIC ADVENTURE (SEGA)**
"What a game! A huge step forward from the Mega Drive. Superb graphics!"
5. **SEGA BASS FISHING (SEGA)**
"Superb fishing simulation with great graphics. In a word: 'Brilliant'."

KEVIN McKEONN LONDON

1. **SHENMUE (SEGA)**
"Be born again with *Shenmue*. Outstanding graphics and top play."
2. **JET SET RADIO (SEGA)**
"No good as a drawing artist? Then be a graffiti artist!"
3. **CRAZY TAXI (SEGA)**
"Want to drive but can't pass the test? Here's the answer to your problems."
4. **SONIC ADVENTURE (SEGA)**
"What can I say? This gets ten out of ten in basically every category."
5. **SILENT SCOPE (KONAMI)**
"Aim perfectly and you can shoot a man over 750 yards away... bullseye!"

MARK ROTHON SOUTHWOLD

1. **SHENMUE (SEGA)**
"It has the three 'B's: it's big, it's beautiful and it's brilliant."
2. **JET SET RADIO (SEGA)**
"Cool graphics, cool gameplay and cool tags."
3. **TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2 (ACTIVISION)**
"The man may have passed his prime, but this game sure hasn't."
4. **POWER STONE (EIDOS)**
"Fast, frantic, furious. How exactly do you describe it? You can't!"
5. **DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX (ACCLAIM)**
"You just have to look at the tricks you can create and you're hooked."

WANNA SHARE YOUR FAVES?

To see your fave games printed in *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, send an email to letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk with the subject heading 'Readers' Fives'. You *must* provide the following information: your name, your home town, a list of your five favourite Dreamcast games (only include games you've played please!) and a 10-20 word explanation of why you like *each* game. We'll choose three entries at random each month and print them in the magazine. Note: we reserve the right to edit contributions. Only emailed entries will be accepted.

GAME	PUBLISHER	MAX PLAYERS	ONLINE	VIDEO	ISSUE	RATING
MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD	MIDWAY	2	NO	50	1	5
The *Mortal Kombat* series felt dated many years ago, and *Gold* does nothing to challenge the tarnished reputation. It looks poor and it is poor. Not a patch on modern fighters.						
MR DRILLER	VIRGIN	1	NO	50/60/VGA	15	7
Colourful puzzle game with back-to-basics design. Drill beneath the earth, keeping an eye on the air as you go. Simple but very addictive with some great music.						
MTV SPORTS SKATEBOARDING	THQ	4	NO	50/VGA	15	5
Attempt to dethrone *Tony Hawk* that fails due to poor controls and some very frustrating collision detection. Good music and flatland tricks but not much else.						
NBA 2K	SEGA	4	NO	50/60/VGA	5	8
One of the best-looking sports sims ever. *NBA 2K* is fantastic, with real teams and players and matches flowing back and forth like the real thing. Where's the sequel Sega Europe?						
NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC	MIDWAY	4	NO	50/60	2	6
The NBA rule book is thrown out to create a fast-paced arcade-style game of basketball. Not so great on your own as it lacks longevity, but good fun in multiplayer.						
NIGHTMARE CREATURES II	KONAMI	1	NO	50/60/VGA	12	2
Poor controls and PlayStation-quality graphics make this game starring an axe-wielding maniac that attacks marauding zombies a real nightmare, for all the wrong reasons.						
NFL BLITZ 2000	MIDWAY	4	NO	50/60	1	7
American football with rules ripped out, fewer players and ridiculous power-ups. Providing you're not a diehard fan of the sport it's all the better for it and a blast in multiplayer.						
NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2000	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50	2	5
Average at best American football sim, mainly due to the clunky control system and the graphics don't do it any favours. Stats aplenty – but why would you want to read them?						
NHL 2K	SEGA	4	NO	50/VGA	9	7
Competent ice hockey sim with fast action and impressive graphics. Confusing menus and limited moves dent the atmosphere and there's no fanfare when you score.						
PEN PEN	INFOGRAMES	4	NO	50	2	6
A bizarre race through cartoon landscapes that involves running, swimming and tobogganing events. If only it was faster! Easy in single-player, multiplayer is more appealing.						
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE	SEGA	4	YES	50/60/VGA	17	9
World-spanning online adventure from Sonic Team, where you can team up with players from around the world, or play by yourself offline if you want.						
PLASMA SWORD: THE NIGHTMARE OF BILSTEIN	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60/VGA	11	4
Disappointing Capcom 3D beat 'em up offering a handful of fighters with simplified moves that make combos too easy. Doesn't do anything new. The name's the best bit.						
POD 2	UBI SOFT	8	YES	50/60/VGA	16	5
Futuristic racer that suffers from confusing track design and poor power-ups creating a weak one-player mode. Ability to race online prevents it from being a complete wash-out.						
POWER STONE	EIDOS	2	NO	50/VGA	1	8
Lunatic fighting with complete 3D movement and interactive arenas. It's super-fast with a great cast and amazing combos. It's also better than the sequel.						
POWER STONE 2	EIDOS	4	NO	50/60/VGA	13	7
Adds new characters and multiplayer into the mix, but other 'improvements' including vehicles and more weapons detract from the fighting fun of the original.						
PSYCHIC FORCE 2012	ACCLAIM	2	NO	50	2	7
An inventive beat 'em up that takes place in mid-air, offering full 3D movement that allows for attacks from all sides. Competent rather than spectacular – for fight fans only.						
QUAKE III ARENA	SEGA	4	YES	50/60/VGA	15	9
The famous first-person shooter looks formidable on DC with furious multiplayer gunplay both online and off. If you're serious, get a mouse and keyboard.						
RAILROAD TYCOON II	TAKE 2	4	YES	50/60/VGA	12	7
Make money building railroads and hauling cargo in this absorbing strategy game that requires planning and plenty of business sense. Plenty of scenarios mean it's long lasting too.						
RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE	UBI SOFT	1	YES*	50/60/VGA	6	8
Impressive platform adventure with excellent controls, good level design and plenty of set pieces and variety to keep you interested throughout. There's also great multiplayer modes!						
READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING	MIDWAY	2	NO	50/60/VGA	1	9
Comedy boxer, with arcade-style play and a large cast of cartoon fighters. Fast-paced with OTT special moves, a great two-player title that makes the single-player mode look wimpy.						
READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING: ROUND 2	SEGA	2	NO	50/60/VGA	14	8
Greater roster of boxers and an expanded Championship mode make this a good purchase for fans that still enjoy the original. The computer fighters now pack plenty more punch.						
RECORD OF LODOSS WAR	SWING	1	NO	50/60/VGA	16	7
Stop the evil sorceress from taking over the land. Huge role-player with plenty of spells and weapons with real-time battles. Starts off slowly, but you'll soon be absorbed by the action.						
RED DOG	SEGA	4	NO	50/60/VGA	5	5
Futuristic shoot 'em up set behind the wheel of a heavily armed tank. Great multiplayer modes, but the main mission fails to captivate and the difficulty level is poorly balanced.						
RESIDENT EVIL 2	VIRGIN	1	NO	50/60	4	7
Explore the zombie-infested streets of Raccoon City. Simple conversion of the PlayStation/PC game that, despite the familiarity, still manages to provide plenty of thrills and shocks.						
RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA	EIDOS	1	NO	50/60	8	9
Real-time 3D graphics make this *Resident Evil* the best-looking and most ambitious in the series so far. Great for both longtime fans and newcomers and as scary as ever.						
RESIDENT EVIL 3: NEMESIS	VIRGIN	1	NO	50/60/VGA	16	8
Visually not on par with *Code: Veronica* (hardly surprising considering the PlayStation roots), but *Nemesis* is another excellent adventure starring the zombies and a terrifying villain.						
RE-VOLT	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50	3	7
Race remote-controlled cars around larger-than-life locations. Fast-moving with great tracks and visuals but the initial buzz wears off due to a lack of depth and polish.						
ROADSTERS	TITUS	4	NO	50	11	3
Basic graphics, terrible handling and some ill-thought random environmental disasters prove that not every racer can be as good as *MSR*. The Mr Bean of driving games.						
SAMBA DE AMIGO	SEGA	2	YES*	50/60/VGA	15	8
Shake maracas to match the on-screen instructions. Genius musical party game that'll put a smile on your face and a dance in your step. But at £100, it's only for the rich.						
SAN FRANCISCO RUSH 2049	MIDWAY	4	YES*	50/60/VGA	12	7
Ramps, loops and flying cars that possess rocket-like speed. This is loud, mindless racing fun featuring multiplayer battle modes and stunt arenas plus other surprises.						
SEGA BASS FISHING	SEGA	1	NO	50/VGA	1	7
Catch the biggest fish you can from a variety of tranquil settings. Sounds dull, but this is an arcade treat and with a dedicated fishing rod controller it's a scream.						
SEGA EXTREME SPORTS	SEGA	2	YES*	50/60/VGA	13	5
Adrenalin-packed racer, featuring a variety of extreme events including bungee jumping and quad bikes. Some events are weaker and the learning curve spoils the fun.						
SEGA GT	SEGA	2	NO	50/60/VGA	15	5
Track racing in souped-up road cars in this shameless imitation of *Gran Turismo*. Plenty of cars and courses but the handling is wrong and spoils any potential enjoyment.						
SEGA RALLY 2	SEGA	2	YES*	50/60/VGA	1	8
Offering more cars and tracks than the arcade original. This is an impressive conversion (despite frame-rate probs) with good handling from the analogue pad and plenty of longevity.						
SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000	SEGA	4	NO	50	3	6
Sega's first football title for DC disappoints with a slow pace and an inability to win the ball without fouling your opponent. Plenty of options prevent a total wash out.						

GAME	PUBLISHER	MAX PLAYERS	ONLINE	VIDEO	ISSUE	RATING
SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER EURO EDITION	SEGA	4	NO	50/60/VGA	8	7
Another attempt, released on the back of Euro 2000, adds some much needed speed and greater detail than before. The computer is still too easy to beat, though.						
SHADOWMAN	ACCLAIM	1	NO	50/60/VGA	3	6
Inventive adult-oriented adventure packed with gore, swearing and voodoo magic. Good story and music but the dull level design lets the side down badly.						
SHENMUE	SEGA	1	YES*	50/60/VGA	14	10
Track down your father's killers in the most realistic game world ever created. An epic adventure that has to be played to be believed and is unlike anything you've played before.						
SILENT SCOPE	KONAMI	1	NO	50/60/VGA	14	7
As a sniper you must eliminate armed terrorists from a variety of locations, using a telescopic sight to zoom in and out of the distant action. Good but short arcade thrills.						
SILVER	INFOGRAMES	1	NO	50/60/VGA	10	4
A rare thing – an RPG developed in the UK. Detailed locations are appealing and *Silver* is easy to get into, but there's no spark to keep you playing and is too linear.						
SLAVE ZERO	INFOGRAMES	4	NO	50	5	6
Stomp around a futuristic city in a 60-foot robot. There's a vast amount of enemies waiting to be shot or squished, but the action never really gets going. Even multiplayer is dull.						
SNO CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP RACING	UBI SOFT	2	NO	50/60	16	4
With the ability to create your own tracks this could have been good, but poor controls, a far too slow two-player option and numerous graphical glitches spoil the proceedings.						
SNOW SURFERS	SEGA	2	NO	50	2	6
Snow Surfers' courses look great but they don't play that way. With poor characters and handling like a dog there's not enough speed to make hurtling down slopes exciting.						
SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	1	YES*	50/60/VGA	0	9
Sega's mascot returns in a jaw-dropping adventure, with some lightning-fast levels and plenty of exploration. Six playable characters mean you get six different adventures.						
SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	2	NO	50/60/VGA	2	10
The best fighting game around, period. Boasting fantastic characters with stunning animation and moves. Not only gorgeous but features incredible depth too.						
SOUL FIGHTER	CRAVE	1	NO	50	2	6
Fantasy fighting adventure that calls on the same moves and special attacks to progress. Using combos to build magical attacks is good, but overall it's too easy and far too repetitive.						
SOUTH PARK: CHEF'S LUV SHACK	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50	3	3
TV-styled game show starring Cartman, Kenny et al, comprising mini-game challenges based on old Atari console favourites and useless trivia tests. One problem – it's not funny!						
SOUTH PARK RALLY	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50/60/VGA	12	6
The *South Park* gang fare better in this *Mario Kart* clone that offers a variety of racing challenges and strong multiplayer modes. This one's funny! Pity about the fluctuating difficulty.						
SPACE CHANNEL 5	SEGA	1	NO	50/60/VGA	13	8
Music and dance thrills. The watch and repeat gameplay sounds dull, but with sassy star Ulala trying to save the galaxy from aliens, you can't help but be won over. Short, though.						
SPAWN: IN THE DEMON'S HAND	EIDOS	4	NO	50	17	6
Third-person shooter that plays like a cross between *Quake III Arena* and *Power Stone*, but poor camera angles and other minor flaws dampen the enjoyment.						
SPEED DEVILS	UBI SOFT	2	NO	50	1	7
Quirky racer that offers long tracks featuring a range of bizarre events – including a UFO invasion, speed traps and police chases. Good two-player mode, but easy to complete.						
SPEED DEVILS ONLINE RACING	UBI SOFT	5	YES	50/60/VGA	17	6
Update of *Speed Devils* now with online racing and bonus tracks. Online works fine but the entire game is tainted with a control delay that affects handling.						
SPIRIT OF SPEED 1937	ACCLAIM	1	NO	50/60/VGA	12	3
Period-themed racer that offers basic motors and long uneventful circuits. Unique idea, but the execution, especially the poor frame-rate, is unforgivable.						
STARLANCER	UBI SOFT	4	YES	50/60/VGA	16	5
Mission-based intergalactic space shooter that can also be played online. Slick graphics and sound effects make it immediately exciting but the action soon becomes too repetitive.						
STAR WARS DEMOLITION	ACTIVISION	4	NO	50/60/VGA	17	4
The *Star Wars* saga takes a detour into Hicksville, with a demolition derby featuring vehicles from the famous franchise. Worse than Jar Jar Binks.						
STAR WARS EPISODE I: JEDI POWER BATTLES	ACTIVISION	2	NO	50/VGA	14	4
Take control of a Jedi Knight including Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan in a scrolling beat 'em up that uses Lightsabers instead of fists. Bad collision detection leads to frustrating moments.						
STAR WARS EPISODE I: RACER	ACTIVISION	2	NO	50/VGA	11	6
WipEout-inspired racer that doesn't feature weapons, but moves at a hell of a pace. Exciting at first, but the courses and competitors are unimaginative and repetitive.						
STREET FIGHTER III: DOUBLE IMPACT	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60/VGA	8	7
Two games for the price of one, comprising of the original *Street Fighter III* and the sequel *2nd Strike: Giant Attack*. Not as accessible as other Capcom fighters. One for true fans only.						
STREET FIGHTER III: 3RD STRIKE	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60/VGA	14	8
Not so much a remould of the series, rather a super tune-up. The ability to choose your opponent before bouts is an enticing new feature. Plus the smash the car bonus stage is back!						
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60	2	8
Huge array of the *Street Fighter* cast assemble in one of the best 2D fighters ever. Great cartoon looks and the excellent World Tour mode will keep you busy for many a night.						
SUPER MAGNETIC NEO	CRAVE	1	NO	50/VGA	12	6
Imaginative platformer starring Neo, who propels himself through the colourful levels by using the polarity of his magnetic head. Frustrating gameplay spoils the fun.						
SUPER RUNABOUT	VIRGIN	1	NO	50/VGA	14	6
Mission-based racer with a wide choice of vehicles and the option to play as cops or hillbillies. The carnage you can cause as you race to the next goal is the best part.						
SURF ROCKET RACERS	UBI SOFT	2	NO	50/VGA	17	2
Terrible attempt to bring the thrills of jet ski racing to Dreamcast. Courses, controls and a water effect that resembles jelly, are all shockingly bad. Avoid.						
SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING	UBI SOFT	2	NO	50	2	7
Very fast superbike racer endorsed by the Suzuki team. Nice variety of twisty circuits, but dodgy pop-up and collision detection mar the performance. Good two-player mode.						
SWORD OF THE BERSERK: GUT'S RAGE	EIDOS	1	NO	50/60/VGA	10	5
Hack 'n' slash and little else in this fantasy adventure. Initially enjoyable, but too many cut-scenes fragment the action which soon gets repetitive. Buy if you like gore!						
SYDNEY 2000	EIDOS	4	NO	50/VGA	11	7
Solid attempt to dethrone *International Track & Field* of the button-bashing athletics crown. Wide variety of events – but lacks the polish of Konami's similar title.						
TECH ROMANCER	VIRGIN	2	NO	50/60/VGA	8	6
More one-on-one fighting from Capcom, this time with giant robots taking centre stage. Lacks the finesse of other fighters and the 'giant' robots look tiny and wimpy.						
TEE OFF	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50/60	3	7
Cartoon-styled golf game that doesn't weigh you down with stats and unnecessary screen clutter. Things are kept simple and easy to follow and four can enjoy a round together.						
THE GRINCH	KONAMI	1	NO	50/VGA	17	4
Below par movie tie-in, that offers interesting platform gameplay but suffers from terrible graphics and a fluctuating difficulty level.						
THE NOMAD SOUL	EIDOS	1	NO	50/60/VGA	7	5
A huge futuristic adventure starring David Bowie. Plenty of shooting, fighting and puzzle solving but they don't work as well as you'd like. Alright if you like sprawling sci-fi.						

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ONLINE

WHY CAN'T I PLAY .WAV FILES ON MY DREAMCAST?

You can, as long as they're embedded in Web pages. The Dreamkey browser can also play .au and .aiff sound files, and has partial support for Javascript as well as Macromedia Flash (version 3).

WHEN WILL A NEW VERSION OF DREAMKEY BE RELEASED?

Probably around Easter. Sega are adding improved Javascript and Flash support. Watch out for news on our website (www.dreamcastmag.co.uk) or Dreamarena.

CAN I USE MY OWN INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER (ISP) WITH DREAMCAST?

No.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO USE MY DC ONLINE?

Calls are charged at nationwide local rates.

WHAT NUMBER DOES THE DC DIAL?

The number in the UK is 0845 757 6339.

CAN I ADD THE NUMBER TO MY BT FRIENDS & FAMILY LIST?

Yes. And if you nominate the number as your 'best friend' number you can get further discounts.

ARE SEGA PLANNING A FLAT-RATE SERVICE LIKE BT'S SURFTIME WITH FREE CALLS?

They're looking into it, yes. We'll bring you news as soon as we have it.

WHY CAN'T I ACCESS CERTAIN WEBSITES?

Because Dreamkey has a built-in child lock to filter out 'inappropriate' content. Annoyingly, this also includes some legitimate sites like Hotmail.

CAN I ACCESS NEWSGROUPS ON DREAMCAST?

Yes, via sites like www.remarq.com and www.deja.com which provide a Web interface for newsgroups. Sites like these aren't among the easiest to browse on DC, however.

WHICH NEWSGROUPS ARE WORTH LOOKING AT?

That depends on your personal tastes. For Dreamcast gaming, uk.games.video.dreamcast is a good place to start.

CAN I STILL RECEIVE EMAILS EVEN WHEN MY DREAMCAST IS SWITCHED OFF?

Yes! Your mail is stored on Sega's servers and isn't affected by what you're doing with your Dreamcast.

HOW CAN I PLAY GAMES AGAINST OTHERS ONLINE?

The big one is *Quake III Arena*. There's also *ChuChu Rocket!* and, of course, *Phantasy Star Online* (reviewed on page 8).

OKAY, SO WHICH OTHER GAMES HAVE ONLINE FEATURES?

Metropolis Street Racer, *F355 Challenge*, *Sonic Adventure*, *Buggy Heat* and *Sega Rally 2* are among those with online facilities. Others, like *Rayman 2*, include bonuses which can be unlocked by going online. Check out the directory entries on these pages.

ARE SEGA GOING TO RELEASE A FASTER MODEM?

Despite rumours nothing definite has been announced yet.

CAN I USE A US OR JAPANESE DC ONLINE IN THE UK?

Yes, but only to surf the Web. You won't be able to access the Dreamarena portal or gaming network.

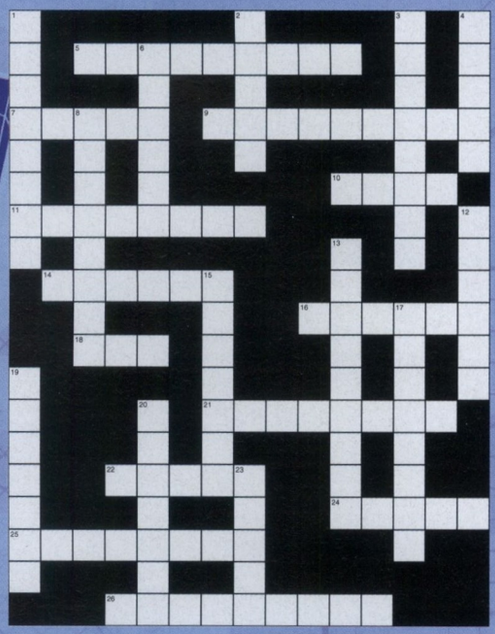
I'M HAVING PROBLEMS WITH MY DC ONLINE. WHO CAN I CALL FOR HELP?

Call Sega's Internet Support Line on 09066 544544 (calls charged at 60p per minute. Seek permission of the person who pays the telephone bill before calling).

• Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know about using the DC online, email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk

CROSSWORD

JUST FOR FUN. WE'LL PRINT THE ANSWERS NEXT MONTH.

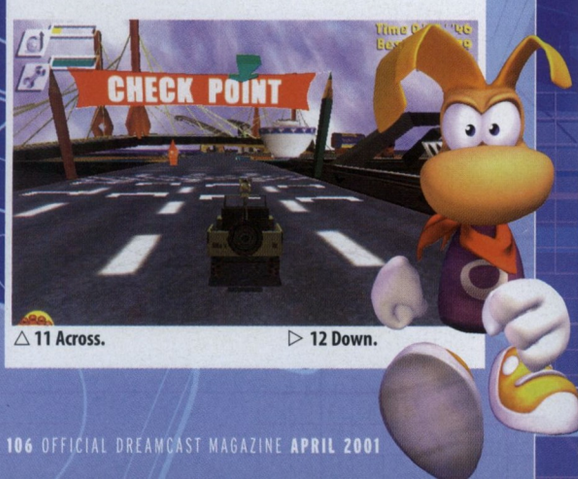


ACROSS

5 The novel writer behind the *Rainbow Six* series. (3, 6)
7 You need three of these to play a four-player game. (5)
9 Free puzzle game given away with *Official Dreamcast Magazine*. (4, 5)
10 The word for a kill, or point, in *Quake III Arena*. (4)
11 Identify the game in the screenshot below. (3,5)
14 Ryo from *Shenmue*'s family surname. (6)
16 Developers of the *Street Fighter* series of games. (6)
18 The Kangaroo. Anagram of 'oak'. (3)
21 Dr --------, Sonic's arch-enemy. (8)
22 What *Metropolis Street Racer* is all about. (5)
24 The triangular joypad button. (5)
25 The movie (and soon game) series starring Bruce Campbell. (4, 4)
26 Armed Cats. A videogame console. (9)

DOWN

1 "...live or die by a few key --------." See page 54. (8)
2 "Class 1 ----- product", written on the bottom of your Dreamcast. (5)
3 Japanese head of Sonic Team. (4, 4)
4 Sonic's friend Miles' nickname. (5)
6 *Phantasy Star Online*'s currency. (6)
8 The name of the main *Pro Skater*. (4, 4)
12 Who is this below? (6)
13 Rubbish driving game which scored 3/10 in *ODM* #11. (9)
15 *Soul Calibur*'s flaming final boss. (7)
17 *Official Dreamcast Magazine*'s editor's surname. (8)
19 *Virtua*, *Street* and *Soul*. (7)
20 Surname of *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*'s afro-haired fighter. (7)
23 Sai-using, mask-wearing *Street Fighter Alpha 3* character. Has *moods*. (5)



△ 11 Across. ▷ 12 Down.

GAME	PUBLISHER	MAX PLAYERS	ONLINE	VIDEO	ISSUE	RATING
TIME STALKERS	SEGA	1	NO	50/60/VGA	13	4
Lame attempt at a role-playing adventure that is too short and linear, with no attachment felt towards any of the characters. Not a good ambassador for RPGs.						
TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE	CRAVE	2	NO	50	1	5
Race for cash against other drivers around the Tokyo equivalent of the M25. There's only one track and the cars don't offer enough variety. May appeal to car nuts.						
TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE 2	UBI SOFT	2	NO	50/VGA	15	5
Another set of illegal Tokyo street races with a few more options and improved graphics. Win money and customise your fictional car. Still too dull for mass appeal.						
TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX	SWING	1	NO	50	17	4
Control a counter-terrorist Special Forces unit in this strategic mission-based shooter. Poor enemy intelligence and below par graphics spoil proceedings.						
TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION	EIDOS	1	YES*	50/60/VGA	6	7
Lara Croft's fourth adventure is set almost entirely in Egypt, getting back to what made the original game great: mind-bending puzzles, and lots of them.						
TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES	EIDOS	1	NO	50/60/VGA	15	6
Fifth outing for Lara sees some new but unsurprising ideas and a good variety of levels, but the series is now looking very tired and the control system is still flawed.						
TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING	CRAVE	2	NO	50/VGA	10	8
One of the best skateboarding games on the block, with a wide range of moves, sublime controls and memorable levels. Plenty of challenges to unlock and perfect.						
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2	ACTIVISION	2	NO	50/VGA	15	9
Bigger than the original, with wider range of challenges and tricks. Far better visually with expanded multiplayer modes and now you can design and save your own skate park.						
TOY COMMANDER	SEGA	4	NO	50/VGA	1	8
Mission-based war games with the action taking place in a house and re-enacted with a child and his toys. Much harder than it looks with imaginative use of the location.						
TOY RACER	SEGA	4	YES	50/60/VGA	17	6
Simple multiplayer racer from the makers of *Toy Commander* with courses set in the various rooms of a house. Benefits from being cheap (£4.99) and online compatible.						
TOY STORY 2	ACTIVISION	1	NO	50/60/VGA	16	4
Below average platform adventure based on the movie with Buzz Lightyear attempting to save Woody from his captor. Weak graphics and an awful control system ruin what's good.						
TRICKSTYLE	ACCLAIM	2	NO	50	1	7
Futuristic hoverboard racing on the streets of London, New York and Tokyo. There's tricks to learn, and VM mini-games but the action is too slow to keep you interested.						
UEFA DREAM SOCCER	SEGA	4	YES*	50/60/VGA	16	5
Third instalment of the *Sega Worldwide Soccer* series, now going by a new name and offering female players as well as the men, but it's too similar to the previous versions.						
UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	4	NO	50	1	8
It was the first footie game on DC, and despite the simple looks, is still the best. It doesn't do anything spectacular, but it does it well and that's enough. Nice training mode too.						
ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP	UBI SOFT	2	NO	50/60/VGA	13	9
Brutal beat 'em up featuring a wide range of fighting styles as real-life competitors fight within a steel cage. Good controls and impressive graphics make this a real hit.						
URBAN CHAOS	EIDOS	1	NO	50/VGA	13	6
As a street cop in this large adventure you'll get to drive cars, shoot criminals and engage in hand-to-hand combat. A strong story and plenty of variety, pity about the poor controls.						
VANISHING POINT	ACCLAIM	2	NO	50/60/VGA	17	7
Arcade-style racer with cleverly designed courses and some spectacular crashes – but no car damage. There's also a stunt mode if you like that sort of thing.						
VIGILANTE 8: 2ND OFFENSE	ACTIVISION	4	NO	50/60/VGA	3	5
Vehicular combat on the streets of the American Deep South, with cars sporting every sort of weapon imaginable. Fun for a while but average rather than spectacular.						
VIRTUA ATHLETE 2K	SEGA	4	YES*	50/60/VGA	12	4
Sega get stingy with this athletics sim as it only contains seven events. The addition of a stamina bar to the button-bashing is a big mistake and there are no extras to unlock.						
VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB	SEGA	2	NO	50/VGA	1	7
Competent conversion of the arcade legend that offers some fine fighting action but hardly any home extras. Great back in its day but looks shabby compared to *Soul Calibur*.						
VIRTUA STRIKER 2 (VER. 2000.1)	SEGA	2	NO	50/60	4	7
At first it seems unplayable, but take time to master the controls and discover why this is the best arcade football game around with national teams and a great goal rating system.						
V-RALLY 2 EXPERT EDITION	INFOGRAMES	4	NO	50/60/VGA	7	7
Fast-moving racer, with loads of courses and cars. Suspect handling slightly spoils the experience, especially as it feels like the cars could tip over at any second, and they usually do.						
VIRTUA TENNIS	SEGA	4	NO	50/60/VGA	12	9
Best sports title on Dreamcast. Simple controls mean anyone can master the variety of shots in a matter of minutes and includes some of the best home modes around.						
WACKY RACES	INFOGRAMES	4	NO	50/60/VGA	9	7
Classic cartoon becomes a slick *Mario Kart*-style racer. The cars and characters of the show are captured perfectly and there are some fun split-screen multiplayer modes.						
WALT DISNEY WORLD QUEST: MAGICAL RACING TOUR	EIDOS	4	NO	50/60/VGA	12	5
Nothing really magical about this *Mario Kart* clone set around the streets of Disneyland. Graphical glitches and boring power-ups spoil the proceedings. It's a small world after all!						
WETRIX+	TAKE 2	2	NO	50/60/VGA	7	6
Puzzler where you must raise and lower land to collect water, using fireballs to evaporate the pools and score points. Unfortunately it soon becomes monotonous.						
WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?	EIDOS	4	NO	50/60/VGA	13	3
There's no cash prize for winning but this is surprisingly close to the hit TV quiz. The eventual repetition of questions and poor production values spoil the enjoyment.						
WILD METAL	TAKE 2	2	NO	50	6	5
Tank game with as much emphasis on strategy as blasting. Choose a tank and pit your wits against the enemy. Sparse, endless levels get in the way of potential action.						
WORMS ARMAGEDDON	HASBRO	4	NO	50/VGA	3	8
Basic 2D graphics hide one of the greatest multiplayer games created. With simple to understand battle to the death gameplay, it's very addictive with a wide variety of weapons.						
WORMS WORLD PARTY	VIRGIN	4	YES	50/60/VGA	15	8
The same as *Armageddon*, but now supports more than one controller and is playable online – or it will be. The release date has been put back to March.						
WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	4	NO	50	2	3
We don't hate wrestling but we hate bad wrestling games like this one, which has poorly animated wrestlers that don't respond to the controls. Not as fun as wrestling should be.						
WWF ROYAL RUMBLE	THQ	4	NO	50/60/VGA	12	7
Technically it's incredible – with up to nine versatile wrestlers on screen at once. The sparse roster of stars and modes are a disappointment as what you initially see is what you get.						
ZOMBIE REVENGE	SEGA	2	NO	50/VGA	6	7
Scrolling beat 'em up based on *HOTD2*. Competent arcade conversion with VM mini-games to beef up your character before loading them back into the game. Undead good.						

*** Denotes limited online modes, such as high-score ranking, new items available to download etc.**

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New Releases Spotlight

Phantasy Star Online

Phantasy Star Online is the first ever online console RPG developed by the hugely acclaimed Sonic Team. The 3D worlds are amazingly detailed and brimming with challenges plus the player can team up with fellow Dreamcast owners around the world to complete common goals. Released: 23rd February 2001

ISZONE Amazing Price £32.99 with free postage and delivery. RRP £39.99 Save £7.00

New Releases

Fighting Vipers 2, Rainbow 6, Sonic Shuffle, Ducati World, Gunbird 2, European Super League, Vanishing Point, Phantasy Star Online, ECW Anarchy Rulz, The Grinch, Dino Crisis, Resident Evil 3, Stunt GP...

Bargain Games of the Month

Sonic Adventure	£9.49	Dino Crisis	£26.99
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Spirit of Speed	£17.99	Rainbow 6	£34.99
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Giga Wings	£21.99	*Prices available on above*	
Wacky Races	£24.99	*games while stock lasts...*	

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ODM RECOMMENDS

Dreamcast
Dreamcast
Dreamcast

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

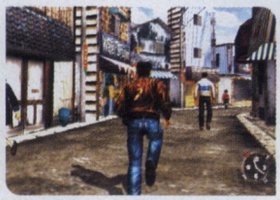
EIDOS • ISSUE #8 • 9/10 • DEMO #9 • GUIDE #9, 10, 11

The *RE* series continues in stunning fashion. It looks infinitely better than the original PlayStation titles, with true 3D characters and backgrounds and real-time cut-scenes. You control Chris and Claire Redfield, two survivors of previous *RE* games. As usual you're up against a zombie horde and a host of other hideous creatures. The only way to survive is to sensibly use the ammunition you find and solve puzzles to progress. This is a story-led adventure with plenty of shocks to keep you jumping and lots of secrets to discover to make you play again.

SAMBA DE AMIGO

SEGA • ISSUE #15 • 8/10

A bizarre 'rhythm action' title that has you standing in front of your TV shaking specially designed maraca controllers to correspond to the commands on screen. Essentially it's 'Simon Says' with famous Latin tunes to encourage you to get shaking, including some Ricky Martin hits and a very upbeat version of Aha's *Take On Me*. Despite an astronomical £100 price tag (due to the cost of manufacturing the sensor technology of the maracas), *Samba* is a winner. A guaranteed smash at any party, it will put a smile on anyone's face within five minutes of playing.



SHENMUE

SEGA • ISSUE #14 • 10/10 • MOVIE #14 • GUIDE #16, 17

Shenmue really is in a class of its own. You play Ryo Hazuki, a Japanese teenager who is searching for the killer of his father. A mixture of many different game styles, the best way to describe *Shenmue* is that it's kinda like real life. You take over the life of Ryo completely, waking each day, going to work, to shops, talking to other characters. Luckily, Ryo's daily life isn't mundane. As he starts to mix with a criminal element, you'll get involved a bar fight among other treats. The most expensive game ever created. Play it and you'll see why it's money well spent.

SONIC ADVENTURE

SEGA • ISSUE #0 • 9/10 • DEMO #1

Sonic is back doing what he does best – racing at lightning-fast speed and collecting rings through some of the most fantastic levels ever seen in a platformer. But that's only half of it. Adventure stages see Sonic explore his world at a slower pace, searching for clues that will lead him to his arch nemesis – the evil Dr. Robotnik. There are also five other characters that you'll get to control, with their own quests that intertwine with each other thanks to a plot that ties everything neatly together. *Sonic Adventure* is a fun title with stunning set-pieces and a host of mini-games that make excellent use of a VM unit.

SOUL CALIBUR

SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 10/10 • MOVIE #2 • GUIDE #3, 4, 5

This is still the best fighter on Dreamcast. Fights take place in small arenas, starring medieval heroes who batter each other with big swords and axes in best-of-three bouts. The characters appear large on screen, are incredibly realistic and animated superbly. Look closer and you can see that they breathe, wince, and smile! Best of all though, *Soul Calibur* plays far better than it looks. The Mission Battle mode adds longevity to play – you travel the world and fight battles where the rules are constantly changing. Doing this unlocks a host of cool secrets. You shouldn't rest until you've seen it all.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

ACTIVISION • ISSUE #15 • 9/10 • DEMO #14

A great example of how to turn a specialist sport into a game that everyone can enjoy. *Pro Skater 2* allows you to perform an array of stunning skateboard tricks in locations that encourage you to go crazy. Once you've learnt the basic controls you'll be addicted. Then you can practice tougher moves that score more points and successfully complete the ten tasks that are set on each level. It's a huge challenge to complete the game, with some tasks seemingly impossible at first. Working your way through reaps its own rewards, with new areas and abilities made available. You even create your own skater or design your own skate park. Nice.

ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP

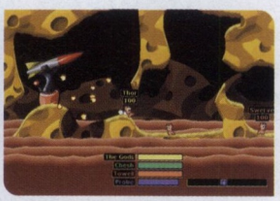
CRAVE • ISSUE #13 • 9/10 • DEMO #13, 16 • GUIDE #15

Realistic fighters battle in no-holds-barred matches in a wire-enclosed ring. Based on the American TV sport, *UFC* is the most brutal beat 'em up on the market. It looks mean, plays mean and it definitely sounds mean. Fighting styles are fully represented – ju-jitsu, freestyle wrestling and submission fighting are just a few. There's 22 characters, more than 3,000 moves, 1,200 combos and a wealth of modes. It wouldn't mean squat if it wasn't fun to play, but despite being brutal *UFC* rewards technical mat skills. It all adds up to make the most complex unarmed combat title ever created.

VIRTUA TENNIS

SEGA • ISSUE #12 • 9/10 • DEMO #11, 17 • GUIDE #13

Despite only using two buttons to select shots, *Virtua Tennis* isn't simple. Through a combination of positioning and timing, you can hit a much wider variety of shots than the standard and lob returns suggest. There are 20 computer opponents to challenge, including real players, who have different playing styles and characteristics. There's the straight-up Arcade mode or the more challenging World Circuit mode. *Virtua Tennis* is a fantastic multiplayer game. Play against an equally skilled friend to discover why, in the Best of the Best feature in *ODM* #16, the experts voted it number one.



WORMS WORLD PARTY

VIRGIN • ISSUE #15 • 8/10

Control a team of four worms and fight rival teams in a turn-based battle. There is a huge array of weapons available for you to mount your attacks, ranging from simple fists or handguns to bazookas and full-on air strikes. There are also some unusual weapons like skunks, exploding sheep and OAPs. *Worms* is simple on the surface, but dig deeper and there is a great depth to the gameplay. It's always been famous for being a great multiplayer experience but falling flat in single-player. The same problem is evident here, but now you can battle online, so you'll never have to play alone again – unless you really want to.

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PERIPHERALS

I'VE HEARD THAT THE SEGA LIGHT-GUN WON'T WORK WITH SONY SUPER TRINITRON TVS. IS THIS TRUE?

Turn off the Auto Picture facility of the television and you'll be okay.

I HAVE A 100HZ TELEVISION, AND THE DREAMCAST LIGHT-GUN DOESN'T WORK. WHY?

This is because the screen refreshes faster than the game, so the light-gun hits aren't registered properly. There's nothing you can do about this, we're afraid.

DOES THE LIGHT-GUN WORK WITH GAMES OTHER THAN *HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2*?

Currently no, but more compatible games are expected soon.

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER WITH A SCART LEAD?

Simply because it will improve picture quality compared with using the RF cable (or 'TV lead') which is supplied with the DC. A fully wired RGB SCART cable is the best option, but check that your TV is compatible before shelling out.

WHEN WILL THE DVD PLAYER BE COMING OUT FOR DREAMCAST?

Er, it won't.

WHEN WILL THE ZIP DRIVE BE RELEASED?

Er, it won't.

WHAT'S A ZIP DRIVE?

Look, does it matter now?

ARE SEGA RELEASING A MICROPHONE, AND IF SO WHEN?

It's out now, priced at around £15.

WILL SEGA BE RELEASING A PRINTER SO I CAN PRINT OUT WEB PAGES?

No. For the record, there's a button marked 'Print' on the Dreamcast keyboard simply because it's based on a PC model.

WHY CAN'T I FIND A DREAMCAST KEYBOARD?

There were supply problems, but keyboards are now readily available in stores and via Dreamarena.

WHAT'S ALL THIS I HEAR ABOUT A DC CAMERA?

Sega announced a camera, called Dreameye, last year but it's doubtful we'll see it released in Europe now.

WHAT'S A VGA BOX?

It's an adaptor that enables you play DC games on a PC monitor, offering improved picture quality. Sega haven't officially released VGA boxes in Britain, but you'll find one if you look hard enough.

WHY DON'T ALL GAMES SUPPORT A VGA MODE?

Because it takes extra time for the developer to include support, and some don't think it's worth their while since only a tiny proportion of gamers have a VGA box. If support is included, then it should be a seen as a bonus.

WHAT'S A RUMBLE PACK, AND DOES IT WORK WITH ALL GAMES?

It's an add-on that plugs into you controller and makes it vibrate in time with the on-screen action. Expect to pay £14.99 for an official Sega one. It's compatible with virtually all games, and really good with *Crazy Taxi*, *Sega Rally 2*, *Soul Calibur*, *Hydro Thunder* and *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*.

IS IT WORTH GETTING AN ARCADE STICK?

If you like fighting games, yes it is. They cost £34.99 and are virtually indestructible, but aren't much use on racing or action games.

IS IT WORTH GETTING A STEERING WHEEL?

Only if you feel like splashing out – we covered them in *ODM* #14. Obviously you can only use them for driving games, and the standard DC pad gives you analogue steering, acceleration and braking, so there's really no need.

• Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know about the Dreamcast peripherals email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk

READER REVIEWS

THE BIT OF THE MAG WHERE YOU TELL US WHAT YOU THINK OF GAMES. HAPPY WITH A PURCHASE? PICKED UP A DUD? THEN DO WRITE IN – IN UNDER 250 WORDS! – AND TELL US

SAMBA DE AMIGO

REVIEWED: *ODM* #15, 8/10

WE SAID: "The cost means that only those with deep pockets will ever get to own this amazing title. That the masses should be denied fun in this way makes us want to cry."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

I dare anyone to walk away from their first session with the maracas without a tune in their head and a smile on their face.

The major aspect of the game is the physical one. After a quick few rounds of maraca shaking (required) and pelvic thrusting (optional, if you can help yourself) you'll be sweating like a pig. But, unlike normal aerobics, you'll love every second. Who says videogaming isn't an active pursuit?

Special mention goes to the choice of tunes. Ricky Martin tunes and *Macarena* aren't normally my cuppa, but in the context of the game they work perfectly. The *Take On Me* remix is doubly funky. And once you get tired of the tunes supplied it's possible to log on to the *Samba* website and, as a bonus, download a selection of tracks from old Sonic Team games

Longevity may be a bit of a problem, as it always is with this type of game. *Samba De Amigo* will last longer than most though thanks to the uniqueness of it. Even after you've got over the initial love of it and showed it off to all your mates, you'll still want to play it simply because it's fun.

The only reason not to own this game is the price – £100 is a lorra, lorra cash to spend on any game. I actually shopped around and got it for £75 from my local mail-order shop (it's available in HMV for £80). At the end of the day it's down to your budget. If you've got the cash burning the proverbial hole you've no reason not to give this a go. They say you can't put a price on happiness. Review score: 8/10, fun score: 10/10.

LAWRENCE MOON, VIA EMAIL

Yep, we'd go along with all of that.

4 WHEEL THUNDER

REVIEWED: *ODM* #8, 8/10

WE SAID: "One of the most entertaining, challenging and best-looking driving games you'll find, and one that's well worth spending time really getting into."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

I'd just like to say that this one of the best driving games I've ever played. I love the idea if playing catch-up – it's just fantastic gameplay. Starting at the back is so exciting, especially when you have to get most of the boosts to win.

I'm about halfway through the game at the moment and I just hope that they bring out a sequel. In my mind the game should get 10/10, not 8/10. I love *Metropolis Street Racer* but this *has* to be the cream of driving games at present.

For £14.99 you can't go wrong. So anyone reading this, buy this game – it's brilliant!

DARREN BEEAZLEY, BURNHAM, ESSEX

We totally agree, Darren – for £14.99 *4 Wheel Thunder* really is an absolute steal. Other readers should be able to pick it up for a similar price if they shop around a bit.

△ ***Samba De Amigo*: butt-naked players and maracas not pictured.**

QUAKE III ARENA

REVIEWED: *ODM* #15, 9/10

WE SAID: "Whether it's online, split-screen or single-player, *Quake III Arena* is so fast, so good-looking and so perfectly balanced that you'll pick up a controller and play for an hour without even noticing."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

Thanks to *Quake III Arena*, I hardly saw any of my mates over the Christmas period. The game oozes class and excellence – it's definitely the game of the year by far [eh? – ed].

Once you actually figure out what's going on in the game – it's very frantic – it becomes extremely enjoyable, and the controls really do become second nature to you.

The visuals are superb and the action is relentless. The weapons – from the good for a laugh Gauntlet to the BFG – are well balanced, and the arenas are very good too (the Longest Yard has to be the best).

The mouse and keyboard combo work a treat (although the mouse is too light for my liking), and you really do have to splash out on them to get the full experience.

I urge everyone out there to buy *Quake III Arena* and discover just how good it really is.

IAN OSBORNE, WIGAN

PC gamers have been spoilt for choice for so long, but now we're getting in on it – starting with *Quake III Arena*.

This game is about one thing and one thing only: death. There is no plot or story – just four people in a medieval arena trying to blow each other to pieces. Literally.

The great thing about *Quake III Arena* is the online mode. Although the delay is only very small, the speed is very fast and so it can be a big problem. You get used to it, but it is still one of the most annoying things in the world when you blatantly shoot someone and by the time the shot has been fired they've gone!

Everyone recommends playing with a keyboard and mouse but this isn't really necessary. It's a console game! It was only ever designed to be controlled with a keyboard and mouse because PC users didn't have a games controller! There's no need to try to make your DC into a PC.

It is also a great way to relieve stress. You can tell who's really stressed out when you're playing online, because they stand over the body of the player they just killed blowing all their limbs off! Nice!

BEN TOLFREE, VIA EMAIL

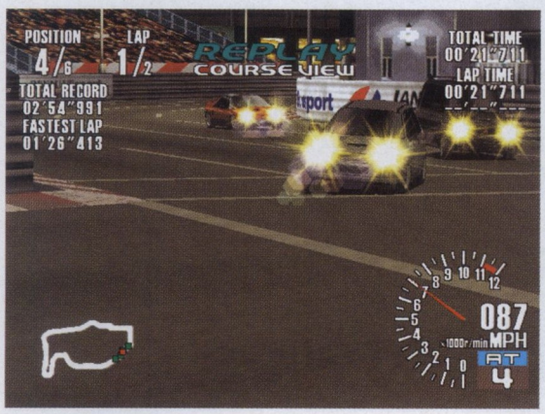
Yeah, nice. Huh huh huh.

△ *Quake III Arena*: there's a whole lotta Quakin' going on.

△ *Jet Set Radio*: turn on, tune in, skate about.

"THE VISUALS ARE SUPERB, THE ACTION IS RELENTLESS AND THE WEAPONS ARE WELL BALANCED"

– IAN OSBORNE ON *QUAKE III ARENA*



△ *Sega GT*: better driving games are available.

JET SET RADIO

REVIEWED: *ODM* #14, 8/10

WE SAID: "*Jet Set Radio* is a rare thing: a game that actually turns heads in these days of generic racers and fighters. It looks and sounds fresher than a fridge full of lettuce."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

I enjoyed *JSR* so much that I put on my own skates and went outside. A few minutes later I was back playing on my DC having decided that rollerblading wasn't my sport unless I could do it with a joypad from the safety of my room.

JSR is one of those games that you get straight into. It's like *Tony Hawk's* in the way the characters move, but better because of the variety of places you're skating in.

The levels, especially those near the end, are very big but, while the missions are not particularly easy, it won't take forever to complete. Once you've finished the game, it's not the sort of thing you'll never play again but it's still fun just skating about a level doing tricks.

It's another very original game that could *only* have come from Sega.

BEN TOLFREE (AGAIN!), VIA EMAIL

And there's a sequel coming. Yay!

SEGA GT

REVIEWED: *ODM* #15, 5/10

WE SAID: "If this had arrived six months ago – before *F355 Challenge*, *Le Mans 24 Hours* and *MSR* – then perhaps we wouldn't be so hard on it. As it is, like a DeLorean, it's worth nothing more than a bit of a drive for variety."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

In *ODM* #16 you printed a reader's review of *Sega GT* and said it was absolutely crap. You also said that the handling was shite. Well, I'm here to tell you otherwise.

It's one of the best games I've played. The handling's great, the graphics of cars, tracks and paintwork are to die for, and the [game] structure isn't bad either.

The selection of cars may not be massive, but the cars it has are cool. The Carrozzeria is a great way to build extra cars and some of the colours and bodies of the cars are just *bad* to the bones!

The tuning section is a great way to buy your car parts and to tune it how you like. Some of the tracks and sponsors may be crap, but that's a glitch that could be picked up on in a sequel. Overall then, no matter what any mag or reader thinks, *Sega GT* is one of the best racers around.

JASON M PARK, VIA EMAIL

Er… thanks for putting us all straight, but don't hold your breath for a sequel!

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE GAMES *YOU'VE* BOUGHT?

Send your comments (in under 250 words) to Reader Reviews, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Alternatively, email them to letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk with the words 'Reader Reviews' and the game of the game you're commenting on in the subject line. Note: we reserve the right to edit submissions before publication. We will not consider any reviews longer than 250 words.

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MISCELLANEOUS

WHAT'S A GD-ROM?

A custom type of compact disc used for Dreamcast games. They hold up to 1Gb (1024Mb), which is more than a regular CD-ROM (650Mb).

WHY CAN'T I PLAY JAPANESE OR AMERICAN GAMES ON MY UK DREAMCAST?

Dreamcast games use something called 'territorial lock-out', a data track specific to the part of the world in which the game is supposed to be sold and played (ie Japan, Europe or America). This helps stop illegal imports of foreign goods.

WHY DO GAMES COME OUT IN JAPAN AND AMERICA MONTHS BEFORE THEY DO IN THE UK?

Because it takes time to convert them for our TV system (PAL) and to translate them into all the European languages. Games developed in Europe, like *Metropolis Street Racer* and *Ecco The Dolphin*, generally come out first here though.

WHAT IS THE RRP (RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE) OF A DREAMCAST?

It's just been reduced to £99.99 – see page 19 for details.

WHY DO RELEASE DATES KEEP CHANGING?

Making games isn't an exact science, so it's often hard to tell how long it will take to finish them. Games are usually delayed to make them better though.

WHO'S NAOMI?

Naomi is Sega's latest arcade hardware and it's very similar in design to Dreamcast, so coin-op to DC conversions are easy to do. *Crazy Taxi*, *Dead Or Alive 2*, *Jambo! Safari*, *F355 Challenge*, *Spawn* (see this month's demo disc) and *18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker* are all Naomi games.

WILL ALL NAOMI GAMES COME TO DREAMCAST?

Not necessarily. Some arcade games don't work well as home conversions.

WHY CAN'T MY DC PLAY WINDOWS GAMES?

Because it isn't a PC. Some Dreamcast games use Microsoft's Windows CE technology, but it doesn't make your Dreamcast a PC.

WHEN IS *SHENMUE II* COMING OUT IN THE UK?

Early 2002. Probably.

WHEN IS *FIFA SOCCER* COMING OUT?

FIFA Soccer is published by Electronic Arts, who haven't signed to Dreamcast yet… and aren't likely to now!

WHEN IS…

Arrrgh! If there's any major news on release dates we'll tell you in our news pages. Please, please, please stop emailing us for information on release dates. Pretty please?

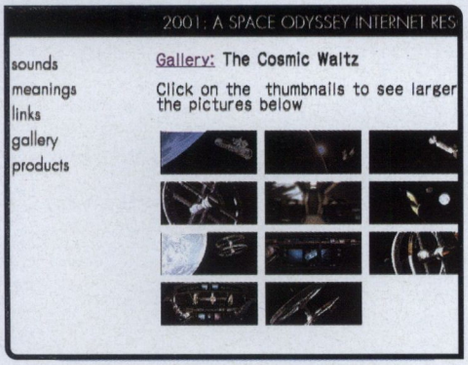
I DON'T LIVE IN BRITAIN. CAN I SUBSCRIBE TO *ODM*?

Sorry, no. Subscriptions to this magazine are only available to those living in the UK.

• Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know (except release dates, please), email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk

SPACE WEBSITES

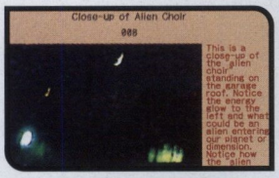
BOLDLY GOING WHERE NO ONE HAS GONE BEFORE, **POGGY** KNOWS THE TRUTH, AND THE BEST SPACE SITES, ARE OUT THERE



2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

www.palantier.net/2001

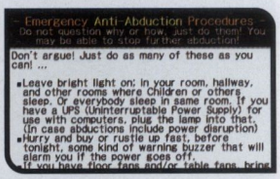
Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C Clark's cautionary tale proving that we were meddling fools to experiment past the Speak & Spell. Other errors included hitting each other with sticks and bubbly chairs from the '60s. Although the real 2001 looks slightly different to the vision – war, famine and pestilence notwithstanding – the spirit of 2001 is alive and well on this site.



ALIEN ABDUCTION - EXPERIENCE AND RESEARCH

www.abduct.com

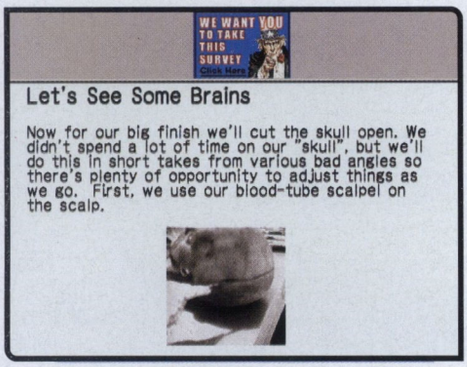
If you're from the Deep South and called Cletus, there's a much greater chance you've been abducted than if, say, you are Charles from Basildon. Must be genetic. Check other survivors over for implants here.



ALIEN ABDUCTIONS, HOW TO PREVENT

www.abductions-alien.com

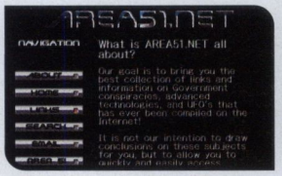
You look both ways before crossing the road, so why not sprinkle a circle of salt around your bed to prevent alien abduction? If that sounds reasonable, then pack a big (as big as possible, they say) picture of Jesus and get chewing on the yarrow root.



ALIEN AUTOPSY

http://www.trudang.com/autopsy/autopsy.html

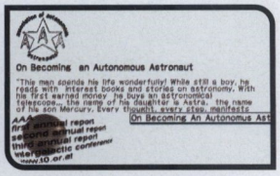
Gone are the days of making go-karts in the garage and having wholesome races down cliff-side paths, now everyone wants to film alien autopsies to torment CNN with. This site takes you by the pointy grey hand from full-body casting the neighbourhood urchins to how to shake the camera so no one can see your creepy alien guts are actually Pot Noodles.



AREA 51

www.area51.net

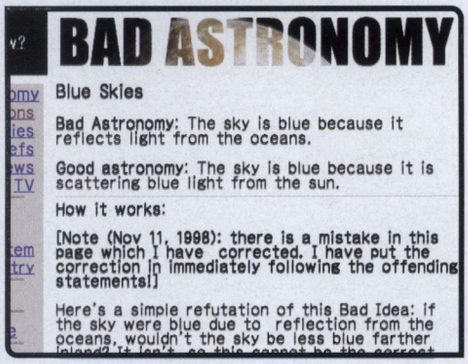
If the State lies to the people half as much as the people lie to the State, then you might as well sign me up for a Biohazard suit pronto. Get your facts not so much 'right', as horribly subverted at this portal to confusion.



ASSOCIATION OF AUTONOMOUS ASTRONAUTS

www.t0.or.at/aaa

The AAA campaign for space travel to be taken from the State and given to the people, who will presumably use elastic bands to reach the moon. With this in mind, they've also invented three-sided football.



BAD ASTRONOMY

www.badastronomy.com

No family gathering is complete without the Wise Old Uncle™ drunkenly stating: "They faked the moon landings, you can't even see stars in the photos!"*. Bad Astronomy is one man's crusade against such tomfoolery, providing the correct answers to questions such as "Why is the sky blue?" *There are no stars as the sun's light reflected by the moon is too great.

BBC ONLINE: SCIENCE

www.bbc.co.uk/science

For years the BBC has told us what to watch, read, eat, drink and, in a few cases, breathe. So it seems reasonable that they know what's in space. In fact, it's probably already writing them a six-episode sitcom about its veterinary practices.

BRITISH INTERPLANETARY SOCIETY

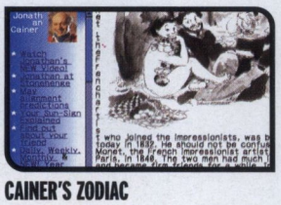
www.bis-spaceflight.com

Formed in 1933, BIS is the world's oldest society promoting space travel, despite the fact that the eternal nothingness isn't stuffed with solid British types. Become a member here and slightly increase your chances of dressing like the Michelin man.

BRITISH NATIONAL SPACE CENTRE

www.bnsc.gov.uk

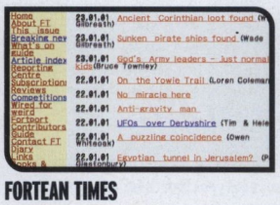
Believe it or not, here in the UK we have a space centre, although its not of the cool planet-claiming/moon-walking variety. This site carries extensive news from which new satellites have been punted into space to why buying plots on the moon is a bad plan.



CAINER'S ZODIAC

www.cainer.com

The movements of celestial bodies affect your life, and not just in an *Armageddon/Deep Impact* way. Although you should be prepared to fight off another twelfth of the population for that tall, dark stranger. Gather together for Cainer's wisdom here.



FORTEAN TIMES

www.forteantimes.com

'Botulism Blamed On Fermented Beaver', 'Severed Birds' Heads Cause Alarm' and 'Big Cat Just A Big Cat'. You know the drill. More informative than the local press and, for those in abduction hotspot Derbyshire, more likely to prevent unwarranted 'intrusions'.

KANSAS COSMOSPHERE AND SPACE CENTER

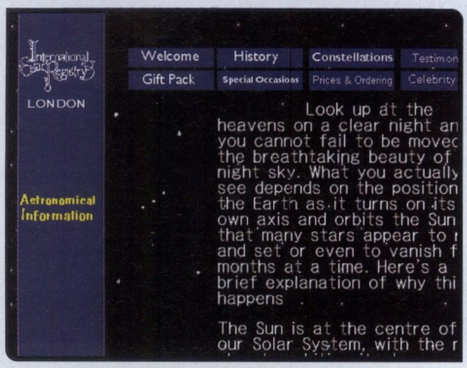
www.cosmo.org

Missus complaining about how many pies she's eaten? Look no further for the ultimate in sensitive gift giving. $600 will send her to astronaut camp, where for two whole weeks she can be weightless! Or shot into space!

NASA

www.nasa.gov

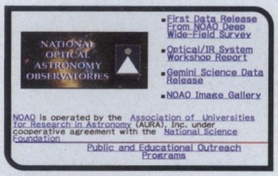
NASA *are* space travel. Extremely long ladders aside, if you want to go into space, these are the guys you're going to have to creep up to. This colossal site covers every facet of space travel, from jet propulsion to courses in fine upstandingness.



INTERNATIONAL STAR REGISTRY

www.starregistry.co.uk

Next time some cheeky fool asks you if you know where the Big Dipper is, baffle them with "No, but that one's called 'Your Mum 's Got A Glass Eye With A Fish In It'". Just £55 will name your star, with monikers already chosen including 'The Royal Leamington Spa Rehabilitation Unit' and 'Jones the Shelf'. Which goes quite a long way towards explaining Sir Patrick Moore.



NATIONAL OPTICAL ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY

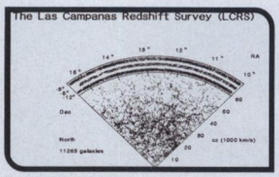
www.noao.edu

On the minus side, you have to become proficient at very complex maths. On the plus side, you could discover the asteroid that's about to hit Earth and have it named after you. Weigh up the pros and cons here.

PHILIP K DICK

www.philipkdick.com

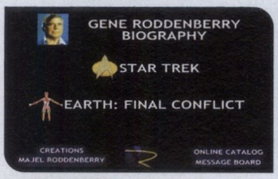
As if the idea of being a tiny spot of culture and meat-eating plants adrift in an eternity of nothingness isn't enough to freak you out, here comes Philip K Dick. One of the world's greatest sci-fi writers celebrated on this amateur but comprehensive site.



REDSHIFT SURVEY

manaslu.astro.utoronto.ca/~lin/lcrs.html

Mapping the universe is not a job for the easily distracted, or those who've been hexed by gypsies. If you've got what it takes to process hundred of pages of dots and numbers, then step in here. You may be some time.



RODDENBERRY

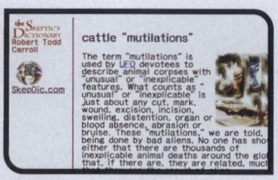
www.roddenberry.com

When we're all living in Mars-based pods, there will only be one thing in our futuristic wardrobes. Lycra. And it'll all be Gene Roddenberry's fault. Praise the god of unlikely ears and corrugated foreheads here, but beware of the Tribbles.

SETI INSTITUTE ONLINE

www.seti.org

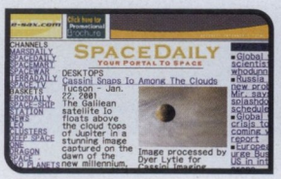
The bona fide, non-gun-wielding-lunatic face of alien hunting, SETI has support from Sun Microsystems and Hewlett Packard, funding giant telescopes and *Contact*-style receivers. The scientific face of scientific research.



SKEPTIC'S DICTIONARY

http://skepdic.com/

There was a time when folks thought the moon was made of cheese and if it weren't for sceptical types we'd still be wondering why the sun hadn't melted it all over us. Use this massive dictionary to check for fairies at the bottom of the garden.



SPACE DAILY

www.spacer.com

Banner-ad heavy space news portal with a predilection for sobering news accompanied by hysteria-provoking images. Despite this, if you can only spare ten minutes a day to check the astral horizon, then this site is a wise stop.

SPACE FRONTIER FOUNDATION

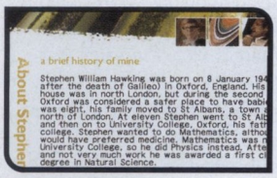
www.space-frontier.org

I don't like Kent much either, but sometimes you can go too far. Space Frontier is devoted to the idea that 'Space is a place, not a program'. Join their quest for Utopia here, although be sure to nip down to Blockbusters for the *Alien* quartet first.

STAR WARS

www.starwars.com

NASA would be running its operations with a staff of two if it weren't for George Lucas. Build your own fan site, see behind-the-scenes shots of *Episode II* and read the filming diaries of the man himself. Bearded genius that he is.



STEPHEN HAWKING

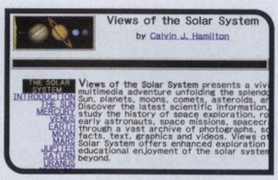
www.hawking.org.uk

He knows everything and he's not afraid to explain it in words of one syllable. The world's biggest brain unfolds the universe with an easy-to-use site and handy glossary. Those with a WAP phone may like to take advantage of email at their next pub quiz...

TRANSORBITAL TECHNOLOGY

www.transorbital.com

'Science site promoting the investigation into forms of propulsion into space other than making a big fire very quickly. Learn about the fascinatingly named 'pogo transients' and their less thrilling sounding Asonic CH4 transients.

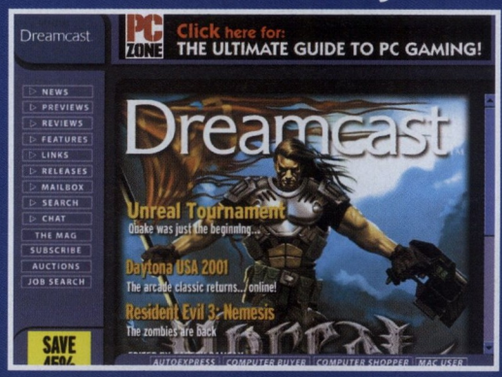


VIEWS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

www.solarviews.com/eng/homepage.htm

It wasn't smoking and red meat that polished off the dinosaurs y'know. Gain a lot of tragically ineffectual knowledge here, then buy a nugget in the shop. Which is kinda like displaying a bullet with your name on it over the fire.

www.dreamcastmag.co.uk



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JASON RUTTER, RESEARCHER UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Jason recently moved into researching games, gamers, and the market aspects of gaming. Especially interested in the innovations in gaming and how it is 'consumed'.

SIMON CALLAGHAN, PR EXECUTIVE INFOGRAMES

Simon has been in the industry for about five years. "When I got into the industry, I rediscovered games, and I love every minute of them," he says.

CHRISTIAN SLATER, ASSISTANT ONLINE EDITOR OF DREAMARENA

Previously a games journalist for three years on various mags, Christian recently joined Sega's online team that maintains and updates Dreamarena.

THE BIG DEBATE

DO GAMES MAKE YOU MAAAAD?

ARE THE BLOOD AND GUTS IN VIDEOGAMES DRAGGING US INTO THE GUTTER, AS SOME WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE? *ODM* STEERS THROUGH THE TABLOID HYSTERIA AND ASKS EXPERTS AND READERS FOR THEIR OPINIONS

ODM: Is gaming good for you?

KEREM: Absolutely. Gaming is a good way of venting frustration, especially when you're a student with loads of deadlines! I tend to avoid them by playing computer games! But in a good way! I'm not avoiding work, though – I am just getting out my frustrations by playing *Samba de Amigo*.

JO: There is a lot of research that looks at the more negative side of videogaming, but there is also a lot of stuff that is beginning to take a positive view and look at it in the context of people's leisure activities. Basically, anything that people do for fun, for enjoyment, for challenge and so on is going to be good for them psychologically. The only downside is that there aren't so many benefits physically as playing a sport, but if you

KEREM SHEFIK
GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDENT

Owns a Dreamcast and has been playing games since he was three. Started on "the little game watches" and hasn't looked back since.

ASIL ESCANE-CARLIN
NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR

Has been playing games for as long as his brother, Kerem. Started off on the likes of the Vic-20 and Spectrum and has ended up with a Dreamcast. Naturally.

JO BRYCE, PSYCHOLOGY LECTURER
UNIV. OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE

Works with Jason on gaming research. Interested in the psychological dimensions of gaming, the media discourses about violence, and so on. Also owns a DC.

are venting your stresses after a bad day at work, it's got its place in the context of the mass of leisure activities available today.

JASON: The thing is, though, that gaming is not just about sitting in front of a console! Especially with younger people, teenagers and kids, it's the actual community that builds up around playing games – you share information and you have friendships springing up from gaming. Games also have a lot of positive features which just watching TV doesn't. It's about problem solving, strategy, teamwork in a lot of the online and multiplaying games, and I don't understand why that can be bad for you!

ASIL: It's definitely a good thing when there are a load of people sitting round a console playing a game. A couple of weeks ago I had a party and we got *Samba de Amigo* out after a while – you wouldn't believe the reception it got. Everyone was up, playing and having a laugh.

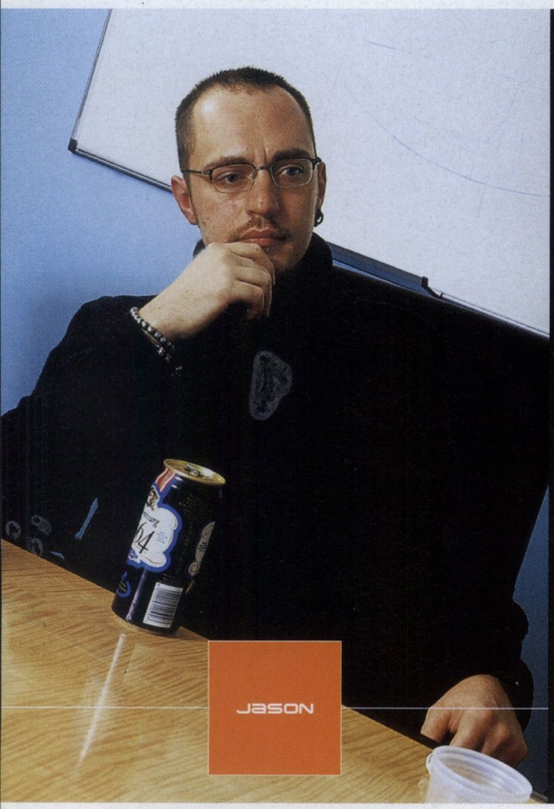
JASON: Also, it's strange that a 'dedicated' gamer is seen as a bad thing. Often dedication is seen as a positive thing, such as if you are solely dedicated to your job or solely dedicated to a sport… but in the context of videogaming it is seen as the latest technological demon so it is regarded as a bad thing.

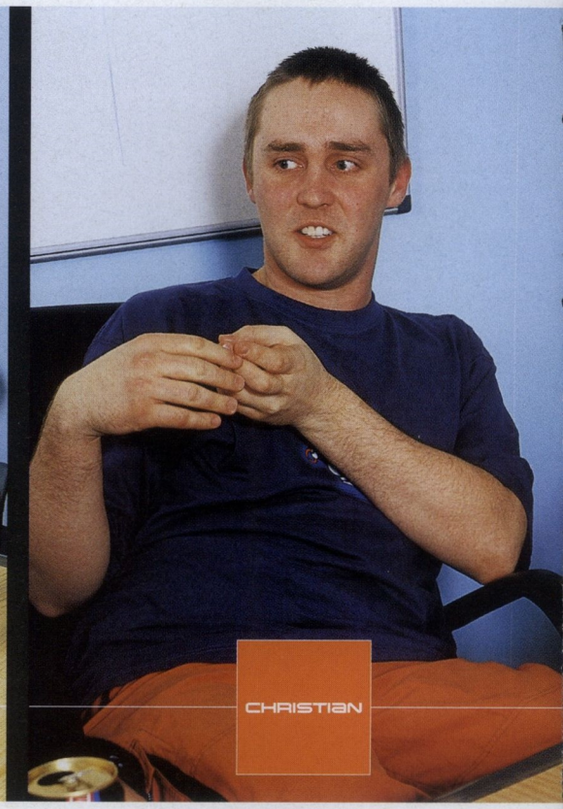
SIMON: I also think that the public's perception of games is erroneous. As much as we like to think that games are on the threshold of becoming mass market, they are not – they are a long, long way from it. People don't understand games and they don't know about games – the normal man or woman in the street perceives games as toys for children, which they are not. They are a lot more involved, a lot more rewarding and intellectually challenging. The trouble is that the public's perception is fed to them by the tabloids and they complain when their kids sit in front of a television playing on the Dreamcast for two hours a day. Yet these are the same people who sit down and watch *Eastenders* and *Coronation Street* day in, day out. I think games are healthier for you than being drip-fed inane soap operas…

JO: Yeah, part of the problem is with the media. People pick up on the idea that all gamers are the same and all games are same, which is clearly not the case. Also, if you look at the psychological literature that's been done on games, they all focus very

"GAMES ARE HEALTHIER FOR YOU THAN BEING DRIP-FED SOAP OPERAS" – SIMON CALLAGHAN

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**





specifically on the violent games and on very young age groups or teenagers. You never see any recognition of the *diversity* of games, the crossover between different types of games, and the different experiences and motivations behind having a console.

CHRISTIAN: The media has always reacted badly to new forms of itself, though. Whether it be film, TV, the Net or whatever. Anything new to the media is always perceived to be Satan!

JASON: It's also about 'the great and the good' people who write newspapers and think that they know what's best for other people. There is also a great link between new technologies coming in and some sort of working class/under class issue. It's like the whole thing about the 'Penny Dreadfuls' during the Victorian era. For the first time in history, you actually had cheaply produced books and the worry wasn't necessarily about the books themselves, but the fact that they were now being read by people who were from a poorer background. 'The great and the good' believed that these poor people couldn't cope with the books and therefore it would naturally lead to the 'warping' of their minds. It's absurd!

ODM: Do you feel that we need to address the issue of violence in games? Or we are doing enough already?

SIMON: It's just the same old, tired subject! Every industry has faced it. The movie industry has had it. The video industry has had it. And time after time, all these so-called studies are done to try and make a link between violence in games and real-life violence – and no one has been able to do it. It's just a scapegoat for the society that we live in. Society doesn't reflect what goes on in games and movies – movies and games reflect what goes on in society. People are getting it back to front! I also think we have to be quite careful here – there is a very fine line between self-regulation and regulation from an outside body, and that becomes censorship, which has always been a contentious issue. I think that as we are living in a democracy, we really have to give people the opportunity to make their own decisions. And if you are too young, then it is obviously up to the parents to make that decision on what their children can or can't be exposed to. For someone else, who is 'all-seeing and all-powerful' to decide what you can or can't play is morally questionable.

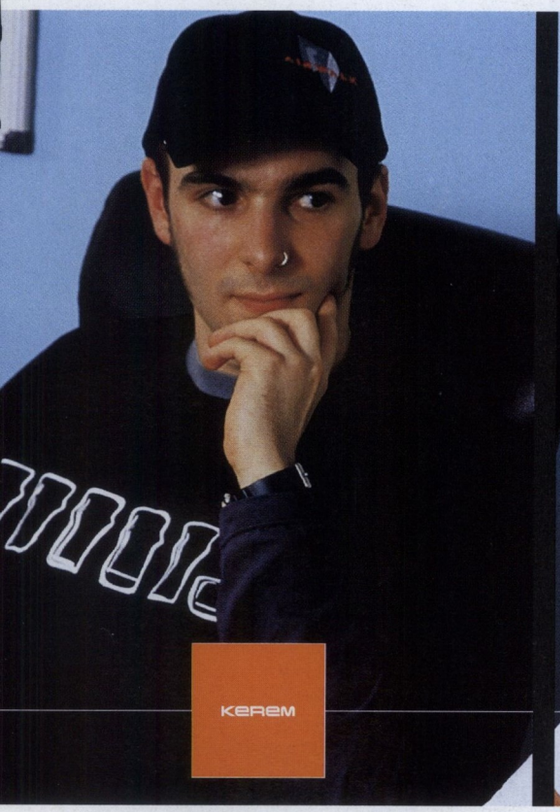
KEREM: Yeah, but you also see that a bit when publishers move the goalposts. Like with *Driver* [on PlayStation and PC] – originally you were a getaway driver and a criminal. That was changed to 'You are an undercover cop who is a getaway driver.' The game is exactly the same but the moral compass has changed. I think that shows weakness. It's just pandering to 'maybe we shouldn't do that because we might upset someone'.

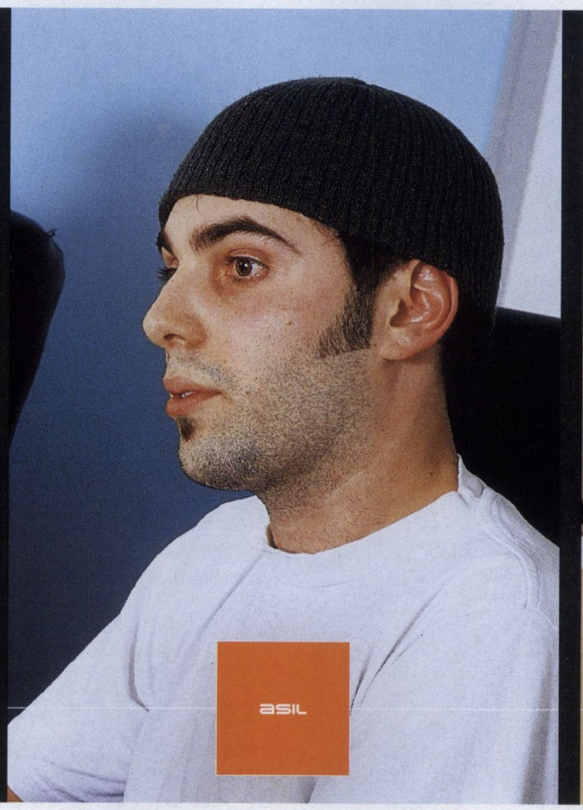
SIMON: I think self-regulation will come in, though, because there are so many big, powerful corporations in the games industry now and making games costs a lot of money. The stakes are so high that companies will start regulating themselves, simply because they don't want to be seen as subversive or a threat to children. I think they are going to want to appeal to as wide an audience as possible, and I think in doing that they will regulate themselves and decide what could be perceived as controversial content – they might think 'maybe we won't go down that road and include that gaming element. Or we won't go so heavy on the gore content'.

JASON: You're right – producing a game now is a multimillion pound business and companies are very reluctant to lose out in any way. So you get companies like Disney, who will not even think about a game that includes any kind of death – so you end up shooting bits of marshmallow at people. The game is the same but it has been *neutered*, and I have very mixed feelings about that.

ODM: Have you readers ever seen anything that made you stop and think 'Oh! This is a bit strong!'

"WITNESSING VIOLENCE IN THE HOME IS GOING TO HAVE A BIGGER IMPACT ON YOU THAN PLAYING A COMPUTER GAME" – JO BRYCE





"ANYTHING NEW TO THE MEDIA IS ALWAYS PERCEIVED TO BE SATAN!" – CHRISTIAN SLATER

ASIL: *Soldier of Fortune* [on PC] is quite graphic to start off with. You're not used to games where you can blow someone's head off and when they are on the floor you can shoot them again and their body goes into spasms. So when you first boot it up you're not ready for it, but then you realise that the imagery is similar to what you have been watching in the movies for the last 15 years! After five minutes, you're like 'Well, it's just a game. It's all part of the visual make-up and aesthetics of it'. You have to take it in the right way – most people would pick up that game, see that it is just a game and it is a way of venting your frustrations and relaxing! At the end of the day, you may want to give your boss a slap round the ear but it's like 'No, let's go and do it in the virtual world and then get back to everyday life!'

JASON: The thing is, though, is explicit violence necessarily bad? Or do we go down the *A-Team* [crap '80s TV series] route where you can shoot people or they can crash and they still get up afterwards! That seems to me to be sending out a far more confused message – that violence doesn't have real consequences.

ODM: By blaming videogame violence for society's ills, do you think the issues behind real-life violence are being overlooked?

JO: With the Columbine High School shootings, it was found that they had played violent computer games and some believed that such games had taught them how to kill people. Well, that's a bit of a simple explanation for what happened there, and there are a whole range of complex social and parental psychological factors to consider. Who knows? I don't – nobody does realistically. It's really easy to go to the media and say 'Oh look, they played *Doom*' or 'They listened to Marilyn Manson. He told them to do it'. But you are underestimating the freewill of people by saying that they would be easily seduced by media – that they would go and routinely follow out what they see on their screens. There are people in society who have psychological problems or who are psychopaths, and they will fixate on something, but it could be a computer game or it could be a book.

SIMON: I think that society looks for external issues or external things to blame its problems on to. People in general have a problem with looking at themselves as a cause of a lot of their own problems. It's a lot easier to blame something else and deflect the attention away from yourself.

JO: A lot of kids also grow up in violent homes seeing their fathers hitting their mothers. So you have to ask what is going to have a bigger impact on somebody's psychological development – that or playing *Doom*? I would say that it's witnessing violence in the home or being a victim of it yourself that is going to have a bigger impact on you than playing a computer game. Yes, you could censor all sorts of media and completely take out anything that is going to be potentially harmful or encourage people to be violent, but people can fixate on anything! It's easy and emotive to say 'Take violence out, take graphic sex out' for that small percentage of the population who may be influenced by it. Then what do you take away next? Where do you draw the line? Do you stop people from going to see football matches, where there is a lot more violence coming out of the terraces than from people sitting at home playing computer games? The main problem is society is trying to find simple answers to very complicated questions.

ODM: Finally, do you have a message for any hysterical tabloids who might be reading?

KEREM: One word – research.

JO: They should be careful of what they are being fed and where it is being fed from. The government will only fund research into computer games that actually looks at the things that they want to prove, and those are the things that will get reported in the media. They're looking for violence in games… the only research that gets funded is the stuff that looks at violence! It's why we couldn't get grants to look at what we want to research, because the government is like 'there is no hard copy in that! It doesn't fulfil our let's blame videogames for everything! brief'. They don't want to hear it.

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Reviews: *ChuChu Rocket!, Ecco The Dolphin…*

D010 Issue #10 • £5.99 • August 2000

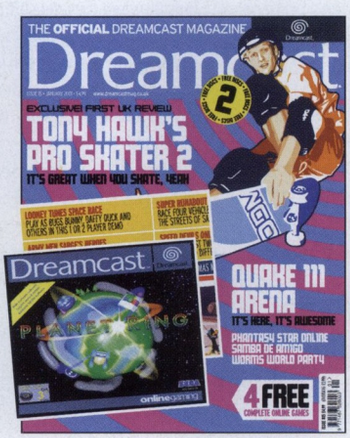
Player guides: *Code: Veronica, ChuChu, Rayman 2*
Playable demos: *Super Magnetic Neo, Wacky Races, Toy Commander*
Reviews: *Marvel Vs Capcom 2, Tony Hawk's…*

D011 Issue #11 • £5.99 • September 2000

Player guides: *Ecco The Dolphin, Code: Veronica*
Playable demos: *F1 World Grand Prix II, Gauntlet Legends, Virtua Tennis*
Reviews: *Dead Or Alive 2, Sydney 2000…*

D014 Issue #14 • £5.99 • December 2000

Player guides: *Dead Or Alive 2*
Playable demos: *Jet Set Radio, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2, Silent Scope, UEFA Dream Soccer…*
Reviews: *JSR, Le Mans 24 Hours, Shenmue…*



D0015 Issue #15 • £5.99 • January 2001

Player guides: *Dead Or Alive 2, UFC*
Playable demos: *Looney Tunes: Space Race, Super Runabout, Speed Devils Online Racing…*
Reviews: *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2, Quake III…*

D016 Issue #16 • £5.99 • February 2001

Player guides: *Shenmue, Metropolis Street Racer*
Playable demos: *Donald Duck: Quack Attack, Kiss Psycho Circus, Stupid Invaders, UFC…*
Reviews: *Resident Evil 3: Nemesis, Starlancer…*

D017 Issue #17 • £5.99 • March 2001

Player guides: *Shenmue, Metropolis Street Racer*
Playable demos: *Sega Extreme Sports, Ducati World…* plus complete game: *Sega Swirl*
Reviews: *Phantasy Star Online, Spawn ITDH…*

LETTERS

Got some thoughts on Dreamcast, Sega or your magazine? Well don't keep them to yourself – share them with us and, if your letter is interesting, thousands of other readers (see below for contact details). Long-suffering editor Warren Chrismas responds to this month's best letters

BARGAIN

I was gutted to hear that Sega are to stop making Dreamcast. I bought one just before Christmas because I didn't fancy paying £299 for a PlayStation 2 and £45 for its games.

There may well still be some excellent games to come on Dreamcast but these will inevitably dry up as publishers move over to other platforms.

The really stupid thing about it is that I was watching a Dreamcast and a PlayStation 2 being played in Toys R Us and the DC looked every bit as impressive as the PS2.

A fact of selling that Sega seem to have forgotten – if they ever knew it in the first place – is that in order to make decent sales you have to advertise your product. Where was the big push before Christmas when it was obvious that Sony were having problems getting the PS2 out? Did anybody see a TV ad for the DC? I certainly didn't. You have to get out there in the face of Joe Public and not just the people who read magazines.

Sega came up with a great package to include a DVD player but it wasn't pushed. Apparently the DVD part of the PlayStation 2 is rubbish (even if you get rid of the green cast). A proper, stand-alone player with a remote control will always be better.

It appears to me that Sega have taken an excellent product, which was 12 months ahead of Sony and wasted the opportunity. How else can you explain why the PSone was outselling the DC *this* Christmas?

I sold my PlayStation with a few games for £110. A friend sold his to the first caller for £100 and was still getting calls about it a week later. We both bought Dreamcasts. I wonder how much they will be worth next Christmas?

PAUL WIGLEY, VIA EMAIL

Does it really matter how much your Dreamcast is worth in simple monetary terms? As Shane is getting at in the letter on the right, you should value your DC by what it means to you personally in terms of fun and enjoyment.

Anyway, we think you've made the right choice with Dreamcast, Paul. Why would anyone want to spend £300 on a PlayStation 2 and sit around waiting for some half-decent games to be released for it, when you can spend less than half that amount on a Dreamcast and play the greatest console games available today?

By the time there are games *really* worth playing on the PlayStation 2, the price of the Sony console will – or, at least, *should* – have dropped significantly, possibly to as little as £150... and you will have the chance to pick up a second console for less than the current price of a PS2 alone.

By the way, while we appreciate that everyone has got to fund their gaming habit somehow, we have never understood why people sell their 'old' consoles. If you bought a new cat, would you kick all your other pets out of your home?

PLATFORM WON

Why do you sound so happy about Sega games on other platforms? There is no reason to own a DC now because all of its wonderful 'exclusive' games are now little more than cheap sluts of the gaming world, shagging any other console for a quick buck.

I, for one, feel betrayed by Sega for making me spend tons of cash on games that I could have played on the PlayStation 2. At least you can still get games for that! Great mag by the way!

J ROSS, VIA EMAIL

We're not exactly "happy" about Sega games appearing on other consoles. Then again, we're not particularly upset right now either, given that the titles that are currently being ported across are old titles, already available on Dreamcast.

It's going to be a long, long time – well into next year, we reckon – before Sega release brand-new, original titles for other consoles.

"No reason to own a Dreamcast now"? Right now, and for a long time still to come, Dreamcast is the *only* way to play all of Sega's brilliant console games.

CUNNING PLAN

I'd like to share my disappointment at the recent news of the DC's departure. I've been a hardcore Sega fan for about ten years when I first got a Mega Drive. I'm only 15 now, so I've been growing up with it for two-thirds of my life!

I'd like to say well done to the Sega for producing, in my opinion, some of the best games I've ever played, most recently *Shenmue*. I will continue to support the Dreamcast until its departure.

I have a PlayStation 2 and it's ultimately very disappointing compared to the DC. Rubbish DVD playback and rubbish games equals rubbish console! The only reason Sony have been successful is the fact that they have cash to burn because they make other products as well.

Anyway, this new plan that Sega have might not be such a bad idea. I have a cunning plan (and it won't go wrong like it does with Baldrick!). In my eyes, if Sega make lots of games for other consoles and gains the 25 per cent of the market they're planning to gain, then lots of people will see how good their games are.

Then Sega could make another console when they get sufficient funds, stuff it in the public's face and, because everyone will know how good the games are, they will buy skip-loads of consoles. What do you think?

Anyway, thanks again Sega for helping me through those boring times by giving me, and everyone else, the best games ever.

TOM ENRIGHT (15), WEST SUSSEX

That a staggering, bowel-shatteringly good plan, Tom. No, really.

HA HA HA!

Hey, looks like you lot are all out of a job! So would you mind sending me all your games and consoles? I was thinking of moulding every Dreamcast together (all three of them), putting Semtex round it and chucking it into the PlayStation 2 factory. Good idea or bad idea?

Ha ha ha! No, but seriously, if you want to send me all your games I have no problems with that! Cheers!

'SLEEPMECHANIC', VIA EMAIL

Yeah, cheers! This is probably a good time to remind readers that we will continue to produce *Official Dreamcast Magazine* while games are still being released on the console – that's well into next year.

CIAO!

Well, goodbye. We love you.

M CONWAY, VIA EMAIL

Hey, don't go doing anything stupid, you hear?

HOLA!

I just finished a game of the underrated *Toy Racer* (*ODM* #17, 6/10) and have started to understand what Sega have with this online community thing.

I was just having a quiet few games and was on to a good winning streak when a Spaniard by the name of Javi_Spain_001 [that's possibly not his real name – ed] came on and beat me three times in a row!

I was having none of this and went on to win the next few games. A battle soon ensued. We were leaving the other poor racers for dust chasing each other's tails.

So I now have a gaming rivalry with a guy from Barcelona, Spain, and have become pretty good mates with the Spanish lads that were in the room.

THE GREATEST

I know by now you've probably been inundated with letters regarding the phasing out of the Dreamcast [you're not wrong – ed].

I must admit that when I first heard the news I was really disappointed that a console I had paid £200 for a little over a year ago was to have such a short lifespan.

However, after my initial shock, a realisation dawned on me – a console should not be judged on the length of time it is around but rather what it achieves in the time it is around.

In my time owning Sega's final console I have had the joy of playing games such as *Virtua Tennis*, *Crazy Taxi* and *Shenmue* and can still look forward to the likes of *Headhunter* and *Sonic Adventure 2*. The Dreamcast has managed to fit more classic games into its short lifespan than the PlayStation has managed in five years.

There are probably Dreamcast owners distraught at Sega's recent announcements and, yes, it's a shame that we won't see the Dreamcast truly develop over coming years, but owners of Sega's console swansong can be proud in the knowledge that they owned the greatest games machine ever made.

SHANE, VIA EMAIL

Wise words, Shane. There are many, many great games on Dreamcast – the best currently available on *any* platform – and yes, there are many more to come.

> "A CONSOLE SHOULD BE JUDGED ON WHAT IT ACHIEVES, NOT HOW LONG IT IS AROUND"
> – SHANE, VIA EMAIL

GOT SOMETHING INTERESTING TO SAY ON DREAMCAST, SEGA OR YOUR MAGAZINE?
Email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk or send a letter to Mailbox, *ODM*, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Please note: you must tell us your full name and, preferably, your home town. *All* letters and emails sent to us are read by *all* the *ODM* team. While we respond when we can, we simply do not have the time to send personal replies to everyone. Sorry! Also, we reserve the right to edit, spell check and add punctuation to letters before publication.

I never wanted to buy *Quake III Arena* but I will now I've got the idea of online gaming, and I'm looking forward to *Phantasy Star Online*. Keep up the good work, Sega.
DAVE, IRELAND

Take a look at page 122 and see where all this could lead for you, Dave. Well, not necessarily with the Spanish lads.

WEB WARS

Thanks to the letters printed in your magazine regarding expage.com in your December and February issues (*ODM* #14, #16), I have been inspired to create my own web page.

It's since grown into a 12-page site including a *Quake III Arena* section which I hope will grow pretty soon. Visit the site at http://www.expage.com/homeofthe1

If the counter says 25 then something's gone very wrong with the publicity as it said 24 when I visited it just now.
BEN WILSON (AKA THE ONE), LINCOLN

Hmmm… we're not sure your pan-European advertising campaign has worked all that well Ben, given that your counter is reading, er, 43 at the time of writing. Still, I'm sure our readers will be happy to visit and fill your guestbook with rubbish.

Twelve-year-old Sam Barker of Lichfield also wrote in to tell us about his website (www.expage.com/sambarkers page). His counter reads 118. Not that we're trying to start a scrap or anything.

YES, SIR!

I have noticed that other magazines have quizzes or a crossword to show how much we know and how we rank as game fanatics. Could you please put one in your mag?
ANDREW SAVORY (12), CARNOUSTIE

Yeah, okay. See page 106.

DISC ERROR

After the joke of a demo disc that came with your February issue (*ODM* #16), I was hoping to see a much-improved array of games and videos.

But it appears you have outdone yourselves with an absolutely dismal disc with the March issue (*ODM* #17). Some of those games have been out for six months!
PAUL LOVELL, WARWICK

We don't actually put together the Dreamon discs, Paul – Sega Europe do – but we understand what you're saying. We're currently seeking assurances from Sega that a decent number of new demos and movies will be included on the discs in the coming months. We'll have more on this in next month's issue.

UNSUBBED

AAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! NNNNNNNNO000000000000!!!!!!!!! !!!! SEGA, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU PLAYING AT?!?!?!?!?!???!!! THE PLAYSTATION 2 IS UTTER SHITE!!!!!! IF SEGA MAKE GAMES FOR OTHER CONSOLES I'LL NEVER TRUST SEGA AGAIN!!!!!!!!!! SEGA ALSO LIED TO US!!!!!!!

SEGA: "WE ARE NOT DUMPING DREAMCAST AND NOT MAKING GAMES FOR PS2!" SEGA 2 DAYS LATER: "WE ARE DUMPING DREAMCAST, LETTING DOWN OUR FANS AND DEVELOPING FOR OTHERS!" (IN OTHER WORDS GIVING UP!) WHY WOULD SEGA WANT TO GIVE UP LIKE THIS???!!! SONY PROBABLY BOUGHT SEGA AND DONE THIS BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT SEGA WERE GONNA BEAT THEM!!!!! AND DONT GIVE ME "SEGA WERE LOSING MONEY BECAUSE OF DREAMCAST" COS SONY LOSE £100+ FOR EVERY SHITTY PS2 SOLD!!!!!! SONY ARE NOW LAUGHING BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO SEE SEGA GIVE UP!!!!! NOW THE PS2 IS GONNA WIN THE NEXT CONSOLE WAR COS IT HAS THE BEST GAMES WHEN THAT COULD HAVE BEEN SEGA!!!!!!!!!! WELL IT SEEMS MY GAMING DAYS ARE GONNA END WITH THE DC AND NOW SEGA HAVE KILLED OFF THE HARDCORE GAMERS!!!!!!!! IF ANYONE WANTS TO STOP SEGA FROM DOING THIS SEND AN EMAIL TO SEGA AND SHOW YOUR DISGUST!!!!! I HATE THE PS2 – IT'S THE WORST CONSOLE EVER (TAKE NOTE SEGA)!!!!!!!!! WELL, GAMES GIANT TO CRAPPY 3RD PARTY DEVELOPER – QUITE A DROP, EH???!!!!! I'M A VERY PISSED OFF SEGA FAN!!!!!
B KNAPP, VIA EMAIL

Yeah, we kinda guessed that.

THE END?

I couldn't believe my ears when I heard that Sega where dumping the Dreamcast after less than a year and a half. I'm shocked, pissed off and very disappointed. What went so badly wrong to such a brilliant games console with the best line-up of games seen in ages?
NICK WILSON, LONDONDERRY

Well Nick, it's a long story but basically what happened is… Oh, sorry, we're out of space.

ASK SEGA

Every month we give you the chance to talk directly to Sega. Send us your questions (contact details below) and we'll put them to the people behind the world's greatest console

EYES WIDE SHUT

Hello Sega dude. When is the Dreameye coming out in the UK?
TAYLEES, VIA EMAIL

SEGA: It's unlikely that the Dreameye camera will see the light of day in Europe. However, don't rule out seeing new peripherals on the Dreamcast.

NO CHANGE

When Sega cease production of the Dreamcast console will you cease production of the peripherals such as control pads, VMs etc? Also, for how long are we going to be able to continue playing *Quake III Arena* over the Net, uploading *MSR* times etc, before Sega close down the servers?
BEN, VIA EMAIL

SEGA: We have sufficient stock of peripherals to last through the Dreamcast's lifespan. As long as there is still a great enough demand to play online with your Dreamcast there will be servers to play on.

VF4 FOR PS2

Are you seriously considering making *Virtua Fighter 4* a PlayStation 2 exclusive? If this is true, are you mad?
DAVID BREEN, KETTERING.

SEGA: As yet, the exclusivity issue is all talk – nothing has been confirmed.

WORD!

I've heard that Sega are bringing out a Dreamcast emulator for the PC. Is this true? Also, are you thinking of bringing out any word-processing software for the Dreamcast?
DJ PAR, SOMERSET

SEGA: Again, the DC emulator is just rumour – as yet nothing is confirmed. A word-processing software package will not be released – it wouldn't be that useful without a printer.

WHAT'S THIS?

I have bought a mouse for my Dreamcast, but the system won't recognise it – all I get is a '?' when I plug it in. The mouse works with *Quake III Arena* but I bought it to use on the Net. What's wrong?
JASON KING, VIA EMAIL

SEGA: Unfortunately, the current version of Dreamkey does not support mouse use [there should be a sticker on the mouse packaging which explains this – ed]. You'll have to wait for the next version of Dreamkey.

2.0 SOON?

Is Dreamkey 2.0 still coming out? And if so, where can I get it? I want to use my mouse on the Internet!
SANDRA WALTON, LONDON

SEGA: We're still hopeful of an Easter release. *ODM* will be the first to know all the details, as per usual!

BALLS

Will *NBA2K1* come out in Europe?
CARL PERSSON, VIA EMAIL

SEGA: There are no plans to release this title at the moment.

SPACE CRASH

I have a copy of *Space Channel 5* that always crashes. The on-screen character stays on (mostly a boss) but the background disappears and the game halts. I would like to return it and exchange it for a working one. Is this possible?
RUDY VAN BOXEM, BELGIUM

SEGA: It appears you have a faulty copy. Take it back to where your purchased it for a refund or an exchange.

BROKEN

My Dreamcast modem broke all by itself – or at least that's what my little brother says. I was wondering if it is possible to get a new one and where from?
MAGPIE BOB, VIA EMAIL

SEGA: Try calling the Sega consumer line on 0845 609 0090. [Note: Sega may be able to repair broken modems but they do *not* sell modems separately – ed]

SPARE CHANGE

How much cash (if any) do Sega have left?
ANDREW BURTON, VIA EMAIL

SEGA: Enough to keep releasing quality games such as *Confidential Mission*, *Headhunter*, *Black & White* and so on for a while yet! [Well it was a daft question! – ed]

WHY, WHY, WHY?

Why are Sega stopping making Dreamcast consoles?
RYAN, VIA EMAIL

SEGA: We have a large stock of Dreamcasts in warehouses around the world. We believe that there is sufficient stock to see the console through its lifespan.

GOT SOMETHING YOU WANT TO ASK SEGA?
Email your queries to us at sega@dreamcastmag.co.uk or send a letter to Ask Sega, *ODM*, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Please note: each month we chose the best of the queries, pass them on to Sega Europe and print their responses. Before writing please check that your queries haven't been answered in our FAQs starting on page 103.

YOU KNOW LIFE IS STRANGE WHEN...

...YOU MEET YOUR SOULMATE IN A BUGGY HEAT CHATROOM!

Dreamarena isn't just about multiplayer gaming – you can also meet your future spouse on it! As Chris and Kirsty found out...

CHRIS: "**I'VE HAD A** Dreamcast since day one and started on Dreamarena as soon as it became available. I spent about an hour a night in the chatrooms talking to people. I was in the *Buggy Heat* chatroom one evening and it was empty. I was about to leave when Kirsty's name popped up. I said hello and we just got talking. The thing is, we must have talked for about three hours online!

"It was even more strange because she doesn't normally go on the DC – she was babysitting at a friend's house who has one! Anyway, we chatted about life in general, what we had done and where we had been. We actually swapped phone numbers and were texting each other as well as talking on Dreamarena!

"Five minutes after I'd switched off the Dreamcast, we were talking on the phone instead! From there we just carried on talking – sometimes eight to nine times a day – for hours! We just couldn't find enough things to tell each other! We would even have to text each other if we hadn't spoken in an hour!

"Two weeks later, we decided to meet. It was a mutual decision – we had both been 'oohing' and 'ahhing' about it and just decided to go for it! She was literally just finishing college and I wasn't doing anything for a couple of weeks, so I said I would come up and meet her, bring her back here for a week and see how we got on!

"We arranged to meet in a public place outside her college. It was a 200 mile journey and I was so nervous that I couldn't even drive – I had to get my brother to drive me up there! I was in a right state! I didn't know what I was doing, but I really had to meet this girl and all I could think about was that it was going to work!"

KIRSTY: "Chris phoned to tell me that he was waiting in the street. I got really bad butterflies and was shaking, but my friend was more nervous than I was! We drove to meet him and I got out, banging my head on the car door because I was so nervous! Anyway, I walked up to him and gave him a kiss. I was like, 'Oh my God, I can't believe I've done this!'

"We went off to see my mum because she wouldn't let me go off with him until she had met him. She was like, 'No sex until you've known him for a couple of months!' You know, typical mother stuff! She actually got on really well with him, so I packed up my things, said goodbye and went with him to his home!

"I stayed for a week and we got on really well! I went home on the Friday and mum asked how it had gone. I told her that I was moving in with Chris. She was like, 'Oh, my baby is leaving me!' So I moved in with him the following Thursday! It was bit of a whirlwind romance! On the Friday, he popped the question on one knee, the old romantic! I said yes! We will be getting married within the next couple of years!"

CHRIS: "At the time, I just didn't think that anything like this could ever happen online. I recommend it to everyone as long as you take precautions. With Kirsty, I had to give her mum all my details, a picture of me and a copy of my driving licence and passport! She wanted to make sure that there was little risk. All I can say is 'Thanks, Sega for coming up with Dreamarena, because I never would have been on the Net without it!'"

- ***ODM* would like to point out that you should be highly cautious of handing out personal information online...**

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

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B - 02
Blue Stinger
Buggy Heat
Bio Hazard: Code Veronica
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Bio Hazard 2

C - 03
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Code Veronica (Res. Evil)
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CAPCOM vs SNK
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Chronicles (Tombraider 5)
Chicken Run
Carrier
Cueball (Jimmy White's 2)
Cool Boarders Burrrn
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D - 04
Dino Crisis
Dead or Alive 2
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX
Deadly Skies
Daytona USA 2
Dynamite Cop
Dragon's Blood
Disney's Dinosaur
Demolition (Star Wars)

E - 05
Ecco the Dolphin
Evolution
ECW Hardcore Revolution
Four x Four Evolution
Episode One: Racer
Evolution 2
ESPN Int. Track & Field
Expendable
Elemental Gimmick Gear

F - 06
Fur Fighters
Four Wheel Thunder
F355 Challenge
Fighting Force 2
Four by Four Evolution
Flag to Flag

G - 07
GTA 2
Gunbird 2
Godzilla Generations
Gauntlet Legends
Giant Gram Pro Wrestling 2
Generator Volume 1
Giga Wing
Get Bass

H - 08
Hidden & Dangerous
House of the Dead 2
Half Life
Hydro Thunder
Hardcore Heat
Hardcore Revolution (ECW)

I - 09
Incoming
International Track & Field

J - 10
Jet Set Radio
Jimmy White's 2 Cueball
Jedi Power Battles
Jojo's Bizarre Adventure

K - 11
King of the Fighters 99
Kao The Kangeroo

L - 12
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver
Loony Tunes Space Race
Last Revelation

M - 13
Metropolis Street Racer
MDK 2
Marvel vs Capcom 2
Millenium Soldier: Expend.
Mortal Kombat Gold
Monaco Grand Prix
Magforce Racing
Marvel vs Capcom
Metro. Highway Battle
Maken X
MTV Sports Skateboarding

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Nomad Soul
NFL Q'terback Club 2000
NBA Showtime
Nightmare Creatures 2
NFL Blitz 2000 NBA 2K
NFL 2K
NBA 2K1

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P - 16
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Powerstone 2
Psychic Force 2012
Plasma Sword
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Pop 'N Music
Puyo Puyo

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Quake 3

R - 18
Resident Evil: Code Veronica
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Ready 2 Rumble Round 2
Rainbow 6
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing
Revolt
Royal Rumble (WWF)
Resident Evil 2
Rayman 2
Racer (Star Wars)
Racing Sim.:Monaco GP
Redline Racer
Rippin Riders
Roadsters
Rush 2049 (San Francisco)

S - 19
Shenmue
Sonic Adventure
Soul Reaver (Legacy of Kain)
Super Runabout
Silent Scope
Sega Rally 2
Silver
Shadowman
Sega GT
Soul Fighter
Soul Calibur
Suzuki Alstare Ext. Racing
San Francisco Rush 2049
South Park
Sega Bass Fishing
Speed Devils
Sydney 2000
Star Wars Episode 1: Racer
Sword of the Berserk
Star Wars: Jedi Power Battle
Street Fighter Alpha 3
Space Channel 5
Street Fighter 3: 3rd Strike
Star Wars Demolition
Slave Zero
Soldier Of Fortune
Sega Extreme Sports
Street Fighter 3: D. Impact
Sarge's Heroes (Army Men)
Seventh Cross
Star Gladiator 2
Street Fighter 3 W Impact
Shotuko Highway Battle
Super Speed Racing
Samba de Amigo

T - 20
Tomb Raider 4
Tomb Raider 5 (Chronicles)
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Trickstyle
Tony Hawk's Skateboarding
Toy Story 2
Toy Commander
Tokyo Extreme Racer
Time Stalkers
Tee Off Golf
Tech Romancer
Test Drive 6
TNN M'sports H'core Heat
The Nomad Soul
Toukon Retsuden 4

U - 21
Ultimate Fighting Champ.
UEFA Striker
Urban Chaos

V - 22
Virtua Tennis
Vigilante 8 - 2nd Offense
V-Rally 2
Virtua Striker 2
Virtua Fightr 3TB

W - 23
WWF Attittude
WWF Royal Rumble
Wacky Races
Worms Armageddon
Wild Metal

Z - 26
Zombie Revenge

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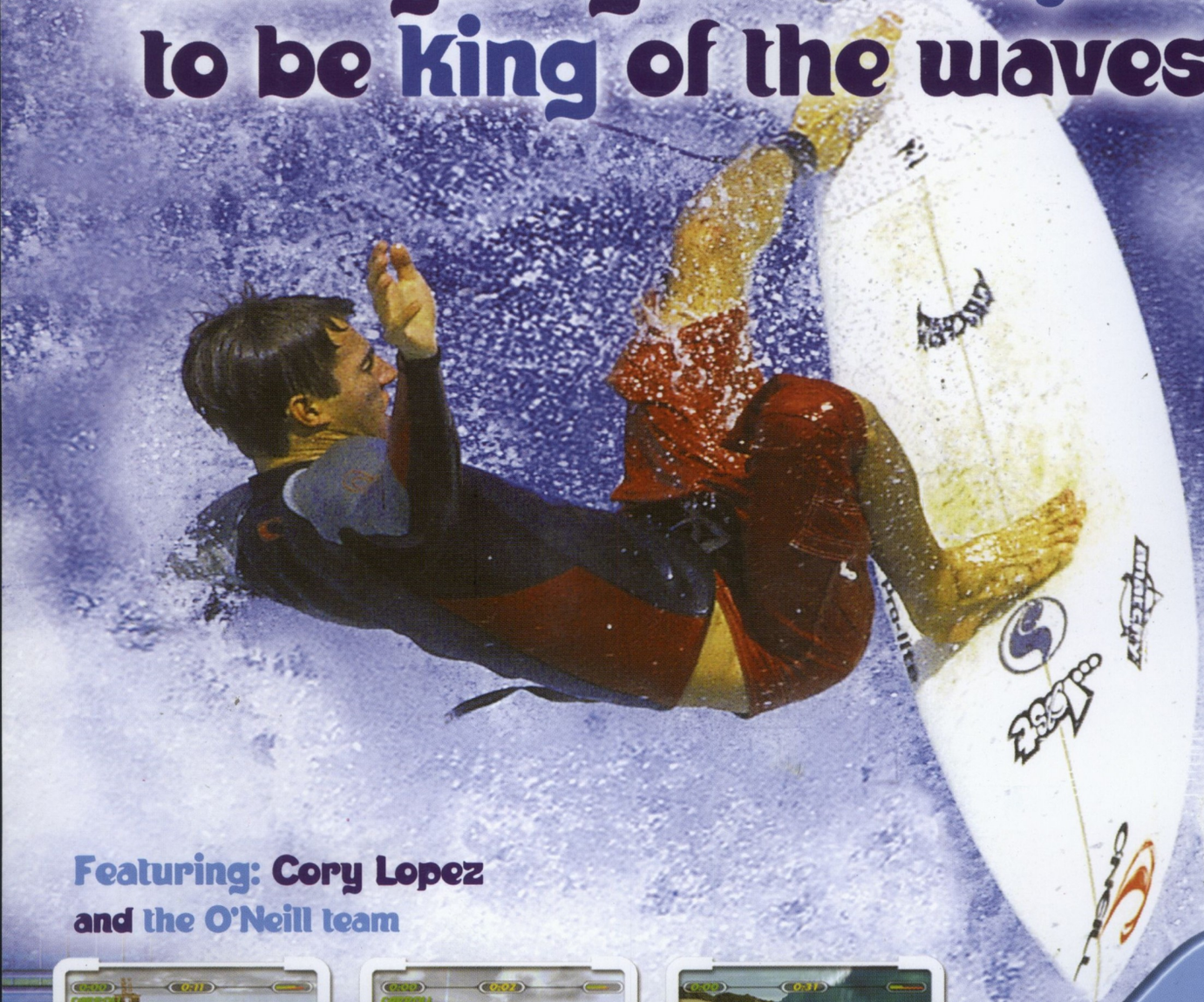

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