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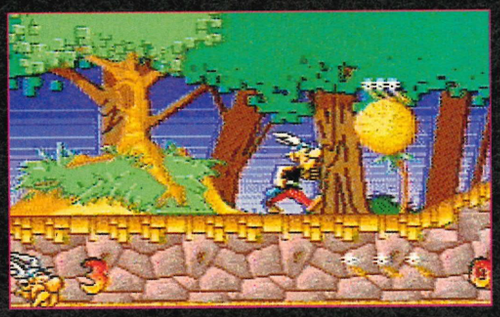

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Sega Zone

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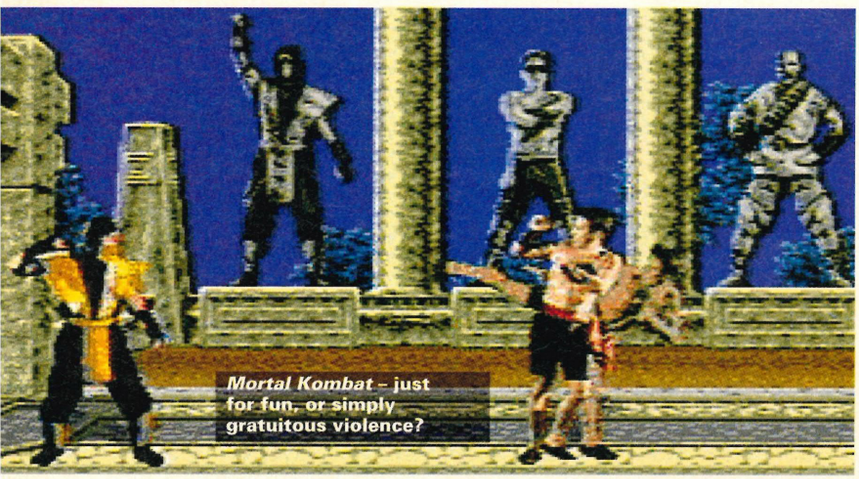
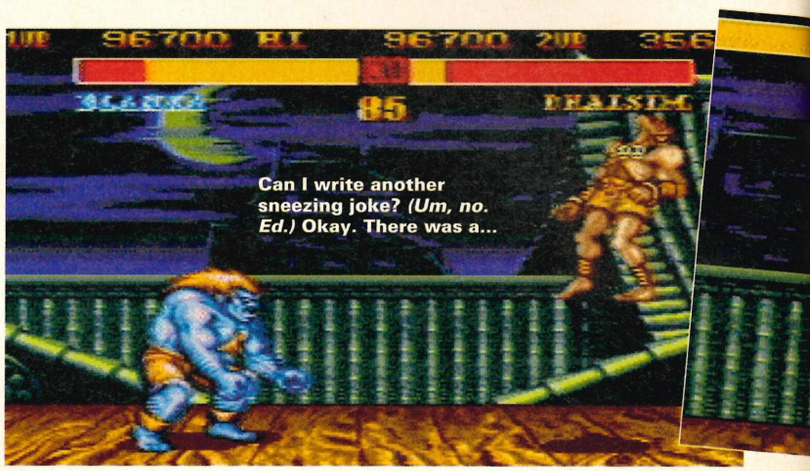
Can you deal with some real excitement? Take a look at this - books, hype, TV boycots and more hype. Find out how you can win yourself £10,000 by entering the National Games Championship (cheesy grin). I'm dribbling already.



Mortal Kombat – just for fun, or simply gratuitous violence?



Street Fighter II

After months of uncertainty and not being sure, Sega have finally announced the release date for *SF2*. Yes, it hits the shops on, er... sometime in October. *(So it's more a release month, rather than a date? Ed.)*

Your £59.99 will get you the Championship edition as well as *Streetfighter II,* and Mega Drive owners will enjoy some special options exclusive that version. Sega believe this is one of the biggest titles to be released this

Ban-'em -up

Two of ITV's most successful teenage shows have decided against giving coverage and air time to so-called violent games like *Mortal Kombat* and *Street Fighter Turbo*.

Producers of both *Movies, Games and Videos* and Saturday morning's *Gimme 5* have opted against beat-'em-ups wishing to 'keep on the safe side' and avoid any potential trouble from the ITC and angry parents.

The release of *Mortal Kombat* (don't miss the in-depth review on page 20) has forced all games related television shows to take a stance – Channel 4's *GamesMaster,* for example, didn't shy away and devoted an entire show to the beat-'em-up, while ITV's *Bad Influence* has not quite made its mind up about how to cover fighting games without ignoring people's concerns.

Sega toys for toddlers

Sega have just developed a non-video game unit called Pico which they plan to target at four to ten year olds.

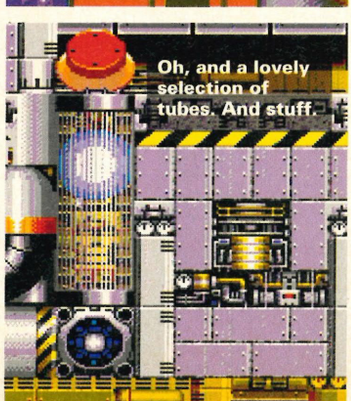
The Pico consists of a writing tablet, a lightpen, loads of colourful buttons and has to be played through a TV.

Already selling in Japan, the Pico will be made public at the American Toy Fair in New York next February with a European launch scheduled some time after that. *(Now you can't get more precise than that, can you? Ed.)* The Pico shouldn't be priced at more than $100 with cartridges at around $25 each. Well, that's what it says here.

VR in Vegas

Sega have linked up with major hotel and casino property developers, Circus Circus Enterprises, and announced the development of a new VirtuaLand theme park in Las Vegas.

This follows the success of Sega's arcades in Japan and the recent opening of Sega World in Bournemouth. It's the first of a number of projects involving both companies. They're also planning to open an arcade area in the Grand Slam Canyon adventuredome which opened up last month, erm, also in Las Vegas.



Take me higher

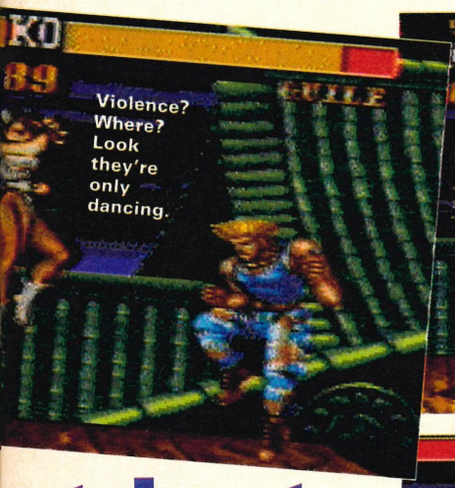
Sonic the Hegdehog has finally topped the 'Q' popularity charts, the most prestigious charts in the US.

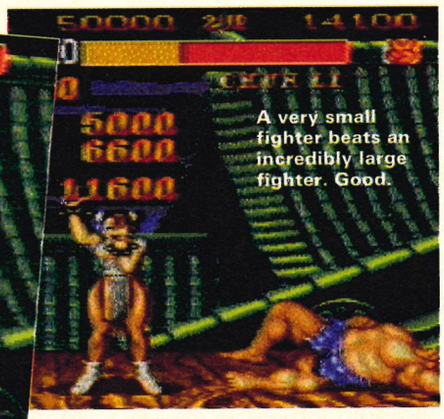
Our spikey blue friend has beaten 391 real, fictional and cartoon personalities like Bart Simpson, Michael Jordan, Mario *(Who? Ed.)* and even his closest buddy, Tails, who reached a respectable fourth.

And it's not going to stop there. Oh, no. Sonic is making his network debut with a Saturday morning show on ABC and a weekday series imaginatively called *The Adventures of Sonic The Hedgehog.* This follows the massive sales of *Sonic 2* which claims to be the best-selling 16-bit video game ever.

Sega Zone can exclusively reveal that, contrary to rumours, Sonic is still the same old hedgehog that he's always been and he still finds time in his packed schedule to visit his dear old mum.

Sonic The 'tediously popular' Hedgehog.





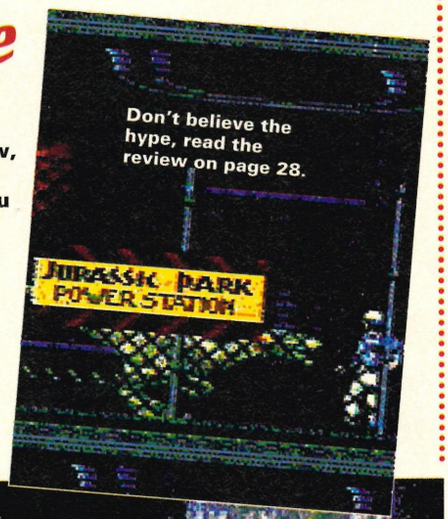
at last

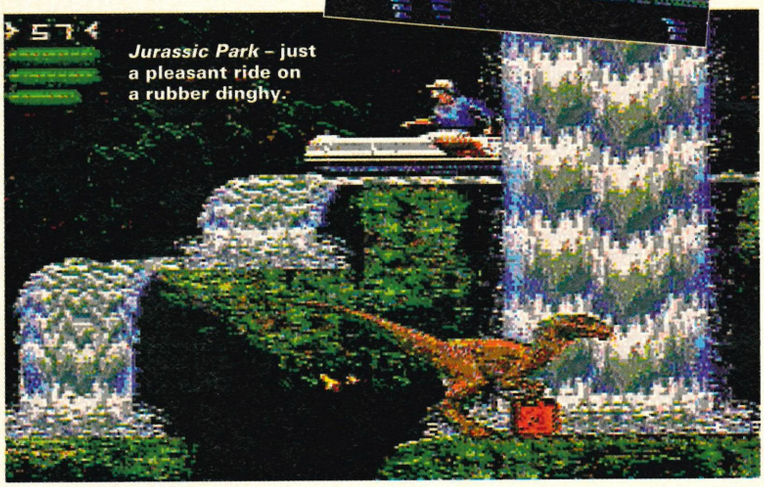
year on the Mega Drive but aren't planning to back it extensively. They reckon the game has already generated enough coverage. So, you'll have to make do with the odd TV advert.

More hype

You've seen the movie, bought the duvet cover and you've read the game review, what more can there be about *Jurassic Park* that you don't know?

Not a lot. It's just that in the US, the Mega Drive version of the game claims to have made $13.5 million in the very first weekend of its release. With the Game Gear and Mega-CD versions following swiftly, it seems like the *Jurassic Park* fever has yet to die down.





Discase licence

Creative Products International have just won a Sega licence for their revolutionary Mega-CD carry and storage case. Now that they've got the licence, they plan to launch it just before Christmas. The price is yet to be announced. Watch this space for further details.

Reading Festival

That's reading from the verb to read, not a festival based in Reading. Anyway, there's a whole series of books out this month – four from Virgin Publishing and one from Hippo.

From Virgin

Virgin's paperback October titles are *The Official Sega Mega Drive Power Tips Book 2 (Short and catchy, I like it. Ed.)* – giving you all the tips for *Cool Spot, Ecco, Lemmings, Sonic 2* and more; *GamesMaster, The Official Book* – which, er, has been put together by the same people who have worked on all three series, and includes Dominik Diamond as well as the new *GamesMaster* Academy Senior Cadet, Dexter Fletcher; *Sonic the Hedgehog In Robotnik's Laboratory* and *Sonic In The Fourth Dimension* – these are Sonic's first two adventures to appear in paperback. More to follow.

And thanks to those incredibly gorgeous people at Virgin Publishing we have three copies of *Sonic's first adventure* (*In Robotnik's Laboratory*) to give to the first three readers who send us a postcard with the answer to this question: What is Tails' first name? Send your postcards to Sonic Is Miles Better, *Sega Zone*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

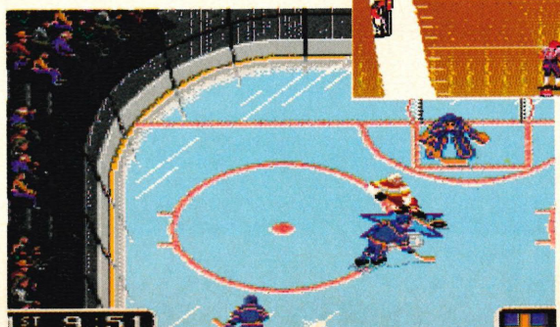
From Hippo

Hippo books have just published the *Official Gold Guide to Sonic The Hedgehog 2* which is a good thing if you happen to be a *Sonic 2* fan and haven't completed it yet. Written by Tony Takoushi – Sega Europe's Software Manager – this guide is full of tips, maps and screenshots that you most probably haven't seen before. Probably.

Yes, you've guessed it. Hippo Books are also incredibly generous and they've offered to give three copies of this complete guide to the first three readers who can answer the following; What is Sonic's middle name? Send your postcards to I Haven't Finished *Sonic 2* Yet, *Sega Zone*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

Sports double

Attention EA Sports fanatics. You can now get *EA Hockey* and *John Madden's Football* on one single cart for £45. So, that's two relatively old games for the price of one new one. Now, wouldn't it be good if all softies took this idea on for their older titles?



The original *Madden* and *EA Hockey*, some of the best sporting action around. Probably.

Win £10,000!

Take part in this year's National Computer Games Championship and you could end up with a £10,000 cheque in your pocket. With the finals being held at The Second Future Entertainment Show in November, it's about time the regional heats got going.

It's pretty fortunate then that selected Virgin Games Centres and Megastores will be hosting 29 heats and ten regional finals during the half term week (that's 18 to 22 October in Scotland, and 25 to 29 October everywhere else). The games for the regional heats are going to be *Mario All Stars* on the SNES, *Pinball Fantasies* on the Amiga CD32 and *Thunderhawk* on Sega's Mega-CD.

All contestants will play on the format of their choice from Monday to Thursday with the four highest scores on each format being entered in the regional finals to be held on Friday. These will feature four contestants on each format – the highest scoring player will then be given 15 minutes to practise on the other formats and then play them. The overall winner will be picked by some official kinda person from Future Publishing whose decision will be based on the players' game playing skills. Every regional winner will then be given all three games machines to practise for the quarter, semi-finals and final which will be held on the *GamesMaster* stage at the Future Entertainment Show.

So, if you want to be part of the fun, just hop along to one of the Games Centres or Megastores – listed in that box over there – on the Monday. If you don't get to enter immediately, don't worry, just put your name down for any of the following days. Er, break a leg.

The second Future Entertainment Show

The heat is on

Regional Heat (Monday – Thursday)		Final (Friday)
East Kilbride	Games Centre	Glasgow Megastore
Falkirk	Games Centre	
Edinburgh	Games Centre	
	Megastore	
Glasgow	Megastore	
Bolton	Games Centre	Manchester Megastore
Stockport	Games Centre	
Manchester	Megastore	
Birmingham	Megastore	Birmingham Megastore
Coventry	Megastore	
Bromley	Games Centre	Marble Arch Megastore
Croydon	Games Centre	
Guildford	Games Centre	
Ilford	Games Centre	
Kingston	Games Centre	
Watford	Games Centre	
Marble Arch	Megastore	
The Megastore (Oxford Street)	Megastore	
Bristol	Games Centre	Cardiff Megastore
Cardiff	Megastore	
Dublin	Games Centre	Dublin Megastore
	Megastore	
Belfast	Megastore	Belfast Megastore
Gateshead	Games Centre	Newcastle Megastore
Newcastle	Megastore	
Sheffield	Games Centre	Sheffield Megastore
	Megastore	
Norwich	Megastore	Norwich Megastore

And what's more

Just when you thought the Future Entertainment Show couldn't pack any more fun in just four days, up pops some more. Check this out – the organisers are getting some professionals to design and build a gigantic games arcade with absolutely loads of game-playing stations. The games arcade is going to be the place to visit if you've been itching to play some of the newest, fastest and best games around.

On top of that revelation, we've just heard that Electronic Arts will be showing up to launch the long awaited *EA International Soccer Challenge*, and they'll be holding daily compos. And you know what that means? That's right, you'll be able to try out what could turn out to be the best footie sim around.

So, what's planned so far? The show is taking place at the Grand Hall Olympia in London from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 November. *GamesMaster* will be broadcasting live on Thursday evening, Radio One will be there, you can get free tickets to see *Aladdin* if you go to the show on Friday and all the big guys will be there (yes, Sonic *will* be there, and, yes he's the biggest – look right). You can only buy tickets (£6.95 each) in advance from the FES Hotline, 051 356 5085. Make sure you book early.

Absolutely free entry

The second Future Entertainment Show

Listen up. Do you want to go to the greatest show in the world for free? Yes, that's right (big cheesy American grin), we've got 20 tickets – that's not ten, not even 15, but 20 tickets – to give out to you, the lucky-wucky readers. All you have to do is tell us, in not more than 20 words, why you should go to the Future Entertainment Show. Just write your answer down on the coupon below (or a photocopy of said coupon) and send it into I want to see Dexter Fletcher for zip, *Sega Zone*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

Rules

1. Employees of Future Publishing are not allowed to enter.
2. Duplicate entries will be laughed at inanely.
3. This competition runs until 30 September, 1993.
4. The editor's decision is often difficult to swallow, but final.

Please, please, please let me go

I think I should go to the Future Entertainment Show because...
(in not more than 20 words)

_____

_____

_____

Tick here if you don't want to take part in any reader research. ❑

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Tel _____

Please return this coupon to: *Sega Zone*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW

Virgin GAMES CENTRE

Game Gear chart

1	World Cup Soccer	Tengen
2	Streets of Rage 2	Sega
3	Mickey Mouse 2	Sega
4	Sonic 2	Sega
5	Aliens 3	Acclaim
6	Lemmings	Sega
7	WWF Steel Cage	Acclaim
8	Super Off Road Racer	Virgin
9	Tazmania	Sega
10	Olympic Gold	US Gold

Shipping chart supplied by Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford St, London W1. Tel (071) 631 1234

Mega Drive chart

1	Jungle Strike	Electronic Arts
2	Micro Machines	Code Masters
3	Bubsy	Accolade
4	PGA Tour Golf 2	Electronic Arts
5	X Men	Sega
6	Flashback	Delphine
7	Populous II	Virgin
8	Cool Spot	Virgin
9	Final Fight (Mega-CD)	Sega
10	Tiny Toons	Konami

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Master System chart

1	Tecmo World Soccer	Sega
2	Mickey Mouse 2	Sega
3	World Tournament Golf	Sega
4	Streets of Rage	Sega
5	Tazmania	Sega
6	Sonic 2	Sega
7	Lemmings	Sega
8	Wonderboy in Monsterland	Sega
9	Super Tennis	Sega
10	WWF Steel Cage	Acclaim

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LOOK MUM, I'VE WON A PRIZE

Sit down, close your eyes and cast your minds back to last month. Remember, we ran three competitions; an ice hockey flavoured one, another one with something to do with Z-Knights and the last was about being red and invisible.

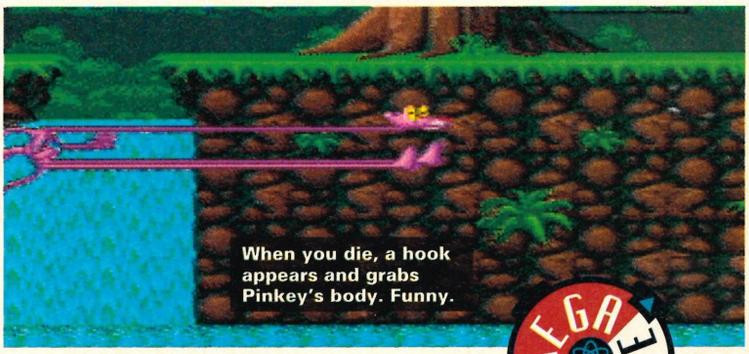
Well, time has run out only on the French's Mustard Ice Hockey Challenge competition, and the winners are; Paul Baillier, Trevor Armstrong, John Maguire and Gus McTiernan. They each won four tickets to see the Toronto Maple Leafs play against the New York Rangers. Oh, and by the time you read this, they'll have already been. *(And say it was really fun and exciting. Ed.)* Er, it was really fun and exciting.

There are also two runners up and they are Andrew Hodkinson and Robert Butcher who win baseball caps, pens and bottles of mustard. Mmmm.

As far as the other two competitions are concerned, the deadline for both is Thursday 30 September 1993.

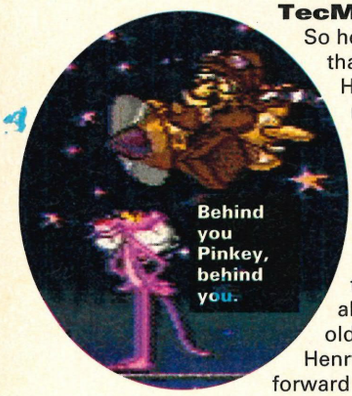
So, if you haven't sent your answers in yet, do so, to *Sega Zone*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

Look! Sylvester's here, and over there you can see Tweety. Oh, and the Pink Panther's just popped in. This month, at the games preview desk we decided to have a cartoon party and just as the music came on... Meep! Meep!



Pink Panther

TecMagic - November



So here he is, the Pink Panther... oh, let's not start all that again. Evidently Pink Panther has moved to Hollywood and has become embroiled in all manner of computer-gamish escapades, including some hassle from his old enemy, Inspector Clouseau (it says 'nemesis' here but, be honest, who uses the word 'nemesis' these days?). It's 14 levels' worth of pink cartoon action.

The game has been designed with the help of the cartoon's original creator, Friz Freleng, and already has something of the look and feel of the old *Pink Panther Show* cartoons. They've got Henry Mancini's music, too, and we're looking forward to seeing the finished product.

Fantastic Dizzy

Codemasters - October

Dizzy, my head is spinning. And it's about time, too. Dizzy's been making something of a splash on other less well known machines, but in October, Codemasters release this hugely playable platformer on the Master System and Game Gear. The Mega Drive version is reviewed in this issue, and we'll be looking at the 8-bit versions in next month's issue.

Evil Wizard Zaks has cast a doomy spell over Dizzy's homelands, which has transformed his homeys into geeks, freaks, pinheads and all manner of baddies. If that's not enough, Zaks is holding Dizzy's girly hostage *(Hasn't he got a decent bone in his body? Ed.)* in his mystic cloud castle. Dizzy must defeat Zaks' spell, get the girl and restore his homeland to it's former glory. Great stuff.

Loads of puzzles up trees, underwater and down the diamond mines in this undeniably cartoony caper, so keep you eyes, ears, nose and throat specialists peeled for this one.

Put your foot down in Domark's *F1*.

F1

Domark - November

Get your driving gloves, crash helmet and flame-proof underwear dusted down and ready for action. New from Domark in November is *F1*, a top speed, tyre-blistering racing game.

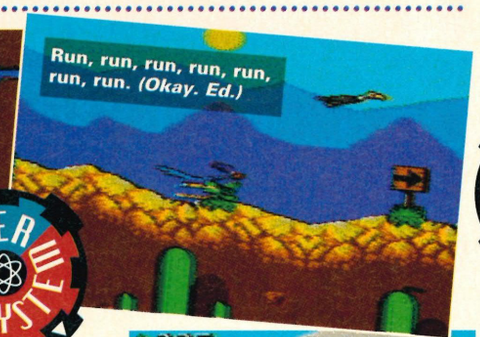
Expected prices are: Mega Drive £44.99, Master System £29.99, Game Gear £24.99.

Ultimate Soccer

Sega - September

Top simulation, detailed statistics, multiple playing modes, styles and different viewing angles should make this a highly playable game. But that ain't the half of it, not even an eighth.

This is multi player football *(Please no soccer. Ed.)* par excellance. What sets this apart is its compatibility with the new MultiTap system. Not one, but two MultiTaps. Eight players. Wow!



Road Runner

Sega - November

Road Runner (meep meep) dum de dum dum dee (join in everybody). Road Runner (meep meep)... oh I can't be bothered with this any more. Does anyone know the words anyway?

Anyway, Road Runner is a cute, but extraordinarily annoying bird that runs dead fast. Wily E Coyote is the archetypal antihero and everyone likes him more than they like Road Runner. And you knew all that already.

You play the part of Road Runner in a platform romp and every now and again Wily roars by on a rocket or some such to give you a hard time. We'll have a full review next month.

Bignose The Caveman

Codemasters - November

Bignose is the star of this brand new game from Codemasters. It's going to be produced for Game Gear and Master System formats, and is due to be launched in November.

Prehistoric platform pranks are promised as Bignose explores his Stone Age world.

Weird and wonderful creatures pose problems for Bignose. Dinosaurs, giant scorpions, sabre-tooth tigers and some wacky spiky slugs all make for a neolithic nightmare. Bignose must beat these beasties with his club, and he can then collect extra weaponry and magic spells to help him out.

MEGA GAMES

LARGE SELECTION OF USED GAMES, PART EXCHANGES WELCOME

IF YOU DON'T SEE IT HERE, PLEASE CALL

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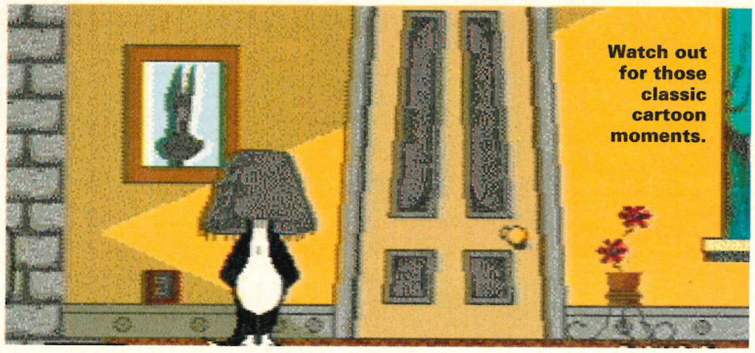


Sylvester And Tweety

TecMagic - Early 1994

There are no prizes for guessing that this is going to be a puzzley platformy sort of affair with Sylvester running about the place and trying to get hold of Tweetie.

The top, fab, ace, brill and groovy thing, though, is that Warner Brothers have been closely involved in the design of this licence, even to the point of supplying their original line art for the animation. So, instead of a computer games graphic artist having to sit there and try their best to copy the complex movements of some very familiar cartoon stars, they just had to scan in the WB originals and tweek them a bit. And it looks incredible at the moment, let's hope the game lives up to its promise. Expect to see a review nearer the end of the year.

The Addams Family

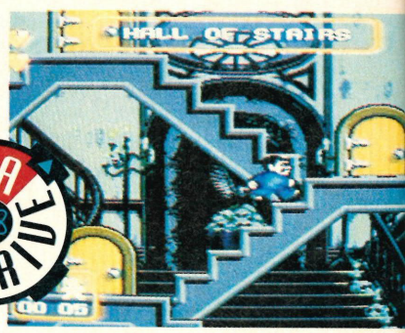
Acclaim - October

New from Acclaim in October on your Mega Drive, Master System and Game Gear is the spookiest, creepiest game to grace your screens. All sing along, it's... *The Addams Family.*

A big hit at the flicks, and with seemingly everlasting popularity on video, this is the kookiest off-beat freaky family that appeals to all ages, and now the whole cast are set to thrill and chill game-playing audiences in this platform adventure which is furnished with puzzles and appropriate Addams Family humour.

Devilish Abigail Craven's after the family's hidden fortune, and will stop at nothing to get her greedy hands on it. She even stoops so low as to cast a spell on good old Uncle Fester, forcing him to become her partner in crime, and has imprisoned the littl'uns somewhere in the ghostly ghastly mansion.

Expected prices are as follows: Mega Drive £39.99, Master System £29.99, Game Gear £27.99.



They're creepy and cooky, mysterious and spooky...

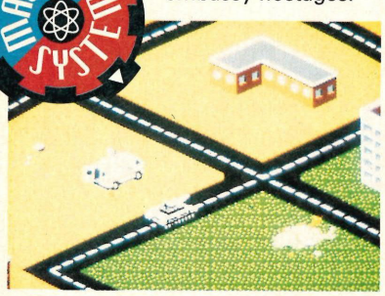
...it's *The Addams Family. (You're so boring, everybody uses that line. Ed.)*

Desert Strike

Domark - November

Stormin Norm, eat your heart out. EA's number one smash hit has sold almost as many units as The Beatles, The Stones and Elvis have sold discs, and now Domark are busy converting this classic to the Master System and Game Gear.

The President has selected you for the mission to defeat the insane dictator, General Kilbaba. Pilot the most advanced helicopters over 27 missions to take out enemy airforces and skuds and rescue embassy hostages.



Let's just hope the game is more exciting than it looks.

Micro Machines

CodeMasters - October

It's already made a huge impact on countless people's lives on the Mega Drive, but it won't be long before Codemasters unleash *Micro Machines'* own brand of madness on Master System and Game Gear players. Scale down a couple of hundred per cent, change down a gear and put that pedal to the metal. The turbo charged *Micro Machines* are raring to be raced over all sorts of obstacle-rife courses.

Formula one race cars, power boats, tanks, helicopters and dune buggies battle it out over the breakfast tables, bathtubs, sandpits and desktops that form some of the 27 different tracks. Animated presentation screens, superb music and full game sound effects promise to make these games every bit as attractive as the Mega Drive corker.

James Bond

Domark - October

Top secret reports just leaked to *Sega Zone* confirm that the world's best loved secret agent is back.

In *The Duel*, 007 must outwit the fiendish professor Greypen over 12 action packed levels. High profile espionage involves destroying the plasma sphere and rescuing hostages from Greypen's shuttle, while avoiding robotic fish, hot water geezers and port hole snipers.

To help you along your way, there's hidden Q cases containing extra lives, missiles, grenades and the all important computer terminals.

On the Game Gear, *James Bond – The Duel* is out in October, priced £27.99.

Royal Rumble

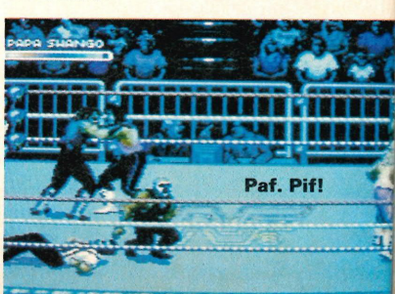
Acclaim - 22 October

The hottest action licence is primed to return to the Mega Drive, as the stars of *WWF* return in the biggest showtime sensation, *Royal Rumble.*

Acclaim's latest ring rumble is due to hit the shelves in late October, and the Mega Drive version will be priced at £49.99.

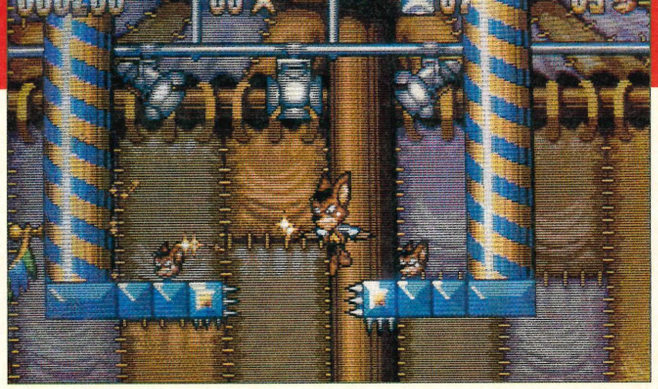
You and the world's best wrestlers are all in one ring, and once the rumble begins, it won't stop until there's only one guy left standing. As well as the mass rumble, there's one-on-one bouts, tag team and even triple tag match options.

And of course, all the action is in the big, brash larger than life *WWF* style. So, get ready to rumble.



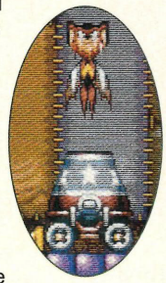
ZAP IN A BOX

There's everything from a bungee jumping bat to a remote control Godzilla this month, as RIK HAYNES presents a bumper crop of previews from the land of hard beds and undercooked fish fingers...



Aero The Acrobat

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Banished from the Big Top for playing dirty tricks when he was a kid, evil industrialist Edgar Ektor is out to destroy the circus. Continually sporting a smirk and swagger in equal proportion, Aero the Acrobat must defuse armed booby traps, collect magical stars and execute daring circus acts to impress the audience. Yes, we're talking platform game time again. There are 30 stages to conquer before a grand finale in the Museum of Horrors. '*Aero the Acrobat* is a game full of amazing stunts and high flying acrobatics,' reckon Sunsoft. 'A cute style is used with a twist.'

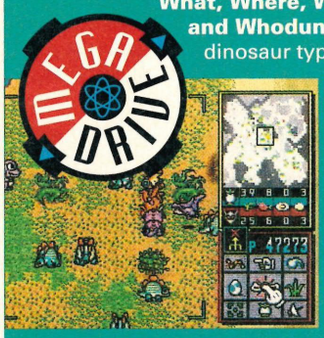


Watch out for: Aero is shot out of a cannon and goes bungee jumping. He also leaps through fire hoops, warp hoops and more. *(What about hula hoops, though? Ed.)*

Wobbly bits: Sunsoft are looking to merchandise their latest creation to any takers. Expect to see plenty of T-shirts, mugs and baseball caps. Gulp, there could even be a cartoon on Saturday morning TV. The show simply must go on, eh?

Published by: Sunsoft
Cart size: 8 Megs
Price: TBA
Out: Autumn

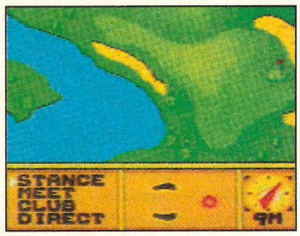
Dyna Brothers 2



What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Flying dinosaur type thing and a fairy head the menu in this off-beat picnic. **Watch out for:** Very cute graphics. **Wobbly bits:** Too early to say.

Published by: CRI
Cart size: 16 Megs
Price: TBA

Scratch Golf

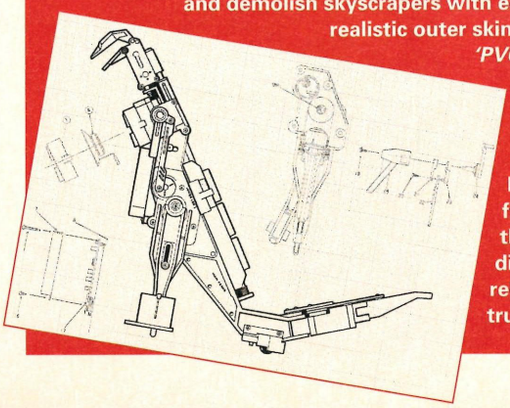


What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: More golf. **Watch out for:** Hardly anything to see at the moment. Map of the course looks okay. **Wobbly bits:** *Scratch Golf* is merely a working title.

Published by: Sega
Cart size: 2 Megs
Price: TBA
Out: TBA

Monster Mash

A dinosaur has finally arrived on the scene who completely outclasses the beasts in *Jurassic Park*. Godzilla, undisputed king of the monsters and star of many excellent low budget movies, is now available in gadget form. This handsome remote control toy from Tokyo Marui is a replica of the original from Ishiro Honda's 1954 film. In case you missed the special Channel 4 season devoted to Japan's number one superhero, Godzilla is a gigantic brute unleashed by atomic bomb experiments in Bikini Lagoon. He can spit out radioactive rays, swim at a hellish rate of 45 knots and demolish skyscrapers with ease. RC Godzilla is 500mm tall with a realistic outer skin made of durable vinyl chloride. *(Or 'PVC' as we call it. Ed.)* The controller can make him walk, turn and swing his tail. An enthusiastic spokesman for Tokyo Marui said, 'The mechanical box inside the body has a beautiful skeletal frame which is splendid itself and the installed speaker of sizeable diameter *(Or 'big' as we call it. Ed.)* releases big roaring echoes of the true Godzilla.'



Yumemiyakata No Monogatari

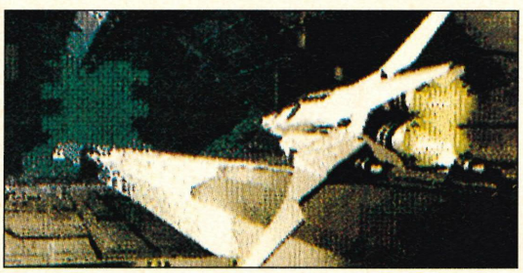
(That's 'Story of Dreaming Mansion' to you, mate! Ed.)

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Sega's answer to the much hyped *7th Guest*. Walk around a spooky house on a butterfly hunt.

Watch out for: So, who lives in a house like this? It's over to you.

Wobbly bits: Describing *Story of Dreaming Mansion* as the debut of virtual reality adventure isn't a promising start.

Published by: Sega
Price: ¥7800 (£53)
Out: September



AX101

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Swoop through asteroid belts, military bases and sandstorms in yet another 3D shoot-'em-up. We've seen it all before but there's always somebody out there willing to come back for more.

Watch out for: Since the first sightings of *Switch* and *Silpheed*, Japanese programmers have been trying to out perform each other in the intro sequence stakes. The start of *AX101* could be mistaken for a B-movie with robots and alien spaceships attacking Tokyo.

Wobbly bits: Early demos suggest the designers of this game have traded lots of pretty colours in for raw speed, so the backdrops seem a bit drab.

Published by: Micronet
Price: TBA
Out: TBA

Panorama Cotton

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Tarako Cotton is an apprentice witch and Silk is her friend. Together, they blast possessed forest creatures into submission. Cotton has previously featured in *Fantastic Night Dreams* on the PC Engine Super CD-ROM2 System.

Watch out for: Cotton and Silk are seductive and sweet. At least, that's what the publishers think.

Wobbly bits: Wait and see...

Published by: Sega/Success
Cart size: 8 Megs
Price: TBA
Out: Autumn

Pebble Beach

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Golf.

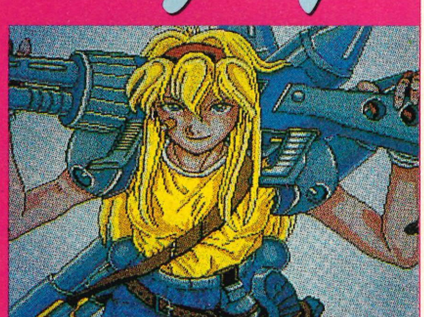
Watch out for: Plenty of expert advice. Trouble is, you need to be an expert in Japanese to understand it.

Wobbly bits: T&E Soft productions have a reputation for creeping along at a frustratingly slow pace.

Published by: T&E Soft
Cart size: 12 Megs + battery backup
Price: TBA
Out: October

Battle Mania Daiginjo

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Wild shoot-'em-up with two teenage girls driving around post Holocaust backdrops in a red three-wheeler from the swinging '60s. Hmmm... that's more like it. Armed with assault rifles and rocket launchers, these babes are on a mission to kill the leader of a religious group called Kikokukya.



Watch out for: Simultaneous two-player action, ahoy! It's *Gunstar Heroes* with a couple of hippy chicks. Status reports at the end of every stage incorporate a full rundown of your sharp shooting skills.

Wobbly bits: Religious angle could be a problem for some, especially if you're a hack on the *Daily Mail*. Apart from that minor quibble, it's full steam ahead. The Japs are looking forward to this one.

Published by: Vic Tokai
Cart size: 8 Megs
Price: TBA - Out: October

Shining Force II

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: More top notch fantasy RPG from the software labs of Sega.

Watch out for: Familiar characters.

Wobbly bits: We'll let you know in the coming months. Meantime, get practising on the original.

Published by: Sega
Cart size: 16 Megs + battery
Price: ¥8800 (£60)
Out: October

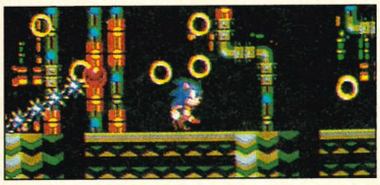
Sonic CD

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Amy Rose – nickname Rosy the Rascal – wants to have a snog with Sonic the Hedgehog. He's not interested.

Watch out for: Sonic does himself proud, managing to reach a fast enough speed to actually travel in time.

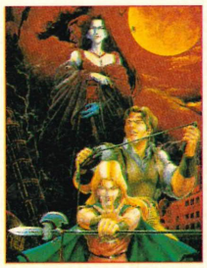
Wobbly bits: The theme song, belted out by obscure Japanese popsters Mi-Ke, will probably be embarrassingly awful. Nothing else worth mentioning.

Published by: Sega
Price: ¥8800 (£60)
Out: 23 September



Vampire Killer

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: *Vampire Killer*, known as *Castlevania* in the USA, first appeared on the NES in 1986.



Watch out for: Mr and Mrs Dracula.

Wobbly bits: *Rocket Knight Adventures* it ain't. Just once, I'd like to see a pair of platform shoes in a platform game. I'm afraid you'll have to make do with a whip.

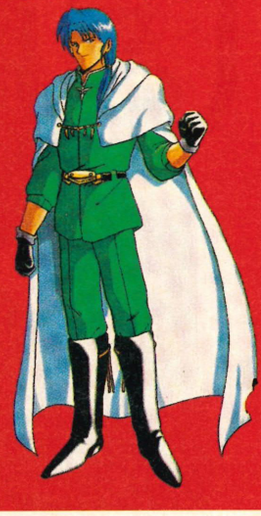
Published by: Konami
Cart size: 8 Megs
Price: TBA
Out: December

Phantasy Star IV

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Fantasy RPG of the highest pedigree. Hours of fun and frustration are guaranteed.

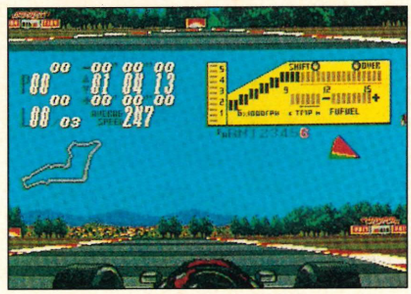
Watch out for: Along with *Virtua Racing*, *Phantasy Star IV* is Sega's hopeful for a chart smash this Christmas.

Wobbly bits: Judging by the lengthy adaption of *Landstalker* and *Shining Force*, it could be a long time before we get our hands on the English version.



Published by: Sega
Cart size: 16 Megs + battery backup
Price: ¥8800 (£60)
Out: December

F1 Circus



What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Officially endorsed by the Formula 1 World Championship, *F1 Circus CD* has just about every option you could possibly want from such a simulation. Nihon Bussan has thoughtfully provided an Overtake button on the joypad. Best of all, Murray Walker isn't doing the commentary.

Watch out for: Keep an eye on the temperature, fuel and RPM gauges during a race.

Wobbly bits: Claims of offering 'F1 live on Mega-CD' are a tad ambitious. Concentrating on petty details, such as adjusting the spring rate on a passive suspension car, could be a total snore.

Published by: Nihon Bussan
Price: ¥8800 (£60)
Out: September

Birds Of A Feather

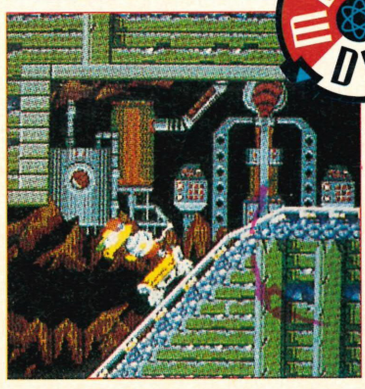
As if by magic, Japanese publishers are busy conjuring up Mega-CD conversions of proven hits on home computer format. Here's our guide to those tiresome titles known only as 3D role-playing game to the legions of equally sad train spotters who play them and genuinely enjoy the experience. *(Rik's only kidding, honest. Ed.)* It's a bit like organising a coach trip to a seemingly endless succession of murky mazes filled with monsters and stuff.

DUNGEON MASTER 2 – SKULLKEEP • Victor Entertainment • Mega-CD • Late '93
Essentially two adventures packed into one – *True Identity* and *Secret of the Void*. *Dungeon Master* was the first 3D RPG to surface and hasn't stood the test of time. Swords & Sorcery rating: *Red Sonja*.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER • Mega-CD • Pony Canyon • October • ¥5800 (£39)
Official Advanced *D&D* license but characters have got neat Japanese names like Ichi, Hiro and Rurusu. Slightly blander presentation than *Might and Magic III*. Swords & Sorcery rating: *Conan the Barbarian*.

MIGHT AND MAGIC III • Mega-CD • CRI • Late '93
Compatible with the 6B joypad and RAM cart for saving game positions. Looks pretty good for this kind of romp. New World Computing is producing a new *Might and Magic* every year, so there's scope for a sequel. Swords & Sorcery rating: *Willow*.

Finally, a quick mention for Sega's plans to publish Origin's Ultima Underworld on the Mega-CD later this year. It gets a presentable Swords & Sorcery rating of *Conan the Barbarian 2*. Of course, top RPG honours must surely go to *Landstalker*. That fine Mega Drive release is awarded the ultimate Swords & Sorcery accolade of *Jason and the Argonauts* without any hesitation.



Time Dominator

What, Where, When, Why and Whodunit: Yikes, a *Bubsy* clone already. Minute is the character you control. He can time travel 'cos of his highly developed robotic nature.

Watch out for: Minute requires electricity pods to operate.

Wobbly bits: Every single bloody thing about this release. Sorry, I just can't take any more. *(Go make yourself a cup of tea, readers. Normal service will return in a jiffy. Ed.)*

Published by: Vic Tokai
Cart size: 8 Megs
Price: TBA
Out: Autumn

EROGE

Send all your ramblings to: Erogenous Zone, *Sega Zone*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

We know that it's a flock of seagulls, a crash of rhinoceroses, a moppet of poodles (erm, we think) and a knot of toads, but what's the collective noun for several pages of letters? A seethe of letters, no that doesn't sound right. How about a rant of letters? Come to think of it, what's the collective noun for a load of collective nouns? A crush perhaps, or maybe it's a fitzhulm. If you know the answer to either one of these, then send it in. But anyway...

DEAR SEGA ZONE

Me and my mate Tristan have been having this argument that's been raging all summer, has ruined our friendship and actually resulted in me hitting him the other night. We've decided that our lives will be ruined forever unless we sort it out, and so are turning to our one source of common sense and straight thinking, namely you.

Do you know that advert on the telly where some bloke's just about to pot a ball in the corner pocket and a parrot bursts out of the pocket? The bloke says, 'It's Mr Cadbury's Parrot!' And then the voice-over man sings a funny song. The problem is this – I reckon the name of the creature is Cadbury's Parrot, and to be polite they refer to him as 'Mister', but Tristan thinks that the bird belongs to Mr Cadbury, and is therefore Mr Cadbury's Parrot, that is the property of Mr Cadbury, owner and founder of the famous chocolate company. What do you think? We're going back to school in a few days time and I'd hate it if this bad feeling spilled over into a new term.

You do realise of course that either way you answer, your readership is going to go down by one, since one of us is going to take the huff. But don't let this put you off making this decision which could cost you your job.

Colin Jarrot, Peterborough

I contacted the promotions manager at the Cadbury's factory, and he filled me in on the background. In addition to being the founder of Birmingham's finest chocolate manufacturers, Mr Cadbury-Sparrot (for t'was his real name) was a successful actor. In his most famous film, Cadbury-Sparrot played a scientist researching teleportation. In the climactic moments of the movie, his pet parrot flies into the chamber with him, and perches on his shoulder. The teleport chambers flash white, and when the door swings open, out steps the creature – half man, half parrot.

As a tribute to their founder on the 50th aniversary of his death, the advertising team at Cadbury's included clips from it in the advert you've seen. So, Colin, as it turns out the creature's simultaneously, and at the same time, Mr Cadbury-Sparrot AND his parrot, you're both right and should BOTH continue to buy this mag.

DEAR SEGA ZONE

Bill Walsh College Football? Shouldn't that read *John Madden '93*? Or *John Madden '92* for that matter, or even possibly (and dare I say it) *John Madden* itself? What's going on with you Electronic Arts people, surely you don't think that we're dumb enough not to realise that you're churning out the same game time after time with just a few superficial changes? I love *John Madden*, and bought the '92 version, but when the third one came out, I thought that they were really taking the mick, and this new version is just plain silly.

Anyway, enough ranting about all that, and onto the point of my letter. If games companies are going to keep on updating their games, rather than expecting us to fork out another £40, don't you think it would be great if they did an upgrade program? You could send back your old cart plus £10, and in return they'd send the newest version. Posting directly to them would mean that there were no middle men such as shopkeepers (so they'd get all of the tenner) and people would stop moaning about the high price of games and how we're getting ripped off all the time. Great idea, huh? I only hope Electronic Arts are listening. Anyway, thanks for letting me sound off.

Chris Sorrel, Cannock

Well, it's an interesting idea, Chris, but I do see a few problems. For starters, although we'd like to think otherwise, games companies exist to make money, and so they'd much rather get £40 for selling a new cart than £10. Also, what would they do with all the old carts that were sent back? They'd be drowning in a sea of little black boxes and dog-eared manuals with level codes scribbled on the inside cover. It would be a nice gesture though, wouldn't it?

DEAR SEGA ZONE

I spotted last month's gratuitious song lyric quotation, and claim my free game, *Micro Machines* please. At the bottom of page 16, the caption 'Like Kruger with a luger turning men into spaghetti' shamelessly rips off Young MC's excellent late eighties rap classic *Come Off*. By the way, it should have read 'Like Freddy Kruger...' Better luck next time.

Suzi Barclay, Tipton

If you're going to waste your time writing in with niggly little complaints like this, at least get your facts right. Firstly, 'like' was not part of the quote, as the quote began at the word 'Kruger'. Second, the quote appears at the bottom of page 18. And finally, Come Off *is not an excellent rap classic, it's a very silly song, that shall not be refered to again in* Sega Zone. *Ever.*

DEAR SEGA ZONE

I noticed on the stickers that came with issue 5 that you had one saying 'To be this good takes NOZE', which I thought was quite amusing. However, I've come up with one that I think's even cleverer and funnier. Why not say 'To be this good takes AGES' because that's an anagram of the first part of your name, and is also clever because if you're playing a good game then it'll take you AGES to finish it. Get it? Maybe you could put it on t-shirts and

NOUS ZONE

things. If I win a prize, can I have a copy of *Cool Spot* please? Thanks.
Martin Richmond, Cardiff

To answer very briefly – thanks. You're joking, right? No really. No you can't. No problem whatsoever. Next...

DEAR SEGA ZONE

You know, I've just sent off a letter to you, and it occured to me that Electronic Arts are cashing in on ice hockey as well. Time after time they just change the players' names, or include a four player option or something, and then expect us to pay our hard earned cash for exactly the same thing. It just annoys me, that's all.
Chris Sorrel, Cannock

Umm, well thanks again for that Chris, but I tend to think that we've kind of covered this ground already. Still, it's good to see that you show a healthy interest in something, especially as the youth of today are often misrepresented in the media as being completely apathetical and disaffected.

DEAR SEGA ZONE

I just thought I'd drop a quick line to set the record straight. In issue 11 you said that it wasn't THAT Robert Smith who sent in the codes for *Flashback*. Well you were wrong, it WAS me, and all the rest of the band helped me. You want proof? Standing on the beach with a gun in my hand, staring at the sea, staring at the sand. I rest my case.
Robert Smith, A Recording Studio

Blimey, you know the first line to a Cure song, so it simply must be you. Well Robert, thanks for last month's tips, and if you (or the band) come up with any more hints, cheats or codes, then don't hesitate to send them in. The same message goes out to any pop stars, so if you're Sting and know a thing or two about Ecco, *or if you happen to be Robert Palmer and know your way round* Jungle Strike, *then post in your level codes to the usual address. Thanks*

DEAR SEGA ZONE

At about three o'clock this morning, I was playing *Jungle Strike* when it suddenly occured to me that although it's a lush and gorge game and all that, it does have a few quirky plot details in it, and the more I thought about them, the more it annoyed me, until I had to go to bed. Do you know when you go and see a film, and there's a glaringly obvious plot loophole that allows the hero to escape inevitable death, or lets the detective work out who the murderer is because of some trumped up coincidence? Well they bother me too, and I frequently write to *Empire* magazine to tell them about them.

Here's my problem then. Are you ready? Suppose you get half way through one of the levels, and your next mission is to pick up some enemy commander or sommebody with vital information, but you accidently shoot him and are called back to base. Your boss tells you off and then sends you out again, and spook, everything that you blew up has miraculously been rebuilt. How can this be? It's just not real, is it?

This set me thinking, and I came up with a few more. Why do the riders in *Road Rash 2* never die, even when they go flying headlong into trees at several hundred miles per hour? And what's with Tails in *Sonic 2*? He flies around when it's patently obvious to anyone that his tails don't have the correct cross section or enough surface area to provide sufficient lift.

I just think that games designers should pay a little more attention to the finer detail if they're going to charge us over £30 for one of their games, that's all. By the way, *Empire* never print my letters either.
Tom Mulvanney, Preston

Well, that's where you're wrong Tom, because even though you seem to have a very blurred knowledge of the difference between video games and real life, we think you're making a valid point here.

Just why do games designers think that they can palm us off with a lack of attention to detail like this? What they should spend more of their well-paid time doing is making games like those you've mentioned more convincing. The feeling of being drawn into an otherwise gripping game can be undone by irritating little faults like this, and the net result is complete frustration.

Or to put it another way, do you think loopholes like these knock the game's entertainment factor for six? Why not write to us to air your views on this highly valid debate.

Oh, and remember, we ain't anything like Empire.

DEAR SEGA ZONE

Toejam, Toejam, Toejam and Earl. OOO-oooo music to my ears. Have you ever noticed that if you play *TJAE* with the sound down and put *Three Feet High And Rising* by De-La Soul on your stereo, you retain the lacadaisical feel of the game while at the same time having an all-new soundtrack? Surely there's a sequel coming out soon. Oh, say there is, pleasy, pleasy, pleasy. To the most richeously mellow game in the whole universe (including *Funkatron*) I send out a message of respect. Word.
Adam Hamilton, Penrith

Hmm, quite. Well Adam, you're either a new reader, or you've just overlooked the few lines we printed in our American report in issue 10. TJAE 2 should be out around Christmas, and we'll be bringing you more news just as soon as we get it. Errm, dude.

DEAR SEGA ZONE

I know what you're going to say, but I'm on a roll here. *Sonic 2* was just more levels of the same thing, *Streets Of Rage 2* never even tried to hide the fact that it was just a sequal. And as for *Road Rash 2*, well... *(Snip. Ed.)*
Chris Sorrel, Cannock

Er, THANK YOU Chris. Thank you very much! It's one thing to have an interest, but it's also important to have a life as well. Please get one now, or stop writing to us. Both would be nice.

DEAR SEGA ZONE

Do you know what annoys me? I'll tell you what annoys me, it's those new fangled tin openers that hold the tin, cut off all the top bit and then leave the entire top section as a razor sharp cutting edge. I used to have one of those rusty old ones that chewed up the top and would drop the end into the contents so that you had to push a spoon in to retrieve it, but when my mum bought me one of these new things. I threw it away. Cut fingers city. I'm a student, so most of my nutritional needs come from tins, but at this rate, I don't think I'm going to have any blood left by Christmas. Boo-hoo.
Tim Holliday, Bournemouth

Listen, Tim. If you think that your wretched rag of a letter has evoked any kind of pity within me or any other resident of the Sega Zone *office, think again. And that fake blood on the envelope wasn't fooling anyone.*

So, although we can't supply you with any pity, what we're never short of here, is advice.

One, you shouldn't be living entirely off canned food, try fresh vegetables instead, they're better for you and quite a lot cheaper. Two, don't you think that throwing the old can opener away was a tad hasty? There are plenty of people worse off than you, you snivelling ingrate. Three, you shouldn't be thinking about Christmas, you've just been on a four month summer break, so get back to your studies. Bloody students, eh?

Striking graphics don't necessarily make for a fab game, but they do make you sit up and take notice.

As well as the point-and-click graphic adventure bit, there're also some platformy arcadey bits to be dealt with.

The puzzles can be quite taxing. This one's got something to do with a teleport device of some sort. But whatever you do, don't mention *The Jetsons*.

When I first saw it I was reminded of those BBC2 cartoons with jazz sountracks.

Cosmic Spacehead

Whatever you do, don't mention The Jetsons, they said to TIM NORRIS as he set off to interview the graphic designer of the new Codemasters game, COSMIC SPACEHEAD.

When someone asks you to think of the typical Mega Drive game, what do you automatically think of? A platform game? Or a beat-'em-up, maybe? Not a point-and-click adventure, then?

And if someone asked you to think of how the typical Mega Drive game should look, what would you think of? High-Tech industrial backgrounds? Cute, extremely cleanly drawn characters, maybe? Not a weird, idiosyncratic 50s jazzy cartoon style, then?

If you're a bit bored by the look of a standard console game, you'll be pleasantly surprised by the unique appearance of the new point-and-click adventure from Codemasters, *Cosmic Spacehead*. It looks, for want of a better, instant, tabloid journalist, not-very-well-thought-out-or-accurate way of describing it, a bit like *The Jetsons. (We told you not to mention that. The Team.)*

I spoke to the graphic designer of the 16-bit version, Damon Redmond, about the game and how he went about designing it.

'Everything else is a bit ordinary, a bit uninspiring, and we wanted to do something a little different. Toby Eggersfield created the original look for the game on the NES and I just took his ideas a little further with the 16-bit version.

'The inspiration definitely wasn't *The Jetsons*, I hate it when people say that. It's just a kind of quirky style that came almost entirely from Toby. We tried a few things, but in the end we settled for this look with big slabs of colour with lines over the top. Do you remember a Golden Wonder ad a few years ago?'

I didn't (oh come on, I only remember my own birthday because my mum phones me up to remind me).

'Well, it looks a bit like that. A bit like those sort of jazz cartoons from the 50s and 60s.

'We both feel very strongly that there's not nearly enough creativity in games these days. Everyone spends so much effort making sure that everything's clean and technically perfect, but they don't seem to take so much care over the look and feel, it's just not inspiring.'

Cosmic's quite a cute little chap, isn't he?

I asked how Damon worked, how he actually got down to the business of creating the graphics for *Cosmic*.

'We tried a few ideas with Magic Markers and then we tried some stuff with montages, but in the end we just did the whole thing straight on the computers and it seems to have worked very well – I'm quite pleased with it.'

So what about the future, what would he like to do next?

'I'd like to do something where we could take the same creative approach as *Cosmic* and do something totally new and fresh – something where I could have a completely free hand.'

And finally, as they say, if you, like Cosmic Spacehead, were an alien tourist, what would strike you most about Earth?

'I'd be quite troubled by all the *Space Invader*-type games. I mean, we're all very keen on the idea of there being intelligent life on other planets, but in all our games we just blast the crap out of them. It's virtual racism and I wouldn't like that. I'd definitely think that Leeds United need a new defence line up, no question about that. And I'd think that Earth had the best ice cream in the universe.'

I wonder if camera shop assistants on Linoleum are smug too.

Cosmic's an alien tourist who found Earth and then returned to his home planet to find that no one believed him. So he has to set about finding his way back and getting some proof. It might be quite good.

Next month sees a whole host of new Sonic games. Just about every system will have one, and here are two of the biggies, Sonic CD and Sonic Spinball. Tim Norris took a look.

Sonic CD

So who is this Sonic The Hedgehog, then? What's all the fuss about? Well, it's like this... Er, no, on second thoughts, that wouldn't be such a hot idea.

If you've been alive at all over the last couple of years, you know who Sonic is, and if you've been keeping your ear to the ground you will a) have extremely dirty ears, and b) have heard that there's a new *Sonic* game on its way, entitled, entertainingly, *Sonic CD*.

In brief, it's a *Sonic* game and it's on the Mega-CD. We'll have a full review for you next month, but for now here are some pertinent facts.

It's big. It's got some quite entertaining Japanese pop music in it. It features the love of Sonic's life (or not, as the case almost certainly is) whose name is Amy-Rose. There are those who choose to call her Amy, some prefer Rosie, we prefer 'Sonic's Girlfriend' because it's a) more descriptive and b) er, there is no other reason. Sonic doesn't seem to like her much. (Ugh, girls.)

The plots in the Sonic games were a bit flimsy, but all that's changed. Now, as well as just running about the place, you have to keep travelling about in time to thwart Robotnic's plans. You have to go back to before he got there to destroy some stuff he hasn't put there yet and it all seems terribly confusing at first but I'm assured I'll understand it when I play it for real. And, to cap it all, there's a nasty evil metal Sonic running about the place, giving everyone a hard time and generally making their lives difficult.

It's bound to be a massive hit and no mistake.

And at the centre of it all there's still a huge amount of ring collecting to be done.

Sonic Spinball

Sometimes I sit here and think to myself, 'You know, Tim, there just aren't enough pinball games for the Mega Drive'. Now I don't want to be accused of trying to start another conspiracy theory, but I'm sure Sega must have some sort of sinister thought-reading device installed in my coffee pot or something because the new *Sonic* game for the MD is a pinball game. Spook. (Do we still say that?) *(You're the boss, you can say what you like. The Team.)*

It's like a huge version of the casino zone bit in *Sonic 2* (what's it called again?) and it has the potential to be particularly fab. But, since it's not finished yet, there's absolutely no way to tell if it will be. Or not.

There are some Sonic-like traps, some amusing monsters jumping on bellows, loads of colourful bits and pieces and everything trots along in a most entertaining way. Everyone's been complaining that the *Sonic* games aren't doing anything new or exciting. Well, pinball isn't exactly new but at least it isn't a platform game so we can all think of it as a Good Thing. E

Above: That's the monsters jumping on bellows, bit.

Left: And there're the flippers and a curled-up Sonic.

IMPORT

This year's supermodel

If we, in our collective wisdom deem a game worthy of 90 or more, then it's an absolute stonker. If you've got any sense and enough dosh, you just have to go out and get it now.

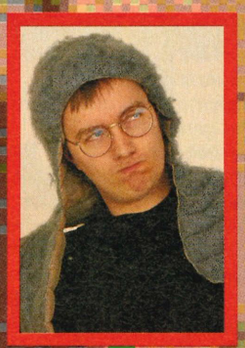
The Roly Polys

Oh dear. Any game that can't scrape 30 is something of a sad waste of space, and almost certainly a waste of cash. Take heed of our fountain of fact. Avoid games like this.

ZONE GROAN

MEGA DRIVE · GAME GEAR · MASTER SYSTEM · MEGA CD

Following an eternal quest for knowledge, we forever pursue new activities to gain valuable experience points. There first was a rumour, dismissed as a lie, but then came the evidence none could deny. Back-to-school folders, Mister Men rulers and shiny new shoes. Yes, *Sega Zone* are going to college.



TIM NORRIS

'I couldn't believe that the socio-economic effects of the Franco-Prussian war were so widespread throughout Europe.' Tim reckons that studying history can be fascinating. 'Look at this bit here, I had no idea that Otto Von Bismarck's foreign policies were so innovative.'

So he went on for the rest of the week, as if trying to prove the point that having a specific area of interest that's not shared by any of your colleagues is a mark of social inadequacy.

Being god-like in stature, Tim was naturally drawn to ***Populous 2***.

AMAYA LOPEZ

A little disappointed at what she regards as the conservative predictability with which we chose our courses, Amaya promptly picked a page at random.

A City and Guilds in Safe Handling of CFCs is what she chose. One day a week day release and she's trying to get Colin The Publisher to pay for it. The rest of us, disgruntled at the lack of right-on-ness, have started recycling all the cans that pile up in the office, and are collecting them in a big green bucket.

We tried and tried to drag her away, but Amaya's absolutely glued to ***Bubsy***.

DAVID ROBERTS

Our polylingual prod ed leafed through all the college prospectuses looking for a new language to tackle. 'Swahili, French, Hindi. No, I know all those.' He admitted almost modestly. We had to find a language that would challenge him. And it was Treky buff Jonathan who found the answer. Klingon. David's first sentence was meant to be, 'A single room with an en-suite bathroom' but since Klingon's don't wash it came out as, 'I want one room and a bar.'

David's own Gallic charm has met some tough competition from ***Asterix***.

PATRICK MACARTHY

Patrick scrutinised the prospectus, attended all the career advisory sessions, and settled on something he considered artistic and beautiful, something that would allow him to express himself.

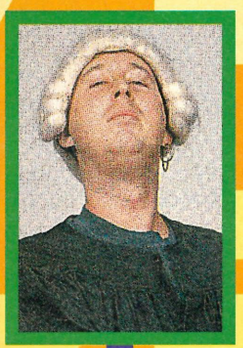
Combined Modern and Traditional Dance weekend workshops are what Patrick has chosen. And by all accounts it's going extremely well. Patrick aims to be up to performance standard in time for the Christmas panto season.

We let Patrick get his hands on ***Silpheed***, and the poor lad has been struck dumb.

TIM TUCKER

Tim submitted an application for a grant and he's now in receipt of a sports scholarship. He was jumping for joy when the letter arrived saying he was going to the US to learn about quarterbacking with his favourite team, the Miami Dolphins. His joy was short-lived when a clerical error came to light. It turns out he's going to The Miami Aquatic Mammal Centre and his scholarship has paid for him to learn about dolphin jumping-through-hoops tricks.

Tim has been in awe at ***Thunderhawk*** this month and has gone absolutely speed mad.



DUNCAN MACDONALD

Anyone who's ever seen Duncan's house can appreciate why representatives of the local council Health and Safety Department had been tipped off about the Macdonald 'kitchen problem' as it is known in the town hall. When Duncan explained that any danger to health was caused by ignorance rather than malicious intent, threats of legal action were dropped upon the condition that Duncan attends a year's course in food hygiene.

It's no reflection on his personality, but Dunc has fallen in love with ***Mortal Kombat***.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

Succinct comment on the game. Or a naff one-liner that fits.

OVERALL 78

Out: a month **Price:** a price
Publisher: a publisher

score zone

Been reading this quality mag for months, and still haven't mastered our simple scoring system? Perhaps you've just had a hard day and need us to spell it out for you one more time? So, here goes.

Graphics: Couldn't be more simple. This score takes account of both the animation and the stills in the game.

Sound: A periodic disturbance in the pressure or density of a fluid or in the elastic strain of a solid, produced by vibration. It travels as longitudinal waves. What d'you expect? It's how good the sound is.

Playability: We've designed a scale where easy games score low, and toughies get ten. Why? Because we can.

Addictiveness: I'm insulting your intelligence by explaining how addictiveness could be represented on a sliding scale such as this. And besides, I can't be bothered.

Overall: This is truly the crunch. Not an average of the other End Zone scores, this is the reviewer's informed and considered impression of the complete game.

JOSSE BILSON

Josse has recently been accused of being a boysy lager-swilling football-watching sexist pig, and, in what appears to be a desperate bid to shake off what he regards as an unfair and stereotyped image, has decided to redress the balance by taking on an artistic and creative course.

Now, two nights a week, Josse can be seen at college, where he's learning porcelain doll-making. The first term project is to make a 23 inch reproduction doll with a cloth body.

The nitros were far too much for Josse and he's addicted ***Super Off Road***.

VIVIENNE NAGY

Vivienne's been unsettled lately and has been thinking about going to college, but won't yet commit herself. Viv's current idea is to study for an engineering degree. Not that she's actually got any interest in engineering as such, rather that there's some deeper political force within her driving her to it. Viv's toying with the idea that it would be a good idea to build a career in engineering, where she can break ground for gender equality.

Vivienne wouldn't tell us her fave game, saying that she's been studying too hard.

STUART CAMPBELL

When the editorial team put the idea to Stuart, his face glazed in that familiar look of abject distaste. 'College? What are you like? Get out of my office!' The next day someone plucked up enough courage to approach him again, 'C'mon Stuart, we're all going to try it out. At least take a look at the prospectus.' We found him in more agreeable mood, and Stuart decided to do GCSE childcare.

'I love kids, I went to school with them, you know,' claims Stuart.

Stuart loves ***Gun Star Heroes*** so much, that no-one else is allowed to play.

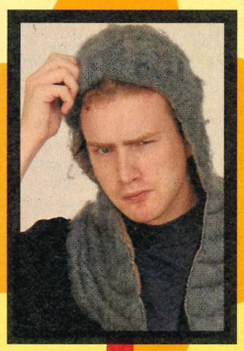
RIK HAYNES

Rik's been on the case with Jap In a Box which has involved a couple of recent trips to Japan. At first Rik was apprehensive about going, but rang us from the Tokyo Hilton, and sounded enthused about the whole deal.

As soon as Rik returned to Old Blighty he scurried down to the local college and enrolled himself onto an evening course in Japanese language and culture.

Rik's been on a voyage of cultural discovery ever since.

Rumours have it that Rik's been playing ***Star Wars*** on his Master System.



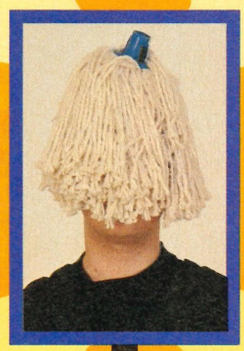
JONATHAN DAVIES

A fair few of our readers have written in saying how much Jonathan looks like an approachable schoolmaster, or sixth form lecturer. And they're right, he does. Not surprising then, that JD felt a twinge of irony at once more being on the receiving end of the lecture.

'I've wanted to learn French for years,' confided Jonathan, 'But I've never quite got round to it.

Thanks to the positive Gung Ho attitude in the office, I've actually got it sorted.'

Jonathan has been tuned into ***Asterix*** this month. It helps with his French.



ADAM PETERS

Our Adam is an all time caring kind of a guy, and has an ambition to grow a 'proper' beard. 'Not one of those silly chinny ones.' He claims, 'You know, a proper liberal humanist vegetarian kind of beard.'

Hardly surprising then, that Adam's keen on our mass decision to go on a quest for wisdom. No surprises, either on the subjects he's chosen. Psychology, sociology, philosophy and probably some other kind of social science.

This month Adam just cannot tear himself away from ***Robocod***.

MORTAL

And just as he picked up his copy of MORTAL KOMBAT, he looked TIM TUCKER in the eyes and said, 'Goodness gracious, great balls of fire...'

You thrilled to *Way of the Dragon*, you spilled to *Enter the Dragon*, now chill to the latest martial arts extravaganza – *Don't-these-films Drag On*, starring the inimitable Brute Loo.

As the film opens, we see Brute in the clearing of an ancient Shaolin Temple (just behind Sainsbury's in Shepherd's Bush), training a young Shaolin monk in the ways of the Dragon.

Brute: 'We need feelings. It's like a finger pointing away to the moon – don't concentrate on the finger or you'll miss all that heavenly glory.'

Pupil: 'Have you got any chocolate?'

Suddenly a car pulls up, and two suspicious looking heavies, with 'Secret Agents' written on their t-shirts, jump out and walk sinisterly towards the martial arts expert.

Secret Agent One: 'Mr Loo, have you ever heard of Shang Tsung?'

Brute (to pupil): 'Run along now, child. Tomorrow, don't forget to bring in that stuff you found in your parents' wardrobe.'

As the boy scurries away, Brute turns to the two heavies.

Brute: 'I don't work for the government any more. I refuse to compromise my strict Eastern ethics for a capitalist system which insists on

JOHNNY CAGE

Johnny Cage is a martial arts actor (you can tell by the shades, apparently). He's dead smooth, but not particularly weird, which is fine if you want to be a hit with the ladies, but not so great when you're fighting in a martial arts tournament.

This is known, rather disoncertingly, as the Package Check, but it doesn't work on Sonya or Goro.

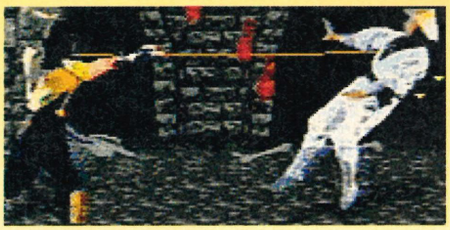
The Shadow Kick puts a shadow Cage beside himself. I'm not sure why that's good though.

The inevitable fireball move is called a Flame Blast in Johnny's case.

This is the death move. You get a chance to perform this whenever you've beaten an opponent, and it's highly satisfying. Cage punches the guy's head off.

SCORPION

He's dead, and he's at the contest to avenge his death. You see, it was Sub Zero who killed him, on a routine ninja assassination mission, and he's going to have to pay. His hobbies include gardening, working with intellectually challenged children and setting people on fire. Whatever you do, don't tell him the joke about the traffic warden.



Scorpion's one of the best characters to play, and here's why. The Spear move.

He removes his mask to reveal a skull, then unleashes his Fire Breath. He is scary.

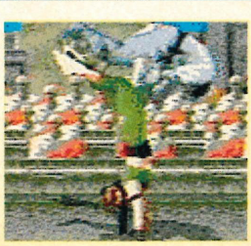
The Teleport Punch. Takes people by surprise somewhat, this one.

And this is the result. The poor soul has become human toast, even before he knew what the hell was going on. His last perception was seeing a corpse breathe fire at him.

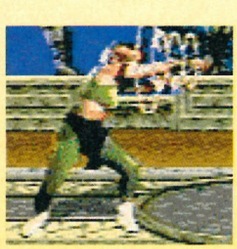
SONYA

Sonya is a member of a special para-military police force, and ended up in the tournament by accident, when following Kano in order to arrest him.

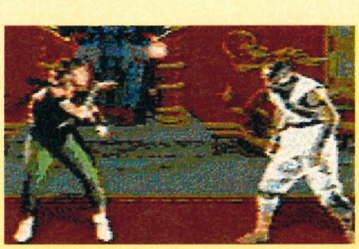
Her Flying Punch move is especially effective when the opponent is in the air.



The Leg Toss works over a fair distance.

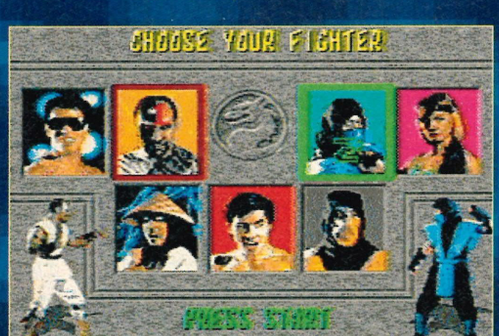


Ah, another fireball move. Predictable, eh?



Sonya's death move is attractively known as the Kiss of Death.

It's like a normal kiss, except it sets fire to you. It's a good job other girls can't do this, eh?

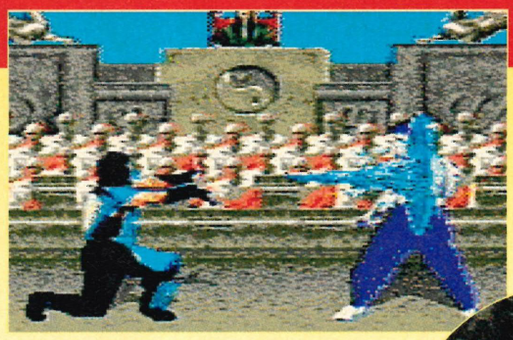


Choose your fighter indeed. Of course, none of them would look too out of place at a rave. And if anyone laughed they could kill them instantly.

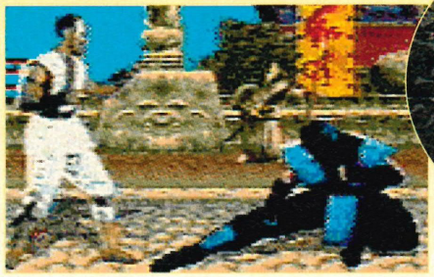
KOMBAT

SUB ZERO

SZ shares his initials with *Sega Zone*, and quite often gets mistaken for us. He's often asked which is the best platform game on the Game Gear, and answers with an icy blast from his finger tips. His official job is as a life long member of the Lin Kuei, a Chinese takeaway down the Old Kent Road, which doubles as a clan of Ninja assassins.



This is presumably why he's called Sub Zero. The temperature of his fireball effect is such that it can't really be called a fireball effect anymore. Yes.



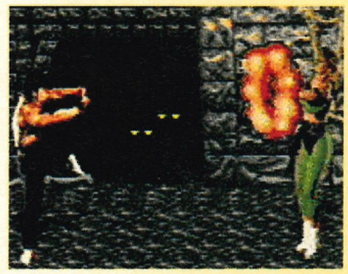
Sub Zero's Power Slide is a bit silly, to be truthful. But it is fast, so that's okay then.

This is one of the great death moves. Tear off the victim's head, complete with spinal cord attached.

LIU KANG

Liu is a Shaolin monk and fisherman, and he has been personally invited to the tournament. He is the last person capable of revenging the Shaolin way, and he's quite keen to do it. He also has an ambition to write for *The Angling Times*.

The Concorde Kick, in which Liu Kang flies through the air and kicks the opponent. So fast it's hard to block.



Liu also does a bit of a magic act as a sideline. Here he makes his assistant jump through a giant doughnut.

Kang's death move is a bit boring, not to mention physically impossible. Rayden's impressed.

But at least he finishes with a big punch, scattering a drizzle of his opponent's blood all over the, er, pitch. Shaolin monks aren't all that serene really.

putting the material wealth of a select few before the spirituality of the individual.'

Secret Agent 2: 'There's ten grand in it for you, you know.'

Brute: 'Shall we go in your car, or I can follow you in mine if you like?'

Shang's Island

In the projection room of a top government office Brute is being taken through the plan by a top government agent named 'W' (bizarrely it's his real name, but he kept it because he thought nobody would believe him). The place is surrounded by security guards and top secret looking people.

W: 'What we're talking about here is more than a game, Loo. It's *Mortal Kombat*.'

Brute: 'I'm listening.'

W: 'The history goes something along the lines of one of your movies. A Shaolin tournament has been corrupted by Shang Tsung. His former pupil, the half-man half-dragon Goro, has been the champion for the last 500 years, and between them they have managed to completely alienate the Shaolins from their own tournament.'

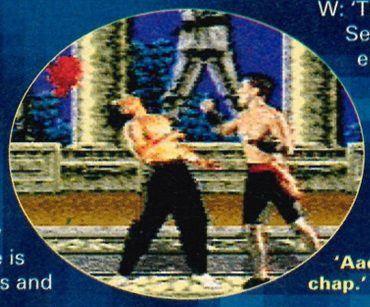
Brute: 'And you want me to go in and sort this mess out.'

W: 'That's right. We need you, Loo.'

Security Guard: 'There's one at the end of the corridor, sir.'

Brute: 'What's the nature of the mission?'

W: 'It's basically one of those one-on-one beat-'em-ups that have become so popular ever since *Street*

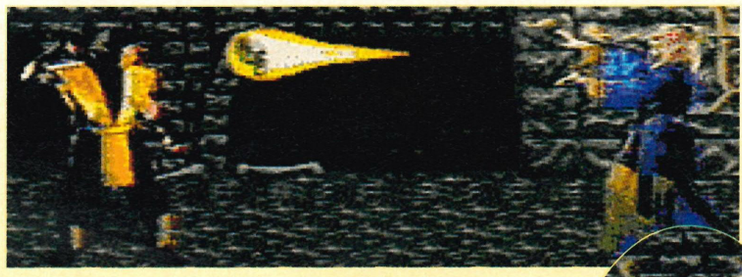


'Aachooo.' 'Have a hankerchief, old chap.' It's not a great caption, but hey...

The in-between fighting bit, where you get to smash various materials into two. Pointless, yes, but also crap. Oh well. At least it's different.

SHANG TSUNG

The organiser and final 'Boss'. He has a fireball move, but can also morph into any other character and use their fireball move, just for a bit of variety.

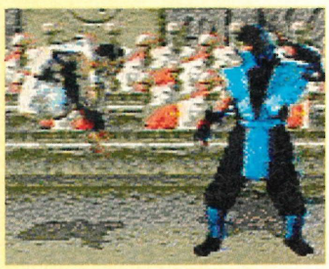


GORO

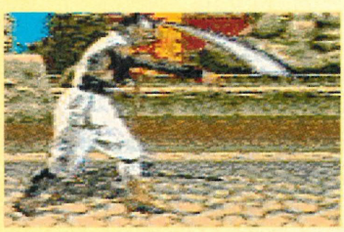
Goro has been champion for 500 years, which is much longer than, say, I've been playing Sega games. He has four arms.

KANO

Strong contender for the most evil man alive, this guy is nasty. He appears to have some sort of metal thing bolted onto his right eye, but I'm not sure what it is and I'm sort of sorry I mentioned it really. He is a member of the criminal Black Dragon organisation.

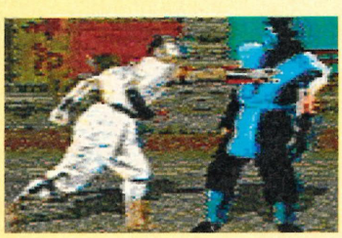


The Super Spin. There's not a lot to say about this really. He spins, and, er, it hurts people. Incidentally, I can do this.



When Kano wants to give up, he waves his little white pendant. Oh alright, it's another Fire Ball move, and it's called Spinning Blade.

The excellent head butt, which is not so much of a 'special' move. I have seen many stupid people do it.



Kano's death move involves him reaching inside the victim's chest and pulling his heart out. This usually results in death.

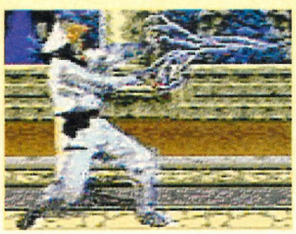
He then triumphantly holds the prized organ aloft, for all to see. Apparently he has other bad habits, like leaving the top off the toothpaste, and never washing up.

RAYDEN

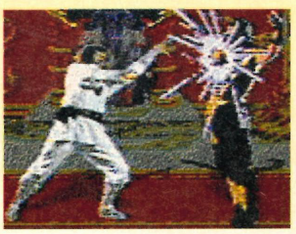
He's not a person at all, but a Thunder God. So how can he ever be beaten, and who'd try? Something to do with taking a mortal form I think.

The contestants always have time for a quick game of Rugby before the fight. Sorry.

Rayden has a Teleport, without the punch. The rest of his body follows.

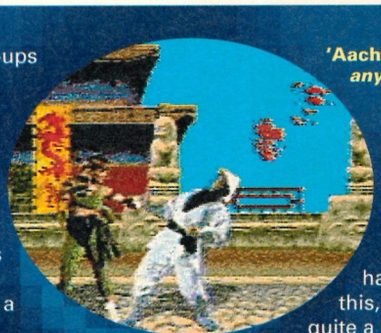


Rayden is charged with electricity.



You can't see this, as someone shot the monitor.

This is a god's way of saying "Hurrah". There's something slightly different about Rayden, can you spot it? That's right, he has a hat.



'Aachooo.' (Look, can't you think of any new captions? Ed.)

Fighter 2 showed that beat-'em-ups *can* have depth. Most *Street Fighter 2* clones have consistently proved that its success is hard to repeat, but the coin-op *Mortal Kombat* has been by far the most popular since *SF2*. It's impressed many games players with its digitised graphics (although *Pit Fighter* was doing a similar thing ages ago), its fast animation, but mainly its extreme violence. Because the characters are digitised, you can really feel the pain when an opponent takes a swipe at your face with an uppercut, leaving severe facial lacerations, or knees you in the guts at close quarters, seriously injuring your abdominal muscles. Now, we've got the Sega Mega Drive version for you to look at.'

Brute: 'Is it anything at all like the arcade original?'

W: 'It's an excellent conversion. Even though everyone's harping on about the reduced colour palette compared to the SNES, there's very little that's noticeably missing from the Mega Drive version, and one thing that very definitely is there – the gore. Yes, sneer at your Super Nintendo owning chums, because let's face it, the gore is important. As you fight, watch your opponent's neck snap back in pure agony, their blood spewing over the stone floor in copious amounts. Unfortunately, it's not quite all there – the bottom of the pit in particular is missing some of the more gory elements of the arcade original, but we can't be too fussy.'

Brute: 'Erm, I see, but is it as fast as the coin-op?'

W: 'It sure is. You're going to have to get used to the speed of this, it really does crack along at quite a pace. The control system works well too. You lose the High Punch with a three-button joypad, but if you have a six-button controller you can use it. Even if you don't though, you're not missing much.

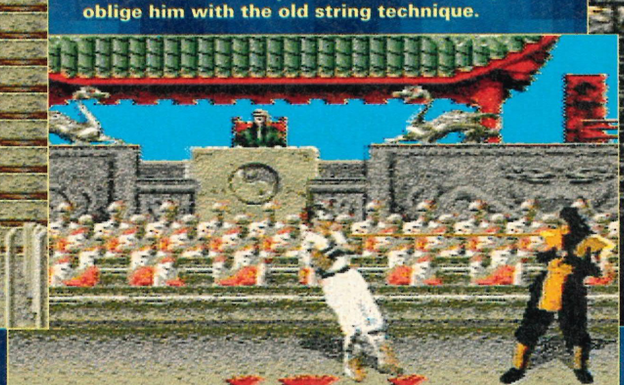
'Some of the special moves are a bit awkward and the fatality moves are seriously frustrating to get right at first. This is mainly because not only do you have to get the tortuous joypad control right, but you have to be standing in the right place too. This differs depending on the character, so you'll spend the first few fights quickly looking at the manual muttering 'towards, towards, away, away, away, A', while your opponent dies of natural causes in the meantime. It's worth getting them right though, because once you do, you'll have an even bigger grin on your face when you finish an opponent. Scorpion's death move is my favourite (a genuinely scary incident, by anyone's standards).'

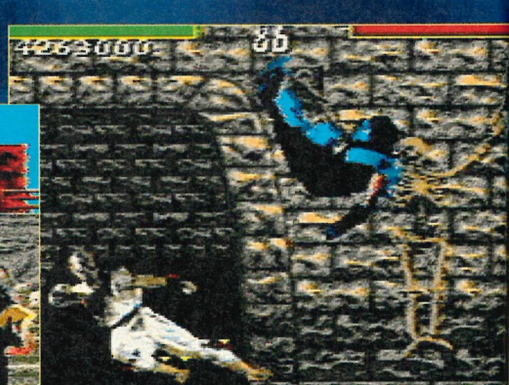
Brute: 'What are the other fighters like?'

W: 'We've prepared detailed boxes on each of the characters for you to peruse at your

In india they do this sort of thing for relaxation. Scorpion seems to have slipped off his bed, or something, and he could well be dead, actually.

Kano is suffering from a particularly nasty tooth ache, and asks Scorpion if he would kindly oblige him with the old string technique.





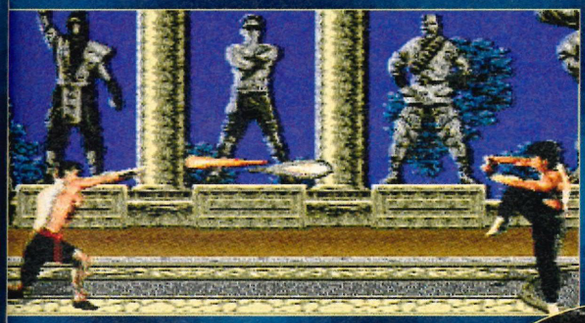
And a nice bit of formation dancing always helps to get the festivities going before a fight. I'm sorry.

REPTILE

Who's this? It's Reptile, you can tell by the fact that his name's at the top of this box. You can't choose him as a fighter, but he occassionally pops up and gives clues as to his whereabouts. Here are some of those clues. We may well tell you the full secret in a future issue, so keep an eye out.

CODE OF PRACTICE

Hardened *Mortal Kombat*-eers will be pleased to find the gore fully intact (well almost) in the Mega Drive version, but undoubtedly the moral majority won't. For this reason, the game loads up gore-less until you enter a code (ABACABB on the screen which wibbles on about codes). Thus Sega hope to please the hard core gamers, while not offending anyone who doesn't want to see their opponent's innards pulled out of their bodies and exhibited to the crowd at the end of a fight. Is this the way forward in the 'Video games are too violent' debate? Maybe, but just try taking all the explosions out of shoot-'em-ups and see if the games are still as fun to play.



It's a little known fact that *Mortal Kombat* is modelled on Flash Dance, the seminal movie of the '80s.

'Aachooo.' No I'm sorry, I can't keep this up. There's only so much I can get away with.

leisure. We strongly believe that one of the reasons for the arcade version's success was the nature of the characters. Perhaps it's the digitised graphics, but they seem to have a real presence, and some of them are quite frightening (you wouldn't want to spill Kano, Raiden or Scorpion's pint, that's for sure).

'Problems arise, not from the characters themselves, but from their fighting manoeuvres. Despite a great cast, they are in fact thinly disguised versions of the same character when you come to fighting with them. All the basic moves and close-ups are identical, and even the special moves are cosmetic variations of each other (usually a fireball type move coupled with a fly-through-the-air-and-hit-someone type move). The only exceptions are Sub Zero's excellent Icy Shot, and Scorpion's Spear. What this means is that the tactics for fighting practically every character are identical, leaving you with a lot less, well... gameplay. Compare this to *Street Fighter 2*, where fighting someone like Dhalsim involves a completely different approach to fighting Honda.'

Brute: 'So, are you saying that it's not the great game everyone's been expecting?'

W: 'Not necessarily, just look at the percentage at the end of our dossier. Be well assured, if you're into the arcade game, you'll be right at home with this. But being a professional government man, it's my job to point out that the game is lacking in certain areas, and these areas become more noticeable when you've got it on a home system. It might even, dare I say it, become a bit tiresome after a while. There are enough difficulty settings to provide a challenge – Very Easy, Easy, Normal, Hard and Very Hard – but where it really scores is in the two-player department.

'Here it plays its ace card, because the inclusion of the gore means you can really pummel your opponent around the screen, and cackle maniacally at him when your fatality move succeeds in totally humiliating him. Be assured, it's the two-player game which makes *Mortal Kombat* worthwhile, and if you haven't got any friends, think twice.

'So, Loo. Are you ready to take on the most fearsome fighting talent in the world in a tournament where the prize is your survival, and the penalty for failure is to be skewered in a pit full of spikes, burnt to a crisp by a corpse, or torn to pieces at the (four) hands of a half man, half dragon by the name of Goro?'

Brute: 'Well, the thing is, it's a bit awkward, you see. What with these library books that I need to take back – they're overdue, you know – and I also promised my Granny that I'd be round for tea later...'

Fade out, to that typical dramatic martial arts theme music.

END ZONE

Graphics

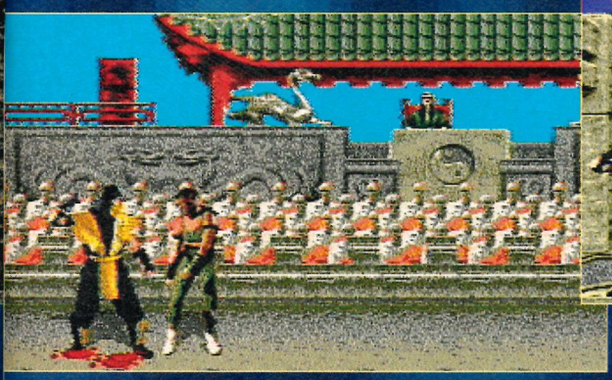
Sound

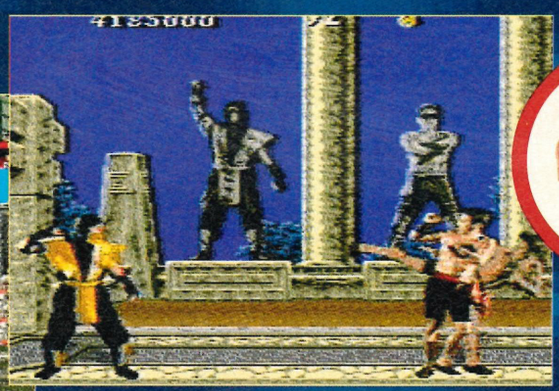
Addictiveness

Playability

Extremely stylised violence, but not the ultimate beat-'em-up.

During the 1994 Shang Island Open Tennis Championship, two of the line judges got into a fracas, and tempers rose.





Dropping a bit too much alcohol in your opponent's drink is always a sure fire way of disorientating him.

OVERALL 81

Out: Now **Price:** £49.99
Publisher: Acclaim

A man with some fluff in his hands.

I'm quite a tolerant person. But I REALLY hate this bloke.

This is what my world looked like. Notice that all my chaps are living in palatial splendour up here while everyone else lives in squalor down there in the south.

'God.' cried someone. 'You called?' asked TIM NORRIS stroking his white beard and playing POPULOUS 2.

You know those electronic gadget things they were selling a few years ago that made a variety of amusing weapon noises? You were supposed to put them on the dashboard of your car so that you could pretend to shoot motorists that annoyed you. Remember? You've probably got one chucked in a drawer somewhere. Well, they were all very well and good, but frankly, they just didn't go far enough for me. I don't want to just shoot these morons, I want to rain fire storms down on their pointy heads. I want virulent plagues visited upon them. I want them and their tribes to be destroyed utterly. Now. *(Watch your blood pressure Tim. The Team.)*

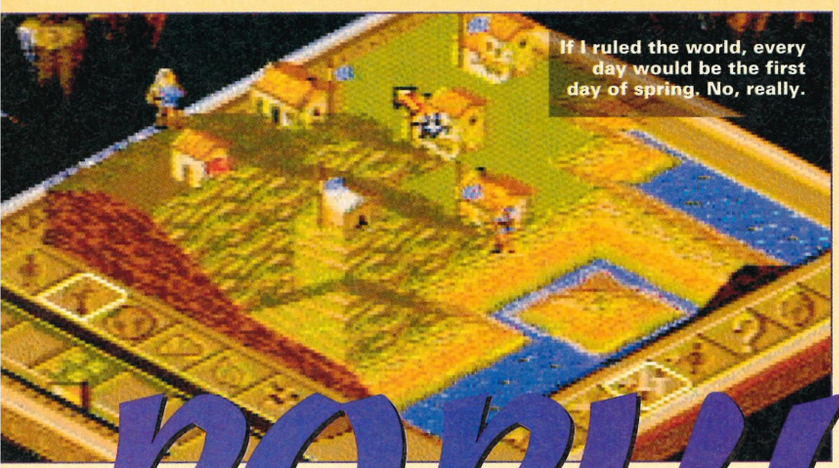
What I need, instead of a fancy gun-noise-simulating device, is some sort of fancy divine-powers-simulating device. Absolute power might well corrupt absolutely, but who cares about being a little bit corrupt? It never did Asil Nadir any harm. Allegedly.

Imagine my excitement then, when Virgin announced that *Populous 2*, the world's most utterly fabulous god sim, was to make its appearance on the Mega Drive. Games like this, these god sim things, are all the rage on the computer formats but there exists a certain mysterious philosophy within the murky world of the games industry that has, until now, meant that we weren't allowed to play them. There's a train, if you will, of thought which says that you and I are too slow-witted and impatient to be bothered with games like *Populous 2*. We're console users, you see, which means we're stupid. Apparently. Anyway, there's been something of a re-think on this 'console users are dimwits' policy and now we're beginning to get access to some really great games.

In *Populous 2* you get to play the part of the Greek-style god of your choice. In fact (bizarrely) you can choose to be any one of 512 different gods by mucking about with your facial characteristics (no, really). *(Aside: I wonder if I can change my own personality simply by wearing a different hat... No, it didn't work.)* I should have thought that the differences between these 512 possible combinations were too subtle to be noticeable, but it is possible to make 'a few' different types of god. ('A few' is a special term devised by chaos mathematicians and means 'a few'.)

If you don't do as you're told, I shall set fire to your house.

Anyway, you're this god, right, and you have a little bit of land to call your own, and a few devoted worshippers whose prosperity and well-being depends utterly upon your power and beneficence. They need flat land to live on and you have the power to raise and lower land to create vast level plains upon which they can settle. They're harassed by their neighbours –



If I ruled the world, every day would be the first day of spring. No, really.

POPULOUS 2

Left: Attack of the killer whirlpools.

Below: Er, it looks like lightning to me.

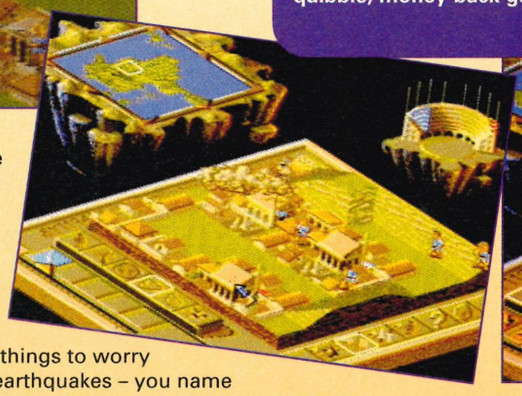
SOME OF THE LESSER-KNOWN GREEK GODS

Domestos – the god of household chores. He was a close friend of Ajax and Jif and spent many years alone in the cupboard under the sink as a punishment from Zeus.

Argos – the god of catalogue shopping. He charmed his followers with a 14 day, no quibble, money-back guarantee.

Sega Zone – Not so much a god, more a collection of god-like game reviewers and writers of exceptional quality, wit and style. Well known for their fondness for biscuits.

Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion – Not a god, as such, more a very useful reference book on everything to do with modern cinema.



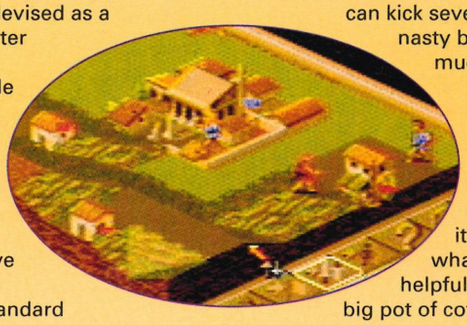
Armageddon – as in Armageddon out of here.

Below: I'm so dizzy, my head is spinning.

worshippers of a rival deity – and you can save them by smiting the neighbours with fire storms, sinking their cities into the sea and, as the game progresses, by giving them all manner of increasingly unpleasant things to worry about (floods, plagues, earthquakes – you name it, if you think a Greek-type god ought to be able to do it, you'll get it eventually).

You begin with only limited powers against a similarly inept computer-controlled adversary. As your powers increase, so do those of your opponent and, indeed, so does the complexity of the problems with which your faced. Nasty demon-type things wander about the place wreaking havoc – I particularly hated one that stomped across the land, leaving a huge chasm into which my people kept falling.

It was originally devised as a mouse-driven computer game and so it's thoroughly compatible with the Micro Trackball (if you should happen to have one). But it's very controllable with a standard joypad as well. You just move your pointer about the place and press the relevant fire button when you want something to happen – simplicity itself.



You can't see it here, but the walkers look quite nice.

Groups of your followers are represented by individual characters called, rather dully, 'walkers' (so called, I imagine, because they walk – it all begins to make a bizarre kind of sense). They walk about the place and then settle somewhere. If there isn't much room, they pitch a tent. As they prosper and reproduce, they build increasingly complex structures until, finally, they're living in a sumptuous castle, set in its own grounds, with hot and cold running water, colour TVs in all the rooms and full English breakfast in the Charlemagne Lounge from 7am.

It's immense fun to play. At first you just charge about the place raising and lowering land and not really being at all certain what's going on. Then, after a while you begin to work out what's happening and get a bit more involved. You find that, as well as flattening bits of land, you can tell your chaps when to wander off and find new homes, when to fight, you can turn your leader into a fab hero and, as I've mentioned at great length already, you can kick seven shades of it out of the nasty blokes and feel much, much better for it.

The map of the world is represented in isometric 3D and it all looks groovy in the extreme. Your followers roam endearingly about the place and it's easy to tell who's who and what's what. The sounds are helpful but dull. Just brew yourself a big pot of coffee, make sure your favourite albums are stacked and ready to play by the hi-fi and settle down for a night of world domination.

As my old mate Socrates once said, 'ποσωυ εγω χρειαυ ουκ εχω' and I think I know how he felt. There are, indeed, many things I can do without. Thinking about it rationally, I could live for many years without my Mega Drive and my Game Gear. But, assuming I did have a Mega Drive, I couldn't do without *Populous 2*.

Above: Er, yes, this happens in the game a lot (I've got no idea why I took this screenshot – maybe I should make notes). Left: See that rock? I ought to get rid of that by sinking it in the sea.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 89

Out: Now
Publisher: Virgin

Fantastic Dizzy

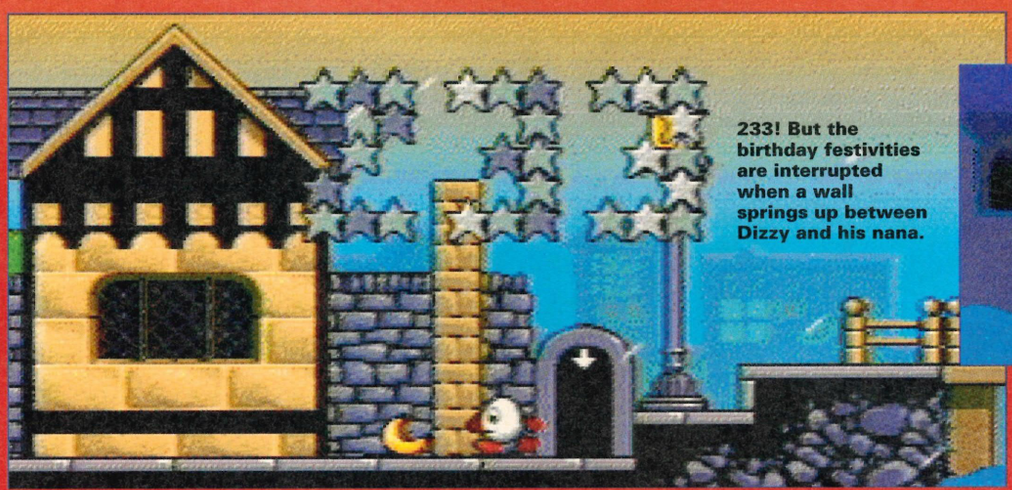
Problems, problems, problems (tut, tut)

You can hardly walk a hundred yards in *Fantastic Dizzy* without running into some cunningly crafted puzzle-style conundrum. To some the solutions are obvious. For others some serious head-scratching and thigh-rubbing is required. And for others still, the only way through is to try combinations of every object you can find till you're blue in the face. Some examples:

Here's one to start you off. Dizzy wants to leave his house, but the front door's locked.

That's right – he'll need a key. Luckily, one's just appeared *(Er... Ed)*, so all we need to do is get it...

...and open the door. Simple? Perhaps. But it's got to be done every time you play.



233! But the birthday festivities are interrupted when a wall springs up between Dizzy and his nana.

What a beautiful day it is here in *Sega Zone* land. Here's amazing JONATHAN DAVIES with a review of FANTASTIC DIZZY. Thank you.

Dizzy, eh? Wouldn't you just like to take a teaspoon and... (A word. Ed.) (Thump. Crash. Tinkle.) Oof! (Smash. Clatter. Crunch. Squelch.) Urgh! (Slap, slap, slap, slap, slap.) Ow! (Twist.) Ee-urgh! (Crash. Clang.) Whimper.

(Pause.)

Dizzy will need no introduction to those who've arrived at the Mega Drive via the ST, the Amiga or the 8-bits. Their shelves will already be grimmacing beneath the weight of some of the three million Dizzy games Codemasters claim to have already sold. But if you're new to the little fellow, er... Readers – this is Dizzy. Dizzy – the readers.

That's the formalities out of the way, then. Oh – except for one. Dizzy's got a girlfriend (there's no justice...) called Daisy, who tends to get kidnapped a lot. And that's just what's happened here. The perpetrator this time is the Evil Wizard Zaks, who's not going to let Daisy free till Dizzy's collected 250 magic stars which are scattered around the playing area. Some are easy enough to find, but to reach others, Dizzy's going to have to do a bit of puzzle-solving, mainly involving picking up objects in one place and using them in another.

Top five next Dizzy games

After the inevitable success of *Fantastic Dizzy*, the Codies must surely be wondering where to take the series next. Here are some suggestions.

1. **FANDANGO DIZZY**
Dizzy's girlfriend has been kidnapped again. Dizzy buys her freedom by performing a lively Spanish dance.

2. **HYDRAULIC DIZZY**
Dizzy's girlfriend has been kidnapped again. Dizzy effects a rescue using a clever system of pistons and rubber tubing.

3. **UNCERTAIN DIZZY**
Dizzy's girlfriend has been kidnapped again. Dizzy's not sure whether he should go and rescue her or not.

4. **RACONTEUR DIZZY**
Dizzy's girlfriend has been kidnapped again. Dizzy distracts her captors with entertaining stories while she escapes.

5. **INERT DIZZY**
Dizzy's girlfriend has been kidnapped again. But Dizzy can't go and rescue her, because someone's pulled his arms and legs off.

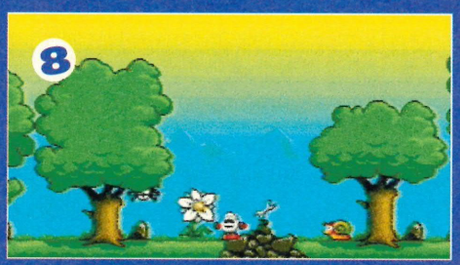
Incredible But Untrue: There are over 500 miles of railway track in *Fantastic Dizzy*.

A little further on, there's a deadly plant blocking Dizzy's path. Looks like that's it, then.

But – gasp! – here's a can of deadly plant spray. Surely it can't be this simple?

Oh dear. This machine isn't working. Which means, er... it needs fixing, that's what.

But it is! A quick squirt and autumn arrives early for our friend the plant. 'Wheeze' it goes, and dies.



Luckily, we passed a spanner a little earlier. In fact, look. Here it is, balancing cleverly on a rock.

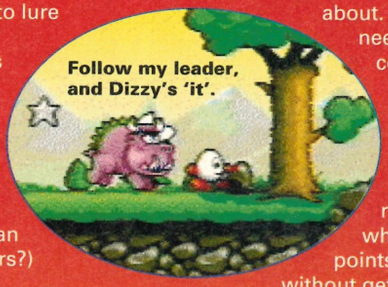
Back to the machine, out with the spanner and the machine roars into life. Sighs of relief all round.

With horror, Dizzy realises he's got odd socks on. And even the fish are laughing!

Fantastic Dizzy isn't going to appeal to everyone – that much is clear. Consider yourself unappealed to if you've ever cried 'Har har!' after knocking off one of your opponents in *Road Rash* or 'And that's for my little sister' after bringing down an enemy ship in *Thunderforce 3*. But if you're more of a dabbler in Mega Drive games, and you're looking for something bright and jolly that you can tackle at your own pace, then your quest is over.

All you've got to ask yourself is a) whether you'll be able to come to terms with the lack of battery back-up, passwords or continues, and the consequent need to begin Dizzy's adventure from the beginning every time you die, b) if you'll be able to show your face in public ever again after spending £39.99 on a (somewhat enlarged) version of a game that used to sell for £1.99 back in the old days (and leave you with enough change for the tram fare home, etc), and c) what 'fug' means.

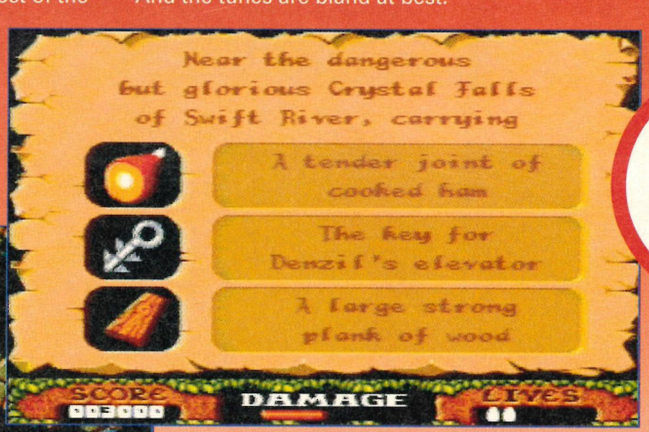
For example. There's an iceberg blocking your path. Rather than simply walking round it, you think: Ah-ha, what I need is some salt to sprinkle onto it to make it melt. So off you go to find some. But – oh no! – the only salt to be had is in grip of an eagle, who's flying high up, out of reach. You need a tasty-looking rodent to lure him to earth. And, sure enough, there is one. But it's in a cage, which is locked. So you'll need the key. But before you can get it, etc. (Actually, readers, those particular puzzles aren't in *Fantastic Dizzy* at all. I just made them up. Good, eh? Can I have a job with Codemasters?) *(Be my guest. Ed.)*



So, you see, you're going to have to think a bit if you're going to get anywhere with *Fantastic Dizzy*. Not too hard, mind. Most of the puzzles are pretty easy, especially the ones near the beginning. Although, thinking about it, a perusal of any of the world's games problem pages shows that people do frequently find *Dizzy* games a little too taxing. So maybe they are actually quite hard. (Or perhaps we've just been given a unique insight into the demography of typical *Dizzy* game buyers.)

There is a bit more to *Fantastic Dizzy* than just picking up objects and carrying them about. It's a platform game, so you'll need to be pretty handy with the controller. And there are some bonus game-type bits, too. The two I've found to date are a sort of tile puzzle thing, where you get an extra life if you complete it within a time limit, and a runaway railway truck section where you've got to switch the points right so you pick up the stars without getting squashed by boulders. Neither gave me any trouble, I'm proud to report. Graphics? It's no gobsmacker to look at. And the tunes are bland at best.

Dizzy's the one with red gloves and shoes on.



You have two minutes to work out the connection between these three objects.65

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

An enduring platform-cum-adventure romp. But it's not for everyone...

OVERALL 75

Out: October **Price:** £39.99
Publisher: Codemasters

This bit's fairly tricky. You have to pilot your little dinghy past the stonking great T Rex, while lobbing gas bombs to immobilise him. You may feel like a fearsome adventurer in a rubber boat, but to him you're just an elaborate and highly evolved doughnut.

JURASS

The rapids drag you down, so you have to steer carefully.

All was quiet in the power station. A good time to practice my diving, thought Dan.

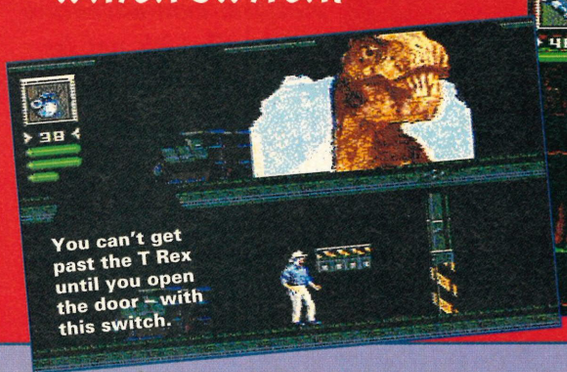
Man meets ancient penguin face to face. Unless man shoots penguin, man gets eaten. So decrees the law of nature.

You've seen the film, bought the merchandise and generally taken part in some form of JURASSIC PARK hype. TIM TUCKER ignores the world around him for the sake of objective journalism. Or so he says.

If there's one thing you have to get used to when reviewing games for *Sega Zone*, it's the constant barrage of comments from passers-by. Before you even get a chance to start pondering whether the game is any good or not, you've had half a dozen opinions thrust upon you from mildly interested pedestrians on their way to making a cup of tea.

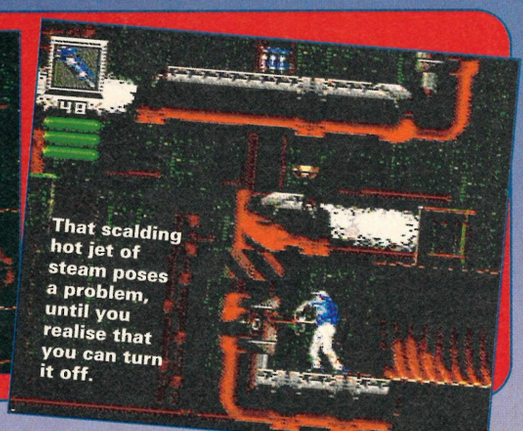
I mention this because *Jurassic Park*, more than any other game so far, has prompted an absurdly unnecessary number of remarks from would-be games reviewers, and every single

WHICH SWITCH?



You can't get past the T Rex until you open the door – with this switch.

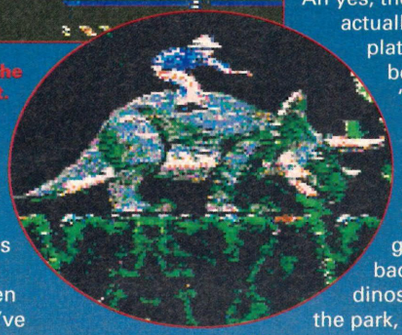
More interactive knob twiddling is required to get up the steps.



That scalding hot jet of steam poses a problem, until you realise that you can turn it off.

IC PARK

Crying and begging for mercy doesn't work with dinosaurs.



Customised skateboards are all the rage in LA at the moment.

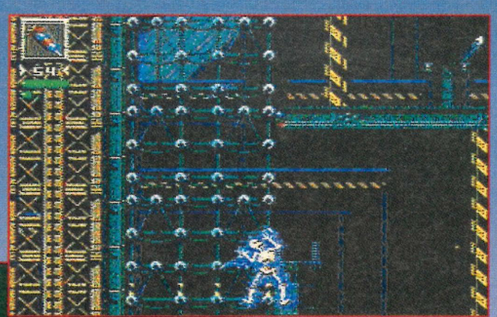
one of them has said, 'Wow, that looks really good. I bet that's really good that one.' *(Every single one? Ed.)* You may well feel the same when you see it first, because it does look, er, really very good.

The opening stage is a lush green jungle affair – you're Grant and you've crashed in Jurassic Park, near the T Rex pen – with lots of sunlight-through-the-trees and rain-drops-dancing-on-the-leaves effects to spice up the atmosphere. Add to this the beautiful sound, including genuinely suspenseful music and gorgeous wildlife bird calls and animal squawks, and it can't be denied that it's all a very attractive experience.

After basking in the prehistoric glow for a while, you press the D-pad to see what your character's like in motion. Blow me if it doesn't look like *Flashback*, even down to the 'climbing on to higher platforms' manoeuvre. The trouble is, it's not got the fluidity of *FB* – there seems to be less frames of animation or something, because it's all a bit jerky. Still, it's a big improvement on your standard platform game's limited animation, even if it is a bit of a rip off.

All this explains why the gawpers were impressed, but they're not writing this review, I am – although I think I might go and have a cup of tea actually. Excuse me a minute...

Right, erm, where were we? Ah yes, the next stage is to actually start playing it. It's a platform game, which does beg cries of 'safe', 'predictable' and 'stop waffling on with your anecdotes about your friends at the office, and tell us whether *Jurassic Park*'s any good or not'. The baddies are, of course, dinosaurs let loose around the park, and they are perhaps the most eagerly anticipated element of the game, just as they were in the movie. The quality of the dinos varies from the frighteningly effective to the laughably cute. Special mention must go to the Raptors (who you can also choose to play, but more on that later). They are the most lovingly detailed and best animated sprites, and do actually look like their big screen



The Archaos circus troupe have a highly effective show.

These are those cute ones in the film which smile at everyone.

CONVERSATION WITH A DINOSAUR

Dinosaurs don't exist any more do they? Or *do* they? OR DO THEY?

A strange incident happened to me recently which I feel I must impart to you readers. It was a perfectly normal evening, and after reading a few pages of Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* I decided to turn in for the night. I suffered a fitful rest and spent most of the night tossing and turning in a feverish anxiety, when I was awoken by a strange rustling sound. Pulling the covers down, I peered into the gloom, and blow me if there wasn't a Tyrannosaurus Rex standing at the end of the bed.

Me: 'Bloody hell, a dinosaur.'

Dinosaur: 'Tim, I have been sent by a force you cannot comprehend.'

Me: 'Bloody hell, a talking dinosaur.'

Dinosaur: 'My name is Hexa Cadolophorous, but if you want, you can call me... Dave.'

Me: 'Hello.'

Dinosaur: 'I can grant you the answers to three questions, but three only, so ask with caution.'

I was entering a competition in the *Literary Review* at the time, in which the top prize was a specisl scratch and sniff version of Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*, and I was stuck on one of the questions – now was my chance.

Me: 'What was Lewis Carrol's real name?'

Dinosaur: 'Charles Lutwidge Dodgson.' Excellent, I thought.

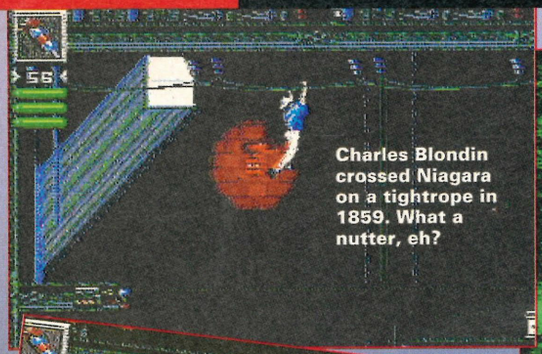
Dinosaur: 'You have two more questions.'

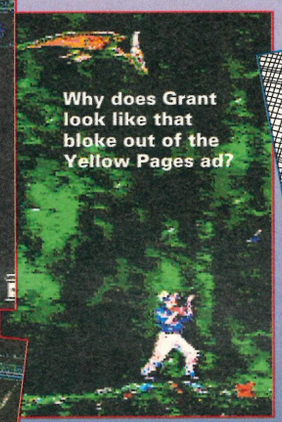
Me: 'Will the Miami Dolphins make it to the Super Bowl next season?'

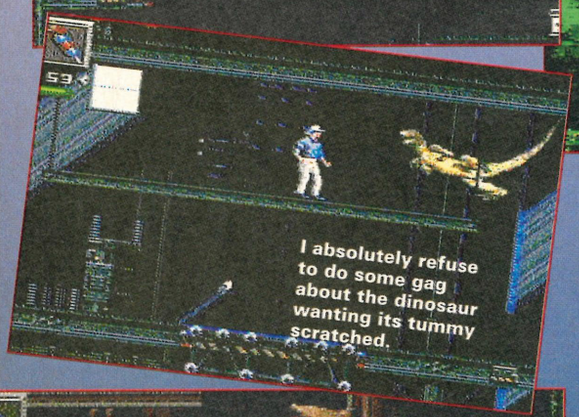
Dinosaur: 'It depends. If they have no injuries at Linebacker, and they can establish a dependable running game, they're certainly in with a chance.' Superb, I thought.

Dinosaur: 'You have one more question. Don't you want to ask me something with more relevance to the wider implications of your existence?'

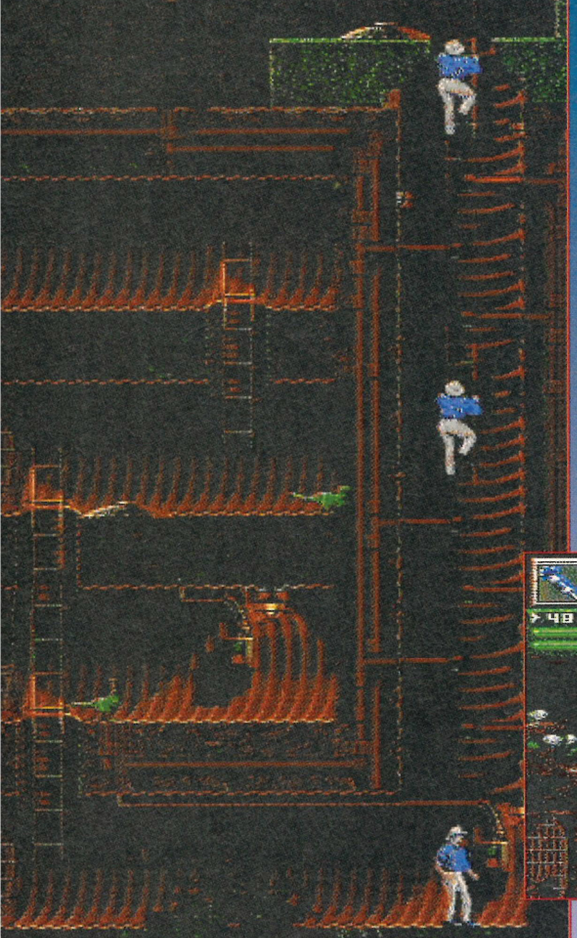
Yes, I thought. This is my chance to discover some of the deeper mysteries of the universe, enigmas previously unknown to the minds of mortals. Fortunately, I had my book of *1001 Enigmas Unknown to the Minds of Mortals* sitting on my bedside table, and as I reached over to pick it up... I was awoken by my Mum, who'd brought me up a cup of tea before I went to work. So, it appears it was all a dream. And dinosaurs don't actually exist any more. Do they? Or *do* they? OR DO THEY?


Charles Blondin crossed Niagara on a tightrope in 1859. What a nutter, eh?


Why does Grant look like that bloke out of the Yellow Pages ad?

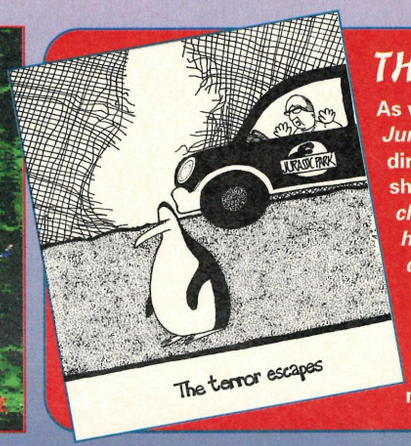

I absolutely refuse to do some gag about the dinosaur wanting its tummy scratched.

You only have seconds to get up the ladder and gas the dino.



Grant dashes around the power station desperately looking for the Gents.

THE DINOSAUR FILE



As we proposed in last month's *Jurassic Park* preview, penguins are directly descended from dinosaurs and share many of their attributes. *(It's chickens, for goodness sake. We don't have to go through this rubbish again do we? Ed.)* We asked leading international cartoonist Gary Lampoon *(Eh? Ed.)* to provide us with his impression of how Jurassic Park would look, with this fact in mind. Frightening, isn't it?

counterparts. What a shame, then, that the Dilophosauruses appear to have just arrived off the boat from an existence in a completely different game. And the Compys are ludicrously out of place. These are small lizards, which have the annoying habit of leaping up to your throat and tearing lumps of flesh out of it, but they look like little Kermit the Frogs. Until they leap up to your throat and tear lumps of flesh out of it, of course. But hey, the T Rex is not bad at all, and he's the most important. He pops up with alarming regularity, and appears to be impossible to kill.

Other perils include the Pterodactyl, the Triceratops and the Brachiosaurus, but disappointingly you're not allowed to kill any of them. You're armed with a tranquilliser dart gun and a stun gun, which enable you to either stun or paralyse the dinosaurs. Call me old fashioned, but I rather like filling something full of explosively charged lead and see the very fabric of it being ripped to shreds in a haze of blood, tissue, flesh and bone. But that's me, I guess. What all this does mean, however, is that you have to move along quite quickly. A shot to a dinosaur may immobilise it, but it'll be back on its feet in no time. On your way round the park you'll find pick-ups, including weapon power-ups and medical health supplies. You'll also find a fair amount of interactive objects to use, such as chests to jump on, vines and power cords to climb and switches to, er, switch.

Where *Jurassic Park* falls down is in its gameplay. It has the annoying habit of throwing perils at you without any warning whatsoever, and so rapidly becomes an exercise in memorising where they occurred so you can avoid them next time round. And all the puzzles and conundrums give you no clue as to what you should be doing, so you spend loads of time trying every single possibility until you finally get it right. This is especially true of the third stage, the river level, which would otherwise be fun to play. It's a shame, because a lot of the elements of *Jurassic Park* work very well. It's just so frustrating, that it rapidly ceases to be fun. Luckily there is a password system, because once you've finished a stage, you really don't want to go back and do it again.

Geoff had by far the best skateboard.

The other option is to 'be' the Raptor instead of Grant. I'm not going to say much about this, because it's frankly worse than the Grant section. Controlling the Raptor is awkward, and there are no objects to manipulate or puzzles to sort out. A complete waste of time, unless you're desperate to 'be' a dinosaur.

Jurassic Park is a disappointment. It's got some excellent touches (the backdrops, the sound, *some* of the gameplay), but it's only halfway towards being a good game. It is playable, and it is reminiscent of the book, if not the film so much. But there are plenty of better platformers around, and if you're spending this amount of money you're better off going for one of them, quite honestly.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

Sonic with balls? Yeah, chinny reckon.

OVERALL 64

Out: Now **Price:** £49.99
Publisher: Sega

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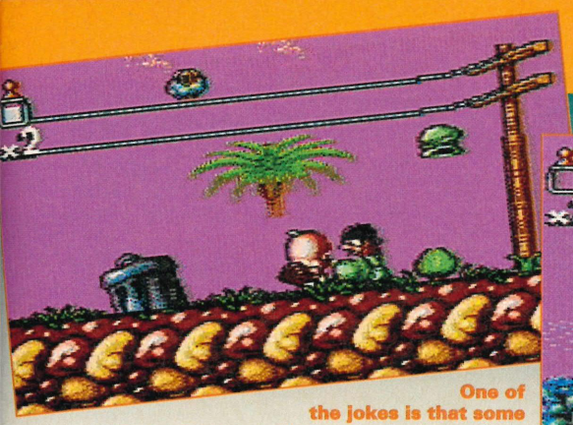
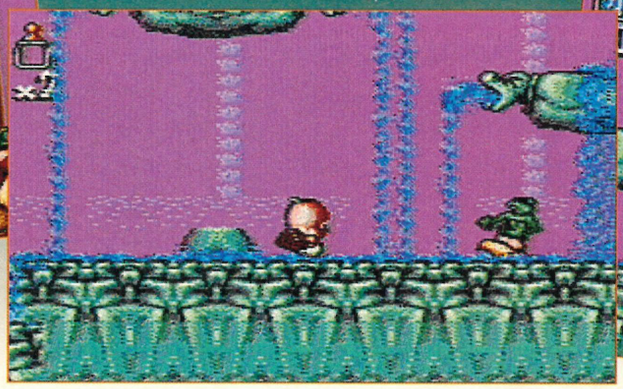
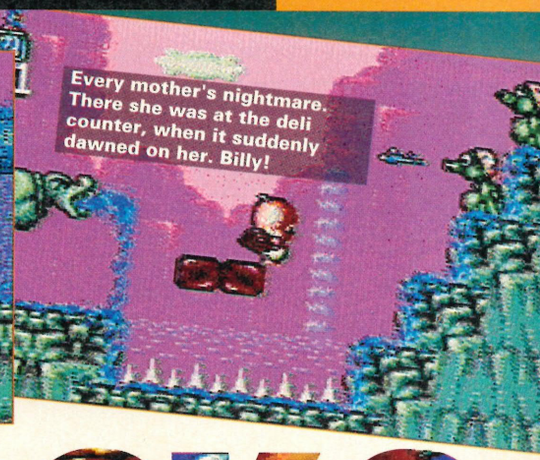


One of the jokes is that some dinosaurs turn out to be people dressed up.



A surfing, er, thing. Very amusing. He looks so content, you feel bad about hitting him.



CHUCK ROCK 2

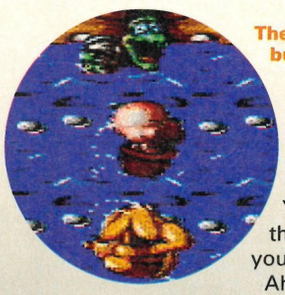
Son Of Chuck

A goo ga-ga. Goo ga, ga. Ga CHUCK ROCK 2, SON OF CHUCK, goo ga-ga. A goo TIM TUCKER, ga ga?

There's a couple of baby related things which really baffle me, and I've got to get them off my chest. Why, when a gaggle of women aged anything between 20 and 85 encounter a baby, do they suddenly contort their voices into the most grotesque high pitched wailing sound, and talk absolute crap, like 'Eeeeeets-ee-weeetsy-woo'? The baby doesn't know what the hell's going on, so it must be for their own sake. The first time I encountered this behaviour, I rushed off to call an ambulance, under the impression that the poor girls were undergoing some sort of mass epileptic fit.

And secondly, why do babies have to go through the first five years of their life under the delusion that every single noun ends in 'y'? Is it some cruel joke on the part of parents, to indoctrinate the child by saying, 'Oooh look, a horse-y,' or 'Eat some nice egg-y'. The infant thinks he's getting the hang of English grammar, that he's grasped the fundamentals of some non-existent noun endings, when eventually it dawns on him – hardly any nouns end in 'y' at all, it was all a big joke. Poor kid. It's not as if adding 'y' to a noun makes it any easier to say or anything, I mean it makes the word longer for goodness sake.

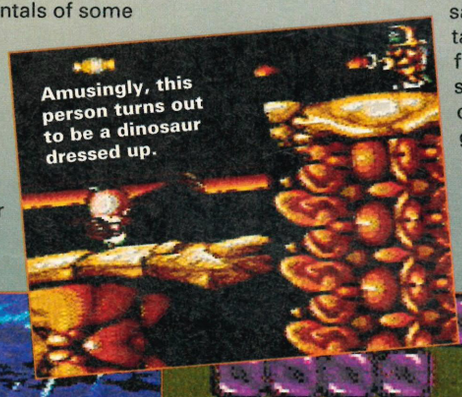
Anyway, I was reminded of these kiddie conundrums while playing *Chuck Rock 2 – Son Of Chuck*, because in it you play, get this... a baby. Yes, you are the eponymous son of Chuck, and your father has been kidnapped by Brick Jagger, a rival car salesman. You have to get your dad back, by hopping around a great deal of platforms and bashing people over the head with your club. Simple really. If you haven't seen the first game, all this takes place in a distant, Flinstones-style past, with bags of anachronistic humour.

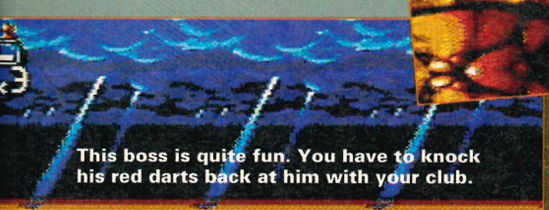


The boat race, where you pound the buttons furiously. It's a cinch.

It's a wonderful game. The graphics are a lovely indication of what the Master System can do when it puts its chips to it, and the gameplay is just fine. The first couple of bosses are a bit dull, but that's to be expected, as the learning curve is a nice, gentle slope designed to ease you into the action. There are six levels to get through, each containing 'numerous zones' (it says here), so it should take you a good while to finish. What makes it stand out from the run-of-the-mill platform games is an ingenious puzzle element which slots comfortably into the game, rather than feeling like a tacked on gimmick. In the second level, for example, you have to avoid certain monkeys, while using others to climb on, and get through the level. You need to use bananas to tempt the useful monkeys to move where you want them to go.

Ahh, if all platformers were this good, there'd be no need to produce a monthly magazine telling you which ones to buy, and I'd be out of a job. So it's a good job most aren't really.





This boss is quite fun. You have to knock his red darts back at him with your club.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

Another great platforming addition to your Master System collection.

OVERALL 83

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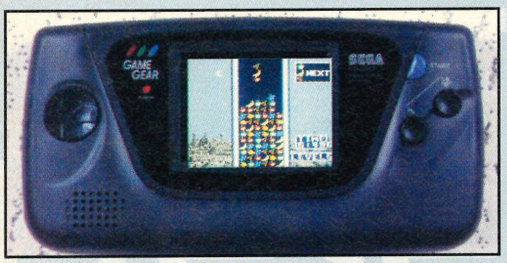

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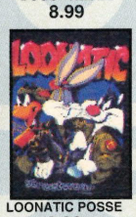
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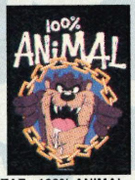
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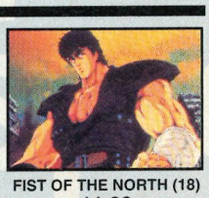
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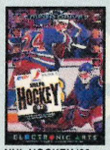
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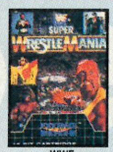
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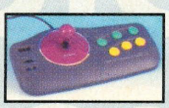
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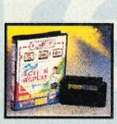
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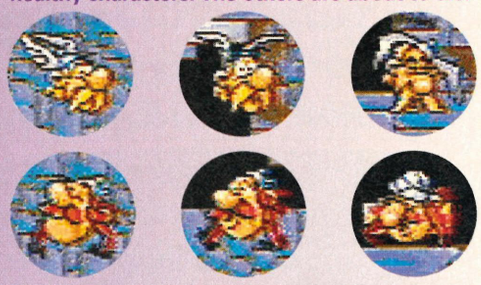
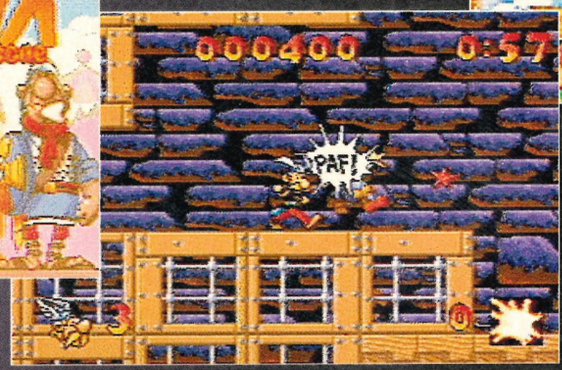
FOUR HEADS BAD, TWO HEADS GOOD

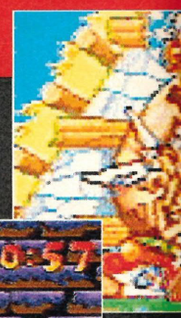
Yes, two of these head shots represent happy, healthy characters. The others are about to die.



Ooh, bloody hell. A picture of a giraffe eating a small Land Rover with chopsticks. What do you think?



'Paf!' indeed. Fantastic baddie-paffing action from further into the game. Further in than what, I'm not saying.



ASTERIX

'Have we already done the 'ASTERIX/asterisk' gag?', ponders STUART CAMPBELL. *(Yes. Now get the 'asterisk' on with it. - Ed)*

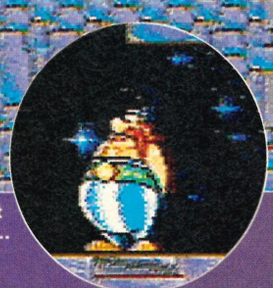
Striding manfully into the Spooky Woods, Asterix completely fails to notice an eight-foot triffid directly in his path. The clot.

Fact: Obelix is as wide as he is high. It's true.

Hang on. 'Getafix'? What's going on here? This is a cutesy platformer aimed at little kiddies, right? So how come one of the main characters in the plot is named after a term meaning – sorry? Hold on a sec, would you? *(Reviewer cocks head to one side and sticks finger in ear. Muffled tinny chattering sounds are heard.)* Oh. Right. Okay. *(Takes finger out of ear, turns back to camera.)* Hello again. Apparently I'm not allowed to mention what 'Getafix' actually means, or some newsagents will never stock *Sega Zone* again. (Did you know they once refused to stock one of our sister magazines because it had a free door hanger on the cover with 'Bog Off' printed on it? It's true.) That's that sketch knackered, then.

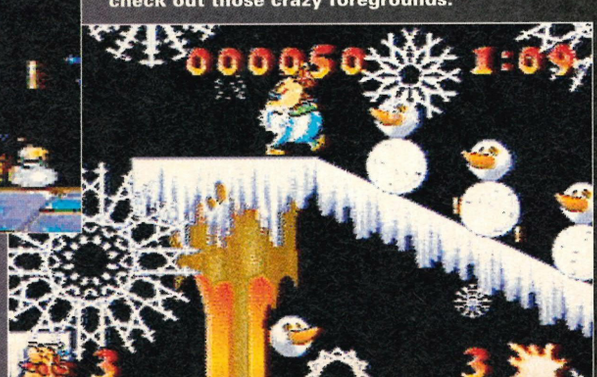
Might as well tell you about the game. Well, you can see for yourself that *Asterix* is a cartoony platformer. So I won't mention that. Instead, I'll tell you some slightly less easy-to-glean-from-screenshots facts, like that for most of the game you can control either Asterix (the short skinny nerd with the appalling moustache) or Obelix

Here, Obelix finds a secret room by wobbling his great...



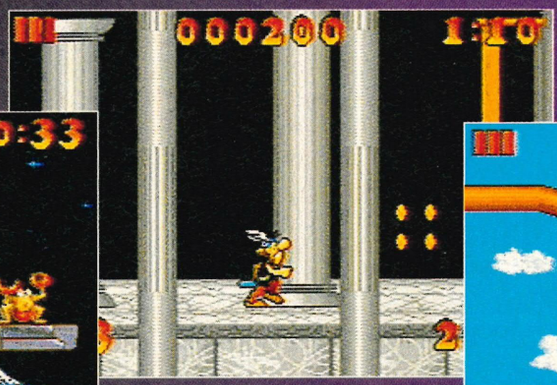
...lardy gut at a solid wall and scaring it into submission.

Another great parallax scrolling shot. Wow, just check out those crazy foregrounds.



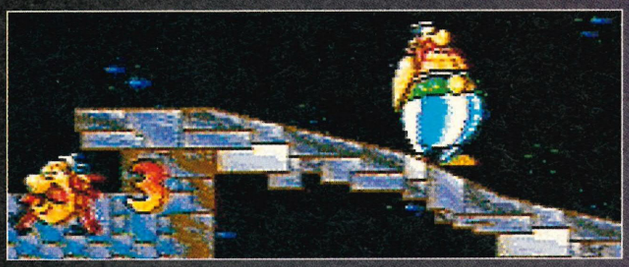
Can I do my 'No, you can't do your crabs joke' joke here, please?

Mr Lard and his chum Shorty head of to the software shop. To buy *Gunstar Heroes*.



This grab was specially chosen to demonstrate the game's fab parallax scrolling.

Asterix walks along some sausages. In the sky. Words fail me. I said words fail me. Go away.



Here's a picture of a great fat lump standing on a slope.

I don't quite understand the point of these map screens – it's not as if you've got any navigation to do, or complicated route planning.

(gross lardbutt in hideous dungarees). They have slightly different properties and capabilities (that is, when they crouch down to avoid low-flying baddies, Obelix's colossal rear sticks up in the air so far he still gets hit), so you can theoretically pick the one most suited to each section, of which there are, ooh, bloody loads.

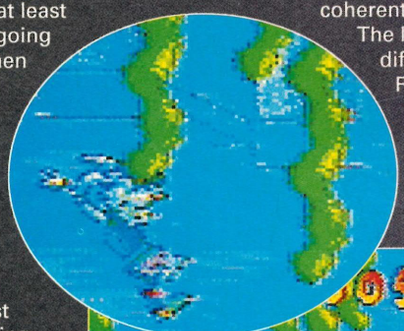
The game is divided into six main worlds, y'see, but each one is positively stuffed with short mini-levels, which is both one of the game's strengths and one of its weaknesses. It's a good thing because you never get a chance to get bored traipsing through some dismal, sprawling, enormous level that all looks the same (like in, say, *Bubsy*), and because it makes the game seem bigger – if you're playing something with five or six great big levels, chances are at least the first couple are going to be really easy. Then you might play the third one, where things might be getting a bit trickier (if you're lucky) and bingo, you're halfway through the game already.

Now, when most people play something, they're likely to stick with it in any one sitting until they've at least reached some kind of obvious stopping point (like the end of a level) before going away and coming back to it later, so it only takes another one or two goes at this mythical five-or-six-level platformer and you'll have finished it, almost certainly within one or two days of buying it. While *Asterix* might not be any bigger than this imaginary game purely in terms of number of screens, though, breaking it up into lots of little bits means you can play more or less as much of it as you want at a time, which means it's likely to last you (in calendar days, anyway) a lot longer.

Whereas this is obviously a great fat lump next to a flame.

Asterix's structure is also a drawback in one way – the mini-levels don't seem to follow any real logical progression (one minute you're in a Gaulish village, next minute you appear to be swimming around in the underwater ruins of the Colusseum, for reasons which the plot more or less completely fails to explain), and they're *so* short that you just can't really get into the game's groove. In the end, it feels like exactly what it is – a collection of short sections of random platformers, rather than some kind of coherent game experience.

The levels setup isn't the only way *Asterix* is different to most platform games, though. For one thing, it's a bit more puzzley



Left and below: It's never quite explained how Asterix manages to survive indefinitely underwater. Maybe he's some kind of super-evolved frog.

TOP SIX FORGOTTEN ASTERIX CHARACTERS

STICKLEBRIX

Supplier of building materials to the Gaulish people since 1249. Blimey, that's nearly one o'clock.

SCALEXTRIX

Car gone wrong? Need a mechanic? You know who to call.

WEETABIX

Despite looking like a small but dangerous skinhead, Weetabix is actually the village grocer's cheery delivery boy.

TIXYLIX

Getafix the Druid's junior assistant, Tixylix is responsible for mixing the less-important prescriptions in the village pharmacy.

BARSIX

Er, a chocolate biscuit.

TURNINGTRIX

Top Gaulish 'hostess and entertainer', pretty Turningtrix is... *(That's enough fictitious Asterix characters. Ed.)*

TOP FIVE OTHER FAMOUS PEOPLE NAMED AFTER TYPES OF PUNCTUATION

NORBERT COLON
Notoriously canny *Viz* character, unjustly pilloried for being careful with his money. And what's wrong with that, might I ask?

DAME HILDA BRACKET
Celebrated transvestite pianist. Can we say 'transvestite'? Or 'pianist', come to that? *(No, I don't think you can. Ed.)*

APOSTROPHE
Greek goddess of love. I think.

KARL MARX
Father of Communism, Karl didn't become well-known until he stopped using his little-heard middle name, Quotation. *(Make him stop, someone. Ed.)* Also wrote *Das Kapital*, which is of course a type of letter.

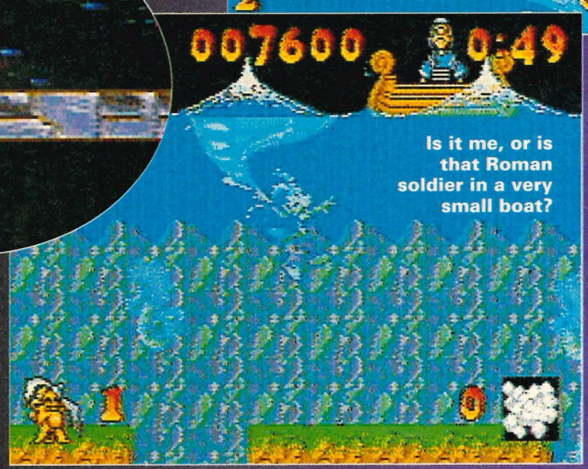
NORMAN WISDOM
Not actually named after a type of punctuation himself, but Norman makes our list for his famous catchphrase, 'Don't laugh at me, 'cos I'm, er, a full stop.' *(Out. Now. Ed.)*

He then decides to drown his sorrows and mumble a lot like this, 'Mumble, mumble...'

Uncharacteristically, Obeleix attempts to avoid some steaming cauldrons full of food.

Suddenly, Asterix stopped. 'I don't think I can be bothered any-more.'

Asterix rehearses for next week's 'Madness walk' competition, to be held in Calais.



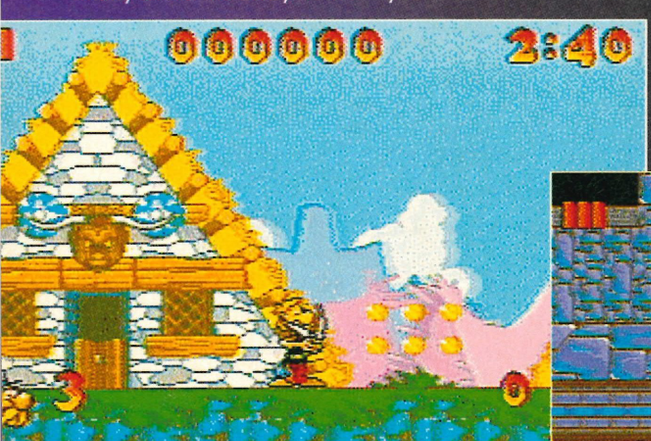
Is it me, or is that Roman soldier in a very small boat?

than most, in as much as that you have to look for switches and stuff to open doors, and manipulate your power-ups with a good deal more care than usual. And secondly, it's actually fairly hard. If, like us, you're sick to the back teeth of forking out £40 and over for a game only to complete it in three hours, this'll seem like a dream come true.

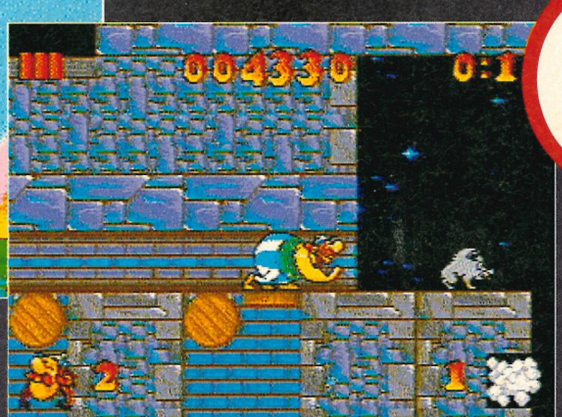
There isn't an especially high number of baddies scattered around, but the ones there are are quite tough and quite awkwardly placed and quite hard to get rid of, and after the first few mini-levels the time limits on each section start to get stupidly tight (to the extent that you'll need three or four attempts at each bit just to work out where you're supposed to be going – one wrong turn, bout of exploration or bit of hanging around beating up a bad guy and you'll run out of time), and it all adds up to a slightly trickier, if somewhat slower-paced, experience than you're probably used to.

Of course, this isn't necessarily a good thing. In fact, the slow pace of *Asterix* is the thing that finally drove me away from it – your characters really do lumber around, and it quickly gets frustrating having to go all the way back to the start of a section (even though they *are* just mini-sections, the difficulty means that it's a fair bit of work to play one half-a-dozen times) and trek through it all over again when you've *seen* it all before, *done* it all before, *know* what's coming up next and for God's sake can't you just LET ME ONTO THE NEXT BIT NOW YOU BLOODY – er, ahem. There's also some fantastically annoying and pointlessly nitpicky collision detection – for example, at one point in about the fifth mini-level, there's a small slab blocking a lift, which you have to blow up with a little grenade type thing. However, if you hit it with the grenade just a pixel or two away from the centre, it doesn't blow up (despite having a big 'PAF!' explosion balloon right on top of it), which would be less annoying if it wasn't for the fact that your supply of grenades at this point is a less-than-impressive three. A couple of these 'misses' and you've blown the whole stage, and it's time to start again. Again. Throw the fact that you only get three lives and three continues into the equation, and suddenly that increased difficulty I was so heavily lauding earlier on starts to look like a less welcome feature.

So anyway. Here we are, with Yet Another Licenced Cute Platform Game staring us in the face. It's not as bad as some (*Chester Cheetah, BOB*), it's not as good as some others (*Cool Spot, Aladdin*), it's just nothing very much of anything. If you're after a bog-standard platformer that's tougher than the norm it's a pretty good buy, but that's about as excited as I can bring myself to get about it. Sorry.



Asterix polishes his helmet *(I mean it this time, you're fired. Ed.)*



Boy this looks deviant and no mistake. But it's all just innocent end-of-stage marker fun, honest. I think so, anyway.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

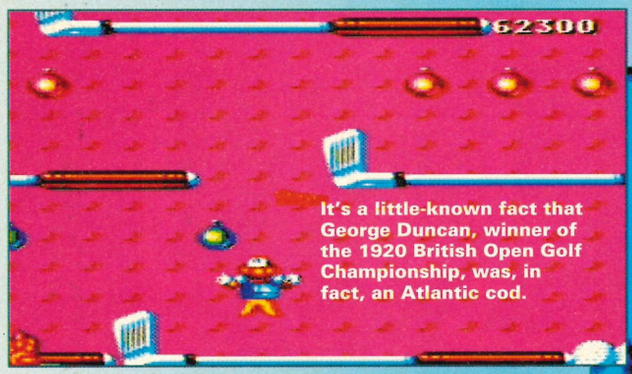
Playability

Good-looking and slightly different, but ultimately pretty dreary platformer.

OVERALL 74

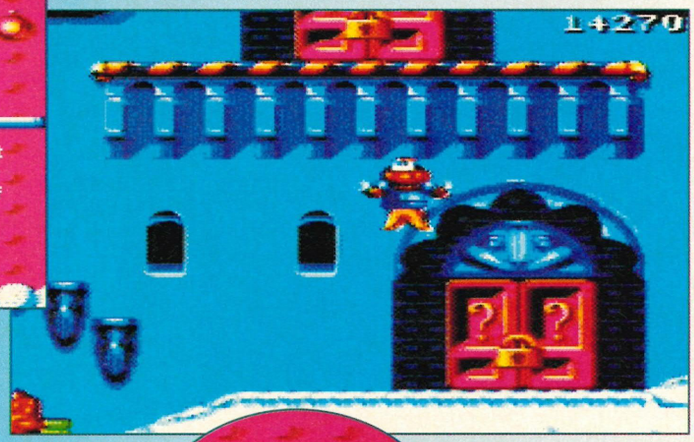
Out: Now
Publisher: Sega

Robocod



It's a little-known fact that George Duncan, winner of the 1920 British Open Golf Championship, was, in fact, an Atlantic cod.

Cod can jump over 15 feet out of the water. They use this astonishing technique to catch sea gulls in their massive jaws.

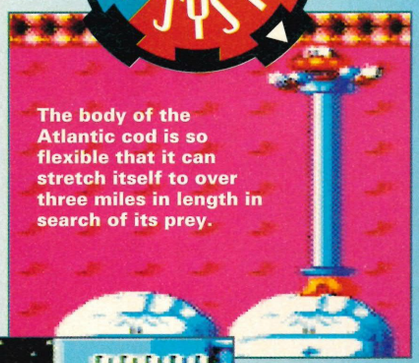


Pond returns in ROBOCOD, TIM NORRIS re-turns and faces the wrong way.

Just one moment, let's get this straight. There's this fish, right, and he's got this super-extending body so he can stretch to the top of the tallest buildings, and he's a secret agent, and his name is James Pond, and he's got to fight giant teddies and men made from Licorice Allsorts, and... Just Say No, guys.

This is the second instalment in the James Pond saga which, unusually for a great platform game, made its first appearance on the Amiga. But does that make it a bad thing? Not necessarily.

At first glance, *Robocod* appears to be nothing more than an extremely cute platform game. But, once you get past your first impressions, you'll find that there's something more in there besides a formulaic platform romp. It's fun. No, really.



The body of the Atlantic cod is so flexible that it can stretch itself to over three miles in length in search of its prey.

Dear old James is still as bizarre a hero as ever. He waddles about in a most un-fish-like way. (I'm convinced he's actually a reptile or something. Or maybe a dinosaur. Or a penguin.) Any rate, he has this bizarre, and extremely helpful, ability to stretch his piscine body in a most improbable way to allow him to grab the parts, as they say, other fish cannot reach. Although, let's be honest here, other fish would have long since died, what with it being difficult for them to survive out of water and all.

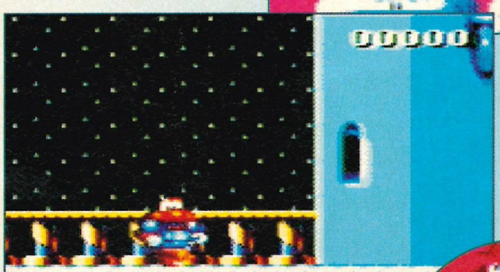
It looks absolutely fabulous. I first saw it being played in someone else's office and I thought they were playing the Mega Drive version. Does that give you some idea of its loveliness?

Although I've tried to deny it, it is just a cute platform game. There's not really a lot you can say about platform games, is there? You control a character and it wanders around a series of exciting worlds, er, doing stuff. There are toy worlds in all of them. There are slippy slidey ice worlds in all of them. There are all very similar.

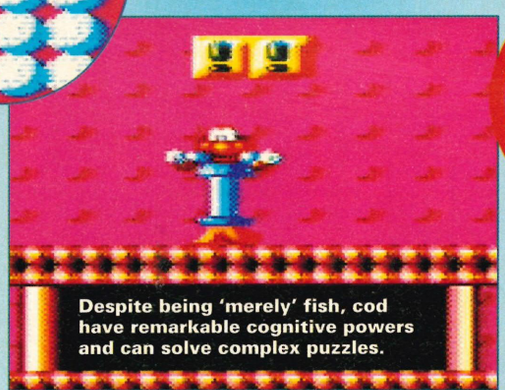
Early teddy bears were made from cod skin.

But so what? I mean, for heaven's sake, does a thing have to be new and innovative to be good? Do our decisions about a product's worth depend entirely upon its originality? Was it not the wise King Solomon who said that there is no new thing under the sun? Yes, it was.

We often get caught up here in the 'but it's just another platform game' kind of thing. But just because it's something we've already seen doesn't actually make it a bad thing. It's fun. It's funny. It's interesting. It's well worth playing. Just stop thinking about whether it's new or not and enjoy it for being a bit on the fab side.



Cod can survive incredibly low temperatures and have been known to swim happily in liquid oxygen. Penguins are the closest living relatives of the dinosaurs.



Despite being 'merely' fish, cod have remarkable cognitive powers and can solve complex puzzles.

It's not easy if you're a fish

Five things you'd have trouble doing if you were a fish:

1. Using a hair dryer.
2. Ten pin bowling.
3. Being a good friend of Captain Birdseye.
4. Holding your breath under water.
5. Playing the piano.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

It's brill. (I don't believe I said that.)

OVERALL 87

Out: October **Price:** £39.99
Publisher: US Gold

MISSION 'A BIT AWKWARD'

These missions aren't impossible, but they're all a bit awkward.

The Panama Canal Zone was acquired by the USA in 1903. *Sega Zone* was acquired by Future Publishing 90 years later. Coincidence?

This mission's covered in snow. As Lou Reed said, 'It's so cold in Alaska'.

This mission takes place at night, and it's a bit awkward.

Arms running – a sport indigenous to South America. We use legs over here.

Recapture a town in Central America. This involves friendly obstacles to avoid, while trying to blow up enemy targets. It's a bit awkward.

THUNDERHA

Kaboum! Here comes Lieutenant TIM TUCKER in his secret chopper THUNDER-HAWK.

You know it's a funny coincidence, but I used to have a Red Indian companion named Thunder Hawk. We used to ride round the wild West and the more sinister parts of South Bromley, where we would fight crime, right wrongs and thwart the evil plots of madmen. I wore a mask then of course, to protect my true identity from the general public. I haven't seen Thunder in ages, and when I was told that *Thunderhawk* was coming in, I thought it was my old associate that had come to visit me and chat about the old times. Unfortunately, it wasn't. In fact, it was just a new game for the Mega-CD. What a shame.

But my sorrow soon turned to joy when I discovered that *Thunderhawk* is not just 'a new game for the Mega-CD', but the best darn thing the Mega-CD has seen. Ever. There has been a bit of a build up for this game, with the usual hyped up expectations and general PR overkill, but I can tell you straight off that *Thunderhawk* is absolutely gorgeous, and quite throat-tighteningly exciting. Read on to see why.

Is it the plot?

The theme of the game is not original to video game land – you have to kill people. Lots of

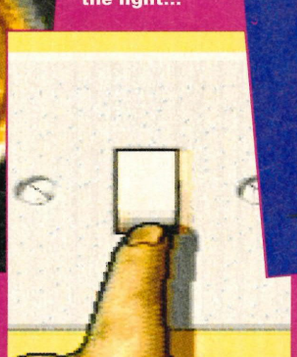
On the bombing mission, and it's post bomb drop. The bridge is in ruins – hurrah.

POINTLESS DETAIL

On the whole, *Thunderhawk* is a fine balance between realism and excitement. But there are the inevitable pointless details, and I thought it important to point them out to you. Or fairly amusing at least.

The coffee cup. This appears when you enter your name, and it does nothing.

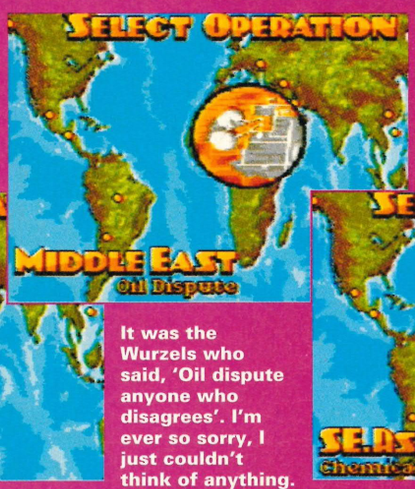
In the briefing room a hand reaches out to the light...



...and turns it off, plunging the room into darkness. Pointless.

Ah, now it get's a bit politically sensitive here. You have to shoot lots of people, then escort some ladies to dinner.

Convoy: 'Rubber Duck to Big Ben, it's clean clear to flag town, come on, come on.'
'There's a bear in the air, Rubber Duck.'



Chemical warfare is a nightmare, kids, and whatever you do, don't do it at home. One of the most difficult operations.

It was the Wurzels who said, 'Oil dispute anyone who disagrees'. I'm ever so sorry, I just couldn't think of anything.

More seafaring antics in the Piracy operation. It's all a bit awkward really, but not impossible. You can start any operation, and each is made up of a few missions.

AWK

them. Except it's not so obvious that you're actually killing people, because they don't die screaming in front of you, their twisted bodies writhing in agony and blood pouring out of their eyes. No, they're enclosed in tanks, planes, helicopters, lorries, submarines and other vehicles of war. Also, you don't have to live with the guilt of leaving countless families without a father and protector, or picturing little Jimmy whimpering to his mother 'Where's daddy?' or face the grieving widow as she slaps you round the face at the grave side, screaming hysterically that you're a coward and a heartless bast... *(Can we get on with it, please. Ed.)*

You are piloting the top secret AH-73M Thunderhawk helicopter, which I suspect doesn't exist because, er, I've never heard of it. But then, I'm hardly an expert on military helicopters, so I'll ask my friend later, he knows loads about it. The thing is, *Thunderhawk* is a 3D game. Not a tedious PC-type 3D game, where you need to mortgage your parent's house to afford the hardware, and undergo three years training at Aviation college to play it. And not an Amiga flight sim, where the sea is one shade of blue, the ground is one shade of green, and everything has straight edges. Nope, this is a Mega-CD 3D game, and boy is it impressive. You have total freedom of movement (unlike *Starwing* on the SNES, where your movement is limited within a fixed course), and the landscape is populated with real obstacles, such as trees and canyons (unlike *Super Air Diver* on the SNES, where the landscape is totally flat).

Ting-tong, tiddle-iddle-um. Ba-bum.

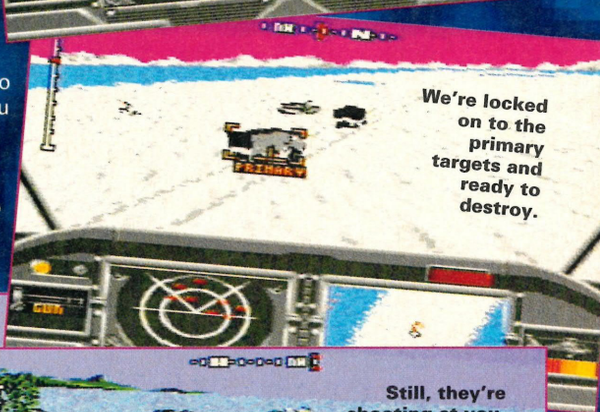
Is it the genre?

In the main, though, Core have taken the emphasis away from flight sim realism, and put the game firmly in to shoot-'em-up territory. The only controls you have to worry about are moving around and shoot things with your various weapons. You can also hover, move up and down and rotate while hovering, thus enabling you to do those nifty sharp turning circles and look hard. You're equipped with an automatic

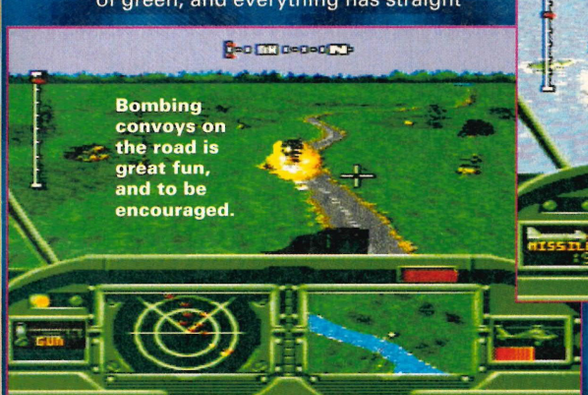
The Long and Winding Road, that leads to your door, will never disappear..etc.

Enemy helicopters swoop in dead close, and there are still some mines to destroy.

Big explosions in the snow, I love 'em.



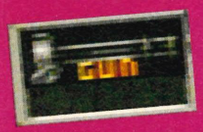
We're locked on to the primary targets and ready to destroy.



Bombing convoys on the road is great fun, and to be encouraged.

It's not a very big piece of land, is it? All there's room for is a large house, really.

Still, they're shooting at you, so fire back. I love this mentality.



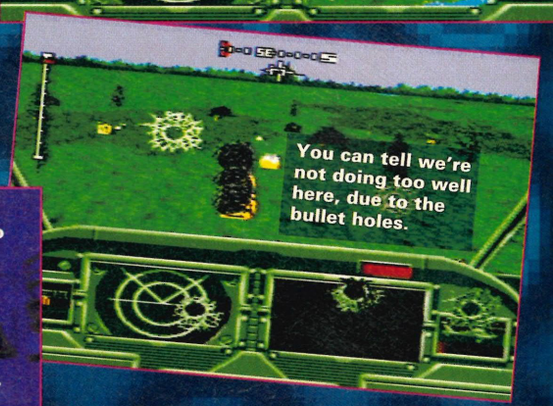
Th is your standard machine gun, which never appears to run out of ammo. Very useful.

You have a limited number of homing missiles, which are great for shooting enemy aircraft.

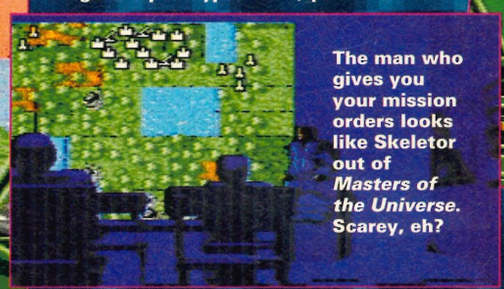
The Rockets are very powerful, but don't waste them. They're great for big Primary Targets.

The Sex Pistols once said "I'm on a Submarine Mission for you baby." They'd have used these.

On bombing missions you'll need some bombs. Only four, so make sure your aim is good.



'Saigon. I still can't believe I'm only in Saigon.' *Apocalypse Now*, you see.

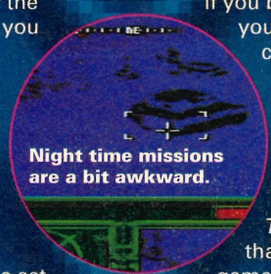


The man who gives you your mission orders looks like Skeletor out of *Masters of the Universe*. Scarey, eh?

Is it the tactical element?

lock-on device that homes in on your targets, which is just as well because there's a hell of a lot to cope with in the heat of battle. As soon as you enter the war zone, you've got your hands full – not only are there ground forces to take out, there's also a full out air attack with helicopters, stealth planes, and homing missiles.

The game is divided into ten operations, each taking place in a certain area of the world, and you can start on any one you like. The operations are further split into four or five missions each, and before each mission you get an animated sequence detailing the mission's objectives and primary targets. This varies depending on the operation, and one of the things which makes *Thunderhawk* so intensely fanciable is the variety of different assignments. Most involve a set of primary targets which need taking out, and these vary from air bases and power plants to submarines and mine layers. There's even a mission which involves picking up a helicopter pilot who's crashed in enemy territory, and when you land to pick him up a fully rendered 3D figure runs towards you and gets in. Very impressive.



Night time missions are a bit awkward.

The actual tactics of the missions are up to you. The briefing gives you an overview of what to expect, and there are a good deal of ground forces to get past before you actually reach your prime objective. However, it's not a good idea to linger too long on anything you encounter before the primary target, as you increase the chance of losing armour. The obstacles on the landscape pose a threat too, so if you bump into too many trees or walls you can do some major damage to your chopper. You can fly higher to avoid them of course, but you're more susceptible to being detected on the enemy's radar if you're too high up. The best tactic is to just shoot the trees down, rather than fly round them. Overall though, *Thunderhawk* is more of a shooter than a heavily tactically orientated game, which is a bit of a shame. If you're looking for the sort of in-depth gameplay of Desert Strike, you won't find it here.

If you can't finish the mission objective, you can still get out of the place alive, you just don't get the fancy medals and decorations. Most of the missions are fairly easy, but with close on 50 of them to complete it's going to take you a while to get through.

Being such highly charged entertainment, it's the sort of game which you'll go back to even when you have finished it, and you'll certainly persevere with the more difficult missions just for the satisfaction of completing them. (I know that you'll feel like this, because I had the gift of prescience bestowed on me at birth by a wise wizard.)

After a successful mission, you get your trousers pulled down in public.

An apt name for a fort, I think. Everyone likes a good ruck.

What is it then?

Thunderhawk is a technical marvel. The graphics are superbly detailed, the enemy ground units actually move about below you and the 3D environment swings around at an incredible speed. The soundtrack is a thoroughly satisfying military/rock hybrid, and the explosions are both graphically and aurally highly effective blasts. What makes *Thunderhawk* so superb, though, is the almost perfect blend of realism and excitement. It's full on action all the way, while still giving you the feeling that you're actually over a combat zone – you can practically smell the napalm. If you've got a Mega-CD you have two choices: buy *Thunderhawk* or sell the Mega-CD. It's up to you. Oh, and by the way, I asked my friend and he said that he's never heard of the AH-73M Thunderhawk. It's still a great game though.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

It may be worth buying a Mega-CD for.

OVERALL 92

Out: Now **Price:** £44.99
Publisher: Core Design Limited

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Power Strike 2

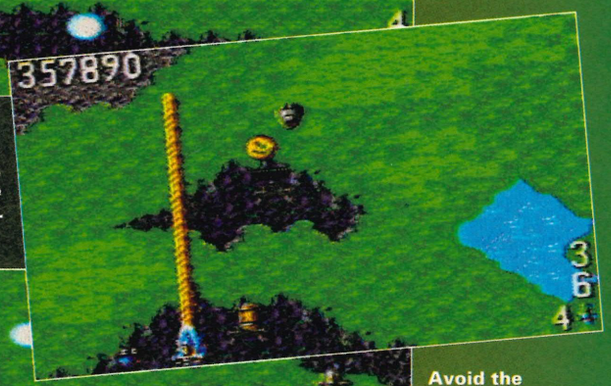
Ever had an Italian grandmother who was a part-time sky pirate? Ever had a great depression? Josse Bilson has both, and so chose to cheer himself up with this amusing space shoot-'em-up.

Flying over some wooded islands near Italy's boot-like peninsula. I don't think.

Gun turrets spray fire at you. Hit them before they hit you.

Some darn fine items to bomb. Have you worked out which one you are yet?

Stage One. Get the blue crystal bottom left, and pick up the number five from the ship.



Here's the light sabre type thing. And some grass.

Avoid the mountains and volcanoes. Get all the numbers and the crystals. Don't blink, it scrolls that fast. Which one are you then?

There are games where you put the cart in, up comes some odd exposition chapter that furnishes you with information – whether historically correct or otherwise – that has such little relevance to the game it's introducing that it's actually quite funny. And then there's *Power Strike 2*.

Surely this is an innovative concept in educational games – education *and* games on one cart? *Power Strike 2*'s introduction can teach us a lesson. And it just happens to be a 20th century social history lesson. And I quote, 'In the early 1930s people have lived in poverty ever since the Great Depression of 1929. Being laid off from their jobs, a great ammount of pilots became sky pirates to survive. The sea and the sky near Italy has been plundered by them. I am a Pothunter. I earn my living by shooting down those poor pirates.'

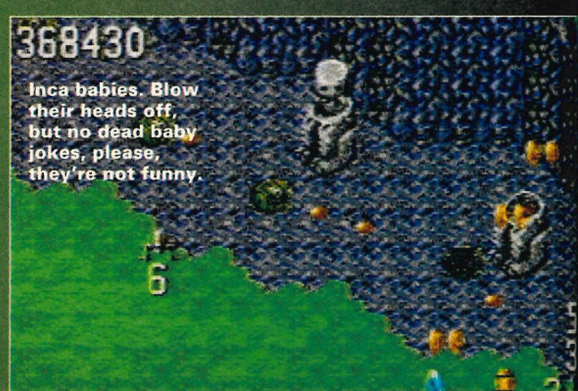
So now we know how the Italian pilots beat the effects of the Great Depression. Hmn.

Hull and back

Sidestepping the obvious question, 'Pothunter?' I consulted a senior history lecturer at Hull University to verify this information. He laughed in my face, but then 'quite enjoyed the game, anyway, thanks'. And still hasn't returned it. Well, Dr Fletcher-Teague, if you don't send it back this week, we'll print your full name, address, and details of your 'vegetable problem' in our next ish. Remember we have pictures.

After the unemployed pilots/sky piracy story, we're presented with a Manga character putting on flying goggles, then a western-style 'Wanted' poster, and a futuristic mini space shuttle. After this lengthy and varied preamble, we're launched into the game itself. This mixed imagery leaves you wondering what's next. The Spanish Inquisition? Renaissance art? Punk rock?

Up comes an Option screen, with what looks for all the world like the 1979 arcade classic, *Galaxian* playing itself on half the screen. 'This can't be it?' I protested to my colleagues. 'No lad,' they replied in the special patronising whine reserved for me. 'That's not a real game, that's what video games looked like 15 years ago.' 'Oh yeah, so I've heard,' I replied, pressed Start Game, and discovered a game that's only a *few* years out of date.



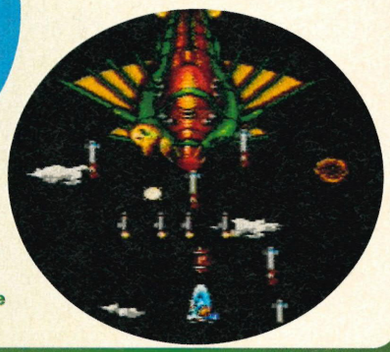
Inca babies. Blow their heads off, but no dead baby jokes, please, they're not funny.

How people beat the Great Depression

1. Becoming sky pirates and liberating other people's goods.
2. Dressing up as pirates and releasing Adam and the Ants songs.
3. Getting on their bikes and looking for work.
4. Dressing up as Manga characters.
5. Starting the Second World War.
6. Playing *Galaxian*.
7. With a stick.

D'ya wanna beat the biggest boss?

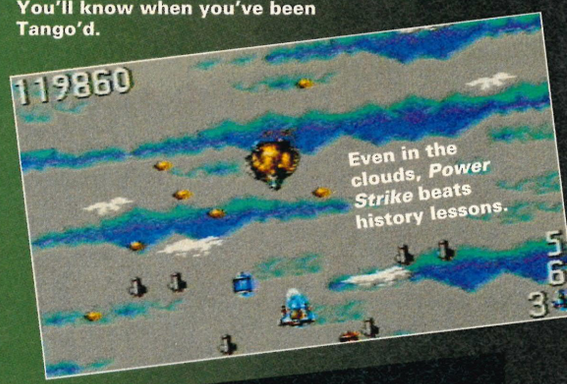
A monster dragonfly, the boss of Italian sky pirates. Did I ever tell you about my grandmother?



The strategy in this game is simple. Hold down fire and don't blink. If you see anything like these, kill it, then the screen will change colour. Got it?

This is Level One. Kill everthing.

The little orange feller comes in from the left. You'll know when you've been Tango'd.



Tenuous wibblings

What's the game actually like? Well, it's a full-paced space shoot-'em-up, a throwback to the days where playability was king and story line wasn't even a concern worth the tenuous wibblings this gets, and eye-hand coordination beats thinking every time. Nostalgia's not what it used to be.

You're at the helm of a tiny airborne vessel. Looks like a spaceship, but it's flying through an atmosphere that looks like ours, and could even be near Italy. Fire at everything you see. Everything. Theoretically, there's an ammunition limit, but the best policy is to put this to the back of your mind, keep Button 1 held down, and eyes wide.

Italian grandmother on her wedding day.

Several barely distinguishable objects hurtle towards you. The small ones are bullets – shoot or avoid them. The big ones are enemy ships – shoot them. Tango cans boost your score, so collect them, but the game moves so fast that you might not know when you've been Tango'd.

Boring, boring arsenal

Along come spacecraft bearing numbers one to six. Shoot the ships and collect the digits. These furnish you with an arsenal, primed with weapons, that are supposed to become more potent as numerical value increases. Type one is a bog-standard shotgun that sprays out single lines of fire, not very effective by itself. Type two is a slight improvement, it's a missile that doubles your spray. Number three, the burner is a weird one, and it looks like a triple light sabre.

Weapon four is good. Called Absorption, this is more of a defensive field than an offensive weapon, sending energy bolts to circle your ship and wipe out any offending articles. Weapon five is the destroyer – laser bolts fly outwards, backwards, then together and forward from your ship. Keep holding button 1 down. Six is Napalm, my favourite. Spheres of energy spin wildy in twin circular patterns. Again it's defensive – rather than being despatched to shoot them down, it stops 'em colliding with you. This part looks like the kaleidoscopic backdrop to an ambient rave. Naturally enough, zero follows six. Shell up is two continuous lines of fire, like Missile, but more intense.

The numbered ships come round in order, be quick off the mark to collect them, as they don't hang about. Be certain to get higher order weapons, or the game's over before you know it. Any numbers you miss first time round reappear even more briefly at the end, but then you're on your own with whatever arsenal you've accumulated.

Boats R Us! Over land or water, shoot everything.

Power Strike 2? Thunder Thighs more like

The game then develops into a full blown, furious shoot-'em-up. Fast vertical scrolling as you pilot your vessel toward the enemy. Cross through cloud, and night time pitch. Over seas, islands and land. Blast gun turrets and battleships along with more futuristic opposition. End of level bosses are big, inappropriate, and ultimately unimaginative. They require shooting lots and lots. But hang on just a minute, aren't these little blobs we're shooting down the 'poor' unemployed Italians? And who are their bosses? I don't think we need to bother with that story anymore, we're trying too hard to follow the action to be worried about ancient history.

Although the game's a somewhat outdated excuse to crowbar arcade entertainment into your home, and despite it's mindlessness, it's pretty amusing, somewhat addictive and also has some nostalgic appeal. Down points include dodgy graphics that make the game hard to follow, and your vessel hard to control. Lose it, and you're almost bound to get hit. The game screen is so crowded that it's bemusing. The game has a limited life, because although it's intensely fast, it's the same old song.

This is how busy the screen gets. Picture this at 400 miles per hour.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

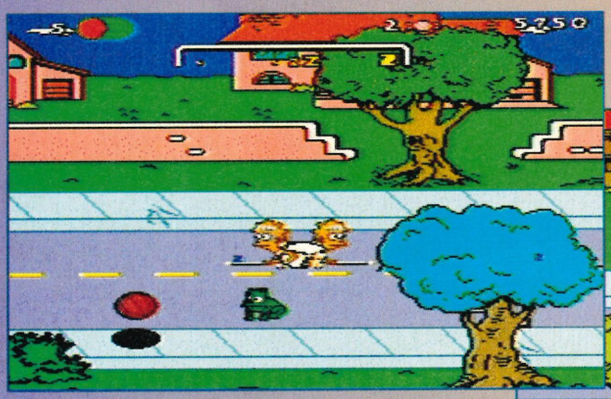
Addictiveness

Playability

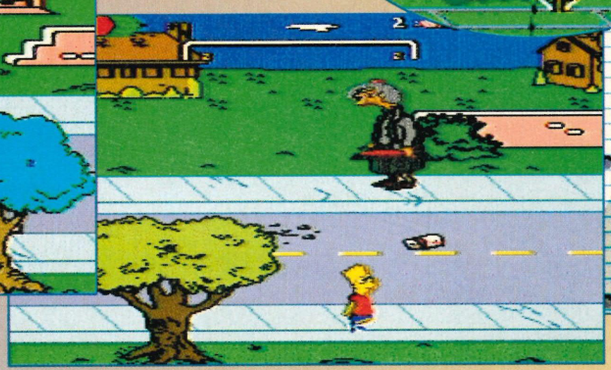
Good clean fun, but nostalgia's not what it used to be.

OVERALL 67

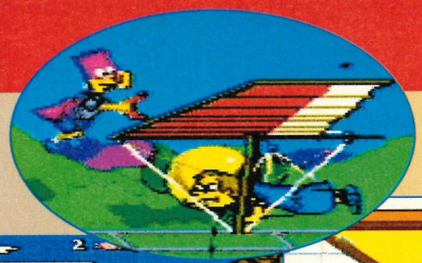
Out: October **Price:** £TBA
Publisher: Sega



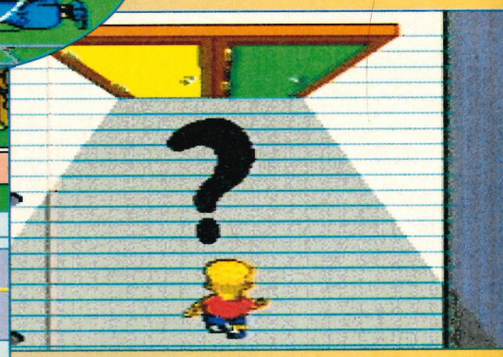
Can you see Bart in this picture? Well, it was a trick question, because he's been turned into a frog by the Lisa with the wand. What a pain.



Back to normal, and Bart's on the search for more sheets of homework.

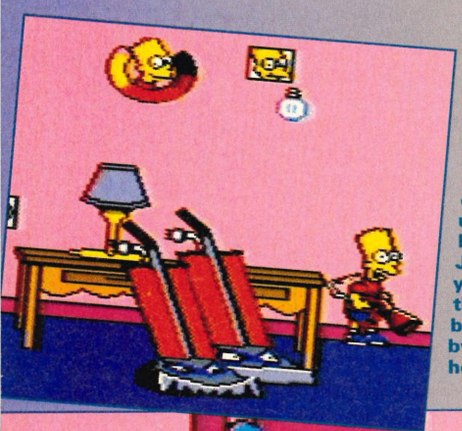


The blue door takes you to Bartman's level.

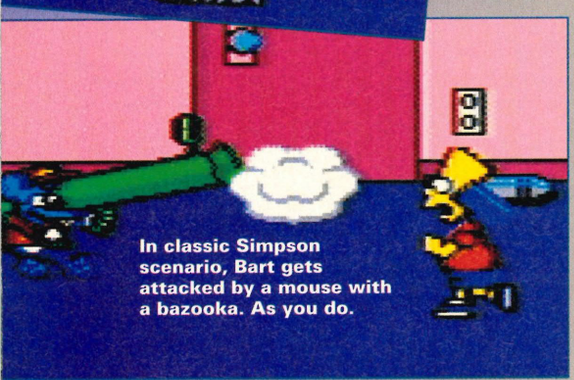


And when you find the homework, you're given two doors to choose from.

BART'S NI



Now here's a good excuse for not doing any cleaning up at home. Just tell your Mum that you'll be attacked by killer hoovers.

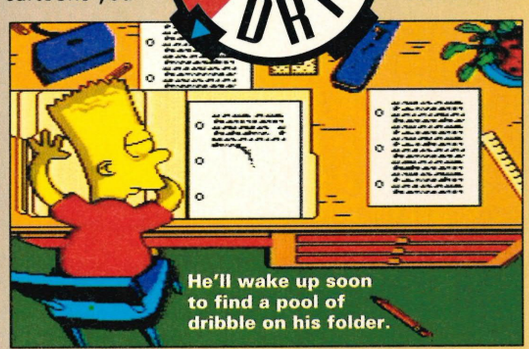


In classic Simpson scenario, Bart gets attacked by a mouse with a bazooka. As you do.

'Have you been playing BART'S NIGHTMARE?' we asked TIM TUCKER. 'It wasn't me, I didn't touch it, I wasn't there, you can't prove anything.'

I'd love to wibble on about *The Simpsons*, and make loads of funny jokes at their expense, but I can't. I've hardly seen any of their cartoons, and it would be unfair of me to do it. Although I do remember that single, *Bart Rap* or whatever, which was a complete load of old crap, wasn't it? Be that as it may, *The Simpsons* are perfect material for a game. So are any cartoons you might say, but not true – can you imagine a game about, say, *Captain Pugwash* or *Rhubarb And Custard*? It wouldn't work, whereas *The Simpsons* has just the right blend of wackiness and cuteness to make an excellent interactive experience.

Bart's Nightmare follows the fortunes of Bart as he struggles to get his homework done. During the evening he falls asleep, and has this nightmare, in which his homework flies out of the bedroom window. It's your job to help Bart retrieve the separate pages, and true to its dream origins, the gameplay wears a rather surreal garb. The central scenario is that you're walking along a suburban street trying to catch up with the loose sheets of paper work. Your progress is impaired by various objects and people, such as the angel Lisa who turns you into a frog, and her saxophone, which reverses your joypad controls. When you finally find a piece of paper, you jump into it



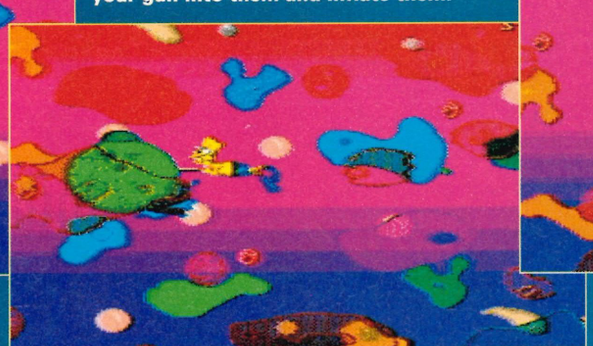
He'll wake up soon to find a pool of dribble on his folder.

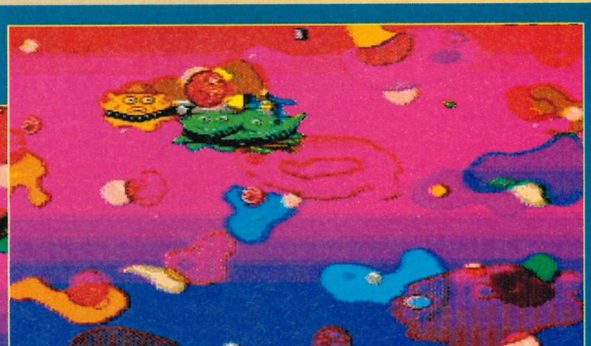
SCUBA DUBA DOO

The purple door is the one you want if you fancy a spot of scuba diving. Well, if you fancy watching Bart do a bit of scuba diving. It's also Prince's fave colour.

It actually looks like he's in one of those lamps with the psychedelic bubbles.

Locate the green, er, things with the spikes on their heads. You must shove your gun into them and inflate them.





Alright, I'll make a stab at guessing what they are then. They appear to be inflatable fruit and vegetables with bullet belts on.

INDY BARTS

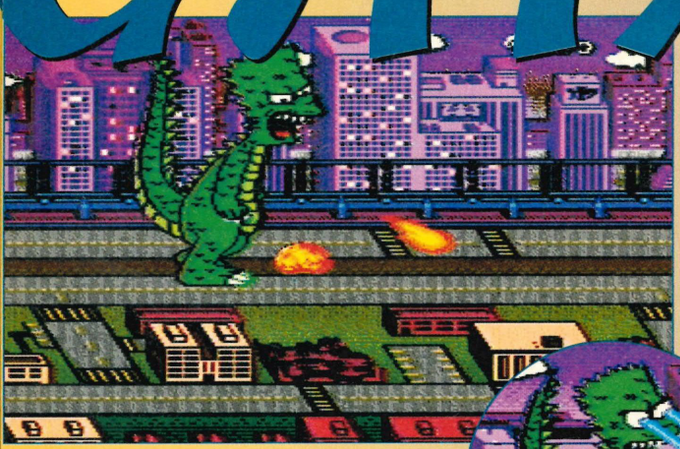
What it is, you see, is a bit of a clever word usement to indicate that Bart is dressed up as Indiana Jones, but which also sounds like Indie charts, the record industry's... oh, never mind.

You have to pick up these eggs, just like in the actual Indiana Jones films (?).

Bart gives us one of his knowing looks, as if to say 'Oh no, not another strange yellow bird stealing my eggs.'

Here comes the little blue devil, which was also my nickname at school because... *(I don't think we want to know that. Ed.)*

GHTMARE



Bart turns into Bartzilla and has fire breath and everything.

And lasers for eyes and stuff. It's bizarre this bit, and pretty tough too.

platform-type game in which Bart becomes Indiana Bart (an Indiana Jones-style character), which is fairly straightforward, and a little more interesting than the other genres. The green door was a big hit for Shaking Stevens in the early eighties, but in *Bart's Nightmare* it leads to a very odd game called Bartzilla, where you play a cross between Bart and the fire breathing monster of Japanese B movie lore. The controls are very odd, and even when you do get used to it the game doesn't become any more fun to play.

Bart's Nightmare was originally released on the SNES about a year ago, to great acclaim. Which goes to prove one of three things:

1. Some games just don't translate between systems very well.
2. A game can seem great one year, and be totally outdated the next.
3. Everyone who said it was good on the SNES was hopelessly misguided.

Frankly, this Sega version is just not up to much. We can discount the third theory, because I remember playing the SNES version and I thought it was really good. The graphics conveyed a genuine feel of the series, and the humour was just right for *The Simpsons*.

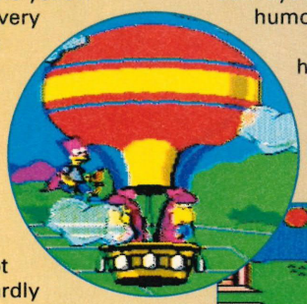
Everything about the SNES version has been kept, except that the graphics seem to contain fewer colours (I'm not absolutely sure about this, but it hasn't impressed me as much as the original). This in itself should be no problem – the cartoon-style graphics don't really require hundreds of colours – but the aforementioned atmosphere is conspicuous by its absence.

It just seems a bit flat I'm afraid. Coupled with a bunch of sub-standard (and I don't mean of the standard of submarines, because that would just be silly) games and you're looking at a waste of your money I'm afraid. It's got a little of *The Simpsons*' style and humour, but no gameplay worth mentioning. Avoid.

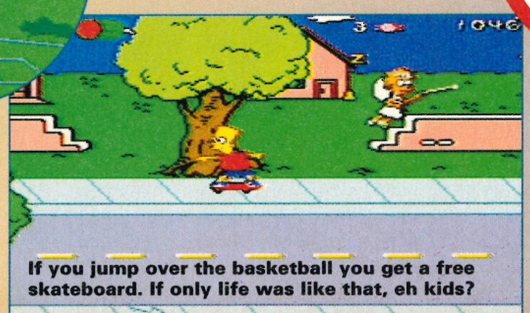
and are presented with a choice of two doors. By entering one of the two doors you are taken to one of five sub-games, and finishing each sub-game enables you to retrieve some parts of the homework. Complete all the sub-games, and you've finished the game.

So it's a game of sub-games then. This doesn't mean that it's full of games about submarines, that would just be silly. What it does mean is that the natural flow of the gameplay is continually broken up. As with most games consisting of more than one game style, the results are variable. Take the yellow door and you're involved in a very poor platform game known as Itchy and Scratchy, which is a complete waste of time and well worth avoiding.

Enter the blue door and you're in a sideways scrolling shoot-'em-up, where Bart dons his Bartman costume and uses a slingshot to bring down the baddies. Not terrible, but pretty dull, and hardly taxing. The purple door leads to a Scuba Diving section in which you have to inflate baddies until they explode. This is okay, but hardly breaks new ground on the Mega Drive. The orange door presents you with a puzzley



Bartman encounters a giant balloon. There's nothing else to say.



If you jump over the basketball you get a free skateboard. If only life was like that, eh kids?

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

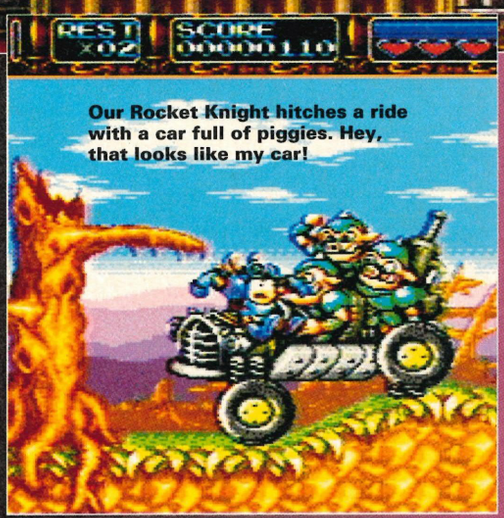
OVERALL 47

Out: Now
Publisher: Acclaim

Rocket Knigh

Rocket Knight wants to keep going. Hang around and he taps his foot Sonic-style, then becomes a Ramone. 'Hey ho! Let's go!'

The tops of buildings in the city level look like pigs. Eerie, that. Avoid those missiles.



Our Rocket Knight hitches a ride with a car full of piggies. Hey, that looks like my car!

'Oh I do love stories about valiant knights and princesses,' sighed AMAYA LOPEZ wistfully as she was passed a copy of Konami's ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES. All those frightfully brave young men in shining... Eeek! Get that mouse out of here! (It's an opossum actually. Ed.)

Sparkster (for it is he) resides in the magical world of Elhorn, home to the Kingdom Of Zebulous. Zebulous was a mammal nirvana until the day when an evil band of invaders arrived on the scene in the dreaded Pig Star ship. What was so scary about this ship, apart from the thought of pork pies, was the fact that it had the power to destroy the world. Such a deep chord of terror was struck into the inhabitant's hearts that once the invaders had been thwarted, the vessel was placed under a magical seal to keep it safe from future enemies. The precious key to the seal was guarded by King Zebulous and his family, and the Kingdom decided to take precautions against future attacks by forming an elite order of fighting knights, the Rocket Knights. Sparkster quickly rose to fame when he banished the evil Axel Gear from the kingdom but that was not the last he'd see of the head-banging possum. *(That's Axel Rose. Ed.)* He returned to kidnap Sparkster's babe, the Princess Sherry, the only living member of the Zebulian dynasty to know where the key to the seal was hidden. Outraged and heartbroken, Sparky begins his quest to rescue Sherry and help keep the Pig Star out of evil hands.

The Which Guide To Small Mammals

Part 1: The Sonic/Sparkster Conundrum

1. FITNESS: Sonic spins very fast; Sparkster can zoom into space and hang from branches (and perform a spin attack).
   Rating: Sonic 8/10 Sparkster 9/10
2. HOBBIES: Sonic collects gold rings (materialistic bast); Sparkster will pluck the odd banana.
   Rating: Sonic 3/10 Sparkster 7/10
3. LOVELIFE: Sonic has a pink girlfriend. Sparkster's gal's a real babe.
   Rating: Sonic 2/10 Sparkster 9/10
4. DRESS SENSE: Sonic's (ahem) nude. Sparkster wears a polished suit of armour.
   Rating: Sonic 10/10; Sparkster 3/10
5. GETOFFABILITY: (Snip! That's quite enough. Ed.)

We've had hedgehogs, bobcats, bunnies, elephants, fish and now there's a new chap in town. Well he's more of an opossum really. Yes, the new star of Konami's platform scorcher is no less than a small marsupial kitted out in a suit of armour, with a jetpack strapped to his back. Whatever next?

Pitbull stance, mighty weapon and floppy ears. Opossum with attitude.

Pigging out

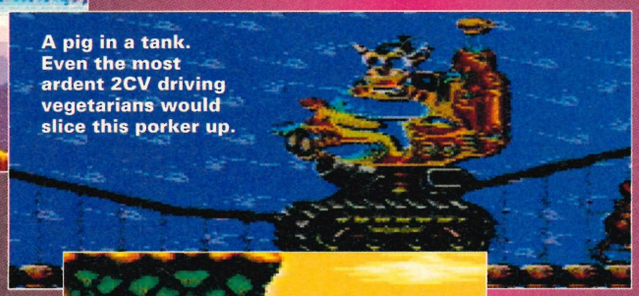
So off you go through seven levels of platform action making

Rocket Knight at full tilt. Blasting upward with his broadsword brandished.

Those foul Ninja Porkers try to jump our hero

t Adventures

Get these cherries. Or are they apples? Plums? Tomatoes? Fruit.



A pig in a tank. Even the most ardent 2CV driving vegetarians would slice this porker up.

bacon out of the swine that come at you. Vegetarians are advised to throw caution to the wind just to see the porkers' crazed expressions as they buy the farm. Why, I've never experienced such a self-contained kosher nightmare: there are pig foot soldiers, pigs driving tanks and cars, pigs on stilts, pigs bursting our of presents: name something evil and it's certain to be porcine. Lucky then that there are life-giving bonuses along the way in the form of apples and bananas and the odd 1-up to boost your energy. But what of Sparkster's own tricks? For starters, he's such a mover. Not only can he use his mighty sword to lay into the baddies but he can also perform a splendid spin attack. Best of all is his incredibly smart rocket attack using his jet-fuelled rocket pack. Master this and you'll be able to do really high jump attacks in mid-air. Another neat use for this move is to get Sparkster out of tight corners. He can rocket from wall to wall and so bounce himself out of trouble. Scoring a huge ten out of ten on the cutesometer is Sparkster's ability to hang upside down. It makes you want to give him a huge hug.

Rocket Knight is a well cool character. And he adventures.

As a new day rises in the east, our intrepid hero looks to the new challenges of the next level. Getting in that truck must be asking for trouble.

A very red part of the game. Top caption, eh!

This looks like a mousey damsel in distress. Perhaps some top rocket action is called for.

The green baddy sneaks on screen, suspended from a balloon. Honest.

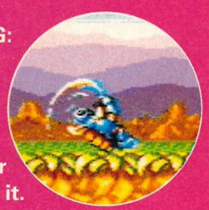
Makin' bacon. Blitz the porcine pests at the speed of light. Well, speed of sound, maybe.

The monorail from the NEC to the airport will be closed today due to being littered with dead pigs.

SWING OUT SPARKSTER

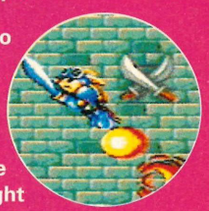
Sparkster got a wealth of marsupial moves up his proverbial snout and here's a choice selection:

SLASHING: press the attack button and use your mighty sword to slice up the porkers at an alarming rate.



SPINNING: to perform an attack spin that kills anyone you touch, keep your attack button depressed until the power gauge is full and then release it.

ROCKETING: this takes a little time to get the hang of since if you don't have Sparkster facing in the right direction (even when he's hanging) he'll rocket off in the opposite way. Basically you need to hold the D- pad down, press your attack button until it hits the end of the power gauge and then press the B button for jump. It's pretty damn impressive anyhow.



REBOUNDING: this is ideal to help you climb out of tricky narrow passageways. You just use the rocket attack together with the D-pad but have to make sure you get the change of direction timing right

HANGING (SIGH): jump onto a branch normally using the B button and Sparkster will slip into automatic hanging mode. Carry on jumping onto branches and you'll find he automatically swings by his tail or clambers along upside down. It's breathtaking (sigh).

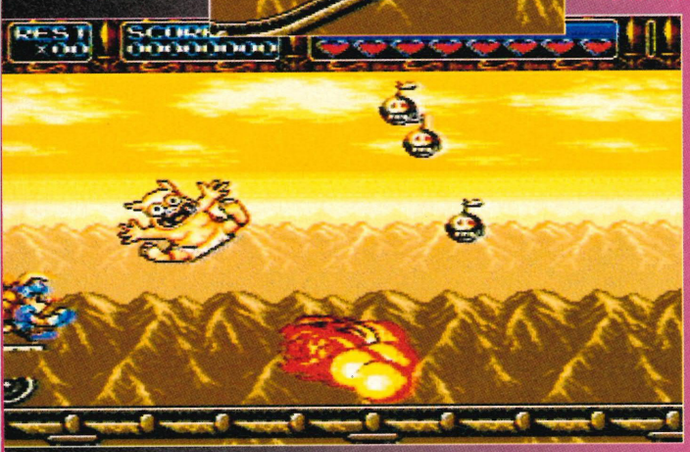
Sparkster And Sonic: The Common Ground

1. They both have names that begin with 'S'
2. They're both predominantly blue.
3. They're both close friends of Rolf Harris.

Devilish green porkers bombard you with weird stuff. Smashing background, dreamy sunset.

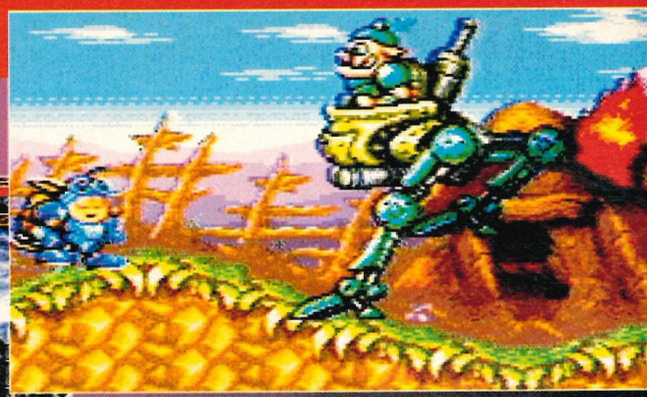
Zap the filthy swine. Arrows point the way. A rebound works round this wonky passage.

Mind your head. (Is that it? Ed.)



I just love the background on this level. So moody and atmospheric. The fireball just adds to it. It really moved me.

This level is set in Oldham. Just out of shot the new arcade with the Debenhams?



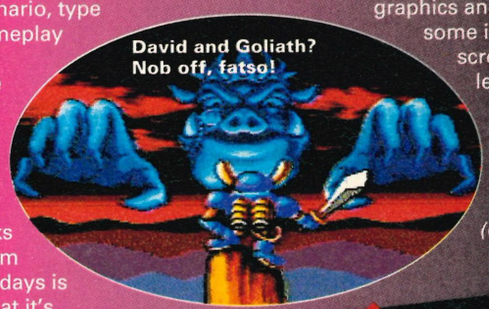
A nasty Walker-type vehicle piloted by another insane hog. See that crazy grin? Kill him.

Airborne opossum above Rochdale. If the bullets don't get you, the industrial pollution will.

(Weed. Ed.) One minute things are bobbing along normally, the next minute the little chap's hanging upside down by the skin of his tail and swaying marvellously to the music. He can even swing from branch to branch in the same position. It's incredible...it's a miracle of nature, it's... *(We get the picture. Ed.)* Then there are the underwater sequences where Sparkster can float and dive and he can even fly as long as you've collected the special bonuses. In short, our small marsupial is brilliantly animated and a joy to behold (sigh).

The game's scenario, type of levels and gameplay certainly borrow heavily from the long list of platform titles. In this respect, on the surface, *Rocket Knight Adventures*, looks like usual platform fare which nowadays is so predictable that it's becoming downright snoozy. (Thank heavens there aren't any gold rings or balls of wool to be constantly collected.) It's the way the whole thing's been crafted and packed tightly with original twists that makes the gameplay such a winner. Okay, so there's the obligatory lava level but I've never seen such a visually exciting one before where you really get the feeling that Sparkster's being toasted alive. *(Steady on. Ed.)* And then there's the mine shaft level where the carts Sparkster sits in whizzing around so quickly that he has to duck and dive like there's no tomorrow. The baddies too have been designed with a healthy helping of bizarre humour. Some of it is simply surreal like the giant silver haddock that spits fireballs at you. It's also neat that the huge bosses haven't just been saved for the end of levels, they often appear when you least expect them.

I loved *Tiny Toon Adventures*, nothing could tear me from it and, despite the pain, I'm going to stick my neck out now and say *Rocket Knight Adventures* is even better. My only criticism would be that it gets too hard too quickly even on the easy level but, hey, at least this provides a strong element of challenge. The gameplay as a whole is definitely the stuff true platformers are made of with loads of neat sub-levels screaming out to be played. It's got topnotch graphics and animation including some impressive parallax scrolling, fab music and a leading character which is as appealing as he is agile. Oh, and Konami, when are the pencil cases coming out so I can bin my Turtles one? *(Get a life. Ed.)* E



David and Goliath? Nob off, fatso!

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

Marvellous marsupial madness – bog off Sonic!

OVERALL 92

Out: October **Price:** £39.99
Publisher: Codemasters

AEROBIZ

IMPORT

Look at this gorgeous plane. Want one? Why not have two.

Curvaceous underbelly, roaring engines. Look at those wheels.

PANTS? Airline takes off. Heading for turbulence?

Since Laker's cut price dreams crashed in the early '80s, a generation of whipper-snappers have stolen his fire. Forget Branson, since reviewing AEROBIZ, our very own JOSSE BILSON has got his own plans...

Since planes first took to the skies, every child dreams of becoming a pilot. And God said, 'Let there be flight sims'. As for the unfortunate kids of Thatcher's generation, one would assume that many of them harbour the desire to own an airline. And God spaketh unto his children, 'Here you go then, have a go at *Aerobiz*'. 'Cheers, God' said the kids, and off they trotted to practise business tycoonery.

The vital first point to bear in mind when you're eyeing up *Aerobiz* on the shelves. It's NOT a flight sim. It's NOT a game about flying aeroplanes. It IS a game about management. It's both a historical and futuristic business sim, centred around building up your airline to provide more and better flight services around the world, and ultimately to make the maximum profit while you're about it. Right? The game works on a series of menus. After the initial formalities of choosing which time period you'd rather compete in (1963 to 1995 or 1983 to 2015), and the ceremonies of naming your airline, *(Josse called his airline 'PANTS?' because he's so childish. Ed.)* then deciding which city to base it in, it's time to get on with the juicy decisions.

I'll have the menu, please

There's a master screen with a row of icons, for specific areas of the business such as aeroplane manufacturers, accounts, existing routes and suchlike. Selecting any of these gives you access to a series of screens and menus, which furnish you with information about those specific areas, then prompt you to make yes or no decisions about options available to you.

Running an airline is as simple as that, clicking on yes or no. Don't believe it for a second. In *Aerobiz*, yes or no decisions can't be made on a random, arbitrary basis. No, you must work out an overall strategy of how best to invest your capital to make your airline competitve.

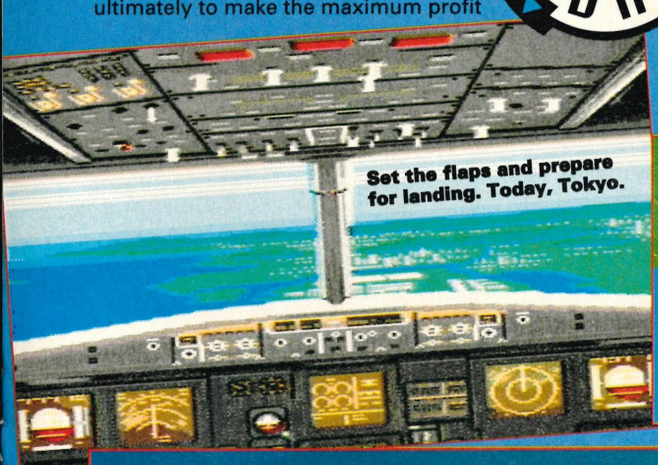
Drunk on power

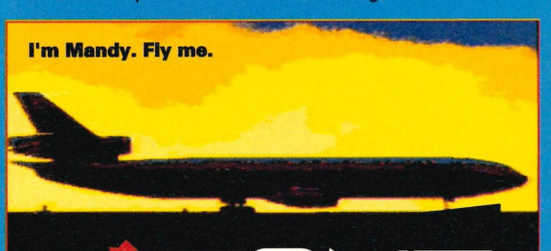
The idea is that you can show your personality through business decisions, but without fearing any real consequences. If you're conservative and hold back, I don't fancy your chances of survival. However, you can be aggressive, and it's surely more fun if you're unnecessarily aggressive and take risks. Invest loads of money into whatever whimsical fancy catches your eye.

Well the point is that you're the boss, so you can take risks with areas of the business that you don't consider vital. There's the odd warning message that you're spending so little on safety precautions and such massive wads on advertising, that you're putting hundreds of passengers in potential danger. So what?

As President of the airline you must build up offices and contacts around the world at airports you want to run services to and from. Buy, maintain and upgrade a stock of aircraft, build hotels, advertise, promote and market your services. I found it frustrating that with all these options and decisions to be made, there isn't the scope to put in your own ideas like round-the-world discount tickets for students, or multiple booking rates.

Sounds like a little niggle, I know, but the point of a management sim is for the player to be in control of an organisation as close in structure as possible to the real thing.


Set the flaps and prepare for landing. Today, Tokyo.


I'm Mandy. Fly me.

END ZONE

Graphics

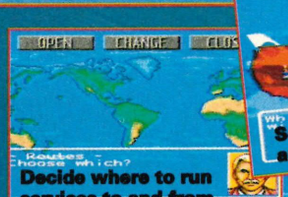
Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

DECISIONS, DECISIONS...

All these decisions to be made. Places to see, people to buy. Life for the manager of PANTS? Airlines is high-powered, high-speed and high-stressed. *Aerobiz* Part Two will have simulated stress-related problems such as high blood pressure, ulcers, grey hair, bad breath, fear of drowning and free tickets to a film of your choice. Or, if you're in Norway... *(You see, the stress has got to him. Ed.)*



Decide where to run services to and from.

Select manufacturer, and choose a plane.

Highly sexy aircraft. And great hair, too.

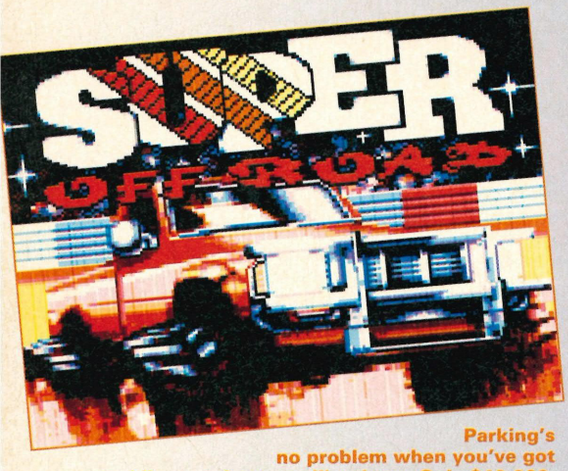
How to get ahead in advertising? Invest.

Position key personnel at bases around the globe.

A convincing enough management sim. Megalomania-feeding, but not exciting.

OVERALL 64

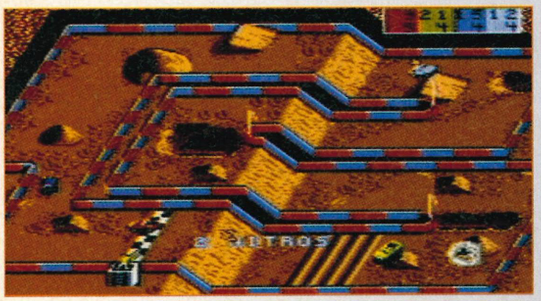
Out: Now **Price:** £49.99
Publisher: Sega



Parking's no problem when you've got stupidly oversize tyres like these. Only $40,000.

Top lasses, eh?

On the intro screen there's two voluptuous beauties, both finalists in the Miss Bristols glamour contest. Mandy (left) wants to work with children, Sandy (right) wants to work with animals. After the race on the podium, the winners (and losers if that includes you) are accosted by more full-figured scantily-clad top lasses. *Sega Zone* thinks that in the enlightened nineties, top female drivers like Louise Aitken-Walker would be winners. Do you imagine she'd want to celebrate her victory with representatives of the Chippendales?



The Sidewinder sure ain't asleep tonight. Me in the red car winning two nitros.

A rediculously difficult circuit, where I came last. Well it's the taking part that counts, isn't it? Isn't it?

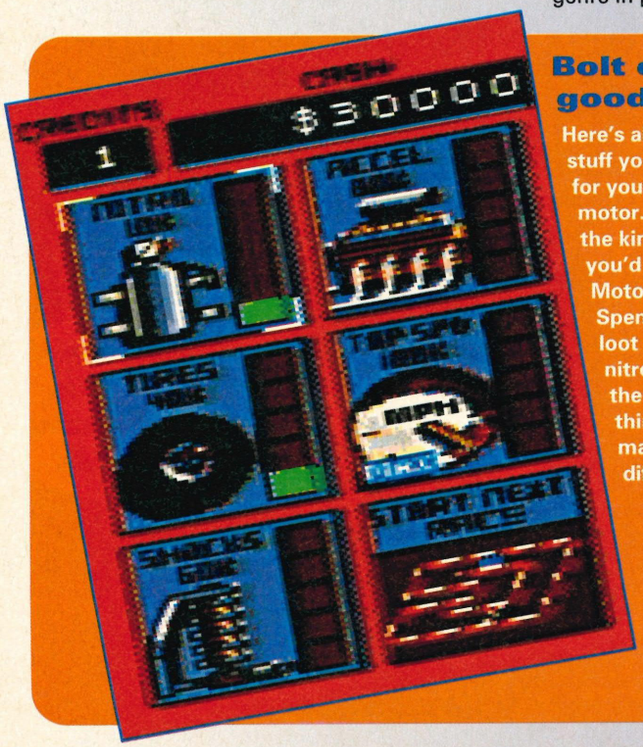
Super Off

You know when someone gives you a lift, turns out to be a dreadful driver, but you don't feel you should say anything? Well ever since JOSSE BILSON gave us a lift to Sainsbury's last week, we've been wanting to drop hints. So we gave him SUPER OFF ROAD.

Yeah! *Super Off Road*. I've got a blister on my left thumb and a square button imprinted on my right. Brilliant. I like driving games in general, and the Super Sprint genre in particular. The sillier variety is intrinsically better fun, and *Super Off Road* is certainly that.

This is the quickest handling, fastest and bumpiest collection of off road racers to grace your Master System. The gist of the game is to uprate your shiny red sports car to convert it to the fastest monster on the track. Then go out and win each race to gain championship points. Simple.

There are four cars in each race. Points and cash are awarded accordingly for finishing positions. At the end of each race there's an Option screen where you choose what to spend your hard fought for prize money. These goodies include modifications which can be made to the engine power and roadholding / handling aspects of performance, with price tags that may correspond to their true worth.



Bolt on goodies

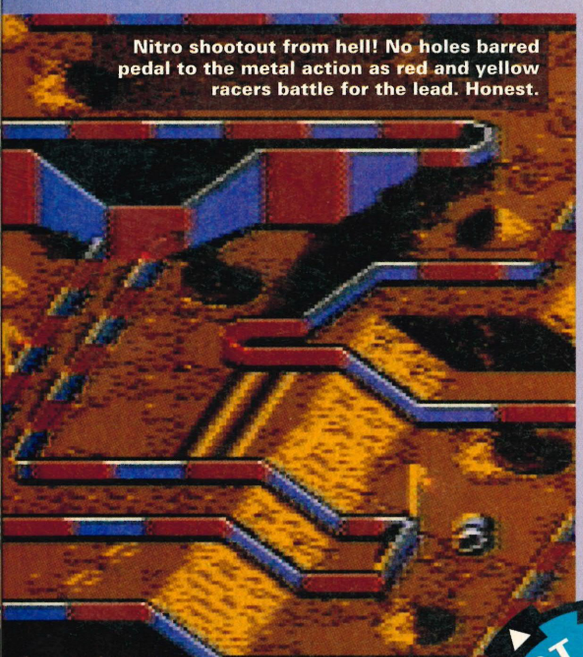
Here's all the great stuff you can buy for your dodgy motor. Not really the kind of stuff you'd see in Motor World. Spend all your loot on the nitros. They're the only things that make any difference.

Bags of dosh

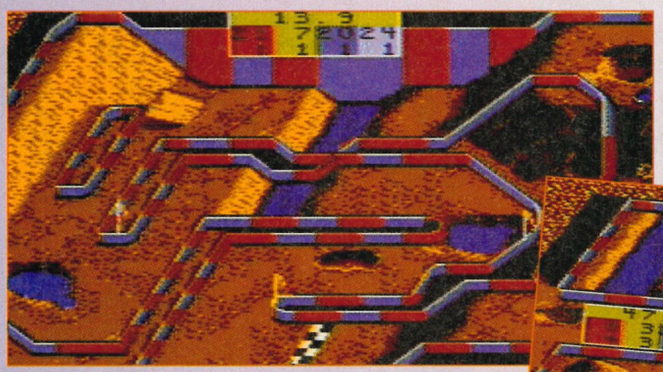
Bags of dollars are also occasionally scattered around the track, so if your reactions are fast enough, and you manage to steer your vehicle towards them, a cash bonus is yours. More than once, I saw a yellow bag of dosh appear from nowhere, and while cash register sound effects 'whirr' and 'ching' away in the background, my eyes lit up with the twin jackpots '$$'. While my mind was taking its trip to the bank, my car was taking a trip of its own, off the track, into the barriers and ended with a 180 degree spin. Oops. Imagine my distress as the driver of that bloody white car sped off into the distance with *my* loot *again*, while I was left fuming, trying to get my car pointing the right way. Don't imagine it, experience it for yourself.

If you can put the anger and resentment behind you, the best way to show Whitey, is to

Road



Nitro shootout from hell! No holes barred pedal to the metal action as red and yellow racers battle for the lead. Honest.



The Dustbowl circuit, devoid of racers. Hills, craters and water slow you down as you'd expect. Nitros speed it all up again. Like you'd expect.

Another great circuit, just outside Kidderminster. Sven's winning again. Bugger.

Big Dukes, my favourite track, near Tipton. Sven and myself battle it out in the bomb hole. Avoid trouble by using the Nitro's. No Dukes, though.

beat him, *goodstyle*. The driver of the white car is called Flash. To be honest, I just can't believe that's his real name. I reckon he's really a Scandinavian, they're good at rally driving, so Eric or Sven would suit him better. The driver of the blue car is Tornado, and the yellow's Jammin. I mean, come on, nobody's called Jammin. Not even Bob Marley, he's called Bob, and what's more, he's a terrible cook. Although they may be great buddies off the track, like spraying the celebratory champagne over each other, and going for a pint afterwards, but on the track, these guys are the enemy.

How to defeat the enemy - part one

Taking a leaf out of the Damon Hill manual of winning races, it seems there are two chief ways to gain a significant advantage over your adversary. The first is to get hold of an automobile with significant horsepower advantage and simply blow them away, just like the lad Hill, himself. Unfortunately there are no big sponsorship deals in *Super Off Road*, not even from Sega, so the only way to get a faster car is by buying decent parts. How to get the money? Simple. Win some races and use the prize money of course.

Ah, back to square one, we still need to go out and win the race. A bank loan? I see no banks, and the last time I did see the inside of a bank was at the manager's invitation, so that doesn't seem such a smart idea. No, what we (and formula one) need is fair competition in standard machines, with results gained by pure skill, or random chance if it chooses to intervene.

We need a strategy, and the best I could come up with is to keep out of the way of the other vehicles until you've worked out how to control your own. Practise a bit, then go for it. Copy Damon and give everything for a fast start. Holeshot the field by hitting the first corner at the front of the pack, that way you stand the best chance of collecting any bonus nitros (and money) that litter the field, then powering your way ahead. Great in theory, eh?

Once the first race is over, even if you finish last, you'll get some money, and must decide how to spend it. Not enough for a fast accelerating engine, I suppose? Never mind, however much they do give you, blow the lot on nitros, they're just dandy.

Into the second race, at the Sidewinder circuit, if you fancy going straight for an early lead, punch Button 2 and watch out for the whiplash. Nitro-powered wheelspins send plumes of dirt airward as you accelerate.

The battlegrounds

Each round, the circuit gets harder. Skid Row (Level Four) is a really awkward figure-of-eight. Just when you're getting cocky, having won a couple of rounds, and earning your go-faster stripes, along comes this veritable *crash and burn* of a round, and in collisions those stripes are bound to get scratched off.

Big Dukes (Level Six) is another tough one. There's another figure-of-eight with a bomb hole affair in the crossover. What makes these rounds so hard are the time-consuming collisions. Because the pace is so fast, you spin when you hit another car and getting righted takes a long time... and there goes Flash Whitey Sven whatever his name is, nicking *your* rostrum place again. Cliffhanger (Level Nine) is harder than anything Stallone could offer, and two players on here generally laugh so much, it's hard to even complete a lap.

Super Off Road is super fast, highly silly fun and very addictive. Down points are a lack of choice and variety. All the circuits are just variations on a theme rather than having different surfaces or weather options. There could also be an option to set the number of laps per race, and races per championship. It's great fun, but frankly is bound to have a short life due to being too samey. The two-player mode is so much better than playing the computer, and should have you throttling your mates for quite some time.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

Loads of fun for two to play, but with limitations.

OVERALL 77

Out: October **Price:** £TBA
Publisher: Virgin

An ineffective mutated bird guard fails to shoot the human half of Saul.

WOLFC

As a helpless neonate, JOSSE BILSON had to fend for himself in Molineux Road Hospital. Ignored by the passing wolves, he was cared for by his natural parents, and developed no lupine habits at all. Could playing WOLFCHILD change his life?

Saul Morrow is a man with two special secrets. Not only does his half sister Tracey pretend to be an original gangster, but his rather bonkers scientist father has burdened Saul with the powers and responsibilities of a lycanthrope. Half man, half wolf, Saul has the ability to change at will, using psychic powers. He roams around the moors near the Slaughtered Lamb, unless and until Brian Glover's mates go and shoot him. Confused? You won't be.

Saul's father has been kidnapped by Karl Draxx, figurehead of the terrorist organisation, Chimera. You don't need to be a genius to work out what I'm going to say next. How about this... Hairgrip partridge underpants cucumber.

But seriously

No, but seriously, it's rather more predictable. You play Saul on his platform quest to rescue his father from the evil Draxx. Unless platforms or lycanthropy are in your blood, then it's hard to see how this game will keep you gripped. Neither of these are particular foibles of mine, although I do have the odd werewolf fantasy, *(I've heard about it, and believe me, it is odd. Ed.)* so perhaps that's why *Wolfchild* was merely a halfway entertaining, playable game to me, rather than a whole new world to be drawn into.

'A 'P' please Bob.' Saul's just about to transform.

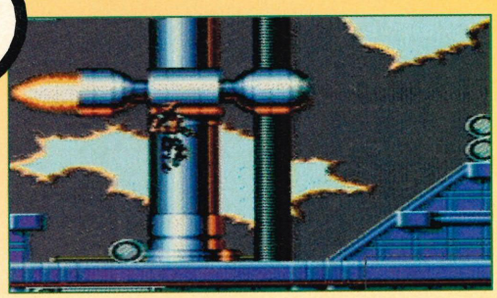
It's a fairly predictable platform parade in which you may act out any wolfman fantasies you may harbour. Roam the levels and grab the power-ups dotted around. These transform you from the regular Saul into the psycho wolf Saul. All this is set against an acceptably picturesque backdrop. It all looks pretty, but I'm afraid the action's unacceptably pedestrian. It's quite a passable game if you've got time to kill – sitting around waiting for a train (Game Gear version), or sitting around waiting to die (Master System, I presume). But if you're vaguely busy with important things, like playing *Chuck II - Son Of Chuck*, for example, I can't imagine that you'd rush home to play *Wolfchild*.

Orphaned children

You know the stories they always tell about orphaned children who are left in the jungle to be brought up by wild animals? Well, they take on some of their characteristics, like hunting instincts and eating raw flesh and all that. You've heard those stories? They're more entertaining than an hour spent on *Wolfchild* which is another platformer whose own tired introductory story fails to make the game buzz.

It's not that *Wolfchild* is a bad game as such. There's enough mileage in it, it's quite playable and you sometimes need to be a bit tricky or perceptive (but too often merely persistent) to work out certain levels and bosses. It's just not particularly exciting. It fails to capture the imagination like you'd hope it would. That's all.

Perhaps it's good to demonstrate how badly humans would get on in the wild when left to their animal defences – well, in comparison with wolves and other near-mythical, scary

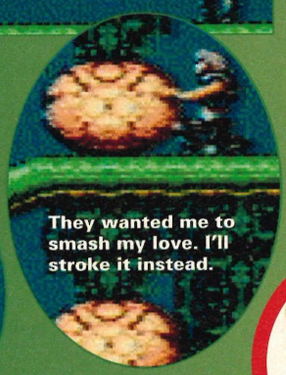


Here's the wolf avoiding barrels aboard the wolfship. Rocket burners slow you down rather than set you ablaze. Easy life. Atmospheric stuff.

THE SMASHING PUMPKINS

At last, we've discovered where Billy Corgan and his up and coming indie band got their inspiration from. Smashing pumpkins is an integral part of the fun involved in *Wolfchild*, as well as a catchy name for a noisy band. Giant pumpkins might contain all manner of goodies, and even if you can't smash them, they're good to stroke or stand on.

Look at me! I'm standing on a gorgeous pumpkin full of points. Shoot me.



Aren't pumpkins just beautiful. I'm in love with this fine fruit.

They wanted me to smash my love. I'll stroke it instead.

My hallowed halloween decoration disappeared in a puff of smoke. Boo.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

Okay, but I'd rather watch American Werewolf in London. Again.

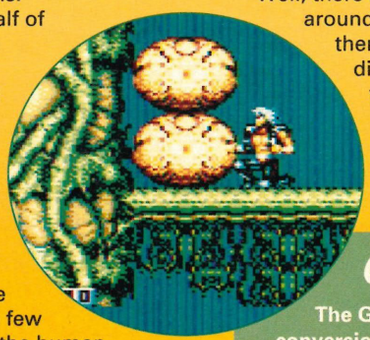
OVERALL 68

Out: October **Price:** £TBA
Publisher: Virgin

WOLFCHILD

creatures. But that's making a rather large oversight in evolutionary terms, namely with the complexity of the human brain. It's our uniquely over-sized brains that have got our species where we are (and that will ultimately steer us to self destruction, and probably take the planet with us). Along the way, though, we've developed technology and skills for building bridges, capturing animals and surgical remedies for injuries. Not only that, but we've also developed firearms. Strange then that in the game, the bloke jumps round the platforms avoiding spitting lizards and guards and the like, with only his fists as weapons.

Meanwhile, the lupine half of your adventurer is equipped with some kind of 'mystical' missile lobbing weaponry. It doesn't seem right, somehow. Yeah, we know that wolves are physically tougher than us, but how come there's no scope for using our intelligence? No way to outwit the bosses? Grr, I'm sure they could have put in some options to use a few of the millions of brain cells the human half of the character has put good time and effort into developing.



You were working as a waitress in a cocktail bar, when I met you...

Another barrage

On both formats, start the game on the Wolfship level. It's fairly straightforward and allows you to see what both the 'child' and 'wolf' characters are capable of. The scenery is fairly atmospheric stuff. Big, metallic drums, shining pipework and guns are set off against the enormous flame blasters of the Wolfship. As it's so entirely tailored around the platforms that have only one possible route to the exit, the atmosphere of the game is a little lost.

Having said that, this is just a short first level to break you in gently, and adhering to that principle doesn't lend itself to too many alternatives. Fairly simple jumps, guards that somehow lack any motivation to fire at you, and an ugly geezer rolling barrels down a slope. It's a good introduction to the game, I'm all in favour of those first levels that allow the less skilled game player to get a feel of things and develop an interest. *(That's because you're crap at games though isn't it, lad? Ed.)*

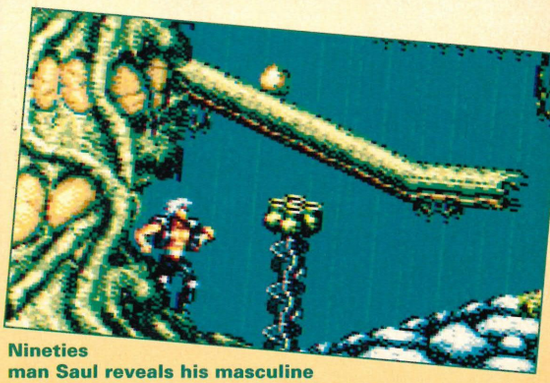
Safe for now, but the triffid above is bad news. The passage bottom right leads through the tree. I hope there are pumpkins down there. Mmm.

Treacherous stretches

Strategy is as simple as any could be. Go straight out and look for the power-ups. Gaining the wolf character enables you to eliminate the bad guys from a safe distance and clear yourself a path to the bosses. I suppose the skill comes in the long, treacherous stretches between power-ups, when you've landed on the spiky plants and been spat on by the ill-mannered summersaulting lizards, and you have to take them on as the 100 per cent human Saul. Good job then that there's plenty of restart points located in well-thought out places.

It's a soundly designed game in many respects. It seems like plenty of time went in at the play testing stage, but I can't help feeling that a little more flair at the initial conception could have made for a highly attractive, as well as solid, game. Bit frustrating, that.

What actually goes on in the game, then? Well, there's some platforms and you run around them avoiding getting shot. Yeah, then what? There are some more different looking platforms, which you jump around, avoiding being shot. Hmm, oh yes, and there are mutated bird-type guards with guns. And the nasty acrobatic lizards who are fairly impressive in terms of gymnastics at least – avoid them. And avoid the ubiquitous platform adventure plants that spit terrible things at you. And the spiky ones. The big, the bad and the ugly end of level bosses need a good punching.



Nineties man Saul reveals his masculine torso as he admires the pretty flowers.

Naked

Work your way through the game, in search of Chimera's base, look for the points hidden in hollow trees and inside the pumpkins. Be certain to engage the restart points, and pick up the extra lives and the all important super-lupine power-ups.

If this sounds tempting, then go for it, but don't go expecting any surprises. If, however it sounds like another barrage of platforms, well, that's exactly what it is.

GAME GEAR LYCANTHROPE PLATFORM FRENZY

The Game Gear's *Wolfchild* is a fine conversion. The levels are the same, and even if you do get lost more easily, it's actually pretty good fun on that small screen. On the down side, Saul doesn't look quite so hard when he's running.

Platform frenzy. The wolf gets the extra life, the lucky man gets the pumpkin.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

How about that shower scene with Jenny Agutter. Oh, not bad game, either.

OVERALL 72

Out: October **Price:** £TBA
Publisher: Virgin

MORE

They said it couldn't be done. They said no one could improve on

Next month sees the first issue of the new-look *Sega Zone*. It'll have:

More reviews of top Sega games ● More news ● More competitions ● More pages ● More jokes ● More words ● More pictures ● More punctuation ● More spelling mistakes ● More tea drinking ● More biscuit eating ● More utter loveliness ● And more reasons to be cheerful than you can shake a zircon-encrusted stick at

BETTER

the world's most favouritest Sega magazine... But we will anyway

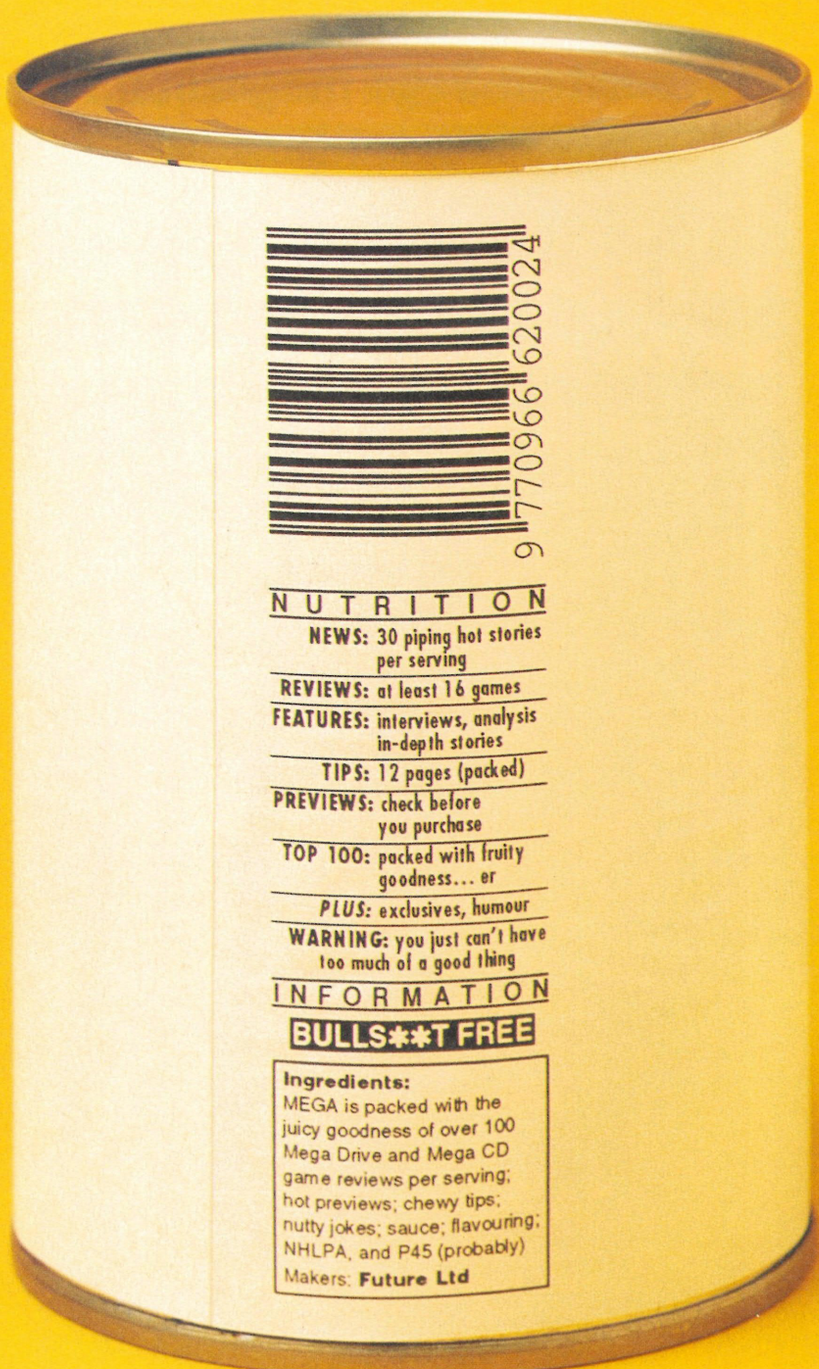
And because it's going to be so much better, it'll also have:

Three extraordinarily desirable gifts ● A first look at Sony's incredible *Sensible Soccer* – probably the best football game in the world ● A full-on review of *Sonic CD* ● A huge preview of US Gold's forthcoming *Winter Olympics* game ● And so much more that to attempt to list it all would be little short of foolish ● Oh, and three fantastic gifts

On sale Thursday

28 October

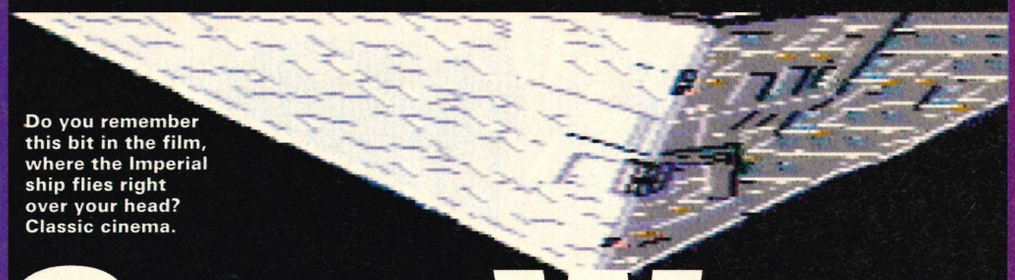
FEED YOUR MIND



On sale Thursday 16 September

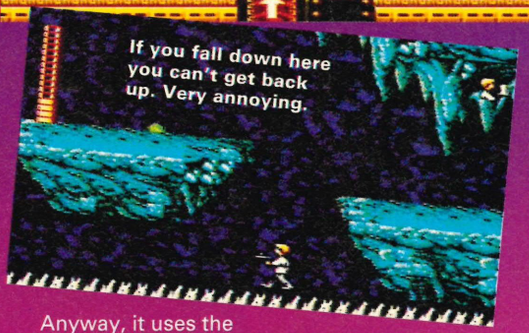
MEGA

100% MEGA DRIVE & MEGA CD


Do you remember this bit in the film, where the Imperial ship flies right over your head? Classic cinema.

Star Wars

Luke's skill as a Cossack dancer is never mentioned in the


If you fall down here you can't get back up. Very annoying.

'Aren't you a little fat to be a Storm Trouper?' we asked TIM NORRIS as he settled down in his sinister white body armour to play STAR WARS.

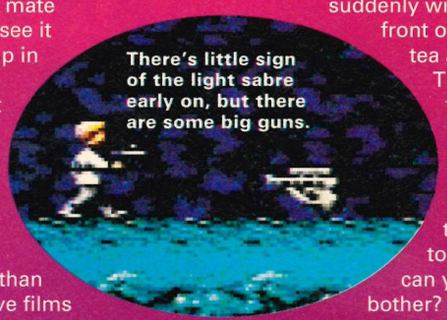
Look out, Luke, there's a large blue rodent on that ledge above you. Could it be a womp rat?

There are few films I've ever seen at the cinema twice. Most of them I watched twice because I went with different people and I wasn't so much bothered about the film itself as going to the pictures with my chums. But the only film I've ever seen twice in the same week because I thought it was so brilliant I had to see it again, was *Star Wars*. My mate Duncan Sked and I went to see it the week it opened in Sidcup in 1977 and then went again the following day. I thought you ought to know that I'm a fan.

Being a fan, then, I approached this game with some amount of enthusiasm. I mean, what, potentially, could be better than a game about one of my fave films of all time? Well, there's the Lotus Elan, a hot air balloon, a nice meal with some friends... *(Great gag, Tim, thanks. The Team.)*

But I digress. As always. There's a lot to *Star Wars*. The problem, though, is that there's altogether too much of the first bit. The first bit is a huge platformy thing with loads of difficult jumps and shooting things and not a lot of pleasure or reward.

Between the platformy, jumpy, shooty bits is a monstrous little section in the land speeder. You whizz round in an irritating way and wonder why you keep crashing into things. Then, suddenly, it dawns on you that the controls are always relative to the screen, rather than the speeder itself. When you're going up the screen, this isn't a problem – you make it go to the left of the screen by pressing Left, etc. But if you're coming down the screen, you instinctively try to turn the speeder to the left of the screen by pressing Right and it goes to the right of the screen and you get horribly confused and suddenly wish you were at home in front of the telly with a nice cup of tea and a choccy biccy.


There's little sign of the light sabre early on, but there are some big guns.

Things get better later on, thankfully, but that raises an interesting question in itself: why not grab my attention from the very outset? If I have to wade through some tedious bits to get to the good stuff, how can you be sure I'm going to bother? There's a lot of that in video games lately (especially *Silpheed*) and I'm not sure if it's a terribly good idea. The counter argument goes something like: well, we didn't want to include these 'not-very-interesting bits' later on in the game, it didn't seem right. So why include them at all? If no one likes them, why not ditch them?

Anyway, it uses the Master System's graphics well and it's all extremely competent, if not amazingly brill.

Er, what else was I going to say? Oh, yes. The whole thing follows key scenes from the film and you get to play various characters and all that kind of stuff. It's absolutely vast and if you want a lot of game then this is the game to get – there's definitely a lot of it. But I'm still not sure what I think of it all. Help me Obi Wan Kenobi, you're my only hope.

Luke, use the force. Trust your feelings.

Okay, Obi Wan, I'll do just that. *(But Tim, your name's not Luke. It's Tim, Tim. The Team.)* I feel that this is a rather ordinary (if big) game and I'm not powerfully impressed. It's not that it's awful or anything (although it can be annoyingly difficult at times) it's just that it's not particularly sparkling or fun. If you persevere with it, though, it's not really all that bad and it is quite evocative of the movie. Sort of. Sometimes.

It's difficult to show how hard the speeder is to control.

Jawas are troublesome but rarely dangerous. Shoot them.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

Sometimes annoyingly difficult. But very big. Oh, yes, it's certainly large.

OVERALL 72

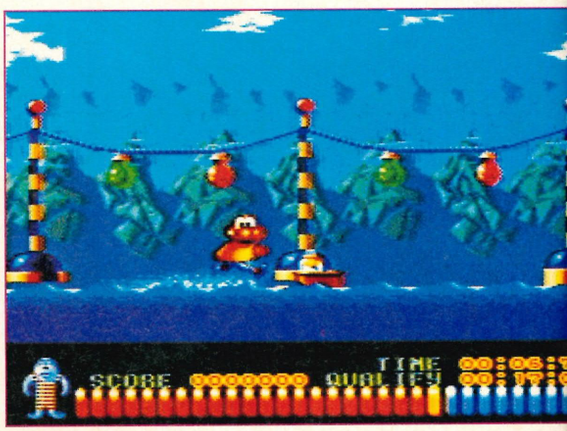
Out: Now **Price:** £29.99
Publisher: US Gold

Wacky Worl

There are sports sims of all shapes and sizes everywhere you look. But we,ve

CUE TITLE MUSIC
RUN GRAPHICS
STAND BY
STUDIO, WE
GO TO AIR IN
TEN, NINE,
EIGHT,
SEVEN...
CAMERA
ONE
FIVE, FOUR...
STANDBY
SOUND
TWO, ONE
GO STUDIO

BOB 1: Hi there, I'm Bob Fernsten-Finklestein.
BOB 2: And I'm Bob Finken-Fertlestein.
BOB 1: And this is the Wacky World Of Sports.
BOB 2: Right.
BOB 1: You've seen plenty of ordinary sports programs.
BOB 2: You have.
BOB 1: And you've seen plenty of ordinary sports.
BOB 2: That's right, Bob.
BOB 1: But here on Wacky World Of Sports we like to bring you something just a little bit different.
BOB 2: We sure do.
BOB 1: So let's get over to Bob McFernsten at the lake.
BOB 2: Hey, Bob, that reminds me of the time when...
BOB 1: Shut up, Bob, you talk too much.



***Aquatic Games*, eh? Dead weird sports which have no correlation to real life... er, more like.**

King Salmon

You join us here on the shores of Lake Winepekaka where Bob O'Bobstein, World Indoor Fishing Champion, is actually attempting to land a record-breaking salmon using only his Mega Drive and a copy of *King Salmon*.

You know, a lot of people laughed at the idea of having a fishing game on the Mega Drive. Hell, I was one of them. But, you know, the more I see young Bob controlling his little boat out there and landing those big old fish, the less stupid I think it is.

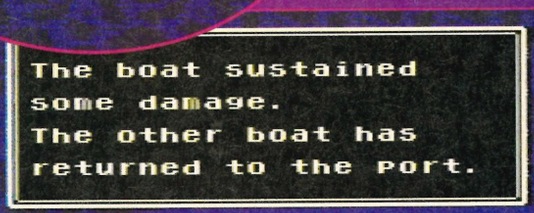
What could be nicer at the end of a stressful day in the big city than to come home, make yourself a flask of coffee, or maybe a warming beef drink, packing some sandwiches in clingfilm and settling down in front of your TV for a couple of hours fishing? All the skill, all the excitement, and all the relaxation of fishing, without the cold, the rain, the midge bites, and the three hour drive to the lake. Hey, I think I'll quit this stupid job right now and go home and do some fishing.

So, er, it's back to you in the studio, Bob.

Bob the salmon was swimming peacefully when the hook sank into his upper jaw.

He thrashed wildly as the cold steel tore into his nerves, and tears filled his eyes.

BOB 1: Thanks Bob.
BOB 2: ...
BOB 1: Let's stay with the watery theme now and join Bob Coatrack at the sports hall.

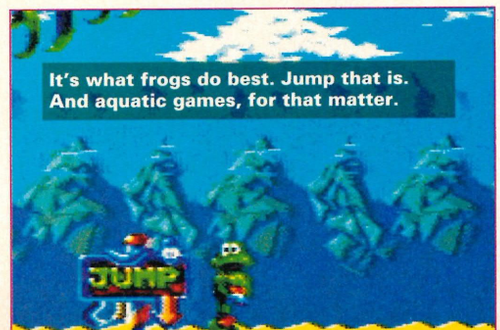


And it wasn't just Bob that suffered. There were others, who fell to... the hook.

In this game, the seals have to stay awake during an episode of *Points of View*.

Aquatic Games

Hi, I'm Bob Coatrack. You know, I often wondered what it would be like to be a fish and to compete in my own mini Olympics. But, hey, doesn't everyone? I mean, ordinary sports are all well and good, but sometimes I want a little bit more than archery or weight lifting. Sometimes I just want to jump on a bouncy castle and make shells spin round. Or maybe keep beach balls in the air to avoid scaring the seals. Thanks to my trusty Mega Drive I can do all that and more, now, here in the comfort of my own padded cell.



ld Of Sports

decided to look a bit further afield to find something a bit out of the ordiinary.

BOB 1: Well, I don't know what's happening next. Do you, Bob?
BOB 2: Where's my blue pen?
BOB 1: Hey, I know, it's Bob with the chess.

The Chess master

Thanks, Bob. It's very tense here on the 12:00 from Paddington to Swansea, calling at Reading, Swindon, Bristol Parkway, Newport, Cardiff Central, Bridgend, Port Talbot Parkway, Neath and Swansea. We've come to England to see Bob Fitzhubert-Bobbington, All-England Freestyle Toad Spitting Champion and Chess Grand Master, compete against his Game Gear for the title of Grand Wazoo and Chief Billy Bodkin. Yes, it's the chess season again.

Chess was one of the first games anyone ever tried to teach a computer to play, and it wasn't long after the release of the Game Gear that *Chessmaster* made its appearance. There are many computerised chess games around, but none of them fits quite so neatly into the slot on the back of the Game Gear. And boy, once it's in that little slot, *Chessmaster* really gives you a run for your money, and with loads of features, including help and hints, it's one of the better portable chess games.

It looks like it's all over for young Bob. He lost his queen's bishop when the train stopped for a few minutes somewhere near the Didcot power station and now it's check as the train pulls out of Swindon. Oh, but he's escaped. No, it was only a brief respite – it's check mate and the Chief Steward is announcing lunch in the Restaurant Car. I'll get something to eat and hand you over to Bob in the studio.

Bowling was invented by a Scotsman in the late 14th century (I'm lying).

After a heavy night's drinking he fell into an alley (untrue).

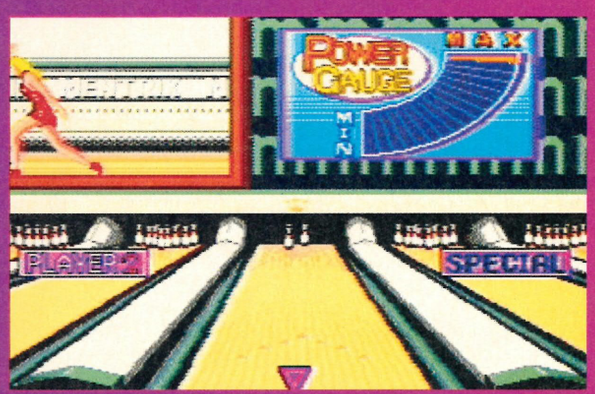
Championship Bowling

Hi, I'm Bob Trimphone, and it's bowling night here on *Wacky World Of Sports*. You know, bowling is one of America's favourite pastimes and tonight we're privileged to be present at the World Championships right here in Bob Needlethreader's bedroom. Say, Bob, did you ever think you'd get a full-size bowling alley in your bedroom? What's that? I can't hear you. Oh, you say you haven't got a full-size bowling alley in your bedroom, you're playing the game on your Mega Drive. Hey, how about that?

Gee, look here, you can play against the computer and play against you friends. And it looks just like real bowling only without the big shirts and the fat people eating burgers and giving you unwanted advice.

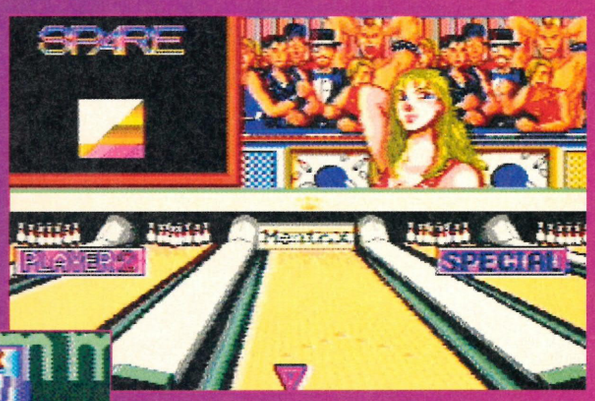
Well, that's about all we've got time for down here at the bowling alley tonight, although I gather that there's a full review of this game coming up later in the show.

So, it's bye for now.



At one end of the alley was a collection of milk bottles (this information is incorrect).

BOB 1: Heyyy, that was great. Wasn't that great, Bob?
BOB 2: Yeah, Bob, that was great. Did I ever tell you about the time when...
BOB 1: Shut up, Bob. Now we take a look at the wonderful world of Ten Pin Bowling. Over to you, Bob.



He picked up a nearby, er, spherical object, and voilà... bowling was born. (I'm sorry, I didn't know what to write).

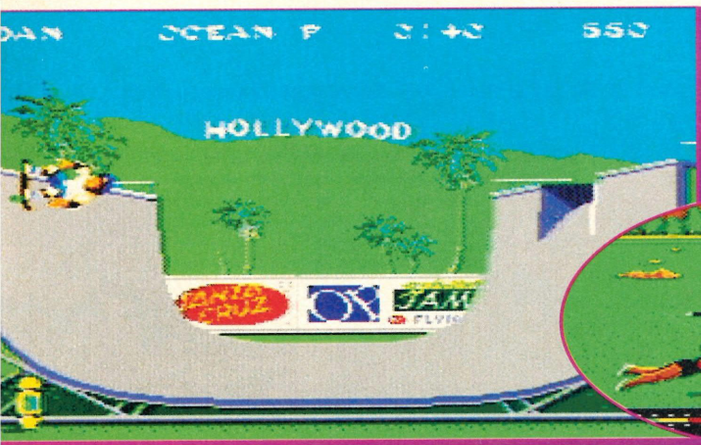
BOB 1: Bye, Bob.
BOB 2: Yeah, Bob, bye.
BOB 1: Wednesday night round at our house is poker night. So let's go over to my house where we'll meet... me.

Solitaire Poker

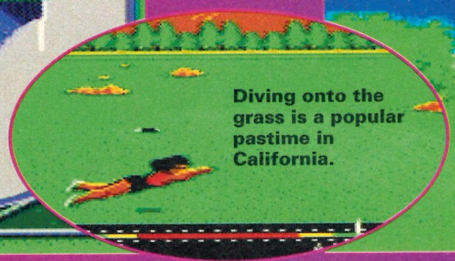
Hi, I'm Bob Fernsten-Finklestein, and this is my house. I'm all alone and there's absolutely no one here to play poker with, so looky here – it's *Solitaire Poker* on the Game Gear. Wow. Look, this is fabulous, I can play poker for hours on end and I don't need any of my buddies to come round and help.

Actually, that's a good point. Where are all my buddies? I guess it's back to the studio. Bob?

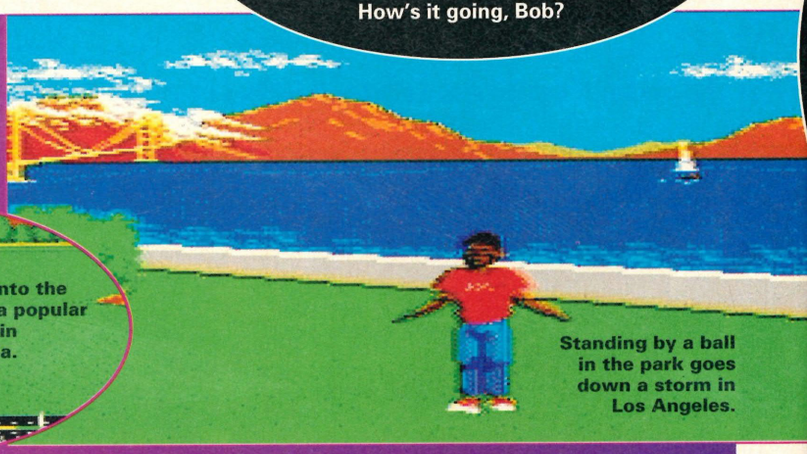
BOB 1: Thanks, Bob, you take care now, you hear?
BOB 2: Yeah, Bob, take care.
BOB 1: Earlier today we took a look at the end of the qualifying round for today's BMX final. Now we're going over to Bob Steamhammer in this packed BMX-o-drome in Smallsville, California. How's it going, Bob?



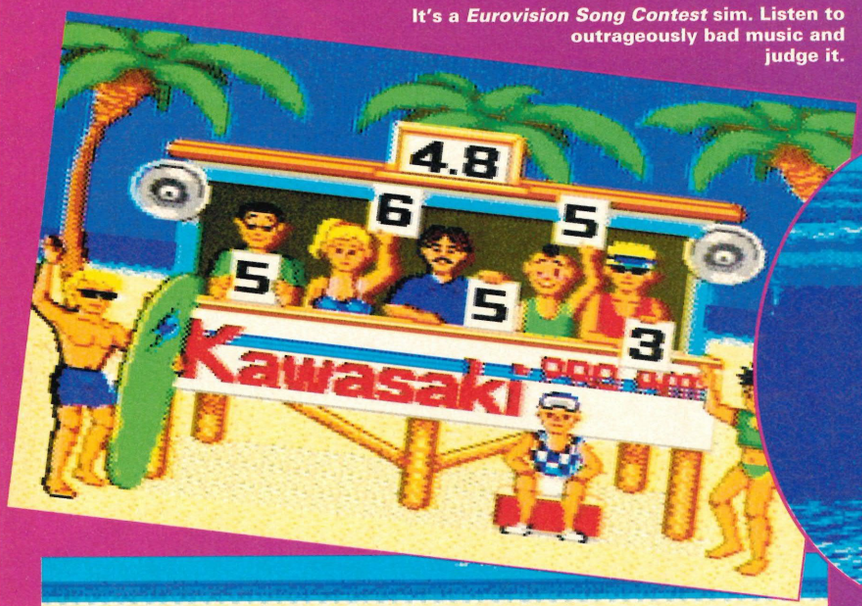
Skateboarding was invented by a Norwegian during the Hundred Years War.



Diving onto the grass is a popular pastime in California.



Standing by a ball in the park goes down a storm in Los Angeles.

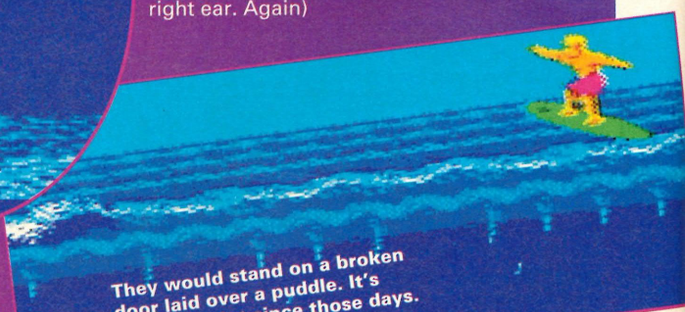


It's a *Eurovision Song Contest* sim. Listen to outrageously bad music and judge it.

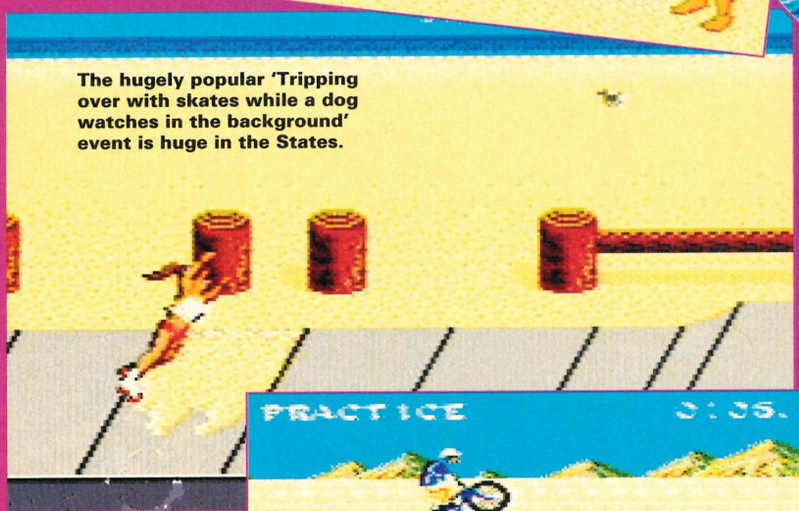
California Games

Not too badly, Bob. A quick glance at the old display tells us that the Ocean Pacific team are leading by, er, a fair amount. Yes, indeed, it's those old *California Games* on the Master System and the Mega Drive again. Watch out for the flying disc event, yet to be recognised by the Official Games Committee. Swiftly followed by the national surfing championships, the skateboard demonstration and the under-eights foot bag semi-finals. The action is really going to hotten up at four, for the BMX finals, but before that we should be able to check out what's happening in the Crazy Golf. Bob? Bob? (Bob places his middle finger in his right ear. Again)

Surfing was born in a small Greek fishing village.



They would stand on a broken door laid over a puddle. It's matured a lot since those days.



The hugely popular 'Tripping over with skates while a dog watches in the background' event is huge in the States.

BMX-ing, in which you perform like a lunatic on your bike. In real life you'd get arrested or ridiculed for this sort of behaviour.

Now you and your Master System can pretend that you're on a real bike jumping real jumps. Modern technology is wonderful, isn't it?

BOB 1: Well, it would appear that Bob can't hear us, so I'd just like to say that I've never liked him and his wife looks like a horse. But I'm sure we can go back to him as soon as the satellite connection is sorted out.
BOB 2: I'm sure it won't take long.
BOB 1: Bob, will you just shut up for a moment and let me speak? Now let's get over to Bob Foalstartler at the Crazy Golf.

Putt and Putter

Hi, this is Bob Foalstartler. For the first time the World Crazy Golf championships are being held right here in the downstairs toilet at the home of Bob Antler-Dance. A few minutes ago we saw an astonishing hole in one on the 'big cross shaped blue hole with the bumper in the middle' on the beginner level of *Putt And Putter* on the Game Gear.

When I was a young boy, I remember hounding my poor dad to take me to the crazy golf in Atlantic City. He always said no, but that was because we lived in Kansas. Hey, I was just a kid, how was I to know? If only the Game Gear had been invented back then, I could have saved myself a whole heap of trouble. I could have played crazy golf to my heart's content without ever having to fly to Atlantic City. I could have played holes with pinball-type bumper things, holes with vicious slopes, holes with water traps and had just a swell time.

I lost count of the times I was sent to bed without any dinner for being such a nuisance to my dad – maybe I could sue Sega for emotional distress for not coming up with the idea for the Game Gear and *Putt And Putter* sooner.

Brazilian volleyball stars are heart throbs to Brazilian schoolgirls.

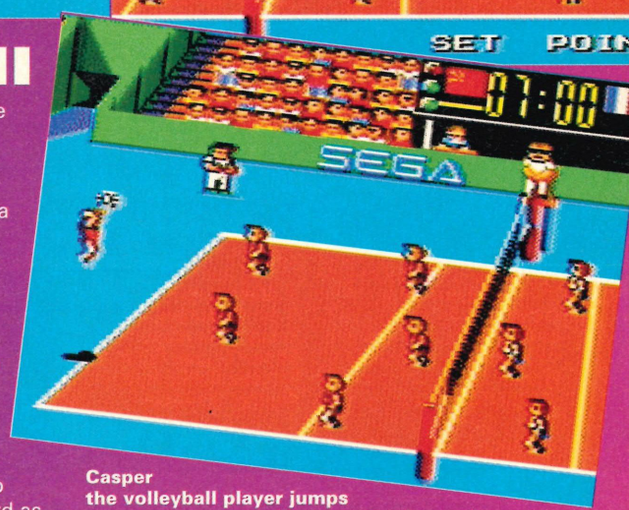
We've seen Elvis. He's standing in the top right corner, in his famous late seventies garb. So now you know.

Great Volley Ball

Let's face it, volleyball has never been a popular sport. Once every four years you might get a 30 second resumé of the olympic finals at quarter past three in the morning straight after the repeats of *The Best Of Songs of Praise.* If you're lucky. So, it's real refreshing to see that the sport is getting a bit of a publicity push here, today, at the Grimsby Comprehensive Sports, erm, Emporium.

In an effort to develop some interest, Grimsby Town Council managed to get the American and Brazilian olympic teams to compete, but only on the Master System. Tune in at half past one when we'll show you the highlights of the first two sets, and possibly the third as well... if it goes that far. I'm Jim Hepplethwaite.

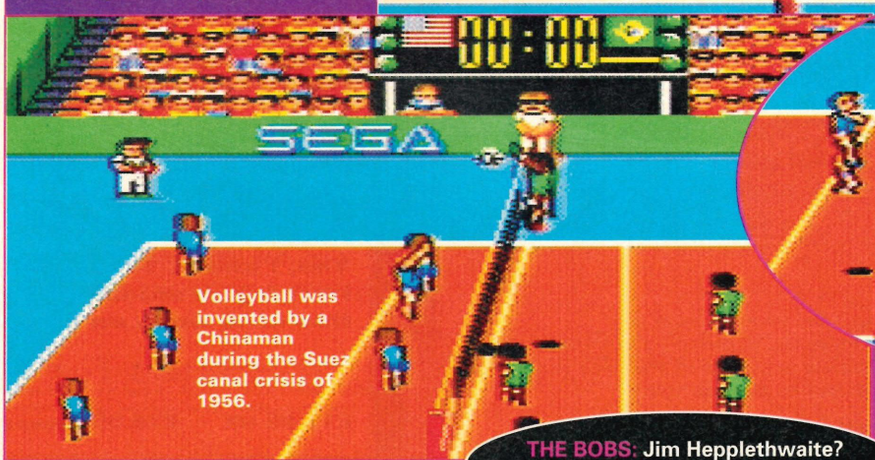
BOB 1: Hey, that was great. Don't forget that Tuesday night is clam chowder night at Bob's Crazy Golf. The first 20 people through the doors Tuesday get a steaming hot bowl of delicious Barn Burner's Clam Chowder absolutely free.
BOB 2: That's not a wacky sport, Bob.
BOB 1: But it's a damn fine chowder, Bob.
BOB 2: Our final event this evening is volley ball. Hey, I did an intro all my own.



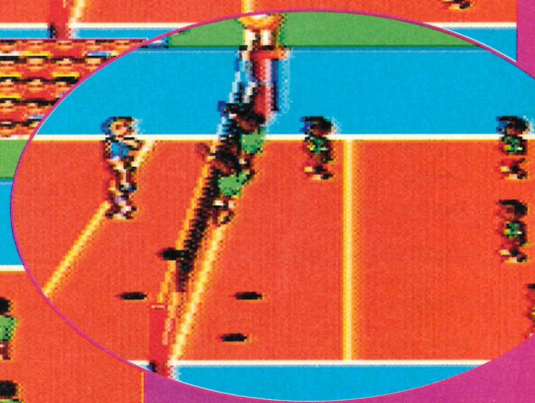
Casper the volleyball player jumps almost three times his body height, and everyone turns round in amazement. Elvis has shuffled over to see the action.

The green team are taking advantage of a key weakness.

In desparation, Miranda falls into her Guppy impersonation. Elvis' twin arrives.



Volleyball was invented by a Chinaman during the Suez canal crisis of 1956.



Foulers are penalised by being handcuffed to the net.

THE BOBS: Jim Hepplethwaite? What kind of name is that?

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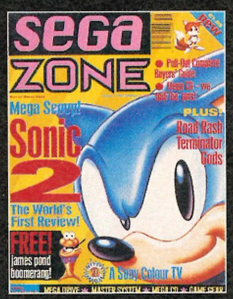

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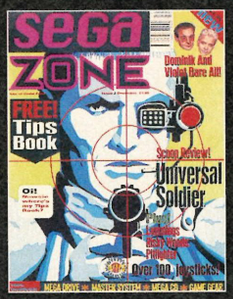

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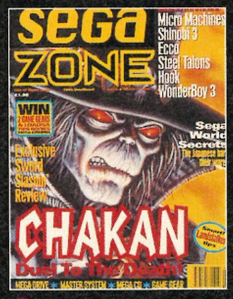

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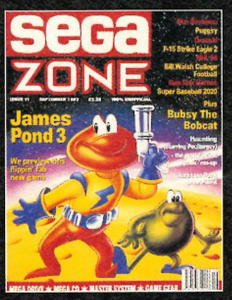

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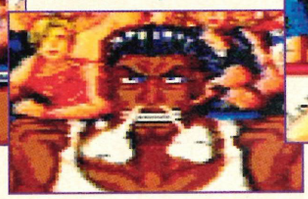
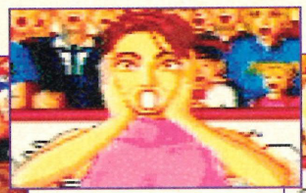
TAKE THE SKINHEADS BOWLING

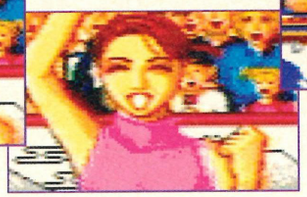
Leroy points out that he isn't a skinhead.



And gets upset about it when we persist.



Dana stops her head from falling off in joy.



She's never shaved her head, but Dana's under-arms are as smooth as a baby's bottom.

Linda blows kisses, and winks her baby blues just for me when she hits a strike.

Linda's spent ten years growing these flowing locks.

CHAMPIONSHIP BOWLING

CHAMPIONSHIP BOWLING. It's not for everyone, but is it the kind of sport simulation we want? We sent roving reporter JOSSE BILSON to his very own alley heaven on the Mega Drive. So, was it Strike or Gutter?

IMPORT

Bonus mode: some pins are point-tastic. Hit'em.

A strike for Mark, who's just about to cry.

Now it may seem like a pretty obvious thing to say, but if you're not interested in bowling, or have never been dragged along one Saturday by your mates who do go bowling, then there's very little chance that you'll be tempted by this game if you see it on the shelf. That, in itself is something of a shame, because although it won't, and doesn't deserve to be a hit, it does have a certain appeal.

It's simple to get the hang of, and after a couple of hours it can get slightly addictive.

What's involved in the game could never be described as high speed or exciting gameplay. It does, however, involve some decision making, or coin tossing, or random button pressing.

The rules of bowling are pretty simple. Each participant takes turns at a frame – attempting to knock down their ten pins. Points are awarded according to how well you manage to do this, and up to four players compete over ten frames. I'm glad to say that *Championship Bowling* translates the rudiments of traditional wide-lane action faithfully, so if you do appreciate the finer points of this trans-Altantic sport, you'll know pretty much what you're getting.

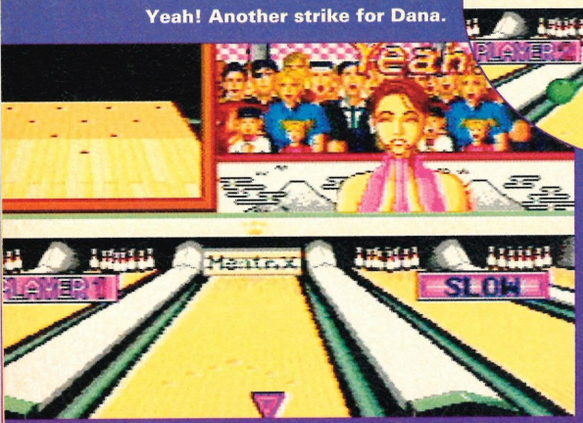
Spares, strikes, scores galore

There are ten pins, so how can any frame be worth more than ten points? Everything you wanted to know about bowling scores, but were too embarrassed to ask, explained by our resident statistician, Dr Linford Logic.

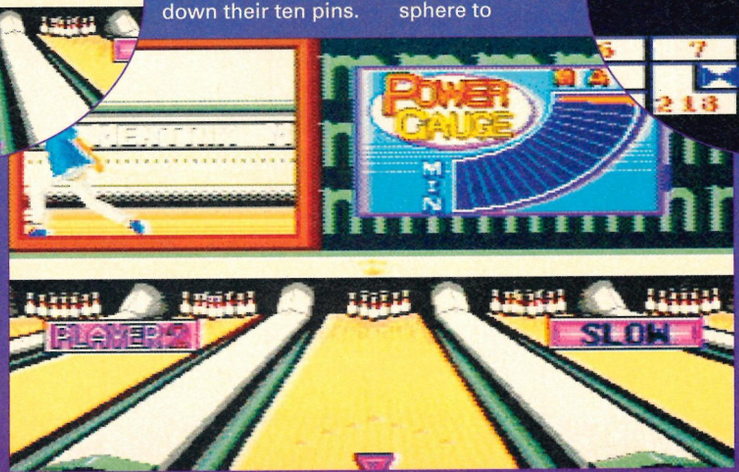
Grasp the sphere in your prefered hand, perform a parabolic arc, allowing the mass of the sphere to

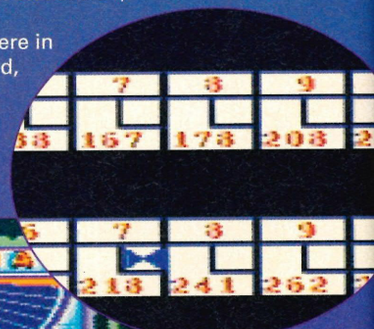
The worst bowling in the world. Min power, max spin. One side of the lane to the other.

Yeah! Another strike for Dana.

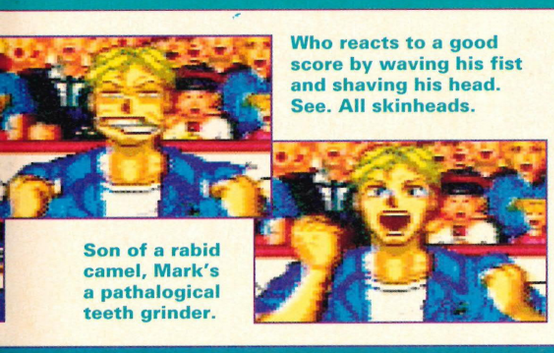


Marky Mark selects the fastest lane, heavy ball and max power. Guaranteed strike every time.Then it gets boring and silly.





Dr Logic explained the scoring. The cross in the final scores above represents a strike. Player Two was me, miles ahead.



Who reacts to a good score by waving his fist and shaving his head. See. All skinheads.

Son of a rabid camel, Mark's a pathalogical teeth grinder.

accelerate itself toward the target. Release the missile at the optimum... *(Snip. Ed.)* Our editor decided Dr Logic was going to take all day to explain, so volunteered me to finish the scores explanation off. Here goes.

Grasp the sphere *(Stop it now. Or else. Ed.)* Nah, only joking. Just bowl the ball down the alley, with whatever spin, speed and all that you've selected.

You get two rolls per frame to knock the ten pins down. If there are still some standing after that, you score one point for each pin you've toppled. If you've clocked the lot after two attempts, that's a *Spare* frame, which is worth ten points plus one point for each pin you get on the following roll. For those of you who've got lucky and have cleaned 'em all up on the first roll, it's a *Strike*. As this is worth ten for the pins, and then the scores for the next two rolls. Now you understand how I managed to get 600 on my first go. *(Liar. Ed.)*

Select your lane and pick your balls

It's not all scores, scores, scores. Progression towards perfection in *Championship Bowling*, as in life, is by practise. Either select Practise mode, where you can try out different combinations by yourself, or to make it just a little bit interesting, get competition against the machine, or up to three opponents.

How interesting can a bowling simulation get? And does it depend on whether you're into the idea of real bowling? If you don't like wide-lane action, I can't believe that you'll want this. If you do have a penchant for bowling, I can't quite see that this measures up to the real thing. Sorry, but either way it's just not worth the lolly.

The major problem with the game is that it's just too easy. Once you've played around for 15 minutes, and worked out how your player hits a strike, the competition's out the window. It's harmless, and occasionally fun to try out the different combinations of oiled, heavily oiled and oiled-beyond-belief lanes with the different weight balls and variable spin to hit the strike as any player and from any position.

The lighter the ball, the more affected it is by spin. Players are either power or finesse bowlers, whatever that means. Work it out for yourself.

Get info on each of the bowlers, weight, style, preference. Then decide who's got the best hair.

In multi-player mode, the competition can certainly get on, but it never reaches laugh-a-minute proportions. I must admit that the last, but very short lived, laughs came from working out who could bowl worst.

Select a light ball, minimum release speed, slow surface and the right player, and it's possible to get the ball in the gutter before it's a quarter of the way up the lane. As you can imagine, we'd got fairly bored by then.

Games like this don't pressure you for time, so between goes you can laugh, swear or swoon at how good, bad or otherwise your mates are, and also means you can nip off and make drinks, sandwiches or phone calls between goes. Great, eh? Any game that relies on opportunity to make cups of tea to make it enjoyable as integral to its appeal is off to a bad start.

Even though the real thing makes for a good evening's fun, the atmosphere is all missing on *Championship Bowling*, and the rest's just lame. Someone's bound to like it, but I ain't the one.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

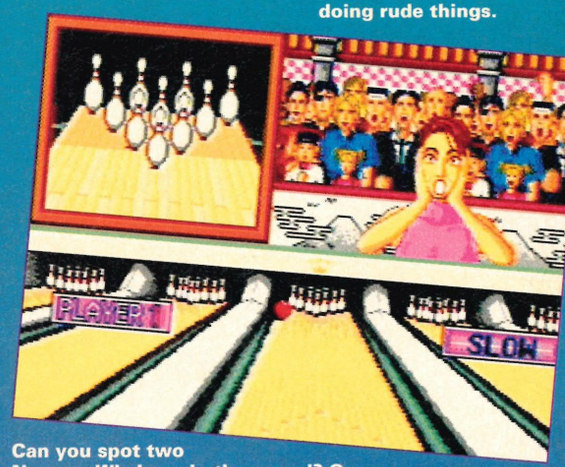
Playability

Pretty dull stuff, but with up to four players it can raise a chuckle.

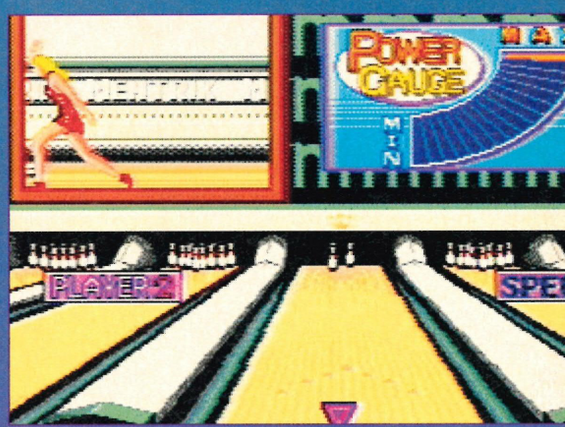
OVERALL 52

Out: Now **Price:** Ask an importer
Publisher: Sega

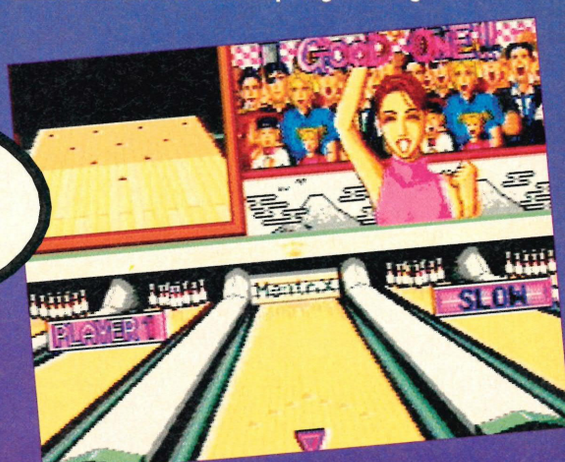
In a blinding slice of imagination, two succesive strike's are called a double. The crowd are all doing rude things.



Can you spot two Norman Wisdoms in the crowd? One Bonnie Langford? Or the England rugby squad?



Chris de Burgh wrote a song about a lady in red, which was almost as uninspiring as this game.



By dawn we were fading fast, but Dana's underarm deodorant was still working. Norman's still in the crowd, 'Ooh Mr Grinthorp.'

CHUCK ROCK II
SON OF CHUCK

1st Prize

One of five copies of *Chuck Rock II* on either Mega Drive, Master System or Game Gear. (That's 15 prizes, excitement fans.)

Do you want to win a copy of the absolutely fantastic and amazing *Chuck Rock II* on the format of your choice? Of course you do.

We gave *Chuck 2* on the Mega Drive a whopping 90 per cent. We gave *Chuck 2* on the Master System a fantastic 83. We would have given the Game Gear version a big mark as well, probably, but our Game Gear's broken so we couldn't.

Now you can check it out for yourself and see how right we were. Just answer this simple question:

What is the Upper Paleolithic?

Is it:

a) a large muscle at the top of the back,

b) a period of prehistory when humans first started expressing themselves through primitive sculpture and cave painting, or

c) a region of Glasgow?

Entries to:
How much rock would Chuck Rock chuck if Chuck Rock wasn't just a character in a video game?

Sega Zone
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2BW

10 Runner up prizes: One of these fetching tee-shirts.

Those rules in full

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- **Multiple entries shall mysteriously disappear.**
- **The closing date is 31 October 1993.**
- **The editor's decisions usually aren't very good ones, but in this case they'll be absolutely final. No correspondence of any sort shall be entered into. Ever.**

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SKILL ZONE

Happy days are here again! Skill Zone explodes into the oft-celebrated and widely coveted pages of *Sega Zone*, probably the best mag in the world. Contrary to rumour, we at *Sega Zone* are the fountain of all knowledge, and once more the crystal waters of truth are cascading forth, spilling happiness and mirth wherever they fall. And how do the omnipotent deities in the office produce these top tips? Well what we do is open all the delicious and colourful post that you send in, sort the wheat from the chaff, and select the best cheat for a gargantuan cash prize. Wanna grace our silky pages? Wanna win fifty quid? It's easy, too easy.

SKILL ZONE
Sega Zone
30 Monmouth Street
Bath BA1 2BW

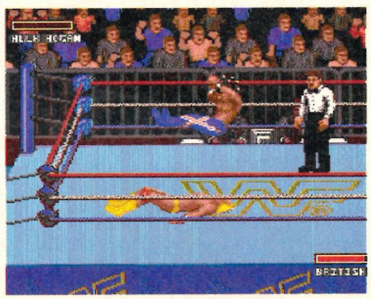
They are necessary

Hmm, it's a bit like being in the army, we know, but rules and regulations *are* necessary. If we didn't have them, society would be just like anarchy. And that's not good. So, here goes:

- Tell us what to do...
- Work out some good tips or cheats.
- Check that they work.
- Make sure they're original.
- No *Sonic, Ecco* or *Jungle Strike* cheats. At all.
- Write legibly, clearly, neatly and generally properly. Thanks.
- Put you're name and address on it then, thicky.
- Stand on your head.
- You put your left leg in, your left leg out.
- In, out, in, out.
- Shake it all about.

Dragon's Fury

Do you ever feel like there's something missing from your life, something that would satisfy all those unpleasant discontentments you harbour, but you can't quite put your finger on it? Well, that's your problem, matey. But here's something we're more than happy to help you with, *Dragon's Fury*. Enter UUBV99BQRE for 73 balls and 505,705,300 points. Thanks to Frances Eakins of London for the tip. Next month Frances advises us on how to beat paranoia, eating disorders and loneliness, and gives us the answer to world peace. Oh, chinny reckon.

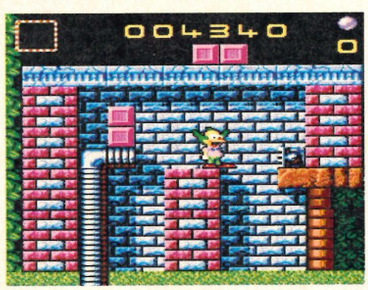


WWF Wrestlemania

'Here's a cheat for the Mega Drive Wrestlemania, from Damian Walker of sunny Edinburgh, which enables you to win each time. Leave the ring, and your opponent will follow. When he's at the bottom, drop kick and elbow drop him. Get back in the ring, and grin as he's counted out.

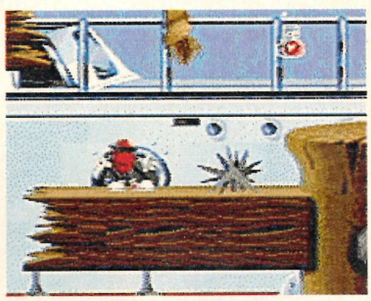
Rampage

Here's a tip so simple that even the most cack-handed amongst us should be able to manage it. To continue where you died on *Rampage*, hold down both the buttons when Game Over appears. And be ever grateful to top geezer Raymond Milne of Northfield, Aberdeen.



Krusty's Super Fun House

If you want to get yourself infinite lives and a level select on this game, why not try typing in SMAILLIW on the password screen. Doing that is infinitely more fun than shouting 'marshmallow' at buses, and stands a better chance of being successful. Anyway, a hearty 'merci' to Frances Eakins for the Krusty's tip, but *marshmallows? (I don't know, kids these days. Ee, I were right about that saddle, though. Ed.)*



Cool Spot

ABRAABRACADABRA sang Steve Miller more than once, but that won't get him infinite time, health and level select for the Mega Drive *Cool Spot*. Try this instead: pause the game and put in ABCBACABCBAC. So says Richie Rich Taylor from Aldershot.

Dungeons And Dragons

'Don't try to live your life in one day.' Sang Howard Jones, warning against looking for too much experience too young. But Nick Payne and myself reckon that gaining plenty of experience early on sets you up for all sorts of top adventures. Especially when it comes to playing *Dungeons and Dragons; Warriors of the Eternal Sun* on your Mega Drive.

At the start of the game buy all your party slings, then cross the bridge to the south-west, even if your party are scared. Lure any giants or big packs of enemies toward you, cross the bridge and hide behind either of the little bushes. The creatures will either come halfway across the bridge or wait just across the river. Let rip

Wonderdog

Passwords for *Wonderdog* on the Mega-CD are sent in by that Richard Taylor chappie, and go something like this.

Dogsville:	MYSTIC
Looney Moon:	LEDZEP
Planet Weird:	REEVES
Planet Foggia:	PIXIES
Last Level:	WOOPIE

with your slings and you can gain experience points without any risk of dying. Keep doing this until you've gained enough experience.

Road Avenger

Want cheats for *Road Avenger* on your Mega-CD? We got 'em. To select your favourite levels from the start push up to enter the Options screen and press A six times, and you'll hear some lovely music to indicate that the cheat has worked. So there.

Rolo To The Rescue

Do you love anyone enough to give them your last *Rolo* tip? Gushy sentimentalist Frances Eakins does, and it's us who's loved. When you're on the title screen, hold down A, C, and the D-pad diagonally Up Left. With these held down, use your third hand *(Are you sure? Ed.)* to reset the machine, and when the Options screen comes up, you may choose infinite lives, invincibility and sneak a look at the map. Maybe it's because she's a Londoner. Or then again, maybe it's because she likes playing *Rolo To The Rescue*.

Black Belt

Just what you've always wanted. Infinite lives on your Master System *Black Belt*. All you have to do is press restart when the screen flashes blue, and there you go, infinite lives are all yours. Many thanks to Raymond Milne of Aberdeen. Good Chap.

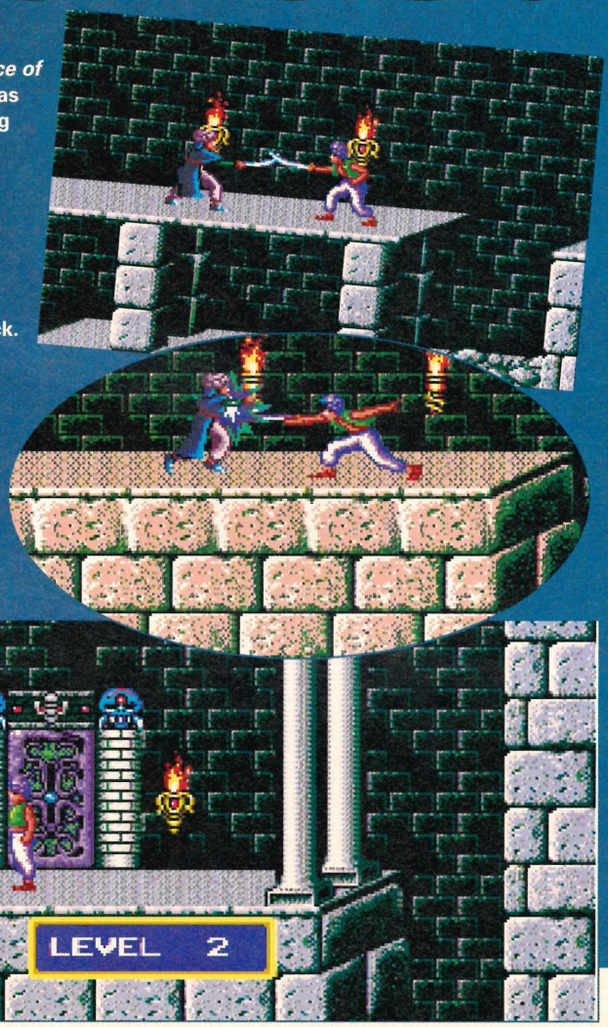
Lotus Turbo Challenge

Ruhul Amin from Portsmouth has sent us into raptures of grateful applause by supplying us with the following level passwords for *Lotus Turbo Challenge*.

2:	SLEEPERS
3:	HERBERT
4:	APPLEPIE
5:	BUSINESS
6:	MALLOW
7:	STANDISH
8:	TEACUP

Prince Of Persia

Kee-Cheung Lau of Gorleston in Norfolk has been busy playing *Prince of Persia* on the Master System, but has taken time out to send the following codes and tips.



POTIONS:

Blue will give you an extra block of energy.
Pink is anti-gravity that helps you do level seven quickly.
Red takes off one block of energy.
Green is an instant refill and adds one extra block.

TIPS:

When falling long distances, make sure that you hold down A to grab onto any ledges you pass.
When you have to fight your mirror image, press Down and you don't have to fight him.
Continue walking, then on the next screen, jump and you'll land on an invisible platform.

PASSWORDS:

Level 2:	HLMJGD
Level 3:	HINJFA
Level 4:	GGFHDL
Level 5:	FDFFBD
Level 6:	JGEIEP
Level 7:	IECGCG
Level 8:	OIQLHO
Level 9:	OMGJGF
Level 10:	RNRLIY
Level 11:	SNRLIZ
Level 12:	RLNJGO
Level 13:	PIKGDA
Ending:	QIGGDX

Bubble Bobble

Matthew Lanham has sent walked all the way from Gilmore in the country of the those fabulous afternoon soaps to bring us the following cheats for *Bubble Bobble* on the Master System. At the start, go to the password screen and press Pause. Next press 1, Left, Down, Up, 1, Up, 1 and Up. Now you have loads of goodies to help you in your game.

Also, here are some level codes for the same game:

48 :	IEWABURN
100 :	IE7CB72B
130 :	RYRFZJKA
140 :	RYDFUPFC
160 :	3VJC56QW
170 :	JVOTOIKA
180 :	3VEWWASR
190 :	3VIW7BVZ

Jungle Strike

Those fiendish drug lords are safely tucked away in their hideout until RIK HAYNES and JAIME SMITH let rip with everything they've got and lead us through a daring raid... *(Sounds like another episode of the A-Team if you ask me. Ed.)*

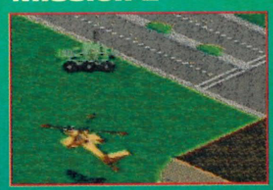
Annihilate, assassinate, blow up, bump off, butcher, crush, demolish, decimate, destruct, devastate, dismantle, dispatch, erase, exterminate, incinerate, kill, knock off, massacre, murder, quash, pulverise, ravage, raze to the ground, rub out, ruin, shatter, slaughter, slay, smash, stomp on, tear down, terminate, wipe out and wreck. *(Yes, I think we get the general idea! Ed.)*

STAGE ONE - WASHINGTON DC

Mission 1

Firstly, dash to the monument near the middle of the screen and protect it. Go to the top one next and collect the crate of armour nearby. On all monuments, immediately destroy every soldier and vehicle showing aggression. If any monument is obliterated, you'll have to start again.

Mission 2

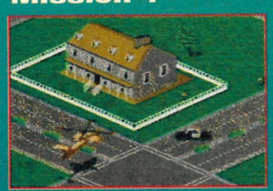


Terrorist Head Quarters are guarded from each side. Make sure you kill off the soldiers and destroy the tanks before blowing the building to bits. Watch your armour level, try to capture the leaders and take them to a landing pad straight away. You get 100 armour points per person.

Mission 3

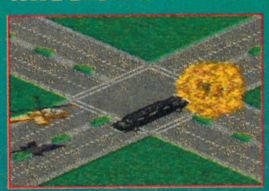
Attack the green station wagons from the side because they move damn fast. The guys in the cars are also pretty good at shooting at you, so it's a good idea to keep moving from left to right to avoid the bullets. You have to destroy them before they reach their designated monument.

Mission 4



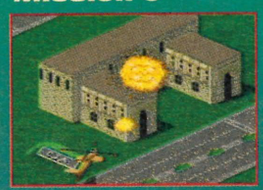
Rescue the secret agent who is being held in one of the houses to the south. Destroy the building to set him free and kill the soldiers that appear from the building. Be careful not to kill the agent though, as he holds vital info.

Mission 5



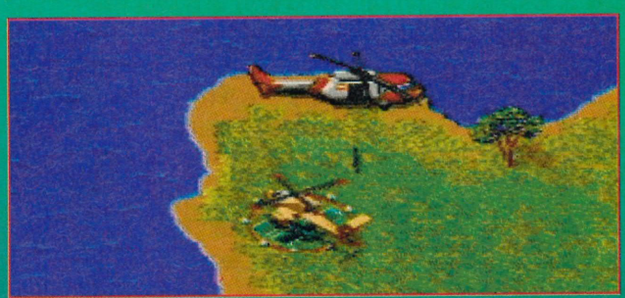
The President's stretch limousine is situated in the bottom left hand corner of the map. Pesky terrorists will organise road blocks which you have to destroy before the President's car reaches them.

Mission 6



Capture the sniper who is out to kill the President and gain vital information on the terrorist's plans. It's a good idea to destroy the building he's standing beside, before completing Mission 5. Make sure you bag him alive.

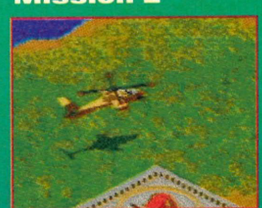
STAGE TWO - SUB ATTACK (Passcode RXVW174MYR7)



Mission 1

You have to rescue two Navy SEALS being held on the small island situated west of your landing point. Take them right to their helicopter which is south east from there.

Mission 2



Fly towards the island with the hovercraft on it and destroy all the terrorists to deactivate the force field. Once the island is safe put your chopper down and swap vehicles.

Mission 3

Head north and destroy as many speed boats as possible. You need to collect eight crates of plutonium but be careful not to destroy any of the crates. If the boats manage to reach the waiting trucks, make sure they're destroyed before they get back to base.

Mission 4

Recover the stranded pilot located on an island situated in the bottom right of the map. You'll also have to kill a terrorist before you land to make it safe. The pilot holds top secret information on the submarine that you have to destroy in mission 5, so get to him quickly.

Mission 5

Destroy the fleet of submarines under terrorist control. These subs will appear individually and they take a hell of lot of hits. The best technique is to move ahead of them and drop your mines. To be successful you need to know when your mines explode, and time it just right.

STAGE THREE - TRAINING GROUND (Passcode 9VMF9NSHK9G)

Mission 1

Destroy enemy training camps situated to the west. Destroy the gun towers. Keep an eye out for gunners on the ground, they are pretty hard to spot.

Mission 2

Secure a landing zone at the top of the screen, near to what looks like some Arabian tents. Destroy the gun turret and then transport the Green Beret, who is north-east of your LZ. *(Blimey missus, this is getting just like a real military briefing. Where's the video featuring a smart bomb knocking out a lavatory of immense strategic importance, thus striking a crushing blow to the enemy before teatime? Ed.)*

Mission 3

Three mobile radars are protecting the tank barracks, destroy them. Each one of the radars is protected by two tanks, so it's best not to go straight for them or you will be hit from both sides. So, destroy the tanks first.

Mission 4

Find the communications expert held in his barrack jail. Use the map to locate the right barrack and destroy it. Pick up everyone who comes out and return to the landing pad for extra armour. You must now drop him off at the telephone pylon LZ.

Mission 5

Get to the Sheridan tanks in the depot and destroy them. Concentrate on the active Sheridans first 'cos they're firing at you and causing you grief, and the stationary ones are no problem whatsoever.

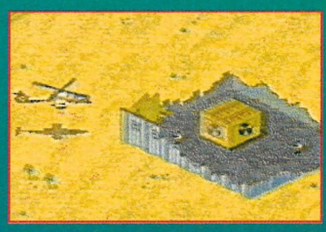
Mission 6

For undetected access to the enemy Head Quarters and the warehouse, you have to destroy the three mobile radars. Before you go for the radars though, watch out for the surrounding military escort – no tanks, just a few armoured vehicles.

Mission 7

Destroy the training Head Quarters and all the adjacent troops, then capture the field commanders and try to squeeze the radio passwords out of them. You can grab extra ammunition and fuel around this area. Which is a good thing, 'cos you'll need it.

Mission 8



The warehouses located at the bottom of the map have to be destroyed. There is a nuclear reactor hidden away in one warehouse. You must destroy all surrounding gun turrets and soldiers. One stray bullet will cause an explosion.

STAGE FOUR - NIGHT STRIKE (Passcode) X7NL45HCYRN

Mission 1

Immediately destroy the eight watch towers. There is no light, so use your weapons as brief lighting. *(Of course, another handy tip is to turn up the brightness on your TV. Ed.)* Be aware of enemy helicopters with night vision.

Mission 2

Save the green beret scout. He is recognisable by his flares but it may be hard to see them if you are continually shooting. Destroy everything before you take him to guard the drop zone, otherwise you'll sustain a mass of damage when landing.

Mission 3

Destroy the squadron of Apache helicopters. The good thing is, you only need to destroy the pads not the helicopters, so if you approach from the right angle you can almost avoid the Apache helicopters completely. Pretty damn sneaky, eh?

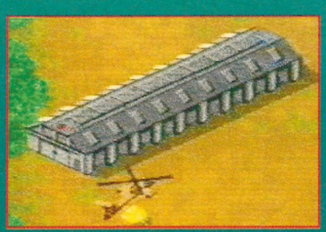
Mission 4

Here you need to free the German scientists held in three separate pits. To get them out you need to blast the pits open. The pits are guarded by a mere handful of soldiers, who are very easily dealt with. Just keep your finger tightly pressed on C.

Mission 5

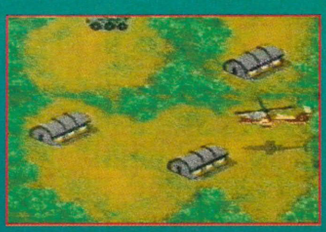
Liberate the American troops from the makeshift prisons situated next to the Germans. Use exactly the same tactics as before but remember that the Comanche helicopter (that's the one you're in) can only hold six people at any one time.

Mission 6



Eleven assembly buildings situated on the left hand side of the map need to be destroyed. You must also destroy the planes standing next to them. Take care of the security patrols before concentrating your fire on the buildings.

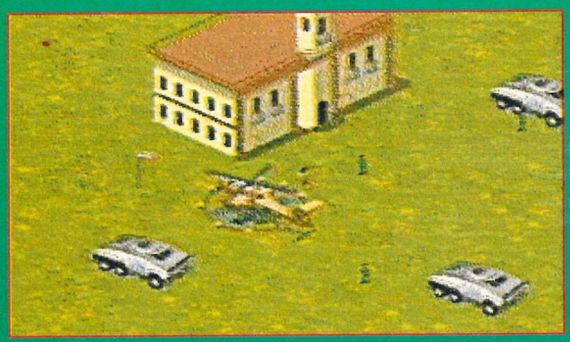
Mission 7



The commander is easy to hook. He's hiding in one of the small huts to the west. Destroy the building with its lights on. You'll notice his position is shown when you start this stage. If you find him straight away, you'll have positions for all the supplies.

STAGE FIVE - PULOSO CITY (Passcode VL4S6MGZBVP)

Mission 1

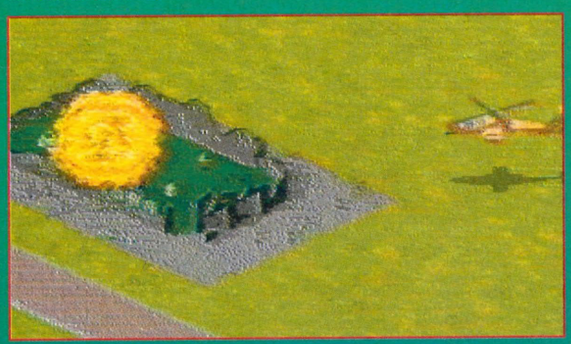


Save the innocent civilians being held hostage. Then fly up to the missions and shoot the turrets on each corner. Remember, you'll need to make two trips if there are more than six people inside your chopper.

Mission 2

The drug plants are situated south-east from the map's centre. Find them and destroy the building and the machinery inside. Look out for friendly scientists. Just avoid the security patrols and concentrate on the buildings.

Mission 3



The drug lord has a counterfeiting operation, too (He's naughty). You can find this on the other side of the map and this facility is easily destroyed. Try to avoid killing any of the scientists, though.

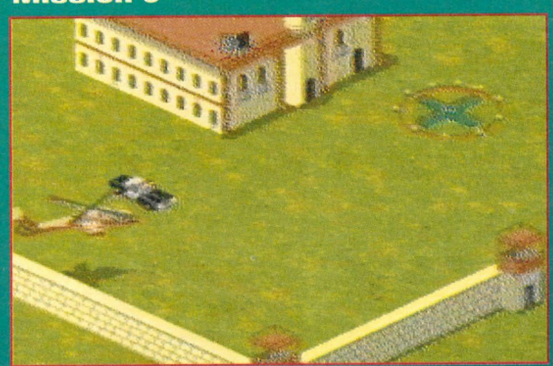
Mission 4

To shutdown all the power that's fed to the laboratories, you have to destroy the power grids – you'll find these in the western part of the map. These power grids are dead easy to crumple and shouldn't cause too much of a problem.

Mission 5

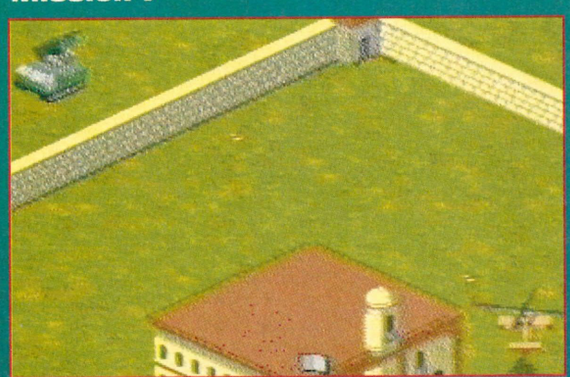
Bomb the two tall computer labs situated top left of the map and reveal some armoured vehicles. The buildings are easily destroyed but are guarded by tanks. Hide behind the buildings and let the tanks destroy them for you.

Mission 6



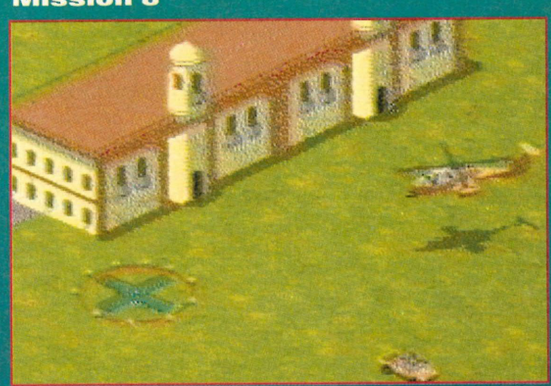
Once you've completed Mission 5, fall back to the police station and change vehicles. Use your mines to destroy all six armoured cars carrying the nuclear detonators. Don't shoot, pick them up and return to the cop shop.

Mission 7



Move near the centre of the map and destroy the building holding plastic explosives. The storehouse is well protected but you only need to destroy one vehicle, then you can hide behind the building and let them shoot it down.

Mission 8



Gather the explosives in Mission 7 and destroy the drug lord's war room. You must destroy the enemy hanging around the landing zone. Drop your co-pilot off to plant the explosives. The area is very well protected so don't wait in one place for your co-pilot.

TAME THE GAME

Action Replay codes by DAMON BARWIN of Datel Electronic.

FF6A0 D0003 - Infinite lives
FFBFC 70009 - Infinite hellfires
FF10C 70064 - Unlimited fuel (That's very useful that.)
FFBF8 7003C - Infinite hydras
FFBF4 700E8 - Infinite guns

SPECIAL THANKS...

To GAMES HQ (0702 603215) for supplying the cart. It was very kind of them.

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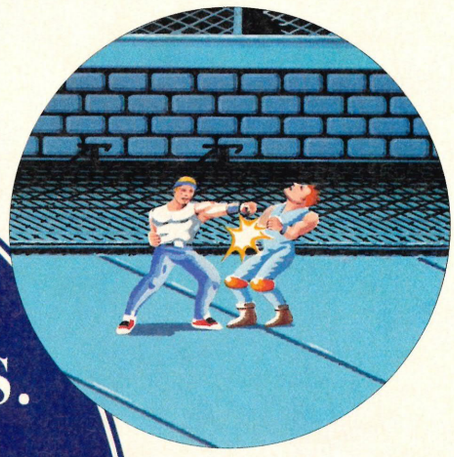

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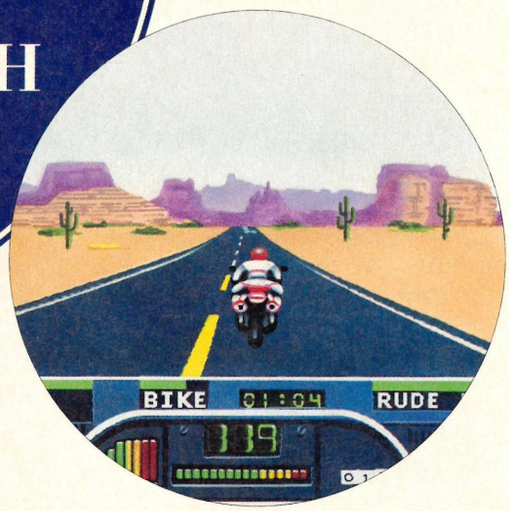

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COOL SPOT

Last month we extorted cash from you, by providing *Cool Spot* tips in exchange for money. It was so successful that we may never have to work again, and this month we're giving you the chance to make us even richer. So pay up.

MEGA DRIVE

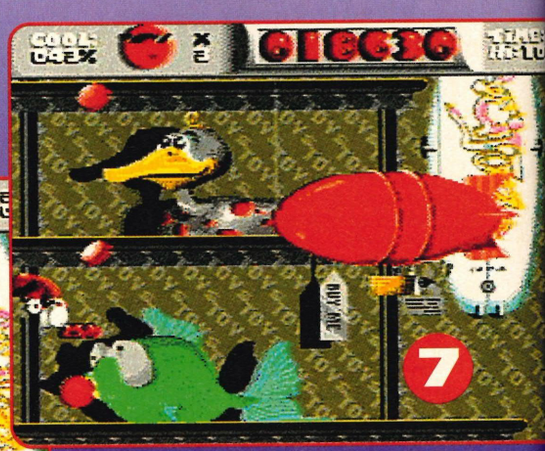
At the far right, don't jump to the duck. Instead, jump up to the bubbles to get up.

The other frogs are harder to kill. You have to shoot them downwards.

Be careful on this section. You can land on the airships, but you get bombed by World War One flying aces.

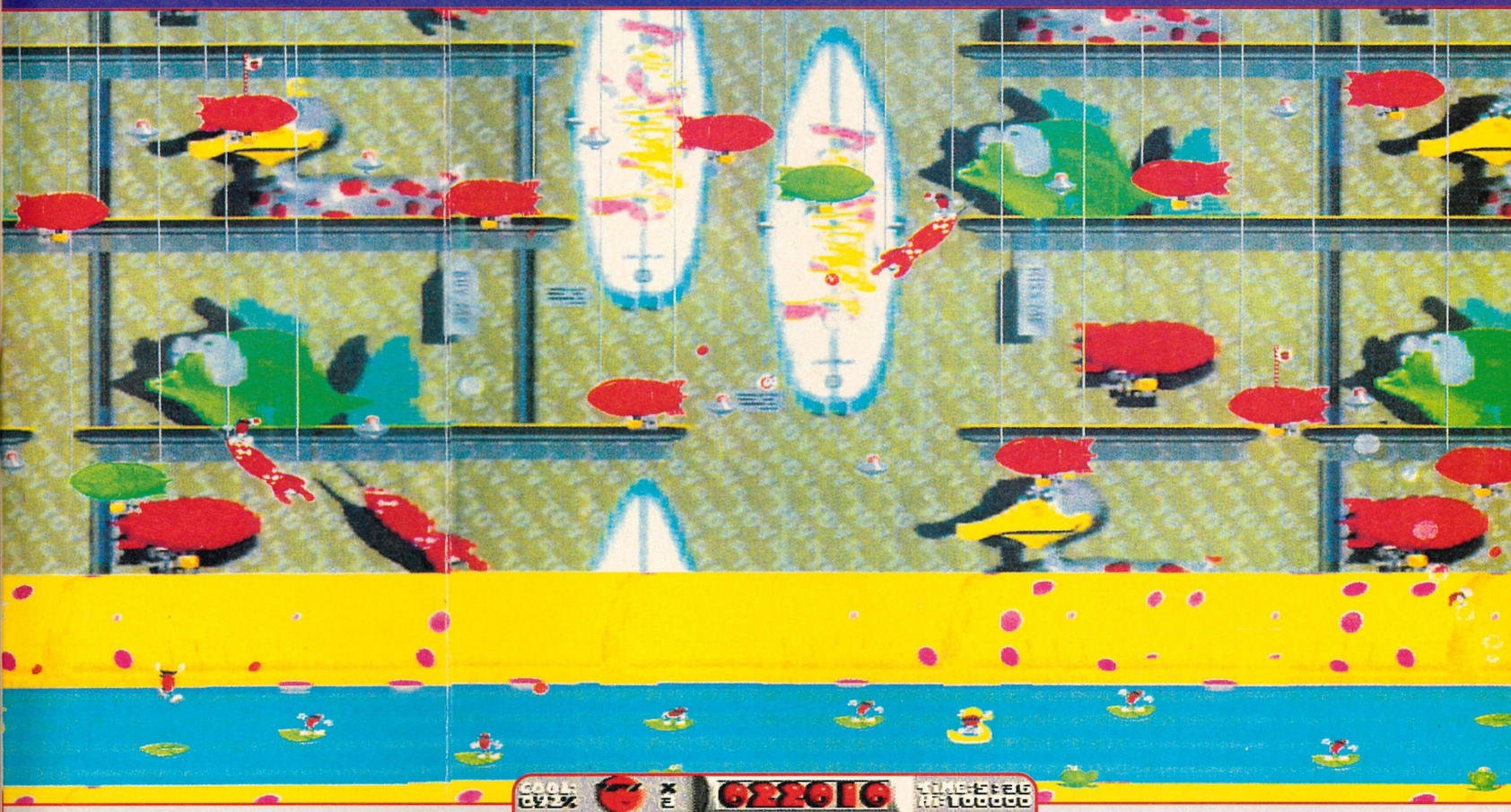
This level is pretty tough. Get rid of the first frog by jumping onto the adjacent lily pad and shooting him. Well, he deserves it.

You can only stand on the front of these angled airships, and it's easy to slip down them, so be careful on these.



On the far left, jump down to get the spots and power-up. You'll be carried back to safety by a floating bubble.

Look out for the bubbles, which you'll recognise from previous levels. You'll also have to jump on the flying saucers, but you mustn't linger.



At the end of level at last. You could shoot the cage and get out of course, but first, why not get those extra spots just to the left of the airship you're standing on?

Did you spot the two spots in the cockpit of the fire engine? It's lucky we're here, isn't it? As well as cash, send us your favourite piece of hi-fi equipment in gratitude.

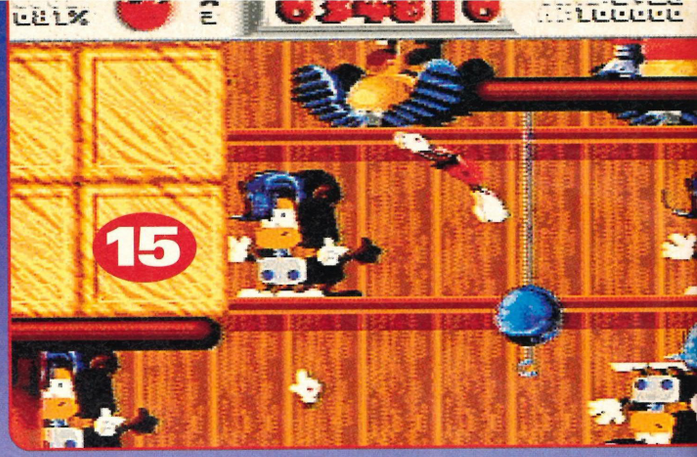
This will get you the bonus level, and a floating bubble to get you back up to the cage.

Now as you know, the objective of *Cool Spot* is to get as many spots as possible. So did you know that there's one behind that shoe at the beginning of the level?

Don't forget, you're going to need these to stay alive during the level. Look out for this one at the top of one of the ladders.

There are hundreds of spots behind these blocks. Well, maybe not hundreds, but a fair few, that's for sure. Get behind them, then roam around to find them all.

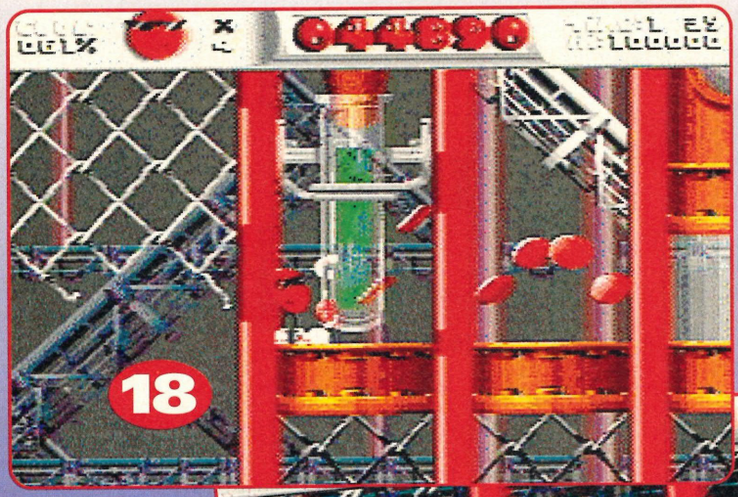
There's a Cool Glass hidden behind this cotton reel too. Watch out for the robot though. In fact, kill him first, then pick up the Cool Glass.



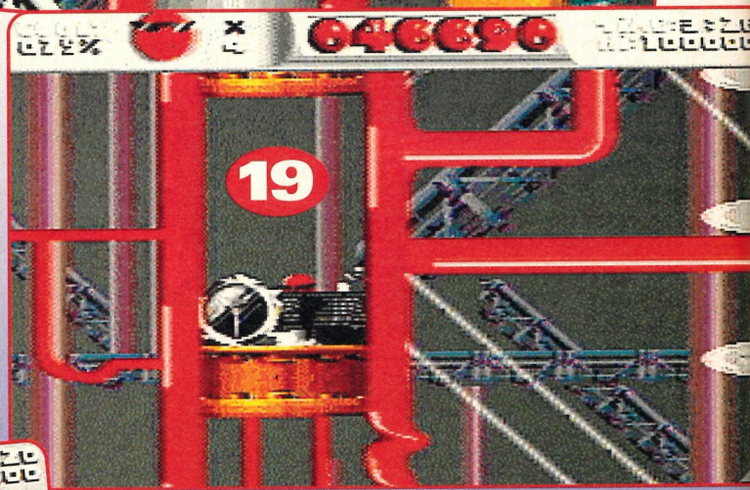
The final jump of this level is a tricky one, but it doesn't take long to master. Jump Up and Left, then pull Right when you reach the platform.

Once you do gain control, don't forget to check out the pipelines. There are a fair few spots lingering around in these areas. It's great fun whizzing up them, too.

You can actually spend about the first minute of this level just sitting back and watching while Cool Spot bounces around the level. You don't even have to touch your joypad.



More spots on platforms. The key to this level is timing, so try to steady yourself on platforms as much as possible, to gain control.



The designers of *Cool Spot* are into hiding spots behind things. There are spots behind this watch for instance. Well don't blame me, I didn't write it. I'm just a tipster.

To actually get out, first get to the far left of the screen and fall to the bottom. Walk along the bottom level to the right until you get to the pipe on the far right of the level. Enter the pipe.

At the top of the pipe you'll find the cage. And that concludes our *Cool Spot* tips. Thanks for the cash, we're super rich now. Cheers.

the Cart Show

Stop! Don't even think about spending £40 without checking out the game you want in the wonder-fab-a-groovy *Sega Zone* six page pull-out game guide. Here we tell you exactly how good, bad, ugly or brilliant the game is. That's what we call service with a smile.

6 page pull-out game guide!

The crème de la crème, the ultimate, the best meal ever... fabulous, monstrous, in fact, absolutely and completely mega.

✪✪✪✪✪ The same dish as above, but with a little less spice and frazzle.
✪✪✪✪ Jacket potatoes and fries.
✪✪✪ Jacket potatoes or fries.
✪✪ Just a salad, actually.
✪ Bread and water.

688 ATTACK SUB
Sega/£39.99 ✱ You can play either a Russian or American sub commander in a range of missions. Complex gameplay, nifty graphics and a whole load of sampled speech make this a very rewarding game. ✪✪✪✪

ABRAMS TANK
Sega/£39.99 ✱ This is a tank battle sim that, despite a rubbery feeling to the controls, tries to do something new (but only half succeeds). ✪✪✪

AFTER BURNER 2
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Classic arcade coin-op transfer that does not suffer in the transition to the Mega Drive. Fast, slick and deadly. ✪✪✪✪

ALIEN STORM
Sega/£34.99 ✱ *Golden Axe* meets *Buck Rogers* with a tad of *Operation Wolf* thrown in. Great fun in two-player mode, with deliciously slimy sprites. Not very original. ✪✪✪

ALIEN^3
Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ Mindless violence a-go go in this gory and challenging shoot-'em-up film licence. ✪✪✪✪✪

ALISIA DRAGOON
Sega/£44.99 ✱ Magical platform game where smart graphics are overshadowed by an almost unplayable difficulty level. ✪✪✪

ALTERED BEAST
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Until recently, bundled with your Mega Drive. Dull beat-'em-up. ✪✪

ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS
TecMagik/£39.99 ✱ Do you like tennis? Have you got plenty of patience? If you've answered yes to both questions, then *Andre Agassi* could be just the game for you. ✪✪✪✪

ANOTHER WORLD
Virgin/£39.99 ✱ Simply stunning conversion of the Amiga and SNES classic boasting the sumptuous graphics and complex, multi-layered gameplay that make it a prime example of the cinematic genre.

AQUATICS
Electronic Arts/£34.99 ✱ Everyone's favourite underwater agent James Pond, returns as host of the Aquatic Games, a series of eight alternative watersports events. Colourful, fun and very competitive. For up to four players. ✪✪✪✪✪

ARCH RIVALS
Acclaim/£37.99 ✱ Basketball crossed with a beat-'em-up which looks (and plays) a little flatly. Nice idea that fails to get off the ground. ✪✪✪

ARCUS ODYSSEY
Renovation/£44.99 ✱ An original and highly addictive graphic adventure. It's varied enough to ensure that even if you finish the whole thing each time you play, a different adventure will unfold. Value for money, or what? ✪✪✪✪✪

ARNOLD PALMER GOLF
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Pretty fine golf simulator which may not be high on action but it is certainly well animated and quite realistic. Fairly nifty for those of you who fancy more of a laid-back sports simulator. ✪✪✪✪

ART ALIVE
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Sega's pathetic attempt to produce an art package. But it totally misses the point. A useless range of colours and brushes means you're better off splashing your cash around somewhere else. ✪

ATOMIC RUNNER
Sega/£39.99 ✱ It's a platform game with lots of levels, excellent graphics and more alien foes than you could shake a mahogany sideboard at. A bit weird and a bit good. ✪✪✪✪

AYRTON SENNA GP
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Fairly good race game starring everyone's most hated driver, Ayrton Senna. All together now, 'There's only one Nigel Mansell, one Nigel Mansell. *(Actually, Ayrton's a very nice lad. Ayrton's mum.)* ✪✪✪

BACK TO THE FUTURE II
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Poor and unimaginative console version of the poor and unimaginative film. Not at the 'best game ever made in the history of the world' end of the scale, more in the 'why?' department. It's sad, I know, but true. ✪

BAD OMEN
Sega/£35.99 ✱ A pretty funky *Breakout* clone with a dash of pinball thrown in for good measure. A pretty good game all in all. ✪✪✪✪✪

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS
Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ Interesting mixture of an arcade platform game with a few puzzles thrown in for good measure. It's a good use of the licence, but it's pitched very hard and there's something stilted about the animation. It's really best suited to the serious Bart fans among you. ✪✪✪

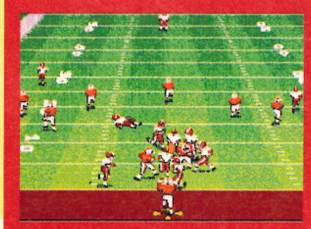
BATMAN
Sega/£39.99 ✱ An okay beat-'em-up that follows the film quite closely, however there are no special features to make this game outstanding. ✪✪✪

BATMAN RETURNS
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Very playable platform beat-'em-up with bags of gothic atmosphere. A variety of gadgets and weapons makes for laffs galore. ✪✪✪✪

BATMAN REVENGE OF THE JOKER
Sunsoft/£39.99 ✱ Superb-looking game that tries for a new, ground-breaking mode of play and falls on its face. Not bad. ✪✪✪

BATTLE SQUADRON
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Run of the mill shoot-'em-up. Nothing very special at all. ✪✪

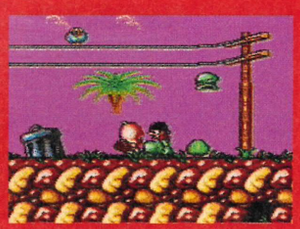
THE ESSENTIAL GAME CORNER



COLLEGE FOOTBALL
Mega Drive/EA/£44.99
***John Madden* with College teams. Absolutely great.**

CHUCK ROCK II
Mega Drive/Core/£39.99
Completely fab *Flinstone*-esque platform game.

GUNSTAR HEROES
Mega Drive/Sega/£39.99
An incredibly fast and thrilling platform blaster.



CHUCK ROCK II
Master System/Core/£29.99
Great on the Mega Drive, bril on your Master System.

GLOBAL GLADIATORS
Game Gear/Sega/£29.99
And even more platform fun to be had with your handheld.

the Cart Show

BATTLETOADS
Tradewest/£TBA ✱ The Turtles now being consigned to a big bin marked 'Soup Of The Day,' it's time for the Toads to sweep the multiverse. *Battletoads* is quite simply wonderful, 12 levels of mayhem that ooze character, humour and lots of intelligent-type things that make you feel intellectually superior as you beat sprites over the head.

BOB
Electronic Arts/£44.99 ✱ 45 levels of pretty much standard platform gameplay. Gets a bit repetitive after a while, but infinite continues ensure you don't see the same level too many times. ✪ ✪ ✪

BONANZA BROTHERS
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Okay puzzle-cum-arcade-adventure game. ✪ ✪ ✪

BUCK ROGERS
Electronic Arts/£49.99 ✱ Based on the old Buster Crabbe movies. This is a smart, if complex, RPG. From picking your adventuring companions to doing battle against the evil space monster, you roleplay for all you're worth. Good combat, good animation, good stuff.

BULLS V LAKERS
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ A high-quality sports sim. This time it's basketball and it comes packed with animation and sound which is of a very high standard. Great game and good addictive stuff. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CALIFORNIA GAMES
Sega/£29.99 ✱ 'Everybody's gone surfin', Cal-i-for-ny-ay.' Shorts, surf, sun and sex *(There's no sex in it, is there? Ed.)* all on your Mega Drive. Okay fun, okay conversion. ✪ ✪ ✪

CENTURION
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ As the title suggests, this is a strategy shoot-'em-up which requires a large amount of thought, guile and planning to be able to achieve the ultimate goal: complete and utter world domination. *(One day it will all be mine hahahahahaggggh. A slightly deranged Ed.)* ✪ ✪ ✪

CHAKAN
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Scary platform slash-'em-up with an unpleasant looking hero and a big dollop of sword and sorcery. An unusual plot and some nice backgrounds all combine together to add to the game's atmosphere. Quite a good game, the atmpsophere increases the enjoyment of the game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO–AM
Tradewest/£39.99 ✱ Fairly halfway decent conversion of the old Nintendo game *RC Pro-Am* (if you're anally retentive enough to really care about this) that unfortunately during the process of the conversion suffers a humongous amount in comparison to the groovy *Micro Machines*. ✪ ✪ ✪

CHIKI CHIKI BOYS
Capcom/Sega/£39.99 ✱ A cutesy shoot-'em-up with a disgustingly sweet name and graphics. (It could cause serious tooth decay.) This game is probably only really suitable for kids. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CHUCK ROCK
Virgin/£39.99 ✱ Much better version than on the Master System, however still rather flat, especially when compared to something like *Mickey Mouse In The Castle Of Illusion*. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CLUE
Parker Brothers/£37.00 (Import) ✱ What is the point? I mean, what is the point? It's all very nice and everything, but computer *Clue* belongs in the same box as computer fruit machine games. The box marked 'totally unnecessary'. ✪ ✪ ✪

COLUMNS
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Cheap cart, but it's a pretty simple game. Made famous on the Game Gear and Master System, *Columns* is an addictive enough puzzler. ✪ ✪ ✪

CORPORATION
Virgin/£39.99 ✱ Slightly frustrating space-age RPG that tips more than a passing nod to *Blade Runner*. Good serious RPG fun. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CYBERBALL
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Space-age American footie game. Nice graphics, but if you want a real football game, look elsewhere. ✪ ✪

CYBORG JUSTICE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Distinctly average beat-'em-up, with lots of moves and snazzy graphics but not much else. Beat-'em-up fans will love it. (Beat-'em-up fans need help. Ed.) ✪ ✪ ✪

D ROBINSON'S COURT
Telnet/£39.99 ✱ Like most basketball games on the MD, it's not really that good, but it's not that bad either. ✪ ✪ ✪

DAVIS CUP CHALLENGE
Tengen/£TBA ✱ Fast and fun tennis game, especially in two-player mode. Not at all bad. ✪ ✪ ✪

DEADLY MOVES
Kaneco/£44.99 ✱ *Street Fighter II*-style one-on-one beat-'em-up. It's no *Streetfighter II*, but it's considerably better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

DECAP ATTACK
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Massive and complex graphic adventure. *Decap* is highly addictive and well put together. Nice one, Sega. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

DESERT STRIKE
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ The Gulf War makes it on to the Mega Drive. Fast and furious chopper action (oo-er) in the desert. You must rescue as many Americans from the Arabs as you can. Simple and very addictive.

DJ BOY
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Long awaited but ultimately very disappointing beat-'em-up with a poorly set learning curve that results in a near-impossible playability factor. ✪

DOUBLE CLUTCH
Sega/£34.99 ✱ *Super Sprint*-style overhead-viewed driving game. It's crap. ✪

DOUBLE DRAGON
Ballistic/£29.99 ✱ Cartoony graphics and predictable gameplay leave you feeling a bit limp. The whole shebang looks a little tired and old now, and despite the low cover price you're left thinking, 'Big, fat, hairy deal.' ✪ ✪ ✪

DOUBLE DRAGON 3
Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ Very lame two-player beat-'em-up with some pretty backgrounds. ✪

DYNAMITE DUKE
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Below par, into-the-screen shoot-'em-up, which was originally a big hit in the pubs. This conversion on to the Mega Drive looks very weak. ✪ ✪

EA HOCKEY
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Electronic Arts' *Ice Hockey* is amazing. Ultra-smooth animation, fab graphics, coupled with the highly addictive game of ice hockey – a must have.

ECCO
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Spooky, off-the-wall dolphin sim and puzzle game. Totally original and fab, thanks mainly to the excellent animation and fiendish conundrums.

EMPIRE OF STEEL
Acclaim/£34.99 ✱ Graphically highly original shoot-'em-up that mixes space-age ships with Victorian designs. Unfortunately, the playability doesn't quite live up to the graphics. It's a case of nice to look at, bummer to play. ✪ ✪

ESWAT
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Highly unoriginal, dated-looking beat-'em-up. ✪ ✪

EUROPEAN CUP SOCCER
TecMagik/£34.99 ✱ Very good footie game based on the *Manchester United* games that you can get on the Amiga. Much closer to *Super Soccer* than *Kick Off* in looks and animation, but not nearly as fast as either of them. It's also hampered by a slightly strange control system. Still quite smart, though. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

EVANDER HOLYFIELD BOXING
Sega/£49.99 ✱ Yet another appalling boxing sim – don't bother (especially since Evander isn't World Champ any more). ✪ ✪

F1
Domark/£49.99 ✱ Excellent racing game which brings the world of formula one to your Mega Drive. Don't miss it.

F-22 INTERCEPTOR
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Yet another classic Mega Drive game from EA. Loads of action keeps your interest alive without sacrificing the quality of the graphics. This game has more balls than the entire English rugby team. It's simply brill-o.

THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a game called *Faery Tale Adventure*. Graphic-cum-movement-cum-combat game, *Faery Tale* is a brave stab at a conversion, but if you want a fantasy game grab *The Immortal*. ✪ ✪ ✪

FANTASIA
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Mickey Mouse. We all know the alternative use of the word. This game isn't quite that – it looks really sweet, yet the gameplay stinks. Awful collision detection and a learning curve which resembles Mount Everest. Great to look at but unfortunately it's crap to play. ✪ ✪

FATAL FURY
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Classic arcade conversion that is all set to appear on the SNES. However, don't do it – don't believe the hype, this is a smart game but not as good as everyone has made it out to be. If one-on-one combat is your kinda thing, then this could be for you but maybe you'd be better off waiting for *SF2*. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

FATAL LABYRINTH
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Famous old RPG game looking a bit long in the tooth. ✪ ✪ ✪

FATAL REWIND
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ This one's an original and clever platform blow-'em-away. It includes some very nice touches, including an instant replay of your recent destruction which you can take over and play at any point, thus changing your own destiny. This makes for a superior game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

FERRARI GP CHALLENGE
Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ Now let's see if you can guess what this game's about. I'll give you a wee hint – there's a strong vein of Formula One in it. ✪ ✪

FIRE SHARK
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Rip-off cart based on *1943*. Nothing special. In fact, if truth be told, just something rather rubbish. ✪

FLINTSTONES
Taito/£39.95 ✱ *The Flintstones* the prog is cool. *The Flintstones* (Mega Drive) is lukewarm. A well animated and highly varied platform jape that suffers from being a bit too easy. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Mindless blaster cart that offers a good pump of the trigger finger. ✪ ✪ ✪

GADGET TWINS
Gametek/£39.99 ✱ Don't be put off by the basic-looking graphics; this game has a fair dollop of playability and some amusing animations. Two-player simultaneous option makes it a real hoot. ✪ ✪ ✪

GALAHAD
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Passable arcade adventure with a slight puzzley aspect. Not much to set it apart from all its fellow platform romps – except a femme-boy hero. ✪ ✪ ✪

GENERAL CHAOS
Electronic Arts/£TBA ✱ A war themed shoot-'em-up with a difference, for up to four players. Great fun. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING
Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ Boxing game featuring the boxer turned preacher turned boxer again. Hard to believe, but this is actually worse than the Master System version. ✪ ✪

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
Sega/£44.99 ✱ Nowhere near as good as the SNES version. Once again, you are out to rescue a chick from the local evil wizard (yawn). ✪ ✪ ✪

G–LOC AIR BATTLE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Okayish sort of *Afterburner* rip-off that suffers away from the arcades and 360 degree spinning hamster wheels. ✪ ✪ ✪

GOLDEN AXE
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Coin-op conversion of an arcade classic. Pathetically easy. ✪ ✪

GODS
Mindscape US/£39.99 (Import) ✱ Even faster than the computer original, this excellent arcade adventure has lots of levers to pull, secrets to discover and baddies to kill.

GRANADA
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Travel through the world of *Coronation Street*, drinking milk stout, gossiping with old people, finding out the latest goss. Nah, just kidding. *Granada* is a plain old shoot-'em-up (unfortunately), with enough challenge and originality to make it worth a look. (Just.) ✪ ✪ ✪

GRANDSLAM TENNIS
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Not bad at all, even though this is just a blatant copy of *Super Tennis* on another format. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

GYNOUG
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Original shoot-'em-up that finds you flying round as a dude with wings fighting strange creatures. ✪ ✪ ✪

HARDBALL 3
Accolade/£39.99 ✱ A baseball game on the Mega Drive, now there's a rarity. It's baseball. It's pretty good. Er… and that's it. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

HELL FIRE
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Average arcade shoot-'em-up. Nothing new. ✪ ✪

HERZOG ZWEI
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Not unlike *Risk*, this is an odd cart that attempts to mix both arcade and strategy action. Not sure it works. ✪ ✪

HOME ALONE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ The dirt says hot, the label says not (which means that it doesn't live up to the hype). Somewhere between conception and playing, a tinge of mediocrity has crept into the gameplay. Rather slow and two-dimensional. ✪ ✪

HUMANS
Gametek/£39.99 ✱ *Lemmings*-inspired puzzle game that crawls rather than romps. A variety of different cave men, with different skills, must be guided through different landscapes. Unfortunately, this game fails to be different in any way. An Amiga classic, a Mega Drive duffer. ✪ ✪ ✪

THE IMMORTAL
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Despite the fair hefty price tag, *The Immortal* is a stonker of a game and worth every penny. The best graphic adventure available on the market – incredibly violent and gory. A true classic.

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE
US Gold/£39.99 ✱ Quite polished but uninspired platform beat-'em-up. Sadly, not that much better than the excellent Game Gear version despite the eight more bits. ✪ ✪ ✪

IT CAME FROM THE DESERT
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Based on an old 1950s B-movie about giant ants – and just as crap. ✪

JAMES BOND: THE DUEL
Domark/£39.99 ✱ Good graphics and beautifully animated, but nothing whatsoever to do with duelling. Locations include an oil tanker, jungle, volcanic cavern and a space shuttle before the final confrontation with Bond's arch-rival wotsisname. The gameplay becomes increasingly more challenging as you progress. Pretty smart all in all. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

JAMES POND
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Not to be confused with *James Bond*, who is very smooth and not a fish. This is the first outing for the aquatic-based super-spy. Pond is licensed to gill and must save as many trapped lobsters as possible from their doom in this eco-friendly adventure. Not as good as its sequel. ✪ ✪ ✪

JAMES POND II: ROBOCOD
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ James Pond, Bubble 07, is back in an adventure so festive that it has everything but fairy lights hanging from it. Silky smooth graphics and animation, as well as an oh-so-sweet storyline. A Mega Drive cart that's well up to the usual EA standard.

JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS
Sega /£39.99 ✱ Fairly competent tennis game, which could perhaps have benefited from being fine-tuned and speeded up. Lots of young ladies in skimpy sportswear, though. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

JEWEL MASTER
Sega/£34.99 ✱ A rather standard fighting fantasy game in which you collect rings to give you extra special powers. Nothing original, pretty pictures and okay muzak. ✪ ✪ ✪

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Original Mega Drive American footie game that now looks a little dated. ✪ ✪ ✪

JOE MONTANA II
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Smart sequel to *JM1*. Boasting more sampled speech than any other game, and with a much improved play system. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ If you're into American football, this is a must. Even if you aren't, it's worth learning the rules just so you can play. Amazingly smooth graphics, great sound and intelligent gameplay. Smart. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

JOHN MADDEN '92
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Take all the best bits from the original *John Madden* game. Improve upon that and you've got *JM '92*. If you already have the original then the high cover price might put you off lashing out the major league cash. If, however, you have yet to get a US footie game for your Mega Drive, then you'd be advised to go for this one above any other.

JOHN MADDEN '93
Electronic Arts/£44.99 ✱ With the teams brought up to date and the programme debugged, *John Madden '93* has inherited the title of best American Football game from its predecessor. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

KID CHAMELEON
Sega/£34.99 ✱ This is a very original kinda platform game in which, instead of collecting loads of different shaped guns to blow those blasted bad guys away, you collect different shaped helmets. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

KING'S BOUNTY
Electronic Arts/£34.99 ✱ A graphic adventure kinda game where you build armies with fantasy creatures and set off exploring continents. Brill. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

KING OF THE MONSTERS
Sega/£39.99 ✱ One-on-one beat-'em-up that suffers from being crap. Four monsters, four locations, four hours of semi-entertainment. ✪

KING SALMON
Vic Tokai Inc/£39.99 (Import) ✱ Fishing simulator. ✪ ✪

KLAX
Domark/£34.99 ✱ *Klax* must have been out on more formats than any other game I care to know. Okay, if you like arranging fast-moving coloured blocks into ever-more-complex patterns. ✪ ✪ ✪

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE
Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ An excellent puzzle game with lots of platform frolics. Would have been equally good without the occasional cameo by Bart and his clan, but still a must if you're into thinky games. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

LANDSTALKER
MEGA ZONE
Climax Ent./Sega/£47 ✱ Marvellous isometrically-viewed arcade adventure. *Landstalker* is the doyen of the Japanese games press.

LEADERBOARD
US Gold/£39.99 ✱ Disappointing and dated golf game. Lacks the atmosphere and feel of real golf. (Eh? Ed.). ✪ ✪ ✪

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Brill helicopter simulation that sets a new benchmark standard for Mega Drive flight sims. The best way to learn how to handle your chopper! *(Oooo-er you are awful. Ed.)* ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Not technically the best Mega Drive driving game, but it still manages to breathe some life back into the genre. If you like your games graphically brilliant, this won't disappoint you. ✪ ✪ ✪

MARBLE MADNESS
Domark/£39.99 ✱ A rather excellent conversion of the old arcade classic. Simple but effective, you guide your marble around six increasingly difficult courses. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY
Sega/£39.99 ✱ No, no, no, not *that* Mario Lemieux, the American ice hockey star who plays for the bizarrely named Penguins. The game's okay, except you find yourself remembering how good *EA Hockey* is. ✪ ✪ ✪

MEGALOMANIA
Virgin/£34.99 ✱ An excellent introduction to the God-sim, with more digitised speech than the rest of the Sega catalogue put together. Gameplay is more a matter of juggling resources and manpower, than real strategy, but a good cart for your collection anyway. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MERCS
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Superior coin-op conversion that has you playing the part of the only mercenary on the block who can save the free world. Lots of violence, combined with an over-the-shoulder viewpoint all combine to make a pretty addictive shoot-'n'-splat game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MICK & MACK AS THE GLOBAL GLADIATORS
Virgin/£39.99 ✱ Nicely animated platformy, cartoony shoot-'em-up sponsored by McDonalds which lacks gameplay variety. Ideologically a tad unsound. ✪ ✪ ✪

MICKEY AND DONALD WORLD OF ILLUSION
MEGA ZONE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Adorable platform romp, mercifully free of any nasty violence. An excellent two-player simultaneous action feature allows Mickey and Donald to interact with one another in a way that would leave poor Minnie feeling all hurt, rejected and unloved.

MICKEY MOUSE
MEGA ZONE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Out to rescue Minnie Mouse from an assortment of fluffy woodland creatures – who, unlike other fluffy woodland creatures, aren't altogether friendly. Mickey must journey through a variety of terrains to a final conflict with the witch Mizrabel. Animation is of the highest standard, as you would expect from anything bearing the Disney name, with fairly nifty sound, too. All in all, this is an outstanding Mega Drive game.

MICRO MACHINES
Codemasters/£39.99 ✱ Spooky old race game puts you in control of these diddy little cars, boats, and helicopters charging around kitchen table tops, green houses and the like. Very unusual and very lovely. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Undercover spy shoot-'em-up. Nothing original plot-wise, but nice graphics. ✪ ✪ ✪

MIG 29
Domark/£39.99 ✱ Flight sim with more emphasis on looking worriedly at instrument read-outs, rather than whizzing about shooting things. Passable basically. ✪ ✪ ✪

MIGHT AND MAGIC
Sega/£49.99 ✱ A menu-driven adventure of the first class. *Might And Magic* is especially nice for the bearded games players who are into Dex points. ✪ ✪ ✪

MIKE DITKA POWER FOOTBALL
Accolade/£34.99 ✱ Difficult to get into, but once you do it's a worthwhile play. Not as good as *John Madden*, but will anything ever be as good as *John Madden*? ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MOONWALKER
Sega/£34.99 ✱ A straightforward conversion of the coin-op. With the sugar-coated presence of Michael Jackson as the hero, the rather twee gameplay is saved by excellent graphics and sound. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MONOPOLY
Parker Brothers/£44.99 (Import)✱ Almost three times the price of the board game, this cart manages to be almost three times less entertaining than the original. ✪ ✪

MUHAMMED ALI HEAVY WEIGHT BOXING
Virgin/£TBA ✱ Oo-er, a boxing game that isn't a complete whiffy toilet. *Ali* suffers slightly from being a bit simple (the game that is) but still the best Mega Drive boxing so far. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ If you like football and haven't got any *JM* games you will get a lot of laughs from this game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

MYSTIC DEFENDER
Sega/£34.99 ✱ *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts* rip off that totally fails to deliver. ✪

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE
Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ With so many decent basketball sims around, only a complete fool would waste their money on crap game like this. ✪ ✪

NINJA GAIDEN
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Classic beat-'em-up that appeared on the Mega Drive after appearing on every other machine. ✪ ✪

NFL SPORTSTALK FOOTBALL – STARRING JOE MONTANA
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Better than *Joe Montana 2* in most respects, yet you still feel let down by the controls when trying to switch between players in a hurry. It's a very good game, but in American football *John Madden* games still wear the crown. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

NHPLA HOCKEY
MEGA ZONE
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Basically *EA Hockey 2*, but featuring teams from the North American Ice Hockey League (NHL) and loads of additional animation and options. Very fast, very slick and, well, absolutely faaaaaab!

OLYMPIC
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Guess what this is about. Yup, that's right. Its about flower arranging. Poor joke , poor game. ✪ ✪

OLYMPIC GOLD
US Gold/£34.99 ✱ Okay *Track And Field* re-style that. While fun in multi-player mode, in one-player mode it leaves you thinking that it really is time to wake up and smell the cutlery. ✪ ✪ ✪

OUTLANDER
Mindscape/£39.99 (Import) ✱ An up-market version of the truly awful *TechnoCop*, but only just a little bit better. *Apocalypse Now* meets *Mad Max* as you belt through the lands of a post-nuclear society. Plays almost as excitingly as it sounds. ✪ ✪

OUTRUN 2019
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Ridiculously bad follow-up to the follow-up to the follow-up of the game that was pretty dull when it came out at the turn of the 18th century. Terribly sad. ✪

PACMANIA
Domark/£34.99 ✱ Classic arcade game. Our old friend, the little yellow blob, runs round eating pills and avoiding ghosties. Great graphics and sound and enough of an update to keep interest alive. Pac for the '90s. ✪ ✪ ✪

PAPERBOY 2
Domark/£39.99 ✱ Are you the sort of person who'd get up at six every morning, suspend a heavy bag from your shoulder and then spend an hour going up and down the same old streets, with your fingers getting progressively more inky – if you weren't being paid for it? If you are, then you'll love *Paperboy 2*. Kapeesh? ✪ ✪

PGA TOUR 2
MEGA ZONE
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ The latest version of this sporting classic now possesses seven courses and even has new improved digitised golfing slacks.

PHANTASY STAR 2
Sega/£59.99 ✱ Despite the hefty price tag, this graphic adventure is worth every penny. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

PHANTASY STAR 3
Sega/£49.99 ✱ This is almost the spitting image of *Phantasy Star 2*. Rather too expensive for a sequel that is so like the original. ✪ ✪ ✪

PHELIOS
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up that has little new to offer any serious gameplayer. ✪ ✪

PITFIGHTER
Domark/£39.99 ✱ Bare-knuckle fighting is violent, illegal and very dangerous. *Pitfighter* is a stonking Mega Drive game. Almost the same as the real thing. One of the best single location beat-'em-ups around. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

POPULOUS
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Here you get to play God. You get to develop a race of people in competition with another race. A classic game and a definite must for all egomaniacs. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

POWERMONGER
MEGA ZONE
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Absorbing icon-driven strategy game in which you control up to five armies in a 3D battle environment. It all happens in real time, it's quite involving and definitely not for those of you out there who are cerebrally-challenged.

PRO STRIKER
Sega/£42.50 (Import) ✱ An excellent four-player mode is the only noteworthy element to this very average footie game. ✪ ✪ ✪

PRO QUARTERBACK
Tradewest/£39.99 ✱ Yet another American footie sim that's about as realistic as David Bowie's acting and as gripping as *The Collected Speeches Of John Major* (Tedium Press, 1992). ✪ ✪

QUACKSHOT
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Similar to other Sega/Disney tie-ins, *Quackshot* is another scrolling platform adventure game starring one of the fave Disney characters. Superb graphically but slightly too slow to make it a classic. ✪ ✪ ✪

RAIDEN TRAD
Ubi Soft/£34.99 ✱ A sadly sluggish shoot-'em-up that really has nothing new to offer. Oh dear. ✪ ✪

RAMBO III
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Crap film, crap actor, crap game. Nuff said? ✪ ✪

RANGER-X
MEGA ZONE
Sega/£TBA ✱ Superb platform shoot-'em-up in which you control a robot/spaceship transformer-type affair. The most exciting and imaginative blaster of recent times. Buy it.

REVENGE OF SHINOBI
Sega/£40 ✱ Leaps and bounds ahead of pretty much anything on either console or computer. One of the best games of its type around. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

RINGS OF POWER
Electronic Arts/£49.99 ✱ Odd little RPG game from EA. You either love it or hate it. Most of us here at *Sega Zone* hated it. Hated it so much that we kicked around the office. Poor graphics, poor gameplay – bit of a poor game all round, really. ✪ ✪

RISKY WOODS
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Rohan the brave young adventurer sets out to free a load of monks who have been turned into stone cladding by the evil Draxos. Collect tags and keys to throw at the gatekeeper who only lets you pass once you've repeated his little tune. ✪ ✪ ✪

ROAD RASH
MEGA ZONE
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ Not a nasty skin complaint contracted from too many hours spent in the saddle, but a rather nifty motorbike racing game. A 'must buy'.

ROAD RASH 2
MEGA ZONE
Electronic Arts/ £39.99 ✱ This is an excellent update of *Road Rash* with a split-screen, two-player option and an exciting new chain to hit people with.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE
Electronic Arts/£34.99 ✱ Cutesy-puzzley elephant sim from the people who brought you *James Pond*. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SHADOW DANCER
Sega/£34.99 ✱ An arcade conversion that owes a lot to *Super Shinobi*, but doesn't stand up in comparison. Both graphics and sound are fine, but *Super Shinobi* inevitably wins hands down. ✪ ✪ ✪

SHADOW OF THE BEAST
Electronic Arts/£45 ✱ Trog around the inside of a really large tree in search of revenge for your mutation from a mild-mannered homeboy to a green slimy thing. Classic game with stunning graphics, let down somewhat by disappointing gameplay. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ✱ More of an update on the original *Shadow Of The Beast* than a sequel. Okay if you have a few years to spend on it. ✪ ✪ ✪

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS
Sega/£49.99 ✱ An okay kinda graphic adventure, but not a patch on *The Immortal*. The only way it scores over its better EA partner is that you can save your position within the game. ✪ ✪ ✪

SHINOBI III
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Also called *Super Shinobi II*, this is the sequel to one of the best ninja games ever. It's not very original and the controls are a bit fiddly, but animation and sound are fab. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SIDE POCKET
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Addictive in a funny sort of way, with the promise of fantasy friends on title screens, but a lack of control over the cue angle makes it frustrating not fun. ✪ ✪

SNOW BROTHERS
Tengen/£44.99 ✱ Great fun, and highly addictive platform game from the same genus as Bubble Bobble and Rodland, but you'll finish it far too quickly. ✪ ✪

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
MEGA ZONE
Sega/£34.99 ✱ One of the best – if not the best – games around. Fab graphics, sound and the smoothest and fastest animation ever.

SONIC 2
MEGA ZONE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Faster and bigger than the first *Sonic*, but otherwise not radically different. Still, they're both must haves for your cart library and the sequel also has the added bonus of two different types of two-player simultaneous action.

SPEEDBALL 2
Virgin/£39.99 ✱ Classic game that falls down a bit in conversion, but still manages to stay up there with the best of the new crop. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SPIDERMAN
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Once mastered, Spiderman jumps, rolls and fights baddies with the agility of a Russian athlete. Lovely animation and great sound with a fair splash of humour make this one of the best Spidey licences. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SPLATTERHOUSE 3
Namcot/£39.99 (Import) ✱ Some people want this game to be banned. We don't want it banned, but we'd certainly think twice before spending 40 quid on a copy. A bit repetitive and uninspired. ✪ ✪ ✪

STAR CONTROL
Ballistic/£39.99 ✱ Stonkingly playable and great fun, especially in two-player mode. Great re-working of an old-fashioned kinda game. It's a little bit pricey, though, but hell – it's worth it. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

STARFLIGHT
Electronic Arts/£49.99 ✱ One of those games that tries to mix a little bit of shoot-'em-up with a little bit of strategy with a little bit of graphic adventure. Usually these kind of games fall flat on their faces, but EA has saved *Starflight* from being too boring. ✪ ✪ ✪

STRIDER
Sega/£44.99 ✱ Above average adventure. Good graphics and ear-bending sound make this game a real treat to play. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SUMMER CHALLENGE
Accolade/£34.99 ✱ Dull multi-event joypad-destroying game. Archery, pole vault, high jump, javelin, etc. Yawn. ✪ ✪ ✪

SUNSET RIDERS
Konami/£34.99 ✱ Western-spiced shoot-'em-up with plenty of genuine frontier atmosphere and rollicking sound effects, packed full of every cinema cliché you could think of. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SUPER HANG ON
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Sega's attempt to duplicate the success of *Road Rash*. Unfortunately,they haven't. ✪ ✪

SUPER HYDLIDE
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Crap arcade adventure, with awful graphics and a playability that kills any interest quicker than a short sword between the shoulder blades. ✪

SUPER KICK OFF
US Gold/£39.99 ✱ Not as compellingly addictive as a soccer game should be. ✪ ✪ ✪

SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Baseball game that isn't as super as the title might suggest. ✪ ✪

SUPERMAN
Virgin/£39.99 ✱ Excellent licence, duff game.

the Cart Show

Man of Steel gets transformed to Man Of Margarine and ends up in the Gotham Home For Distressed Ageing Superheroes. Too small and too dull. ✪ ✪ ✪

SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX

Sega/£36 ✱ Fab Grand Prix simulator. Compete in all 16 rounds of the World Championship. The control system takes some getting used to, but you'll be able to race with the best of them when you do. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SUPER MONACO II

Sega/£49.99 ✱ Improves on the original only in cosmetic ways. Not worth shelling out for if you own *SMGP1*. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SUPER OFF ROAD

Accolade/£29.99 ✱ For 'arcade classic' read 'cheap licence'. Cynic? Never. Not a bad version of the off-road racing game, but it does all look a tad old now. ✪ ✪

SUPER REAL BASKETBALL

Sega/£34.99 ✱ No it ain't. ✪

SUPER THUNDERBLADE

Sega/£34.99 ✱ Ancient game with loads of really blocky 3D graphics. Sadly, it's looking its considerable age. ✪

SWORD OF VERMILLION

Sega/£49.99 ✱ Very expensive, but very good. One of the best RPG games available for the Mega Drive, if not the best. Easy to use, with loads of action and a high rate of play means that you never get bored. A game for everyone. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

TAILSPIN

Sega/£34.99 ✱ Fairly sedate platform romp with that all-important simultaneous two-player option. It's a bit of a naughty cash-in on the TV cartoon really. ✪ ✪ ✪

TAZ-MANIA

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Classic cartoon game featuring the tearaway Tasmanian marsupial of TV fame. Top class action and animation — quite simply, a top class game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

TECHNO-CLASH

Electronic Arts/£44.99 ✱ You'll find non-stop action in this fab overhead view *Gauntlet*-style game. Totally addictive.

TECMO WORLD CUP

Tecmo/£34.99 ✱ A sorry excuse for a football game. In a game of two halves, it doesn't make it to half time. Total utter rubbish. ✪

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: THE HYPERSTORE HEIST

Konami/£39.99 ✱ Not a bad little walk-along beat-'em-up, really. The animation is very good and quite funny, there's a two-player option and a dash of digitised speech. ✪ ✪ ✪

TERMINATOR

Virgin/£34.99 ✱ Well, it all looks very nice, but it's about as shallow as a kiddies' paddling pool. Low on variety and low on challenge. Not one to keep you up all night. ✪ ✪

TERMINATOR 2

Acclaim/£39.99 ✱ Just like the arcade version, with a high Arnie count and the chance for some fab simultaneous two-player action. Definitely an excellent reason for getting yourself a Menacer light gun for your Mega Drive. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

THE DUEL: TEST DRIVE II

Accolade/£39.99 ✱ Unimpressive and dated driving game.You avoid police and Sunday drivers as you hurtle about in a sports car.Precious little playability. ✪ ✪

THUNDER FORCE 2

Techno Soft/£34.99 ✱ Fast and smooth scrolling shoot-'em-up crammed with excellent sound and graphics – one of the ultimate shoot-'em-ups. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

THUNDERFORCE 3

Techno Soft/£35.99 ✱ Kersplat, pow, spagoo! This is the real thing – a shoot-'em-up to end all shoot-'em-ups. Amazingly fast and smooth, with great, huge, enormous, chunks of graphics flying all over the screen. This is the Chilli Dog of computer games. Pretty far out – and really rather hot with a piquant sauce. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

TOEJAM AND EARL

Sega/£39.99 ✱ The much vaunted *ToeJam And Earl* is like a *Sonic* House mix. So laid-back it's horizontal. Funky tunes, spaced-out graphics and sampled speech. A graphic adventure where the kickin' brothers wander around collecting things in a side-splitting manner.This not-so-dynamic duo expose *Sonic* and *Mario* as '70s throwbacks.

TOKI

Sega/£34.99 ✱ Monkey spit, eh? It's dreadful to clean off your clothes.The coin-op and 16-Bit versions were great – even the Lynx remix was ace –so why, oh why has Sega changed pretty much the whole game? ✪ ✪ ✪

TRUXTON

Sega/£34.99 ✱ A straightforward arcade conversion of the well known shoot-'em-up. Very good arcade conversion with sound and graphics to match the original. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

TURBO OUT RUN

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Oh dearie, dearie me. A very poor and very dated game (from an arcade game that is, itself, very dated). You'll probably have a lot more fun playing with the cardboard box it comes in. ✪

TURRICAN

Ballistic/£39.99 ✱ *Turrican* is truly vast and really rather brill. A conversion that stands up to the original. In fact, it does more than just stand up to the original, it goes right up to it, gives it the two-finger salute and then saunters off into the nearest bar to start a fight. It's that cool. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

TWIN HAWK

Sega/£39.99 ✱ The same as every other Mega Drive shoot-'em-up before it, except this came last and thus isn't as original as the shoot-'em-ups that came first. If you get our drift. ✪ ✪ ✪

TWO CRUDE DUDES

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Very average walk through beat-'em-up that fails to impress in virtually every department. Best to avoid unless you are a dedicated fan of beat-'em-ups in general. Yawn. ✪ ✪ ✪

ULTIMATE SOCCER

Sega/£39.99 ✱ The best soccer sim so far on the Mega Drive, and no mistake, nut it may be worth waiting for *Sensible Soccer* to arrive before making a buying decision. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

Accolade/£34.99 ✱ Good game with fast-paced action and a billion nasties. It has an excellent mix of power-ups, tortuous mazey bits and hidden blocks. However, we can exclusively reveal that it's really *Turrican 2* in disguise with a very convincing wig. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

WHERE IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

Electronic Arts/£49.99 ✱ This one is otherwise known as *Where In The Game Is Carmen Playability*? Jolly historical japes as EA try to get all serious and educational in this time-jumping detective game. Hmmm. ✪ ✪

WINTER CHALLENGE

Ballistic/£34.99 ✱ Superb winter sports sim that lets you try your hand at speed skating, bobsleigh, giant slalom, downhill skiing, cross country skiing and ski-jump without having to embark on a bone-crunching Thompson's winter holiday. A sim so real you can see the peaks, feel the snow, even hear the cow bells.

WONDERBOY 3: MONSTER LAIR

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Typical platform game with Wonderboy once again having to rescue his hapless and helpless girlfriend. Neat puzzles, good graphics and sound keep this from being simply just another *Wonderboy* game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

WRESTLE WAR

Sega/£34.99 ✱ One of the best wrestling games currently available for the Mega Drive. Large graphics and sprites result in a very playable game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

WWF

Acclaim/£37.99 ✱ Marvellous wrestling game with all your bikini-clad *WWF* favourites and zillions of moves. Learning all the various keypress combinations is a bit of a nightmare, though, and not for the cack-handed. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

XENON II

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Unfortunately, this is not as good as the Amiga version, but it's still a merry little blast-'em-up jaunt through deep hyperspace. ✪ ✪ ✪

X-MEN

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Yet another *Marvell* comic spin off and, for a change, a very good one. Featuring all the characters from the comic books, including The Wolverine, Gambit, Iceman and anybody else who wants to save the world and wear tights. Great game, almost a classic game. But not quite. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

ZANY GOLF

Electronic Arts/£19.99 ✱ Despite the low cover price, which is possibly the only good thing about it, this is still a real pile of steaming brown and smelly stuff. ✪

ZERO WING

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Tough shoot-'em-up that scores with impressive graphics. One of the best. shoot-'em-ups around. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

ZOOM

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Small scale arcadey puzzle game, which is not unlike *Qiz*. It's hard on the eyes as it makes you squint a bit 'cos it's so titchy . ✪ ✪ ✪

BATMAN RETURNS

Sega/£TBA ✱ Alternate driving and platform action, this certainly improves on the standard cart version. Still doesn't manage to rise above the mundane, though. ✪ ✪ ✪

CHUCK ROCK

Imagesoft/£39.99 (Import) ✱ See *Chuck Rock* on the Mega Drive. Add longer graphic interludes and better music and it's the same game, only it's on the Mega-CD. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

HOOK

Imagesoft/£39.99 (Import) ✱ See *Hook* on the Mega Drive (barely playable platform game). Add longer graphic interludes and better music. Starting to see a pattern developing here, readers? Oh well, early days. ✪

KRIS KROSS

Sega/£TBA ✱ Kris Kross invite you to make them a video, using lots of film footage, video effects and no gameplay. *Sega Zone* invites you to throw Kris Kriss off the nearest cliff. ✪

MARKY MARK

Sega/£TBA ✱ Marky Mark invites you to make him a video. His request is slightly more enticing than that of Kris Kross (see above), if only because Marky is slightly less obnoxious and considerably more snoggable than the backwards-trousered kids. Still crap. ✪

NIGHT TRAP

Sega/£49.99 ✱ A load of nasty blokes are taking American teenagers hostage. Good. Loads of snazzy video footage, very little game. If you want to watch a film, visit a cinema. ✪ ✪

ROAD AVENGER

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Great looking, Manga-inspired driving game that owes a lot to *Dragons Lair*. It's a case of pushing the joypad at the right time in the right way or else die horribly. Nice to look at, but rubbish to play. ✪ ✪ ✪

SEWER SHARK

Imagesoft/£39.99 (Import) ✱ A very basic shoot-'em-up made lively by some nice video sequences. The gameplay isn't going to win any awards, but it's a sign that programmers are starting to make proper use of the Mega-CD's potential. Very encouraging. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

SHERLOCK HOLMES CONSULTING DETECTIVE

Sega/£39.99 ✱ One for the older, wiser and dare we say it, more boring games player. Trog round a suitably disinfected Victorian London while trying to solve one of several classic cases. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

WOLFCHILD

Sega/£39.99 ✱ An Amiga classic makes its way onto the Mega-CD. But it'snot that different to the Amiga version. A good platform romp, but you'd think the Mega-CD could pull off a couple more impressive graphical tricks. Above average. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

ACTION FIGHTER

Sega/£12.99 ✱ Nasty, cheap and tacky. Packed full of, er... action and fighting. What else can be said really. ✪ ✪

AERIAL ASSAULT

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Very unimaginative shoot-'em-up. A case of holding down the Fire button and tuning your brain to the 'vacant' frequency. ✪ ✪ ✪

AFTER BURNER

Sega/£29.99 Q The classic arcade game now makes a disappointing appearance on the 8-Bit. ✪ ✪

ALEX KIDD IN HIGH TECH WORLD

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Standard Alex Kidd fare with loads of puzzles in this arcade platform adventure. ✪ ✪ ✪

ALEX KIDD IN LOST STARS

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Yet another adventure for the Kidd. But its probably best suited for Alex Kidd fans only. ✪ ✪

ALEX KIDD IN SHINOBI WORLD

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Ninja-style graphic adventure in which the puzzles play as important a part as the blood-letting. Smooth scrolling. But little variation makes this a dull game. ✪ ✪ ✪

ALIEN STORM

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Absolutely awful game. Poor conversion of the Mega Drive original. ✪

ALIEN SYNDROME

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Shoot-'em-up, beat-'em-up kinda thing. Rather uneventful. ✪

ALTERED BEAST

Sega/£29.99 ✱ One of the oldest games around. A crap fighting fantasy beat-'em-up. Avoid. ✪

AMERICAN BASEBALL

Sega/£14.99 ✱ One or two-player mode available. Standard sports management programme plus active play sequences gives you enormous control. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

AMERICAN PRO FOOTBALL

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Not just American football, which it is really, but American Pro Football. Says it all, really. ✪ ✪ ✪

ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS

TecMagik/£29.99 ✱ There's a lot of sad Master System tennis games out there but this isn't one of them. It's actually quite a happy tennis game. The biggest smile of all emanates from the excellent Doubles option, particularly in two-player mode. Ace. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

ASTERIX

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Smart version of Goscinny and Uderzo's original comic books. Graphics and animation are absolutely brill. Rather disappointing sound and FX, but more than made up for by great playability. Great game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

AYRTON SENNA'S GRAND PRIX

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Kind of like the original. However this game has enough new twists and effects to make it a pretty good game. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

AZTEC ADVENTURE

Sega/£12.99 ✱ Everything to do with arcade adventures in Brazil, and nothing at all to do with trying to see Roddy Frame in concert. ✪ ✪ ✪

BACK TO THE FUTURE III

Acclaim/£32.99 ✱ As a graphic adventure kinda game, *Back To The Future III* is fine – it just doesn't go very far. Three levels ain't value for money. ✪ ✪

BATMAN RETURNS

Sega/£34.99 ✱ Quite stale platform beat-'em-up with the caped crusader taking on the penguin. The 8-bit graphics struggle with Tim Burton's gothic vision of Gotham. ✪ ✪

BANK PANIC

Sega/£12.99 ✱ Otherwise known as the 'I don't get paid enough and why is my overdraft so bloody big?' sim. Uneventful bank job jaunt. ✪ ✪

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS

Acclaim/£29.99 ✱ Smart conversion of the old NES game. Once again, we find the young dude with the yellow skin trying to fend off an alien invasion on his lonesome. ✪ ✪ ✪

BASKETBALL NIGHTMARE

Virgin/£29.99 ✱ Standard basketball game with the twist of playing against various mythical and fantasy creatures. Rather like playing against the England basketball team. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

BLACK BELT

Sega/£12.99 ✱ Cheap, but unoriginal, beat-'em-up. ✪ ✪

BLADE EAGLE 3D

Sega/£9.99 ✱ Stonkingly cheap and cheerful, but also stonkingly crap, er, and crap. ✪

BOMBER RAID

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Take that, Jerry Hun-trousers! Standard 'jolly japes in this RAF kinda shoot-'em-up. ✪ ✪

BONANZA BROTHERS

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Smart multi-layered arcade action puzzle game. With traps to overcome and swag to be half-inched. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Taito/£29.99 ✱ Cute, bubble-blowing brontos, monsters and over 100 platforms. Great gameplay makes this more than a challenge for hardened games players. ✪ ✪ ✪

CALIFORNIA GAMES

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Surf's up on the Master System. A classic game but a poor conversion. ✪ ✪

CAPTAIN SILVER

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Follow the adventures of Captain

Silver as he puts wrongs to rights and generally goes about being a hero. ✪ ✪ ✪

CASINO GAMES
Sega/£29.99 ✱ *Roulette, Blackjack, Poker* and *Craps,* to name but a few in this pointless gambling sim. ✪ ✪

CHASE HQ
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Various vehicular chase and destroy missions keep interest alive and help to maintain the game's high level of addictiveness. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CHASE HQ II: SCI
Sega/£32.99 ✱ Good guy cop game with loads of bad guys to be blown away and cars to be skidded. Humm… okay, I suppose. ✪ ✪

CHESS
Sega/£34.99 ✱ What can you say? *Chess* is *Chess* is *Chess.* Okay kinda cart with some nice graphics. ✪ ✪ ✪

CHOPLIFTER
Sega/£24.99 ✱ Classic horizontally-viewed shoot-'em-up that, despite being as old as the hills, is still enjoyable and pretty damn playable. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CHUCK ROCK
Virgin/£34.99 ✱ Moderate platform game that, despite looking great, plays a bit sluggishly. All rather samey, especially after a little playing time. ✪ ✪ ✪

COLUMNS
Sega/£24.99 ✱ Sega's answer to *Tetris* finds you directing multi-coloured columns of gems so that they match and disappear. Very simple and very addictive. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

CYBER SHINOBI
Sega/£29.99 ✱ *Shinobi* goes electronic but retains the same old beat-'em-up formula. ✪ ✪ ✪

CYBORG HUNTER
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Earth-bound shoot 'em up that really has little new or exciting to offer you. ✪ ✪

DARIUS II
Sega/£32.99 ✱ *Darius II* makes a welcome appearance on the Master System. Good quality shoot-'em-up. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

DICK TRACY
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Despite – perhaps in spite of – Warren Beatty and Madonna, the film was a pretty hopeless turkey. Surprise, surprise, the Master System game lives up, or rather, down to it nicely. ✪

DONALD DUCK
Sega/£32.99 ✱ Absolutely brill graphics and really sweet animation as you play your guy Donald. Loads of platforms to jump on and baddies to bash. Easy, though. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

DOUBLE DRAGON
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Pretty poor beat-'em-up. It's not really worth shelling out 30 notes for this. ✪ ✪

DRAGON CRYSTAL
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Sword and sorcery malarkey, not bad, not good. *Dragon Crystal* has Mr Average knocking at his door. ✪ ✪

ENDURO RACER
Sega/£9.99 ✱ Cheap price. Crap game. ✪

ESWAT
Sega/£29.99 ✱ A beat-'em-up in which you are out to rescue some poor sap who's gone and got himself kidnapped. Bog standard. ✪ ✪ ✪

F-16 FIGHTER
Sega/£17.99 ✱ If this is a flight sim, I'm a cabbage. I'm not and it ain't. ✪

FANTASY ZONE
Sega/£12.99 ✱ Not as good as the Mega Drive version, but not bad for all that. Opa must save his planet by blowing up everything he sees. Weird, druggy shoot-'em-up. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

FIRE AND FORGET
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Bog standard fighting fantasy fare, full of buxom maids and mad wizards. ✪ ✪ ✪

GAIN GROUND
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Not unlike that old arcade chestnut *Qix,* where the object of the game is to section off large areas of a given space. Plays a lot better than it actually sounds. ✪ ✪ ✪

GALAXY FORCE 2
Sega/£29.99 Q Sega's massive coin-op has been converted on to the Master System. The 3D scrolling is just as crisp and sharp as the coin-op, with great arcade-quality sound. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

GANGSTER TOWN
Sega/£24.99 ✱ Poor Oppo Wolf-style shoot-'em-up. Not worth it. ✪

G-LOC
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Sad graphics and sound, saved by a rather high level of gameplay. Beats *Top Gun* on the NES into the ground. ✪ ✪ ✪

GAUNTLET
US Gold/£29.99 ✱ Faithful conversion that retains all the playability of the original. Two-player mode brings the game to life. Still a good buy, however, despite its age. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING
Acclaim/£29.99 ✱ A viewed-from-the-side boxing game. Has some nice ideas with stats and super punches, but it's just not very playable. ✪ ✪

GHOSTBUSTERS
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Not nearly as good as it could have been. Only for hardened fans of the movie/cartoon series. If there are any of you left out there. ✪ ✪

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Loads of monsters to splat and power-ups to collect. ✪ ✪ ✪

GLOBAL DEFENCE
Sega/£12.99 ✱ Slow, uneventful and downright dull shoot-'em-up. ✪ ✪

GLOBAL GLADIATORS
Virgin/£29.99 ✱ A walk-of-the-mill platform game based on a hamburger. Very professionally done but a bit samey and it's really just a big advertising scam. ✪ ✪ ✪

GOLDEN AXE
Sega/£29.99 ✱ An okay version of Sega's prize beat-'em-up, but suffering from the same easiness that marred the Mega Drive version. Looks nice, though. ✪ ✪ ✪

GOLDEN AXE WARRIOR
Sega/£32.99 ✱ Take *Golden Axe,* stick 'Warrior' on the end and you've got *Golden Axe Warrior. (Inspired. Ed.)* ✪ ✪

GOLFMANIA
Sega/£32.99 ✱ Have you a mania for golf? If so, this is the one for you. *Golfmania,* maniagolf, geddit? ✪ ✪ ✪

GREAT FOOTBALL
Sega/£24.99 ✱ Very poor. Maybe Crap Football would have been a better title. ✪ ✪

GREAT VOLLEYBALL
Sega/£9.99 ✱ There's only one 'great' thing about this pile of jobs and that's the price. ✪

HANG ON
Sega/£9.99 ✱ Brave attempt at a MS bike racing game that suffers from the 8-bit's lack of memory. Too slow, too blocky, too bad. ✪ ✪

HEAVY WEIGHT CHAMP
Sega/£24.99 ✱ Pricey boxing sim that fails to deliver fairly dramatically. Large sprites chug around the screen like a couple of heavy goods vehicles. ✪

HEROES OF THE LANCE
US Gold/£29.99 ✱ You get to play an assortment of eight characters, one at a time. Together they must quest through deep, dark and extremely unpleasant dungeons. It's a standard plot, but, it has to be said, very well executed. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Arcade platform adventure, with one of the biggest dollops of puzzle-solving you are ever likely to come across. Terrific non-blasting action. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

INDIANA JONES: LAST CRUSADE
US Gold/£29.99 ✱ A standard platform adventure with the added attraction of Indiana Jones, who is after the Holy Grail and who owns a jolly nice piece of headgear. US Gold havw managed to produce a bit of a corker, here. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

JAMES BOND: THE DUEL
Domark/£34.99 ✱ A cart that loses all the good bits from the Mega Drive version (like animation, gameplay and sound) and ends up being just another mediocre platformer. Not Fleming worth it *(Oh, very funny, ha ha ha ha. Ed.)* ✪ ✪ ✪

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Yankie footie sim, bit blocky and a bit slow. Not that hot, but probably the best footie game you're gonna get on the Master System. ✪ ✪ ✪

JUNGLE FIGHTER
Sega/£29.99 ✱ If you fancy a bit of fighting in the jungle then this is for you. If you're more of a 'fighting in the greengrocers, or down the local co-op' kinda guy, I'd look elsewhere. ✪ ✪

KLAX
Sega/£32.99 ✱ Classic arcade puzzle game that suffers not at all in its conversion to the Master System. In fact, it fairs rather well in the conversion. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

KRUSTY'S FUN HOUSE
MEGA ZONE

Acclaim/£34.99 ✱ Superb and original puzzler that has Krusty the Clown attempting to rid his fun house of rodent rascals. Addictive and with an almost perfect learning curve. We all like this one lots. A bit of a classic and almost an exact copy of the Mega Drive version. This game is smart.

KUNG FU KID
Sega/£12.99 ✱ Loads of flying backflip death-chops in this average, under age beat-'em-up. ✪ ✪ ✪

LASER GHOST
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Brill graphic arcade adventure thang, in which you attempt to save Katherine's stolen soul. (She's already got her funk back.) This game is definitely worth a look. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

LINE OF FIRE
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Very poor arcade conversion with little to challenge even the most inexperienced gamesplayer. Average graphics, sound and gameplay do nothing at all to lift this game in any way what-so-ever. ✪

LORD OF THE SWORD
Sega/£29.99 ✱ More leather-bound sword and sorcery adventure. Only for the serious grebo. ✪ ✪

MARBLE MADNESS
Domark/£29.99 ✱ Arcade classic that works well on the Master System. Guide your marble down a series of increasingly difficult and tortuous paths. Mind you, if you've seen one version of *Marble Madness* you've seen them all. ✪ ✪ ✪

MAZE HUNTER 3D
Sega/£9.99 ✱ Into the screen version of the wrinkly old classic *Pac-Man.* Big, fat, hairy deal. ✪

MERCS
Sega/£32.99 ✱ Bit flicky and a bit blocky but, having said all that, not a bad little shoot-'em-up. ✪ ✪ ✪

MISSILE DEFENCE 3D
Sega/£9.99 ✱ Naff version of an ancient game, with the added crappo-schlappo factor of you having to wear a ridiculous pair of 3D glasses. ✪

MONOPOLY
Sega/£29.99 ✱ The board game that only ever makes an appearance on Boxing Day can now be found on the Master System. Great, if you like that kinda thing. ✪ ✪

MOONWALKER
Sega/£29.99 ✱ The man with the chimp makes a console appearance and is just as poncey as he was on the big screen. Okay, but I have to say it was all rather sweet and sickly. ✪ ✪ ✪

NEW ZEALAND STORY
TecMagik/£34.99 ✱ Excellent conversion of the cutesy platform arcade classic. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

NINJA
Sega/£9.99 ✱ We're not even gonna think about telling you what this is about, 'cos it's so blindingly obvious. It's also crap, but that's another story. ✪

NINJA GAIDEN
Sega/£32.99 ✱ This does not take place in a garden. Smart ninja bash – high on action, high on gameplay. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

OLYMPIC GOLD
US Gold/£34.99 ✱ Okay version of the disappointing Mega Drive game. Once again, seven sports to compete in against either the computer or a pal (if you have one). Average. ✪ ✪ ✪

OLYMPICS
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Bloomin' expensive Track And Field sim that is as uneventful as it is expensive. Not very good value for your hard earned or your parent's hard earned spondules for that matter. Not a very good outing at all. ✪ ✪

OUTRUN
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Slow, blocky and about as much fun as a kick in the groin with a large hob-nailed boot. ✪

OUTRUN 3D
Sega/£9.99 ✱ Almost the same as *Outrun* but – suprise suprise after much soul searching and pondering you guessed it – the whole thing is in 3D. Oh dear, snore where are those matchsticks for the ole mince pies. ✪

OUTRUN EUROPA
US Gold/£29.99 ✱ *OutRun* but with a subtle difference. You play an international spy whose car has been stolen. Not the most obvious reason to dash across Europe, except the top secret files that were left on the parcel shelf. So off you dash in a car, on a bike, speedboat and anything you can get your mitts on. Gripping stuff. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

PHANTASY STAR
Sega/£39.99 ✱ Classic arcade adventure game with more quests to go on than I've had hot dinners. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

PITFIGHTER
Domark/£32.99 ✱ Nonciey, snorey one or two-player beat-'em-up with dodgy controls and minuscule sprites. A chore to play and only slightly better than having to compete in the real thing. ✪ ✪

POPULOUS
MEGA ZONE

TecMagik/£34.99 ✱ Fancy meddling in the affairs of mortal men? With *Populous* you can meddle in the affairs of all to your heart's content. This near-legendary game shapes up well on the Master System. Potter around 5,000 worlds and act in a generally godly manner. A superior game

POWER STRIKE
Sega/£12.99 ✱ Shoot -'em-up galore. Loads of things that go bang, but not much here for the massses high of brow genre amongst you. ✪ ✪

PREDATOR 2
Acclaim/£29.99 ✱ Run of the mill shoot-'em-up. It is undeniably most remarkable for the seeming absence of the eponymous villain. ✪ ✪

PRO WRESTLING
Sega/£24.99 ✱ Sorry kinda cart, with loads of block-o-vision sprites and little playability. Brave attempt, but… sorry, it just doesn't quite make the mark. ✪ ✪

PUTT AND PUTTER GOLF
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Crazy golf game that is fun for a little while, but unfortunately soon begins to wane in the interest department. The game is fine, for those sad people out there who are into Kiss Me Quick hats and other such stuff. ✪ ✪

R-TYPE
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Fine version of the old shoot-'em-up classic. Fast, fun and full of juicy bits. Has to be said that it's a bit easy, but worth checking, out, though, just 'cos it looks nice. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

RAINBOW ISLANDS
Sega/£28.99 ✱ Platformy puzzler that, despite the fact that it is the son of the wonderful *Bubble Bobble,* it never really quite comes up to the quality of its daddy's spermatazoa. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

RAMBO III
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Disgustingly damn poor version of the awful 'blood and guts,' 'He drew first blood', 'Gawd bless you America' Sylvester Stallone film. Real Oppo Wolf territory. ✪ ✪ ✪

RAMPAGE
Sega/£29.99 ✱ The old corker in which you play an old hirsute B-movie monster (ie King Kong). You stomp about and proceed to knock down the whole of New York. Nice animation and a dash of classic action team up to make this a game a king amongst the stonkers. ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

RASTAN
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Average game, which is certainly not worth the relatively high cover price. ✪ ✪

RC GRAND PRIX
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Get yourself all rigged out with your helmet and go-faster stripes for a motor racing game with a difference. Not a Porsche or Ferrari in sight – you dash round in a remote-controlled car. Not bad for all its bizarreness. ✪ ✪ ✪

RENEGADE
Sega/£29.99 ✱ An odious pile of beat-'em-up gunk with all the redeeming qualities of a scuba holiday off the coast of Sellafield. ✪

RUNNING BATTLE
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Very, very poor. Awful sound, graphics and flick animation. Use it to prop up a wobbly table. ✪

SHADOW DANCER
Sega/£32.99 ✱ One man and his dog. Above average ninja beat-'em-up, but, let's face it – if you've seen one ninja-'em-up, you've seen 'em all. ✪ ✪ ✪

SHADOW OF THE BEAST
Sega/£34.99 ✱ Huge, classic graphic adventure, where you play the mutated homeboy in the fetching blue underpants. This plays rather less well. Shame. ✪ ✪ ✪

SHINOBI
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Yer, yer, yer. Been there, seen that, got the T-shirt, washed it on a boil wash, too small, so flushed it down the toilet. Yawnsville, Arizona. Yes I know , I know it's all very pretty, but sadly it's also all very old. ✪ ✪

SLAP SHOT
Sega/£29.99 ✱ Above average hockey game that has the Master System steaming with the effort of having to move all those sprites about. ✪ ✪ ✪

SMASH TV
Acclaim/£34.99 ✱ Crap conversion of a fab game. Graphics are in a sad state and the sounds are in an even worse state. Avoid this game as if it were an unexploded minefield. ✪

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
MEGA ZONE

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Sonic the punk hog is back and he's

back with a vengence. He's even better on the Master System in some respects than he was on the Mega Drive original. Much easier and slightly slower, but with a better playability factor over a larger playing area. Sonic will certainly make a lot of Master System owners very happy and a lot of Mega Drive owners very jealous – a first. This is a classic conversion. Classic game.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Sonic and his new found bosom pal, Tails, in more fun and frolics with the evil Dr Robotnik. Immensely playable, frighteningly addictive and a fabulous reason for giving up your social life and waiting for your skin to go toothpaste pale.

SPEEDBALL

Mirrorsoft/£29.99 ✱ Not unlike the excellent film *Rollerball*. This is a highly violent cross between hockey and volleyball. It's the two-player option that makes the game. Both graphics and sound are a little disappointing, but if you're a budding Jonathan E, this is the game for you.
✪✪✪✪

SPEEDBALL 2

Virgin/£29.99 ✱ Yet another excellent version of Renegade's stylish but violent game of the future. Quite sedate compared to the 16-bit versions, but marvellously playable anyway. *The* two-player sports sim for the Master System.

SPELLCASTER

Virgin/£29.99 ✱ Animated sword and sorcery action adventure set in Japan, with ultra-smooth graphics and sound, Spellcaster is one of the best games around available on the Master System.
✪✪✪✪✪

SPIDERMAN

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Pretty nifty version of the old web-slinger's merry jaunts over the skyline of New York. Smart animation and graphics really make this game about good ole Spidey one to watch out for.
✪✪✪✪✪

SPIDERMAN 2 – RETURN OF THE SINISTER SIX

Acclaim/£TBA ✱ This game's a bit of a stonker on the NES, but however, a bit of a damp squib on the Master System. But hey, that's the way the cookie crumbles. Spiderman must battle in turn each of his six worst enemies, climaxing with a final showdown with Dr Octopus. A rather run-of-the-mill walkthrough platform beat-'em-up with little or nothing new to offer.
✪✪✪

STRIDER

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Classic space-age beat-'em-up, with every kind of bad guy to be overcome, defeated and deftly disposed of. Good stuff.
✪✪✪✪

STRIDER II

US Gold/£29.99 ✱ Large number of athletic moves make for quite varied gameplay but otherwise this platform beat-'em-up is fairly run of the mill. ✪✪✪

SUBMARINE ATTACK

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Underwater shoot-'em-up. Okay, but nothing to write home about. Dive, dive, dive, dive for the nearest better game instead.
✪✪✪

SUMMER GAMES

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Track And Field clone that is, frankly, disappointing. If you're desperate for this kind of thing go for *Olympic Gold*, it's a hell of a lot better. ✪✪

SUPER KICK OFF

US Gold/£29.99 ✱ The grand-daddy of all footie games makes a long-awaited appearance on the Master System. Okay, so the MS is a bit slower than, say, the Amiga but the sheer playability of *Kick Off* shines through.

SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Forget baked bean tins and a plate. *(What are you talking about? Ed.)* Much more arcade-bound version of the Mega Drive hit that's worth a look if you fancy a bit of armchair racing. ✪✪✪

SUPER SPACE INVADERS

Domark/£29.99 ✱ Fun kinda game which, surprise, surprise, is based on the ancient grand -daddy of all computer games. New meanies and end of level monsters make for a very playable game. ✪✪✪✪

TAZ-MANIA

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Let's twist again. The demonic whirling dervish spins on to the Master System. Unfortunately, it'd be much better if he just buzzed off, 'cos this is a disappointingly limp game that gives the Master System a bad name. ✪✪

TEDDY BOY

Sega/£9.99 ✱ Nothing to do with wearing drapes and giving Mods a kicking, but everything to do with your cuddly teddy bear. Aaaaaaahh! Retch. ✪✪

TENNIS ACE

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Ironically, slightly better than *Super Tennis*. But not much. ✪✪

THUNDER BLADE

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Fast and furious chopper action. *(Please! Ed.)* Standard *Air Wolf*-style shoot-'em-up. ✪✪

TRIVIAL PURSUIT

Domark/£32.99 ✱ A good effort at converting the popular board game. Advantages include a one-player option for lonely fact fans, a choice of languages (handy if you're playing people from other countries) and a score screen that charts everyone's rating in the various categories. Disadvantages include the extremely slow pace and irritating humour.
✪✪

ULTIMA 4

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Role-playing game in the vein of *Dungeons & Dragons*. You roam the countryside earning money, partaking in jolly japes, meeting people with silly names, etc. Very freeform game that allows a great deal of variety. ✪✪✪✪

VIGILANTE

Virgin/£29.99 ✱ Ninja-inspired, multi-screen, beat-'em-up. Good visually, plenty of action and screens. Plenty of fun, but just how many more ninja games can we take? ✪✪✪✪

WIMBLEDON

Sega/£29.99 ✱ With all the usual choices of hard, lawn or clay courts, tournament or single matchplay, this is an initially difficult, but an ultimately rewarding tennis game. First *Wimbledon*, next the cardboard-acted coffee ad. ✪✪✪✪

WONDERBOY

Virgin/£24.99 ✱ The original outing for Wonderboy now looks a little dated, but there is still a bit of a stonking game in here.
✪✪✪

WONDERBOY IN MONSTERLAND

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Massive, cutesy platform game with a small element of RPG. Not hugely difficult to complete, mind, so the rock hard among you may feel you haven't got your money's worth (you whinging tight wads).
✪✪✪✪

WONDERBOY III

Virgin/£29.99 ✱ Yet another Wonderboy game. The same old formula rears its ugly head. Nothing really new, but extremely well put together. ✪✪

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

US Gold/£29.99 ✱ A re-worked version of Leaderboard with an increased playing area and better graphics by far. Up to four players can compete over 18 holes. ✪✪✪✪

WORLD GAMES

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Yet another Track And Field-type game with very little in the way of new elements to offer. ✪✪

XENON II

Image Works/£29.99 ✱ Potentially a game of greatness, let down by some very ropey collision detection. However, there are some pretty nifty graphics and sound effects.
✪✪✪✪

YS

Sega/£32.99 ✱ Bit pricey, but for all that a pretty smart game. Worth a look for all those serious adventure players who want to quest for the unknown. ✪✪✪✪

ALIEN 3

Acclaim/£29.99 ✱ Addictive platform shoot-'em-up, possibly the best of the genre, featuring an awful lot of hardwear to experiment with. Very exciting and atmospheric, with a digitised Sinead O'Connor.

ALIEN SYNDROME

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Quite addictive plan-view shoot-'em-up, with lots of weapons, killer gametes hunting you down, and a maze of rooms containing people to rescue. A kiddies' version of *Alien 3*, really. ✪✪✪

AXE BATTLER

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Lots of battling with axes. Uneventful hack and slash job. ✪✪

BATMAN RETURNS

Sega/£32.99 ✱ Luckily more in common with the Mega Drive version than the Master System effort. Stylish platforming à la Tim Burton's gothic movie but a bit easy. ✪✪✪✪

CHASE HQ

Taito/£25 ✱ Race and shoot game that makes Outrun look ancient. Too easy. ✪✪✪

CHESSMASTER

Sega/£19.99 ✱ Stonker of a game. Although chess is chess is chess, if you want to play it on your GG, this is for you. ✪✪✪✪✪

CHUCK ROCK

Sega/£24.99 ✱ *Chuck Rock* is an instantly playable platform game with lots of humorous touches like belly-butts and cool caricature graphics. Great fun. ✪✪✪✪

CRASH DUMMIES

Acclaim/£24.99 ✱ *Crash Dummies* is shaping up to be one of the biggest disappointments of the year. You play the Dummies and earn money by blowing themselves apart in interesting and amusing ways. ✪✪✪

CRYSTAL WARRIORS

Sega/£24.99 ✱ A *Zelda* clone if ever there was one, and it's a pretty funksome one at that.
✪✪✪✪✪

DEVILISH

Sega/£20 ✱ Somewhere between pinball and an excellent shoot-'em-up, Devilish puts you in charge of a *Block Out*-style paddle which you must use to destroy nightmare versions of graveyards. A spooky little gem.

DONALD DUCK

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Smart graphic adventure with loads of platforms and bad guys to do away with. It may be all a bit easy, but who cares – it still looks very nice. ✪✪✪✪

DRAGON CRYSTAL

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Fire-breathing action, but with no sign of Puff. Nothing special. ✪✪✪

REAL DEAL BOXING

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Unusual boxing game featuring a view of your disembodied gloves floating about before your opponent and there's also an excellent character generation section.
✪✪✪

FACTORY PANIC

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Odd little puzzle game, but worth a look if puzzle-'em-ups are your thing.
✪✪✪

G-LOC

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Conversion of a far from brill game. Smooth graphics give the flight sim feeling, but after a couple of plays interest wanes. ✪✪

GEORGE FOREMAN

Acclaim/£28.99 ✱ Okay-ish boxing game that fails to hit the spot If you really want a boxing game, try *Real Deal*.
✪✪

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

Virgin/£29.99 ✱ McDonalds, McDonalds, McDonalds. Average platform game.
✪✪✪

HALLEY WARS

Sega/£24.99 Q Not a bad little shoot-'em-up, with loads of little triangles zooming all over the place. Not bad for what it is, which is loads of zooming triangles.
✪✪✪✪

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US Gold/£29.99 ✱ The graphics are rather sparkly; Indy himself has a rather smart, swaggering way of walking and the backgrounds are varied and atmospheric. The difficulty is pitched about right, too. It's a (whip) cracker.
✪✪✪✪

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Hup, hup handheld. Loadsa Yankie footie action, surprisingly easy to see and with a fair dollop of playability. *Joe Montana* ain't bad.
✪✪✪

KLAX

Domark/£29.99 ✱ Classic game that makes a welcome appearance on the GG.
✪✪✪✪

MARBLE MADNESS

Domark/£27.99 ✱ Identical to the Master System version, but smaller.
✪✪✪

MASTER OF DARKNESS

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Vampires are hip, this game is not. Dingy platforms, that should be lighter. And there's no Winona Ryder.
✪✪

MICKEY MOUSE

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Scaled-down version of the excellent Mega Drive game. Retains great graphics and animation.
✪✪✪✪

NINJA GAIDEN

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Nothing to do with hardy perennials and everything to do with kicking people in the teeth.
✪✪✪✪

OUTRUN

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Naff conversion of the ancient pub-bound coin-op with little of any interest to offer.
✪✪

OUTRUN EUROPA

US Gold/£24.99 ✱ A technically adept game that combines the best bits from other driving games. Lots of different vehicles and the ability to ram, shoot and punch other traffic help sustain interest.
✪✪✪✪

PREDATOR 2

Acclaim/£29.99 ✱ One of those isometrically-viewed 3D shoot-'em-ups. Not very inspiring and a nightmare to hit a target coming in on the diagonals but otherwise not bad.
✪✪✪

PSYCHIC WORLD

Sega/£19.99 ✱ Mind-bending action – well worth looking at, partly for the low price and partly for the puzzley, arcadey action.
✪✪✪✪

PUTT & PUTTER

Sega/£19.99 ✱ The putting green, peace, order and well cut lawns. Except here it's gone mad. All twisted and turned, complete with hills, traps and bouncy bollards. The thing is, you need to bounce as well as putt to get a hole-in-one in this game.
✪✪

SHINOBI

Sega/£24.99 ✱ The classic slash 'n' dash over four levels game survives the transition to the Game Gear very well. There's ultra-smooth graphics combined handsomely with an interesting and varied gameplay. One for your collection.
✪✪✪✪

SLIDER

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Dull and uneventful puzzle game that owes more than a passing nod to *Pac-Man*. Very poor.
✪✪

SOLITAIRE POKER

Sega/£24.99 ✱ More like *Patience* than *Poker*, but still a well-executed little cart. This will definitely be your bag if you're into pull-your-hair-out-by-the-roots type puzzle games.
✪✪✪

SPACE HARRIER

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Into-the-screen shoot-'em-up, that looks very, very dated.
✪✪

SPIDERMAN

Sega/£39.99 ✱ Quite standard fare, this. All the action takes place on loads of different platforms. The game has nice, smooth animation and sound. Reasonably good stuff.
✪✪✪

SPIDERMAN VS THE KINGPIN

Acclaim/£24.99 ✱ A superb conversion of the Mega Drive smasheroonie. A pretty steep learning curve sets just the right level of challenge and playability.
✪✪✪✪✪

SPIDERMAN 2 RETURN OF THE SINISTER SIX

Acclaim/£24.99 ✱ Average platform beat-'em-up that fails to light the essential spark at the heart of all games players.
✪✪✪

SHINOBI II

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Well animated ninja beat-'em-up, which may not be hard enough to make it value for money.
✪✪✪

SUPER KICK OFF

US Gold/£27.99 ✱ Is there any format currently known to man that *Kick Off* hasn't been on? A brillo pad version of the old faithful footie game.
✪✪✪✪✪

SUPER SPACE INVADERS

Domark/£27.99 ✱ A lot more fun than many of you out there would expect. Many nifty new touches with numerous configurations of aliens that do strange and weird things.
✪✪✪✪

SUPER MONACO GP

Sega/£19.99 ✱ One of the few *Grand Prix* games available for any handheld, and also one of the most disappointing.
✪✪

SUPER OFF ROAD

Virgin/£27.99 ✱ Speedy four-wheel buggy driving game in glorious microscope-o-vision.
✪✪

SUPER WONDERBOY

Sega/£19.99 ✱ Cute and detailed with nice graphics, Super Wonderboy is highly playable.
✪✪✪✪

TALESPIN

Sega/£29.99 ✱ Lacklustre platformer that was cobblers on the Mega Drive and is double cobblers with cheese on the Game Gear.
✪✪

TERMINATOR

Virgin/£25.99 ✱ With smart graphics and blasting sound, you'll need lightning reflexes and a brain tuned into your trigger-finger for this five-level fightorama.
✪✪✪✪✪

TOM AND JERRY

Sega/£24.99 ✱ Lots of platform romps with everyone's fave cat and mouse as they get up to all the usual comical antics.
✪✪✪

WWF WRESTLEMANIA STEEL CAGE CHALLENGE

Acclaim/£29.99 ✱ A bloke in a leotard climbs in a cage and starts grunting. ✪✪✪

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

Sega/£24.99 ✱ The classic golf game.
✪✪✪✪

MAIL ZONE

Don't you just love this mag? I mean, not only is it positively bursting with in-depth reviews and previews and all that, it also brings you loads of mail order goodies at special prices. Now, isn't that thoughtful?

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freeloader

C'mon everybody. I said c'mon everybody. (Musical pause type thing) Let's do the twist again. Like we did last summer. Oh, twist again, like we did last year. Do you remember, er, what the hell the words are, er, like we did last year? *(You're fired. No, seriously. Ed.)*

hard ZONE

★ **Sega Master System II** with nine games – includes *Prince of Persia, Sonic 2, Alien 3, Terminator,* etc. All worth £300 – will sell for £135. Call 0494 436846.

★ **Kicking ass Game Gear** with a/c adaptor, Master converter and six games. Just £130 ono. No you're not dreaming. Life can be this good, so buy it. Call 0483 762645.

★ **Mega Drive for sale** with nine great games including *Flashback* and *Streets of Rage 2*. Three joypads. Worth £490, sell for £275. Call Andy 0236 723457.

★ **Mega drive for sale** boxed and instructions, powerstick and control pad and seven games including *Sonic 2, Madden '92, Lemmings.* Excellent condition. Ring Jon on 0707 873473. Will sell for £170 ono.

★ **Mega Drive for sale** hardly ever used, also with six games including *Sonic The Hedgehog, Sonic 2* plus three joypads (owl pad) and cheats book. Phone Marion after 6pm on 0844 290305.

★ **Sega Master System II** with two good games including *Super Kick Off 2*. Excellent condition, still boxed, only used twice. Will sell for £50. Phone and ask for Wayne on 061 7752674.

★ **Master System II** with ten games including *Sonic 2, The Ninja, Bart Simpson versus the Space Mutants* and the *New Zealand* story. All boxed with instructions. Bargain at £90. Contact 0925 756730.

★ **Sega Master System II** for sale. Plus seven games including *Alien 3* and *Sonic.* Plus two control pads. Sell for £100. Phone David on 0222 693581 after 6pm (Cardiff).

★ **Mega-CD and Mega Drive** and seven CD games, four Mega Drive games, two joypads. Six months old, £300. Telephone 0203 447594.

★ **Jap Mega Drive for sale** (still boxed), four games, extra joypad and joystick, plus magazines, games, *Sonic, Speedball 2, EA Hockey* and *Lemmings* for £150 or nearest offer. Contact Jamie on 0482 564366.

★ **Sega Mega Drive** plus five top games, two joypads. All boxed. Only £135 or swap for video camera phone Adam on 071 4851374.

★ **Sega Master System II** with five excellent games including *Sonic, Mickey Mouse,* and *Tom and Jerry*. Paid £160 less than a year ago. sell for £105 ono. Contact Simon on 081 9408093.

★ **Mega Drive for sale,** converted for Japanese games, boxed, good condition, 21 games, with Game Genie. Sega magazines. All games boxed. £320. Write to Jason Turner, 11 Lytham Place, Leeds LS12 5PJ.

★ **Look Mega Drive and Mega-CD** for sale with 25 games. Total cost approximately £1,400/£1,500 – sell for £700 all in or may swap for A600. Mint condition/guarantee with games.

★ **Game Gear, five top titles,** *Prince of Persia, Shinobi II, Kick Off, Monaco GP, Castle of Illusion.* Fully boxed with instructions. £110 (inc P&P). Please phone Noel after 5pm on 0274 834065.

★ **Sega Game Gear for sale,** six games, six Master System games, all boxed with instructions, PSU, Master Gear, magnifier and carry case. £200 ono. Phone Nick on 0922 35647.

★ **Mega Drive games for sale:** *Turrican, Spiderman, Sonic, Mercs, ESWAT, Truxton* – £10; *Chuck Rock, Strider, Ex-mutants* – £15; *Alien 3, Thunderforce 4, Road Rash, Sonic 2* – £20; *Fatal Fury, Streets of Rage 2* – £25. Offers considered. Game Genie – £20. Phone 0902 727878.

★ **Game Gear, a/c adaptor,** battery pack, convertor, 14 games, worth around £500, will sell for £350 ono (works out £19 per item). Call Martin on 081 5314856.

★ **Game Gear, a/c adaptor,** and six games (*Sonic, Sonic 2, Alien 3, The Chessmaster, Mickey Mouse, Lemmings*). Boxed with instructions, excellent condition. £140 or nearest offer. Phone 0236 325949 – after 6pm.

soft ZONE

★ **For sale or swap** – Mega Drive games – *Rampart* £22, *California Games* £13, *Fatman* £12, *DJ Boy* £12, *D Robinson's Basketball* £22, *Afterburner 2* £20, *Crack Down* £12, *Lemmings* to swap. Telephone Adi on 071 7949724. All prices are negotiable.

★ **For sale or swap – Mega CD** games – *Night Trap* (US) £30, *Earnest Evans* (Jap) £15, *Heavy Nova* (Jap) £12, *Death Bringer* (Jap) £10. Telephone Adi on 071 7949724.

★ **For sale – *Road Rash 2*** £25, *LHX Attack Chopper* £25, *Shining Force* £30, *Phantasy Star 2* £30. Phone Mark on 0604 881805 after 6pm.

★ **Selling Black Belt** (Master System) £20, *Bart versus Mutants* £27.99, can be bought as bundle £40.99. Phone 0962 852927. Ask for Ewan and phone now. Today. No price changes unless upwards.

★ **Mega Drive games:** *Streets of Rage 2* for £30, *Flashback* £35, *Road Rash 2* £20, *Madden '93* £20, *Euro Club Soccer* £20, *Quackshot* £20, *Robocod* £20, *Fatal Rewind* £15, *Sonic* £10. Phone 081 8836174 from 6-10pm.

★ **65 Sega magazines for sale** including *Sega Pro, Sega Power, Sega Force, Sega Zone, Mean Machines* and *GamesMaster*. All together for just £30.

★ **Nintendo *Mario Bros,*** *Duck Hunt*, Game £15 ono. Ring Michael on 0733 208027. Also various motorbike spares for sale.

want ZONE

★ **Mega Drive, Master System,** Game Gear games. Will pay up to £22. Swap with my large selection of games from £3.50. Phone Brian between 2pm and 10pm on 0463 221173.

★ **Mega Drive with game(s)** and joypads. From £70 to £90 in Cambridge and Peterborough area. Phone 0480 463442 after 3pm.

★ **Master System II games** wanted. *World Soccer, Super Kick Off, Pit Fighter, Streets of Rage* and more. Will pay up to £20. Phone Kevin after 3pm on 0695 22576.

pal ZONE

★ **Please, please, please write** to me. I need a penpal, quick. I'm bored, bored, bored. Must be female aged 10 – 12, must like the Mega Drive. Phone Hayley on 0679 64664.

★ **18 year old male seeks 17+** female for love and companionship. The most you have to lose is your sanity. Phone Nicholas on 0506 852403.

★ **Penpal wanted aged 16 – 23,** male or female. Must have a Mega Drive and like Madonna and dance music. Please send a photograph. Phone Mike on 0850 820412.

★ **Hi. Laura here.** I want a penpal 11 to 13 years old. I like pop music, sport, drawing, swimming. Please send a photo. Phone Laura on 041 778 4721.

★ **14 year old female seeks males** 13 plus. Interest: Sega, music, anything. Guaranteed replies. Phone Angie on 0522 750071.

★ **Two good looking boys** are looking for girls who are good looking, funny, like the flics. Phone Steve on 0604 642357.

★ **Write if you like rave** and hardcore music, also interested in martial arts. Any age, any city, lets have some thrilling conversations by paper. The more interesting the better. Phone Louise on 021 308 1774.

swap ZONE

★ **Want to swap *Alien 3*** on the Master System for an equal value game (something like *WWF Wrestlemania*). Please, don't bother with rubbish games. Only in Kent area. Phone Tom on 0227 274191.

★ **I will swap my Game Gear** *Columns* or *Super Monaco GP* for *Streets of Rage 1* or *Alien 3.* Phone Ralston on 0671 2901.

★ **Swap Mega Drive games,** *Mickey and Donald* for *Cool Spot, Streets Of Rage II* for *Tiny Toon Adventures, Alex The Kid* for *Golden Axe II,* and *Chuck Rock* for *Ariel the Little Mermaid.* Phone Eric on 0896 58635.

★ **Master System games,** swap *Sonic 2* for *Asterix* or *Land of Illusion* or *Lemmings.* Buyer must collect. Helpful if you could live in Hornchurch / Romford area. Phone Neil on 0708 557320.

★ **Swap Commodore 64,** disc drive, tape deck, printer, 100's of disks, tapes, cartridges totaling 1000's of games. Joysticks, magazines, electronic TV game and scalextrics sets for Mega Drive. Phone Andrew on 0582 419825.

★ **Swap *Ecco the Dolphin*** or *Mega Lo Mania* for *Cool Spot* or *Rings of Power.* Must live near Glasgow. Phone Jonathan on 041 8834262.

★ **Swap Mega Drive,** excellent condition, TV adaptor, 13 games, two pads, one turbo pad for Amiga 600 with games, mouse, joystick or sell for £250. Phone Gareth after 6pm on 081 876 0669.

★ **Swap my Game Boy** with 13 games , case, light boy and four player adaptor for a Mega Drive with any amount of games. Phone Daniel on 0753 854367.

★ **Swap *Toki* or *Lemmings*** for *Mutant League Football, Cyborg Justice* or *X-men.* The games are in good condition. Phone Tristan on 0978 755375.

fan ZONE

★ ***Romp* should have** been called 'very trendy to own' for obvious reasons really. All formats, reviews, previews, features. Ish 2 – send SAE 70 pence to: Paul C, 7 Bristol Close, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 2QG.

★ **Why are Frank Zappa's CDs** all in the reduced bin at my local HMV store? Doesn't anyone appreciate what a genius he is? I think this situation should be rectified immediately.

★ **So what if** Paul McCartney's songs are wishy-washy? He's a better singer than you are AND he met the Beatles.

★ **Rebecca Thingy from *Home And Away*** (she's the one that plays Sophie). Hasn't her figure held up well considering she had a baby and all that?

★ **Kate Bush** – Isn't it about time her album came out? What's that? It's out? I'll get down the shops now, then.

thing ZONE

★ **Have you got soul?** If so join the world's hardest working band and contact J Granier on 0388 450327 anytime.

★ **Radio controlled car plus** cash, to swap for a Mega Drive with any games. Also the excellent Master System *Shinobi* for sale (cheap). Phone Edward on 0309 690965.

★ **I desperately want to sell** my *Turtles III* video. From America, only works on NTSC format. It's new. Phone Zubin on 071 483 2550.

★ **Have you got soul?** If so, join the world's hardest working band. Contact James Grainger on 0388 450327 anytime. Don't sit about musicians, ring now. You might like it!

★ **If you haven't got soul,** don't despair. You could always borrow some from an extremely generous friend who my be a soul donor. Well, you'll never know if you don't ask, will you?

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If you want to advertise in Freeloader, please write in BLOCK CAPITALS below and send the coupon to Freeloader, *Sega Zone,* 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Don't forget – only cretins forget to include their address and phone number. Business advertisers will not be accepted, they can jolly well go and advertise in the classified section and pay for it 'cos we all know they're stinking rich.

So write out your ad below (in 30 words or less), and please, please, please tick the section that you want it to appear under.

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FAN ZONE ● SWOP ZONE ● THING ZONE ● ? ZONE ●

Nibble Four Imps? Norwich Farmers' Institute? Never Fiddle Internally? Norris' Fantastic Issue? Nah, I haven't got a clue. And by the looks of it, neither have you. Assuming that even though we can't be bothered to use capitals or full stops, these three letters really are an acronym, sooner or later one of you will write in and tell us what it means. Either that, or perhaps one morning one of us will wake up to a blinding flash of inspiration and remember it for ourselves. I mean, are you thick or what? Just sit down for five minutes, think about the spirit, the essence of the NFI pages and it's obvious.

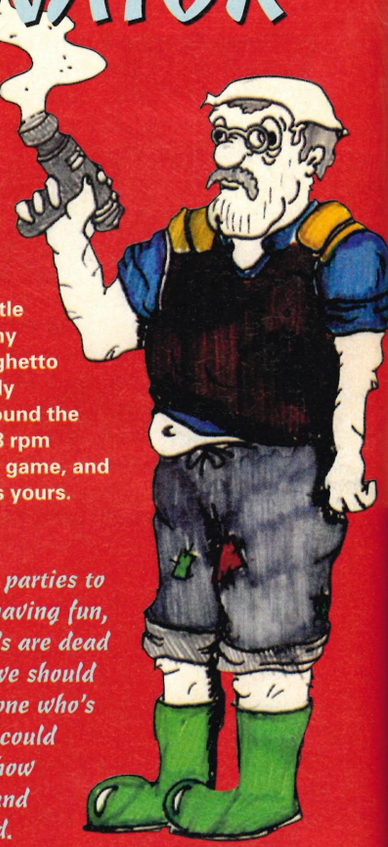
Do you want your game idea to appear on the revered pages of NFI? Simply design a game and make it original. Put in a plot, some characters, some 'screenshots' and send it to us. That's all. Each month we wade through hundreds of beat-'em-ups and predictable platforms, so do us a favour, and think of something interesting. Please.

MY GRANDAD'S A TERMINATOR

From Kevin Coomber of Colindale, London

Dear NFI

Old Jim Blenkinsop has finally had enough. Donning his bulletproof woolly pully, and taking his plasma blaster in hand, he comes out of retirement to battle for the good of all OAPs. Traversing many platforms he destroys excessively loud ghetto blasters, breaking up raves, and generally liberating all Grannies and Grandads around the globe. The sub-plot is to collect all six 78 rpm records across the different levels of the game, and the very rich old spinster, Nora Bloggs is yours.



AN NFI SPOKESPERSON SAYS:
And he could send his false teeth into parties to scare all the girls and stop everyone having fun, or talk to you about how all his friends are dead and how he fought a war for us, and we should have more respect. And if there's anyone who's enjoying themselves really loudly, he could take them all up to his allotment to show them how his carrots are getting on, and leave them pretending to be interested.

CONSOLE SIM

From Tracey Marrow straight out o' Compton

Dear NFI

Using the D-pad, guide your player to the console, avoiding such hazards as parental demands for washing up. Select menus to choose which hand and fingers to control, and load up your favourite cart. On your joypad pressing button B makes the simulated character press his button B, pressing C makes the character press C, and so on.

This delightfully convincing sim becomes mind-bendingly entertaining when the cart that you choose to put in is *Console Sim*, and you control the character who presses his buttons to control the character in his game, who's playing *Console Sim*, taking charge of a character who's pressing the D-pad to make the character in the game move his D-pad.

And then you could make yourself a giant TV screen and Mega Drive out of cardboard boxes and double sided sticky tape. Paint it black and get inside, slot in *Console Sim*, and really freak your parents out when they come in to moan about tidying your room.

AN NFI SPOKESPERSON SAYS:
Or what about a real time life sim, where you wait 200 million years for the species to evolve. Then play an infant developing into a schoolchild learning about Mega Drives and how to read Sega Zone. Then getting all spotty and miserable for a few years, and just when you think it's safe to make a cup of tea, your character gets run over by a drunken monoped moped rider, and all that gameplay's been a waste of time anyway. Game over. Start again. Surreal.

NIGHTMARE

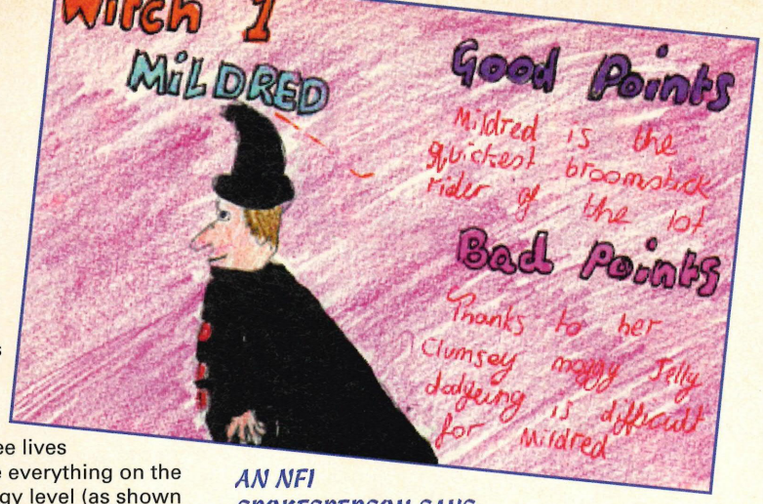
From Kevin Smith of Weymouth, Dorset

Dear NFI

My game is called *Nightmare.* The scene is set, it's the 31st of October. It's Halloween. This is a racing game in which you play one of four witches, en route from London to a Halloween bash in Manchester. Each witch has her own strengths and weaknesses. To start the game, put your cat on your broomstick, hop on and take off. The object of the game is to get to the Halloween rave. There are seven checkpoints along the way, and in each level there are different airborne objects to avoid, these are briefly: Level One – jumbo jets. Two – flying saucers. Three – moons. Four – hot air balloons. Five – chairs. Six – televisions. *(Anywhere near The Who's hotel? Ed.)* Level Seven – basketballs, and in each level there are more pesky identified flying objects to dodge such as birds, hang-gliders, garbage, etc. Each stage has a time limit which can be selected as on the difficulty intro screen.

Start each level with three lives and three spells which make everything on the screen disappear. Your energy level (as shown in a bar at the bottom of the screen) is depleted each time you hit an object, and halved if you swerve so violently that your black cat falls off. Lose a life when your energy bar reaches zero.

There are various items to pick up on the way, such as food for energy, frogs legs and bats wings to create extra spells. There's also a two-player mode with a split screen that enables you to play against a friend.



AN NFI SPOKESPERSON SAYS:

Nice idea, Kevin. Topical too, with Halloween coming soon. Do they have particularly good (or evil?) Halloween raves in Manchester?

At Sega Zone we all liked the split screen two-player option. This is guaranteed to make a spooky race game hair raising. What happens when you arrive at the rave?

THE HIGHLAND WILDCAT

From Laird Poland of Kirkcudbright, Scotland

Dear NFI

THE PLOT: (Nobody ever reads it anyway). All the world's leading cute video game characters have been abducted by 'A Baddie'. He's developing a special formula to turn all the Cuties into Uglies, so repulsive to the public that Baddie's own bunch of misfit characters will look positively attractive to us, enabling him to monopolise the video games market.

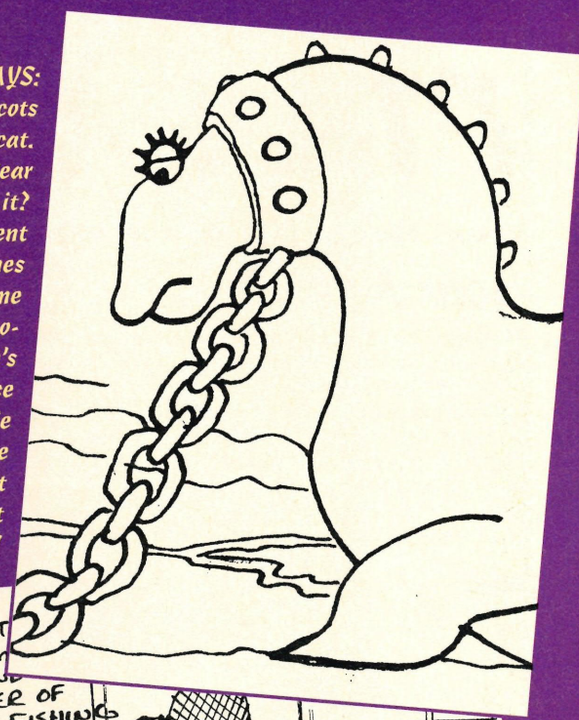
What a rotter. Enter the reluctant Wildcat, on a quest for the evil character, A Baddie's, hideout, tucked away in a remote corner of the highlands.

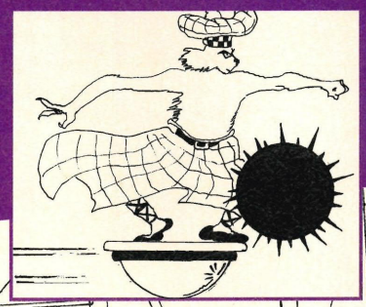
Wildcat's quest to rescue the cuties takes him through six levels including woodland, an ancient stone monument, ski lifts, a quick couple of events at the highland games, deep into Loch Ness, a boat yard and a submarine. End of level bosses and bonus games make for exciting action for the reluctant feline hero.

AN NFI SPOKESPERSON SAYS:

Aye, its about time for a canny Scots superhero like The Highland Wildcat. Cracking kilt, what does he wear underneath it?

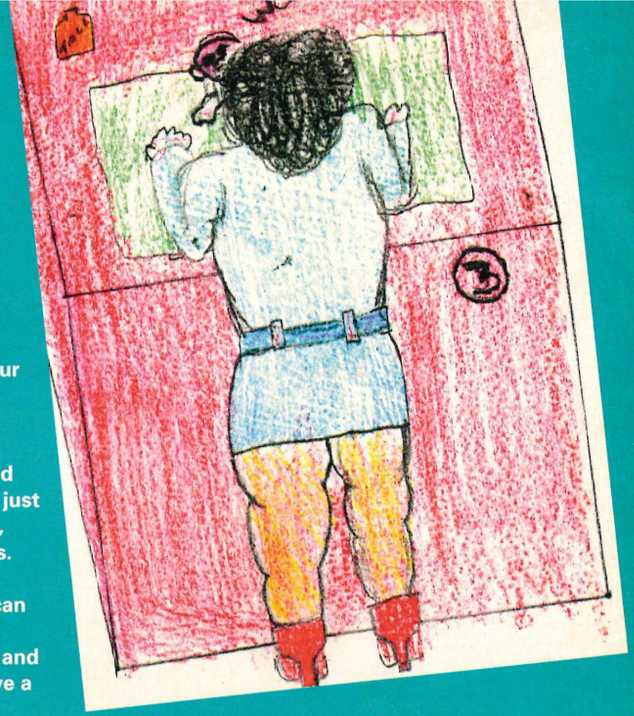
The undoubtedly ironic comment about monopoly in the games industry was lost on me unfortunately, but as you say, no-one reads the plot anyway. Nessie's gorgeous, too. You tell us that once we're rescued, Nessie helps Wildcat find the Cuties. How? Smart illustrations too, but COLOURS PLEASE!





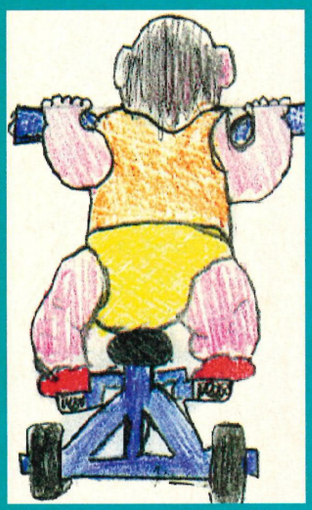
NAPPY RASH

From Michael Murphy of Forres, Morayshire



Dear NFI

This game is based on *Road Rash*. Take control of one of five babies in a tricycle race through different platform levels. Level One is from the nursery to first floor home, with all the associated hazards such as crossing roads. Obstacles to avoid include pedestrians, manhole covers, trash cans, lampposts as well as cats and dogs.



Weapons are involved. Choose from the bottle, rattle, or teddy bear. The bottle is the best weapon because you can squirt milk behind you for other players to skid on, but bear in mind you only have a limited supply of milk. If you get hit or fall off your bike, you most likely get scared and fill your nappy, necessitating a pit stop.

There are five characters to choose from: Smoke, Ace, Harmont, Dragster and Scalper. Try out each character, because just as real kids all grow up in different ways, these toddlers each have their own tricks. Also, they are all changed by their own mothers, and their different techniques can save or cost you time.

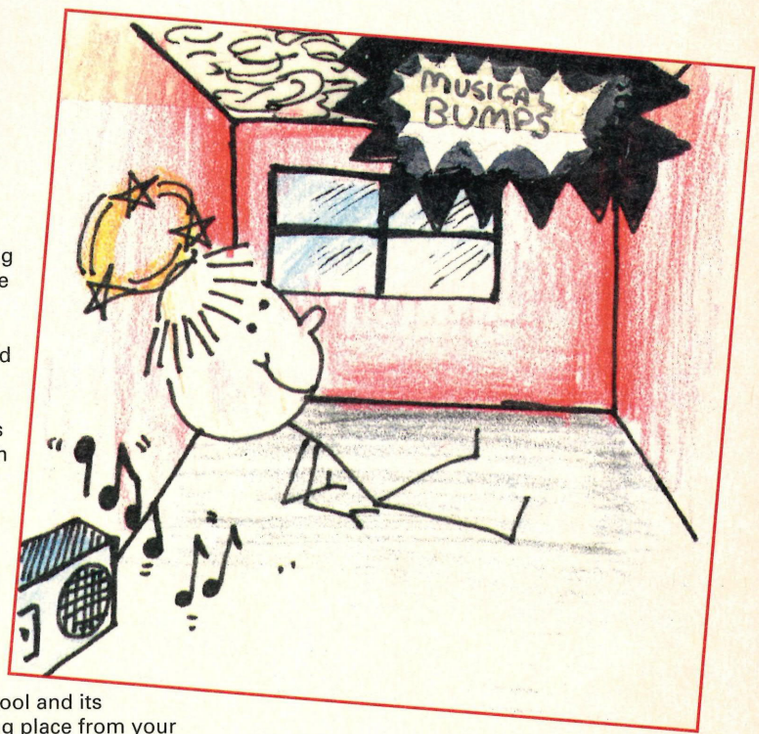
Come first or second to finish a level and progress onto the next. You can also have a two-player mode in this game.

AN NFI SPOKESPERSON SAYS:

Looks like there's some inspiration from an advert in there, pit stops 'n' all. Do you think it's really suitable to have toddlers crossing roads by themselves? And how come there's no cars or motorcycles to avoid on this road? What about getting their mothers to take them to the accident unit to get broken bones fixed? Sick, we love it. Sega, what do you think? Somebody got away with Mad Nurse on the Speccy with babies putting their fingers in light sockets, and that was plenty politically incorrect.

PTA GAMES

From Rueben Gotto of Norwich



Dear NFI

My Mega Drive game is called *PTA* (Parents-Teachers Association) *Games,* and is a fun sports simulation for one or two players, involving competing over five different activities. For player one, the objective to embarrass your son or daughter as much as possible, and for player two – the child – to avoid embarrassment. The parent with the most upset child wins the game, and vice versa.

The egg and spoon race would be a button basher, but if the egg fell off then you would have to chase it round the floor using the D-pad.

The skipping race would doubtless be fairly difficult because as you can see, your character has no arms whatsoever. Plenty of laugh potential here.

Musical bumps would be predictable, pointless and probably very little fun, so this sim gets points for realism, and for its originality.

In hide and seek you have 60 seconds using the D-pad to run round the school and its grounds looking for a hiding place from your parents. After the minute is up, on one-player mode, the computer looks for you. If you're in a two-player game, then the player with the most points hides, and the other must seek. There's a time limit, and if the hider's not found by this limit, he wins. There's a time-linked points scale if the seeker is successful.

For the side-splittingly funny three-legged race, you could either team up with player two or the computer for more button bashing. Great coordination is needed in this race, as it's all too easy to fall over.

And of course, when the events have ended, there'll be refreshments for everybody in the main hall. And that can be embarrassing too.

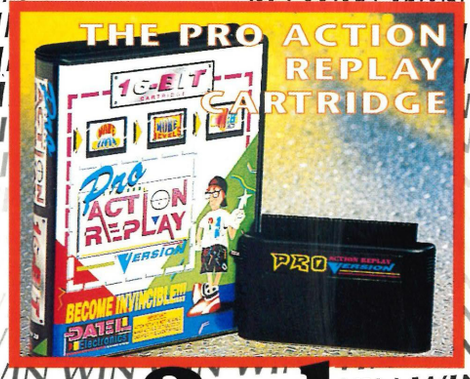
AN NFI SPOKESPERSON SAYS:

Like the concept, Reuben. Rather than tired old motivations like survival or honour, it's refreshing to see some down to earth embarrassment. Yes we all know what it's like when your mates are around and your dad starts telling the story about how you pissed yourself on the school trip. Well get your own back with the PTA Games. And good to see you've got into the spirit of sports days with a baffling scoring system.

PYRAMID Leisure

Presents... SUPER SEGA C.D. COMPETITION

ENTRY FEE ONLY £1



1st
10 TO BE WON

2nd
25 TO BE WON

3rd
50 TO BE WON

RULES & CONDITIONS

The competition is open to anyone 18 years and over (anyone under 18 must seek permission from their parents/guardian) except employees, agents and families of organisers and judges. Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery. The organisers will not be responsible for postal delays or postal losses.

The winner will be the entrant, in the opinion of the judges, with the most apt, original and skilful answer to the tiebreaker. Second and Third prizes will be awarded accordingly and will be judged in the same manner. The judges' decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Funds are not available for any other use.

If the total valid entries are less than 15,000 then the first 10 prizes will be substituted with a sum equal to 4% of the monies received, Second 25 prizes substituted with 1% and Third 50 prizes substituted with 0.2%. Monies received will be held in a deposit account, withdrawals will require the signature of a solicitor.

THE CLOSING DATE OF THE COMPETITION IS 12.11.93. COMPETITION WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED WITHIN 28 DAYS AFTER THE CLOSING DATE.

SEND POSTAL ORDERS TO:
(If sending cash, please make sure you send by registered post.)
UNFORTUNATELY, CHEQUES CAN ONLY BE ACCEPTED IF TOTAL EXCEEDS £2, IE 2 ENTRIES.

PYRAMID LEISURE, ARCHWAY HOUSE, STATION ROAD, CHESTER CH1 3DW

SKILL CHALLENGE

COMPLETE IN INK, USING BLOCK CAPITALS

1. Fill in the missing word

SEGA .....GEAR

2. What is the first level of Sonic the Hedgehog?

.....

3. Name the letters on the Sega Joypad

.....

TIE BREAKER

Complete in no more than 10 words

I WOULD LIKE TO WIN THE MEGA CD BECAUSE .....

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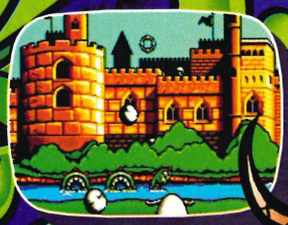
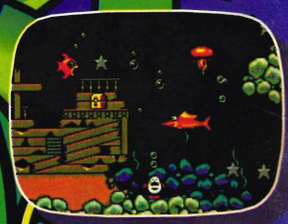


CASTLE ATTACK



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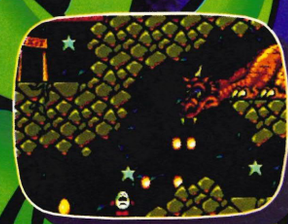

DRAGON'S LAIR

SPOOKY! CLOUD CASTLE

He's here! Dizzy is in full action in a huge arcade adventure! Explore the magical kingdom of Zakeria, Palm Tree beach, medieval towns, haunted graveyards, the troll palace and many more exciting and mysterious realms! Meet the strangest people, creatures and monsters in this most excellent adventure! It's all here in the award winning adventure of a lifetime!

"It's exciting, puzzling, well presented, hopelessly addictive - sure to be a winner" **90%**
Sega Pro magazine
(MEGA DRIVE)

"A neat combination of platform fun and clever puzzles"
Sega Power magazine

GAME PLAYS IN FIVE LANGUAGES
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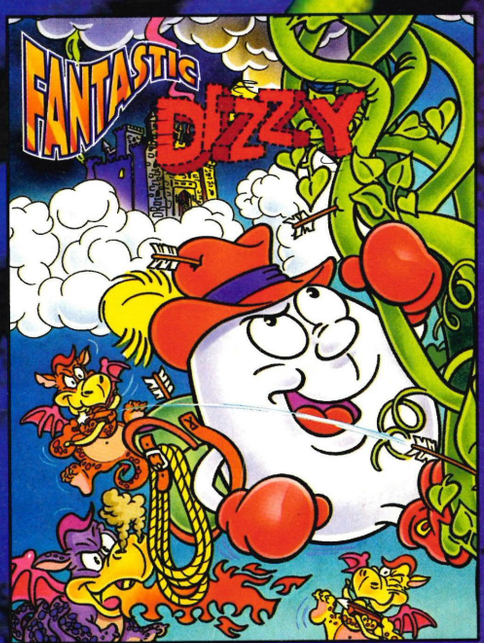
"A superb adventure - plenty of puzzles and great satisfaction" **92%** Sega Pro magazine



LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES FOR PLAY ON THE:
MEGA DRIVE. GAME GEAR SYSTEM. MASTER SYSTEM.
ALSO AVAILABLE ON: AMIGA. IBM PC. NES*.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
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