MEGA DRIVE MEGA-CD Master System GAME GEAR

SEGA MAGAZINE

#9
SEPT '94
£2.25

BRITAIN'S ONLY OFFICIAL SEGA MAGAZINE

MICKEY MANIA

DISNEY'S CHRISTMAS EPIC EXCLUSIVELY REVEALED!

32X

EIGHT PAGE PICTURE SPECIAL!
VIRTUA RACING DELUXE
STAR WARS ARCADE
METAL HEAD
DOOM
BULLET FIGHTERS
SHADOW OF ATLANTIS

MORTAL KOMBAT II

THE DEFINITIVE REVIEW INSIDE!

FREE! GIANT MORTAL KOMBAT II POSTER INSIDE!

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SEGA MAGAZINE SEPTEMBER 1994
BRITAIN'S ONLY OFFICIAL SEGA MAGAZINE

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Disney's

The Jungle Book

VIDEOGAME

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SEGA MEGA DRIVE

SEGA Master System™

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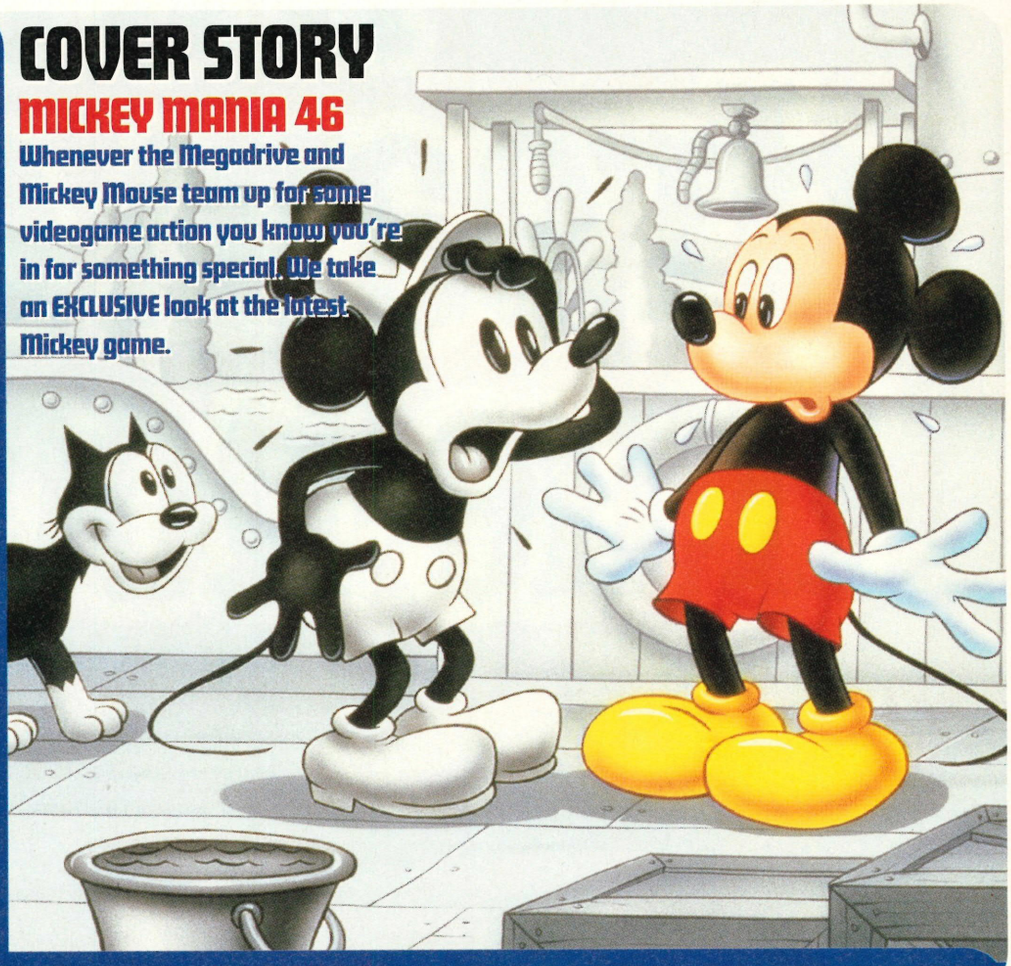
MICKEY MANIA 46

Whenever the Megadrive and Mickey Mouse team up for some videogame action you know you're in for something special. We take an EXCLUSIVE look at the latest Mickey game.



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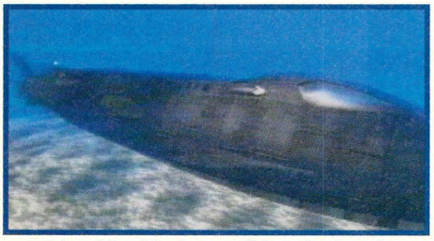

▲ With a bit of luck, you'll be playing these games by Christmas. Honest!

REGULARS

EDITORIAL 6
Only SEGA MAGAZINE has the audacity to sack Blaze Paisley...

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Rad once again proves that he, in fact, a rather amusing chap.

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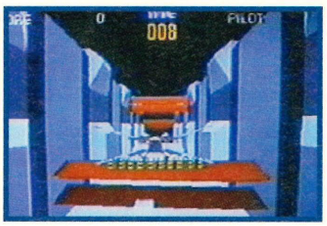
More gloating about all the great stuff we may or may not have lined up for you next month.

SHOWCASES

MORTAL KOMBAT II 38

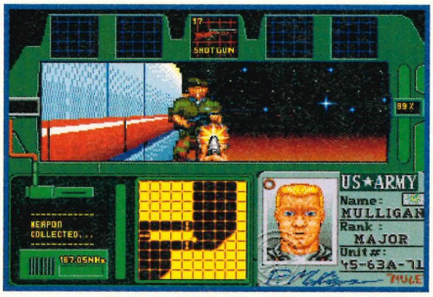
A game about death. Bloody grizzly death. Mortal Kombat II is its name, and we've graced it with a smart eight page feature! As they say: "read all about it".

32X: EIGHT PAGE WORK IN PROGRESS SPECIAL 50

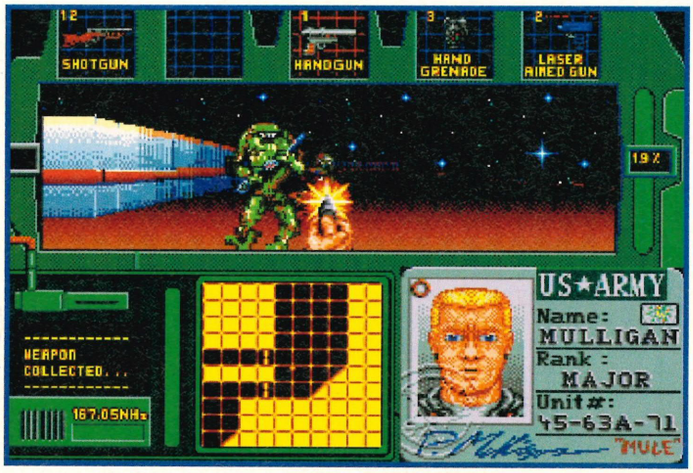


SEGA MAGAZINE has been given access to a vast proportion of the 32X projects currently in production. Check this feature out - you won't read anything like it anywhere else.

ZERO TOLERANCE 58



Doom is one of the most amazing titles available for the PC. Zero Tolerance aims to bring that experience to the Megadrive. Have the coders been able to pull it off? Examine this feature (and later, the review) and you'll find out.



▲ Zero Tolerance – the closest the Megadrive will ever get to Doom? Find out in our four page showcase on page 58.

SEGA MAGAZINE
ISSUE 9

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EDITORIAL

32 BITS AND PIECES

This month the unmatched 32-bit coverage that only SEGA MAG can provide continues. We have an unprecedented EIGHT pages of Megadrive 32X coverage, concentrating on Virtua Star Wars, Virtua Racing Deluxe and the texture-mapped mega game, Metal Head.

There's no doubt that the Megadrive 32 and Saturn are going to be formidable systems. We're planning some superb 32X coverage for the next few issues of SEGA MAGAZINE. Our overseas contacts have reported that several software houses have finally got their 32X development kits, although it transpires that they need a Saturn system to plug them into (which not so many people have got). Subsequently, coders in Japan and the US are running about playing a bizarre game of mix 'n' match with their respective systems! Thankly, as we write, that situation appears to have sorted itself out.

As you will have seen by reading SEGA MAGAZINE, there's no doubt that Sega's 32-bit systems are going to take the world by storm - but from all accounts, Saturn is facing heavy competition in the form of the Sony Playstation.

That's one of the reasons why I'm putting my money on 32X for the time being. It may not have a spec as powerful as Saturn's, but it's cheap and frankly, it's powerful enough - our specs last month reveal a machine that has the potential to eclipse a top-spec 486 PC. What's more, Sega have chosen wisely with the first 32X releases: Star Wars Arcade and Virtua Racing Deluxe are big enough names to pull in the punters, whilst titles such as Doom show that Sega aren't just relying on their coin-op heritage to make the system the success it deserves to be.

It all goes to show that 32X isn't just a "stop gap" measure until the Saturn arrives, as the more snooty journos have continually stated. As we prove this month, it's got the power and it's got the games... and unlike the £400 machines, it's cheap, which means that it's the only true mass market 32-bit machine available.

And, of course, we'll be the first with ALL the Sega 32-bit exclusives. Exciting stuff eh?

RICHARD LEADBETTER

THE SEGA MAG POSSE

TRICKY RICKY

Rich's recent extended sojourn to the States, under the pretext of a company visit, obviously did him the power of good. Returning in a hideous flowery Hawaiian shirt and munching on a Twinky, or similar horrific artificial "food"stuff, Rich was full of the joys of Spring. This can be attributed either to the resting effects of his lovely holiday, or the machine gun he bought over the counter in the crack neighbourhood in which he was residing.

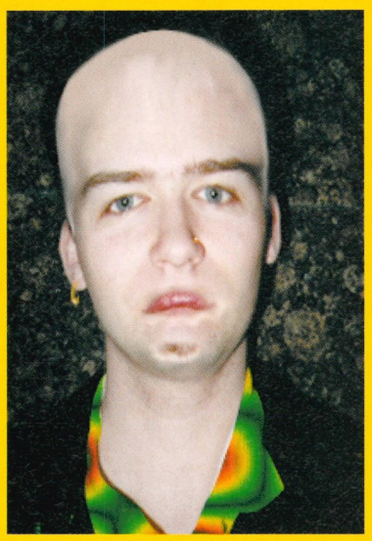
SAM

With Rich out of town, Sam got her fair crack of the whip. She also got her fair being dragged down the main street by horses whilst crowds of onlookers pelted her with fruit and vehement language. And then she got her fair ritual burning at the stake. The Witchfinders were in town, you see, and they arrived just in time to catch her little party piece with the disappearing ball and the three cups. Although it was the cat entrails and human body parts that they took offence to.

RAD

Rad's been practising his delegational management skills this month. Yes, you've guessed it, we had another work experience type in the area, homies. This has of course led to a flurry of inactivity from the Automatic camp as our plucky lad bravely denies himself and leaves everything to Reshad. Little does he know that the company's denying him too, and is going to give Reshad all Rad's wages too. Arf arf.

BLAZE PAISLEY – TRENDY EDITOR



Yo, word up you sucker DJs. I'm Blaze Paisley, the man without fear. The man without pain. The man without hair halfway up my forehead. The man without a job. Yeah, that's right compadres, I've been classified THTH – Too Hot To Handle! Those pussies in suits can't deal with a burning games freak like me, and they're all running scared! There's no stopping me! But if they think I'm gonna take this crap – yeah, that's right, I said CRAP – lying down they've got another thing coming. No, I'm gonna take it sitting by the bar in the pub, spending my giro on a few cold brewskis. But that's enough about me – do you come here often? No that's not right, I mean, games ratings – what's the point huh? Hey, there's nothing worse in a game than what you'll see on the news. Except people getting their spines ripped out. Or getting shot to pieces with a laser rifle. Or there's those disks I've got of all that hardcore por... er, yeah well, why rate them? They're trying to keep THE KIDS down! Yo, fight the power gamesniks!

Well that's all from me for this career, I'm going home to mum.

Nuff Respeck,

Blaze.

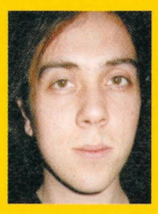
TOM

Tom's month got off to a shaky start when his bottom fell off, and things just went downhill from there. Despite the determined use of gaffa tape, Pritt Stik and staples, he just couldn't get his rump to stay on. Naturally, this has lead to a few problems for Tom, who now needs braces to keep his trousers up and has to write standing up. The biggest problem, however, has been for the rest of team who've already had difficulties getting nappies to fit the lad.

JEFF

Jeff's had no difficulty keeping his posterior affixed. No siree, wouldn't dream of suggesting it. Especially not after seeing what happened to the last person to insinuate anything of that sort to Jeff's face. Unfortunately Jeff's pals "Mad" Frankie McGBH, "Disturbed" Rodney Laceration and "Absolute Stark Raving Psychopath" Jimmy Intenalbleeding were also around at the time. What a nice bunch of lads they are too.

TOMMY C



Predictably, the last month has seen Oi Oi Tommy Boy in a football frenzy, watching each game religiously, refusing to hear a word said against John Motson or Brian Moore and spinning tenuous yarns about how "Well, my auntie was once cousins with this bloke who was married to this bloke's dog, and that was from Brazil, so I've got to keep up with the family tradition inn I, guv'nor?". Oh deary dear.

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SPECIAL THANKS: To all our friends at Core and Acclaim for being such lovely bunnies. And to Caroline Stokes at Sony too. And a special thanks goes out from Rich to the very naughty bloke at Paramount who leaked the script to the new Star Trek film and uploaded it onto the Internet for mass consumption!

SPECIAL NO THANKS: To the bloke that shouted at Sam while she was shopping in Greenwich.

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CLASSIC GAMES ON THE FOLLOWING FORMATS ...

MEGA DRIVE

CAPTAIN AMERICA

MICKEY & DONALD

OTTIFANTS

SHINOBI 3

TALESPIN

KING OF THE MONSTERS

HOME ALONE

GRANDSLAM TENNIS

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL 3

EX-MUTANTS

SEGA Master System

DONALD DUCK THE LUCKY DIME CAPER

BATMAN RETURNS

DESERT SPEEDTRAP

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GPII

ASTERIX & THE SECRET MISSION

WIMBLEDON

MASTER OF DARKNESS

OTTIFANTS

THE FLASH

WONDER BOY IN MONSTER WORLD

SEGA GAME GEAR

BATMAN RETURNS

DEVELISH

WIMBLEDON

STREETS OF RAGE

LEADER BOARD

CRYSTAL WARRIORS

HOLYFIELD BOXING

OTTIFANTS

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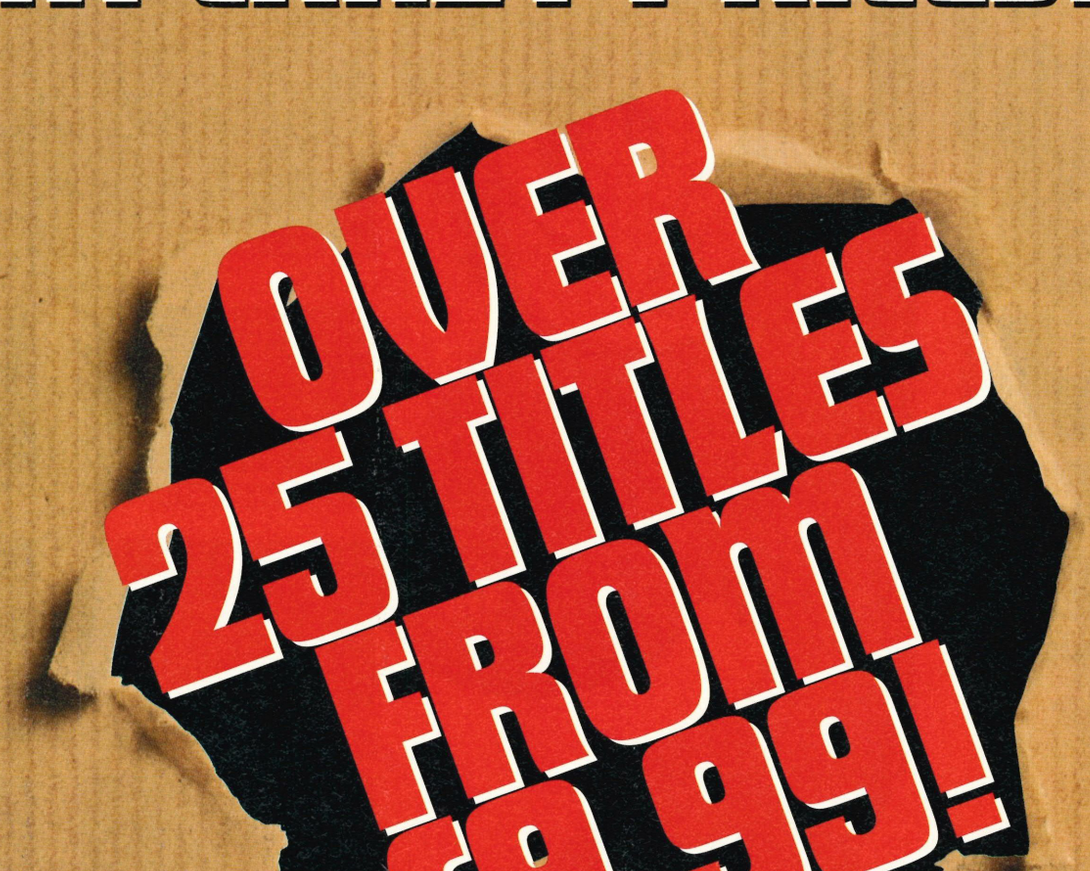
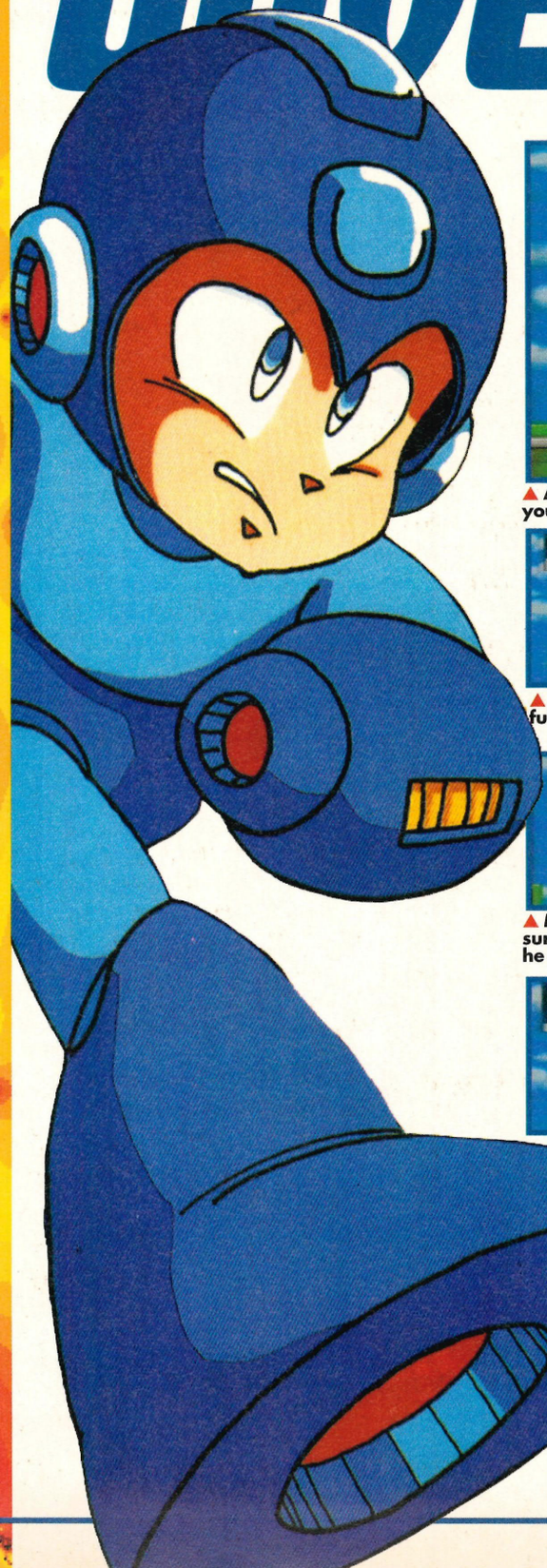


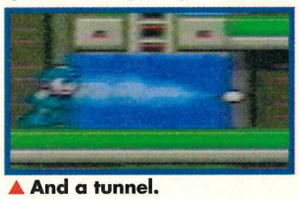
SEGA

WORLD EXCLUSIVE: MEGADRIVE UNVEILED!



▲ Actually, when we say "Megaman Revealed", we don't mean, you know, *revealed*. We're not being rude or anything.

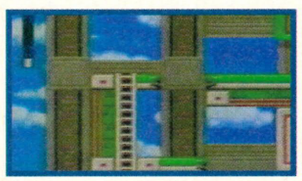
▲ Megaman strides purposefully towards a ladder.



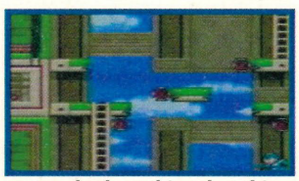
▲ And a tunnel.

▲ Megaman disposes of his surplus KFC bread roll as only he can.

▲ And here it is again in slow-motion close-up.



▲ What a lovely ladder.

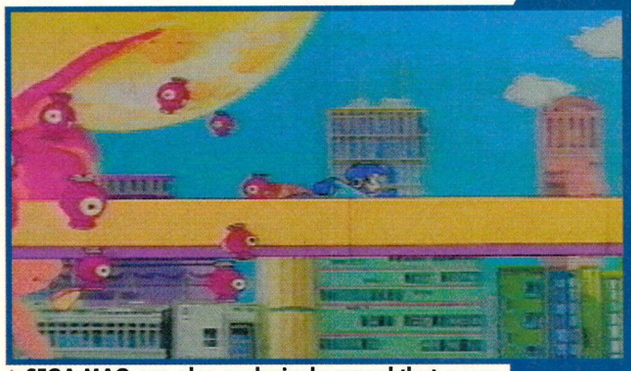


▲ Cor, look at this. I bet this is going to be ace.

▲ Oh no, it's Inflated Head Man!

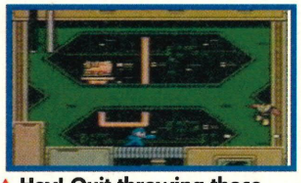
▲ This all looks rather swish doesn't it?

MEGAMAN



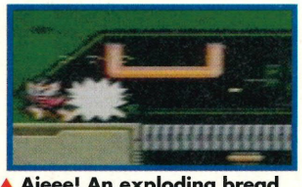
▲ SEGA MAG can also exclusively reveal that a cartoon version of MegaMan is also in the works. As usual, we have exclusive pictures!

▲ Boom! Skreeeow! Kapoosh! Budda budda! More action from the excellent MegaMan cartoon series - coming soon!



▲ Hey! Quit throwing those bread rolls kid or you can get out!

▲ Right! That's it! Out!



▲ Aieee! An exploding bread roll! Save me!

▲ Grr! I'll get you, you meddling kid!

▲ Exclusive sneak picture of the forthcoming MegaMan cartoon series!

▲ More MegaMan cartoon action!

EXCLUSIVE!

MegaMan is one of Capcom's most recognised videogames characters; his games selling over 2,500,000 units on "certain consoles by another company" (ie, Nintendo). At the Chicago CES show in June, Capcom revealed the Megadrive version in all its glory, and SEGA MAGAZINE came away with exclusive pictures. However, the slight downer is that a European release of the game has not yet been confirmed.

MegaMan: The Wily Wars is best described as a compilation title, for it is not one game, but THREE! Packed into one Megadrive cartridge are enhanced versions of MegaMan I, II and III.

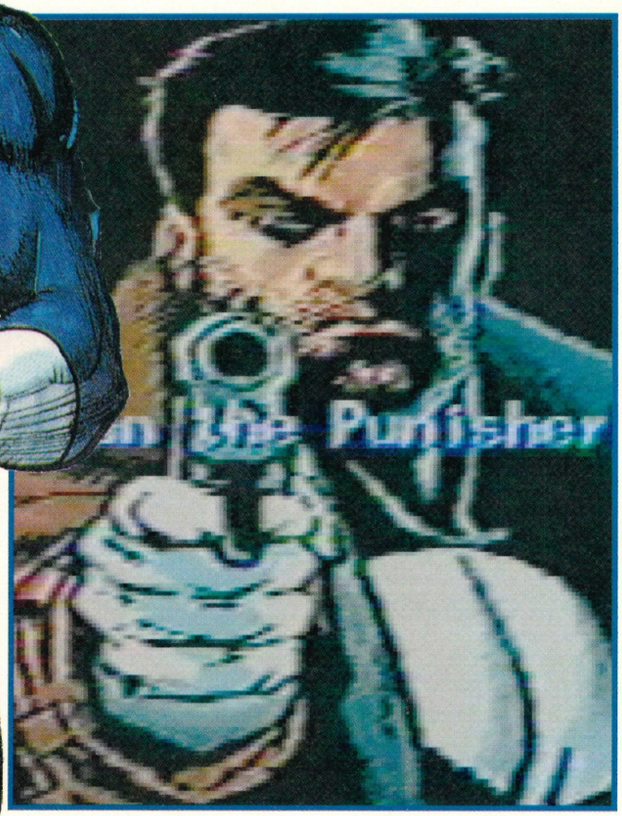
The basic gameplay is much the same in all three games. MegaMan battles his way through loads of scrolling platform levels in order to face up against evil robots created by Dr Wily. Once these creatures have been defeated, MegaMan adds their weaponry to their collection. Occasionally, Dr Light (MegaMan's creator) turns up to help him out by kitting him up with even more useful equipment. And, in MegaMan III, the eponymous hero gains a pooch - Rush - his robotic canine pal, who disposes of enemies in his own inimitable way. So that's all right then.

And it's not "just" a conversion of the three old MegaMan titles. Included in the new cart is a brand new bonus game, never seen before in any MegaMan game! Capcom are also promising us enhanced graphics along with some all-new baddies. Huzzah!

Stay with SEGA MAGAZINE for the latest news.

WORLD EXCLUSIVE: THE PUNI REVEALED!

NEWS



▲ He is. Oh yes.

▲ Alright, alright, you've told us once. We get the message, you're the Punisher already.

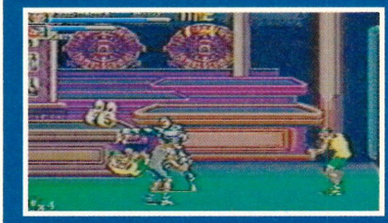
SHER

EXCLUSIVE!

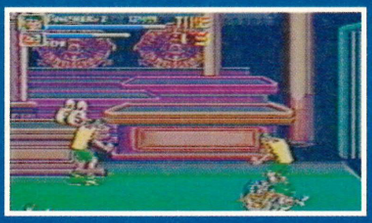
The Punisher. Not only does he sound particularly hard - he is. Even though he doesn't have superhuman strength or gimmicky powers like Spider-Man or the X-Men, he's more than useful in a rumble owing to his superlative combat training and vast array of devastating weaponry. Sounds like a good basis for a videogame eh? Capcom obviously think so, hence the announcement of this game at the recent Chicago CES Show in June. Of course, SEGA MAGAZINE came away with exclusive pictures of the project - but we must stress that a European release has not been confirmed at this time.

Actually, this is a conversion of a little known Capcom coin-op. In this game, the Punisher teams up with other noted Marvel Comics hard man, Nick Fury of SHIELD. This paves the way for sideways scrolling combat action as the two heroes take on the evil might of the Kingpin of Crime. As you might imagine, there are plenty of common punks as well as evil end-of-level bosses to defeat on the path to the Kingpin. So, it's just as well there's a decent array of weaponry to collect along the way including sub-machine guns and baseball bats. The characters also have some decent hand-to-hand combat attacks like rolling dashes, izuna falls as well as the usual amount of punches and kicks.

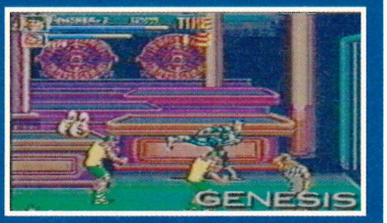
It's quite early on in development at the moment, but there's no doubting the potential of a game based on a character as rampantly destructive as the Punisher.



▲ He might be big and hard, but look – he punches like a big girl.



▲ And now he receives the kicking he deserves for such an offence.

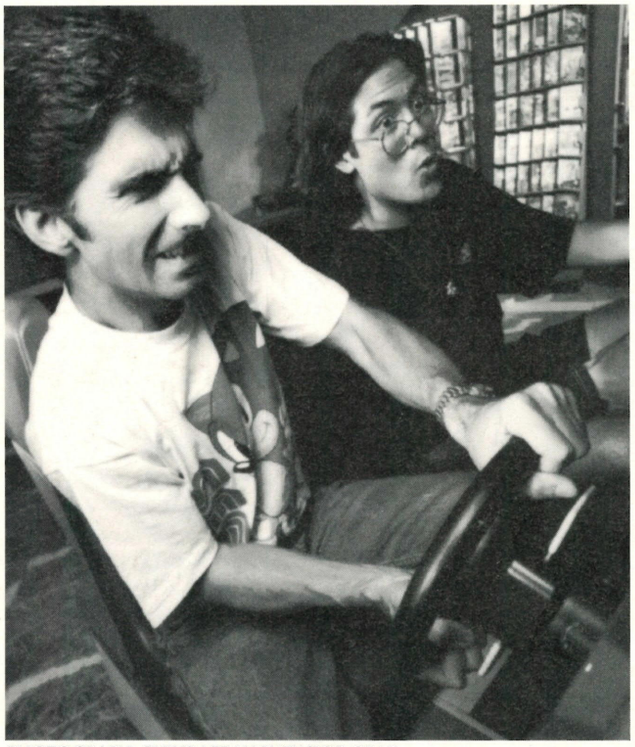


▲ The Punisher paused for an instant as he realised how fragile Lycra is.

▲ Remember kids, smoking is bad for your health and under no circumstances should you try this at home.

▲ Don't try getting beaten up by local gang members either, thinking about it.

SPEED DAMON!



PHOTOGRAPH: PHILIP LEE HARVEY/TOP GEAR

If you've been following the Formula One World Championship of late, you should know that British racer, Damon Hill, claimed victory in the recent British Grand Prix at Silverstone. Well, we'd just like congratulate him on a superb job well done.

However, if truth be known he was involved in an even more nail-biting race only five days earlier when staffwriting chimpanzee, Tom Guise, met the man himself at Sega HQ and challenged him to a head-to-head race on the Virtua Racing coin-op.

Although neck-and-neck throughout most of the Big Forest course, our unpalatable gaming gibbon just managed to scrape ahead at the last second, winning the race! No mean feat when you consider that Damon is a big Virtua Racing fan, claiming it's the best racing game he's ever played. In fact, he's even been known to race fellow Formula One drivers, Johnny Herbert, Mark Blundell and Derek Warwick at the four-player link-up version in a Japanese amusement arcade.

Obviously the defeat left the Grand Prix champion in deep shock, because in an after race interview he started to ramble about his old jobs stripping ceilings in South London and working in a fur dying factory, throwing steaming rats pelts into a vat of ammonia to eventually be transformed into furry slippers. Well, it's always best to keep your career options open.

COMING SOON

MEGADRIVE

AUGUST
- JUNGLE BOOK
- ~~SUPER STREETFIGHTER 2~~
- WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SOCCER

SEPTEMBER
- MAXIMUM CARNAGE
- MORTAL KOMBAT II
- NHLPA HOCKEY '95
- URBAN STRIKE
- EA SPORTS TENNIS
- MICHAEL JORDAN ADVENTURE
- SYLVESTER & TWEETY
- MEGA SWIV
- KAWASAKI SUPER BIKES
- LAWNMOWER MAN

OCTOBER
- PSYCHO PINBALL
- VIRTUAL BART
- FIFA SOCCER 2
- NBA SHOWDOWN '95
- GROVER WAITER
- JAMMIT
- DRAGON
- JIMMY WHITE'S SNOOKER
- ZERO TOLERANCE
- BALLZ
- SINK OR SWIM

MEGA-CD

AUGUST
- BATTLECORPS
- SOULSTAR
- JURASSIC PARK
- DRAGON'S LAIR

SEPTEMBER
- POWERMONGER CD
- OCTOBER
- ANOTHER WORLD 2
- NBA JAM CD
- RISE OF THE ROBOTS

MASTER SYSTEM

OCTOBER
- BATTLETOADS: BATTLEMANIACS
- DRAGON

GAME GEAR

SEPTEMBER
- DROPZONE
- EXCELLENT DIZZY
- MORTAL KOMBAT II

OCTOBER
- DRAGON
- PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS
- SINK OR SWIM

This full and unstoppable release schedule was correct at the time of going to press. Of course, there is a chance that those fickle-minded software people might have changed these dates in the brief time it takes to deliver the magazine from our secret Venusian pressing plant to your local newsagents. So don't blame us if they're wrong. In fact, don't blame anyone. Learn to love each other.

If however, you're a hell-driven werebeast who's totally incapable of love, all this peacenik nonsense just won't wash with you. In which case, you may interested in calling the Sega release line on (071) 244 2698. Compiled by Mystic Knuckles, this hotline should provide you with all the latest release info. Even though you're calling the Green Hill Zone, calls are charged at normal rates, but you have to use a touch-tone telephone as Knuckles doesn't like pulse-diallers. He's scared of them.

"...the most enjoyable playing experience you'll ever have."

"I haven't come across a more polished, more enjoyable and more playable game in ages."
MEGA 90%

"Superb animation, lots of fun, and gameplay to match most platforms."
SEGA POWER 90%

"Jungle Book is a polished package that's too good to miss."
MEGA POWER 92%

GAMESMASTER 90%

Disney SOFTWARE

Disney's The Jungle Book VIDEOGAME

Virgin

SEGA GAME GEAR

SEGA MEGA DRIVE

SEGA Master System™

Screen shots may be taken from a different format.

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WORLD EXCLUSIVE! SONIC AND KNUCKLES: THE SPECULATION IS OVER!

EXCLUSIVE!

Over the past couple of months, numerous Sega organs have contained information regarding Sonic and Knuckles - the all-new Megadrive game based on Sega's mascot character. A lot of what has been written is total fiction. Only SEGA MAGAZINE has the facts... as usual.

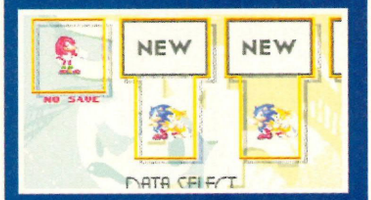
For a start, Sonic and Knuckles is not Sonic 4 as the American press have incorrectly labelled it. However, quite frankly, it is the most innovative Sonic product Sega have ever attempted.

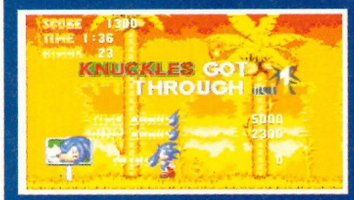
Sonic and Knuckles IS a plug-through cartridge which is backwards-compatible with other Sonic games. Basically, when you plug in Sonic 2, you're able to undertake that incredible adventure using new character Knuckles, who has his own special abilities. The game also transforms Sonic 3. You can control Knuckles of course, and using him, you're able to reach places that Sonic and Tails are unable to access. But that's not all - Sonic 3 is expanded in ways that we aren't going to tell you about... for the moment.

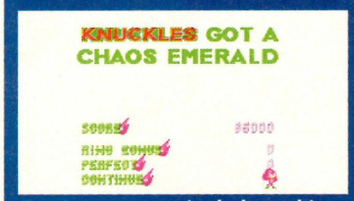
Yes, the plug-through excitement is pretty impressive, but Sonic and Knuckles is A GAME IN ITS OWN RIGHT! It's the first ever Megadrive 18-meg cartridge that contains an all-new Sonic/Knuckles adventure. Of course, you want to know all about this new game, but we're afraid

you're going to have to stew for a while. You're going to have to wait for next month's edition of SEGA MAGAZINE for the exclusive story, devoid of all rumour and speculation!

SONIC AND KNUCKLES: EXCLUSIVE DIY "PREVIEW"







Don't get too excited about this, but it is quite intriguing. Sections of the Sonic and Knuckles code are already in the basic Sonic 3 cartridge, just waiting for you to activate them!

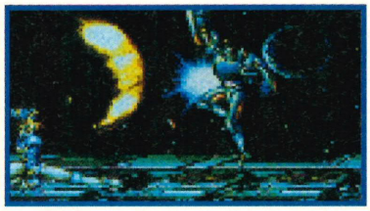
You'll need an Action Replay to get this going. Enter the code: FFEF4 D0003 and you'll be able to access Knuckles as a character on the initial character selection screen. Now you can play as Knuckles in the basic Sonic 3 game...

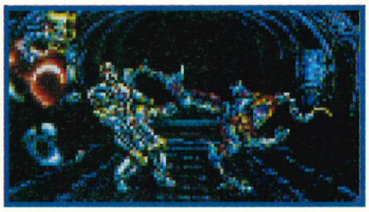
Er, sort of. Although you get to see the pink echidna on the character select screen, you still get Sonic as an in-game sprite. Doh! However, the character does respond with Knuckles' stats as in the split-screen game: that is, higher jumping, better braking and a slower top speed.

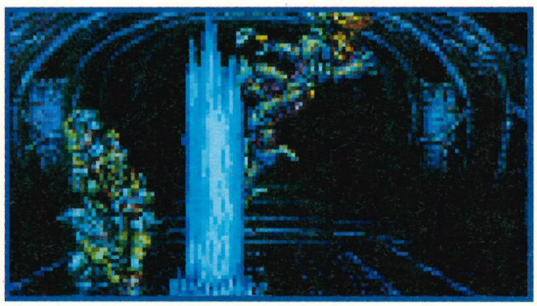
However, we will say that in the actual Sonic and Knuckles game, the character has all-new special moves (which aren't in Sonic 3 at all).

It's all just a bit of fun really, but hats off to our premiere tips meister Ed Lomas, who spent decades trying to get the Knuckles code working. However, it looks as though investing in the new game is the only way to control the pink dread-locked one...

THE ULTIMATE FIGHTING GAME







▲ Sega's latest addition to their 32X line-up.

Contrary to some inaccurate reports in the European press, Sega of Japan ARE releasing the 32X Megadrive upgrade - and they've just released a few screenshots to the game-hungry Far Eastern press. All of them (and plenty more besides) have been printed by SEGA MAGAZINE either last month, or in this issue's eight page work in progress special... except for these shots of a game known only by its development title: The Ultimate Fighting Game. We're currently chasing details on this one... in the meantime, enjoy the pics. This looks most exciting.

SATURN UPDATE

Just in from Japan: top new pictures of the Saturn project. The conversion of Virtua Fighter is proceeding apace. Sega have had final Saturn development kits for the last few months - and they've spent that time well - as you can see from these latest pictures.

However, the big surprise is how well 3D Shooting Game is getting along. The shots we've already printed show how great this game is looking - but take a look at these new shots. Smart eh?

SEGA MAGAZINE will keep you up to date with all things Saturn. Ready yourself for some more top-notch coverage next month.

▲ Panzer Dragoon - great!

▲ Saturn Virtua Fighter!

▲ Is this fab or what?

▲ More Virtua Fighter!

▲ Airborne Panzer action!

▲ A side view. Smart.

SHINOBI-EX FOR SATURN

Sega of Japan are currently gearing up for a November release of the next generation Saturn console over in the Land of the Rising Sun.

One of the most exciting products (that we haven't already covered in SEGA MAGAZINE) is Shinobi-Ex - an all-new adventure for the king of all ninja, Joe Mushashi. The basic gameplay looks very similar to the 16-bit Revenge of Shinobi, but Sega's gamesmiths are incorporating far more realistic animation along with 24-bit photo-quality graphics.

Let's hope that traditional Shinobi musician, Yuzo Koshiro is handling the tunes - Shinobi-Ex is a CD product...

DO I NOT LIKE THAT #3

Just about everyone has a dark, hidden secret. Something that tears at their very soul years after it happened. Something so grotesque and obscene that it cannot be forgotten. Sega are no exception...

THE SEGA CHAIR

Riding the wave of hydraulic arcade cabinets, the ever imaginative, never intelligent Sega R&D masters decided to launch the fantastic new controller on the unsuspecting public.

For just over a hundred quid, you got an uncomfortable plastic chair a bit like the ones you find in very poor schools, except constructed at just the right height to guarantee piles for the regular user. The Sega Chair functioned like a sit-on joystick (and was about as comfortable as sitting on a joystick for that matter), with the direction in which you threw your weight corresponding with the correct controller direction, and the buttons being mounted on two metal poles placed at arms length (if you're about two-years-old... and a dwarf) from the body. Just to make sure there were no redeeming features whatsoever, the base of the chair was made incredibly stiff, so you had to really chuck your weight about to get anywhere, and the long leg rest meant that, by laws of gravity, the up direction was almost constantly pressed. Diagonals were, of course, impossible.

Now to you or me, this sounds like commercial suicide, but to a senior (and no doubt highly paid) member of Sega staff, the Sega Chair was "destined to revolutionise the way we play driving games and simulations." Tee hee.

ECCO II: IT'S IN 3D!

Hot news from Sega - Ecco II: The Tides of Time is compatible with Children in Need style 3D glasses! The game looks spectacular enough in 2D (see the preview later on in the mag), but don those ridiculous looking "shades" and the sub-aqua world of Ecco springs into 3D! The parallax scrolling is a lot more pronounced, with foreground images and sprites really standing out. At the time of writing, Sega aren't sure whether to pack the glasses with the game or whether you pick 'em up from your local software shop at some nominal price.

NEWS

TRUEMOTION S BOOSTS FMV

At the Chicago CES Show, Sega announced that they have signed up an all-new full-motion video compression technique for forthcoming Sega hardware platforms.

Developed by Duck Technologies, TrueMotion S is like CinePak, in that it enables full-screen full-motion video for CD platforms. However, by using the power of the more advanced 32-bit hardware, TrueMotion S allows more interactivity and far superior picture quality.

Sega have chosen TrueMotion S "so that future products will be able to offer the consumer the ability to: transparently choose from multiple streams of images a gameplay path that seamlessly integrates with previous gameplay; to instantly interact with the game via multiple points of view; to simultaneously move multiple characters within multi-layered three-dimensional backgrounds; and, to enjoy graphics in which aliasing, pixelisation and artifacting no longer impair full-motion video images - images which will be generated at rates equivalent to standard television transmission."

Basically, what this means to you is FMV games which aren't quite so linear and allow you to pursue different paths with no noticeable disc access blanking. You can also expect to see FMV characters over the complex 3D polygon images the 32X and Saturn can produce. The quality of the images is expected to be superb - says Sega: "Unlike MPEG systems [Like CDi digitial video CDs], TrueMotion does not require consumers to purchase a $400 playback adaptor, yet provides superior image quality."

Crikey O'Reilly - it all sounds rather good, doesn't it? No titles have been officially announced that use the new technology, although our money is on seeing it used in the forthcoming Saturn edition of Tomcat Alley...

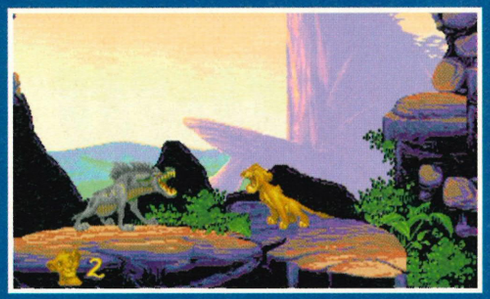
THE LION KING: AMAZING!

Virgin Interactive Entertainment are in the final stages of development on their hottest game of the year: The Lion King. Feast your optical equipment on the shots that all the other magazines have only dreamed about!

Westwood Studios, who handled the epoch-making Dune II: Battle For Arrakis, are handling the coding chores, and by all accounts, they've handed in some excellent work.

The player takes control of Simba, the eponymous Lion King, who must overcome the dread forces of the evil Scar. From these shots you can determine the quality of the graphics, but what you can't see is the sheer brilliance of the animation. This game makes a mockery of Aladdin and laughs in the face of the much-hyped Earthworm Jim.

The game is looking utterly fab, and we should be able to provide more details and a lot more shots in time for our next issue.



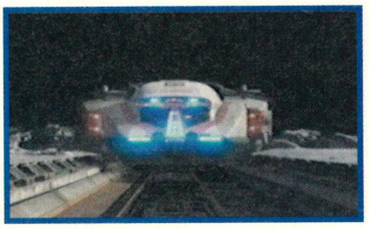
▲ The Lion King: surely destined to appear at the Christmas number one slot? And if not, why not?

ROCKET SCIENTISTS RECRUITED BY SEGA

Sega have invested hod-loads of cash in a hot new programming team known as Rocket Science.

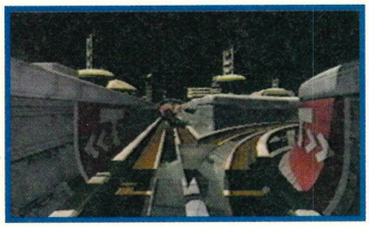
Rocket Science use Silicon Graphics workstations to create some of the most stunning graphics ever seen anywhere. These graphics are the basis of some hot new games Rocket Science are developing for the Mega-CD, Megadrive 32X CD-ROM as well as IBM PC CD-ROM. Sega have noted that there's some cash to be made from selling PC games and they intend to get in on the act by selling premium quality CD games. This is the first time Sega's home division have ever created games for someone else.

▲ Check those graphics...



▲ Excellent visuals eh?

▲ Look. A tunnel. Wow.



▲ Loadstar: the first game due.

▲ Forthcoming CD riches...

▲ It's a Cadillac. On a bit of rock.

CAPCOM SCHEDULE UPDATE

As well as announcing MegaMan: The Wily Wars and The Punisher at the CES Show, Capcom also told us about a couple of new products they've got coming your way later this year.

The first is a conversion of the mammoth Saturday Night Slam Masters. This vast 24-meg game is best described as WWF meets Street Fighter II. The Super NES version is out now - and if the Megadrive version is as good, Capcom have effectively sewn up the wrestling market.

The second project is extremely interesting. Fancy Super Street Fighter II for the Game Gear? The project has been confirmed and is in development as we speak. The question is: will it be any near as good as Acclaim's stonking portable conversion of Mortal Kombat II?

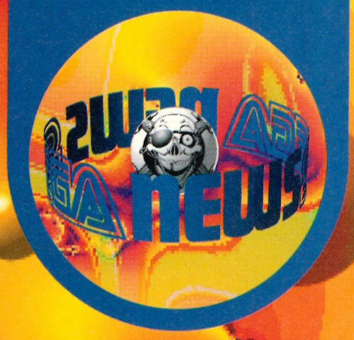
CAPCOM RUMOUR MILL CORNER

On the interesting-little-news-snippet-from-Capcom front, we have heard from Capcom of Japan that they've signed up for the new Saturn project, with one of their first titles being a beat 'em up... no official announcement has been made regarding what game they're producing, although rumours have emerged. We don't usually print unsubstantiated stuff like this, but this is so exciting, we just couldn't resist. The rumours, in reverse order of excitement, are:

1. A straight conversion of the "new" Super Street Fighter II: Turbo coin-op.
2. A CD packed with every version of Street Fighter II made to date (cue collapsing journalists).
3. A conversion of an *all-new* one-on-one beat 'em up that Capcom have ready for release...

No one from Capcom has either confirmed or denied these rumours, but they can't pull the wool over SEGA MAGAZINE's eyes! The all-new combat game has been spotted on location test by resident Street Fighter II Master and occasional SEGA MAG contributor, Gary Harrod. The game's name is DARK STALKER, it features some of the most stunning graphics ever seen in a combat game, and it's basically BRILLIANT.

We'll bring you an in-depth report on this hot new coin-op in the next SEGA MAG.



news

RIGNALL RANTS

Sun-drenched greetings from the West Coast! It's been a couple of weeks since the Chicago CES Show, and things in the industry are looking up. 32X was on display in Sega's booth and I got the chance to see Virtua Star Wars, Virtua Racing and Metal Head. Star Wars is looking very promising and bears close similarities to the coin-op. Virtua Racing was running with no light shading and only 50% of the polygons that'll be in the final version but already looks very good indeed. It's far too early to tell what Metal Head's going to be like, but in technical terms it certainly looks good, with a big robot sliding around the streets of a city. So good news, then, for those of you interested in that machine. So far it looks quite a neat little powerhouse for polygon games!

Also on display at the Sega booth was Dynamite Headdy, which is looking very nice indeed. It features great graphics and special effects and a heap of original and fun gameplay elements which all work together to produce a game I'm very much looking forward to playing. Other than that, though, it was a pretty uninspiring display. Taz II is more of the same, there was an American Football game which looks like a more refined version of Sportstalk Football and that's about it.

New Hollywood software houses Viacom New Media were showing off Beavis and Butthead, Fox had The Tick and Pagemaster and Time Warner had a whole load of stuff courtesy of their recent tie-up with Tengen. The best of the lot, and my personal pick of the show on Megadrive was Commando Raid (which is also known as Hard Wired). It's an overhead-viewed shoot 'em up that features super smooth Super NES mode 7-style scrolling, unbelievably good parallax movement on tall structures (buildings go past in perfect perspective) and extremely good gameplay. The action is split into two distinct sections: one part where you control a helicopter and fly about blasting the seven shades of shinola out of everything you encounter, and the second part where you get out of your chopper and explore buildings for specific items. The game looks absolutely stunning, and as I said, it plays really well too. Look out for it - this one is Hot! Hot! Hot!

Another top title on display was the incredibly hyped Earthworm Jim, which has brilliant graphics, excellent sound and pretty good gameplay. Another original character which has lots of potential is Interplay's Boogerman. Only on Megadrive at present, this is the first game in ages that made me laugh out loud. You see, Boogerman is a flatulent superhero who destroys his enemies by turning around, bending over and letting rip with a trouser-rending guff of deadly proportions, or merely standing upright and letting forth a belch which blows the baddies into oblivion. All this wind-based activity is accompanied with marvellously coarse sampled sound effects, which are brill. And if you get bored of letting off, you can always use Booger's reserve weapon, which is his ability to flick bogeys right out of his nose at his enemies. Top quality, high IQ stuff, and well deserving of anyone's attention!

My personal Best Range of Games at the Show award went to Konami, who were showing truckloads of quality stuff. Contra: Hard Corps (which I believe will be called Probotector in the UK) is a shoot 'em up of extraordinary proportions. It's got slack-creaming gameplay, mega special effects, awesome sound and has 'whoppa hit' written all over it. Animaniacs and Tiny Toon Adventures: Acme All Stars (which is a loony basketball and soccer sports game with brill graphics and gameplay) are both looking excellent and Sparkster is topper!

Well, that's enough CES-related japes from me - I'm sure Rich'll fill you in on all the other games that were around and about. Meantime I'll keep my ear to the ground for more gossip, rumour and news.

See you next month.

Julian.

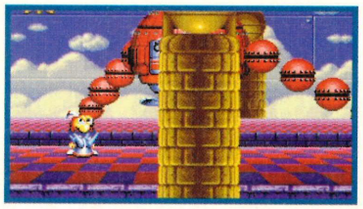
NEW STAR TREK GAME FOR MEGADRIVE?

Avid trekkies should be happy to discover that the forthcoming Star Trek film has already been licensed for conversion onto the Megadrive.

Set approximately six months after the final Next Generation episode, the film sees Captains Kirk and Picard battling a mad scientist called Dr Soren bent on entering a mysterious time vortex called The Nexus (which cunningly explains Kirk's presence). Unfortunately, to enter the Nexus, Soren has to destroy an entire star system at the loss of several billion lives. Having got our hands on the entire script for the film we can report that the film looks totally brilliant (on paper at least).

Spectrum Holobyte have the rights for the film and aim to convert it to just about every format. More news "as and when".

DYNAMITE HEADDY UPDATE



Here at SEGA MAGAZINE, we have an eye for the really special games - and Treasure's Dynamite Headdy is one such title.

We've covered the game pretty intensively since issue four and it's now just about complete. What we can't show you in the magazine is one of the game's greatest additions: speech! But this isn't speech in the conventional Megadrive sense. Dynamite Headdy has some of the clearest, best, most appropriate speech ever. It's truly excellent stuff, and hopefully we can bring you the full showcase and review next issue.

NEW STICK FRENZY

If the prospect of handling Street Fighter II with a joypad isn't particularly appealing, you could try checking out this new six-button joystick for the Megadrive.

Intended for table- and lap-top use, the Fighter Stick MD 6 (for 'tis its name) is direct competition for Sega's own six-button powerstick. We've given it the once over and reckon that although easier to handle in terms of size, the Powerstick is a lot more responsive.

Even so, with its many autofire settings and suchlike, it's still a pretty impressive package. Worth checking out.

YOU WON'T SEE ME WITH SPOTS.

Getting spots was no big deal. But given the choice, I can live without them.

It's been a while since I've had one. Nowadays I use Oxy* Clean Facial Wash.

Twice a day, morning and night – no more soap and water for me.

First, I wet my hands and clean them thoroughly with Oxy Clean Facial Wash.

Then I lather up some more and rub it all over my face before rinsing it off.

That's it. That's all you need to know about how to get clean, healthy skin. And how to keep it that way.

Of course, even when I'm really careful a persistent spot can slip through the net. And if one does, I just use some Oxy 10. But I hardly ever have to.

HARDLY EVER.

Always read the label. Oxy 10 contains Benzoyl Peroxide. *OXY and OXYCUTE 'EM are trademarks.

OXYCUTE 'EM!*

PREVIEW

16-MEG

BY: SEGA

RELEASE: NOV '94

ECCO 2: THE TIDES O

The original Ecco the Dolphin game managed the impossible - it brought a whole new style of play to the Megadrive. In an age of combat games and platformers, its highly atmospheric, original gameplay went down a storm with gamesplayers the world over. Sega obviously hope that lightning will strike twice - hence the upcoming arrival of Ecco II: The Tides of Time.

The game is a massive 16-meg, giving it a memory capacity twice that of the original adventure. This enables coders Novotrade to produce a game with a lot more variety in terms of graphics and gameplay.

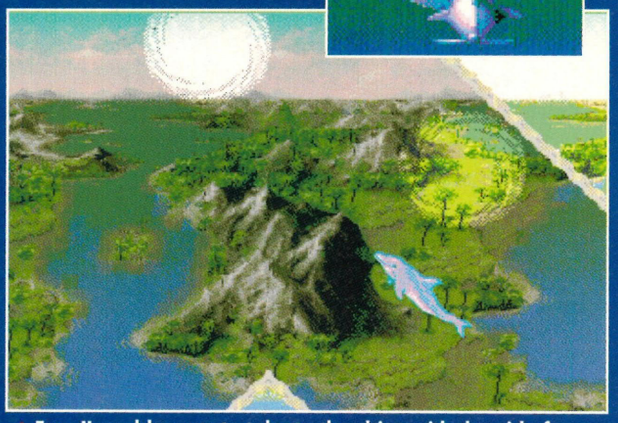
Whereas the original game was set mostly in the ocean, Ecco II takes you up into the skies and beyond! The game features the unique ability for Ecco to morph into other creatures. For example, Ecco can change into a bird and take to the skies!

Other notable new features include some amazing-looking 3D sequences viewed from behind Ecco! SEGA MAGAZINE was the first magazine in the world to reveal this stunning section in our Ecco II global exclusive a couple of months ago.

The game is now nearing the end of its lengthy development period and from all accounts, it's looking pretty damn excellent - on all formats. Ecco II: The Tides of Time is appearing on Megadrive, Game Gear and Mega-CD (this version boasts more incredible "3D" ambient sound and contains the original Ecco game on the CD for you to find!).

SEGA

▲ Dolphins from the future summon young Ecco.



▲ Ecco II enables you to take to the skies with the aid of these sky tubes. These vertically scrolling sections of the game are very difficult - mind you don't fall out of the tube!

GAME GEAR TOO!

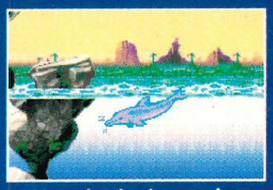
We've seen The Tides of Time on Game Gear too and it's looking extremely impressive. Take a look at these shots...

▲ As you can see, Ecco II on Game Gear is looking pretty smart.

▲ The 8-bit graphics are decent and the gameplay is excellent.

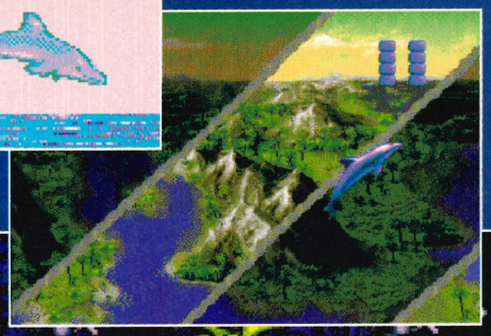
▲ Deep sea underwater action with Sega's world famous dolphin.

▲ Ecco's obviously a part-time contortionist.

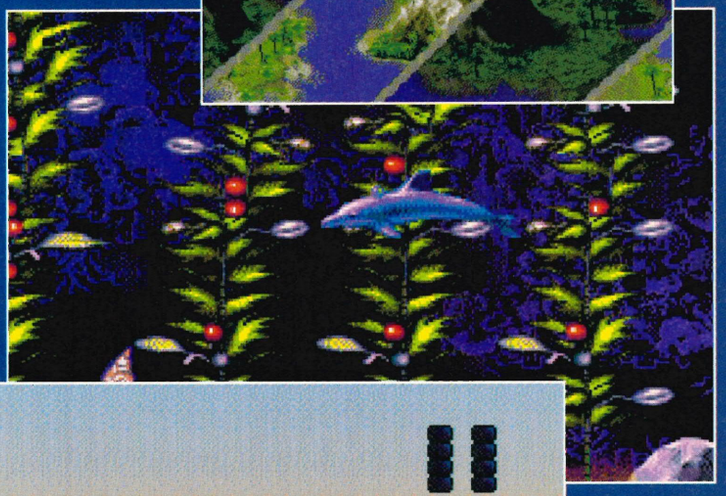


▲ More intriguing underwater Ecco activity.

▲ Not exactly the best pic of the game in action...

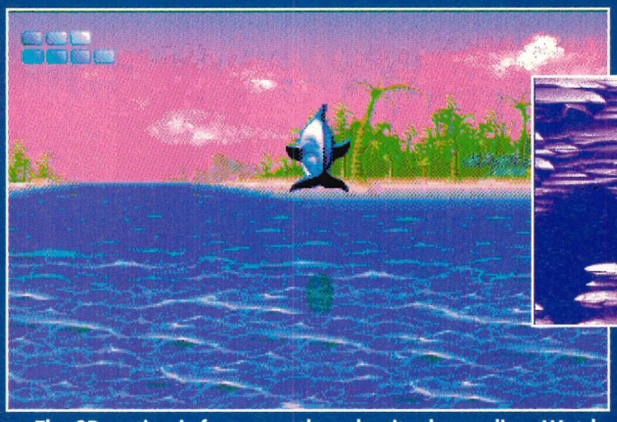


OF TIME



▲ The plants slow Ecco down during these arduous levels.

▲ Ecco explores the sub-aqua depths in this level. It's on a fault line, meaning potentially lethal earthquakes!



▲ The 3D section is fast, smooth and quite demanding. Watch out for the rings and be sure to jump through them!

▲ Ecco and his pod cavort happily in this shot from the game's excellent introduction sequence, based on the in-game 3D sub-screen.

▲ Exploring the seabed in the 3D section of Ecco II. The effect is superb.

▲ These skytubes lead to previously unknown sections of each level.

▲ The graphics in Ecco II are a lot more diverse than in the first game.

PREVIEW

16-MEG

BY: SEGA

RELEASE: OCT '94

JURASSIC P
RAMPAGE

Last year, the most successful movie of all-time was unleashed unto the public. Jurassic Park was the name of this incredible movie, redefining the standards for special effects in motion pictures. Not surprisingly, a Megadrive version came out, and whilst it wasn't bad, it was in no way outstanding.

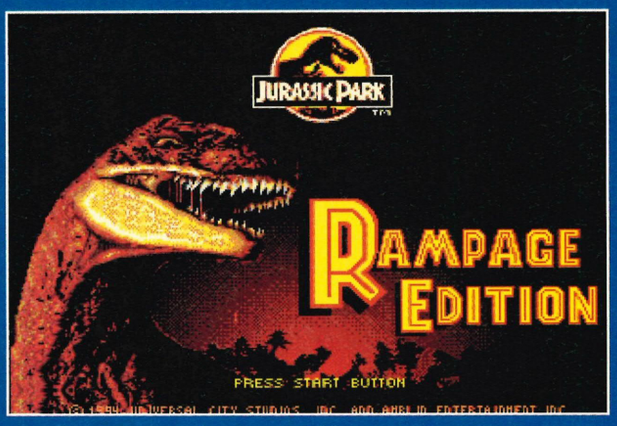
The programmers went back to the drawing board in putting together this sequel (which should be released about the same time as the film comes out on video), and the result isn't bad at all.

Just like its predecessor, it's a platform game - and yes, once again you can play as either Alan Grant or a Raptor. However, there's no doubt that the Rampage Edition is in every way superior - Grant has far more animation, there are more weapons and the levels are significantly bigger. The new game also has a lot more variety too - there's an ace section where Grant jumps onto the back of a dino and uses its ostrich-like legs to speed across the scenery!

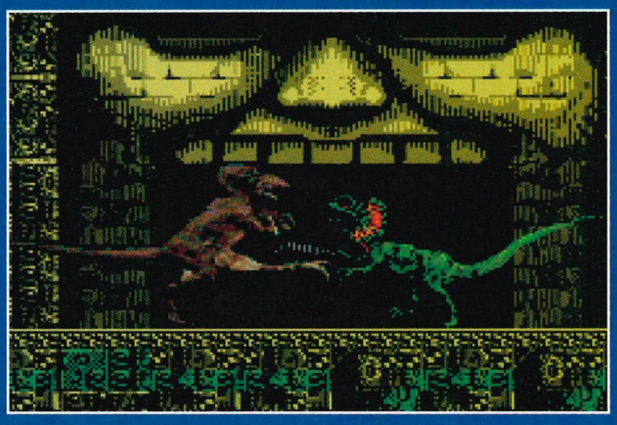
What's more, the game's a lot meaner as well. In the first Megadrive game, you didn't kill any of the dinosaurs, you just "stunned" them - not so in this Rampage Edition. Weapons include M-16 machine guns, grenades - as well as a Tazer gun that fries the poor dinos until they dissolve into dust! Jurassic Park is also packed with evil soldiers too, all of them out to slap Grant (or the Raptor) about a bit.

Whilst not overly original, Jurassic Park: Rampage Edition looks like being a highly playable, enjoyable blaster. Expect a full review and perchance a showcase in the very next edition of SEGA MAGAZINE.

SEGA

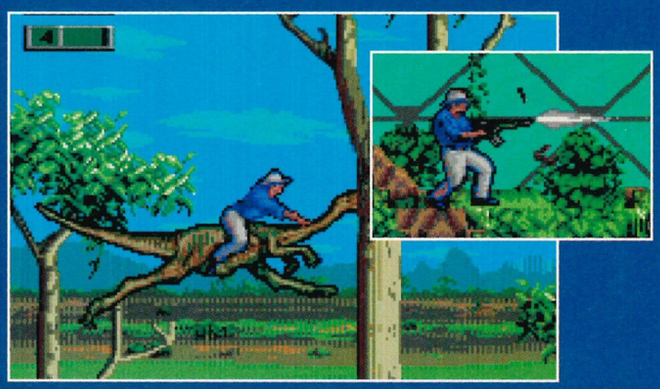


▲ Crikey, it's the title screen of this new Jurassic Park game. So, there you go.



▲ Just like the first game, it's possible to play as the Raptor and do battle with other dinos. And humans.

▲ The pteradactyl's domain is the first level for both Alan Grant and the Raptor.



▲ Yes! The Savannah level enables you to jump on the back of a waiting dino and speed along!

ARK: EDITION

▲ Not exactly an action-packed picture. Grant's just having a little nap under a tree by the looks of it.

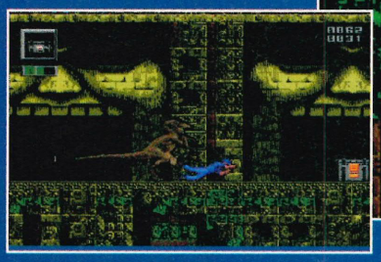
▲ Grant gets dragged off as food for young dino hatchlings. Hmmm.

▲ And here we catch the Raptor in mid-jump.

▲ Grant accepts his fate as elevenses for a particularly hungry Raptor.

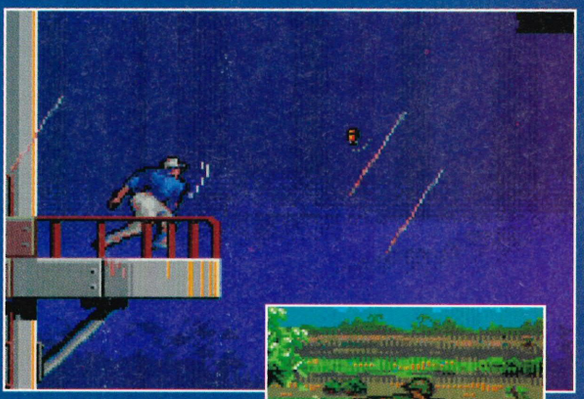
▲ This time, the humans are after Alan Grant as well...

▲ More dino riding here. This ostrich ancestor is capable of quite a fair speed.



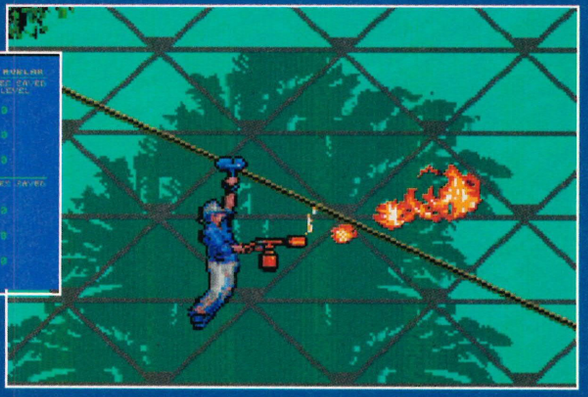
▲ These ruins are the scene for a particularly vicious battle.

▲ All the cunning and dexterity of the Raptor is required in Rampage Edition.



▲ One of the levels sees Grant and the Raptor negotiating the terrors of a cargo ship. It's crammed with guards and suchlike.

▲ It's the map screen, where you choose your destination.



PREVIEW

PREVIEW

8-MEG

BY: CORE DESIGN

RELEASE: TBA

SKELETO

▲ Some blasting action from level one.

▲ Even the very sewers are alive with evil!

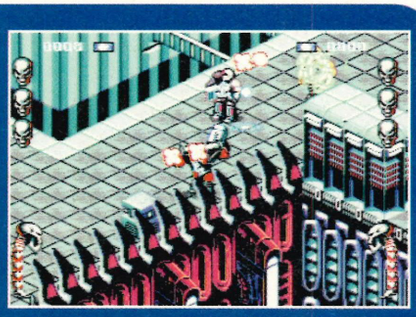
▲ Rib takes on an entire legion of twisted enemy robots in this action-packed scene from the first level of Skeleton Krew - which is shaping up to be superb.

▲ The character selection screen. Great eh?

▲ Brrr... it's a bit nippy here.

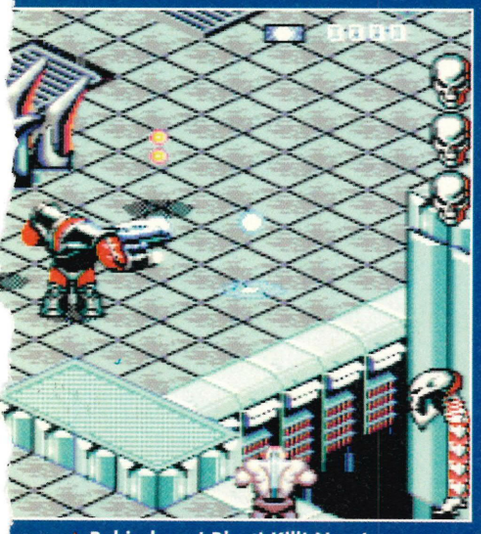
ON KREW

The recent CES Show in Chicago was a bit of a loss as far as decent new Megadrive titles were concerned. However, one of the most outstanding games on display was a certain isometric shoot 'em up packed with action, explosion and innovation. And that game was Skeleton Krew.



▲ The isometric perspective lends itself well to the rampant blasting action.

▲ The arsenal of weaponry is superb.



▲ Behind you! Blast! Kill! Now!

If you've ever fancied taking control of armoured droids packed with possibly the most devastating weaponry seen in a Megadrive game, you've come to the right place.

Skeleton Krew gives you three characters to control (two on-screen at once, if you've a pal willing to join you in action). Rib, an ex-pleasure droid is the fastest moving member of the Krew. Although not very powerful, she's super swift. Joint is the "hard man" of the team. A huge robot packed with devastating weapons, you would definitely not want to spill his pint. Spine is the leader of the Skeleton Krew, being faster than Joint and more powerful than Rib. The basic objective of the game is to blast anything that moves - and anything that doesn't if it's in the slightest bit suspicious-looking. Clearing out enemy territory enables you to move ever closer to the embodiment of evil that lurks at the end of the game.

As you'd expect from Core Design, Skeleton Krew is basically ace. The control method is superb. Whilst holding the B button (for firing), A and C enable to rotate your robot's upper body. This enables you to walk in one direction whilst blasting in another. Ingenious stuff. From what little we've seen on Skeleton Krew, it's clear that Core Design have a game here that could wrest the Best Blaster of the Year award away from current holder, Sub-Terrania. Expect a full review, plus in-depth showcase feature in a future issue of SEGA MAGAZINE. Hopefully really soon.

SEGA

PREVIEW

CD
BY: US GOLD
RELEASE: TBA

▲ Wireframe images are textured and detailed for an ace look.

▲ The Mega-CD version won't be quite so detailed or colourful, but the Saturn version should be even better than this!

WORLD CUP GOLF

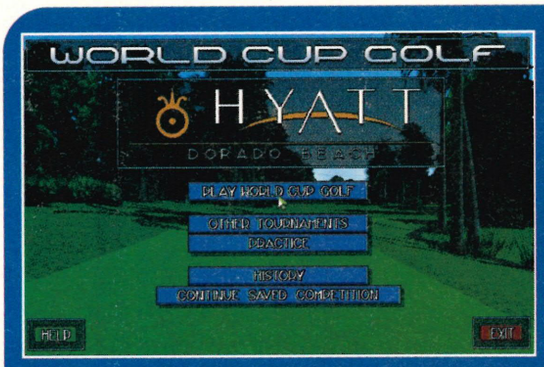
US Gold tend to spend a packet on securing the licenses to some of the world's biggest sporting events. Their latest purchase is the officially licensed World Cup Golf game. And as you can see, it looks extremely special.

The programmers, ARC Developments, are using Silicon Graphics computers running the incredibly impressive Wavefront graphics software to create the images you see on this page. Unlike other games, such as PGA Tour Golf, US Gold are using CD technology to bring photo-realistic graphics to the golf genre. Just one course, the Hyatt Dorado Beach Golf Resort (venue of this year's World Cup) takes up over 800 megabytes of data.

Other courses have also been licensed by US Gold, including Runaway Bay in Jamaica, Mission Hills in Thailand and Missions Hills in China. Whether these courses will come with the game or if you can buy them as separate data CDs isn't known at this time.

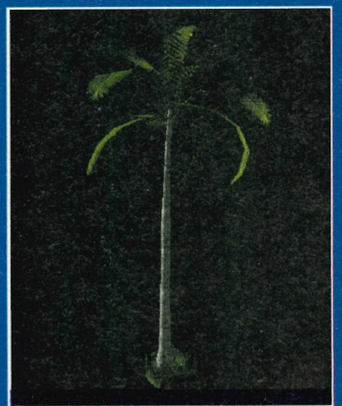
As such, you won't see World Cup Golf appearing on any non-CD systems. As far as Sega platforms are concerned, the game's due for release first on Mega-CD, with a Saturn version due for completion early next year.

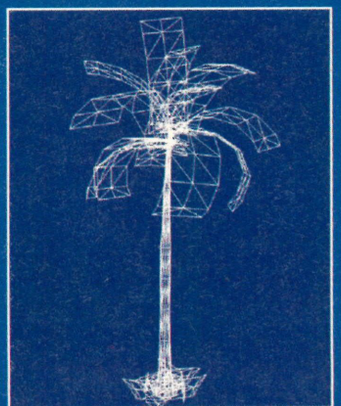
US Gold are aiming to make World Cup Golf the greatest, most realistic game of golf ever seen, with up to 64 human players able to participate in tournaments of immense proportions. We're really looking forward to seeing more of this game in both its incarnations, and SEGA MAGAZINE aims to bring you updates as development continues.



◀ The title screen, along with the many game variations on offer. Pretty smart eh?

▼ Silicon Graphics with Wavefront software is used by ARC.





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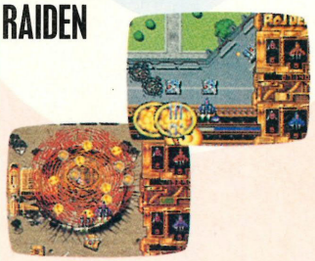

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PREVIEW

CD

BY: CORE DESIGN

RELEASE: TBA

BC RACERS

Having already safely secured the Best Mega-CD Title of the Year with the phenomenal Battlecorps, Core Design are still not satisfied. Coming soon is the jolly spiffing BC Racers, formerly known as Chuck Rally.

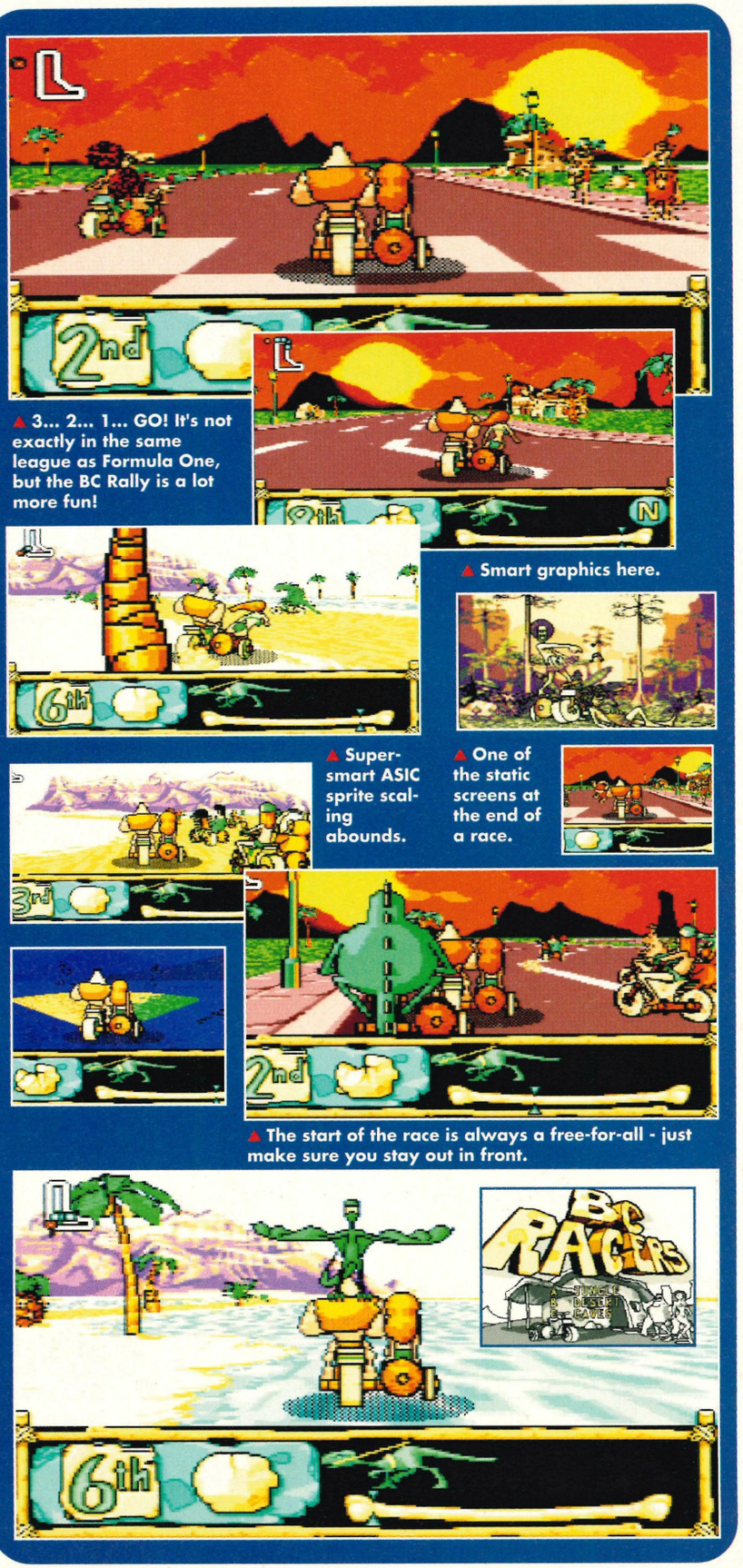
Core describe the game a cross between "Mario Kart, Road Rash and Virtua Racing". Without doubt, all of them are top notch products and much the same can be said of BC Racers. Core have used their fabulous 3D Thunderhawk engine to create a sprite-based 3D environment similar in execution to Outrun and Super Monaco GP in the arcades.

You adopt the slightly dodgy mantle of Cliff Ace, a neolithic racing expert, who with girlfriend Roxy, aims to take the chequered flag in an unprecedented stone age grand prix put together by Millstone Rockafella. The race has attracted the greatest racers of the age, including Chuck Rock and baby Junior!

BC Racers is an impressive use of the Core Mega-CD 3D engine. The movement is extremely fast, with very smooth update and little of the blockiness that sometimes mars games that use the Mega-CD's ASIC sprite scaling chip. Also to the game's credit is the fact that there are over 30 tracks to master, along with seven different motorcycles to get the hang of.

Just like the epoch-making conversion of Virtua Racing, BC Racers also allows to select different views of the racing action. Pausing the game allows you to choose from either a behind-the-cycle view or a more spectacular aerial view - far above and behind your two-wheeler.

Without a shadow of a doubt, Core have already established themselves as the greatest Mega-CD developers in the world today. We're pleased to say that it looks as though BC Racers will only strengthen their already enviable reputation.



▲ 3... 2... 1... GO! It's not exactly in the same league as Formula One, but the BC Rally is a lot more fun!

▲ Smart graphics here.

▲ Super-smart ASIC sprite scaling abounds.

▲ One of the static screens at the end of a race.

▲ The start of the race is always a free-for-all - just make sure you stay out in front.

SEGA

PREVIEW

8-MEG

BY: ACCOLADE

RELEASE: TBA

BALLZ

Ballz. Ho ho. We could have plenty of fun with that, because, like, it's a bit rude isn't it? Just think of all the hilarious, totally predictable gags we could do...

Shame on you! We journalists, burdened by our weighty responsibilities as custodians of the nation's morals, feel it is our duty to inform you that Ballz is in fact an all-new, quite-original-thank-you one-on-one beat 'em up from Accolade, and doesn't have too much to do with the old "family jewels" at all. Honest.

Basically, the nearest equivalent to Ballz is probably Virtua Fighter in the arcades. Just like VF, Ballz is a 3D combat game. However, instead of super-swift polygon figures, Ballz offers not-quite-so-quick-but-still-pretty-swift figures made out of the eponymous spherical items.

This gives the game a unique look, and thanks to the very smooth and realistic movements the characters are capable of, Ballz is immediately interesting. What's more you won't need any new joypads for it. Ballz only needs three buttons (punch, kick and jump), but still offers quite a few different combat maneouvres for players to master.

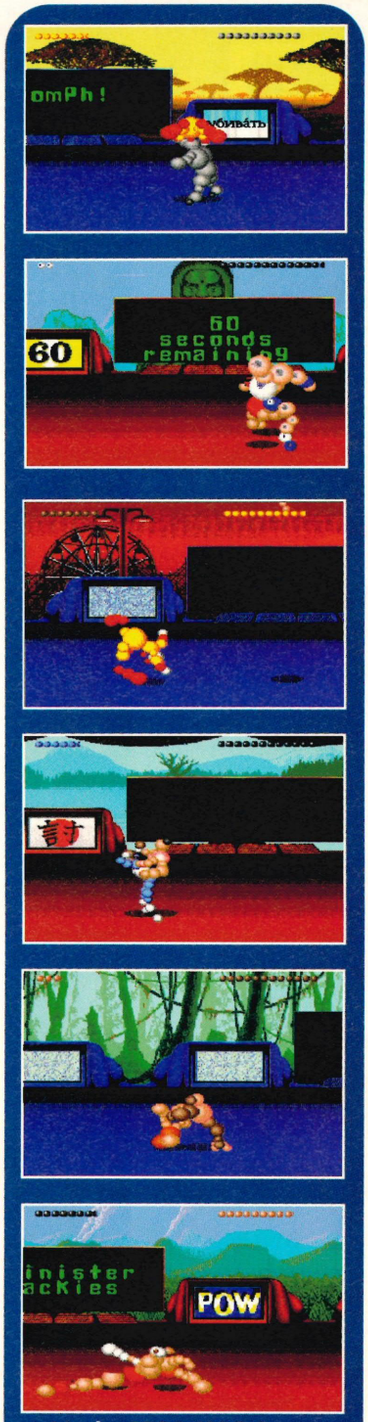
The game is packed with some very nice touches, including a 3D replay of each round. Moving the joypad around at this point allows you to view the previous fight from just about any conceivable angle. And that's not bad.

The game's just about complete as we speak, with minor debugging and "touching up" currently taking place. Hopefully, we'll have the game for review in the very next issue.

▲ Look! They're jumping! And it's in 3D. Flippin' 'eck!

▲ This is supposed to be a girl...

▲ Dimensional warping in the Ballz continuum causes this strange effect. What we're basically saying is we haven't the foggiest what's going on here...



▲ It's the SEGA MAG Spot the Ball compo! Maybe not.

▲ Balls. The game is crammed with 'em. Hence the name. Probably.

LETTERS

Who was it who said the pen is mightier than the sword? They were quite stupid. Let's be honest, if some whacking great armoured type is running towards you with a huge sharp plank of steel, you're going to want more than your trusty Bic to help you out. Perhaps whoever wrote the quote down misheard the speaker. Maybe they said the gun is mightier than the sword – that sounds alright. As for one pen dethroning a tyrant – pah! Stuff and blimming nonsense. However, here in the SEGA MAGAZINE letters page, one man can make a difference (as Knight Rider would have said). We want you to send us your letters, all of them. This is your chance to speak out on any issue at all, as long as it's got something to do with games. If it hasn't, you could write in anyway, but we might not be able to give you a reply or anything. Still, if you'd like to see your name in print, and possibly have other readers write in the next month and slag you off, send your missives to MORE POST THAN THERE'S COPS IN A DUNKIN DONUTS SHOP LETTERS, SEGA MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

IF IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE

DEAR SEGA MAG,
Something caught my attention whilst flicking through Issue 7 of your most excellent mag. I couldn't fail but notice that a certain game had crept into the Mega-CD release schedule. I am of course talking about EA's FIFA International Soccer! How about a preview? Now what I wish to know is that whether this is a direct port over of the Megadrive game. Or could it possibly be more along the lines of the PC version. Now if it is the former, why has it taken so long to release? And if EA must give us the same game on a CD format I would expect a significant cut in price! Since not only are the production costs of CDs a lot cheaper than cartridges but also most, if not all of the programming has already been done. That is of course excluding the completely pointless FMV segments tagged onto the game.
One other point I would like answered if it is not too much trouble: if the Mega-CD 32X games are to feature VHS quality FMV, how will the single speed Mega-CD ROM drive cope. For instance in Silpheed during the level with the detailed fractal landscapes the graphics would lose quite a few frames per second. This resulted in terrible jerkiness. Add to that the background music, which is much worse in games such as Sewer Shark, Road Avenger and Silpheed where a lot of FMV is involved. Considering that the Mega-CD has enough sound channels and enough memory to be up to the job of producing decent quality sound. I hope that this is not the case with Rebel Assault which would seem the last hope the Mega-CD has.
Avipaul Bhandari, Isleworth, Middx

SM:You may not have realised this, but the Megadrive 32X actually improves the capabilities of the Megadrive and Mega-CD. That's the point in buying it, you see. So it makes your existing console better, so you can have things like VHS quality video. Hope you enjoyed our full review of FIFA CD last month .

I'LL BE BACK... GOODBYE

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
Well done for supplying that very good Virtua Fighter poster in SM Issue 7. It now nestles comfortably on the wall of my presidential citadel.
Ecco 2 looks good, and Rebel Assault (a game I've been looking forward to) looks excellent. However, I can't say I'm surprised that Mortal Kombat CD is crap. What did I say about Acclaim, eh? You just see, Mortal Kombat 2 on the MD will be a sad travesty with embarrassing graphics and sound. Naturally, this isn't the fault of the Megadrive. More like the programmers. But you never know, it might be brilliant.
Anyway, in Issue 7 a person known as Miss N Hobbs wanted to know about a few decent ending sequences for Megadrive games, as she said (quite rightly) that it's annoying when you spend ages on a game and just get a "Congratulations" message.
In response to that, I'd say Sonic CD is the best ending ever, but that's the Mega-CD so it doesn't count (because we all know you can't beat the Mega-CD's graphical powers). Turrican's not bad though, as you get a short but brilliant digitised sequence of the enemy base exploding and the ship flying off to freedom. Thunderforce 4 is also digitised excellence, and Toe Jam and Earl 1 is interactive, because you can control both of the characters when they eventually get back home. I've heard that Sub-Terrania is totally brilliant (the game AND the ending sequence).
Finally, Miss Hobbs, the only reason I do actually keep reading Digitiser is for the same reason as some of the SEGA MAG staff; – that being the only thing Digitiser's good for, to laugh at. I don't mean that I find their pitiful attempts at humour amusing, but their blatant Nintendo/Amiga loving Sega biasedness is so funny and unconvincing. "FIFA Soccer's miles better on the SNES than the MD" they say. Not according to my own eyes, it's not. Sad graphics, lacklustre animation etc make the SNES version far inferior to the MD original. And mid 77% reviews of Virtua Racing when all the other mags give it 90+%? Anything related to the Mega-CD is branded as crap before they even play it, and have you seen their "official" CD charts? Every game in their chart is a CD32 game, and yet the Mega-CD outsells Amiga's attempt regularly. Hope that clears things up. Keep up the good work, mon amis, your mag is already bigger than any other magazine available. Total domination is a certainty.
I'll be back! Goodbye
Paul Johnson, Skegness.

SM: You're right about end sequences there, you know. There's nothing more annoying than spending yonks finishing a rock hard title to be greeted with "Congratulations – Game Over" or similar. There are probably lots more annoying things, like having your house burgled, but it's still a bit of a pain. However, we can't agree with your comments on Acclaim as they've got a pretty good track record (and Mortal Kombat 2 is truly superb). As for Digitiser, we categorically refuse to be drawn in to that little furore again. And we don't read it. Ever.

I HAVE AN IDEA

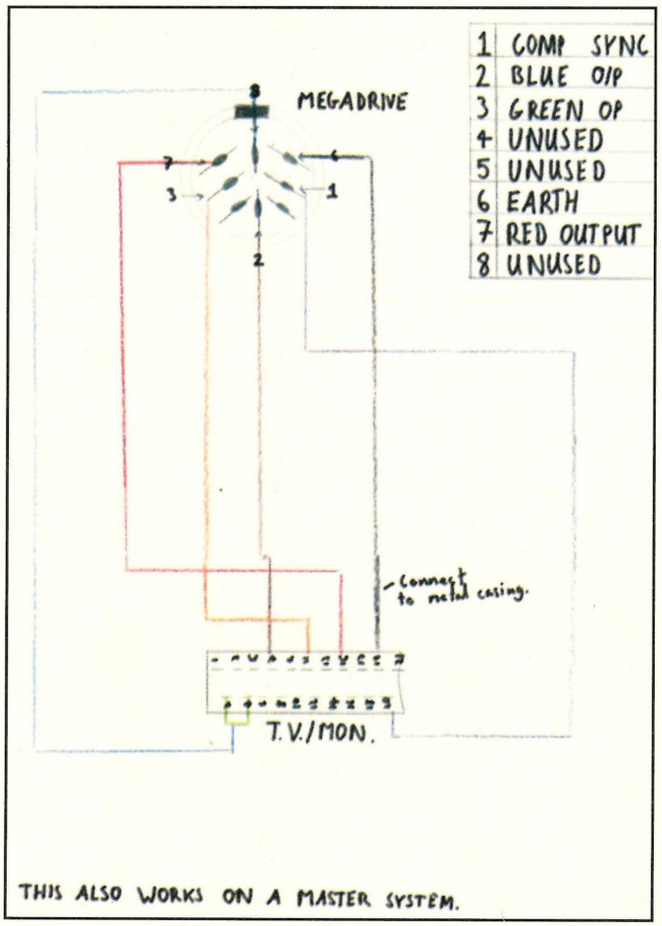
DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
I think your magazine is really great!
I have an idea that (after seeing your Director's cut feature in issue 7) Sega should make a Sonic game from the bits cut out of old games and adding new bits to fill in between. I think it was a waste to take some of those scenes out, so do you think they will ever do this? If not they are missing a money making opportunity.
Anne-Marie Lunde, Godalming, Surrey

SM: There aren't really enough out takes to make a full game, sadly. However, it would be possible to release limited edition titles with all the out takes put back in. Capcom did something similar with Final Fight Guy, which was almost exactly the same as the original version, but featuring the missing character, Guy, instead of a highly similar character, Cody.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SCART LEAD

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE
Whilst browsing through my local computer shops I have noticed that shops are selling SCART to Megadrive leads at extortionately high prices. After seeing this I went home and decided to build one myself. I found that I could make one for just over £2. When you consider that most shops sell them for £10-20, this is an excellent saving. Now, I could force other readers to send me money to obtain this beneficial-to-all-except-rip off merchants

deal, and I could make a fortune! But instead I have decided to make my SCART lead "public domain", so that all Megadrive users can benefit (provided of course that they read SEGA MAGAZINE). All you have to do is follow these guide lines.
1 Get yourself down to your local electronic components shop and buy some 8 core cable, a SCART plug (all are the same) and an 8 pin male DIN plug (one with prongs, basic anatomy really). Members of the shop staff should help you if you have difficulties.
2 Using a standard soldering iron, solder each wire correctly to each pin, first on the DIN plug and then the SCART plug, following my diagram. I advise you to use a clamp for the SCART plug as they can be quite tricky to solder. NB Colours of wires may differ from yours.
3 Check everything is correctly soldered in properly and that each wire is at the correct pin.
4 Plug in, sit back and enjoy improved graphics!!
Monitors and TVs all have the same SCART outputs because it was introduced as an industry standard.However, if you do have any problem (probably due to dodgy Chinese TVs), you should contact the nearest supplier.
To everyone that reads this and makes one: DON'T send the design in to other magazines as your own idea, you will be in breach of copyright and will have an extremely tough court case from the publishers on your hands, and also it's my idea, HEAR THAT, MINE!
Martin Hughes, Eastleigh, Hants.



▲ **Martin Hughes' design for a do-it-yourself scart lead.**

SM: Martin! Martster! Il Martino! What can we say? Thanks a lot for that, you're now an Official Mate of Sonic. However, can we just say that SEGA MAG accepts no responsibility for anyone who messes up the job and burns their house down. If you reckon you're up to a bit of DIY though this is a pretty spiffing idea. Also, how can you copyright a SCART lead? It's not as if you made it up or anything.

"SM"

SM
I must congratulate you on your achievement. I have recently bought Thunderhawk and I think it is the best game in the world. Please tell me if Core are going to bring out THUNDERHAWK 2. Oh and by the way I have got issues 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Is there any way that I can acquire issue 2? Please print this letter. Your mag is the best.
Robert Malcom, Skegness

SM: There are no plans for Thunderhawk 2 as yet, but you might like to try out the brilliant Battlecorps, which uses a similar game engine and is ace. Check the side panel in Editorial as to our back issues/subscriptions details.

I WANT A GIRL BETWEEN 15 AND 20

DEAR SEGA MAG,
I am an eleven year old boy looking for a pen pal. My name is Thomas Garfield Morley and I want a girl between 15 and 20, any offers to Thomas Garfield Morley, 1 Beck Way, Louth, Lincs.
PS You have to love football.
Thomas Garfield Morley, Louth, Lincs.

SM: Is there no end to the sadness? Not that looking or a pen pal is sad, it's just the thought of an eleven year old boy looking for a 15 year old female pen pal. It sounds quite suspicious if you ask us.

DAMNING INDICTMENT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

DEAR SEGA MAG,
This is a little poem I cooked up on my OWN while thinking of my Sega Megadrive. I think they're great, anyway hope you like my poem.

MY POEM ABOUT SEGA
Sega games are cool
Play them. Don't be a fool.
The games are quite dear
But don't shed a tear.
Some games are cheap
So there's no need to weep.
I think they're great so does my mate.
Don't hesitate buy a Sega.
The End.

Daniel Stewart, Glasgow, Scotland

SM: A lot of snoot newspapers have recently made something of a meal about the sudden resurgence of interest in poetry. Hopefully this isn't because they've been reading SEGA MAG for the past couple of months, or the literary world is in dire peril.

I THINK I KNOW WHAT CHRIS PEARSON IS ON ABOUT

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
I think I know what Chris Pearson is on about regarding his letter on page 36 in issue 6 of SEGA MAGAZINE. If you have the original Master System with Hang-On and Safari Hunt built in, then switch it on and wait for the Sega logo to appear. Then, when it's just coming on, press both of the buttons on a joypad in port one and down-left diagonal on the D-pad simultaneously. You need to time it just right, and if you've done it properly, you can play a secret game with a snail in a maze!
Keep up the good work with the excellent mag!
Adam P Langdon, Leigh on Sea, Essex.

SM: This also works on the very first edition Master Systems, without Hang On and Safari Hunt built in, if you're interested. But thanks for clearing that up for us Adam, at least someone could understand what Chris P was on about.

I HAVE A SERIOUS VIEW TO PUT FORWARD

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
First of all, although you've been told this many times, this mag is brilliant! I've read Sega magazines in the past, but this one sweeps them all under the carpet!
Anyway, I have a serious view to put forward. I have owned a Megadrive for about 4 years now, have played many games on it and have several add-ons. About a year ago, I bought a Super Nintendo, and kept both consoles.
I've played many games on this too, and I love it! Before you all scream in horror, I still really enjoy playing on the Megadrive! Rad should be able to back my argument, as he worked for Mean Machines (when it was a multi-format title). The "My machine's better than yours" argument is really pathetic. Until you have owned both machines, and played them for ages, only then can you choose which is best. They both have weaknesses and strong

points. They are both brilliant machines, with great games. So please, if you have only owned one of the machines, don't argue against the other until you know the facts.
As well as this, I have replies to two other readers' letters, from issue 7. A Beford from Bagillt, big mistake. I will not change if my letter is not printed but I hope it is. Chris Quigley from N Ireland, how many Nintendo games have you properly played? No offence meant to either of you though.

Thanks for listening and please print this, because I feel that people should realise the truth.
Michael Summerall, Upper Eastville, Bristol.

SM: Quite right. Just because Nintendo owners are all a bunch of drooling, craven half-beasts who couldn't open a door let alone handle a CD-ROM unit doesn't mean they're bad people. Just kidding! We think they're lovely really. Hey, we're all gamesplayers in the grand scheme of things. At least we're not polo enthusiasts.

LICENSED GAMES ARE POO SHOCKER

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
Licensed games are poo! I have come to this conclusion through a number of mega-hyped, mega-crap titles. Let me explain...
I have been saving up for Ryan Giggs' Champion Soccer for weeks now, and because of the level of hype and the quality of screenshots circulating through the various magazines, my expectations were raised to fever pitch. This proved to be gullibility on my part. As with most licensed games these days, Ryan Giggs' turned out to be cack. You know, I'm getting a bit sick of these mega-hyped "licensed" games that turn out to be rubbish. Ryan Giggs' is just one example of the pitiful nature of most licensed games. Do you remember Batman Returns, Jurassic Park, Robocop 3, Last Action Hero, Cliffhanger and the truly terrible Italia '90? Maybe not, but that's because none of them are worth remembering. And yet, most of the aforementioned games sold by the bucket load. When are the public going to wake up?
And it's not just the older licensed games that are crap either, let's take your last issue for example. You reviewed four "official" titles and surprise, surprise, three out of the four "official" titles reviewed were a major disappointment. Instead of throwing obscene amounts of money on an official license and publicity, why don't the game producers use that money on the actual development of the game, eh? It seems too many game producers are prepared to churn out sub-standard games on the shoulders of an official title (Sony and Acclaim spring to mind).
I know this letter is in complete contrast to my last letter, but that was before I read the Ryan Giggs review. I'm sorry if I sound too dismal, but it really gets to me when game developers decide to take the public for a ride.
Christopher Quigley, Co Armagh, N Ireland.

SM: Whilst there is a tendency with licensed games to put a lot of effort into pushing the name and not much into creating a product to back it up, circumstances aren't quite as terrible as you make out. Jurassic Park was ace on the Mega-CD, as was Batman Returns, and Aladdin on the Megadrive was pretty hot too. When a license is handled properly it can capture all the atmosphere of the subject, it's just a shame that some teams choose to let the name do the work for them.

CRAP ANALOGY CORNER

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
The other day I was looking through the computer mags in our local newsagents, and SEGA MAGAZINE stood out from the crowd by a long way.
The mag is colourful, bright and packed with all the latest news from Sega.
Comparing SEGA MAGAZINE with other mags is like trying to compare Leeds United with Kiddiminster Harriers (no offence intended).
Well done lads (and lass)!
Chris Beverly, Morley, Leeds.

SM: We couldn't have put it better ourselves.

I HOPE TO ENGAGE MYSELF

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
I hope to engage myself in a career in computer games journalism when I leave college this June, and I would appreciate it if you could answer the following questions:
1 To work on a top mag such as your own, do you need to have unprecedented academic qualifications, or is natural talent enough?
2 What course of action would you recommend me to take to obtain such an illustrious position as a games reviewer?
Thanks for answering my questions. Yours faithfully,
Dean Loveday, Grays, Essex.

SM:Well you can stop talking like a ponce for one thing – that's not going to get you anywhere.

MORE THAN JUST A GAMES MACHINE

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
With Sega currently developing, and within the next couple of years hopefully releasing the Saturn, I have to ask why they are bothering to release the Megadrive 32X. I know they are trying to bridge the gap between the current Megadrive and the distant release date of the Saturn, but for several reasons I don't think this is the way to go about it. Firstly if the Megadrive 32X is equal to the Saturn in terms of performance and is also Megadrive compatible, why on earth would anyone want to spend vast sums of money for a new machine in a year or so, when they can have the same technology at a much cheaper price within a couple of months that is also compatible with their current hardware and software.
You have also mentioned that current Saturn games such as Virtua Fighters and Daytona (to mention a couple) will no doubt be available for the Megadrive 32X. Again Megadrive/32X players are hardly going to buy these games when they are available for the Mega 32, and then "bother" to buy the exact same game, for the Saturn, a year or so down the line when it is identical in performance, and the technology by that time will be old hat, as it were.
I know the Saturn is going to be more than just a games machine, but Sega should remember that millions of gamers who own Megadrives, Master Systems and Game Gears have bought these systems to play games and not to watch videos or play music on. Yes, the Mega-CD plays music CDs but it is hardly the same as sticking it in a dedicated CD player, is it?
Sega are way ahead of their rivals in the gaming field, as we all know, so let's hope they keep it that way and stick to what they are good at and to what has made them the company they are – games.
Matthew Meeson, Headington, Oxford

SM: I can see what you're driving at here, but I wouldn't get worried about it. For starters, the 32X won't match up to the final Saturn spec. The decision to launch the Megadrive add-on was one of the reasons behind the Saturn being taken back into the labs for upgrading. Thus, whilst the 32X is going to be very powerful indeed, it won't make the Saturn redundant. The prohibitive price of such a powerful machine as the Saturn means it has to do more than run games, and there's a definite market for multimedia systems, which look set to replace the whole stereo/video/TV/games machine set up in the future. The Saturn marks Sega's expansion into home entertainment in much the same way as Sony and Time Warner are moving into games. It's all very much a good thing. Trust us.

THEY SHOULD COST LESS

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
My name is Barry James Monaghan, I am 9 years old. I am not complaining about the games but about how much the games cost us. I think the games should cost us a little bit less and what are the next two games that are coming out.
Thank you.
Barry James Monaghan, Houghton Regis, Beds.

SM: We think games should be cheaper as well, but it doesn't look like there'll be any significant across-the-board price cuts in the near future. In the meantime, how about taking advantage of the Sega/Blockbuster Video rental scheme if you're short of cash and fancy a new game? It's the cheapest way next to buying second-hand to get your mitts on a new title.

Well, that's about all we've got time for. Actually, it's about all we've got space for. We've got plenty of time. Anyway, go on, get lost. Go on you pesky kids – be off with yer.

SEGA

DOMANI

REFLECTIONS OF FASHION

Domani shoes available from: Russell & Bromley, Charles Clinkard Ltd, Domani Retail Shops – also Domani at Childrens World, Jones Bootmaker, John Lewis Partnership stores, Milwards Shoes, Gordon Scott and main Start-rite stockists. Style shown: Axel.

Q+A

Ha! How many of you are worrying about exam results at this very moment, eh? Wishing you'd done just a little bit more revision for that tricky maths test? And how are you going to tell your parents that you got a "U" in English? Ooh no, I wouldn't like to be in your shoes right now. Don't you wish you were as clever as the SEGA MAG crew? I mean, we must have at least three GCSEs between us. Anyway, I suppose we should turn these pages into a kind of career workshop for the next couple of issues. So, if you need some advice on what to do with your life (and let's face it, most of you probably will) write to: Q&A, SEGA MAGAZINE, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Oh, and you can include some gaming problems too if you want.

BORING QUESTIONS #1

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
I know that you will be able to answer my questions and here they are:
1 When are the following Megadrive games coming out: Ninja Gaiden, Tales of Heaven, Road Riot 4WD, Power Drift and Starblade? It seems as if they've all been in development for years.
2 I've heard that Captain Commando and souped up versions of Forgotten Worlds and Strider are coming out on the Mega-CD. Is this true?
3 Are the following arcade games coming out on Mega-CD or Mega-32: The Punisher, Golden Axe 3, Asterix, Taito World Cup, Samurai Shodown.
Please, please answer my questions, as you're probably the only people who can give me accurate answers.

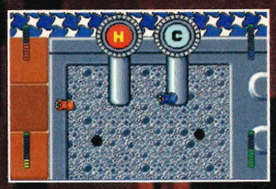
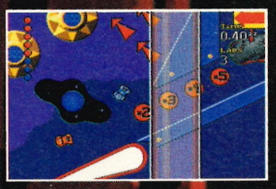
SM: 1 Probably never, they're a bit past their sell by date now. Starblade will turn up on Mega-CD soon though come to think of it. 2 No, well definitely not in the near future anyway. The Punisher is the next Capcom conversion and it's for the Megadrive. 3 Samurai Shodown will be out in the Mega-CD by Christmas, but it's doubtful whether the others will be released.

"SEGA ARE GREAT" PERSON POSES QUESTIONS

TO THE GEEZERS FROM PLANET SEGA
I am the proud owner of many consoles, but in true honesty I can say that Sega are simply the best. The Megadrive has truly excellent games in comparison to NI*$£nDo, Sonic is much more fun, etc, etc, (cue several pages of demented blathering about Sega's dominance over Nintendo).
Anyway, to get to the point, when will the Megadrive 32X be released? I've already started saving up for one.
Will the Mega-CD be able to play movies in the future, as the CDi can? If it could, it would be really spectacular, because you could wire up your Mega-CD to a stereo and have really cool sound AND pictures!
Finally, now that the Megadrive 32X is being released, does this mean that Sega will stop developing for the Megadrive?
BEN STOREY

SM: The Megadrive 32X as it's now called, will be out in the shops by November and will cost around £150, although there hasn't been a definite price point fixed yet. It's not yet clear whether the Mega-CD will ever be able to reproduce movie quality images (although with 32X it does get close), but even movies on the CDi aren't true movie quality. However, we can say that when the Megadrive 32X is released it will enable the Mega-CD to produce some much higher quality images. The add-on is really only designed for game use anyway, so don't hold your breath for any movie releases.

BRAIN STRAIN

▲ **Philip Walker can hardly wait for MM2!**

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
Here are some, as Rich would say, "intriguing" questions to test your collective brain power.
1 Is Sam Hickman in any way related to Lucy Hickman from Mean Machines? (Crikey, our collective brain power is really being taxed here - SM)
2 Is Rad excited about Micro Machines 2 (I can't wait!)?
3 A huge thumbs up for the utterly smart Virtua Racing collector cards. Are there any more lined up for future issues? Some Gunstar Heroes jiggery pokery would be excellent!
4 I am the owner of a Megadrive and Game Gear and I may be purchasing a Master System convertor soon too. Please list some cracking MS games that are not on the Megadrive or Game Gear.
PHILIP WALKER, CLEVELAND
PS Do any of you like the song "Doop"? It does my head in! I'm a Spin Doctors sort of bloke myself. Bye!

1 Nope, Lucy and Sam aren't related at all. 2 Rad can hardly contain himself at the prospect of playing MM2. 3 We do have loads more ace promotions lined up, although we can't tell you what they are yet. It's unlikely that we'll give away any Gunstar Heroes stuff though, because the game's getting on a bit now. 4 Er, Sonic Chaos, Land of Illusion, Star Wars – there's actually quite a few good games out for the MS, but if you already have a Megadrive, you'd be better off buying games for that really. And Tommy Gee can often be seen in his lunch hour, bob-a-swinging to the sounds of Doop. Ah, well, there's no accounting for some people's taste, but then being a Spin Doctors fan, you'd know all about that.

VAGUELY INTRIGUING QUESTIONS

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
I would like to congratulate you on your issues up until now, but I have noticed that the amount of tips seems to be decreasing. So if anyone is reading this, PLEASE send your tips in, because it annoys me to see hardly any in the magazine.
1 You've covered some aspects of the Sega Saturn, but could you tell me how much it's going to cost and when t will be released?
2 I read the Another World preview, and so far, the game looks great. Will it be released for the Megadrive too?
3 Will Sonic the Arcade game ever be released on the Megadrive?
4 Which is better, Goal or Sensible Soccer?
Keep up the good work,
MICHAEL ROBERTS, MERSEYSIDE

SM: Apologies if there has been a decrease in the amount of tips we print, but we're on the case at the moment. In fact, if you read the tips this issue, you should notice that there's more new tips and that overall, the pages are more packed than usual. We still need tips from readers though, so if you have any, send 'em in You could win up to £150 worth of new software.
1 We can't tell you how much the Saturn will cost yet, or when it will be released, because we don't know. Sega haven't released any pricing details yet, and at the moment the machine isn't even finished. 2 No. 3 No. 4 Sensi Soccer is great, but Goal hasn't been released yet, so it's impossible to compare them.

VIRTUA ANGST

DEAR SM,
Your magazine is ace! I loved the review of Virtua Racing, but is it worth buying if you already own Super Monaco GP and Domark's F1?
Do you need to have a Mega-CD for the Megadrive 32X to work?
Is FIFA International Soccer better on the Nintendo? If so, will there be any improvements made to the Megadrive version?
Is it worth buying the Sega Saturn, or should I buy the 32-Bit upgrade instead?
SCOTT BEATTIE, GLASGOW

SM: Virtua Racing is the best racing game available on the Megadrive, but if you already own another racing title, I don't know if it's worth you buying this. Why don't you try it out in a shop before you make a decision. Or you could trade in those two and put the cash towards the superior Virtua... 2 No. The Megadrive version has already been out for almost a year, so it's impossible to make improvements to it. Anyway, it's brilliant as it is, although the Mega-CD version does have a couple of extra features. Super NES FIFA is much the same as the Megadrive game and as such is equally excellent. 3 The Saturn isn't going to be out for ages, so unless you can wait until both machines are out in the shops, the Megadrive 32X would be a better choice.

▲ **Ragnacenty – coming your way soon.**

COMPLETE MORON

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
Please, please answer my questions, because I've written to you loads of times and so far, you haven't answered any of my questions.
1 Why do you always print letters from complete morons in the letters section? They never make any sense and just seem a waste of space.
2 If Sega don't like import games, why do they keep all the decent titles in the USA? No wonder everyone is buying a CDX.
3 Will there be any games packaged with the Megadrive 32?
4 Ragnacenty looks brill – when will it be released?
5 Rebel Assault for the PC got terrible reviews a couple of months ago – will the Mega-CD version be the same?
9 Have you seen Robocop 3 yet? If you haven't, don't – it's crap!
Sorry about the number of questions, please feel free to miss some out if you wish (we did – SM).
PAUL DENNETT, LEICESTER
PS I think Digitiser is written by a bunch of hairy gibbons who wouldn't know a good magazine if it jumped up and hit them in the b*****ks.

SM: 1 Unfortunately, because they're always the ones who seem to send in the letters. We get a huge response from our letters pages, so it seems that most readers don't think it's a waste of space. Anyway, you could always change it by writing letters in yourself. (Although I wouldn't bother if this is the best you can do - patronising Ed)2 In the past, Sega could be blamed for not synchronising their releases between the UK and the US, but that's changed now, and most big titles are released at around the same time. True, many Megadrive and CD games don't get released over here, but it's usually games that aren't very good in the first place, so no one in the UK would be interested in buying them. 3 Probably not. 4 Towards the end of the year sometime. 5 We should have a review of Rebel Assault for next issue, so you'll be able to see our judgments then. 6 No and we don't want to either.

BORING QUESTIONS #2

DEAR SEGA MAGAZINE,
Please could you answer the following questions:
1 Earthworm Jim looks stunning on the Megadrive. When will you be reviewing it and how much will it cost?
2 Will Super Empire Strikes back ever be released on the Megadrive?
3 Will you ever do Sega Mag binders like other mags do? What about back issues?
MARK TOPLISS, WALSALL

SM: Earthworm Jim will be reviewed in the next couple of months although the game won't be out until the end of this year. 2 It's unlikely, but it's a really good game, so you never know. 3 Possibly, although not in the very near future. As for back issues, if you phone our Subscription enquiry number, (0858) 468888 you should be able to get back issues from them.

IMPATIENT OUTRUN FAN WRITES

DEAR Q&A,
Why do Sega take so long to release games into the shops, when they've already been reviewed in magazines? I mean, you read a review which tells you how great a game is, then by the time it gets out into the shops, another game is reviewed which is better. So you end up waiting for that game instead.
Also, you mentioned in Issue 7 that you would like to see an arcade perfect conversion of Outrun on the Megadrive 32X or Saturn. Is this a possibility? I think Outrun is the best game ever, but it would be even better on cartridge.
TB, FLITWICK

SM: Magazines always get to review games well in advance of their release date. For instance, if a game is due for an October release we'll usually review it in the October issue, which is out on the shelves in September. This means we get to see the game in August (as we work four weeks in advance for each issue). If we have an exclusive review of a game, we may even get to review it a month before that! This often causes problems with Software houses, as their release schedules can change from month to month, or they could have problems with distributing the game in the UK – this means that the release of a game will often slip into later months. 2 It's possible, but we've heard nothing official yet.

SONIC-RELATED QUESTIONS

DEAR SEGA MAG,
I have a few Sonic related questions for you:
1 Why won't you tell us what these extra zones are doing on the Sonic 3 level select? I can't access them and I can't access a couple of bonus stages either. And what is the odd picture in the foreground in the two player vs game? It's not on Sonic 2 or 3!
2 What is the new Sonic game you said was planned for release later this year?
3 Why don't you out a free cassette on your cover and fill it with all the Sonic tunes? I'm sure readers wouldn't mind paying a bit more for it.
Please answer these questions because I bet there's loads of people out there who are dying to know the answers too.
WILLIAM DIXON, LOUTH

SM: 1 Haha, you'll just have to wait and see! It does involve the new Sonic game that's going to be released later this year though. 3 Don't you think that would be, like, a tad boring? Still, I dare say a Sonic cassette would look great alongside your complete collection of 2Unlimited CD singles.

VERY CONFUSED/IGNORANT QUESTIONS

DEAR SM,
Can you play games like Virtua Fighters and Virtua Racing on the Megadrive without the Megadrive 32X?
2 Will the Saturn be compatible with the Megadrive and Megadrive 32X?
3 What other games will be released with the 32X when it finally hits the shops?
RONAN McGRATH

SM: Hrrmph! Well, seeing as Virtua Racing has already been released on the Megadrive, the answer is yes, you can play it on your Megadrive. as for Virtua Fighters – just how do you think the Megadrive is going to cope with the complex polygon images you nitwit? Of course you won't be able to play it on your Megadrive! It's a Saturn only game, I'm afraid. 2 No. 3 See our Megadrive 32X feature in this issue.

VIRTUA RACING "ANNOYING" SHOCKER

DEAR Q&A
I bought the excellent Virtua Racing a couple of weeks ago, and although it's great there is something that I find very annoying. In the manual it says that your car will receive damage every time you have a serious accident, but try as I might, I can't pick up any damage on the beginner course. On expert mode it only takes one crash to bash up your car, but I once spent 10 minutes on beginner mode just ramming everything at full speed, and still nothing happened. Is this normal, or is my cart faulty?
I have a Sony TV for my Megadrive with a scart input. The problem is that when I use the scart lead, the picture isn't in the middle and there's a border on the right hand side of the picture. Also if you put the contrast up more than halfway, the picture begins to distort. Is this something I can rectify or will I have to put up with it forever?
ANONYMOUS

SM: You don't actually receive any damage on the beginner mode of Virtua Racing, as that's kind of the point really. You know, it's a beginner mode – for people who aren't very good at playing the game.
As for your TV problems, well, unfortunately, when Sega designed PAL Megadrives, they squeezed the picture a bit and the border problems you encountered turned up. The only solution would be to buy a monitor which enables you to muck around with the orientation of the image. This would also enable you to overcome the letterbox syndrome of PAL Megadrives and move the picture to the right a bit.
Your contrast problems are a bit odd, if the truth be told. But why would you want to put the contrast up more than halfway? The picture would look rubbish - where are your eyes, young man?

Right! Time up! If you could all put your pens down now, and place your letters in the tray as you leave. And you! You at the back! NO talking until you've left the room, okay?

SEGA

SEGA

WHOOPS!

THERE GOES MY SPINE

"Goro, Goro, wherefore art thou Goro?" is the plaintive cry springing forth from the mouths of heart-broken teenagers across the globe. But there is no romanticism inherent in this yearning, merely the cold-blooded lust for death inspired by that fiendish work of Satan himself – Mortal Kombat! Ahahahaaa!

If you're new to the video games scene, or just not very attentive, you may not know the history of Mortal Kombat. However, to the initiated, it is a well-known fact that this game is the omen of the Dark Lord himself, signalling the imminent arrival on earth of the fiery hordes of the Netherworld. But what happened to the star four-armed half-dragon of the original game? He has escaped! Yes, Goro, pillar of evil, has escaped from a Mortal Kombat coin-op somewhere in the world, to spread a trail of vileness and destruction to herald the dawning of Doomsday, whereupon Goro, Beelzebub and Mark Turmell shall wreak death and mutilation across the globe.

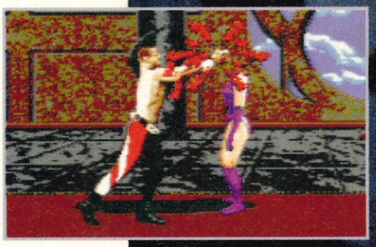
But from which Mortal machine did Goro free himself? Was it a luxury large-monitor version in an American bowling alley, or is Goro even now crouched behind the suspicious-looking lump of revolving meat in your local kebab shop?

At least, that's what it says in the tabloids, and they'd know all about what a threat video games are to the safety of humanity. I mean, you let your little kid play Sonic for twenty minutes and what happens? They run out, get addicted to crack, ram-raid a shop and spend the rest of the night at an illicit rave. Actually, that's more likely to happen if you play Altered Beast for more than fifteen seconds – God knows, that's enough to tip anyone over the edge.

AT LONG LAST DEATH

Mortal Kombat might be a good game, but it's doubtful it ever would have achieved half the commercial success it did without one vital element – the Fatalities. These, if you're a dunderhead and you've never heard of them, are the hard-to-perform finishing moves which reward the player with a disgustingly gory decapitation or some similar hideous event. Mortal Kombat 2 features a whole new ruck of these. Each character averages three Fatalities apiece, and some of them are quite incredibly horrible, as you can see from these blood-soaked, plasma-loaded pictures.

▲ **This is one of Baraka's Fatalities. As you can see it's very gory indeed and will probably give you nightmares.**



▲ **Here, Jax crushes his victim's head with a single clap.**

▲ **In a fit of gore, Johnny rips his opponent in two. Ooh, temper temper.**

▲ **Ooh, bleedin' hell, he's 'armless really! Ahahaha! We kill ourselves!**

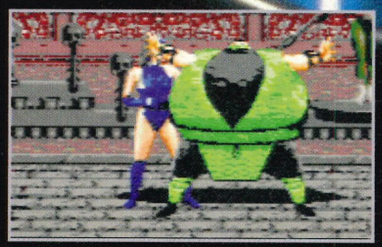
▲ **Boom! He's dead!**

▲ **This is the famed Triple Head Decapitation, which is dead hard to do. And we did it.**

THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE GORE

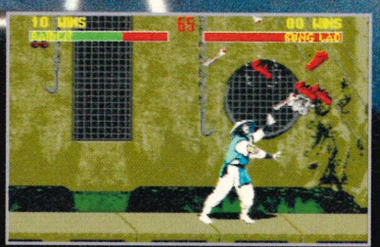
With Goro gone, there is of course a large, four-armed demonic-shaped gap in the game. This position is ably

MORTAL KOMBAT II



▲ This is a good one. The unlucky recipient of this Fatality inflates until they explode.

▲ "And just where do you think you've been until this hour, Kung Lao? Get straight to bed!"



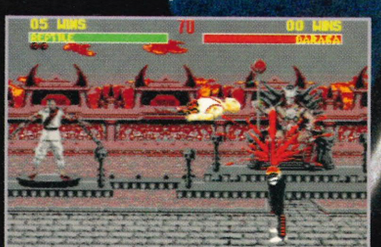
▲ Guess what happens here. That's right – there's blood all over the shop!

▲ Unfortunately, this shot doesn't show the ace and imminent decapitation.

▲ Here's a tip – don't show this one to your Mum or she won't let you buy the game.

▲ This one doesn't look so bad. Shame.

▲ Not only is this Shang Tsung/ Kintaro morphing Fatality almost impossible, it's ace.



▲ Here's Reptile's Invisibility Fatality. Which sort of rhymes.

filled by the somewhat less scary Kintaro. Kintaro may be harder than Shang Tsung, but thanks to his furry feline visage, he actually looks almost nearly a bit cuddly. You could imagine Johnny Cage pausing mid-thump to tickle him under the chin. This, from the people who brought you Sub-Zero's decapitation special, is a bit of a surprise. In fact, that's not the only strangely nice thing in Mortal Kombat 2. The characters all seem to have changed their attitude towards each other to a quite alarming degree. This has seen the introduction of the famed Friendship. Performed, like a Fatality, once you've trounced your opponent across two rounds and the "Finish Him" message appears on screen, Friendships are the diametric opposite of the tabloid-famed death moves. And being as this is SEGA MAGAZINE and we're so skill, here's a picture of every single Friendship in the game.

▲ **This is all very well, but where's all the plasma, eh?**

WE WANT TO BE HAVING...A BABY

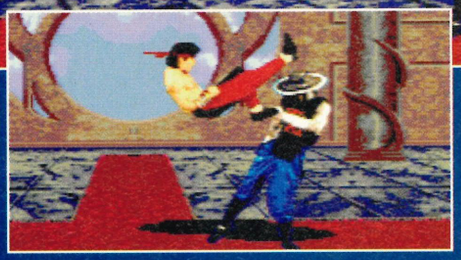
If you're the kind of person who longs for the decisive, final victory of a Fatality with the humanity and humour of a Friendship, look no further than the Babality for all your finishing move needs. Performing a Babality regresses your foe to a mere hapless infant, meaning they're not dead, but neither can they show up at your house with some mates wanting a re-match (at least, not for another twenty years or so). However, transforming an enemy into a babbling babe-in-arms is harder than you might think. For a Babality to work, you may only use the High Punch button all throughout the final round of combat, severely limiting your attack range, and thus your chances of actually winning.

▲ **Aah, isn't this sweet? Now eat them while they're helpless! Ha ha!**

HERE'S

LIU KANG

The Shaolin monk with the squeaky voice is back, in a way which mere mortals could not even begin to comprehend. Actually, that's not quite true, but Liu has gone from being the character no-one ever liked to play in the first Mortal to being one of the most formidable fighters of the sequel. This is thanks to his new variety of moves, and in particular his ability to shoot fireballs whilst jumping.

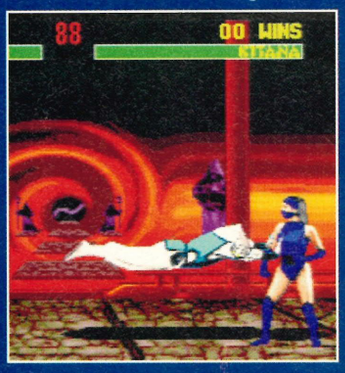


FLYING KICK Faster than the bicycle kick, but only good for one hit, this is still a staple of Liu Kang's armoury.

BICYCLE KICK A very fast multiple-hit flying kick which is very hard to dodge. If it is blocked, however, it leaves Liu Kang open to a reciprocal combo.

RAYDEN

God of Thunder and the man who wears a wok on his head, Rayden makes a welcome return in Mortal Kombat 2. His moves remain pretty much the same as ever, with the addition of one new technique, so he's probably the easiest character to pick up if you've played the original but you're new to the sequel. However, he's also one of the comparatively weaker characters in the game.



TORPEDO ATTACK With a familiar war cry, Rayden launches himself head-first at his opponent's midriff. Leaves him extremely vulnerable if blocked.

SUPER SHOCKER A little bit like that famous exploding-head finishing move from Mortal 1, Rayden grabs the bonce of his foe and drains their brain by process of electrocution.

WHO TO KILL

MORTAL KOMBAT II

The player characters available in Mortal Kombat 2 differ somewhat from those found in the original. A few of the chaps present should be familiar to previous Mortal players, but the new arrivals will be completely alien to those of you who haven't played the arcade version of MK2 yet. What's more, each of the old characters from the first game has been revamped somewhat to match the competition. Just to help you through this kooky jungle of unfamiliarity, here's a comprehensive guide of every character and all their special moves so you know where you are.

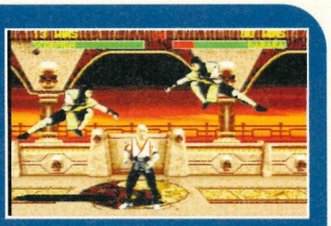
LOW FIREBALL Hurt your opponent's knees with this crouching attack. Makes it possible to dodge incoming projectiles whilst still attacking.

HIGH/JUMPING FIREBALL The standing fireball remains from the first game, but the jumping version is a new variation and bound to annoy your opponent.

SCORPION

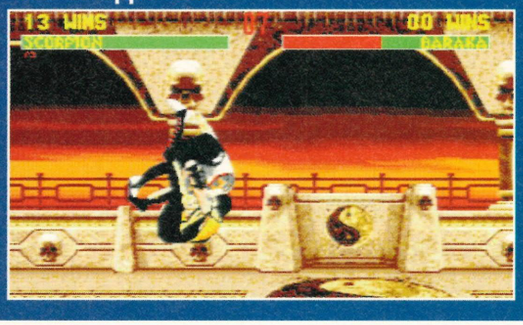
The dead bloke from the first game once again makes his cadaverous presence felt. This time, he's not out for revenge on Sub-Zero, just to spread death. Scorpion still sports his ever-popular Van Damme spear, and also has some of the goriest death moves in the game, if you're into that sort of thing.

VAN DAMME SPEAR Doesn't do much damage in itself, but it looks ace and it's always a good starting point for a combo when combined with an uppercut.



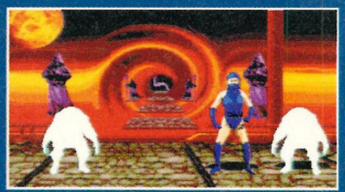
DECOY Fool your opponent into thinking you're a duck with this incredible move. Scorpion uses this sort of whistle to...aah, only joking!

SCISSORS KICK Probably Scorpion's second most useful special move next to the Van Damme spear, this kick does a reasonable whack of damage.



AIR THROW If you're playing against a clever type who uses late, deep kicks to start combos, use this move to knack his little game. That'll show 'em.

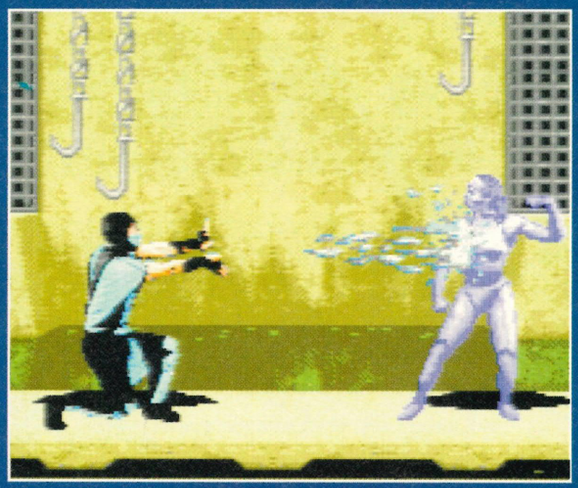
LIGHTNING TOSS Not a quick...oh never mind, this is Rayden's projectile attack. He shoots lightning from his hands to kill people. It's pretty good.



TELEPORT Stop yourself from dying by teleporting to a random point on the screen with this move. Don't use it when you're already out of trouble or you'll more than likely teleport into a fist.

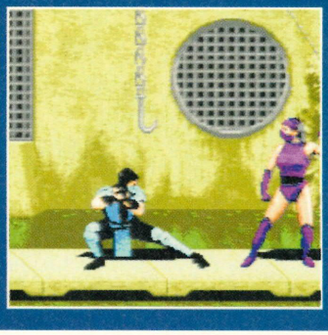
SUB ZERO

He's fat, he's round, he bounces on the ground, Sub Zero, Sub Zero. Yes, everyone's favourite head-plucker is back, showing off a couple of new techniques and the same old costume.



FREEZE Stops foes in their tracks and leaves them open to a free hit. Also deflects other projectiles if it catches them in time.

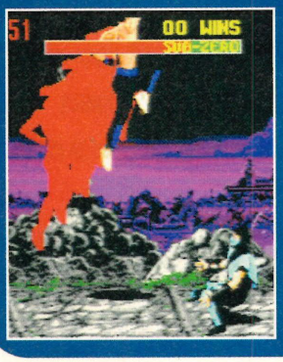
GROUND FREEZE Makes walking rather difficult for adversaries. Good for a free hit, and provides better combo potential than the regular Freeze.



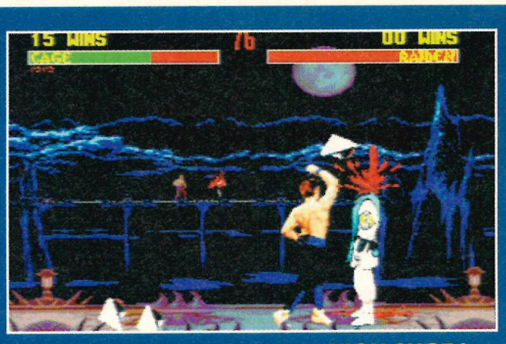
SLIDE Being just a kid at heart, Sub Zero loves to slide on the ice, only he also uses this as an excuse to break the legs of anyone getting in his way.

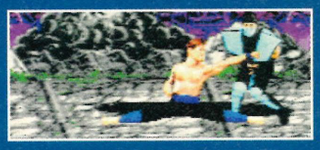
JOHNNY CAGE

Old Johnny has been a busy boy in between Mortal tournaments. The man who started life as a parody of Jean-Claude Van Damme now commands a pretty impressive array of special moves, including the all-important ability to fire both low and high projectiles.



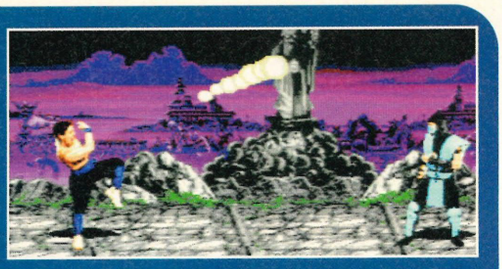
SHADOW PUNCH A new move, this is very much like the famous Streetfighter Dragon Punch, but with an attractive display of after-images.





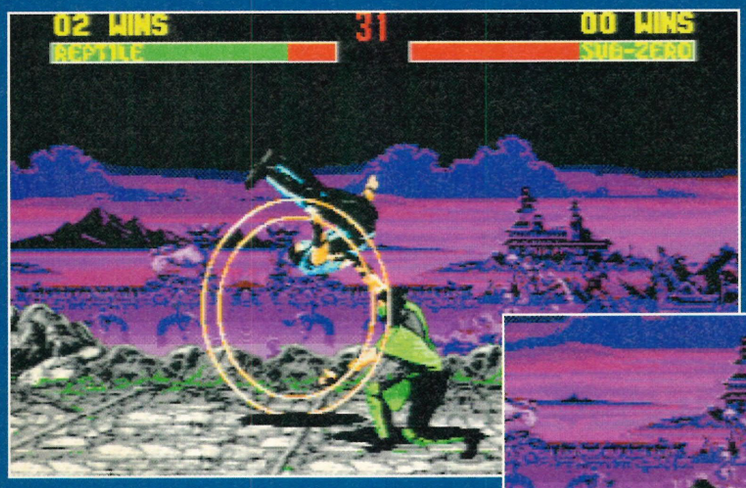
HIGH SHOT In an all-out frenzy, Johnny aims for the head of his rival, in a desperate bid to singe their eyebrows to extinction.

PACKAGE CHECK In case you were wondering, yes, Johnny Cage is still able to do the splits and thump his opponent in the lunch box.

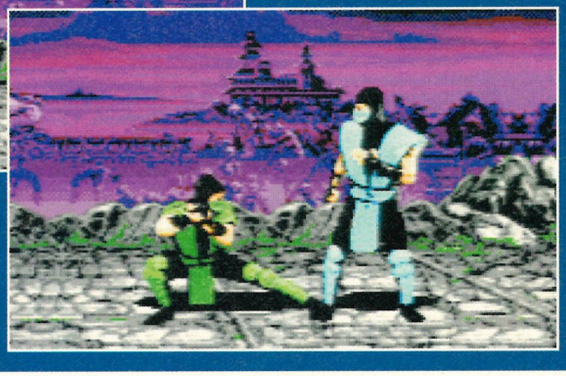


SHADOW KICK Graphically revamped, the Shadow Kick looks really rather nice now. It's also been upgraded in power a little, too.

LOW SHOT Crouching in a way that only he can, Johnny unleashes a fireball at the lower portion if his foe.



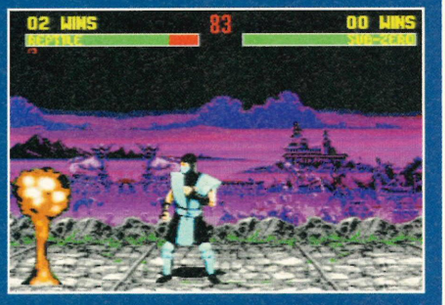
ORB One of the most annoying moves in the game, Scorpion fires an exploding orb of floating energy which is absolutely rock hard to dodge.



SLIDE Copying Sub Zero (played by the same actor, sinisterly enough), Reptile slides across the floor in a Seventies-style attack.

REPTILE

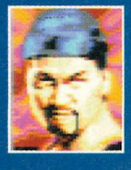
If you're a bit sad and never got the chance to play against Reptile in the original game, here's your chance for glory now, as Reptile has been upgraded to a fully-interactive player character, with all his own special moves and everything! Doubtless this should light up the lives of people across the globe.

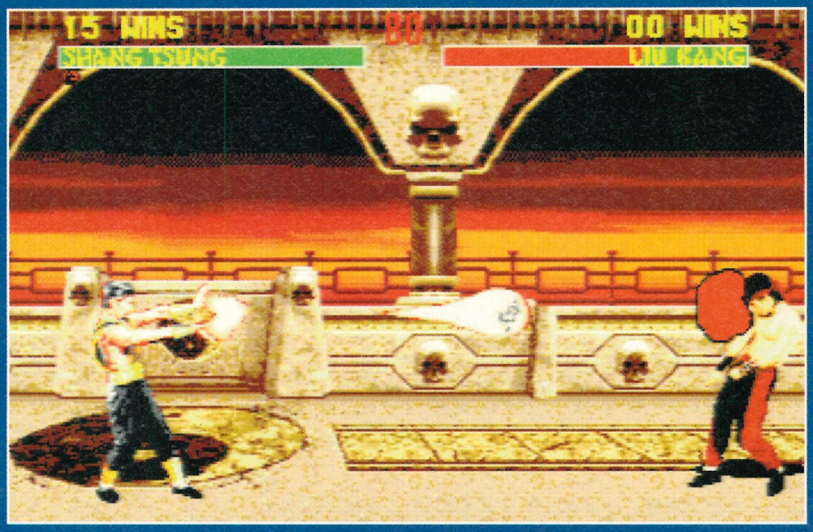


INVISIBILITY A bit tricky to get the hang of, but devastating once you get used to it, this prevents your opponent from seeing where you are until you get hit.

SHANG TSUNG

Looking much healthier than he did when he was the end-game boss in the first Mortal outing, Shang Tsung has used his demonic powers to take several hundred years off his apparent age. He's also gone and bought one of those crap "ethnic" hats you see peanut-headed right-on Socialist Workers wear when they're ranting at you in the street.





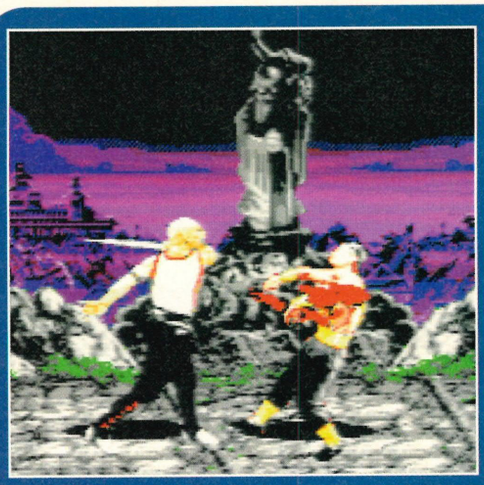
FIRE SKULLS Shang is able to cast either one, two or three flaming skulls at his foe, depending on the joypad combination used. This is a good way to trick someone, or get three hits on a dizzy opponent.

MORPH Being master of his own molecular system, Mr Tsung is able to morph himself into ANY of the other characters in the game, providing the player knows the correct technique for each. Once morphed, Shang can use all of that characters moves, Fatalities, Friendships and Babalities. Corkolina!

MORTAL KOMBAT II

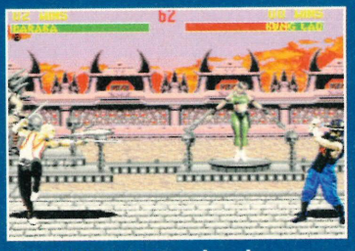
BARAKA

A slap-headed scary monster with big teeth and whacking great claws in his arms, you'd be forgiven for being quite scared of Baraka if you met him on a dark night. Luckily though, he's not real.



BLADE SWIPE Taking advantage of his unfair advantage, to whit – one large pair of blades – Baraka slices his adversary across the chest.

DOUBLE KICK A face-bashing technique taking advantage of Baraka's strange alien joints, this allows the chap to kick his opponent twice in rapid succession.

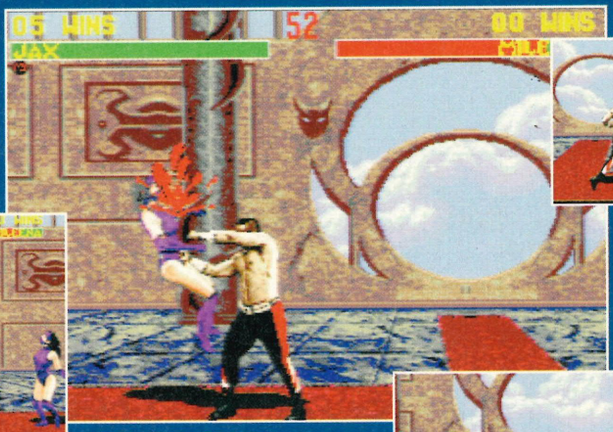


BLUE SPARK Baraka throws one of his rapidly-regenerating arm blades at whoever is standing in the way.

BLADE FURY Best used when someone tries a jumping kick against our lad, Baraka kneels down and slices away with gay abandon. Leaves him open to a counter if he misses, though.

JAX

Jax, despite looking like one of the most boring characters in the game, is actually one of the best. He might not have a nice Ninja uniform, but he does have an excellent line in special moves and combos. Once you learn how to handle him, Jax is a formidable opponent.



ENERGY WAVE As if all this wasn't enough, Jax also possesses a projectile attack! What a spawny get!

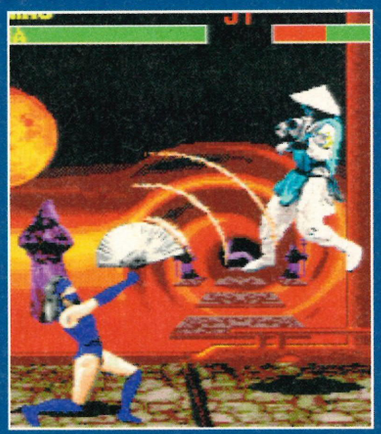
SUPER SLAM Pretty much the same as a normal body slam, but allows Jax to slam his foe up to three times before releasing them.

EARTHQUAKE PUNCH The most frustrating move in the game, the Earthquake punch is impossible to block and can only be dodged by jumping straight up and the moment of impact. Grr!

GOTCHA GRAB Grab your opponent by the neck (whilst shouting "Gotcha!" strangely enough) and repeatedly punch them in the face, to a maximum of five hits.

BACK BREAKER And an air throw! He's got an air throw as well! This just isn't fair!

FAN SWIPE Sweeping her hand across in an attacking stylee, Kitana uses the sharp end on the fan in a slicing action.
FAN TOSS A good multiple-hit technique, Kitana spins one fan towards her adversary, hitting them up to five times.



SPIN FAN LIFT Using magic, Kitana crouches down and spins her fans, creating power waves which not only hurt enemies but also lift them right off the ground.

KITANA

Despite being a new character, Kitana's already got a couple of fans. Ha ha! Sometimes we're just too funny. You see, Kitana is armed with two deadly sharp steel Ninja fans, which she uses to slice up her foes.

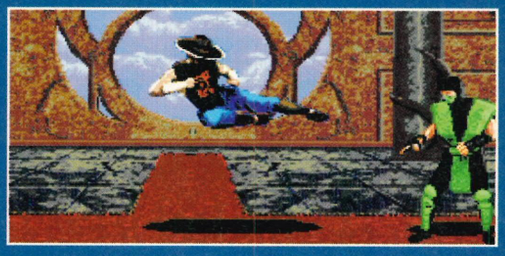
SQUARE WAVE PUNCH Making like Superman, Kitana springs towards her foe with one fist outstretched, ready to punch them gob-wise.

➤➤

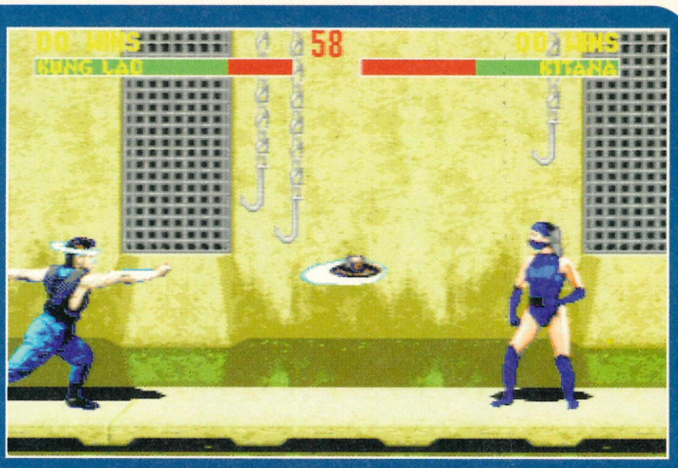
KUNG LAO

Looking not unlike an oriental version of Clint Eastwood, Kung Lao is one of the better characters in Mortal Kombat 2, although a couple of his moves to tend to leave him open to counter-attack combos if blocked.

TELEPORT Pretty self explanatory, this. Kung Lao transports himself to a random position on the screen. Leaves him prone to uppercuts.



AERIAL KICK A super-fast flying kick not unlike Liu Kang's, or Kitana's Square Wave Punch.

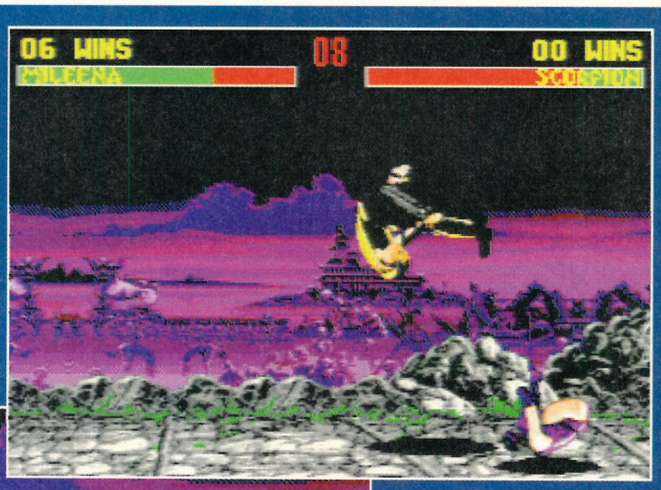


HAT TOSS Kung chucks his steel-tipped razor hat at his foe, using his amazing joypad skills to move the hat up and down in mid-air to make sure it reaches its mark.

WHIRLWIND SPIN Another hat-based attack, Monsignor Lao folds his arms and spins himself into his rival, thus hacking them up a bit.

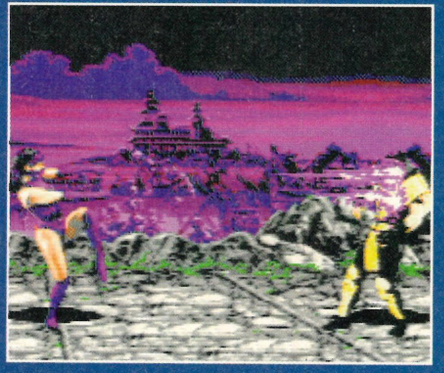
MILEENA

Mileena easily rivals Jax as the best player character in the game, once you get the hang of her combos. Her special moves might seem a bit crap, but when used in the right way they're completely devastating. However, if you're clever you can always get her with an uppercut when she performs her Teleport Kick attack.



ROLL ATTACK Mileena rolls herself into a little tiny ball and rolls back and forth across the screen. A bit tricky to dodge, and good when used in combos.

TELEPORT KICK Mileena slides off the bottom of the screen and re-appears, foot first, from the top. Difficult to block, but easy to hit for skilled players.



SAI TOSS Mileena is able to throw her sharp knives with some force. However, as she jumps back she is left open to a counter-attack.

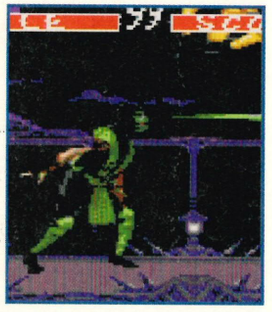
▲ Here's your choice of characters. Hey – it's an informative caption!

▲ Jax loses a contact lens. Again.

▲ Wow, look at that! Aren't we just skill?

▲ Look – we got all the way up to Kintaro.

▲ Oh no, it's that Fatality again. I don't like that one. It's scary.



▲ That's what I feel like, sometimes.

◀ Then one day, marriage to the delectable Debbie McGee just wasn't enough. Paul Daniels, hero to the nation, had gone bad.

CRUSH 'N' GO!

It's not just Megadrive owners who are lucky enough to have the Mortal 2 privilege. Wandering, free-spirit types with Game Gears will also be able to get their hands on the game in the very near future. The Game Gear version has been programmed by the same team responsible for the 16-BIT wonder, and it is, by all accounts, brilliant. Obviously, the lack of memory has meant a couple of omissions. The list of available player characters has been forcibly reduced. You have full reign of Scorpion, Reptile, Sub-Zero, Mileena, Kitana, Jax, Shang Tsung and Liu Kang, but sadly there's no Baraka, Kung Lao, Rayden or Johnny Cage. Other than this, the game is pretty much intact. All the special moves are there, as are all the Fatalities, Babalities and Friendships.

▲ Tired of people throwing harpoons into your eye? Post today for our free course!

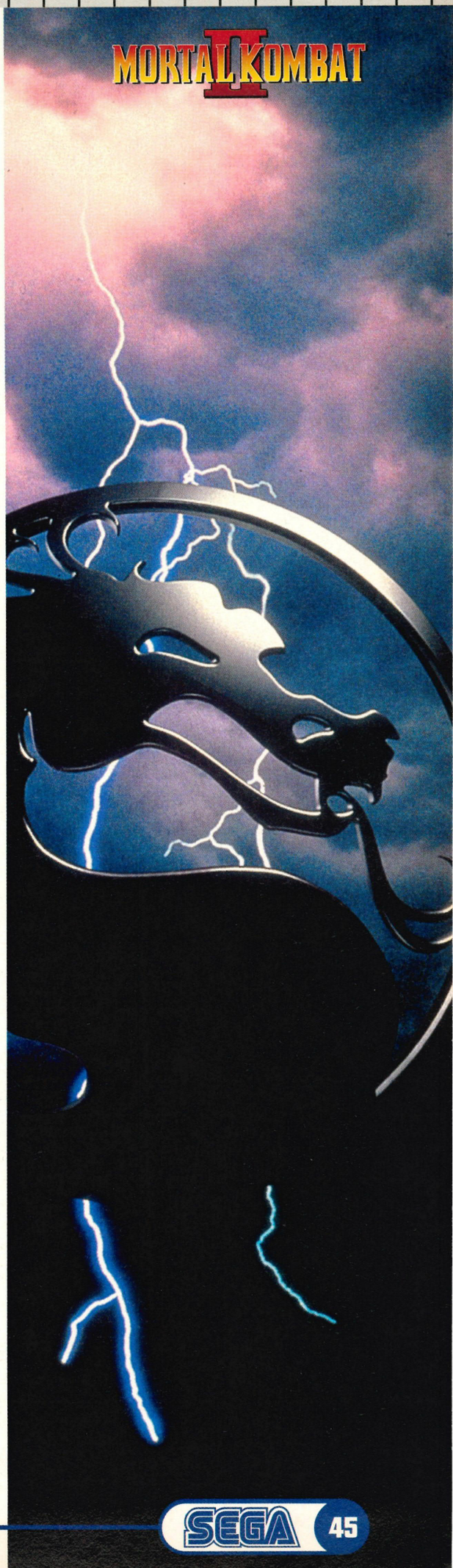
▲ Shang Tsung and Reptile return to the local youth club disco after last month's great outing.

SKINNING A CAT ON THE GAME GEAR

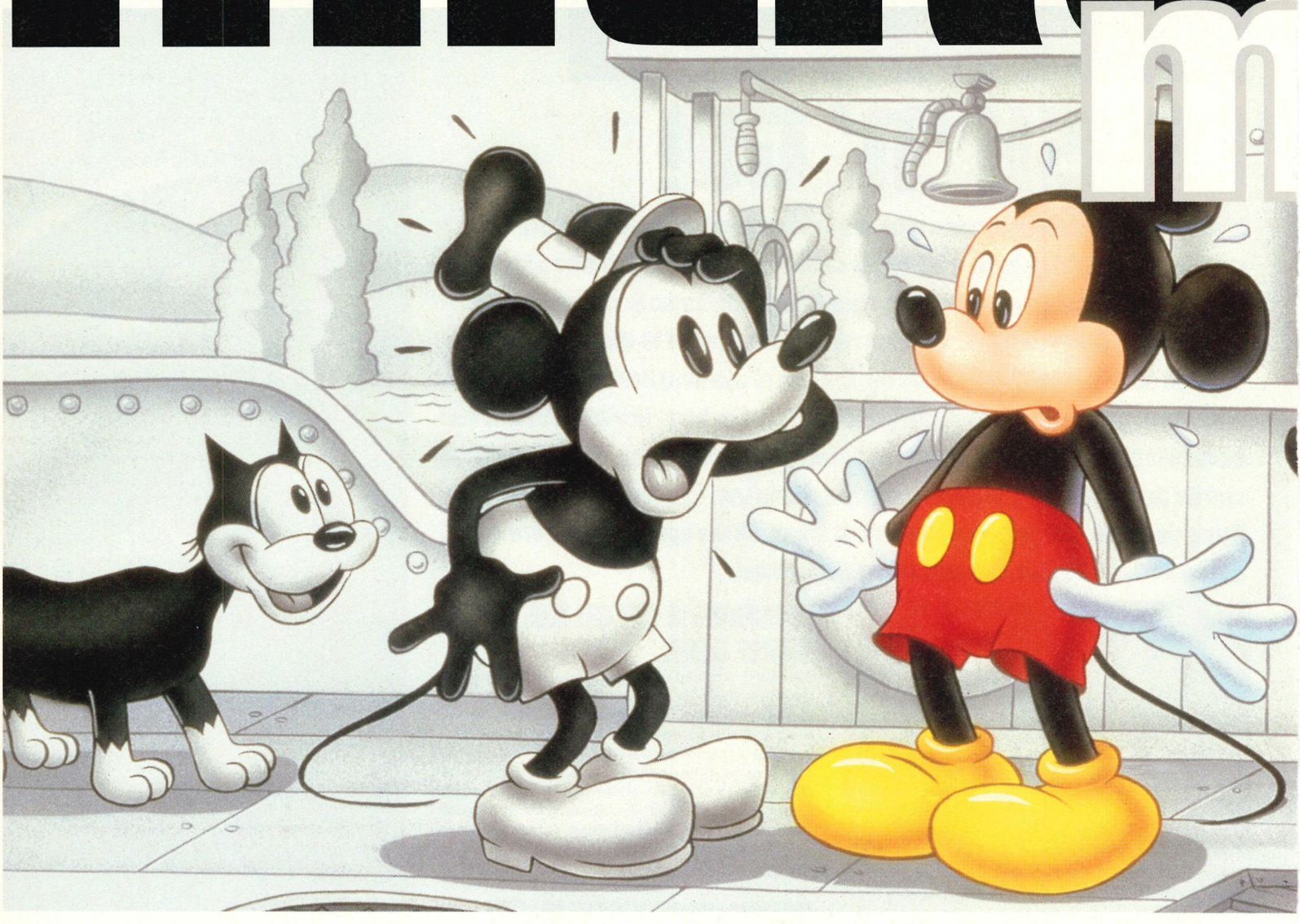
Hey kids! Worried about how you'll manage all the moves with only a measly two-button built-in Game Gear joypad? Well worry no more, as your problems are solved. In Game Gear Mortal Kombat 2, each of the two main fire buttons corresponds to either punches or kicks, the force of which depends on the situation and speed of button press. The Start button takes a bit of a break from life pausing and restarting games to join in with the action buttons and fill in on blocking duties.

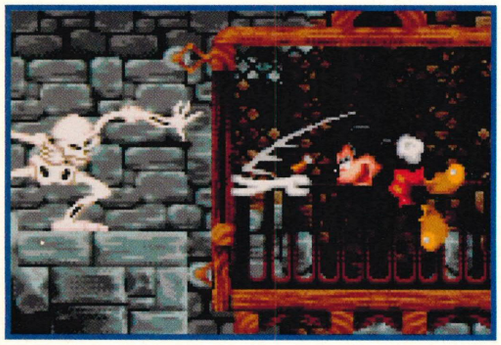
NEVER MIND THE QUALITY, FEEL THE WIDTH

The Game Gear graphics were produced using a similar technique to that responsible for the incredible Megadrive visuals. However, whilst the limited colour palette and display of the Game Gear may seem to be something of a hindrance to programmers, the dark moodiness of the graphics actually helped the team to get it right. The shots here, expanded onto a larger screen, don't really do Game Gear Mortal 2 justice. When viewed on the small Game Gear screen the sprites look much smoother and more rounded. Game Gear Mortal 2 is hitting the streets very soon indeed, and it looks every bit as (proportionally) splendid as the 16-BIT version.



MICKE





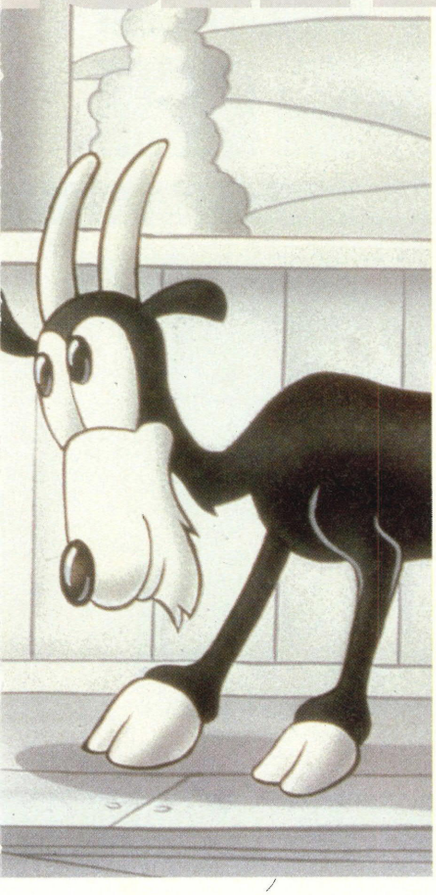
▲ Throwing marbles at skeletons just isn't on. You could have an eye out. Oh, they already are.

▲ Hey it's Pegleg Pete, Mickey's arch foe, in his first 'Steamboat Willy' incarnation.

▲ Poor weasels, they're always depicted as nasty creatures. That's animal discrimination, you know.

Mickey Mania

Before Sonic the Hedgehog, there was only one platform superstar on the Megadrive. A character who was a worldwide megastar long before the Megadrive was even a twinkling in Dr Sega's eye. Before colour TV existed. Before talking pictures even. His name is Mickey Mouse, hip-hop cardinal of cutesy cartoon characters, cool-gone daddio of of the Disney dimensions. And, now he's all set to take the Megadrive by storm with what could be his greatest Megadrive game yet. Slipping into his finest red pantaloons and comedy mousketeer ears, TOM GUISE takes a look.



Mickey Mouse. You just can't help loving the guy, can you? He might wear dodgy red breeks, strange yellow booties and talk in a comedy falsetto voice, but despite of these peculiarities, or maybe even because of them, he's a star. From silent cartoon character to recognised Worldwide icon, his rise to fame has been incredible. Why, at this rate he could soon be President of Earth, ruling the World from under his soft cartoony thumb. But how could one mouse be so successful? Could it be that he is in fact, an alien? After all, why do his ears always face in the same direction? Why, does he only have three fingers on each hand and how is it that in 65 years he doesn't seem to have aged one bit. Of course, it could just be that he's a ficticious cartoon character and I am, in fact, mentally troubled. And to prove this more conclusive latter theory, Mickey Mania is on its way, a game that features all the finest moments in Mickey's career, proving his success has nothing to do with alien mind suggestion. And as for his everlasting youth? Well, it's all down to Grecian 2000 obviously.

▲ It's just not a Mickey game unless it has cartoon spider webs. Maybe they should get a cleaner.

▲ He may be sixty-six, but there's plenty of life left in the old mouse. What a boy!

▲ What's that, Pluto? Aw-haw-haw! Shucks, you silly dog. I'm not a moose, I'm a...

▲ ...moose! Goddamn stupid, ugly mutt! Why didn't you say something? I could have been pronged. Badly.

Originally called Mickey's 65th Birthday, this was all set to cash in on the anniversary of the world-famous rodent. Unfortunately, it missed the celebrations by a year and since Mickey's 66th Birthday didn't have quite the same ring to it, publishers Sony Imagesoft have decided instead, to call it Mickey Mania. Of course, a game that was designed to celebrate the birthday of the World's most famous cartoon character would surely have to be something special and indeed Mickey Mania is just that, because it actually re-enacts the mouseketeer's life.

As with Mickey's previous Megadrive outings, Mickey Mania is a platform game. However, what makes it so novel is that each of the seven levels are based around a famous Mickey Mouse cartoon. Every one signifies an important landmark in Mickey's cartoon career, from his cinematic debut, to his first colour appearance and even his first speaking part. What's more, the look and feel of the original cartoons has been captured perfectly, from the different artistic styles through the ages to the washed-out colouration of the early colour cartoons. There's even crackling lines on the first black-and-white level, giving the impression that it really is an old celluloid film. Mind you, this attention to detail is hardly surprising because Disney animators worked on the graphics, producing thousands of frames of animation on the little rodent.

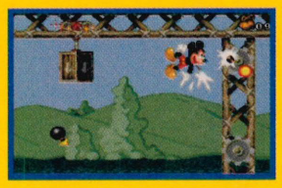
The historical jaunt through Mickey's life is more than just a graphical gimmick – it actually plays an important part in the game. In each level there is a Mickey Mouse from bygone days hiding somewhere, and the modern-day Mickey must find him as he journeys through the game. At the end of the game each older Mickey joins the present day Mick in his battle against the final boss, Pegleg Pete. Finding the hidden Mickeys isn't essential to completing the game, but the help each one provides could be the difference between winning and losing the game.

From the stunning visuals, Mickey Mania could well prove to be the best Mickey Mouse game yet – no mean feat when you consider the quality of Mickey's previous Megadrive outings. But of course, as any hardened games warrior worth their mouseketeer ears knows, looks aren't everything. There's only one way to find out whether this mouse earns his Disney Club membership and that's to check out the full SEGA MAGAZINE review closer to its Christmas release.

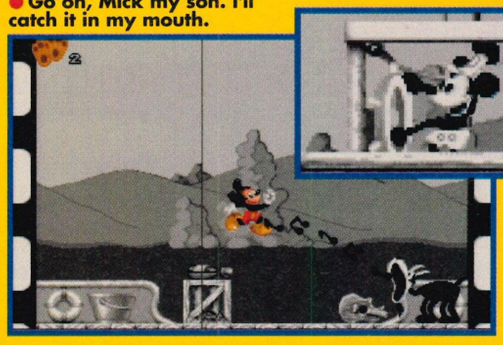
MICKEY mania

MOUSE TALES!

Mickey Mania follows Mickey's life from his first Here's a look at six of the levels. Why not all sev what cartoon it's based on.

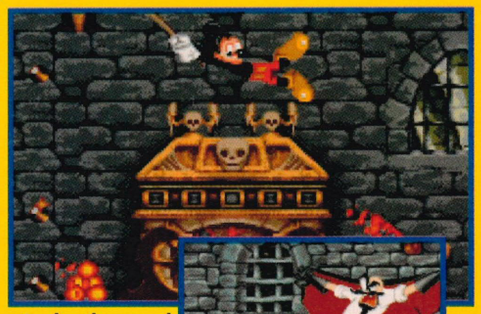


● Go on, Mick my son. I'll catch it in my mouth.



STEAMBOAT WILLY (1928)

Based on Mickey's very first cartoon, this level starts off in black-and-white as our hero clambers his way across the old steamboat before heading for the wharf to face Pegleg Pete. The original Mickey Mouse in his role as Steamboat Willy can be found at the helm of the ship.



● Lucky that mad doctor had his nighty on there. Poor Mick could have done himself a mischief.

LONESOME GHOSTS (1937)

Entering a haunted house, Mickey and Pluto are terrorised by the undead inhabitants as they float down a subterranean river on a raft, clamber up folding stairs and ride barrels atop an ectoplasmic mist.

● Look at the size of those buns!

MICKEY PUZZLE!

It may be a platform game, but Mickey can't get away with just bouncing on baddies' heads and throwing marbles at them. Sometimes he has to use his little rodent brain to overcome more puzzling situations.

Deep in the laboratory of the Mad Professor, Mickey is unable to get past a locked door.

However, by filling up a beaker with three different coloured serums...

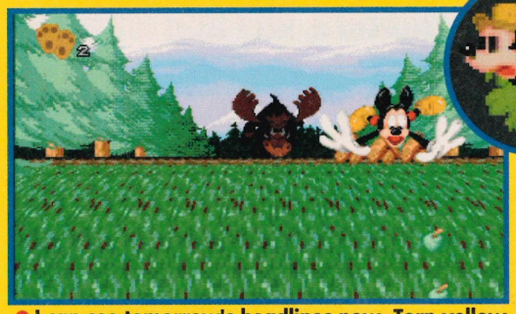
...he can produce a strange grey potion.

Heating this final solution under a Bunsen burner...

cartoon right up to the present day, with each level based on a famous cartoon from his past. en? Well, because one of the levels is hidden away and we're not going to reveal how to find it or

THE MAD DOCTOR (1933)

Mickey's first colour outing manifests itself as the second level of the game. Battling against exploding skeletons and giant bats whilst taking time out for a madcap ride through the hallway on a go-cart, Mickey finally ends up in a laboratory face-to-face with the crazy scientist in question.



● I can see tomorrow's headlines now. Torn yellow-buttoned shorts found. Mouse still missing. Aargh!

MOOSE HUNTERS (1937)

This cartoon provided Mickey with his first speaking role. It also paired him up with his faithful hound Pluto, who helps the plucky rodent through the level by barking and pointing his nose at such impending hazards as falling rocks, broken branches and the infamous charging moose.

MICKEY AND THE BEANSTALK (1947)

Clambering up a mysterious beanstalk, our hero enters a giant garden filled with oversized beetles, dragonflies and a terrifying spider-queen. Then it's onward to a massive dinner-table ladened with giant dishes, before happening upon the hungry owner of the food.

● Watch those hot coals, Mick, old chum. Charred cartoon mouse flesh smells terrible.

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER (1990)

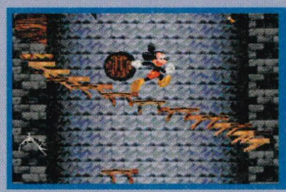
Bringing Mickey up to date is this tale of mediaeval identity crisis. Racing through a huge castle, our rodent hero has to face crossbow-firing weasels, flaming pits, and moving walls before confronting the final boss – modern day Pegleg Pete!

MICKEY TRICKERY!

There's no doubt that Mickey Mania looks absolutely gorgeous, but this isn't just thanks to the classical cartoon look. There are some more modern graphical tricks which not only look stunning, but also add some variety to the gameplay. For instance...

Which can be found in a set of giant syringes...

...he can cause a huge explosion, blowing the door open.



This tower on the Mad Professor level rotates incredibly as Mickey races around it.

An in-yer-face 3D moose-chase as Mickey races to avoid a pain in the backside.

As Mickey enters this haunted house, the front of the building scrolls back in brilliant 3D.

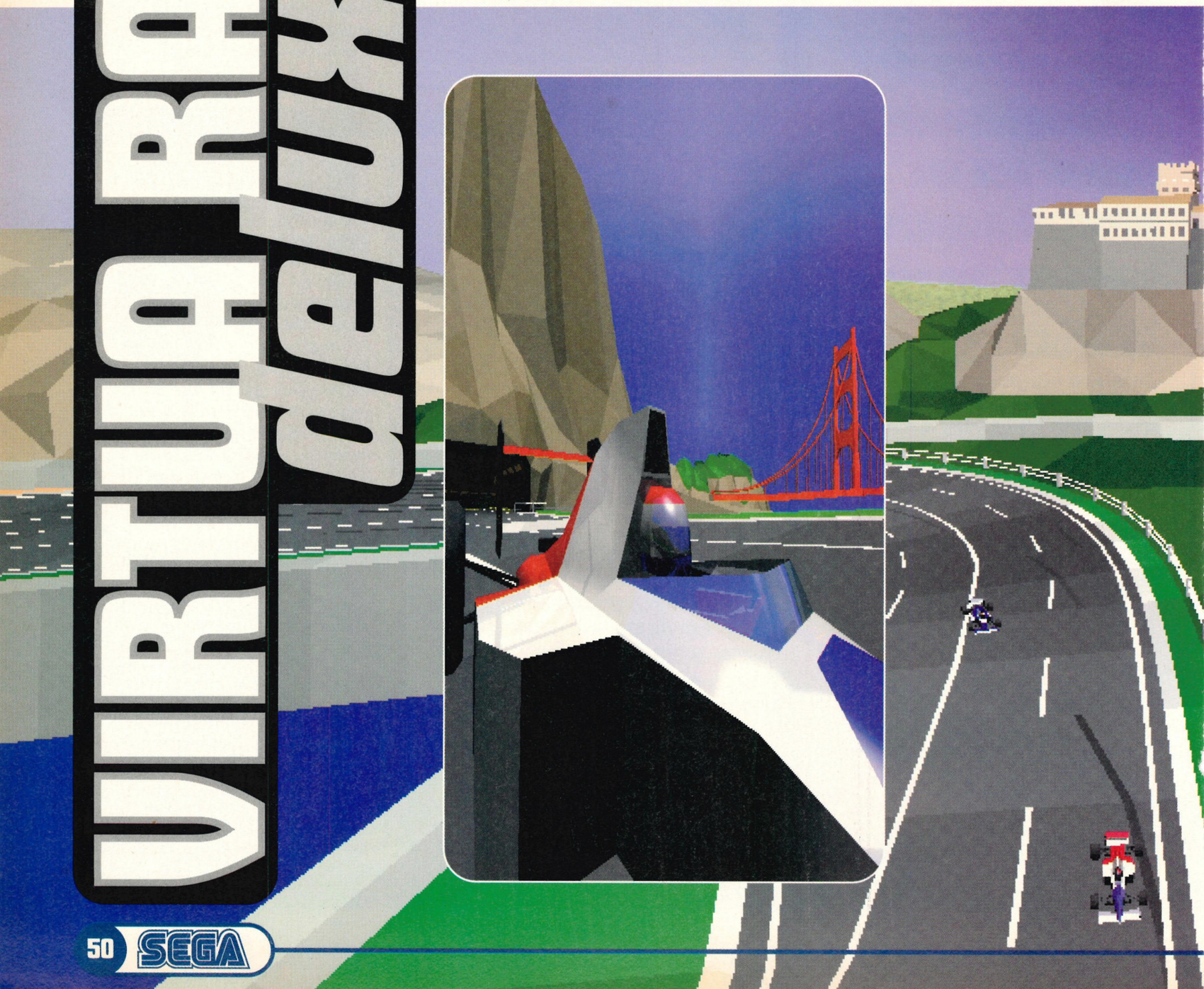
VIRTUA RACING deluxe

The press got their first official view of the Megadrive 32X at the Chicago CES Show. Being the official Sega magazine, we vow to bring you the ultimate coverage - hence this eight page work-in-progress showcase feature, starting with a look at Virtua Racing Deluxe. Richard Leadbetter brings you all the hard info.

Virtua Racing remains one of the most popular coin-ops around - its high speed polygon action only surpassed by the more recent charms of Daytona USA. The Megadrive version, out now, is an amazing feat of programming - but the Megadrive 32X version is just around the corner, and it's looking even better.

We took a look at an early work-in-progress version of the game at the Chicago CES and we talked to Jesse Taylor of Sega of America - the man who's heading up SOA's 32X development. He gave us valuable insight into the 32X project.

Virtua Racing Deluxe is being coded by members of the original Virtua team, currently beavering away in the secret labs of Sega of Japan's AM2 department. We have to stress just how early on in development Virtua Deluxe is at the moment. The shots you are seeing here, impressive though they are,

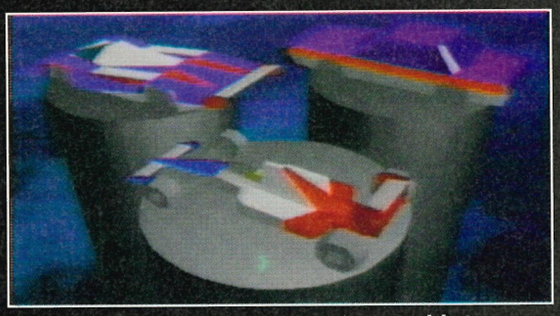


are just of one track featuring one car.
The final version of VR Deluxe will have six different tracks along with three different classes of automobiles to race. The actual graphics engine is still early as well. The game currently runs around twice as smoothly as the SVP version out now, but when finished, it should have twice as many polygons.
AM2 are importing a lot of code directly from the coin-op. Many compromises were made on the SVP version of the game, but since AM2 are dealing with an incredibly powerful 32-bit machine, they don't have to worry as much about the limitations of the hardware.
The first code they imported was for the actual shape of the F1 racing car. This shape, as it appears in 32X VR Deluxe, is *exactly the same* as the original coin-op's. AM2 are importing a lot more polygon data as we speak, which should really spruce up the game's appearance. Thousands of polygons still have to be added.

We expect to see a lot more of this potentially stunning title within the next couple of months. Being big VR fans here at SEGA MAGAZINE, this is one title we can't wait to test drive.

VIRTUA MOTORS

During development, a lot of different versions of the software are created, each showing various aspects of the game. The version we saw didn't have the two other classes of vehicle incorporated yet.
However, Sega of America's Summer CES video gave us a vague clue as to what to expect from the finished version.
As you can see from this screenshot, there are three different cars to choose from. There's the basic F1 racing car that we're familiar with, along with a more conventional sports coupe. The final vehicle looks like the sort of car you'd expect to see on the Le Mans circuit.
This all sounds great to us - when we first learned that there were different vehicles to control, we expected them to be different variations of the F1 car. Looks like we're in for something a whole lot better...



▲ The three VR motors Sega aim to add. Smart.

COMPARISON CORNER

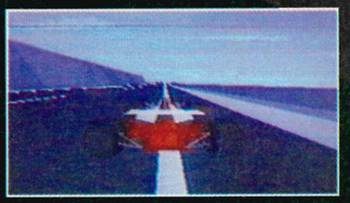
The original aim of 32X was to bring the arcade experience home. Just how well have Sega succeeded?

MEGADRIVE SVP

There's no denying that Virtua Racing on the Megadrive, powered by the Sega Virtual Processor, is a mighty road racer. However, the SVP chip's top polygon output is only rated at around 9,000 polygons a second, which means compromises in the detail and frame rate. The Megadrive's colour palette limited VR to 16 colours on-screen at once.

MEGADRIVE 32X

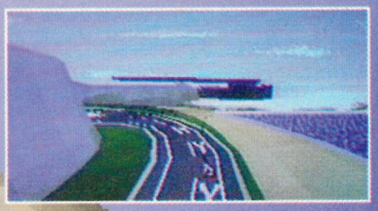
VR Deluxe on 32X copes with at least 256 colours on-screen at once and has a higher screen definition. It's a lot faster, but then with 32X hardware rated at 50,000 polygons a second, what do you expect? The finished version will be twice as detailed as this and should be a lot closer to the coin-op.



THE COIN-OP

Model One technology means that the main differences between 32X VR Deluxe and the coin-op is mostly down to colour and speed. The arcade game remains a fair bit smoother but comparing detail with 32X isn't fair at the moment, what with VR Deluxe being so early in development.

▲ Early VR Deluxe action.

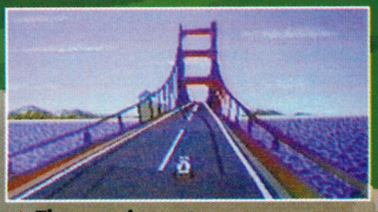


▲ A bird's eye perspective.

▲ Just like the coin-op!

▲ Much detail is still to be added.

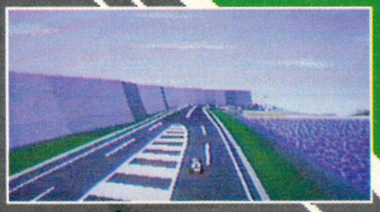
▲ All the VR views are intact...



▲ The scenic route.

▲ Action from the Bay Bridge.

▲ Approaching the tunnel...

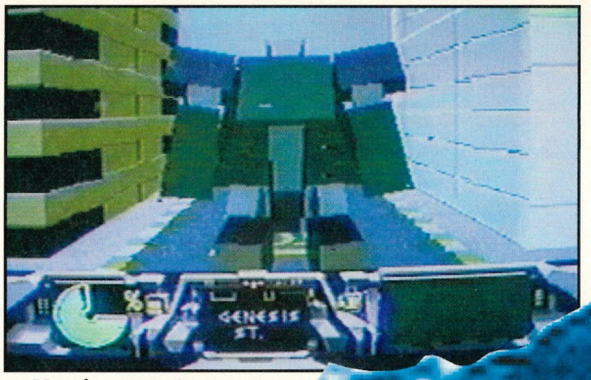


▲ Far and Away...

▲ More Bay Bridge tomfoolery.

METAL HEAD

Ever heard of, or indeed played, BattleTech? It's basically a mighty fine RPG that puts you into the boots of an enormous robot kitted out with all sorts of top weaponry. You use these weapons in order to create mass carnage - which sounds fair enough by us. Now something similar is being developed for the Megadrive 32X. Richard Leadbetter has seen the game and brings you this report.



▲ You just won't believe how smooth this game is - and it's running at half power in this stage of development!

▲ Crikey. The preliminary title screen.

Games like Ridge Racer, Daytona USA and Doom are bringing the bizarre art of texture mapping to videogames. And now, Sega of America are determined to prove just how good the Megadrive 32X is at producing similar games. Their first, all texture-mapped extravaganza is a game based around large, heavily armed robots and it's called Metal Head.

The scenario is pretty routine. Terrorists have taken over a big city, bringing in all sorts of heavy artillery in order to create some serious anarchy. Enter the player with his big robot. Armed with missiles, cannons and the like, it's his job to clean up the streets - and damn those pencil-neck bureaucrats back in City Hall.

Jesse Taylor, heading up 32X development for Sega of America, talked to SEGA MAGAZINE at the recent Chicago CES to bring us some behind-the-scenes insights into how the project is progressing.

He did stress just how early this project is. Although a lot of preliminary work has been done on the project (for 3D games, all of the shapes and the basic look of the game can be put together on Silicon Graphics workstations), the actual 32X game we saw was a very basic demo.

Also, it was explained how this demo was created on an under-powered development system using just one of the Megadrive 32X's 32-bit SH2 processors... and even the one processor isn't really being pushed that much since the game is so early on in development.

So what *has* been programmed in so far? Basically, the coders are attempting to get the look of the game right. The texture mapped skyscrapers are in, along with basic plans of the city (a map at the bottom of the screen helps you keep track of your position).

An extremely basic robot image "ice skates" around the city at the moment, with the graphics engine changing the camera angle Virtua Fighter style. This is all just as a demonstration. Sega are aiming to make the robot far more detailed, being as fully texture mapped as the skyscrapers. Realistic movement for the robot's arms and legs is also being added.

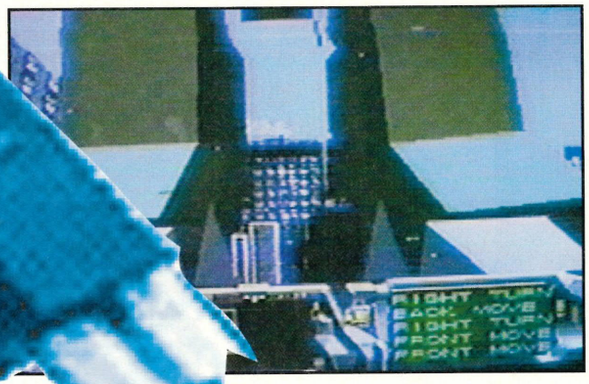
Even at this early stage in development, Metal Head is looking most exciting, and even though there wasn't much to see of the title at this time, it certainly was a treat to see the genesis of such a potentially impressive 32X product.

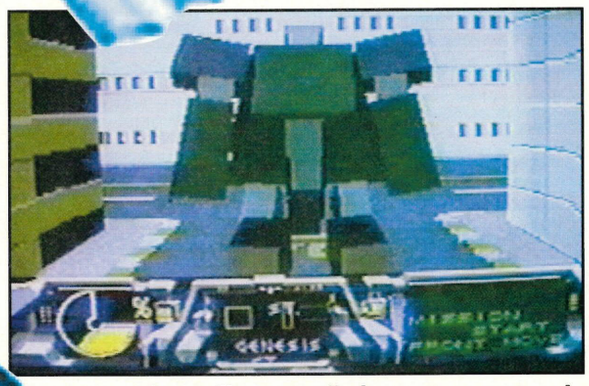
WHAT'S ALL THIS TEXTURE MAPPING ABOUT?

Basically, if you stripped away the textures from the skyscrapers and roads of Metal Head, you'd be left

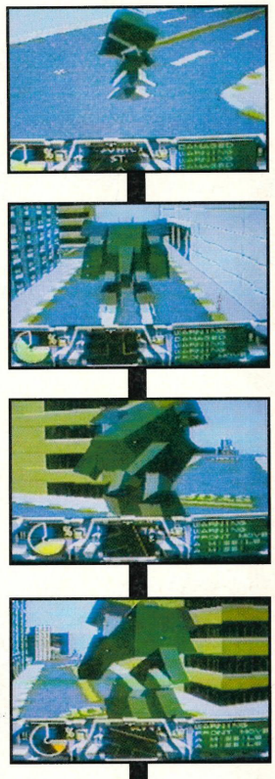
METAL HEAD

▲ It's very early, but it's already looking excellent.

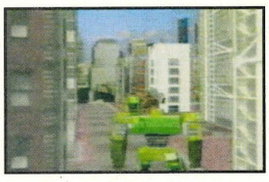


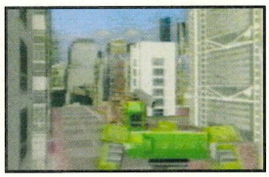


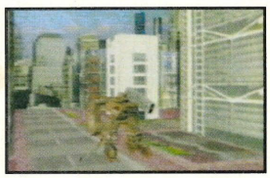
▲ The robot will eventually be texture-mapped.

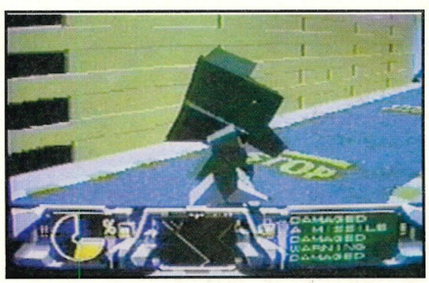


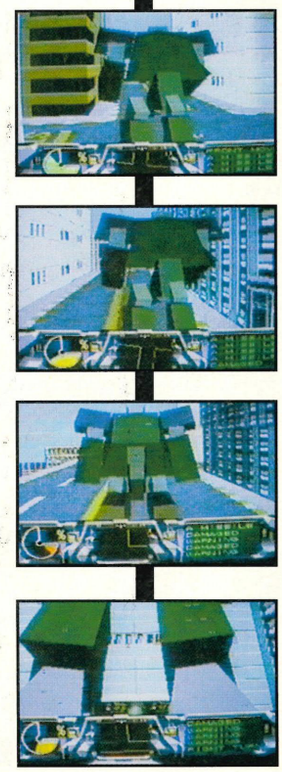
A Silicon Graphics generated vision of Metal Head's final look. ▶











with bare polygons, Virtua Racing style. By using texture mapping, Metal Head's coders are able to overlay detailed sprite-like images over the polygons and warp them so they still look realistic when viewed from different angles.

At this stage of development, a mock robot has been overlaid. We understand that just about everything in the game will be fully texture mapped in the final version of Metal Head.

FROM SILICON GRAPHICS TO 32X

A lot of the development work for Metal Head was done on Silicon Graphics workstations, and from that work, this amazing looking demo was created. Of course, the finished 32X version won't be quite *this* detailed, but it does provide a fascinating insight into what Metal Head's coders are attempting to achieve with the 32-bit upgrade.

STAR WARS arcade

Star Wars, as well as being a movie phenomena, also happens to be a smart new coin-op from Sega - which we showcased last month. During the CES Show, Sega of America officially unveiled the Megadrive 32X version. Richard Leadbetter was there.

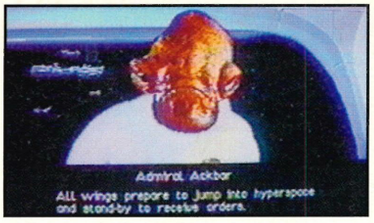
A lot of Sega's recent coin-ops have been based heavily around polygons and all-new 3D technology, and since the new 32-bit Megadrive 32X upgrade just happens to do polygons extremely well, it's only fitting that some of Sega's arcade work should make it over to the new home system.

Star Wars Arcade and Virtua Racing Deluxe (also featured this issue) are the first fruits of that work. Sega gave the press an official viewing of the 32X project at the CES and Star Wars was the most "together" project of the three revealed so far.

If you want to get an idea of what to expect, check out an arcade near you now, where the game should just have arrived. From what we've seen, the Megadrive 32X version should be pretty close once it's finished.

Sega showed only two levels out of six with their demonstration of the 32X Star Wars project, and even these still needed a lot of work. Jesse Taylor, Sega of America's appointed 32X demonstrator at the CES Show was receiving new versions of the game - daily! Now that the coders have complete development kits, work is progressing at a frighteningly fast pace in time for the game's launch, with the system, in November.

What we saw included the final trench run down the Death Star in search of the battlestation's elusive exhaust port. Also on



▲ "That's your Mum, that is."

▲ It's a Corellian freighter!

▲ And here it is again. Flip me!

▲ Initiating the final trench run.

▲ It's early days yet...

▲ Expect a lot more detail...

▲ And loads more hazards!

▲ This game will be ACE!

▲ Darth insults players with his very rude gestures...

show was a deep space shoot out between X-Wings and TIE fighters/interceptors - all of them weaving in between massive Corellian freighters and Imperial Star Destroyers.

The levels we saw were barely playable. Sega explained that a lot more detail (in terms of polygons), colour and speed was still to be implemented into the conversion. However, even at this stage, it was clear that Star Wars Arcade has a whole lot of potential.

Being the official Sega magazine, expect to see the first - and the best - Megadrive 32X coverage over the next few months.

VIRTUA VIEWS

Before its release, Star Wars Arcade was unofficially dubbed Virtua Star Wars (since it was based on the same arcade board as Virtua Racing). In fact, although the games are totally different, they do share a few similarities. Just like VR, it's possible to change your perspective in this conversion. Using the MODE button on your six-button pad, it's possible to switch between an in-cockpit view and an external view of your X-Wing.

COIN-OP COMPARISON

It's a bit unfair to compare Star Wars in its 32X form to the arcade game at this point since so much remains to be done. Still, in basic terms, the 32X conversion is spot-on and with the promised improvements in terms of speed and detail, we should be seeing something extremely similar.

The programming team have plans to incorporate everything from the coin-op - including the two-player mode, where one player flies the X-Wing while the other takes on the role of gunner, aiming and blasting.

32X DEMOS! HOT NEWS!

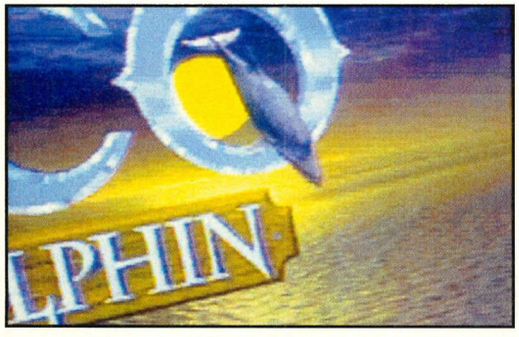
This section brings together other information and demos we've seen on the Megadrive 32X, clarified with exclusive information direct from Sega.

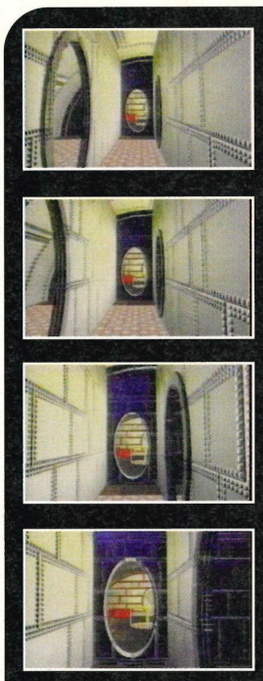
CD TECHNOLOGY WITH 32X

If you've been looking lustfully at the latest wonders of PC CD-ROM, wondering if anything as good is likely to appear on Mega-CD, you can rest easy. We've seen a couple of full-motion video demos running on the 32X... and here they are, for your delectation.

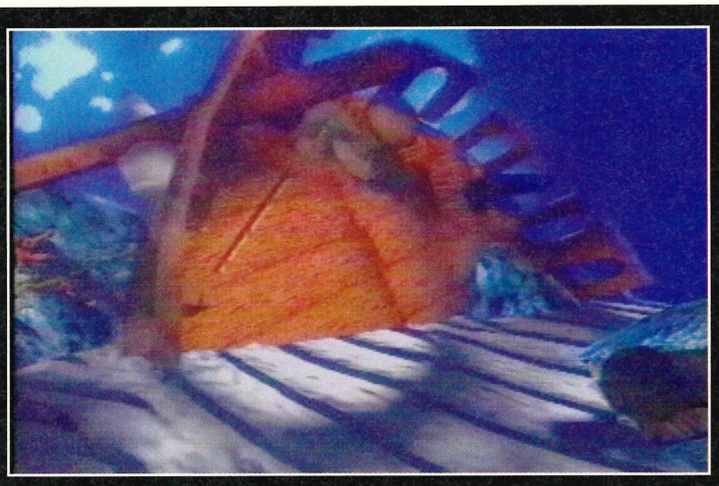
THE ECCO DEMO

Based around the preliminary Mega-CD intro, this demo runs for a few seconds and is actually on cart. Whether it will ever see the light of day outside Sega HQ (apart from on these pages, of course) is unknown. Basically, the programmers wanted to see how CinePak full-motion video appears using 32X. The quality of the video is frankly superb, almost as good in terms of quality as the MPEG digital video CD movies you can buy for the Philips CDi system. It compares extremely favourably with the Star Wars and Jaws demos running on the Jaguar CD system at the CES Show.
Full-screen FMV on 32X is no problem at all.





▲ **A fine sequence of 32X full-motion video. Looks smart.**

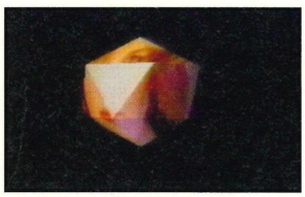


Fahrenheit is the first CD title being released for 32X. However, the first screenshots and video footage released are of a title still deep in development: Shadow of Atlantis.
As you can see from the pictures and video sequences, the game is looking mighty fine with some totally incredible graphics.
According to Jesse Taylor at Sega of America, just one of the 32X's SH2 RISC chips can display full-screen, near VHS quality full-motion video running at 60 frames a second (that's smoother than cinema images!). This leaves the second SH2 chip free to do whatever it wants whilst the video is running.

SHADOW of atlantis

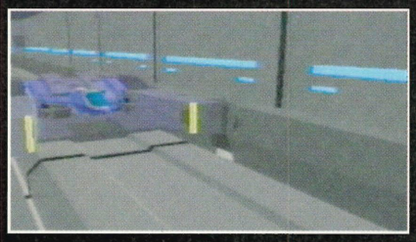
TEXTURE MAPPED MODEL DEMO

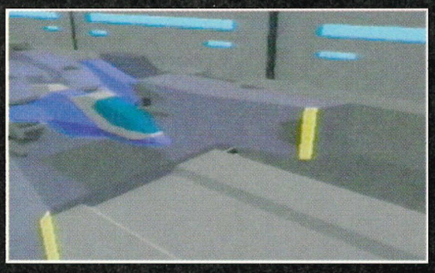
This spinning shape features hundreds of polygons with a fashion model's face texture mapped onto its sides. The shape then explodes towards the "camera" and you can see pieces of the model's face flying out towards you! A fine demonstration of the 32X's power. Check it out.

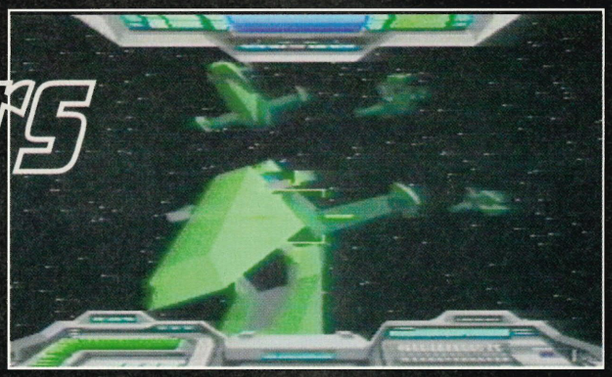


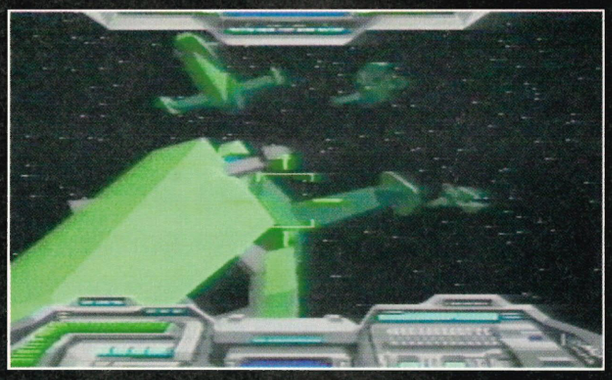
BULLETfighters

All that's been released on this new Megadrive 32X title is a few seconds of video footage. It's not scheduled to appear for quite a while yet, and since it does at least bear some superficial resemblance to Star Wars: The Arcade Game, that's probably not a bad idea. Bullet Fighters, by the way, is only the game's preliminary title.



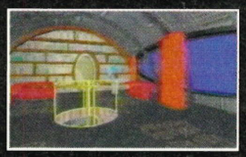




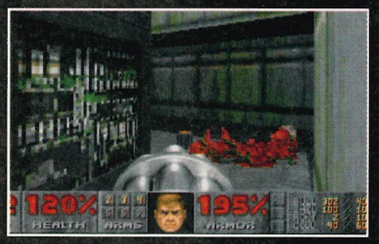


▲ Intriguing green-based alien blasting tomfoolery.

▲ Polygon Power! Now does this looking pretty darned ace or what?



DOOM



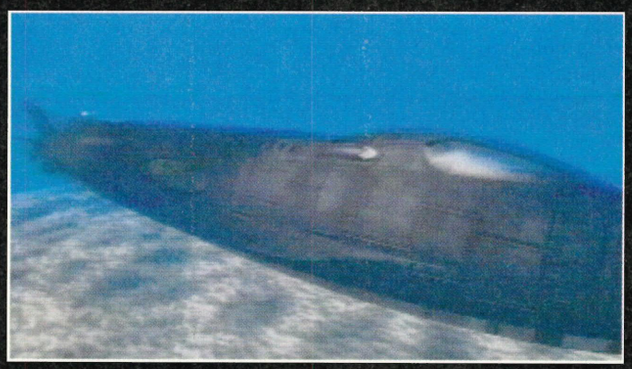
Hardly any information has been officially released as of yet. In pursuit of details we spoke to Jay Wilbur, who heads up Id Software - creators of Doom.

He says that, apart from some levels being absent, 32X Doom is going to be "exactly the same as the PC version". Qualifying this, he told us that he was extremely impressed by the 32X hardware's capabilities. However, Id themselves are a very small outfit and as such they haven't time to produce the conversion themselves. The original Doom code has been licensed to Sega of America, who are carrying out the Doom conversion.

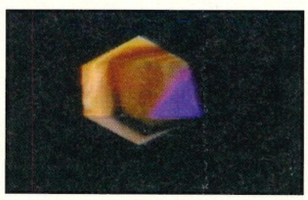
Jay also reiterated his much-used Doom quote: "You haven't played Doom until you've played network [multiplayer] Doom." Apparently, 32X will cater for two players - using AT&T's Edge 16 modem (no European launch is planned yet, but hey - we can hope can't we?).

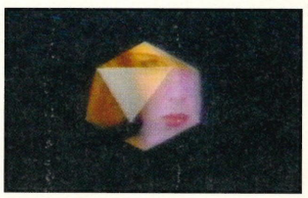
We can't stress enough how excited we are about Doom. It is one of the greatest PC games ever, and it looks like being just as visually impressive and playable as the PC version. Excellent stuff.

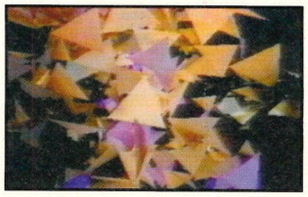
▲ One of the best games of all time! (PC shots).

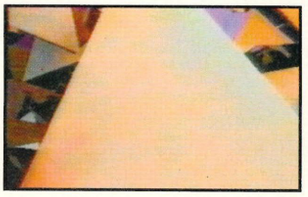


▲ The 32X struts its FMV-related stuff. Impressive eh?

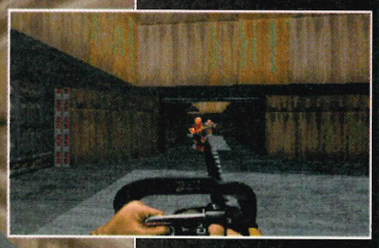








▲ Rich's favourite game for a long time (PC shot).



▲ Rich searches EMAP Towers for late staff writers...

POP! POP! AND WATCH THEM AL DRO

When Doom – a revolutionary 3D shoot 'em up – came out on the PC last year, Megadrive owners pleaded for a version of their own. Well, to a certain extent their prayers have been answered with a forthcoming Megadrive-32X version in the works, but where does that leave exasperated non-superpowered Megadrive owners? With Zero Tolerance, that's where. It's enough to drive you mad as psychiatric escapee TOM GUISE found out.

If there's one thing you always expect from your video games, it's a plot. After all, they're what we unflinching games commandoes rely on to start our trusty showcases. You know the sort of thing – the sinister Mollusc Men of Zendor have invaded Earth and only a lone starfighter can take on their deadly legions of insectoid scum. Or the evil Dr Zozobar has kidnapped all the woodland creatures and Maxwell Mole has to battle his way through eight jungle zones to rescue them. Yep, without a plot to justify the crazy things in video games, we'd all go completely bonkers. Well now, here comes Zero Tolerance, a game packed with mindless killing and no plot to explain it. It's just kill, kill, KILL! No mother, I won't do it. Get out of my head, damn you!

ZERO PLOT

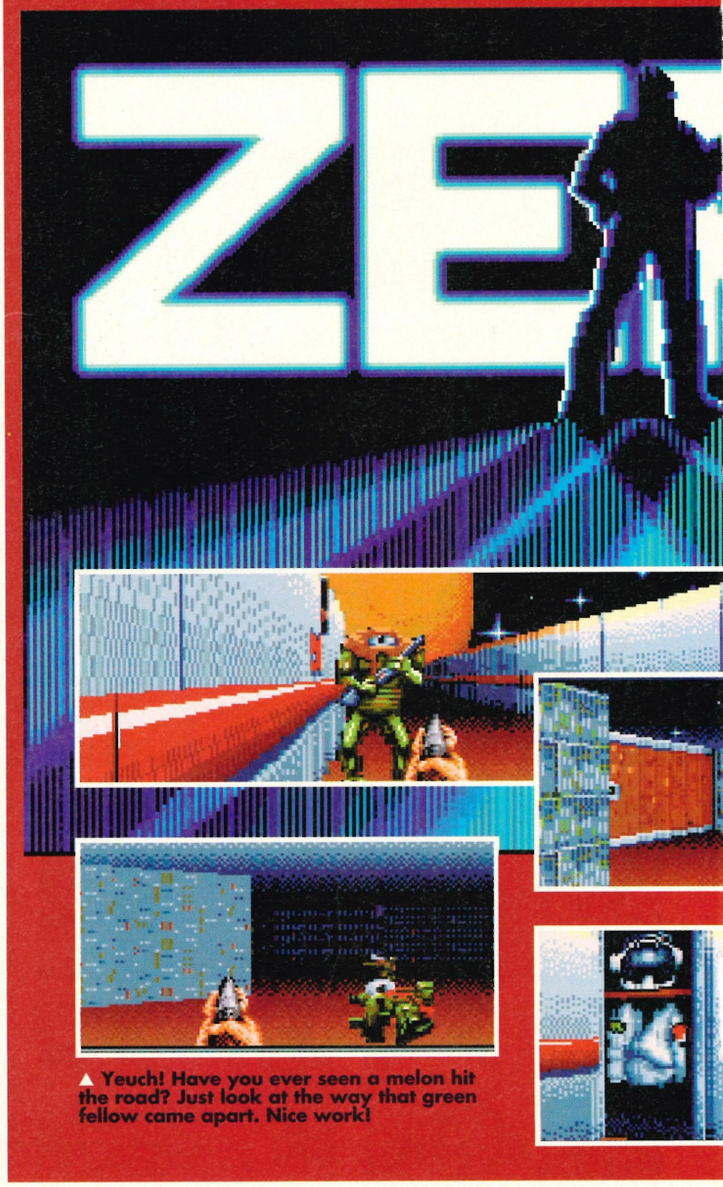
Okay, I'm lying.There is a vague plot. You're a special forces commando, and terrorists (or they could be aliens) have invaded your outpost, so you've got to kill them all. It's a slim explanation, but it'll do. Besides, who needs a decent excuse to go out and kill loads of people? Yeh, scum-sucking dirtballs probably deserved it anyway. Of course, we don't condone the mindless murder and maiming of others, but then this is just a game so it's alright, isn't it?

So, there you have it. Wandering around the corridors of the installation, the aim is simply to shoot anyone you come across. Oh, and find the lift to the next level, but only so you can shoot more people.

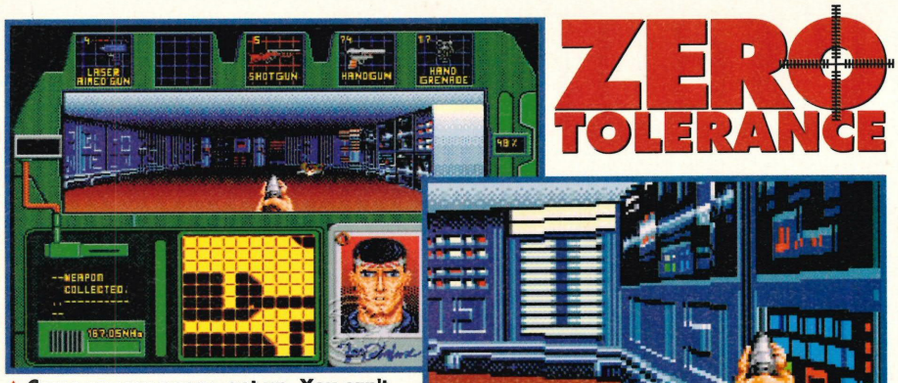
IN YER FACE!

Of course, the idea of a game where you wander around a maze of corridors, making munce of everyone you meet is hardly new. Rambo 3, Crackdown and more recently, Chaos Engine, are just a few such games, giving you a plan or isometric view of the action.

Which is fine, but wouldn't it be better if you could really see the blood and gore close-up? Actually witness an enemy's chest being ripped open by the searing blast of your sawn-off shotgun? Well, that's where Zero Tolerance satisfies, because all the action in the is game is viewed in first-person 3D to give you that hands-on feeling of metting out



▲ Yeuch! Have you ever seen a melon hit the road? Just look at the way that green fellow came apart. Nice work!



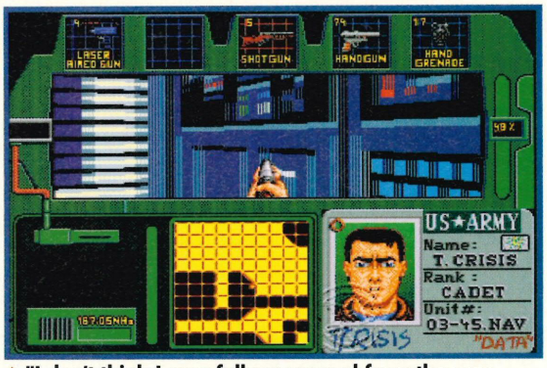
▲ Come on you pussy, get up. You can't be done yet, I haven't even blown your stupid grinning head off.

ZERO TOLERANCE

violent justice.The atmosphere – as you creep around the dimly-lit hallways of the complex, peeping around corners only to see a host of villains emerging from darkness – is quite nail-biting, especially when your life-energy is low and you're desperately searching for a first-aid kit.

IT'S IN THE BRAIN!

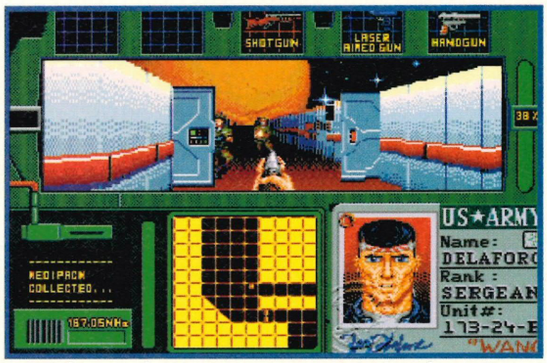
Now, even the most zealous psychopath will tell you that spending your whole day slaughtering people can get a bit formulaic. It's just blam, blam, blam then you start taking the whole thing for granted. Fortunately, there's more to Zero Tolerance than just mindless murder, although not much more. As you wander around each level, you'll have to keep an eye out for extra power-ups. Collecting new and more powerful weaponry isn't vital, but it helps your body count no end. What's even more important though, is finding certain appliances such as bio-scanners, bullet-proof vests and infra-red goggles. Take the fire extinguisher. Without this, it's impossible to get past burning corridors. Effectively, this adds a small puzzle element to the proceedings, making it more of a thinking murderer's game as opposed to a mindless killing spree. Honest.



▲ "I don't think I ever fully recovered from the war. Sometimes I can still hear the helicopters overhead! Oh God, here they come again! You won't take me alive!"

SPAWN OF DOOM!

There's no doubt that Zero Tolerance owes a lot of inspiration to Doom, the gritty godfather of gore games. Exploring caverns, collecting a variety of increasingly powerful weapons, searching for medi-paks and lifts to different levels – to all intents and purposes it could be Doom. Even the walls are texture-mapped, thanks to a custom DSP (digital signal processor) chip. Not to be mistaken for the SVP chip used in Virtua Racing, this chip nonetheless performs a similar function, speeding up the Megadrive's processing power and allowing it to overlay the texture onto the 3D wall surfaces whilst still running the game at an impressively high-speed.

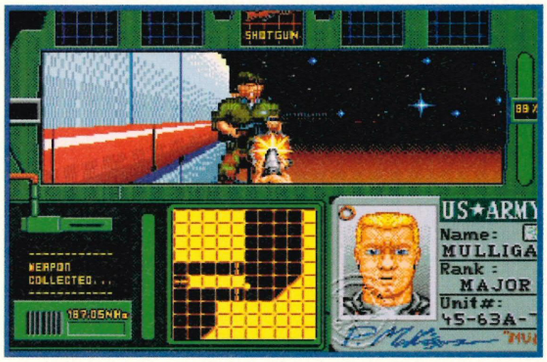


▲ "Hi there Ted. Hey great party you've got here. Ha ha! Hang on, what are you doing with that gun? Ow, ow, ow. Jeez, oh grief, I can see my insides! Gurgle!"

THE SENTENCE ISSS...DEATH!

So there you have it. A game with guns, gore, ground-breaking graphics and atmosphere so thick you could cut through it with a chainsaw. All witnessed through the fish-eye lens vision of a crazed murderer. What's more, there are loads of levels, each increasing in size and complexity, and most importantly, packed with more and more fresh victims to perforate as you please, guaranteeing plenty of challenge for even the hardiest of street surgeons.

Surely a psychopath's dream? Well, as any bearded axe-man will tell you, it's only worth doing the job if it's fun. So, turn to page 82 and find out how Zero Tolerance fares as we unravel its entrails on the operating table. The doctor will see you now!



▲ " Don't think you can fool me with all that 'great party Ted' trollops. I know who you are and I know your game, you filthy scumbags. Now eat this, and this, and this! Ha ha ha!

FETCH MY GUN, MARTHA!

It doesn't matter what profession you're in, if you haven't got the right tools you can't hope to do the job properly and that goes for psychopathic fraternity too. Fortunately, our fatal surgeon can find various items to make the craft of death all the easier to perform. Here's a small selection from Doctor Death's bag.

HANDS

Being a commando, it comes as no surprise to find these on the end of your armies. Although relatively useless, they can come in quite handy (ho ho) for punching villains out the way during a swift escape.

PISTOL

Your basic weapon, the hand-gun is used most often, as its ammunition is so readily available. A reasonably effective killing tool, but lacking in range.

LASER-AIMED GUN

This gun has pretty much the same power as the normal hand-gun, but with the added novelty of drawing a little red bead on your victim's forehead. This actually proves quite ineffectual, but is a must for wannabee terminators.

SHOTGUN

Definitely the choice of the more discerning murderer, if only because of the excellent blunderbuss crack it lets out when it buries a spray of lead in your quarry's face/ chest/ butt (delete as applicable).

ROCKET LAUNCHER

Not a weapon for those who delight in the finer points of death, but for the mass-murderer this is a must. Crowd control becomes a stroll-in-the-park as the high-explosive missiles rip baddies limb-from-limb in the most spectacular fashion.

GRENADES

Similar in effect to the rocket launcher, but with the satisfaction of a hand-delivered carnage. Remember to run away after throwing to enjoy full display without subsequent hospital stay.

FLAME THROWER

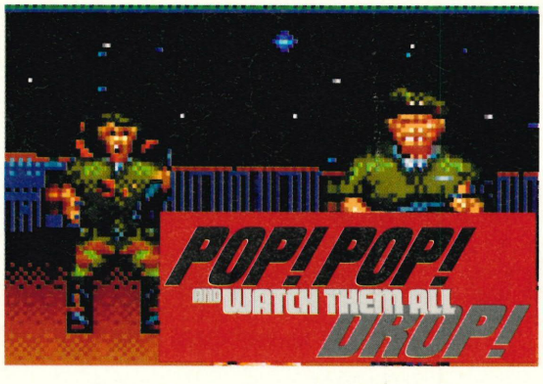
The heady smell of petroleum, the chilling whoosh of flames, the crackling sound of popping flesh. Definitely the connoisseur's killing machine. Excellent for mopping up those hard-to-get-at victims.

BIO-SCANNER

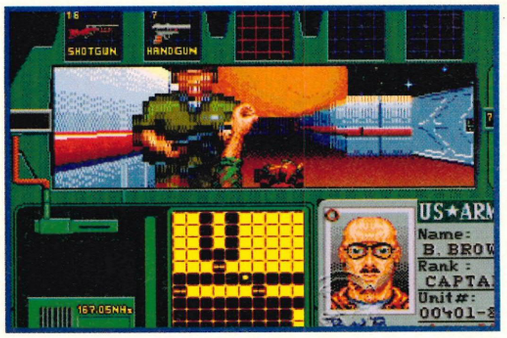
The ultimate accessory for any serious killer. The bio-scanner allows you to see any potential victims in the area, giving you the chance to hunt them down like dogs. Not so you can run away like a lily-livered coward.

BOOBY TRAP

Calling busy psychopaths everywhere! Is the workload getting on top of you? Are victims not getting the attention they deserve? Well, you need the booby-trap. Simply leave it at a location of your choice and your hands are free for those more urgent appointments.

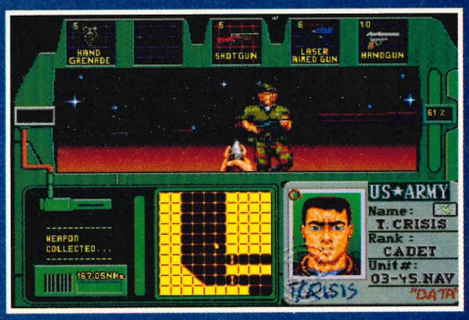


KILLER MOVES



Although the prison psychiatrist may disagree, you are a human being. So it wouldn't be very realistic for you to trundle around the levels like you're on trolley wheels. To this effect, the programmers have included some moves only a bipedal earthling could perform. Not only can you pan your vision around at 360 degrees, but you can also move around whilst facing in one direction – excellent for popping out from behind walls, taking potshots, and ducking back. Also, when you're shot the view drops to the floor, realistically mimicking a fall. On top of this, you can punch and kick, although this looks very strange when enemies move in close, because their scaled-up bodies make your arms and legs look kind of shrunken.

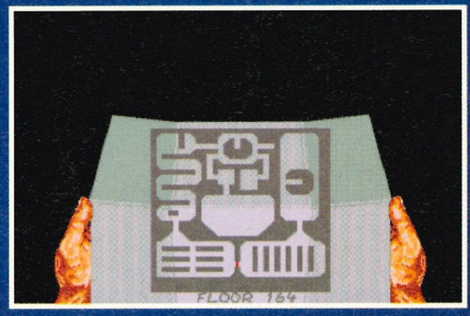
▲ "Shoot first, ask questions later. That's what The Sarge said. I'm just following orders. It's a dirty job, but someone's got to it."



▲ "Hang on though. Every time I shoot them, they're never in any condition to answer questions. What's The Sarge really up to? Hmm."

▲ "What if he's really working for the reds, eh? And he's just tricking me into shooting allies in a vain bid to keep the dark truth from me?"

▲ "Holy smokes, it could be true! But how can I know for sure? I can't take the chance. Must keep ripping into these hapless victims."

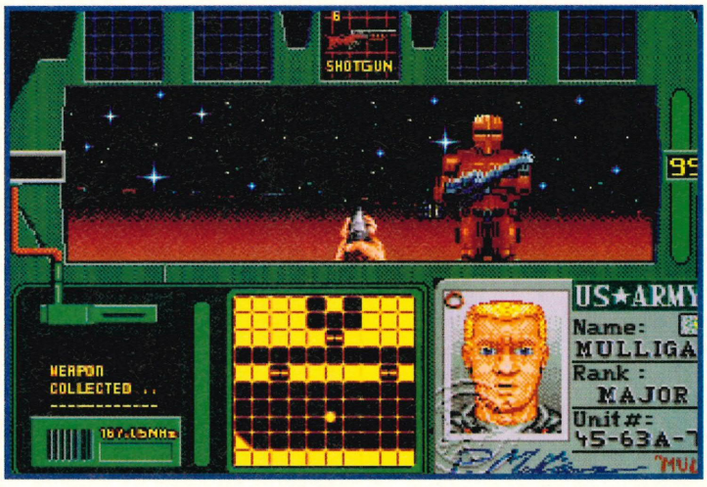


▲ "Now let me check the orders Sarge gave me. Great Shakes, I knew it! Some strange alien design on a metal sheet unlike anything material I've ever seen before!"

▲ "Yes soldier, you have discovered my dark secret! I am indeed not of this Earth. I am Prince Thrangos of Planet Qox. Alas, you know too much. Now I will feast on your brain. Heh heh!"

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S NOT BRICK!

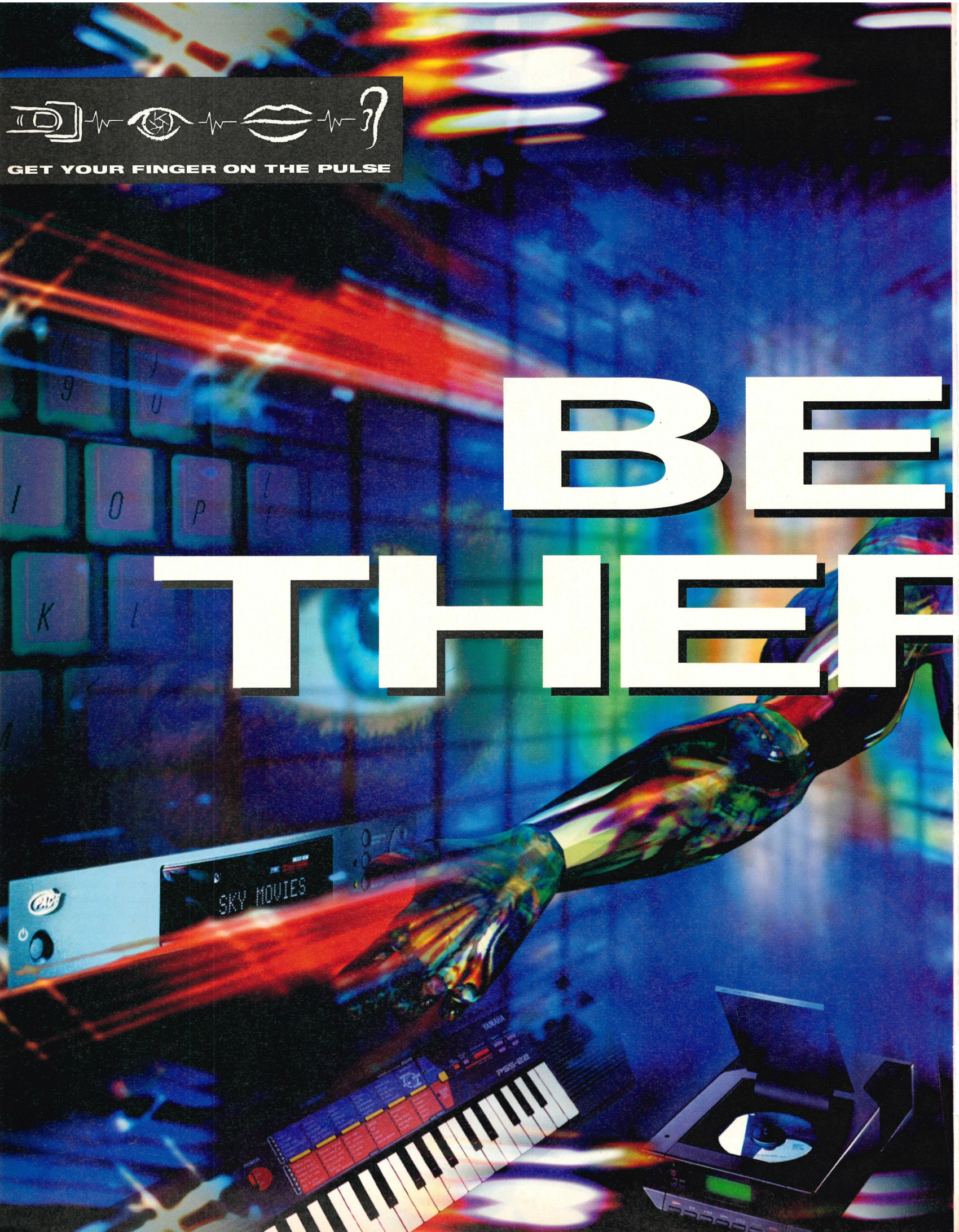
So, Zero Tolerance features texture-mapping eh? What the hell is that, then? Well, this basically means that sprites are overlaid onto 3D polygon surfaces. This means that the bare walls of the corridors have been 'wallpapered' to make them look as if they're made of brick, metal or even covered in computers. For a good example of this, just take a look at the difference between the simplistic graphics of Virtua Racing and the hyper-realistic look of Daytona USA. As you can imagine, this is no mean feat for the Megadrive to perform, but the results are remarkably effective as you can see here.



YOU ONLY DIE TWICE!

One particularly smart feature of Zero Tolerance is its two-player option which allows a Bonnie and Clyde duo to either battle together or against each other. However, what makes this two-player option particularly special is that, rather than using the age-old split-screen technique, it requires two Megadrives to be linked together via the second joypad port, so both players get to view the action from the luxury of their own screen. The downside to this is that each player needs their own copy of the game and some poor sap has to lug his Megadrive and TV to his mate's house to play it.

SEGA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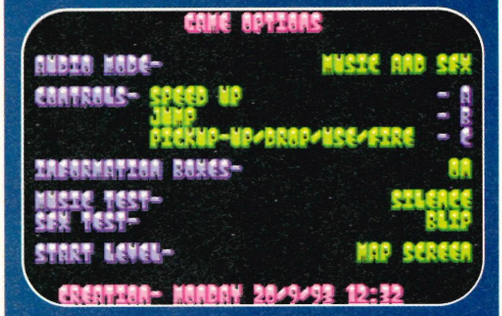
START FILE

TIPS

Welcome, friends. Welcome once again to the mysterious world of my marvellous mind. Yes, once again I, Ederick Lomas, Bareback Horse Rider in the Circus of Infinite Wisdom, command the tips pages of this magazine. Once again, I poke a cocktail stick in the eye of game difficulty levels. Verily, I doth laugheth at the pitiful challenges set by design teams. Armed only with my sacred runic Game Genie device, I cut swathes through their coding heresy. Ahahahaa! Also, I am available for weddings, christenings, Bar Mitzvahs and children's parties, at very reasonable rates. Pulling eggs out of my mouth, balloon animals, those crap bits of string trick, you name it. Call today for the latest rates and an example of my hilarious patter. Here's the address – INCREDIBLE TIPS LIKE SOMETHING FROM OUT OF THE TWILIGHT ZONE, SEGA MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, EC1R 3AU. Until next we meet,
EDERICK LOMAS, MASTER OF ILLUSION

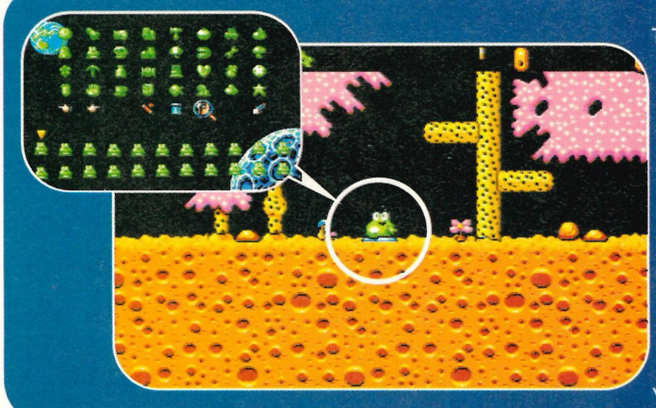
JAMES POND 3: OPERATION STARFISH

Go to the password screen and enter 'Red cheese, yellow mouse, green cat, blue dog' and click on the door icon. You should hear a noise.



Highlight 'options' and hold left and B whilst pressing start to get a level select and other cheats.
Go to the password screen and enter the same password as above but add one or more of the following to the end for extra bonuses.

Red book = Full map available
Red heart = 9 lives
Red fish = Invincibility
Red star = 5 energy units
Red cup = All cheese mines and all stiltonium machines destroyed
Red dog = X-Ray glasses to see all hidden blocks
Red skull = Harder game



This is the ultimate password for 102 levels completed and everything collected with maximum lives. You can exit any level whenever you get bored unlike the cheat above. Use blue skull, red moon, red moon, red U.F.O.., green rocket, red moon, red moon, red moon, blue sweet, red moon, red umbrella, yellow elephant, yellow cake, red umbrella, red umbrella, yellow bomb, yellow frog, red moon'.

This next cheat is from Mark Hancock from Northfleet in Kent. Go to the password screen and fill all of the spaces with green frogs. Click on the door icon and you'll hear a "Ribbit" and when you start you are playing as Finnius Frog.

SA DRIVE

FIFA SOCCER

Enter the password Y3*XF7P3 to be play in the cup final as Qatar who are the worst team. From Daniel Bull, Notts.

MUTANT LEAGUE HOCKEY

Some passwords to be play as "The Mutant Monsters" from Jason Hall, Nuneaton, Warks.
Quarter-final = BTPCZCQ57232W
Semi-final = BKWYPMKTXMK2Y
Final = VTN2VBF84GGQC

THE LOST VIKINGS

Passwords:

The Space Zoo
1- STRT
2- GR8T
3- TLPT
4- GRND
Prehistoria
1- LLM0
2- FL0T
3- TRSS
4- PRHS
5- CVRN
6- BBLS
7- TR33
8- VLCN
Egypt
1- QCKS
2- PHR0
3- C1R0
4- SPKS
5- JMNN
6- SNDS
7- TMPL
8- TTRS

The Factory
1- JLLY
2- PLNG
3- BTRY
4- JNKR
5- RVTS
6- CBLT
7- H0PP
8- SMRT
9- V8TR
Wacky
1- NFL8
2- WKYY
3- CMB0
4- 8BLL
5- TRDR
6- FNTM
7- WRLR
8- PDDY
9- TRPD
Starship
1- TFFF
2- FRGT
3- 4RN4
4- MSTR

Here are the locations of some useful secret rooms hidden in the early levels of the game.
1.2- Walk left into the wall from the first lift.
1.3- Jump left into the wall from the top of the ladder before the first teleport.
1.4- Jump left from the top of the ladder after collecting the key from the laser.
2.1- Jump into the wall on the right of the first key.
2.2- Jump onto the top of the fire gargoyle and walk into the wall.
2.3- Headbutt the first wall on the right.
2.4- Walk left from the first ladder.
2.5- Headbutt the first wall after the snail.
2.8- Free the lady then headbutt the fire gargoyles.

SONIC 3

From Daniel Lemard in Malvern, Worcs.
Do the level select cheat then go to the sound test option. Play sounds 1,3,5 then 7 and you will hear a ring noise. Highlight 'Special Stage 2' and hold A and press start. You will get an extra difficult secret eighth special stage to get an eighth emerald.

STREETS OF RAGE 3

To play as Shiva, beat him at the end of level 1 and as soon as he dies hold button B until the next level starts. You can now select him when you continue.

MEGA DRIVE

GAME GENIE CODES

From Martin Taylor in Strood,Kent.

Desert Strike:
3A9 807 2A2 = Infinite armour
004 CF7 E6E= Infinite hellfires

Star Wars:
00D 92B 3B7 + 3AD 93B 2A2= Infinite energy for all players
3AF 6BA 2A2= Infinite lives for Luke

Mean Bean Machine:
187 C2E B6A= Practice level 25
009 82D 3B7= All beans become odd squares

Mortal Kombat:
DEB 9F6 5D3= Gore mode on
00B 40C 3BE= Infinite time
004 2D6 19E= Infinite credits

Sonic Chaos:
3A9 DCB 2A2= Infinite rings
3A6 24E 2A2= Infinite lives
208 4BB F72= Hold right to run straight to end of act. Turn off for boss acts.

Alien 3:
EDD EDD EDD= Strange looking aliens
CAC CAC CAC= Can't use pulse rifle

Micro Machines:
702 AC4 991= Crazy noises
000 007 000= Very bad opposing drivers

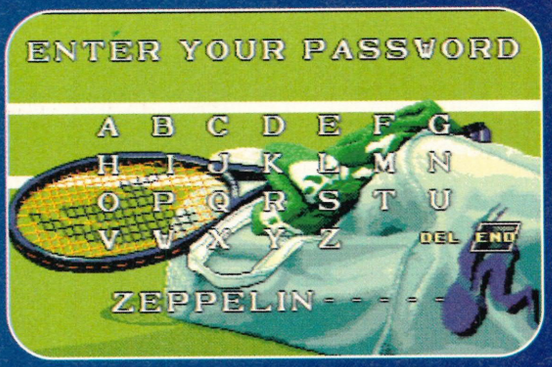
Desert Speedtrap:
C31 A8B E61= Cannot be harmed

Road Rash:
00A C6C E6E=Don't lose speed on grass
213 054 91D= Infinite bike energy
00D B5E E6E= Infinite time

Streets of Rage 2:
3E8 83A 91D+098 84A 193+008 85A E6F= Mega-power attacks

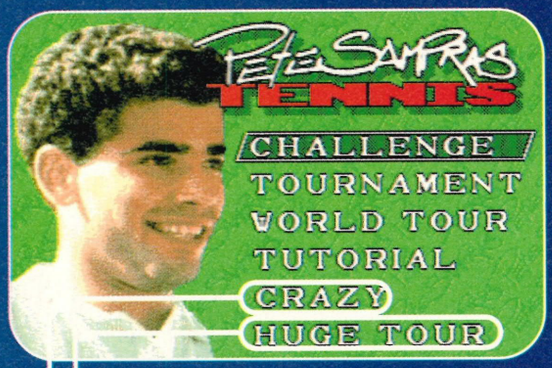
NBA Jam:
07E 214 C46= Super dunk ability
07E 0F4 C46= Always on fire
07D FD4 C46= Shot percentage display

PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS



Here are the World Tour passwords:
1- Stuttgart = START
2- Tokyo = CAR
3- Washington = VEGAN
4- Dusseldorf = STAR
5- Paris = LCD
6- Montreal = WALL
7- Barcelona = SINKORSWIM
8- San Francisco = SHELF
9- Bombay = WINDOW
10- London = POOL
11- Zurich = LUCKY
12- Memphis = HOUSE
13- Milano = CUE
14- Barcelona = DURHAM
15- Hamburg = JUMPING
16- New York = HAPPY
17- Berlin = MEGA
18- Florida = PLAYPETE

Select 'World Tour', select any character and go to the enter password screen. Put in the password 'ZEPPELIN' and press start. You will be back at the title screen with two new options: 'Crazy' and 'Huge Tour'.
Here is a selection of passwords for the Huge Tour



mode, to play as Pete Sampras, always at number one seed with every tournament so far won. Because of the high ranking you can also enter any tournaments you fancy.
They are in chronological order and each one is just after one of the tournaments.
1- TWDBB
2- STBXZX
3- TRXVXSV
4- NLQNRLJN
5- QLQNSLLJN
10- BLQNZLLLLLLJBN
15- GJNLDJJJJJJJJJGGXXL
20- ZTXVNSSSSSSSSSSSQQV
23- HWBXQVVVVVVVVVVVVVX
In case you find 'Crazy' mode confusing, here are the rules for it. At the bottom of the scoreboard is a target score which both players must have reached by the time the white disc has counted down to zero. If both players get a high enough score, the court will change, your target will increase and you will have slightly less time than in the previous round. If one player doesn't get the target score in time, the game stops and whoever has the higher score wins.
Just as a general handy hint, if you ever accidentally hit the ball straight up in the air above you, get right under it and smash it before it hits the ground and the umpire won't notice.
Also, to argue with the umpire at any time, hold down+right and press start.

DUNE 2

Here are the passwords for each of the three houses.

	Atreides	Ordos	Harkonnen
2-	Diplomatic	Domination	Demolition
3-	Spicedance	Spicesabre	Spicesatyr
4-	Eternalsun	Arrakissun	Burningsun
5-	Defthunter	Coldhunter	Darkhunter
6-	Fairmentat	Wilymentat	Evilmentat
7-	Ashlikenny	Slymelanie	Itsjoebwan
8-	Sonicblast	Stealthwar	Devastator
9-	Dunerunner	Powercrush	Deathruler

SPECIAL OFFERS FROM SEGA MAGAZINE

BRITAIN'S ONLY OFFICIAL SEGA MAGAZINE

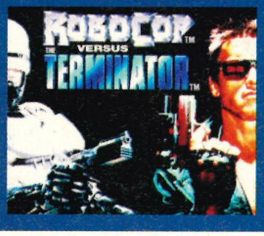
GUNSTAR HEROES

Gunstar Heroes is one of the most incredible games of all-time. Coded by top programmers Treasure, Gunstar Heroes allows one or two-players to partake in what is definitely the greatest scrolling blaster ever to hit the Megadrive.
Packed with superlative graphics, raucous sound and incredible gameplay (along with the greatest bosses ever seen in any videogame), Gunstar Heroes MUST be added to your Megadrive collection.
The game scored a gargantuan 95% in the first issue of SEGA MAGAZINE, and we still reckon that it's a hot contender for the award of Greatest Megadrive Game of All-Time. Buy this game now - at this price it's a bargain.

ALIEN3

Ellen Ripley returns in this top-rated Megadrive blaster. All alone on an inhospitable prison planet, it's up to Ripley to patrol the platform levels dealing death to all and sundry (just as long as they're aliens). Rescue the prisoners to move on, but beware the crushing time limit - as well as those pesky xenomorphs!
Critically acclaimed on its release, scoring over 90% in just about every games mag, Alien3 is an exceptional shoot 'em up.

ROBOCOP VERSUS THE TERMINATOR



Take two of the most violent characters in cinematic history - and put them together in one game. What do you have? One helluva top-notch blaster. Guide Robocop through Terminator territory, doing battle with the forces of Skynet armed with a variety of deadly weaponry.
Praised for its non-stop action and superb playability, Robocop Versus The Terminator scored a worthy 90% in our sister magazine, MEAN MACHINES. And now it's yours at a bargain price!

X-MEN

You just can't stop the X-Men can you? Their comic books have been "doing the business" for decades and recently their TV cartoon series has been wowing the punters.
The Megadrive version of X-Men is fast paced platform game featuring one- or two-player action as you control the likes of Cyclops, Wolverine, Nightcrawler and Gambit (as well as a six-strong back-up X-team) through six levels packed with the cronies of the evil Magneto!
Another title that did exceptionally well when it was first released, X-Men scored 87% in MEAN MACHINES. And now we're knocking it out to our lovely readers at a BARGAIN price!

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TIPS

MEGA-CD

PRINCE OF PERSIA

These are the ultimate passwords to start on any level with an hour to finish the game and 8 hit points.

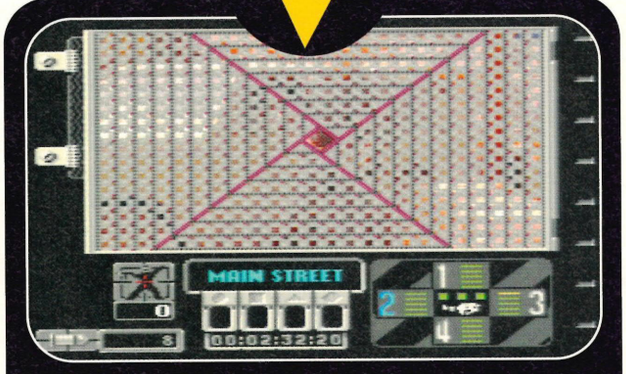
1- BJKDGT
2- BJKEQS
3- BJKFAS
4- BJKGKR
5- BJKHUQ
6- BJKIEQ
7- BJKJOP
8- BJKKYO
9- BJKLIO
10- BJKMSN
11- BJKNCN
12- BJKOMM
13- BJKPWL
14- BJKQGL
15- BJKRQK
16- BJKSAK
17 (End sequence)- BJKTKJ

The following cheats must be initiated when the game is paused. Just tap the buttons in the order shown.

Restore one energy unit- C,A,C,B,B,A,C,C
Open all gates on the level for a few seconds- A,A,B,A,C,A,A,C
Kill all guards on the screen- A,B,A,C,C,A,C,B
Start and earthquake to shake all loose panels down- B,A,A,B,C,B,B,B

McDONALD'S TREASURELAND ADVENTURE

On the title screen press left, right, A,B,C then start for the level select screen. Graeme Sanford from Cliffe Woods said that.

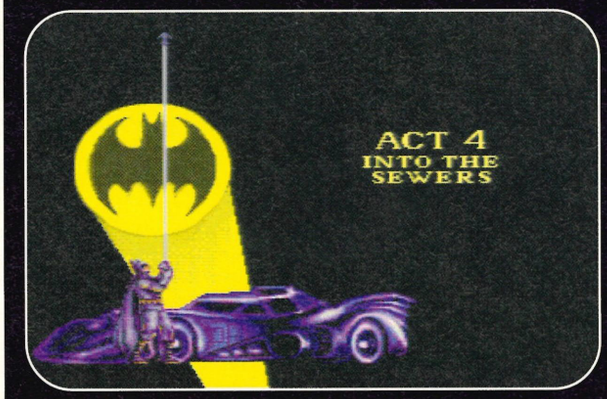


GROUND ZERO TEXAS

Always put on your battle-cam shield in all four locations at once so that when you are fighting two battles at once, one camera isn't getting quite as damaged.
Mark Flynn from Bellingham in London says that the code that you must enter at the end of level 2 is '1000'.

BATMAN RETURNS

Here are two new cheats that I figured out myself. They are very similar to the level skip.
Go to the options screen and change the game mode to Platform Only, then hold left and press B on options 1,7,1,6,7, to hear a chime. Set up the options as you want them, then hold left and B on the option number corresponding to the level you wish to start on. To start on level 3, hold left and B on option 3 until the level begins.
This next cheat must do something but I haven't figured that much out yet. Go to the options screen and set the game mode to Full Game. Now hold left and press B on all the options from 7 up to 1 then back down to 7. You will hear a chime but I'm not sure what it does.



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SENSIBLE SOCCER

Just in case you want to rename all of the players to their proper names but you have never heard of them, here is the key to changing the first vowel of each of their names.

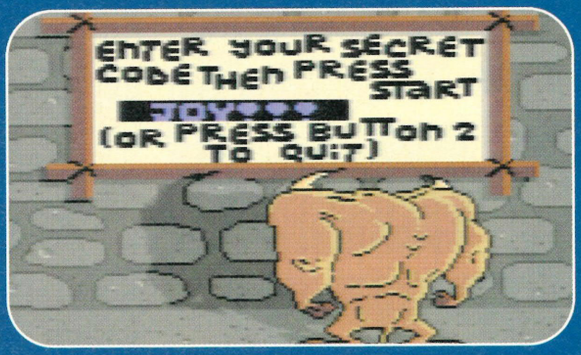
E=A
U=O
I=E
O=I
A=Y
Y=U

TIPS

GAME GEAR

SONIC CHAOS

On the title screen press down, down, up, up, left, right, left, right, 1,2 and start for a sound test option.



REN AND STIMPY: THE QUEST FOR THE SHAVEN YAK

Here are the level passwords.
Stinking Dry Desert- AURGHH
Stinking Wet Bayou- ZONNNK
The Perilous Mt. Hoek- YYYOWW
The Great Frozen North- ZOWCHH

Master System

COOL SPOT

Regular Master System tipper Daniel Thornton from Chatham in Kent says:
On the options screen, highlight the music test and press up, up, up, down, down, down, up, down, up, down and a cheat screen will appear with more options such as a level select.

DRACULA UNLEASHED

Here is a complete list of the correct sequence to follow to get the best ending to the game. It is possible to slightly alter the time and place that you go to but this may change the ending. Where it says "At Hand", you should have the item listed in the "At Hand" box before starting the scene inside the building.

Day 1, December 28th:

Person/Place	Time(in and out)	Items,Stories, etc...
Home:Notting Hill	7:00am	
Annisette:Notting Hill	7:05am-7:35am	Get: old cloth
Holmwood:Westminster	8:20am-8:35am	Get: Harker's address
News stand:Westminster	8:40am-8:55am	Get: "Saucy Jack" address
Harker:Marble Arch	9:15am-9:30am	Get: Harker's office address
Telegraph:King's Cross	9:55am-10:10am	At Hand: Janos calling card
Hades Club:Kensington	10:50am-11:20am	Hear: Devlin's story of club
Saucy Jack:The Strand	12:00pm-1:00pm	Get: Bookstore's address
Bookstore:King's Cross	1:20pm-1:50pm	Get: Asylum's book+address
Asylum:Paddington	2:10pm-2:20pm	Get: Blackjack
Holmwood:Westminster	3:00pm-3:30pm	Get: Package
Harker's office:St. Pauls	4:10pm-4:25pm	At Hand: Package Get: Necklace
Annisette:Notting Hill	5:25pm-7:25pm	At Hand: Necklace Get:Rose
Hades Club:Kensington	7:40pm-8:10pm	Hear: Devlin's second story
Saucy Jack:The Strand	9:00pm-10:00pm	Hear: Wolf story
Asylum:Paddington	10:40pm-11:10pm	Hear: Dr Seward's inmates story. Get: Knife
Home: Notting Hill	11:30pm	Hear: Story. Sleep

Day 2,December 29th

News Stand:Westminster	7:00am-7:15am	Hear: News
Holmwood:Westminster	7:20am-8:05am	Hear: Story of your brother
Annisette:Notting Hill	8:50am-10:20am	Hear: Juliet's dream story
Asylum:Paddington	10:40am-12:10pm	Get: Van Helsing's calling card
Bookstore:King's Cross	12:30pm-12:45pm	Get: University book+address
Telegraph:King's Cross	12:50pm-1:20pm	At Hand: Van Helsing/Janos calling card
Hades Club:Kensington	2:00pm-2:30pm	Get: Gold coin
University:Kensington	2:35pm-3:20pm	At Hand: Cloth and gold coin
Harker:Marble Arch	3:35pm-4:05pm	At Hand: Rose
Harker's Office:St.Pauls	4:40pm-5:25pm	At Hand: Knife. Hear: Story
Saucy Jack:The Strand	5:45pm-6:45pm	Hear: Song
Harker:Marble Arch	7:10pm-8:10pm	At Hand: Knife
Annisette:Notting Hill	8:40pm-9:55pm	Get: Note for Devlin
Hades Club:Kensington	10:10pm-10:25pm	At Hand: Note. Get: Three Keys
Bookstore:King's Cross	11:05pm-11:35pm	At Hand: Keys. Get:Gold book
Home:Notting Hill	12:30am	Read: Letters. Sleep

Day 3,December 30th

Annisette:Notting Hill	7:05am-7:35am	Hear: Juliet Story
News Stand:Westminster	7:55am-8:35am	Hear: News
Hades Club:Kensington	9:05am-9:20am	Hear: Story
Cemetery:Paddington	10:00am-11:00am	Hear: Andrew's Funeral
Asylum:Paddington	11:05am-11:50am	At Hand: Blackjack
Holmwood:Westminster	12:30pm-2:00pm	Hear: Meeting
Telegraph:King's Cross	2:45pm-3:15pm	At Hand: Janos calling card
Saucy Jack:The Strand	3:35pm-4:05pm	At Hand: Gold Book
University:Kensington	4:45pm-5:15pm	At Hand: Gold Book
Harker:Marble Arch	6:05pm-8:05pm	At Hand: Gold Book. After outside scene press button C to go back into game. Get: Wolfbane
Home:Notting Hill	8:50pm-9:05pm	Hear: Janos' Letter
Annisette:Notting Hill	9:10pm	You will oversleep here until the next day.

Day 4,December 31st

Harker:Marble Arch	7:30am-7:45am	Get:Cross
Harker's Office:St.Pauls	8:20am-8:35am	Hear: Story of asylum fire
Asylum:Paddington	9:15am-9:30am	Get: Stake and mallet
University:Kensington	10:00am-10:15am	Get: Two keys. Prof. is dead
Home:Notting Hill	10:45am-11:00am	Get:Dictaphone tube
Cemetery:Paddington	12:00pm-1:00pm	Hear: Juliet's funeral
Annisette:Notting Hill	1:20pm-1:35pm	Hear: Story
Saucy Jack:The Strand	1:55pm-2:40pm	Get: Note from Harker
Holmwood:Westminster	3:00pm-3:15pm	Hear: Story
Harker's Office:St.Pauls	3:55pm-4:10pm	At Hand: Dictaphone tube
Saucy Jack:The Strand	4:30pm-4:40pm	Get: Map with crosses
Hades Club:Kensington	5:00pm-5:35pm	Hear: How to open wall
Cemetery:Paddington	6:05pm-6:50pm	At Hand: Stake and mallet
Annisette:Notting Hill	7:00pm-7:25pm	Hear: Annisette been bitten
Harker:Marble Arch	7:55pm-8:10pm	Hear: Story
Annisette:Notting Hill	9:10pm-9:15pm	Dracula appears
Holmwood:Westminster	9:35pm-10:15pm	Hear: Story
Harker:Marble Arch	10:30pm-10:50pm	Hear: Story
Home:Notting Hill	11:20pm-11:35pm	Hear: Janos note
Annisette:Notting Hill	11:40pm-11:55pm	Annisette's gone! But where?
Hades Club:Kensington	12:10pm	At Hand: Cross

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REVIEW INDEX

Once again, you've reached that point in the mag. You've probably already read the reviews which follow this page, and you're just sitting there on the toilet trying to get the last scrap out of this magazine. Quite likely to wipe your bottom on, knowing what your sort are like. Anyway, this is where all the reviews are. If you're looking for a specific page, look here. If you can't find it, try the Contents. Which also, ironically, tells you the page numbers for most of the reviews. But not all the Out Now and Rental stuff. Still, stop reading this bit and go and do something constructive, like learning a new language or something. Or how to sew.

REVIEWED

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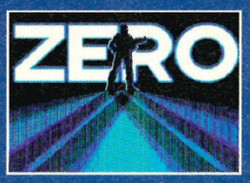
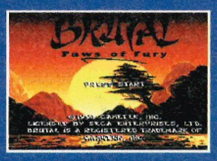
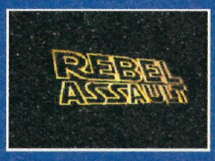
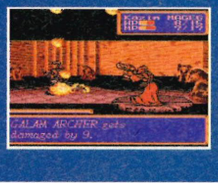
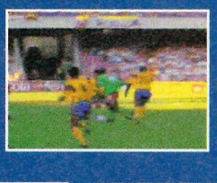
VIRTUA STAR WARS P97

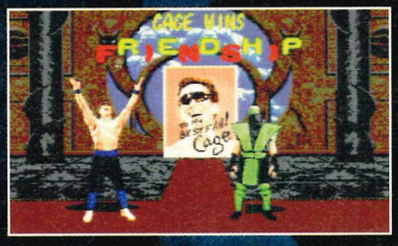






REVIEW



MORTAL KOMBAT II

24 MEG

BY: ACCLAIM

PRICE: £49.99

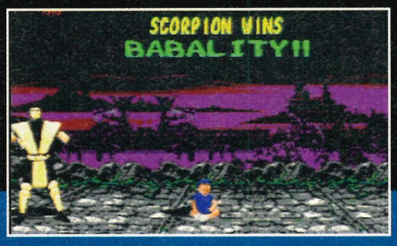
RELEASE: OCTOBER

STYLE: BEAT 'EM UP

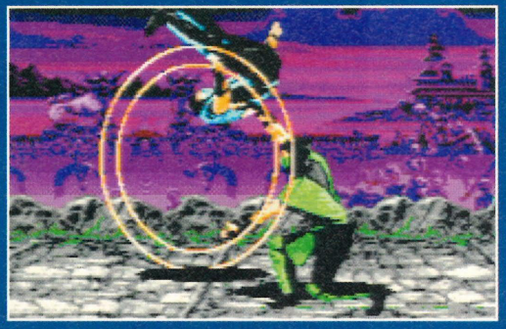
PLAYERS: 2

CONTROL: JOYPAD

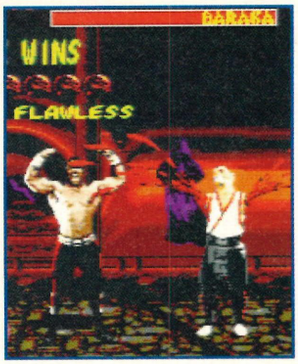
CONTINUES: VARIABLE

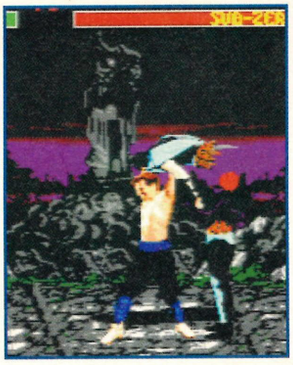


▲ Those kooky fatalities are back in full effect, homies. Yes, there's a never-ending variety of blood-soaked methods of sending your opponent to the hereafter. And, if you're a bit squeamish, you can finish them off in lovely friendly ways too, as seen in our ace Showcase.



▲ Also mentioned in our fantastic in-depth Showcase are a number of these – special moves. Each character has a variety which usually work together nicely for loads of smart combos. The better the move, the trickier it generally is to get the hang of.





▲ Bet you 10p that someone complains about this.

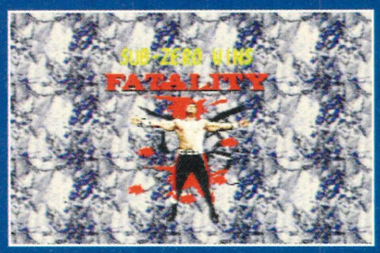
The original Mortal Kombat took both the arcade and home markets by storm, thanks to a combination of special-move laden gameplay and copious quantities of gore, (particularly the latter). The arcade version of Mortal Kombat 2 has been similarly successful, mainly because of the same two factors as its predecessor. However, this time around, the gameplay has taken priority.

The scenario should be familiar to anyone who has ever played a beat 'em up. There's this big martial arts tournament in which your chosen character has their own special reason for wanting to win. Your job is to guide the character through several bouts of face-punching to a glorious victory. As usual there are a number of special moves at your disposal, and this is where Mortal 2 steps into its own. The amount of moves and their effects are quite extraordinary. Each character is master (or mistress) of an impressive repertoire of projectile attacks, teleporting attacks and just plain gory attacks. Once you've got the hang of the requisite joystick-shifting (which is pretty instinctive) you should be able to handle just about any combat situation.

The graphics match this standard of quality. The sprites are large, detailed and very well animated. Colour use is also quite stunning, with more shades packed on screen in one go than you could possibly believe (although, on reflection, maybe not quite that many). The backdrops are also ace, enhancing the atmosphere with their moodiness (such as the swirly vortex level), humour (the trees level) or just their practicality (a couple of levels have specific Death Moves, much like The Pit of old). Fans of sound effects and music shouldn't be disappointed either. All the music, effects and speech of the original arcade version has been crammed in. And this is none of your slap-dash rush job either, the sound has been lovingly re-mastered (as they say in adverts for bad classical music box sets) for the Megadrive, so each breaking bone or "Sub-Zero wins" sounds almost as good as the original.

Mortal Kombat 2 is destined to be one of the biggest games around this year. This is a real improvement over the first title, with more than just a few moves and characters. It's a lot easier to construct a combo now, and whilst each character has completely different abilities, they're all pretty evenly matched. The difficulty level has been perfectly gauged too, with a setting to suit everyone (except Very Hard, which only suits masochists). This is the perfect sequel, improving greatly on the original without losing the atmosphere and alienating fans. It doesn't matter if you've already got Mortal Kombat, make sure you get hold of Mortal Kombat 2.

SEGA



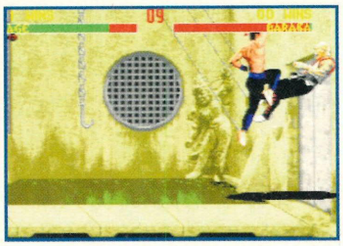
▲ Check out all the blood in this excellent Pit Fatality! Any character can perform this, so long as they're in the right location.

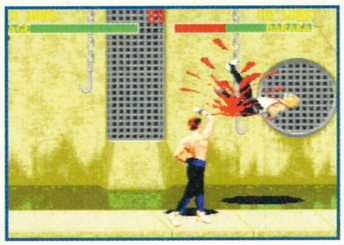
▲ Another background specific Fatality is this, the Acid Pool. The victim is dissolved to a skeleton by the green goo.

COMMENT

RADION AUTOMATIC

Right now it seems like there's a re-run of last year's Mortal Kombat vs Street fighter 2 business. However, whilst Super Streetfighter is really aimed at hardcore fans, Mortal Kombat 2 is a completely new game. The new characters and moves are ace, the graphics are way better than in the first version and the sound is quite chipper. If you've got Mortal 1 and you like it, this is an essential for your collection, as indeed it is for everyone, thinking about it.





▲ Johnny Cage gives Baraka a good seeing to here.

COMMENT

TOM GUISE

Mortal Kombat II is an exceptionally good conversion of the classic coin-op, bringing home just about everything from the original game. I don't think it plays as well as Super Street Fighter II, but it scores just as well because it's not just an update - it's a whole new game that is ten times better than the (albeit lacking) original. Besides, it's still extremely playable - and mastering all the fatalities and such-like adds to the lastability no end. This is an exceptional game - get it as soon as it hits the shelves.

90 **Presentation:**
Options aplenty, a rather natty title screen and loads of high-quality inter-missions.

91 **Graphics:**
Large, detailed sprites, great animation and some of the best backgrounds in any fighting game.

90 **Sound:**
One whole big heap of samples with digitised sound effects and everything.

23 **Originality:**
Well...er, let's be honest, it does fall down a little here, being a sequel to a one-on-one fighting game.

94 **Playability:**
Fast, responsive controls, reasonably instinctive special moves and general all-round smartness.

92 **Challenge:**
A bit of a doddle on the earlier skill settings, but notch it up to Hard and this should keep you going for yonks.

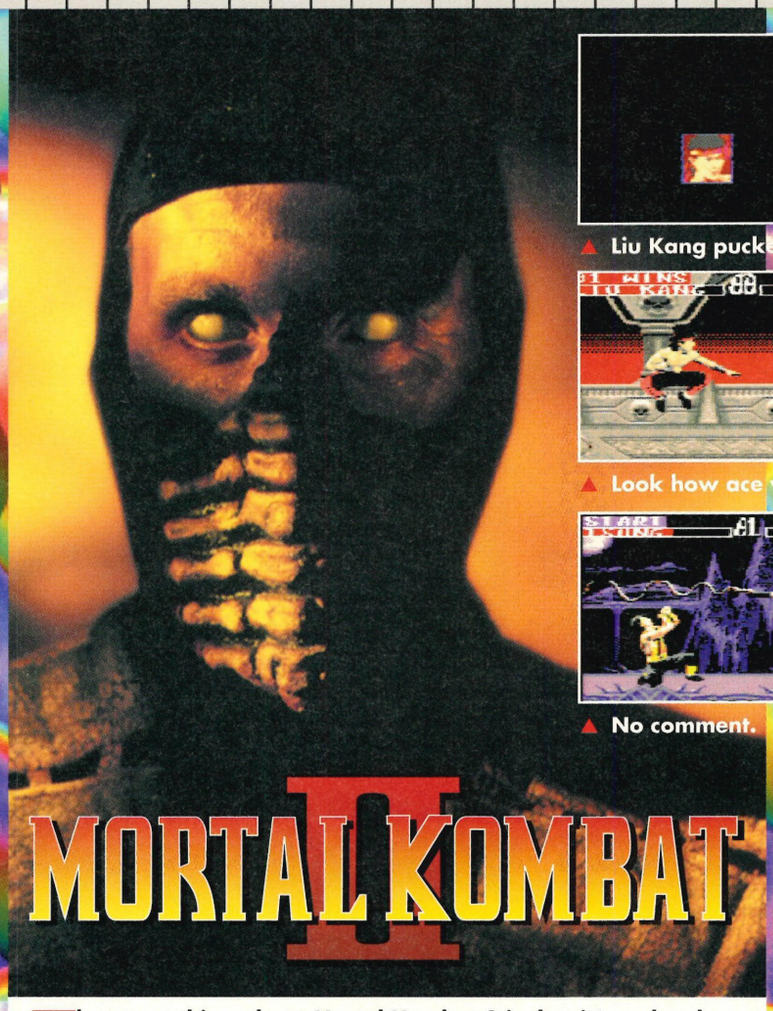
93 **Lastability:**
This is certain to last forever, especially with a second player around.

OVERALL:
Just blinking brilliant! This is well worth the money, even for old Mortal owners.

96

REVIEW

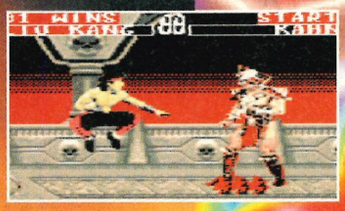
4-MEG
BY: ACCLAIM
PRICE: TBA
RELEASE: TBA
STYLE: DEATH
PLAYERS: 1-2
CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: 6



MORTAL KOMBAT II

▲ Liu Kang puckers up.

▲ Liu Kang dies.



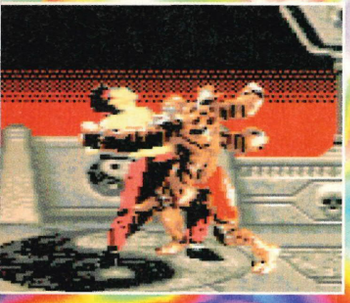
▲ Look how ace we are.

▲ "Schlllp", as Rich says.

▲ No comment.

▲ Specky four-arms power!

Here's one of those Fatalities much talked about the world over. As you can see, the Game Gear may have a limited colour palette, but it's very good when it comes to splashing buckets of gore all over the place.



The worst thing about Mortal Kombat 2 is that it's so hard to impress members of the opposite sex with your death move skills whilst down the local.

But no more! Yes, now Mortal Kombat 2 is available for the Game Gear, allowing you to perform grotesque death moves any time, any place. Now it's possible to pull off a Fatality on the bus, in the chippy or even down the local nightclub (thanks to the GG backlight overcoming the darkness problem here), wherever you spot a potential tonsil hockey partner.

Of course, all that was a joke. If you really think displaying games prowess is a sure route to success with the object of your affections, you're probably very much mistaken. Although I don't suppose we'd know about that sort of thing. Anyway, Mortal Kombat 2 has finally made the transition to the home and portable consoles, and it transpires that the Megadrive version, at the very least, is chuffing brilliant. So how does its portable cousin measure up?

Well, for starters, fans of Baraka, Kung Lao, Johnny Cage or Rayden are in for a disappointment, because they're all out of the game, although all the special, Fatalities, Babalities and Friendships for the remaining characters are in full evidence, along with all the smart backgrounds. The graphics are rather on the smart side all round, actually. The sprites are huge, and there's a surprising amount of detail included. The gameplay is also very hard to fault. The action moves quickly and every character responds well. It's definitely worth putting the difficulty level up though, as you'll clock it on Easy setting in no time.

If you're in the market for a new GG title, you really have to buy this. It doesn't matter if you usually hate beat 'em ups, this will change your mind – It really is that good.

COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

This is an excellent 8-bit adaptation of the Mortal Kombat II coin-op. Of course, being only four megs, there are bound to be compromises in the variety department - and there are a few backdrops and characters missing. Other than that, it's business as usual - all the murder, death and maiming action you would want from a Kombat conversion. The best handheld combat game ever.

COMMENT

RADION AUTOMATIC

I was a little bit wary of Mortal 2 on the Game Gear. I didn't really think the titchy portable screen would be able to do justice to the Kombat sprites, which are a large part of the game's appeal. I needn't have worried though, as Probe have done a spectacular job on this conversion. The graphics are brilliant, featuring huge, detailed sprites and a plethora of ace backgrounds. And, despite the loss of four characters, just about all the playability of the coin-op is in effect. The only real gripe I have is with the sound. It's all there, but the sound quality is a bit muffled. If you're in any way a Mortal fan, or you just fancy an action-packed and playable game, seek this out.

90 Presentation: Lovely atmospheric intro, some options and even the ace character select screen with each Kombatant strutting their stuff.

94 Graphics: Huge sprites, loads of detail and colour. The backgrounds are equally impressive. A great feat for the Game Gear.

76 Sound: All the music and effects of the arcade original are reproduced, but in a fuzzy, hissy, muffled kind of way.

23 Originality: Let's be perfectly honest, this isn't the sort of design which would be voted "Best New Game Design" at the Smash Hits awards.

92 Playability: Fast-moving, loaded with special moves and plenty of bloodshed. How a beat 'em up should be.

90 Challenge: Don't play this on Easy or you'll ruin it. Go for Medium at the very least to get a decent run for your money.

93 Lastability: With the two-player link-up type situation, this is destined to be a Gear staple across the whole wide world. Single players should get plenty of mileage out of it, too.

OVERALL: 92

One of the most impressive Game Gear titles to hit the shelves in a long time. One of those must-buy kind of things.

REVIEW

2-MEG
BY: ACCLAIM
PRICE: TBA
RELEASE: TBA
STYLE: PLATFORM
PLAYERS: 1
CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: 1

▲ A clown with a gun! Pant-wetting excitement? Methinks not.

Spider-Man is becoming something of a console veteran, and along with his pals the X-Men – who have themselves starred in a Megadrive game – you'd think they'd have the right credentials for a top Game Gear title. Unfortunately though, in true Marvel/Sega stylee, this is yet another comic tie-in that just doesn't quite work.

Which is a shame really, as with such a big line up of superheroes, it could have been a great game. However, the programmers have plumped for the easy option and come up with, yes you've guessed it, an "imaginative" platformer. Yippee.

Beginning as Spidey, the aim of the preliminary level is to rescue your old mates the X-Men from the clutches of Arcade. However, once rescued, the game hardly changes at all bar the backgrounds, and instead of pooling all their superhero powers together to really kick some booty, they decide to just send one person to carry on with the task in hand (to teach Arcade a lesson or two). Sorry if I'm missing something here, but I thought the title was Spiderman AND the X-Men, not "Spidey and his mates lounge about while Wolverine does all the dirty work". You can choose which member of the X-Men you'd like to play, but it's not exactly awe inspiring stuff, is it?

It wouldn't be so bad if the game was vaguely interesting, but the level designs are awful and the action is well, plain boring. Half the time you'll aimlessly run around, and the rest of the time you'll struggle with fiddly controls.

With an abundance of good platformers on the Game Gear, there's no excuse for producing something this dull. Don't be fooled by the big names characters. They're only there to con you into believing that there might be something vaguely interesting in the game. There isn't.

COMMENT

SAM HICKMAN

Every time a software house attempts to bring a Marvel character into a game it fails dismally, and unfortunately, this title is no exception. There's hardly any attempt to make use of each character's powers and even when there is, the game is almost the same whichever character is chosen. All the levels are really bland, and half the time there aren't even any enemies to shoot – you just wander around trying to find a way out of each level. It's not exactly a bad game, it's just a shame that such little thought has gone into the design and the graphics. Still, there's no real reason to buy it, especially when there's so many other better titles to choose from.

COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

The Megadrive version was a case of too little, too late, but I'm just not impressed at all with this Game Gear conversion. Yes, it's pretty fast, but playability is a bit on the low side. Controlling Spidey's web-slinging and jumping is a total nightmare, whilst the powers of the X-Men (watered down already on the 16-bit version) seem almost non-existent - it's as if the coders really wanted to outrage fans of the heroes in the game - surely the people they wanted to attract. The music was the best bit of the 16-bit game, but the GG renditions are just not good enough. Sorry, but this just didn't do it for me.

41 Presentation: In between each level, there are a couple of presentation screens, but there are no options, and very little else to spice up the proceedings.

68 Graphics: Looks very dated, with some extremely bare levels which hardly change throughout the game.

45 Sound: Extremely dire. Turn it off if at all possible.

12 Originality: No points here I'm afraid. Taken directly from the platform standards of the last four years.

60 Playability: Strangely compelling, although not because it's good in any way. Will have you tearing your hair out.

70 Challenge: Fiddly controls make this pretty difficult to get through and the game itself is quite hard too.

51 Lastability: you'll throw it down in disgust before you get to finish it.

OVERALL: 51
A poor comic-to-game conversion and a very dull platformer indeed.

REVIEW

CD

BY: SEGA

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: SEPT '94

STYLE: DRIVING

PLAYERS: 1

CONTROL: JOYPAD

CONTINUES: N/A

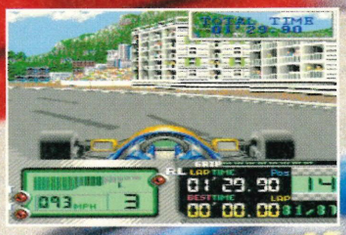
Ever since Batman Returns was released for the Mega-CD, we've been wondering just when somebody would have the good sense to use the CD system's custom sprite scaling chip to produce a top-notch driving simulation. After all, considering the success Sega had with the likes of Outrun, Super Monaco GP and Rad Mobile, you'd think that it would be heaving under quality coin-op conversions. But it never happened.

Until now... sort of. Formula One World Championship: Beyond the Limits is basically a Mega-CD version of Super Monaco, using similar sprite scaling techniques along with playability very similar to the coin-op. However, using the mass storage of CD, Formula One goes beyond being a mere conversion. For a start, being an officially licensed F1 product, the presentation is a lot smarter. You get your obligatory CinePak full-motion video, along with different graphic looks for each of the official F1 teams - right down to digitised mug-shots of the principle members of each team.

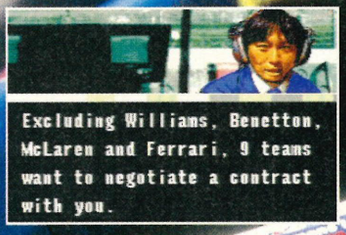
In terms of actual playability, Formula One works out pretty well. It isn't an arcade game in the sense of Virtua Racing, which relies on keeping your foot down until you reach certain corners. Cornering is a lot trickier in this game and all too often you're sent spinning off the track or crash into a wall. Maintaining control of your F1 beast is a lot trickier, which although ultimately rewarding, may put a lot of people off.

SEGA

Ah, for the open road.



▲ Aiee for the approaching scenery.



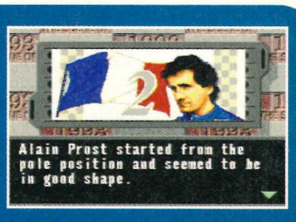
▲ So, apart from th... teams?

▲ You must be a bit rubbish if you need a sign to tell you that.

FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Beyond the Limit

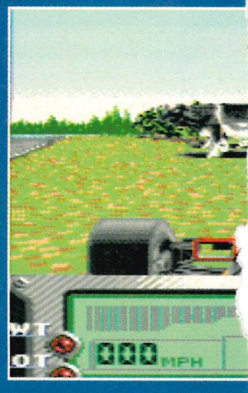
▲ This gives you the chance to tune up your motor. Just about every aspect of the car can be fiddled with, from the engine through to the tires and the transmission.



▲ Since it's based on the official 1993 Formula One tournament, this game features all the correct names and colours for each of the teams.

▲ Pits, pins – it's all danger here.

▲ See what we mean?



▼ The actual in-car driving action is very difficult. Realising that you can't take every corner at top speed takes quite a while. Control of your car is a lot more difficult than in other games of this ilk. However, things are made a tad easier by the fact that just speeding through obstacles does very little damage (if any) to your car!

COMMENT

SAM HICKMAN

Although it's initially impressive, I have to completely disagree with Rich as far as Formula One's gameplay goes. Because the game is so difficult, it's not at all easy to get into, and after a very short time, it becomes too frustrating to play. The controls are really over sensitive, so you can't race around the tracks at high speed, and the scrolling is very jerky indeed. It does have a couple of redeeming features, namely the full-screen full-motion video and the rock soundtrack, but it just isn't enough – I've seen much better racers on the Megadrive.

COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

This is a very difficult game to get the hang of, as the designers have tried to base the driving experience around actual F1 motoring. However, perseverance does reap some rewards - especially when you're offered a particularly lucrative contract! However, it's not the greatest racer in the world - the view ahead of your car is quite restricted which makes cornering difficult (especially with no on-screen map) and the buzz you get from an incredible road racer like Virtua or Batman Returns isn't there. Formula One anoraks will love this game to bits, no doubt. It's a decent game with stunning presentation, but the initial difficulty may put a lot of people off - and that's a shame.

REVIEW

Presentation: 92

Superb. Loads of full-screen CinePaked full-motion video, loads of stats and plenty to look at.

Graphics: 80

Very nice to look at, although the racing action is jerkier than Batman Returns. The obstacles are very blocky close-up.

Sound: 74

Some nice Rrok tunes lifted from CD along with some fair sound effects. However, other cars sound like vacuum cleaners!

Originality: 64

Very similar to Super Monaco GP in terms of gameplay, with Constructors' options similar to Senna's Super Monaco II.

Playability: 76

Very, very difficult to get the hang of, but if you persevere, there's a lot of enjoyment to be had from this one.

Challenge: 90

It's a tough cookie, even with a slow car. Actually getting a contract and winning with Williams will take a long time to achieve.

Lastability: 80

No two-player option, but loads of tracks and constructors in the game which helps the lastability no end.

OVERALL: 78

Batman Returns is a lot better to play, but Formula One World Championship has more depth and lastability. The choice is yours.

REVIEW

8MEG

BY: EA

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: TBA

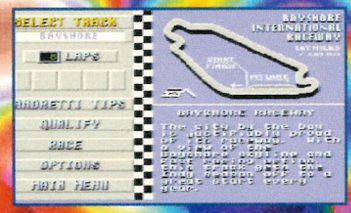
STYLE: RACING

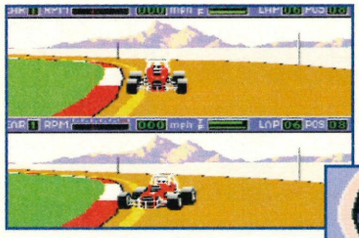
PLAYERS: 1-2

CONTROL: BARELY

CONTINUES: N/A

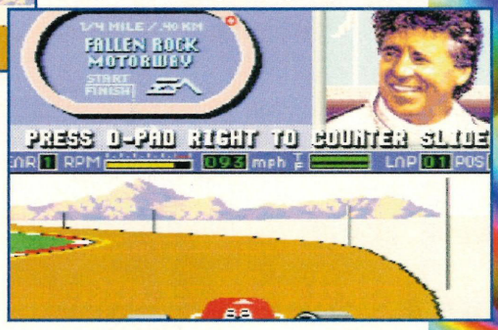
MARIO ANDRETTI RACING™

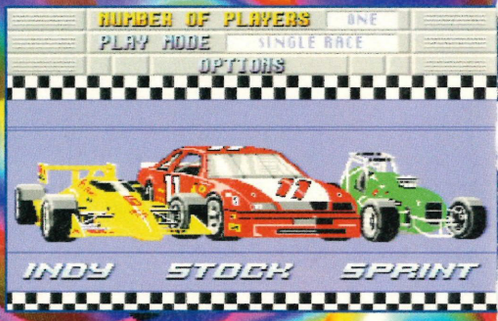




▼ If you're fed up of your sprint car constantly spinning around, try the Mario Tips option, where the old geezer teaches you how to corner properly. After this it's all very easy, but it still doesn't feel like you're really doing anything.

▲ Here's a stock car going into a spin. This happens a lot. On every corner in fact. It's because the cars don't steer properly. Obviously, all this spinning around and losing races becomes very frustrating after about...oooh, a lap or so.





COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

The Megadrive has some of the greatest road racers ever hallowing its extensive library. Super Monaco GP, F1 and Road Rash II have just about sewn up the racing market. Andretti starts well with a host of excellent options to tweak, but the basic gameplay just isn't up to scratch. The first EA Sports title released that DOESN'T warrant purchase.

COMMENT

RADION AUTOMATIC

The premise of Mario Andretti Racing is really rather good, and the design of the game is certainly impressive. However, once you've got past all the impressive intro and option screens, tweaked the paint colour of your car and so on and so on, the game behind it is a real disappointment. There's no feeling of inertia or even real contact with the ground. Needless to say, this renders Mario Andretti Racing completely redundant in a market already featuring some top quality racers.

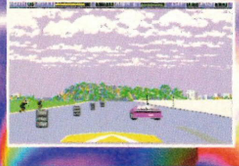
At last! Mario hits the Megadrive! Ha ha, that was a good one, wasn't it? Hilarious though it may have been, but it's still nowhere near as laughable as Electronic Arts' latest release, Mario Andretti Racing.

Quite ominously, Mario Andretti Racing is endorsed by a racing "star" who hasn't won anything good in years. You can say what you like about his diversification into other areas of motor racing, but it's a rather too suspiciously accurate analogy for us to ignore.

Actually, let's not be harsh – MA Racing is an excellent idea. You get the chance to race Indy cars, stock cars and little precarious sprint cars too. There are loads of different tracks programmed for each of the car types, and each motor does handle differently. There are even two different views to choose from, and if you like, you can have them both on screen at the same time in a split-screen fashion.

The real trouble lies with the handling of the cars. It's absolutely terrible. They don't handle like real cars, and they don't even handle like realistic games which don't handle like real cars. They handle like old Atari Pole Position cars on unreliable shopping trolley wheels. Take the sprint cars – please! Ho ho. Anyway, the sprint cars are very light and they run on dirt tracks, so obviously they slide around a lot, and require very careful handling on corners. However, it seems as if they've been programmed in by someone who's seen sprint cars being driven, but has never actually been in one or talked to a driver about what they're like.

There are loads and loads of ace racing games out on the market right now, if you're looking for a more simulation one than the mighty Virtua, try Domark's F1, but don't be tempted into buying this. Sadly not up to EA's usual high standard.



91 Presentation: Billions of options, loads of lovely looking cut screens and stats and some more options and pictures of cars. Basically great, here.

80 Graphics: The scrolling is a little jerky and it suffers from "wraparound backdrop" syndrome. The chase cam cars are fairly well drawn though.

48 Sound: Rather on the shameful side, there is very little sound throughout the game. Really needs some in-game music to spice things up.

63 Originality: Putting three different types of cars on a single cart is a good idea, and it's the first time sprint cars have made it to the Megadrive.

37 Playability: This is where it all starts to go wrong. The cars just don't handle in a fashion conducive to good times, to be polite.

49 Challenge: Well, the Indy and stock cars are a piece of cack, er, cake, but the sprint cars are very frustrating.

31 Lastability: Before long, this will be laid to gather dust with other games such as Altered Beast, Dark Castle and Shove Ha'penny.

OVERALL: A real let down after the initial promise of the design. Avoid this one, unless you've got lots of shares in EA.

36

REVIEW

CD

BY: SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: TBA

STYLE: EDUCATION

PLAYERS: N/A

CONTROL: JOYPAD

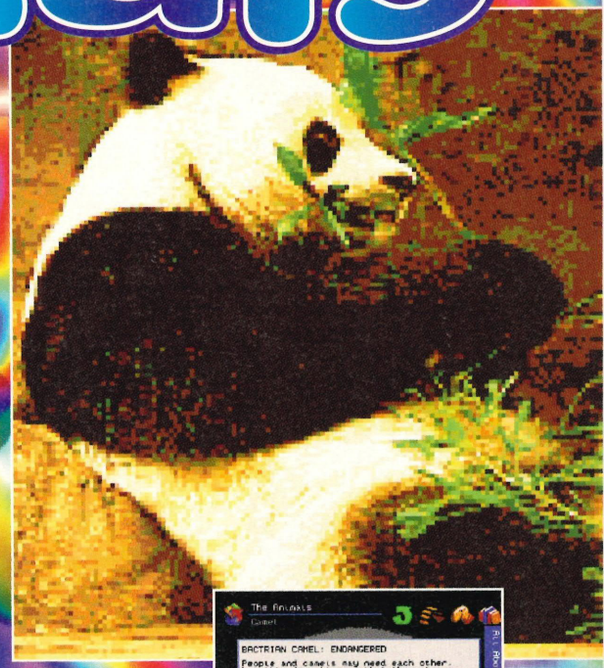
animals

Well, here's something of a novelty. The Animals is perhaps the first Mega-CD title masquerading under the ominous genre of "multimedia". Basically, it's not a game at all (hence our altered ratings), rather a collection of differently presented data concerning animals.

The content, as it stands, concerns an imaginary island which is packed with a veritable menagerie of the eponymous animals. You guide a character called Ping who can basically wander around this island and select different snippets of information to "enjoy". And, um, that's it. It's not a game, it's an educational product.

So what do you get for your money? Basically, you get some extremely dodgy full-motion video in a very small window, along with some static pictures (with sampled atmospheric sounds so it's just like "being there") and boring text. The only possible reason for calling this a multimedia product is that you can access the information in whatever order you want. But when the actual educational content of the title is so low, it doesn't matter what order you view it in. In fact, the it loses any coherence it might have for that very reason. And what's more, the full-motion video concentrates, for the most part, on San Diego Zoo with interviews with zoo keepers going on about how much they like animals. Surely we should be seeing the animals here, not their keepers?

Animals is an intriguing attempt at a multimedia product (and the Mega-CD could use some), but the genre's got to develop a whole lot more before the BBC and David Attenborough feel in the slightest bit threatened. Animals is best described as an inept, tedious, over-priced piece of software.

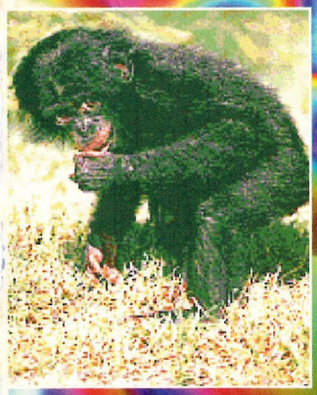


▲ Text files are also selectable, but the depth of information and the subjects covered is sketchy, the presentation dire.

COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

I'm all for original Mega-CD concepts, but The Animals is just about the most pointless CD product I've seen. The full-motion video is tedious and devoid of animal info, the text screens are unlikely to get any one interested and the static pic/atmospheric sound combos are just, well, not very good. Don't bother buying this for your kids if you're considering it at all. Save yourself around some cash by following one of these two courses of action. 1) Stick 'em in front of Life on Earth, The Living Planet or Wildlife on One. 2) Take 'em to a REAL zoo, if you don't mind seeing wild animals imprisoned behind bars. Personally option one sounds good, even if you have to go out and buy the vids (surely it can't be much more than the Animals CD RRP) if you can't wait for the repeats.



▲ Aaah. Cutey-ickle-wickle monkey.

▲ Ooh that's a bit rude, isn't it!

COMMENT

RADION AUTOMATIC

Although Animals is original in that it attempts to give some educational worth to the Mega-CD, it fails to deliver in every way. If this had been thought through properly, it could have been both educational and entertaining, but instead, it's worse than Maths on a hot Friday afternoon. The FMV window used to view the animals is tiny AND fuzzy, so you can't see much, and the information is delivered in such a static, dreary manner that after around five minutes, it loses all appeal. It's nice to think that the Mega-CD could be used for educational purposes, so I suppose this will at least stand as a lesson for other developers for how not to do it in the future.

▲ When you actually want to see some animal-related information, you're treated to these pretty decent static images. If you're lucky, you get some CD sound to go with it.

32 Presentation: All important in what is supposed to be an educational/multimedia title. Cut screens, grainy FMV and text just aren't good enough.

67 Graphics: Nice static pictures, but inappropriate FMV (which doesn't look great) is poor to say the least.

75 Sound: Of course, sound accompanies the FMV, plus there are audio tracks to back a lot of the static screens.

90 Originality: Although quite common on PC, this is a first for Mega-CD (unless you discount the Ecco CD library sequence of course).

15 Informability: Not good. Only the FMV grabs the attention, but there just isn't enough footage of the animals to make it all worthwhile. You don't learn too much from this.

25 Lastability: Once you've seen everything, you won't want to see it again. If you can be bothered to read/watch/listen everything in the first place.

OVERALL: 30

David Attenborough and the BBC haven't got too much to worry about if this is the level of natural history related multimedia. TV or vids are cheaper... and better.

REVIEW

ZERO

8 MEG

BY: ACCOLADE

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: OCTOBER '94

STYLE: SHOOT 'EM UP

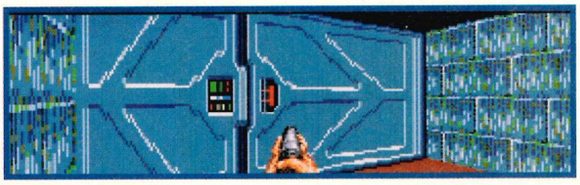
PLAYERS: 2

CONTROL: JOYPAD

CONTINUES: NONE

ZERO TOLERANCE

Heard of Doom? You should have. This gem of a shoot 'em up has done wonders for the PC, and has been hailed by one and all as one of the most exciting games of all time.Until now, it was thought impossible that a game of this genre could be brought to the Megadrive, but thanks to Accolade and a small contribution from a DSP chip, a Doom clone is on its way.



For those of you who have no idea what all this Doom business is about, let me elaborate. Imagine that you are a lone warrior in a labyrinthine building. Now imagine that the building is infested with aliens, all of who are determined to have you for dinner. What are you going to do? Run away and let them take over? Blub all over your one-eyed friends and beg for mercy? Naah, you're going to engage in the biggest bloodbath of all-time of course. Well, what did you expect?

And to be honest, there's not much more to Zero Tolerance than that. Doesn't sound very exciting really does it? But don't be put off, this one of the most action-packed games we've had in for ages. Unlike traditional shooters on the 16-bit, this takes a first-person perspective and right from the beginning the atmosphere is incredibly tense. Starting off with no weapons you'll have to search the many corridors for guns, flame throwers, light phasers, bio scanners and the likes, then use them to blast away encroaching aliens. You can pick up weapons from the enemy (after you've splattered them of course) and you can swap your weapons about according to the type of alien you're facing.

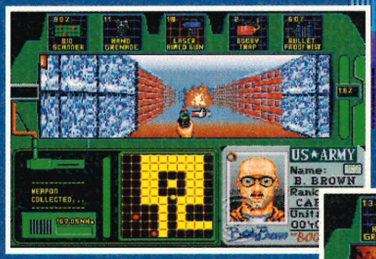
This may sound a little similar to the Chaos Engine in theory, but there's been nothing like this on the Megadrive before. The graphics are nothing short of amazing, and while there's not much variation in the backgrounds, the enemy sprites are huge and some of the weapon effects are stunning. There's over fifty mazes to explore (you're free to roam wherever you want) and once the first few levels are completed, the action becomes really chaotic. And although there's no two-player option built into the cart, if a friend has a copy of the game too (and a spare telly), you can link up your Megadrives and either play co-operatively or competitively. At first this option can be quite confusing – it's quite difficult remembering not to shoot your mate, even if he does look different – but once you've got the hang of it, it really is brilliant fun, not to mention a great novelty for the machine.

So, it all sounds pretty rosy, eh? Well, not quite. The viewing screen is very small indeed, and with it swinging about all the time while you change direction, it can make you feel a bit sick. And even with the inclusion of a DSP chip, it's still slightly sluggish. It's also quite annoying that every time you get shot, you suffer from recoil, which sends you flying back quite a considerable distance, sometimes disorientating you. On top of this, there are no restart points, so once you die, it's back to the beginning – very unfair considering that it's already pretty difficult.

Still, faults aside, this is something of a breath of fresh air. If running around mazes killing everything in sight is your thang, then you'll love this. And even if it isn't, you could well love it anyway. We did.

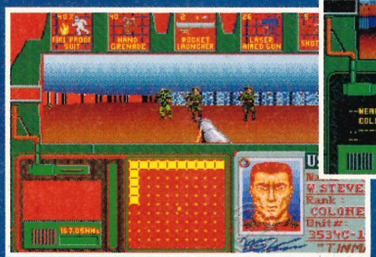
SEGA

▲ Did anyone see the programme 'Passengers' (C4) a few weeks back?

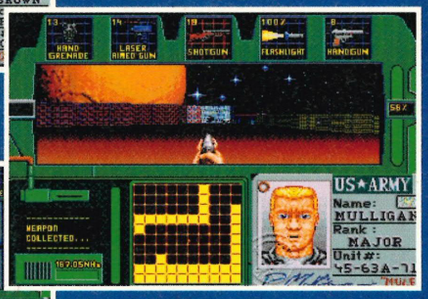


▲ It featured the programmer of this game, one Desmond Crisis.

▲ In fact, he made himself look very stupid indeed.



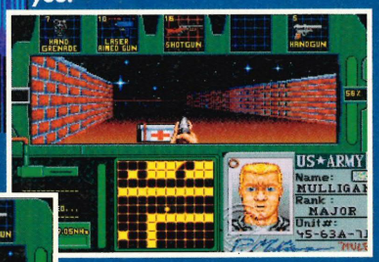
▲ Every time you kill an enemy, you're able to steal their weapons for your own arsenal.



▲ C'mon I'll 'ave the lorra yer!

RO RANCE RO

▲ Eeek! These crabs are the worst beasties in the game, as they crawl along ceilings, then jump down on you.



▲ Medi-pacs give you a welcome boost after a hard day's killing.

▲ As you can see, the viewing window is miniscule.

▲ Eurgh, look at those blood splats. They're even more gory close up.

▲ Die! Die! Die!

COMMENT

SAM HICKMAN

To bring any element of originality to the Megadrive these days has to be an achievement, and Accolade have really managed to come up trumps with this. In fact the only game I can think of in this genre on a console is Wolfenstein on the SNES. However, Zero Tolerance is much better, with loads of levels to explore, and a great tense atmosphere throughout. Admittedly it does suffer from a few faults, such as its high difficulty level, and it doesn't compare at all well with Doom on the PC, but as a pure action game it must be one of the best so far this year.The two-player link up is also an added bonus (albeit an expensive one) and for sheer adrenalin-pumping action, you just can't beat it.

COMMENT

TOM GUISE

I sure do like Doom on the PC and although Zero Tolerance is nowhere near as good, it's the closest thing you can get on the Megadrive. From the screenshots you might think it all looks pretty crud, but it's a different story when you see it moving. Creeping around corridors, side-stepping around corners and blasting alien scum straight in the chest – the game gets full marks for atmosphere and action. To be honest, the two-player mode doesn't really work too well, but then I doubt many people will be able to make use of it anyway. As a one player shoot 'em up though, it's ace. Definitely in a league of its own, until Doom arrives on the Megadrive32X, that is.

80 **Presentation:**
A map can be accessed via the pause screen and there's also a small-on screen map at all times. There's not much else though.

81 **Graphics:**
There's not a lot of variation in the backgrounds, but the sprites, weapons and effects are fairly detailed.

78 **Sound:**
Apart from the weapon effects, a pretty mediocre affair.

80 **Originality:**
There's been nothing like this on the Megadrive before.

91 **Playability:**
The gameplay isn't exactly sophisticated, what with running around mazes shooting things, but it is terribly addictive.

90 **Challenge:**
In both one player mode and two player link-up, it's far too difficult.

84 **Lastability:**
You'll play it until the end, then come back for more.

OVERALL:

An original concept for the Megadrive and one of the best blasters we've seen this year. You'll really get your money's worth here.

83

REVIEW

CD

BY: SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: JULY

STYLE: CHESS

PLAYERS: 1-2

CONTROL: JOYPAD

STAR WARS CHESS

Star Wars is excellent, basically, isn't it? Surely it is one of the most believable fictional universes ever created? A shame therefore, that Star Wars Chess attempts to make itself a part of that universe in the most unbelievable way.

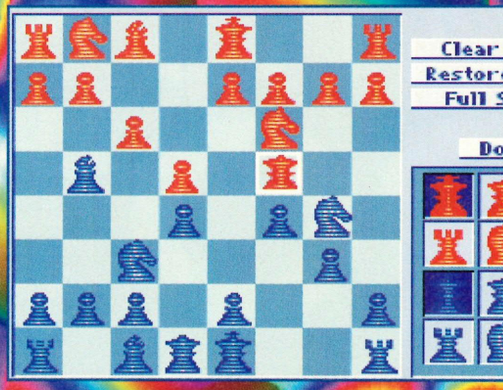
The scrolling-writing-disappearing-into-the-distance appears when you boot up the game, informing us that the Empire and the Rebel Alliance intend to settle their differences by playing CHESS!

Yeah, er, right. What this means is that you play chess, but with Star Wars characters instead of horses or turrets. Take a piece and the scene cuts to a pre-drawn animation which shows the two characters battling it out (pretty pointless really since you know the outcome).

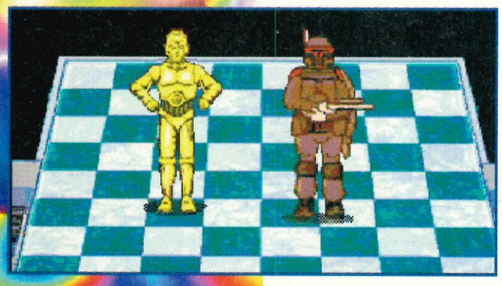
We were really looking forward to this game, thinking (like the fools that we obviously are) that we might get to play that amazing holographic 3D chess game that Chewbacca and R2-D2 play on the Millennium Falcon during the first film. But no, it's ordinary chess, with fancy pieces.

It would be all right if the pieces and the animations looked good, but they don't. FMV techniques are used on crappy comic-style figures for the fight scenes. As it is, the artist has taken liberties with the characters - since when has Darth Vader had red eyes? Chewbacca is perhaps the worst of the lot, looking like some kind of horrifying gun-toting dung creature from oblivion.

Unless you're *really* desperate to play chess against a computer, buy a real board and challenge a mate. It's more satisfying and about 35 quid cheaper. Even Star Wars fans will not like this.



Oddly enough, this basic chess board, stripped of all its Star Wars affectations gives you the best game of chess this game is likely to offer. At least you can see everything that's going on.



▲ The fight scenes. What could have been excellent FMV epics have been reduced to crap cartoon style "hilarious" moments. The one saving grace is the sound. Actual sound effects have been sampled from the film. Once you've seen the animation sequences, you won't want to see them again.

▲ Here's the board. It's not exactly packed with well-drawn sprites, is it? The main problem is the perspective. Basically, it's really difficult to see when a piece is in danger. Which doesn't help much. By the way, Darth Vader is a queen.

COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

The only difference this has to ordinary chess is new pieces along with some of the worst animated sequences on any 16-bit system. Playing on the pseudo-3D Star Wars board is very difficult, since the view you get doesn't enable you to see what's going on - particularly during the opening moves, when there are a lot of pieces on the board. Strip away the crap Star Wars bits and you have Video Chess - a game I bought for the Atari VCS over 12 years ago. What a waste: of the Star Wars license, of my time spent playing it, and of your cash if you decide to buy it.

COMMENT

TOM GUISE

I like chess and I love the Star Wars trilogy, but I can't stand this dreadful hybrid of the two. There's nothing here to appeal to Star Wars fans at all. The action figure-style chess pieces make it impossible to see what's going on and the unfunny battle scenes look like outakes from the Droids cartoon series. And don't expect it to capture any of the atmosphere of the movies. It is, after all, just chess. Remove the annoying Star Wars sections and you're left with a substandard computer chess game. This is not the game you're looking for.

Presentation: 30
Tacky. The music's dire (even though it's on CD), the premise is diabolical and the response time is slow.

Graphics: 28
The full-motion video fight scenes have been drawn by some kind of crap impressionist artist. Surely actors in costumes, digitised, would have been miles better?

Sound: 70
The Star Wars music sounds like Les Dawson has been in charge of the remix duties - but the sound effects, at least, are faithful.

Originality: 23
An original (albeit crap) take on chess... which is thousands of years old.

Playability: 33
The 3D-ish perspective makes reading the board difficult. Moving pieces and watching animations takes agggeeessss.

Challenge: 80
Computers have been playing chess for decades. They couldn't really go wrong here, could they?

Lastability: 54
You'll get bored of the fight scenes in no time and playing real chess is more fun than waiting around for disc accessing.

OVERALL: 44
A top contender for the most pointless, downright irritating Star Wars license ever.

MATCH

he plays computer games...

he reads MATCH...

...and he plays football.

What else is there to do?

MATCH ~ the football mag that matters! Get it every week!

REVIEW

8-MEG

BY: SONY

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: OCTOBER

STYLE: EDUCATIONAL

PLAYERS: 1

CONTROL: JOYPAD

CONTINUES: N/A

fun 'n games™ PAINT GAMES MUSIC STYLE

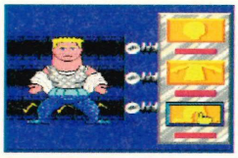
Oh dear. There's not a huge amount of interest in so-called "edutainment" packages, is there? I mean, why do most people buy a Megadrive? I thought it was so they could play GAMES, not find out what the capital of Norway is. Still, it hasn't stopped software houses trying to offer gamesplayers a bit of culture – something Sony are definitely hoping to achieve with their latest release, Fun 'n Games.

Aimed at the younger end of the market – namely pre-school gamesplayers, Fun 'n games attempts to "put the fun back into learning". Unfortunately, it only succeeds in completely taking the fun OUT of learning, resulting in a hugely patronising debacle. The package offers four different educational categories; painting, games, music and style. By far the worst of these four is the style section, where you get to dress various different dollies up in the clothes of your choice, or match jumbled up bodies with their correct parts. Thinking back to when I was young, this sort of "activity" was boring enough when using the traditional paper-and-scissors method. It's even worse on computer.

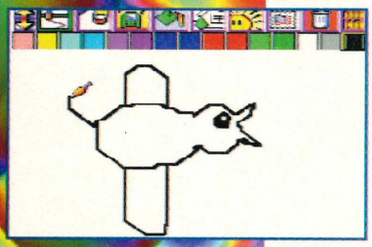
The other three categories are similarly bland: Music has you copying tunes, with a huge library of sounds to choose from. Which may sound like a bit of a laugh, but bear in mind that the Megadrive isn't exactly renowned for its wondrous sound effects (ie. it's bloody awful).The games section consists of a crappy Pac-man rip-off and a dire shoot 'em up, and the painting section is, well, a souped up paint box really.

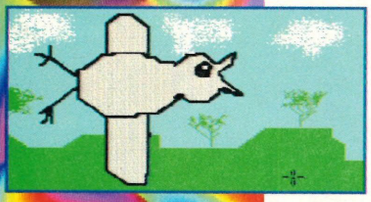
It's always a bit tricky reviewing these types of packages, as not being of pre-school age anymore (although Tom Guise comes quite close sometimes) it's hard to estimate their educational worth. However, I can't see any child enjoying this for a prolonged period, and at the end of the day, surely REAL painting and REAL music lessons are much more fun.

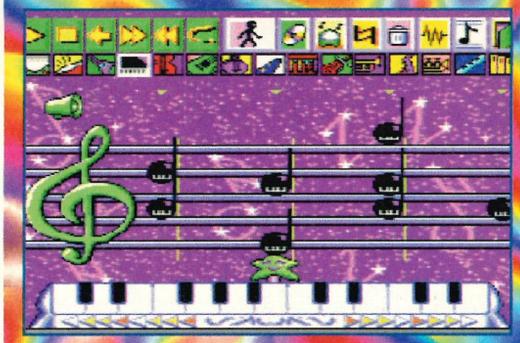
▲ One of the maze-game sections. More fun than a dump.



▲ Dress up the woman. Thrilling fun.







▲ Ooh, so many games to choose from.

▲ Mummy, this plop makes my head hurt.

COMMENT

SAM HICKMAN

I know this is supposed to be for kids and everything, but it really is appalling in every sense. I can't see anyone but pre-school kids finding it interesting, and for them, the packages such as painting may be too difficult to get to grips with. Admittedly, it did have me playing around on it for a fair old while, but that's probably only because the painting package contains a huge variety of psychedelic backgrounds and effects. However, apart from its novelty status, it really has no value – gamesplayers won't be interested at all, and parents buying it for their kids may find it very disappointing indeed.

COMMENT

RADION AUTOMATIC

There's something fundamentally wrong with Fun and Games – its title. No Fun At All and Games would have been a much more accurate description. I can see the idea behind it, and it isn't all bad, but the implementation is somewhat skewed. The interfaces are too complex for a pre-school age child, and the content of the package is way too simple for anyone over that age. If you want Mix 'n' Match games I believe you can still buy cardboard ones for a fraction of this price, along with some paint, pencils, paper etc to re-create the art package. And you could use bottles full of various measures of water or peas to do the music bit. Not big and not clever.

52 Presentation: Although there are out-screens for most of the packages explaining how they work, they're not very useful at all.

50 Graphics: Just because it's for youngsters, doesn't mean the graphics have to be quite so cutesy and rough around the edges.

56 Sound: Ridiculous quacking noises accompany every accomplishment, and the music package sounds completely appalling.

64 Originality: Edutainment packages are very rare on the Megadrive, and this incorporates lots of different educational elements. Which makes it fairly original.

52 Playability: It's not a game as such, so it's difficult to rate playability. However the two games that are included are pretty pathetic.

15 Challenge: Apart from the gaming element, there's no challenge whatsoever.

48 Lastability: After the novelty has worn off, it will lose its appeal very quickly.

OVERALL: May suit very young children, but has little worth as an edutainment package. **49**

REVIEW

4-MEG

BY: US GOLD

PRICE: £29.99

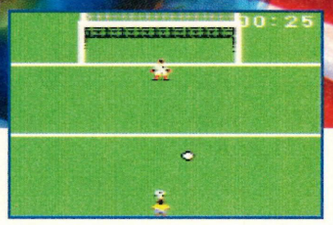
RELEASE: OUT NOW

STYLE: SPORTS

PLAYERS: 1-2

CONTROL: JOYPAD

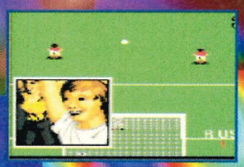
WorldCupUSA94

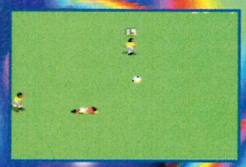


Coming from the people behind Game Gear Kick Off, you'd expect World Cup USA '94 to be something similar and indeed it is. Once again the action is viewed from above as small, featureless sprites race around the pitch at speeds beyond those of mortal man. The free-rolling ball method – popular among footy game snobs – is used, as opposed to the 'sticky ball' method favoured in games like FIFA. And as you'd expect, the ever popular aftertouch is there.

Of course, the main feature of the game is its World Cup USA '94 license and to that effect you can play 24 nations, including, in an endearing show of compassion, England. On top of this, there are a whole host of options allowing you to tweak almost every aspect of the game from the basic formations and strategies to how the players move in certain sections of the pitch, and even how individual players react to the ball within a small movement area.

World Cup '94 is certainly fast and playable and the simple graphics make it very easy to see what's going on. Unfortunately though, it does have its faults, the most noticeable of which is the slow response time of your players. This makes for very frustrating play as the computer players scurry down an open pitch, performing passing feats impossible for the human opponent to match, due to a lack of pitch map. World Cup USA '94 is a fairly good footy game, but at the end of the day there's not enough excitement to keep up that World Cup fever. And in that respect, it's just like the real thing.





COMMENT

TOM GUISE

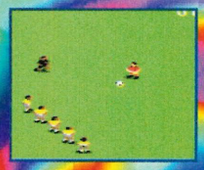
I've never been a fan of these Kick Off style Soccer sims and as such, I find it hard to tell whether this is really superior to the aging Kick Off or the more recent Sensible Soccer. However, I can see that it's a fairly competent game, with fast-moving sprites and decent enough gameplay. There's certainly no doubt that this game's strongest point is its huge wealth of options and if you're a footy fan who likes to tweak every little aspect of your team to perfection, then you'll certainly get something out of World Cup USA '94. As it is though, I found the game somewhat dull and uninspiring and wouldn't recommend it to someone looking for World Class thrills.

COMMENT

RADION AUTOMATIC

World Cup USA was an incredibly average title on the Megadrive, which is a bit of a downer considering how ace it was on – hem hem – a certain other format. The Game Gear version has managed to recreate the 16-BIT version almost perfectly, unfortunately. The real problem lies with the slow response time of the players, which makes the going a bit on the hard-work side. That said, this isn't terrible, it just doesn't match up to its only competitor, the crumbly-but-still-quite-ace Kick Off.

▲ The many options all make use of these inventive icons featuring the official World Cup mascot. Using them becomes instinctive if you've read the instruction manual, otherwise they might as well be written in Martian.



Game on! It's sort of like watching fleas playing our national sport as the single-pixel creatures scurry around booting the ball with their extra, hidden, pixel.

92 Presentation: Being the World Cup license, the game features all official branding. Plus, there are more options than you could possibly imagine (nearly).

80 Graphics: Tiny, featureless sprites and a simple green pitch. However, it does make for a very clear game on the small Game Gear screen.

42 Sound: Strange repetitve grunts from the crowd to go with the bossonova-beat ball sounds. Annoying music helps hurry you through the lengthy options.

45 Originality: Soccer certainly isn't something new. The wealth of options do, however, add something to the old format.

82 Playability: Fast, with pretty instinctive controls. Your players do seem to respond quite slowly though and the lack of pitch map hinders passing plays somewhat.

85 Challenge: The computer provides quite a challenge making it pretty tough to battle your way to World Cup victory.

55 Lastability: It becomes dull fairly quickly in one player mode., even with all the options. Two players may find some lasting amusement.

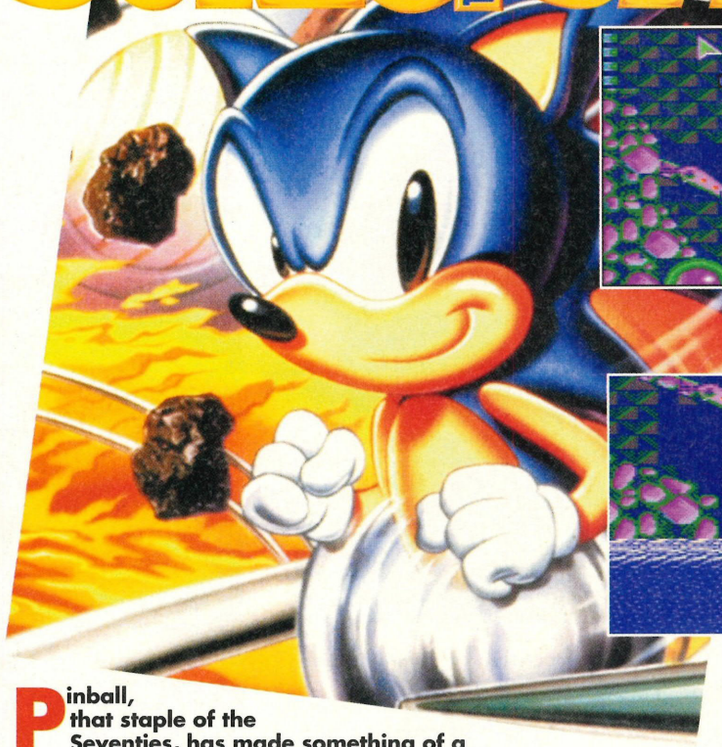
OVERALL: 78

A reasonable soccer game with a mass of options. At the end of the day though, it's quite dull.

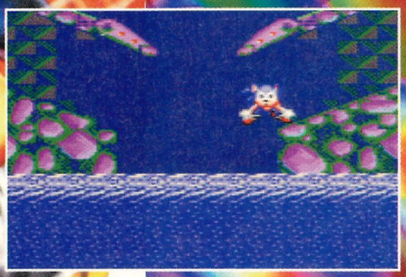
REVIEW

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG SPINBALL

4-MEG
BY: SEGA
PRICE: TBA
RELEASE: TBA
STYLE: PINBALL
PLAYERS: 1
CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: 3-7



▲ Sonic picks a fine time to take a dump.



▲ Ha ha, snake! You are doomed!

▲ Boing! Doink!

This is the toxic waste at the bottom of the screen. If Sonic falls into this, it's goodbye to one of his lives. It's easy enough to avoid this fate on the the first level, but once you start advancing through the tables it's all too easy to cop it.

Pinball, that staple of the Seventies, has made something of a resurgence in recent times. But don't worry, you don't have to have a massive curly ginger afro, big wide collars and a "Keep On Truckin'" T-Shirt to play today's pinball games. No, you'll not hear the swishing of corduroy bell-bottoms around the pin tables du jour.

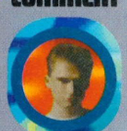
Mind you, most of the best pin tables around these days aren't even proper pin tables, but computer simulations. Obviously, it's possible to do a lot more with these, as scrolling beats space restrictions, and the computer ball doesn't acually have to obey the laws of physics. A good case in point is this, Sonic Spinball, originally released for the Megadrive and now available for the Game Gear. The ball in question is in fact Sonic himself, and the player is given complete control over his movements, both by use of flippers and by swerving his body around in mid-air, in order to hit the ramps and tunnels so prevalent in this sort of game.

If you're looking for a straight pinball title, this probably won't meet your needs, as it does contain a lot of platform elements. However, this is no bad thing. For starters, there's more of an objective than just scoring points. Sonic has to collect Chaos Emeralds from several tables and beat the boss on each level before progressing on to a more challenging table. This ups the lastability factor enormously, as in addition to just sitting there trying to top your last high score, there's actually a game to finish too.

Sonic Spinball is supported by some excellent graphics, impressive presentation, and, thankfully, blur-free scrolling. Sonic is a little less responsive than he was in the Megadrive original, but he's still plenty controllable enough for the purposes of the game. The only thing Sonic Spinball is really lacking in is excitement. It's great fun to play and so on, but it doesn't really get the adrenalin flowing. – it's actually quite relaxing to play.

If you fancy a change of pace, give this a look. If, however, you're after a frenzy of arcade thrills, you might like to point your nose in the direction of the excellent Mortal Kombat 2.

COMMENT



RICHARD LEADBETTER

I see what Rad says about a definite lack of exciting features, with this portable version of Sonic Spinball. It's hard to pinpoint what's missing, as Spinball is a great little game, packed with decent features – and it's a good laugh to play as well. Also in its favour is the fact that it's the only decent pinball game available for Game Gear. Not an essential hand held purchase, but well worth investigation.

COMMENT

RADION AUTOMATIC

It's a strange one, is Sonic Spinball. On the one hand, it's well programmed, it looks neat and it's great fun to play. However, it's not the kind of game you can really rave about. Despite it all being very enjoyable, it just fails to get anyone foaming at the mouth, even Tom G, and he foams at the mouth all the time. Definitely worth trying out in the shop, but don't expect the usual Sonic buzz.

89 Presentation: A lovely intro, and plenty of in-game messages and pics.

90 Graphics: Surprisingly detailed sprites, Sonic himself is very well animated too. The excellent scrolling also deserves a mention.

76 Sound: Whilst the music is well composed, it suffers from the usual Game Gear speaker problem. The effects are better, though.

80 Originality: As Game Gear games go, this is one of the more original titles seen in recent times, being the first pinball/platform crossover.

87 Playability: There's loads to do, each table is packed right out with stuff. It's easy to pick up and enjoyable, although not exactly exciting, strangely.

86 Challenge: Spinball is dead dead rock hard on the Hard setting, and should keep you going for a good length of time.

88 Lastability: Certainly a game you'd play right to the end, and the pinballular nature of the action means you'll go back to beat your scores once you've clocked it.

OVERALL: 87

A good, solid, dependable game which scores quite low in the exhilaration department, but high in the value for money stakes.

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REVIEW

CD

BY: GAMETEK

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: SEPT '94

STYLE: BEAT 'EM UP

PLAYERS: 2

CONTROL: JOYPAD

CONTINUES: 3

BRU

Paws of

Considering the venerable age of the Mega-CD, you'd think that the system would be heaving under a large catalogue of beat 'em up titles. But you'd be wrong. What's out there at the moment? Black Hole Assault and Mortal Kombat CD - both of them flawed creations. Into the fray steps Brutal which aims to bring quality combat gameplay to the Mega-CD.

Things start out well. The first thing to hit you is the extremely slick front-end, packed with interesting options, brilliant animated cut-scenes, rousing music... the lot. Never before has a CD title been this slick.

And then it's on to the game itself, which is, well, good. Nothing outstanding. Just good. The combat action is nowhere near as technically accomplished as Street Fighter II (in any of its incarnations), but the sheer polish of the game is enough to make it enjoyable, at least in the short term.

The game also has some excellent ideas. A password system exists that effectively enables you to save your character - which is useful as special moves are gained as you progress through the game. Also, after a bout, you're presented with loads of intriguing stats about the round just completed along with a one-line summary. It's not essential to the game at all - it's just interesting. Intriguingly enough, interesting but not essential sums up the entire game perfectly.

SEGA

▲ Hey look – it's Usagi Yojimbo, Samurai rabbit.

▲ Slow Boat to Barnet strut their stuff.

Brutal

Fury

▲ Oh that was YOUR pint.

▲ Another thrilling Brutal shot.

▲ Actually, this bit's quite good.

▲ Hello mum.

COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

Being a hardened, combo-fixated Street Fighter veteran, I was pretty sure I wasn't going to like Brutal. But I do. For a start, it's definitely the best presented CD title to date (as stated elsewhere in this review). Its graphics are decent - vibrant and simple and the Prodigy-esque techno is right up my street. The only problem with the game is that it's nowhere near as complex (and as such, lastable) as Super Street Fighter, but I'm pretty sure that this simplicity is going to appeal to a lot of people. Brutal also has a healthy, very English sense of humour which I enjoyed. By no means an essential purchase, but a strangely compelling game none the less.

▲ Must we fling this filth at our youngsters etc etc.

COMMENT

SAM HICKMAN

Not being a great fan of beat 'em ups, I can't say I was exactly thrilled to see yet another effort turn up at the office. Okay, so the cartoon theme is a little different, but for me this doesn't come close to the greats of the genre such as SFII and Mortal Kombat. Yes, the graphics are lovely, yes the music is great, but it offers nothing new and in addition, you can only learn a special move every time you win a fight – which makes for some very dull first levels. It will probably give you more instant gratification than Mortal Kombat CD, but if you're after a lasting beat 'em up, it's still Super SFII that takes the crown.

94 **Presentation:**

Second to none. Loads of cut-scene animations, options aplenty and a very polished feel to the game.

82 **Graphics:**

The sprites are quite simple, but overall, the graphics are most pleasing to behold and work well.

88 **Sound:**

Techno! Techno! Techno! Techno! Oh, and some very decent fighting effects to boot.

38 **Originality:**

Some original features in there, but overall not many surprises in store.

80 **Playability:**

Very easy to get the hang of, with an ingenious special move tutorial section which teaches you between rounds.

67 **Challenge:**

With certain characters, it's possible to breeze through the game, but there are loads of difficulty levels to bring you back.

68 **Lastability:**

Eight characters and many difficulty levels, but the simple gameplay may not appeal to most for that long.

OVERALL:

Bright, vibrant, loud and playable. Better than Mortal Kombat CD, but definitely aimed at a younger audience.

72

REVIEW

REBEL ASSAULT

CD

BY: MARUBENI

PRICE: £49.99

RELEASE: OCTOBER

STYLE: SHOOT 'EM UP

PLAYERS: 1

CONTROL: JOYPAD

CONTINUES: PASSWORDS

Chapter IV. A New Hope. It is a period of civil war. The Sons of Sonic, striking from their secret Green Hill Zone base, have won their first victory against the evil Legion of Plumbers by unveiling their ultimate weapon, the MEGA-CD, a Megadrive add-on with enough power to destroy an entire planet, probably. Unfortunately, it seems to have trouble producing good full-motion video games, with each one released lacking decent gameplay. Pursued by the Plumber Prince's sinister agents, Princess Marubeni races home aboard her starship, custodian of Rebel Assault, a game that could save the Mega-CD and restore enjoyment to the galaxy.

Ah, the Star Wars trilogy, the greatest sci-fi saga of all-time. Combining outer-space action with stunning special effects and an exciting plot, it's surely a prime candidate for the so-called 'interactive movie' treatment. Well, that's exactly what Rebel Assault is. Yep, once again it's that classic tale of conflict between two opposing forces – those people who love the game and those who loathe it.

Those who love Rebel Assault are no doubt impressed by the atmosphere it exudes. Each of the 15 chapters is based around a scene from the films, ranging from the AT-AT attack on the ice world of Hoth to space battles against Star Destroyers and, the grand finale, taking out the Death Star. There are even movie clips interspersed with Silicon Graphic computer-generated scenes. Couple this with a superb rendition of the classic John Williams soundtrack and there's no doubt that Rebel Assault closely captures the feel of the movies.

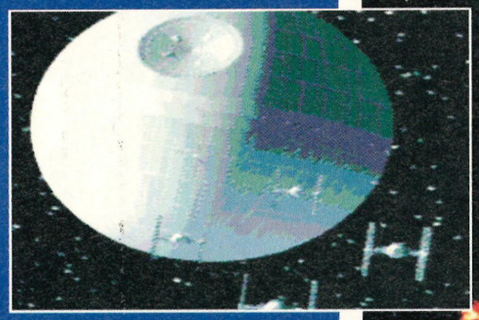
But wait, there are those people who loathe the game. And why? Well, that comes down to the degree of player interactivity.

Although you get to fly around Star Destroyers and AT-AT Walkers, through Beggar's Canyon and asteroid fields, you DON"T really get to do the flying. It's more like you get flown. There's a limited amount of manoeuvrability, mainly so you can avoid obstacles, but for the most part, it's just a case of shooting any targets that appear in your field of vision. These targets are always highlighted in green, which is fortunate because the Mega-CD's limited colour palette makes the graphics look incredibly blocky and indistinguishable in places. Couple this with the fact that the levels follow the exact same pattern with each go and there's certainly room for disappointment.

At the end of the day, Rebel Assault is certainly a fun game the first time you play it through, but its lastability is questionable. You should be able to clock it in a matter of days, and then you've seen all there is to it. Whether you should buy it or not, really all depends on how fanatical a Star Wars fan you are.

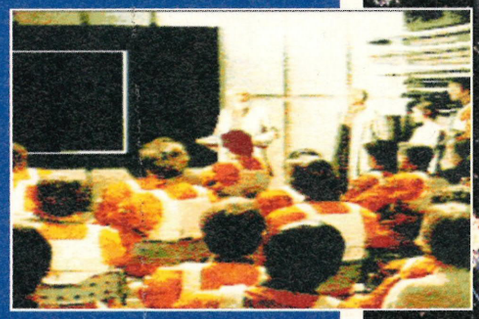
SEGA

▲ It's like watching an all-new Star Wars movie...

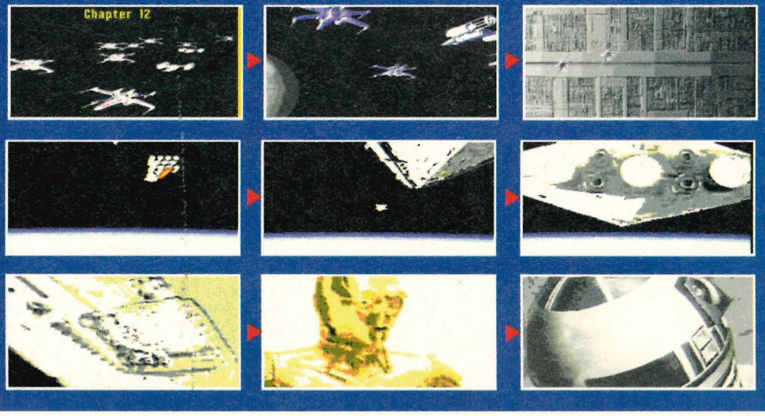


▲ Except when you see these classic film clips...

▲ Then it's like watching an old Star Wars movie...

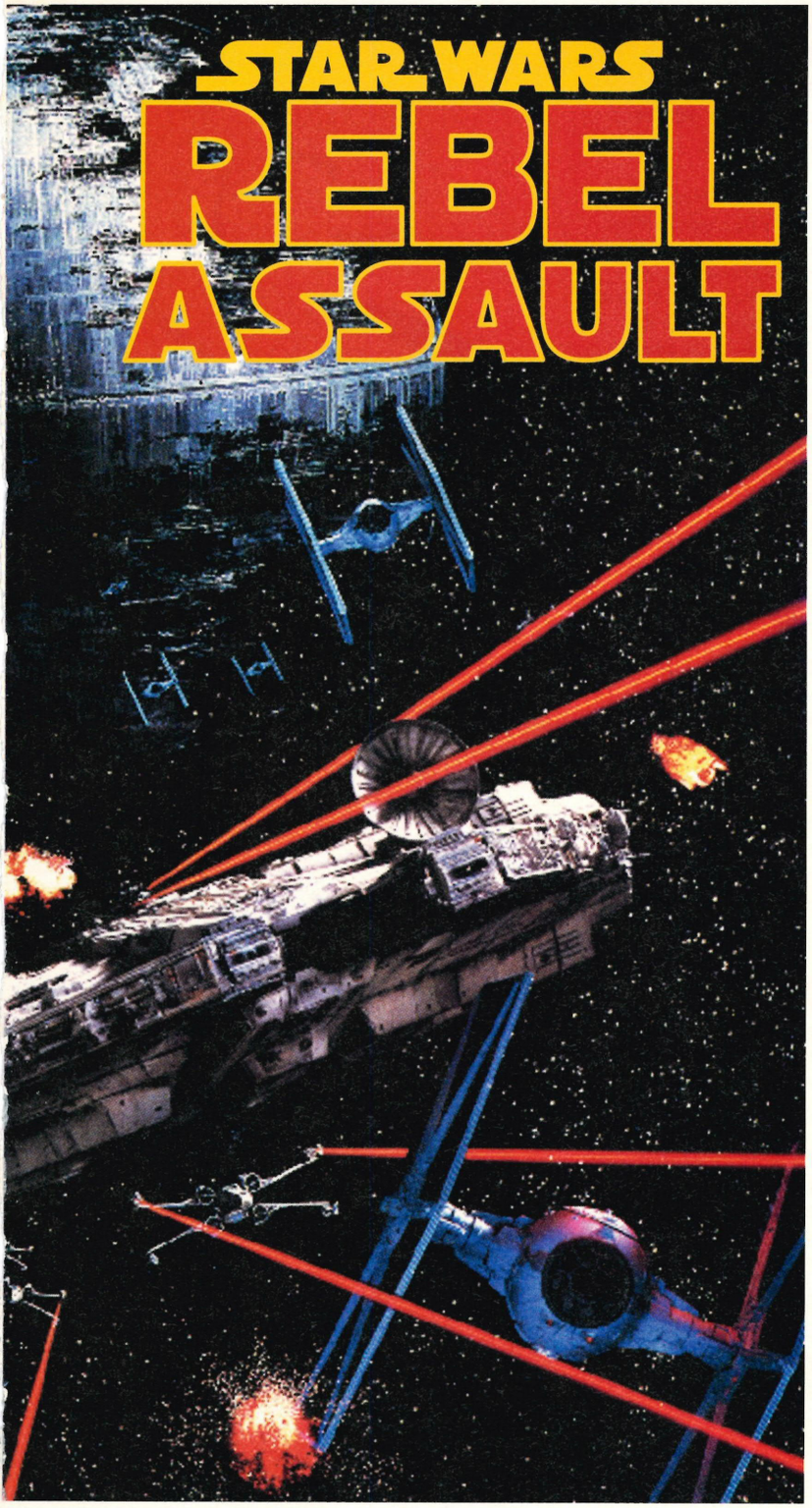


▲ ... but that's no bad thing 'cos the films are great!



▲ There are tons of intermission scenes. Computer generated ones (above) are clear, but the film clips (right) are grainy.

STAR WARS REBEL ASSAULT



COMMENT

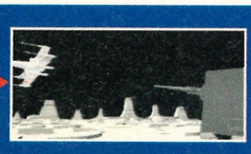
RICHARD LEADBETTER

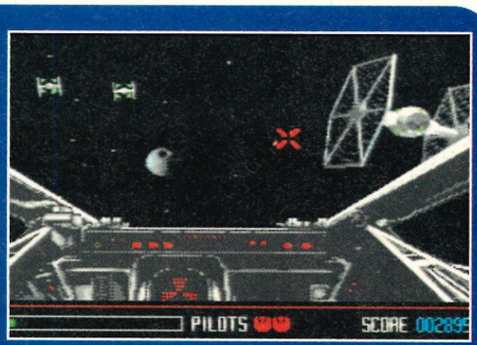
I actually shelled out £45 for the PC CD-ROM version of Rebel Assault, which is very similar to the Mega-CD offering, (but more colourful and speedy)... and I don't like either version. All the drooling critics go on about how closely this captures the feel of the movie! It DOESN'T. The Star Wars trilogy was never slow-moving, dull and tedious. Rebel Assault on Mega-CD is. The control method is dire and the level of interactivity in the title is lacking - Tomcat Alley and Silpheed are far better than this. For the same price, you can buy the entire trilogy on video in wide screen - and you certainly feel a lot more involved with the Star Wars story than you do by playing Rebel Assault. Plus, if you're still itching to play a damn good Star Wars game, you'd have enough cash left over to play all the way through Virtua Star Wars in the arcade - an experience ten times more rewarding than Rebel Assault.

COMMENT

TOM GUISE

I may not have forked out for the PC version of Rebel Assault as Rich did, but I still think he's being a tad harsh on the game. Having played both versions I can honestly say I enjoy this. In fact, the Mega-CD version actually plays better, although it does look considerably worse. I can see Richard's point, that it can become tedious playing the identical levels over and over again. However, I think that the appeal of this game IS its atmosphere and IT DOES capture the feel of the movies. Enough so, in fact, for you to want to play it through again, to see all your favourite bits. There are few FMV games on the Mega-CD that are genuinely enjoyable and I think this is one of the better ones.





▲ The enemy attack patterns are identical with each go, so it doesn't take too long to overcome each level.

REVIEW

Presentation: 94

Opens like a Star Wars movie and, with all the cut scenes, it maintains a strong atmosphere throughout.

Graphics: 86

The computer-generated scenes are superb. However, the movie clips are hideously fuzzy.

Sound: 95

Just superb! The complete movie soundtrack accompanies the action . And the spot effects are perfect.

Originality: 62

Full-motion video shoot 'em ups are certainly nothing new on the Mega-CD.

Playability: 76

Simplistic shoot 'em up action, but it's still fairly enjoyable thanks to the atmosphere.

Challenge: 55

A mixed bag of rock-hard levels and stupidly easy ones.

Lastability: 70

You'll have seen it all once its completed, but it does have that 'come back and see it again' factor. Just like the movies.

OVERALL: 76

As a game Rebel Assault is certainly quite limited. As an interactive movie though, it proves quite successful thanks to the Star Wars factor.

REVIEW

8 MEG

BY: SEGA

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE: TBA

STYLE: PLATFORM

PLAYERS: 1

CONTROL: JOYPAD

CONTINUES: PASSWORDS

THE P

DA WA

If you're one of those people for whom Saturday mornings mean cartoons and Nobby the Sheep as opposed to an extra eight hours in bed, doubtless the Pirates of Dark Water will be as familiar to you as adverts for WCW Wrestling action figures.

Now, in the true 90s spirit of merchandising potential, those self same pirates are starring in their very own computer cartridge video game. The plot goes something like this – there's this bunch of magic treasures which will save the world from some evil geezer, and your heroic band of cut-throats has decided to seek them out. You have three characters to choose from: Ren, who far from being a bleary-eyed and violent Chihuahua is a blond, blue-eyed all-American looking pirate who wields his trusty broken sword with great vigour, but little power. He's the all-rounder you'll generally find when there's a selection of three characters. Then there's the token woman who – surprise, surprise – is the weakest of the trio, but makes up for this by being faster than either of her compatriots. Go on, try and guess what the third character's like. That's right, he's the big character who's twice as strong as the others but suffers when it comes to speed and jumping prowess. There's also a fourth character, a monkey-bird, which is the kind of bizarre and grotesque mutation you'd expect to read about in the Sunday Sport. You can't actually take control of this chap, but he pops up in between each level to give you a brief run down of what's expected of you in the next stage. After this, you just have to choose the character best suited to that mission and you're away.

The game itself follows the greatest tradition of platform hack 'em ups. As well as battling the environment, the player has to deal with a constant stream of enemies armed with sword, nets, spears and even acid-spitting capabilities. Most of these are dispatched easily enough with a couple of swishes of your sword. If you're having trouble getting close to your foe, each of the player characters has their own limited supply of long-range weapons. It's possible to pick more ammunition up as you progress through the game, either by killing enemies or smashing goody-laden treasure chests, but missiles are best reserved for those end-of-level boss situations.

Pirates of Dark Water doesn't exactly sound ground breaking, and it isn't. There's nothing here which hasn't been seen before, but some of the elements have been seen fewer times than those which comprise the usual platform game. The choice of characters is a little redundant – the strong-man character is by far the best and there's no real need to pick either of the other two ever. However, the myriad of mini-quests do add a bit more purpose to the game and lend a greater sense of achievement. Graphically, there's a good deal of variety between the stages, the action running from ports to jungles to haunted citadels. However, the game itself doesn't really change much from level to level.

It couldn't be said that Pirates of Dark Water is an unplayable game. The controls are good, there's loads to do and it's basically good fun to play. However, it is a bit on the bland side. Once you've completed three or four levels, which isn't very hard, your interest starts to wane and your concentration lapses. Whilst the password system does make what is a pretty easy game even easier, it does actually lengthen the lifespan of the title. If you always had to play from level one you'd get bored after a few goes, whereas with passwords it's possible to play through a bit at a time.

If you're a really big fan of the Pirates cartoon, and you're what we like to call "a less experienced player", it's wholly possible you'll get a kick out of this title. Anyone with one platform game in their collection, however, could find this something of a drag. Not bad, just bland.

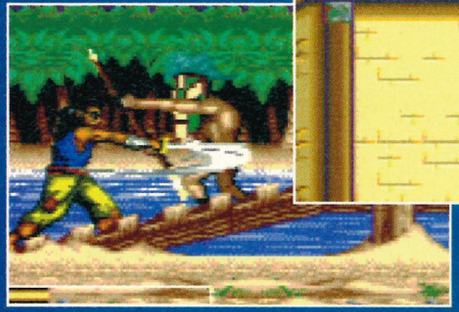
SEGA

▲ Remember kids, smoking is bad for you.

▲ As is being hit by falling clay pots.

▲ And being stabbed by that sword.

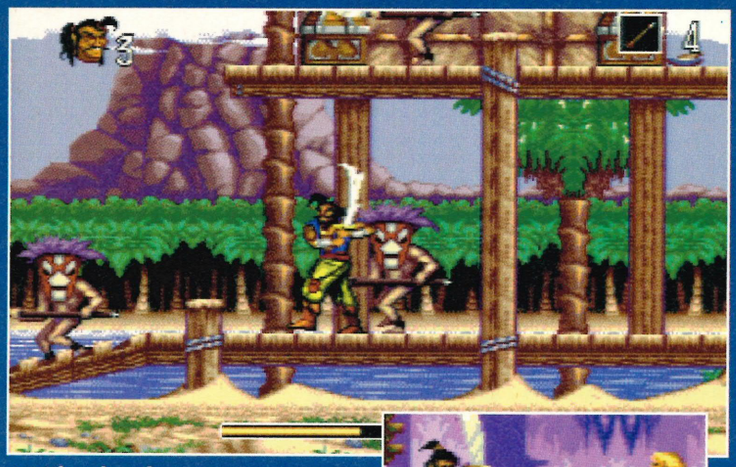
▲ No, behiiiiind you! Shut the gate! Etc.



▲ An exciting bit of action here and no mistake, Pirates fans.

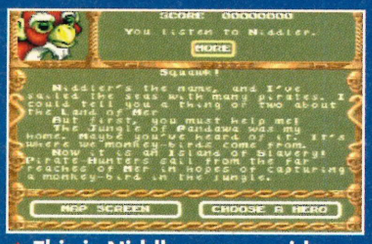
IRATES OF

ARK TER



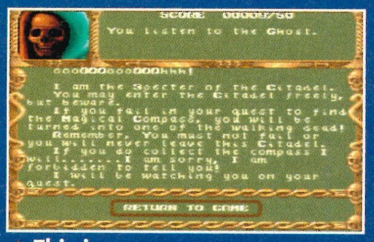
▲ What lovely scenery.

▲ The lads compare choppers etc etc.



▲ This is Niddler, your guide.

▲ Ren uses his tickling stick.



▲ This is a ghost, one of the many characters you converse with.

▲ Ren looks a bit pensive.

COMMENT

RICHARD LEADBETTER

This game isn't too bad really. The action, although nothing outstanding, is entertaining enough and keeps you occupied for a little while. However, I reached a point where I thought, "No, I just don't fancy playing this any more" and that was that. This isn't a horrific piece of software at all - but there are far more deserving games worthy of your cash.

COMMENT

RAD AUTOMATIC

At first, I didn't think Pirates of Dark Water was that bad, but it does have a strange likeness to Chinese water torture. It's impossible to play more than two or three levels in one go before you start dying and have to turn the machine off. Whilst the game is action-packed enough, it is lacking somewhat in excitement. Well thought out and a decent enough sort, Pirates of Dark Water just misses that crucial adrenaline factor.

91 **Presentation:**
There's options and passwords and in-game menus galore, along with some good intermissions.

79 **Graphics:**
Fairly well drawn, but flat looking sprites wander around some colourful and varied backdrops.

58 **Sound:**
A bit weak, the effects are too quiet and the music is rather tuneless.

21 **Originality:**
You won't be finding much originality here, I'm afraid.

78 **Playability:**
The controls are quite responsive, the action is well paced and there's always plenty to do, but there's no real drive.

64 **Challenge:**
A piece of cake, this. If you can't get a considerable away through after a couple goes the password system should still give you a chance.

71 **Lastability:**
Once you've completed Pirates of Dark Water you'll never play it again, and you may never play it again even if you don't clock it.

OVERALL:

A solid but average game which is utterly surpassed by a million competitors.

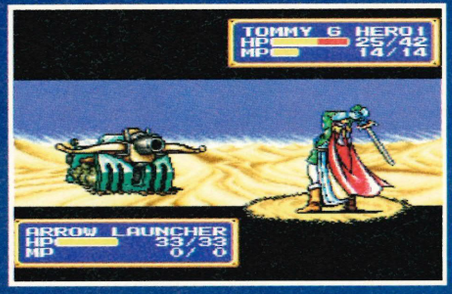
76

OUT NOW

OUT N

MEGA DRIVE

SHINING FORCE 2
BY: SEGA



The Shining Posse return for their second episode on the Megadrive, and by all accounts, it's much better than the original adventure (which incidentally, was also brilliant). The basic RPG/strategy flavour of the game remains the same for the sequel, although all the characters, places and of course the story has been changed. The title takes most of its inspiration from traditional RPGs (there's a lot of wandering around, talking to people and finding things), but this has tons more atmosphere than most and is coupled with loads of action scenes, making for a more fun, not to mention original title. If you're looking for a game that will last you more than a couple of days, or you're just after something a little different, this is well worth the money.

FIRST ENCOUNTER: MAY

LONG-TERM COMMENTS: We've been playing it for around six weeks now, and it still isn't finished. A great challenge with tons of lastability.

OVERALL: 90%

MEGA-CD

FIFA SOCCER
BY: EA

Possibly the best footie sim ever hits the Mega-CD this month, with an array of FMV scenes, some ace music and an upgraded difficulty level added on for good measure. Anyone who's bought this on the Megadrive will know just how great it is, but to be honest, if you already own it, there's not much point in getting the Mega-CD version too. Still, for people who haven't yet indulged (are there any) and who own a Mega-CD, this is about as good as Sensible Soccer CD (which is also ace) although which is the best buy is largely down to personal preference.

FIRST ENCOUNTER: OCTOBER '93

LONG-TERM COMMENTS: Gets better and better with age! Instantly playable with loads of lastability.

OVERALL: 89%

JOW

BATTLECORPS
BY: CORE

Core design are possibly the most innovative developers for the Mega-CD, and Battlecorps, their latest release is probably their best yet. Following on from their last smash hit, Thunderhawk, this is a top-notch blaster, but this time, there's more of a strategy element, and the adventure is much more difficult. Again, the graphics are first rate, with huge, lumbering robot enemies to face and a real explosion of colour in every level. The music is also absolutely stunning and succeeds in portraying an atmosphere second to none on the Mega-CD. An essential purchase.

FIRST ENCOUNTER: MARCH

LONG-TERM COMMENTS: The best blaster on the Mega-CD, with plenty of adrenalin pumping action.

OVERALL: 92%

ON RENTAL

****** Bali**
***** Biarritz**
**** Bognor**
*** Beirut**

CHAOS ENGINE
BY: MICROPROSE

If you're after a game which provides instant blasting gratification, the Chaos Engine could be a perfect choice. While the game design is very simple indeed (you'll do little more than wander around shooting baddies and collecting keys) the pace is frenetic and will provide even the most hardened shoot 'em up freak with their fair quota of death. Admittedly, the graphics and scrolling aren't exactly of the highest quality, but the game is huge and for instant satisfaction, it's hard to beat.

***

PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS
BY: CODEMASTERS

What with Pete Sampras winning Wimbledon and this being a tennis sim of the highest quality, there must be something of a celebration going on in the Codemasters' camp. Although Sampras tennis is easily the most playable game of its type on the Megadrive, it's also really original too, as up to four players can take part, thanks to their J Cart invention. Through the two extra joypad ports built into every cart, two extra players can participate without the extra cost of adapters. The controls are really easy to get the hang of, and once you've played through all the tournaments. there's a couple of extra modes to discover too. A perfect rental choice.

***

JUNGLE BOOK
BY: VIRGIN

As film-to-game conversions go, this is brilliant – the graphics, sound and feel of the film are all there. So what's the catch? Well, the gameplay is your bog standard platform stuff, and it's far too easy too. In fact, at a push, you could complete it in an evening, which makes it a great choice for rental.

**

COMBAT CARS
BY: ACCOLADE

This has just recently been released as a budget title (£29.99) and although it's fairly good fun for a while, unfortunately there are loads of better racers around. It's obviously taken it's main gameplay from the far superior Micro Machines, immediately leaving it rather redundant (you can probably rent MM for the same price). Anyway, Virtua Racing was released on rental last month, so why not go for that instead?

*

IN THE ARCADE:
VIRTUA STAR WARS

The latest Sega coin-op to make use of their Model One Virtua board is this long-awaited licence of the legendary Star Wars movies. Taking control of a X-Wing fighter, one or two players (with one as the gunner) must fly through four thrill-packed levels of intergalactic space combat. You'll face the Imperial fleet, take a jaunt through the intestines of a Super Star Destroyer and of course, confront the dreaded Death Star. Incredible polygon graphics and stunning sound help make the whole game an awesome experience – especially the final ride to the Death Star's core. If you see it in an arcade near you, definitely have a go, although taking a friend as a gunner is essential. It shouldn't take you too long, or very much money to clock it.

***

NEXT MONTH

WE RIP OFF YOUR HEAD... AND WEE DOWN YOUR NECK!

That's right, next month we're going to come round to your house... and kill you! Ha, only joking! Actually, next month we'll be reporting on the best top ace Sega produce in the whole world in space. How would you feel about a full review of Core's amazing SoulStar? Or maybe an EXCLUSIVE – let's say that together... EXCLUSIVE – review of EA's much-touted Urban Strike? And what about another EXCLUSIVE, this time of Sonic and Knuckles? Or the wonder that is Megadrive 32X Doom? Plus there's a whole stack of other ace things we'd rather not talk about right now – we don't want to spoil the surprise for you. Godammit, aren't we just great?

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Comprehensive CES show report, including first Saturn pictures. Previews spectacular, including Streets of Rage 3, Sub-Terrania, Mega Race, Battlecorps, Soul Star... and more! Reviewed: Ground Zero, Texas, Double Switch, Skitchin' and plenty more besides! Interview with Lead Sonic Games Designer!

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Virtua Racing! Review and 12-page feature with course breakdown and programmer interviews! Stunning Saturn: Sega release official shots. Jimmy White Snooker exclusive! Reviews include The Chaos Engine, Sub-Terrania, Game Gear NBA Jam. Treasure feature: secret games (that still aren't out!) revealed!

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Megadrive 32! 32-bit upgrade announced - we interview Sega's European Product Director for the WHOLE story. Streets of Rage 3: incredible feature and review. Sonic merchandise round-up. Daytona coin-op revealed!
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More Megadrive 32: first casing pictures revealed to the world! Over 150 pictures of HOT work in progress Saturn titles! Dragon feature and review! Included in the line-up of top reviews: The Incredible Hulk, World Cup USA '94, Mortal Kombat CD, Body Count and plenty more too!

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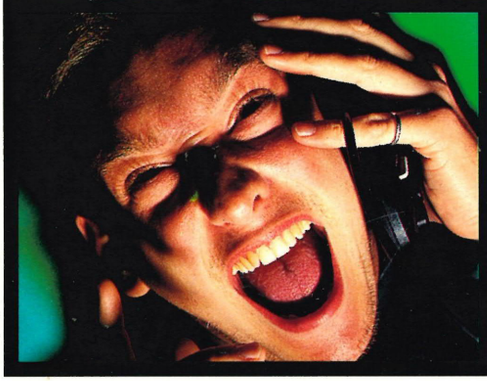

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