

GAMEFAN

NEXT GENERATION VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 2

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA PS



BETTER THAN THE COIN-OP?

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PLAYSTATION

ZERO DIVIDE

DESCENT

JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE

REVERTHION

KRAZY IVAN

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SCORCHER

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DARIUS GAIDEN

GALAXY FIGHT

3DO

LUCIENNE'S QUEST

NEO-GEO

SAMURAI SHODOWN 3

INSIDE GF SPORTS

SPORTS MEGAWARDS '95

V-TENNIS

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X-MEN SATURN



DARKSTALKERS PS



RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION





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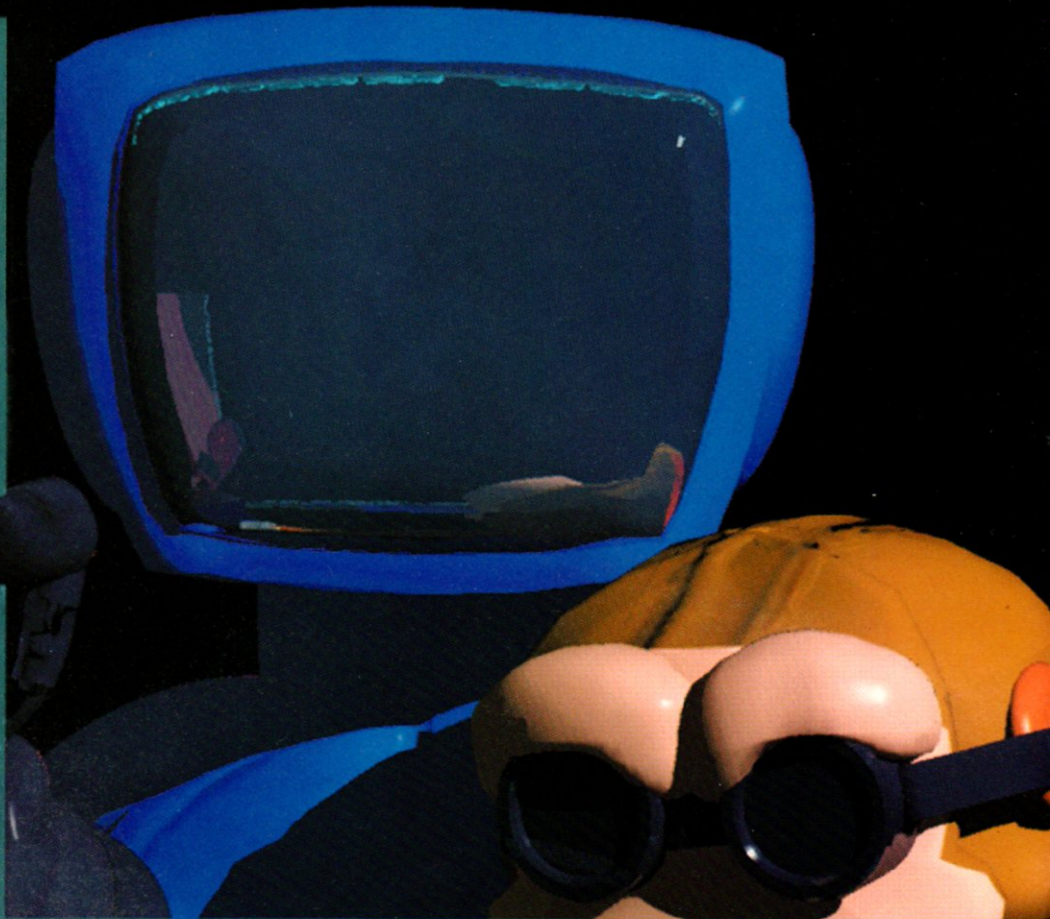
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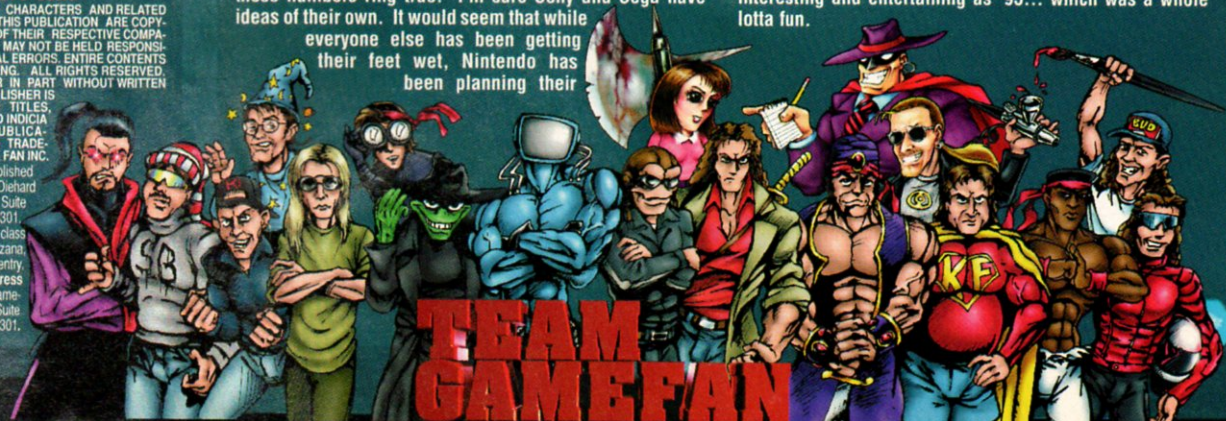
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As '95 has come and gone and we look ahead to a shiny new year, it's amazing to see how far we've come in terms of gameplay, in such a short amount of time. The industry is switching gears rapidly. Talk in January '95 of 16-bit holding strong through '97 seems less conceivable now, especially on Sega's side of the fence. Genesis game development has all but halted and the much anticipated Nomad enjoyed a luke-warm response at best receiving limited marketing and no announcement of firm 3rd party support similar to that enjoyed by the Game Gear for so many years.

Sony's presence in the market has had a major impact and now, Nintendo has finally made their plans public. NOA believes that this Christmas 16-bit sales will occupy approximately 65% of the market with 32 taking a distant second at 20% and everything else filling the gap. This would be a good indication of why they chose April (or beyond) '96 as their launch date for the Ultra, if indeed these numbers ring true. I'm sure Sony and Sega have ideas of their own. It would seem that while everyone else has been getting their feet wet, Nintendo has been planning their

ultimate emergence, with intentions to bring with the Ultra 64 a whole new batch of genre-defining titles as they did with the NES in '85. The NES, by the way, sold over 150,000 units in '95. Nintendo will shift their focus to the Ultra 64 and Virtual Boy officially in January, while still supporting the SNES with more SGI-based games, including the much-anticipated *Mario RPG* this March. There is however, already talk of a slight delay on the Ultra 64 attributed to the overwhelming response it received at the Shoshinkai show in November. Nintendo may only have time to manufacture enough consoles to fill Japan's high demand by April 21st, so don't be surprised if the Ultra launches at E3 and then surfaces between May and September, rather than April. In regards to the Virtual Boy, Nintendo is standing behind the product 100% as are we. This system's potential has yet to be seen. This, along with the forthcoming launch of the M2, and the recent launch of the Neo-Geo CD, should make '96 every bit as interesting and entertaining as '95... which was a whole lotta fun.



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SONY



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AMOK & SCORCHER

Scavenger takes the Saturn to new limits with *Amok* and *Scorchers*.

PGS. 44 & 58



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High powered role playing comes to the 3DO. Too little too late, or just enough, just in time?

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COVER STORY

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Rapunzel's schizophrenic.
And **Cheech** is blazing again.
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Rapunzel—Not quite the same long-haired maiden from your childhood. Buzz-cut. Walking time bomb. Advice? Keep your distance.

Trivet—The smarmy court jester. You know the type. Bitter, rude, cynical, ignored. Classic middle-child syndrome. Marsha Marsha Marsha!

Sir George (Cheech)—Referred to in English Lit. as The Protagonist. Greedy SOB. Steer clear. Unless, of course, you're driving a Mack truck.

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TOP TEN MOST WANTED

READERS' TOP TEN

1. Tekken - PS
2. Wipeout - PS
3. MK3 - PS
4. Panzer Dragoon - Saturn
5. Doom - PS
6. Vectorman - Genesis
7. VF Remix - Saturn
8. Toshinden - PS
9. Yoshi's Island - SNES
10. Killer Instinct - SNES



READERS' MOST WANTED

1. Tekken 2 - PS
2. Killer Instinct II - U64
3. SF Alpha - PS/Saturn
4. Toshinden 2 - PS
5. Ridge Racer Revolution - PS
6. Final Fantasy VII - U64
7. X-Men - Saturn
8. Resident Evil - PS
9. Super Mario RPG - SNES
10. Darkstalkers - PS



DEVELOPERS' TOP TEN

This Month's Guest Developer
Interplay's
James Goddard
Arcade Producer

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. SF2 Turbo Hyper Fighting - Arcade | 6. Dark Forces - PC |
| 2. Doom 1 & 2 - PC | 7. Lords of Thunder - Turbo Duo |
| 3. Yoshi's Island - SNES | 8. Super Mario Kart - SNES |
| 4. Loaded - PS | 9. Marvel Super Heroes - Arcade |
| 5. ChronoTrigger - SNES | 10. Smash TV - SNES |

GF EDITORS' TOP TEN

1. Super Mario⁶⁴ - U64
2. Skeleton Warriors - Saturn
3. Darius Gaiden - Saturn
4. Loaded - PS
5. Guardian Heroes - Saturn



6. Panzer Dragoon 2 - Saturn
7. Amok - Saturn
8. Super Mario RPG - SFC
9. Vampire Hunter - Saturn
10. Sega Rally - Saturn

1. Super Mario⁶⁴ - U64
2. Vampire Hunter - Saturn
3. Guardian Heroes - Saturn
4. Resident Evil - PS
5. Super Mario RPG - SFC



6. SF Alpha - PS/Saturn
7. Virtua On - Arcade
8. Marvel Super Heroes - Arcade
9. Skeleton Warriors - Saturn
10. Star Wars⁶⁴ - U64

1. Ridge Racer Revolution - PS
2. Super Mario⁶⁴ - U64
3. DKC 2 - SNES
4. Wave Race⁶⁴ - U64
5. Street Fighter Alpha - PS



6. Killer Instinct - SNES
7. Sega Rally - Saturn
8. Super Mario RPG - SFC
9. PilotWings⁶⁴ - U64
10. Golden Eye - U64

1. Dragon Quest VI - SFC
2. Street Fighter Alpha - PS
3. Soul Edge - PS/Arcade
4. Ridge Racer Revolution - PS
5. Night Warriors - Saturn



6. Samurai Shodown 3 - Neo Geo
7. Tenchi Sozo - SFC
8. Resident Evil - PS
9. Virtua Fighter 2 - Saturn
10. Darius Gaiden - Saturn

1. Super Mario⁶⁴ - U64
2. PilotWings⁶⁴ - U64
3. Ridge Racer Revolution - PS
4. Sega Rally - Saturn
5. Doom - PS



6. Street Fighter Alpha - PS
7. Super Mario RPG - SFC
8. Alien Trilogy - PS
9. Toshinden 2 - PS
10. Darius Gaiden - Saturn

1. Super Mario⁶⁴ - U64
2. Y's 5 - SFC
3. New Japan Pro Wrestling - PS
4. Ridge Racer Revolution - PS
5. Samurai Shodown 3 - Neo Geo



6. Darius Gaiden - Saturn
7. Super Mario RPG - SFC
8. Toshinden 2 - PS
9. Resident Evil - PS
10. Front Mission Gun Hazard - SFC

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All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to: GAME FAN TOP TEN 5137 Clareton Dr., Suite 210 Agoura Hills, CA 91301

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Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write GameFan Top Ten with self addressed & stamped envelope.

Congratulations

to last month's winners:

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Thi Chan, Silver Spring, MD

Second Prize:

Shaun Bowman, San Bernadino, CA

Third Prize:

Craig Benusa, Arcadia, WI

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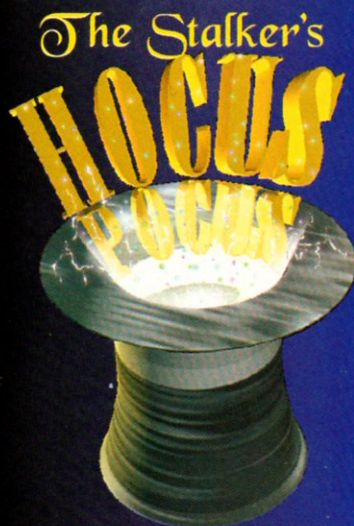
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* Any video game featured in our viewpoints section

CONGRATULATIONS!

To this month's winners:

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Second Prize:

Paul Lind, Aurora, CO

Third Prize:

Juan M. Gonzalez, Inglewood, CA

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Ridge Racer Revolution / PS

Extra cars and secret bonus:

To access the eight CPU cars in RRR, simply get a perfect score (40) in the opening game of Galaga '88. Look to our coverage of RRR for info on the "13th Racing," "13th Racing Kid," and the "White Angel" cars.



If you let all 40 aliens pass by and complete Galaga '88 with a score of zero (0), a single burst will go off and the words "Secret Bonus" will flash on screen. Can you unlock the mystery of the Secret Bonus?

X-Men:

Children Of The Atom / Saturn

Play as Akuma:

To play as the fearsome demon Akuma, perform the following tricks while on the character select screen in Arcade or Versus mode:

On 1P Side - Move the icon to Spiral and wait three seconds. Then, without stopping, move through Silver Samurai, Psylocke, Colossus, Iceman, Colossus, Cyclops, Wolverine, Omega Red, and then stop on Silver Samurai. Wait three seconds and then press A, C and Z simultaneously.

On 2P Side - Move to Storm and wait three seconds. Then go through Cyclops, Colossus, Iceman, Sentinel, Omega Red, Wolverine, Psylocke, Silver Samurai, and then stop on Spiral. Wait for three seconds and then press A, C and Z simultaneously.

-Ari McClory Maguire,
San Jose, CA.



Toh Shin Den S / Saturn

Big Head Mode:

At the Mode screen, hold the R and L buttons and select "Game Mode" to begin a normal game. Now all the characters will have massive SD-style heads!

New Japan Pro Wrestling / PS

How to play as Power Warrior, Kero-chan, Tiger Hattori and The Great Muta:

Enter the corresponding code for the desired character on the title screen and then begin the game. Highlight the corresponding "normal" character to begin. This trick works on either side and can be used during a 2P simultaneous game!

The Great Muta (Highlight Keiji Mutoh, 3rd from the top):

Circle, Right, Triangle, Up, Square, Left, X, Down, X, Down, Square, Left, Square, Left, Triangle, Up, Circle, Right, and SELECT.

Play as Power Warrior (Highlight Kensuki Sasaki, 6th from the bottom):

Square, X, Square, X, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Up, Down, Left, Right, and SELECT. Kero-chan (Highlight Hiroyoshi Tenzon, 3rd from the bottom): L1, L1, L2, R2, R2, R1, Triangle, Down, X, Up, and SELECT.

Tiger Hattori (Highlight Kohji Kanemoto, the next to last name): Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, X, Square, Circle, L1, R1, L2, R2, and SELECT.



High Velocity / Saturn

Access the two hidden cars:

At the car selection screen, hold L, R and Y. Push right on the pad and you'll see two new cars, types "G" and "H."



Wipeout / PS

Extra Track:

To access the hidden 7th course, Firestar, highlight "one player" at the option screen, hold L1, R1, D-pad right, Start, Square, Circle, then press X while holding all buttons. X must be the last button pressed.



Hang On GP '95 / Saturn

Special Course Select:

Begin the game and go to the option screen. Enter into the Mode Select screen, move the cursor to "Options" and tap R, R, L, R, and R (the top buttons, not the pad!). This allows you to choose any course.

Ride The Super Cycle:

On any course, win the cup, then go back and try to beat your own time by at least 1 minute and 29 seconds. The Super Cycle will be available in the machine select screen.

Warhawk / PS

Enter all codes at the password screen.

Kali Mode (upgrade weapons):

X, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Triangle.

Thor Mode (super bullets, lightning bombs):

Square, Circle, Square, Square, Triangle, X, Triangle, Triangle.

Infinite Weapons:

Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Triangle, X.

Warhawk a-la-Mode (invincibility):

Circle, Circle, Circle, Space, X, Triangle, X, X.



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VIEWPOINT

Legend
Graphics
Control
Play Mechanics
Music
Originality



SKID E. STORM NICK ROX K. LEE S. QUAN STALKER TAKUHI ENQUIRER



LONE SOLDIER
PLAYSTATION
TELSTAR • CD
3-D ACTION

Lone Soldier's the first 3-D game of its kind for the PlayStation (or any other next-gen system for that matter) and I like it. If strafing and perhaps shooting on the run was an option I'd really be ecstatic. There's plenty of diversity, excellent texture mapping and gouraud shaded polygons and the 3-D is as smooth as we've come to expect from the PS. Very cool.

G C P M O 80
 (8) (7) (8) (7) (8)

The thing that I liked most about this game is that your character is almost always moving. You never stop to hide behind walls and stuff (like in *Doom*), you're out in the open and it really feels like you're alone. The control is a bit odd at first but in time it became natural. The 3-D is fab and the music has that nifty "Rambo" touch to it, but it's the crazy "banzai" attitude in LS has that gives the game its charm. If you're looking for a unique game that kicks butt, LS is for you.

G C P M O 90
 (8) (6) (7) (8) (10)

I'm still mired in the action/platform genre having just beaten the huge *Hermie Hopperhead*, who is not a clown by the way, and am finding it hard to re-acclimate myself with 3-D gaming. No jumping, no timed leaps or tricky obstacles... it just ain't right. I'm sure LS's graphics will suck in the masses but I just don't see any gameplay here. Admittedly, for a walk n' shoot this is really cool. But for me it's just not enough.

G C P M O 70
 (8) (6) (6) (7) (8)



SF ALPHA
PLAYSTATION
CAPCOM • CD
FIGHTING

Capcom has done the impossible. Not only does the PlayStation version of *Street Fighter Alpha* look and play EXACTLY like the coin-op, this game (like *Tekken*) is even better than the arcade game in many ways. You get your choice of original or arranged music, you can choose all the way up to Turbo 2 speed and best of all, you can practice combos all day long against an invincible CPU player (a la KI). Too cool, too cool. *SF Alpha* PS: the best home fighting game of all time? Easily!

G C P M O 100
 (9) (10) (10) (10) (10)

On one hand, *Alpha* is one of the greatest translations of possibly the greatest fighting game of all time. It's identical to the arcade except for the OPTION (thank God) of arranged music, a useful (finally!) training mode to practice combos, recordable combos, the fix of Adon's Level 3 bug, and of course some loading time. On the other hand, I hate to condone the game's lack of varied backgrounds and almost nonexistent parallax/line-scrolling. Still, it's the best 32-bit fighting game to date and the best all-around video game available for the PlayStation. As a translation it's 110%, as a game it's 98%... sounds like 100 to me.

G C P M O 100
 (9) (10) (10) (10) (10)

I am in total heaven: The ultimate fighting game is now available at home, and it's totally perfect. In fact, it's the only perfect home version of a *Street Fighter* game yet. Every frame of animation is here, it plays perfectly, and a multitude of new options like recording your match, selecting between original and arranged music and a KI-style practice mode complete the disc. The only problem with *Alpha* is that the boss codes were changed, but you can't have everything.

G C P M O 100
 (9) (10) (10) (10) (7)



ROAD RASH
PLAYSTATION
EA • CD
RACING

I absolutely loved this game on the 3DO, and this is essentially the same game. So I should love it, right?... Wrong! Been there, done that! This is the PS. Where's the upgrade? *GEX*, *Total Eclipse*, and especially *Off World Interceptor* got majorly better going from 3DO to PS. What gives here? Gimme *Rash 2* and maybe we can talk. I got a 3DO.

G C P M O 70
 (8) (8) (6) (6) (7)

Thank you, EA, for finally proving that the PlayStation can do everything the 3DO can, 'cause you know, I had my doubts that the PlayStation could handle a 3DO game from a year and a half ago. The music's even actually worse... now *that's* sad. The play control's still all there, but this is THE EXACT SAME GAME as the 3DO version. I'm sorry, but this is just pathetic.

G C P M O 65
 (5) (8) (6) (3) (2)

For the life of me, I can't figure out why EA didn't create an all new version of *Road Rash* for the PlayStation. I'm not saying this game isn't good (cool music, great gameplay, lots of challenge, and most of all, fun), but I've already played this exact game on the 3DO and now I want to play a new version for a change. If you've never played the 3DO version, buy this game, you'll have a blast. If you're looking for something new, you'll have to look elsewhere.

G C P M O 70
 (7) (8) (7) (9) (8)



REVOLUTION X
PLAYSTATION
ACCLAIM • CD
SHOOTING

Like, they're right in the middle of another comeback, man, and now they go and do this? Uh, I don't get it man, like, why are they in a gun game, dude? Fer sure this game is meant to attract a younger audience as shootin' Power Rangers, and rescuing busty blondes (by shooting them) just doesn't fill the bill for me. As gun games go, so goes *Rev. X*. Besides the lack of originality, the scaling is framey and the scaling pixel laden. A bad conversion of a game that shouldn't have been in the first place.

G C P M O 50
 (6) (7) (3) (7) (4)

Revolution X is a perfect translation of the arcade game. All the levels are here, all the music is here and the graphics are virtually the same as the coin-op. Trouble is, the game itself is boring to the max. The levels are long and challenging but they're repetitive as hell and the shooting patterns are the same throughout the entire game. Shoot Power Rangers, pick-up power-ups, shoot some more Power Rangers, kill boss, shoot Level 2 Power Rangers... it goes on and on. Thanks, Acclaim, but I think I'll pass.

G C P M O 70
 (7) (7) (7) (8) (6)

Revolution X is a pretty solid entry into the "arcade gun-game" genre (despite the present lack of a PS gun controller) and represents a good change of pace. The sound is right there; so too is the control, but that's more than I can say for the game's visual performance. If you take a look at other converted Williams games (e.g. MK3), you'll see a much tighter translation. There's a lot of detail missing, but at least the general game itself remains basically intact. Not a perfect arcade translation, but not a complete miss.

G C P M O 75
 (7) (8) (7) (7) (7)



PRIMAL RAGE
PLAYSTATION
TWI • CD
FIGHTING

This is a perfect version of *Primal Rage* with additional (and very nice) CG cinemas. If you like the game than it's time to *Rage*.

G C P M O 75
 (9) (7) (8) (8) (7)

I'm not the biggest fan of the arcade game, but I must give credit where credit is due. The PlayStation is known to be the home of many perfect arcade translations and *Primal Rage* continues the tradition. In fact, I feel this game is even better than its arcade counterpart because it actually uses 6 different buttons (as opposed to 4 in the coin-op) for its 6 different attacks. The graphics, music, gameplay, and control all mimic the arcade game perfectly. If you like *Primal Rage*, here's your game.

G C P M O 82
 (8) (7) (7) (8) (7)

TWI pulled out all the stops with this version, meaning that it's the game it should have been all along on the other systems: a six-button fighting game (with an FMV intro). Considering the landmark addition of an actual six-button option for the six attacks (the auto-specials went sayonara, praise the heavens), I can say this is hands down the best *Primal Rage* to date. The decision here boils down to whether you thought the coin-op was the greatest thing since the JAMMA harness.

G C P M O 78
 (9) (9) (8) (8) (7)

Zero Divide is much better than *Toshinden* yet slightly worse than *Tekken*. Its graphics trounce both, but the 100% *Virtua Fighter* rip-off control harms it. Zoom didn't replicate *Virtua*'s feel, however; the hits seem slightly sluggish and the many of the pre-set combos are simply impossible to do. If you're after astounding graphics rather than solid gameplay, you can't do any better than *Zero Divide*.

G C P M O 85

Hard-core PC gamers out there will love the PS version of *Cyberia*. They'll see that the graphics, sound, and movement have all been cleaned up and tweaked to 32-bit level. However, despite its facelift, this game shouldn't appeal to anything more than a small niche in the market. *Cyberia* plays exactly the way it did two years ago on the PC: like a PC game. If you missed it the first time around and want to check it out, or if for some reason you can't get enough, this title is worth a look.

G C P M O 69

This one really surprised me. When I first sat down to play *Krazy Ivan*, I typecast it as a generic 3-D shooter with cool graphics and a couple of big robots thrown in for good measure. Upon closer scrutiny, I found a real game underneath all that 3-D gloss, with a little strategy, and challenging gameplay. There's a little bit of polygon pop-up here and there and the game is a bit on the hard side, but that doesn't take too much away from *Krazy Ivan*. Very cool.

G C P M O 87

Skeleton Warriors is truly a triumph for the Saturn, a system which to date has most of its games either still in or coming from Japan. This homegrown game of high power is rich in gameplay and diversity while at the same time exhibiting some of the best visuals yet seen in a video game of any kind. Then of course there's the soundtrack which to this day I can not believe is in a game. Bone chilling. This is the one game you can brag about in front of PS owners this year. Unless they have *Toshinden 2* then I'm afraid you're on your own.

G C P M O 98

Ouch. That's about all I can say about *Toshinden S*. The original *Toshinden* wasn't a very good game, but it did have great visuals. Take away those visuals, and you're left with the Saturn version: same control, bad graphics. But hey! We get a new character, new voice, new cinematics, and a new intro! Yeah. Personally, I'll wait for *Toshinden 2*.

G C P M O 65

I can't believe that one of '95's best RPG's is a 3DO game. Titles like this a year ago would have put the now fledgling 3DO on track for sure. You see, just get those imports out and presto! Success is imminent. The fact that Panasonic reacted with a swift port is a great sign for the upcoming M2. RPG fans will no doubt read up on *Lucienne's Quest* in this issue so I'll leave you to it. This is the best 3DO game I've ever played.

G C P M O 90

When I first played the Japanese *Zero*, 3 months ago, I gave it a 95%. Since then, my respect for the programmers' accomplishment has only grown. A perfect translation of one of my all time favorite fighting games, and some of the best graphics and sound on the PlayStation. *Virtua Fighter* fans would be insane to pass this one up.

G C P M O 97

Ugh. I'd much rather watch this one than play it, and even watching it's pretty lame. The stiff polygon people animate poorly and the "action" (ha) scenes are nothing to look forward to. In between that, we get a straight-from-PC RPG that's hard to control and incredibly uninteresting. At least it's a bit more interactive than most FMV games, but with the exception of *D*, that entire genre should just go away.

G C P M O 40

Krazy Ivan has crystal clear FMV, great-looking enemies and some impressive 3-D, but bites it big time in terms of variety. The infinitely-repeating terrain and final bosses are what hurt *Krazy Ivan* the most. Still a hell of a lot better than *Metal Jacket*, though.

G C P M O 68

My first impression of *Skeleton Warriors* was stunning graphics, incredible music, but no play mechanics. Well, a few levels into it, the play got interesting too, so *Skeleton Warriors* truly does have it all. The Saturn's at its best with SW's incredible 3-D 2-D, and Tommy Tallarico's composed the best soundtrack of his life, by far. I wish you could run a bit faster, but otherwise, there's very little to find fault with here.

G C P M O 95

In *Toshinden S*' defense, the graphics have not been downgraded as badly as a lot of people have been saying. They're not as good as in the PS-X, of course, but they're still pretty good by current 3-D standards. My main problem with *Toshinden* is that they did NOT revamp the play mechanics, as promised, and the control and balance are as screwed up as they were in the original. They didn't even fix the hideous AI! Neat intro, but there are only about ten thousand better fighting games out there.

G C P M O 72

An RPG! For 3DO! In English! Yes, Panasonic *does* care! S&S is a great game, with lovable characters, an amusing quest, some very nice 3-D, and a very diverse soundtrack. It's a tad linear, but the story is interesting enough that you won't want to go off track anyway. This is right up there with *D* and *Road Rash* as the 3DO's best accomplishments.

G C P M O 90

Problem: you want a game with great 3-D graphics and plays like VF but you only own a PlayStation. What to do? Solution: *Zero Divide*. This game is an example of: A) some of the best graphics on the PS, B) gameplay that would make Yu Suzuki proud, C) killer music, and D) an overall polish and sheen that's rarely seen in today's games. I don't know how a tiny company like Zoom programmed a game this good, but they did. Wow.

G C P M O 92

Cyberia might have been a big PC hit, but compared to other console games, it's a little boring. To its credit, *Cyberia* has terrific music, a long quest, cool motion captured SGI graphics and a good storyline. On the other hand, this game also has lame "action" shooting sequences, limited real-time interaction and uh... did I mention that it's boring? If you liked the PC title or if you enjoy these types of games, knock yourself out. If you're a hard-core console gamer, you might want to look elsewhere.

G C P M O 70

As 3-D games go, this one's a little shallow in the game play dept. While *Krazy* does sport the single best opening I have ever seen and some truly spectacular visual effects, like a transparent FMV heads up display, in the end it's just a lot of running around shootin' stuff. Also, it's first-person play with only one available perspective. Hey, for a lot of people that's enough. And for those I recommend this graphically intense game.

G C P M O 70

Wow. This is what I imagined a side-scrolling U64 game would look like. The DKC-like rendered graphics in *Skeleton Warriors* are some of the best visuals I've ever seen with wild scaling and rotating sprites, amazing line scrolling and crazy special FX. The only thing better than the graphics in this game is the unbelievable music (I'd buy this game for the tunes alone). Not only that, but the quest is long and challenging and there's much play technique to master. If you have a Saturn and don't plan on buying SW, don't consider yourself a true gamer.


G C P M O 94

Unlike Mr. chain-combo two-in-one, I feel that *Toshinden* is a great original 3-D fighter. In fact, I think it helped to mold the growing genre of home console 3-D fighting. This version is simply devoid of the glistening effects found on the PS. It's still a good game. I'm sure that given more time the developers could have done a better conversion, but I'm sure Sega wanted this one fast. Why, I do not know. They shouldn't compare the Saturn's 3-D with Sony's. They have no light sourcing or gouraud shading. Ugly compared to the PS... yes. Bad game... no.


G C P M O 80

Can it be? Yes! A full-length RPG on the 3DO, mere months after its Japanese release, with almost no story-line changes! *Lucienne's Quest* clearly defines the future of RPG's with its innovative polygon locales and 32-bit effects, yet it also has a pretty good storyline and quite literally some of the best game music ever. All 3DO owners have to buy this.


G C P M O 90




ZERO DIVIDE
PLAYSTATION
TWI • CD
3-D FIGHTING



CYBERIA
PLAYSTATION
INTERPLAY • CD
ADVENTURE



KRAZY IVAN
PLAYSTATION
PSYGNOSIS • CD
SHOOTING



SKELETON WARRIORS
SATURN
PLAYMATES • CD
ACTION ADV./PLATFORM



TOSHINDEN S
SATURN
TAKARA • CD
3D FIGHTING



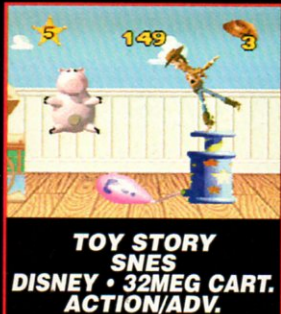
SWORD & SORCERY
3DO
MICRO CABIN • CD
RPG



MMX3 is one of the best in the series to date. Playing as Zero is a big bonus as are the length, challenge, diverse levels, and beauty SNES hand drawn graphics in this super platformer. From new power-ups, weapons, and more secret stuff to brilliant C4 special effects, this is all the *Mega Man* anyone could ever hope for... on 16-bit. I pray Capcom doesn't take as long to start the series on a next-gen console as they did to start it on the SNES.



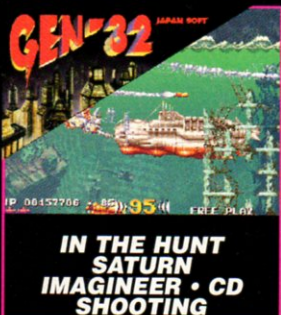
G C P M O 85
8 8 7 7 8



Toy Story SNES has all the graphic force of the 'Kong' games (well, almost) but without the cool platform feel. The whole interactive gameplay thing coupled with some questionable mechanics (like the classic stop n' go stuff) kind of bother me. I think straight action platform would have been in order here. Shine following the storyline, when you've got SGI graphics this great put 'em in a platformer.



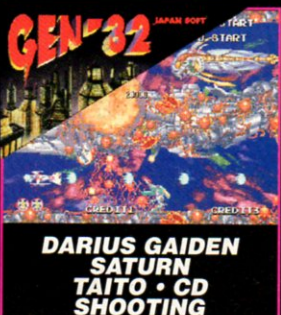
G C P M O 70
9 7 7 7 8



So why is it that on the king of 2-D systems this game slows waaaay down when it's perfect on the PS? This aside, I beat *In The Hunt* in half an hour and although I enjoyed the graphics, the intensity level is at an all time low. *In The Hunt* crawls along at a snail's pace and never really goes anywhere I haven't been. Do yourself a favor and spend your hard earned import dollar on *Darius*!



G C P M O 68
8 7 4 5 2



Beyond-arcade-quality-side scroll shooting comes to the Saturn with visual glutony. *Darius Gaiden* has effects in it I don't even have words for. Zuntata is of course right along side with musical force to compliment the stunning visuals. As a big *Darius* fan I have no complaints. Like they've all been, this one is big on challenge and will never get old. Just the coolest!



G C P M O 97
10 9 9 9 8



Remember Technosoft? Well, after two crap PS games they are back on track. I'd rather it were *ThunderForce 5* on the Saturn, but this unique sci-fi fighter will do just fine. *Reverthion*'s graphics rival high buck arcade games, the characters are beyond cool, and the music's excellent. Like a cross between *Cyber Sled* and a poly fighter, *Reverthion* is unique as well. This worthy import needs a date with a stateside third party.



G C P M O 80
9 8 7 8 7



Here's where me and the other guys have a problem. To me, fighting games don't get much better than this. GF has some of the best hand drawn graphics I've seen in the category and amazing animation (also check out the babes). The backgrounds are insane and the music is phenomenal-techno-techno! This aside, they claim it's not a "real" fighter. Maybe they just suck.



G C P M O 89
9 8 8 9 7

Although I still prefer the old NES *Mega Man* games and the more traditional look of the SNES MM7 as well, but even so, X3 is not a game to take lightly. This game is all about timed jumps, moving platforms, earning power-up and all the things that made the classic MM's so great. The control couldn't be more perfect, the graphics and music are great, plus all the different powers *Mega Man* accumulates do spice things up a bit. MM X3 is the game MM X should have been from the start.



G C P M O 87
8 10 8 8 6

On the Genesis, this game stood alone atop its SGI pedestal. But with awesome competitors like the DKC twins, *Killer Instinct*, and the upcoming *Super Mario RPG*, the shock value of *Toy Story*'s graphics is lessened somewhat. The levels are diverse and the control is pretty tight, but the objectives are very simplistic in nature. TS is perfect for the younger gamer, but the hard-core gamer may want to look elsewhere.



G C P M O 85
9 7 6 7 7

In the Hunt was only a fairly good game in the arcade, and the Saturn version is further down a notch from that. With screwed up animation, lots of slow down and bad music you might want to pass on this one and go for *Darius Gaiden* or the PlayStation version instead. This one is for huge Irem fans only.



G C P M O 74
7 5 7 3 4

While I preferred the more intricate play mechanics of *Layer Section*, I am very impressed by *Darius Gaiden*'s cool, plentiful bosses, strange and beautiful backgrounds, and surprisingly good Zuntata soundtrack. The usual 26 levels ensure high replay value, and the game's a good challenge with only 2 continues. Nothing beats a good Taito shooter.



G C P M O 90
9 5 6 8 6

This game features some of the best 3-D graphics on the PlayStation. The lack of polygon pop-up and the quality of the ultra-high-res textures will make you wonder if somebody crammed a Model 2 coin-op in your PlayStation while you were sleeping. This pummel-fest is everything *Cyber Sled* should've been. There're tons of special moves, crazy 3-D camera angle changes, pulsing music and best of all, gameplay to burn. The control is a little floaty at times but hey, if you can't hang, play mahjongg instead.



G C P M O 90
10 8 7 7 8

Now, I know graphics and sound play a vital role in fighting games, and indeed *Galaxy Fight* excels in these areas (amazing voice, unique backdrops, and high-quality music). Unfortunately, *Galaxy Fight*'s gameplay is too basic and one-dimensional. Special moves require perfect execution and are not very forgiving, and the characters aren't very balanced. Two years ago, when games like MK and SF2 only came along once or twice a year, mere decent games (like *Galaxy Fight*) were acceptable. In 1996, decent doesn't cut it anymore.



G C P M O 76
8 7 7 8 6

I can't get enough of this series, ever. I hope that when the Nintendo Hyper 256 system comes out in the year 2022, I will be playing *Mega Man XXX* 17. And it will be 2-D, thank you very much. MMX3 is definitely the best in the X series and very nearly as good as MM7. The levels are bigger, there are many more items to find, and of course you can play as Zero (his laser sword is amazing!). A must-play for SNES platform fans.



G C P M O 90
8 10 9 8 8

Toy Story is just what I expected, the Genesis game with more colors, sharper graphics overall, and clearer (but unfortunately NOT better) music. The changes aren't too significant so I'll stick with the rating I gave the Genesis version. I still can't describe my amazement at the CG animation, but on the other hand, it was amazing for a Genesis game... This definitely isn't *Donkey Kong Country*. I still also say the difficulty level is way off the scale for the target audience, and the gameplay is a bit too slow-paced/puzzle-based for my tastes.



G C P M O 85
9 8 7 6 8

How pathetic must Imagineer's programmers be if they can't even do decent 2-D on the Saturn? This one has embarrassing slow down, extra loading time and a Genesis quality soundtrack, none of which is present in King's far superior PlayStation version. Still basically a good game but there are far better titles out there.



G C P M O 70
5 6 6 5 6

This and *Pulstar* rank as the best (and most difficult) 2-D shooters ever. The standard 26 alphabetical levels, some of the most spectacular sights ever seen in a game and very good, if... uh... different music combine to bring you utter shooting satisfaction. This, by the way, IS the arcade game. The only difference is slightly less animation on the bosses, but it isn't something you'll notice.



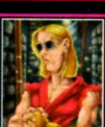
G C P M O 95
9 8 5 8 5

If you like *Cyber Sled*, you'll LOVE *Reverthion*. Everything you wanted in CS is here: huge multi-level arenas, fighting game-ish special moves and jumps. The Model 2-quality graphics and excellent music don't hurt, either... I won't go so far as to say that Technosoft's back, but they're certainly on their way.



G C P M O 80
10 8 7 6 8

What can I say? A perfect translation of an arcade game with godly backgrounds, OK characters, top-notch tunes and humdrum play mechanics. This is worth buying for the visuals, but serious fighting game enthusiasts will probably want to look elsewhere... The super-lenient combo system and the "just plain attack" button system aren't my style.



G C P M O 72
8 6 5 8 5

THE SAVAGE DRAGON



CATCH THE DRAGON ON





ENTERTAINMENT FAN

@Fan

T2 GOES 3-D AT UNIVERSAL STUDIOS FLORIDA

This summer Universal Studios Florida brings you the visual reality experience of your life! *Terminator 2: 3-D Battle Across Time*. We're talking a mega-multi-media mind blowing extravaganza starring none other than the man himself, Arnold Schwarzenegger and his fellow T2 buddies Linda Hamilton, Robert Patrick, and Eddie Furlong.

Action director god Jim Cameron, creator of such joy as the *Terminator* saga, *The Abyss*, and *True Lies*, heads an award-winning team of such geniuses as Stan Winston and John Bruno, both *Terminator* veterans and effects masters extraordinaire. Combining the latest in 3-D cinematography, digital composite imagery, state of the art cinebotics, up-close live action stunt work and cutting edge lighting and audio techniques, T2-3D shatters the barrier between reality and film to create a literally unheard of multi-dimensional experience.

Twenty four hundred guests every hour will enter the newly relocated Cyberdyne Systems headquarters where they will twist and turn in their seats as sinister T-70 cinebotic soldiers train their sights on targets all around the audience. Witness as well the T-1000 Terminator "cop" from the

Terminator 2 movie morph before your very eyes as Schwarzenegger's T-800 cyborg literally jumps off the screen to save the day.

"Universal has always been on the leading edge of theme park entertainment," states Universal Studios Florida president and chief operating officer Tom Williams. "With *Terminator 2 3-D*, we have brought together an elite group of world-class artists from all disciplines of the entertainment industry to give our guests an awe-inspiring, motion picture based experience that can't be found anywhere else."

"Universal Studios Florida is a leader in location-based entertainment, and of all the theme parks has had the most success with integrating live shows with cinebotics," says Cameron, explaining why he chose to work with Universal on this project. "They have made that one of their niche areas of expertise."

Why T2 in 3-D, you might ask? Cameron says the decision was made "...to do it in 3-D so that the objects on the screen become almost indistinguishable from the people in the foreground, creating one reality, the reality of *Terminator 2*." -Jason Weitzner

Right about now you
may want to press
the pray button.

OR YOUR EJECTION SEAT

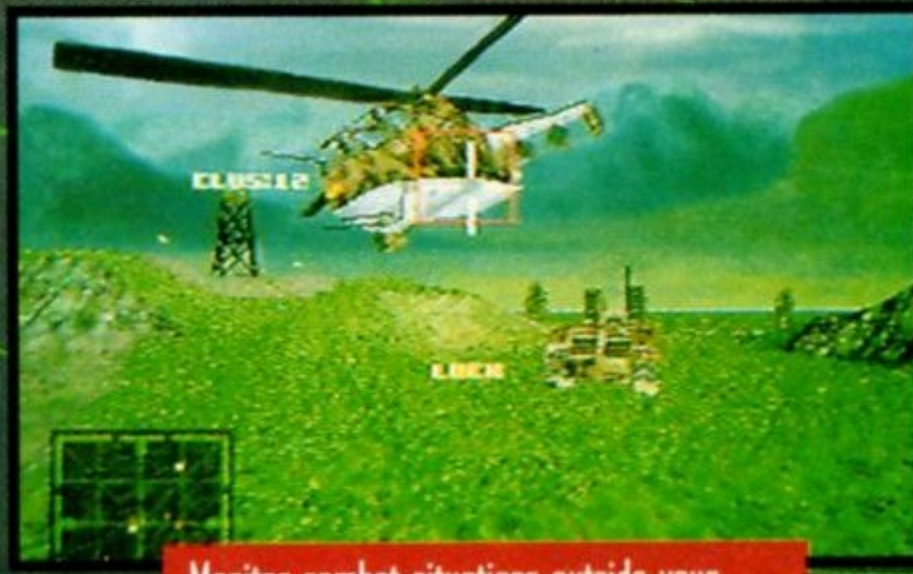
Strap into ThunderStrike 2. True 3-D environments. 37 incredibly realistic missions in real-time, first person perspective, that reflect today's world conflicts. Rotate your viewing position 180 degrees. Your control panels and multi function monitors light up just like a real gunrunning in South America Seas, it's in your face.

THUNDER
STRIKE

Whether it's
or piracy on the South China
So go ahead, start praying.



Fluid cinematic animation makes ThunderStrike 2 feel more like a movie than a game.



Monitor combat situations outside your copter in 360 rotation.



Prioritize targets, engage radar, activate weapons and hold on.



U.S. GOLD



PLAYSTATION NATION



R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - TELSTAR

PUBLISHER - TBA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - JAN/FEB



LONE SOLDIER



He's the *Lone Soldier*, a bazooka-totin', flame-throwin', polygon Merc, and he's headed for your PlayStation. Terrorists from outer space have 'napped some high rankin' dudes from your side, so the brass is sending you in (by yourself, of course) on a recon mission loaded with blazing cinama's and texture mapped poly's. Telstar's initial PS launch is an impressive effort indeed. *Lone Soldier*'s texture mapped polygon environments allow the player complete freedom to move in every conceivable direction throughout the entire game, save the bosses whom you cannot escape. Your character even turns and runs parallel with the screen in many of the levels. Top notch graphics they are, with literally NO pop-up or flickering polys. Speaking of polygons, each gouraud shaded character is finely detailed, complete with facial expressions, excel-

lent voice (the natives actually do the ugga-bugga thing), and texture mapped fatigues. Visuals aside, however, it does take a while to dial in the lonesome one's control scheme. The control is (at first) a bit weird. Wherever you point on the D-pad, he goes. Tap left and he spins all the way over. Accidentally press down and he spins all the way around and stares right back at you, etc... You kinda have to steer this guy. The lack of a strafing option or the ability to lock down the character while firing, coupled with the natural instinct to keep moving, causes one to collide with the enemy quite a bit until you learn to stop, turn, lay off the D-pad, shoot, and then take off. Shoot



E. STORM

I LOVE THE SMELL OF POLYGONS IN THE MORNING!



on the run (or should I say walk, you cannot shoot while sprinting) and you're headed for the clash of the polygons (two guys standing toe to toe with dueling M-16's. The game actu-





ally plays quite well once you become acclimated with the controls. The gameplay in *Lone Soldier* is pure search and destroy. Avoid enemy fire, keep your distance from grenades and flyin' bullets, and use those power items



(bazooka's, M-16's, flame throwers, and grenades sparingly. The bosses in this one are pretty nasty, and big too.

Lone Soldier is full of cool stuff to do as you dash about, madly inflicting pain on the enemy. You can roast occupied tanks (there are guys talking inside), demolish look-out towers, burn huts and tents, and even explode fuel cans sending standers-by to a fiery death. It's all quite entertaining and



good training too! Actually, it's quite nice to see the 3-D genre getting a much needed dose of diversity. *Lone Soldier* will hopefully pave the way for more similar titles. The shots on these pages are probably all the convincing you'll need, but I can assure you, *Lone Soldier* is worth the price of admission. 3-D war-time gaming is hopefully here to stay. -E Storm



The following are mugshots of the terrorists believed to be responsible for this morning's hijacking. Your mission is to eliminate the terrorist threat and prevent activation of the nuclear device



STREET FIGHTER

ALPHA

WARRIORS' DREAMS

When I pre-viewed the PlayStation version of *Alpha* in the December issue, I had no idea that Capcom would add the best collection of options ever seen in a home fighting game, effectively pushing the score of their already A+ title off the scales. We all know by now that the actual game is totally exact - the only things that aren't arcade-perfect are the intro, which instead of featuring many characters and backgrounds has one of each, and the altered boss-codes. There's probably no way humanly possible to replicate the arcade intro on a CD system anyway: not enough RAM. But Capcom, being the gods that they are, have instead decided to give us two features we simply do not deserve: Training Mode and the choice between original or arranged music.

While the idea is no longer original, (Yu Yu Hakusho on the MegaDrive did it first) *Alpha* features a Training Mode in which you can beat up a defenseless computer opponent for as long as you want, and if your combo is blockable, the mock opponent will block it. This probably doesn't sound too exciting, but if you're serious about your *Street Fighter* this is the greatest gaming gift you have ever received. You can even set the computer opponent to be constantly jumping or ducking, and - feature of features - you



Art by: Bengus





can RECORD your combos. One block of your memory card can store an entire game round, so if you actually pull off that 18-hit Ken combo and your friend's not there you can prove it. Why you can't record an entire two-player round is beyond me, but this feature's cool enough. The Level 3 punch super that only the CPU Adon could perform in the arcade can now be done by human players, a bug I thought sure would not be fixed... but it was. Besides the standard Capcom options, other little tidbits include forgoing the fancy character select screens in VS mode for no loading time, three game speeds and the greatest *Street Fighter* option of all time: The choice between original and arranged tunes. I enjoy the re-done arranged tracks tremendously, most of which are pretty darn good - though ultra-70's, it's much better than *Super Turbo 3DO's* music. There are times, however, when you just need that original music for 100% true arcade enjoyment. Capcom should be praised in the highest for including this choice, as every arcade port needs to have it and of course none do. While on the subject of sound, let me mention that Capcom seems to have re-recorded the samples directly off the original tape rather than lifting them off the arcade board, and the difference in quality definitely shows.

I won't go into the gameplay, because if you haven't played *Alpha* by now you have big



R REVIEW



DEVELOPER: CAPCOM

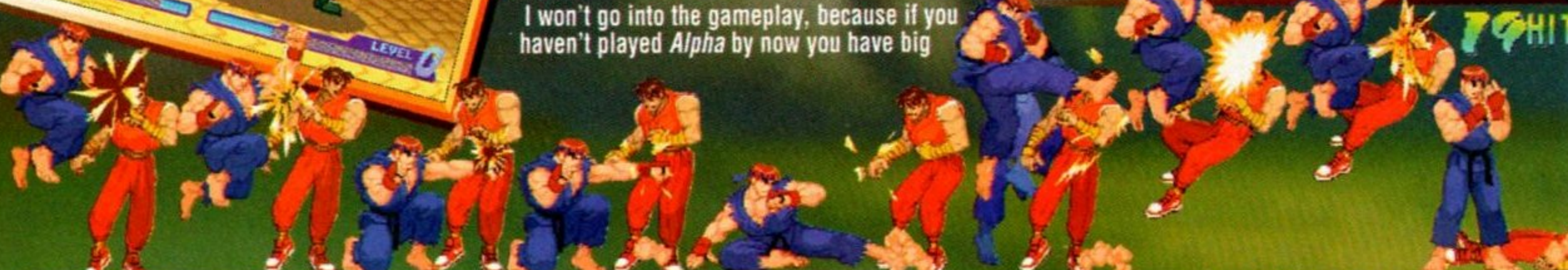
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

FORMAT: CD

OF PLAYERS: 1-2

79 HIT COMBO DIFFCLTY: ADJ.

AVAILABLE FEBRUARY



problems. Just know that this is PERFECT. Other magazines are quick to use that word for extremely imperfect ports, like the 3DO *Super Turbo*, for instance, but I can be trusted. I'm an *Alpha* freak who's literally played the arcade game every day since its release... until now, of course. Now I have my lovely PlayStation game - in fact, the best PlayStation game released so far - and I am one happy dude. If you were a fan of the arcade game (who wasn't, for that matter) you owe it to yourself to own this \$2000 arcade game for a mere \$50. The ultimate home fighting game has arrived. Oh, by the way... the Sega version of *Alpha* came in the day our issue closed, so next month I'll be seeing you on Saturn.

- Nick Rox



NICK ROX



Save your combos to memory card in the Training Mode!



R REVIEW



DEVELOPER - EA

PUBLISHER - EA

FORMAT - CD

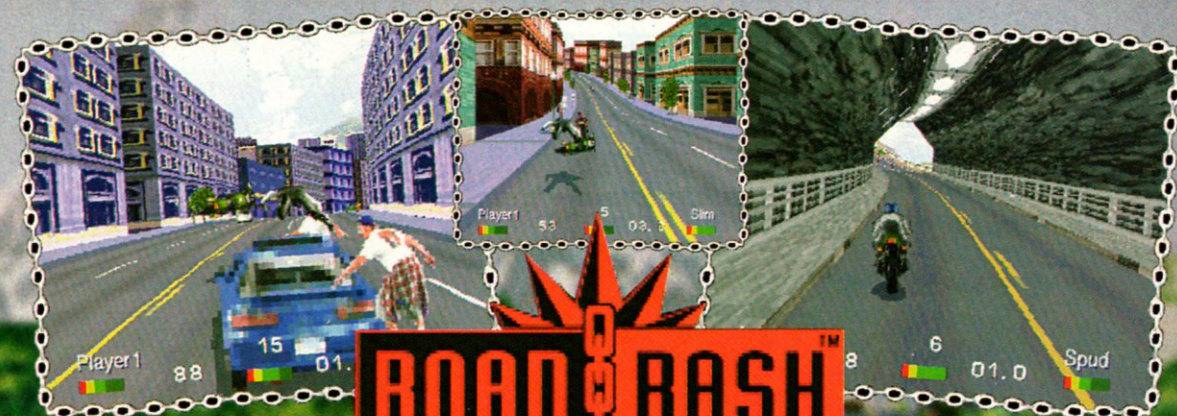
OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - JANUARY



K. LEE
DEJA VU?



ROAD RASH™

One of the best games on the 3DO (and one of the best motorcycle racing games, period) is revving up for release on the PlayStation. When I first discovered that EA was creating a PlayStation version of RR, my mind reeled. Since the PS is capable of some spectacular 3-D (much better 3-D than the 3DO's), I prepared for a version that would be (or at least look) much better than the 3DO game. Unfortunately, the game is a direct port of the 3DO *Road Rash*.

On the positive side, the gameplay seems to have been tweaked and improved over the 3DO game. The bikes seem to handle a little better and control is now perfect.

I hate to sound like a broken record, but even the

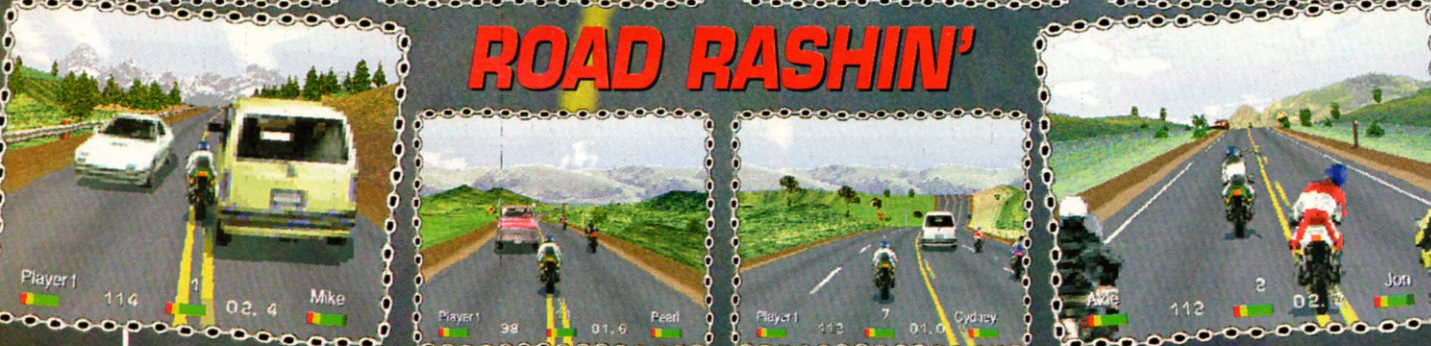
sound and graphics are exactly as they were in the 3DO game. All the music (and music videos) are of course here and are noticeably cleaner via the PS's stellar FMV hardware, but that's a given.

Don't get me wrong, I loved the 3DO game and played it to death, and for those who missed the 3DO game this is one ride you'll love taking. But, with all the amazing 3D PS games out there, I feel that a company with the stature and reputation of EA should've created a *Road Rash* that takes advantage of the PlayStation's unique 3-D features. What we have here is, for all intents and purposes, a 3DO game, and I have been there and I have done that.

-K. Lee



ROAD RASHIN'



REVOLUTION X featuring AEROSMITH



The evil organization of NON has taken control of our youth, our culture, and our society. To further constrict their stranglehold on the minds of young people everywhere, the evil dominating queen of NON has ordered the kidnapping of Aerosmith! It's up to you to rescue Aerosmith, destroy NON's weapons of mass

destruction and to slay its leader.

Revolution X was an overlooked (yet highly playable) gun game in the arcades a couple of years ago. Its conversion onto the PlayStation came with some basic flaws, but most of the action was retained on the most advanced home systems.

Like most every other gun game, *Rev-X* centers around an icon-style crosshair used to direct machine gun and special weapon fire. Your special weapons, in keeping with the theme of things, are compact discs which can be "powered up" to laser discs. Of course, this is no ordinary shooting game: Aerosmith makes cameos and special appearances all throughout the game as their music plays in the background.

If you've played the arcade game, you've already played the PlayStation version... sort of. A sizable deal of the original game's graphic power is curiously missing from this one. Some of the scrolls are choppy, there are fewer sprites, the scaling is only fair and the digitized enemies looked WAY better in the arcade version. The tunes are (natch) exactly the same,

R REVIEW



DEVELOPER - SCULPTURED

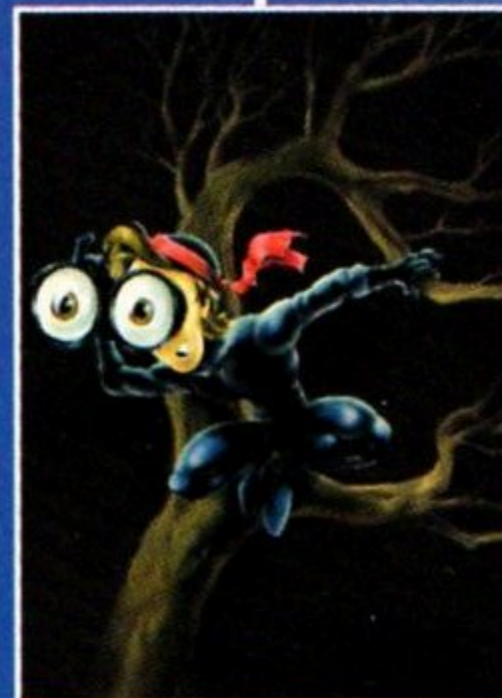
PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

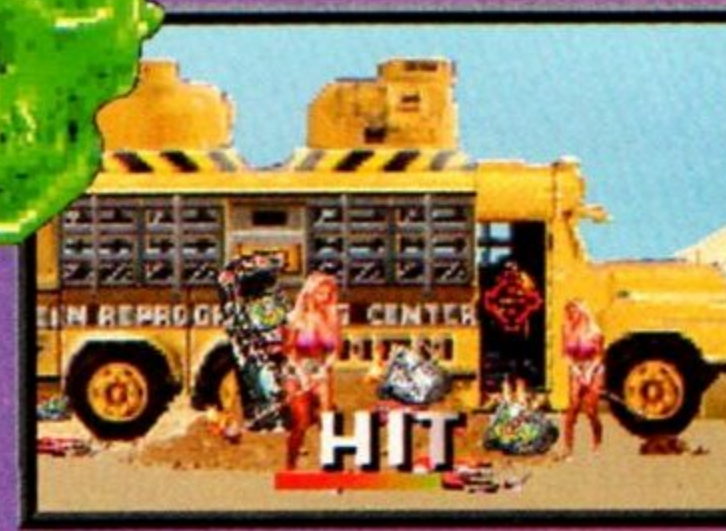
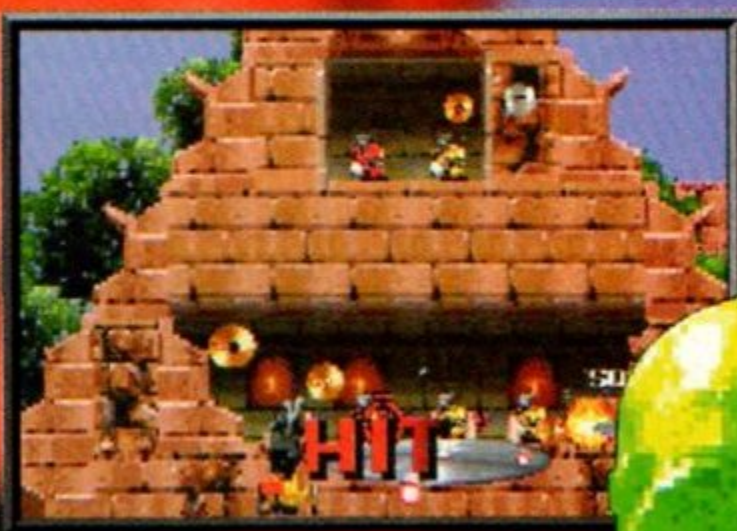
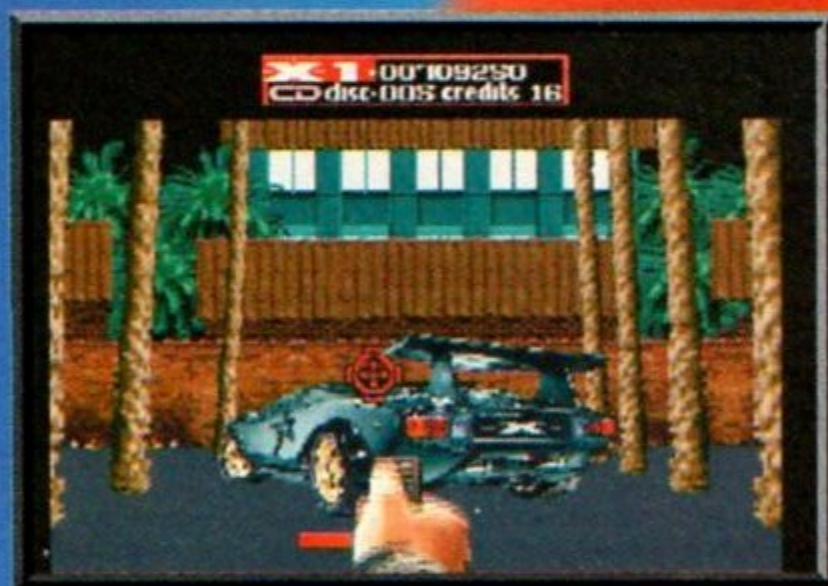
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW



THE STALKER
TO WALK THIS WAY OR
NOT TO WALK THIS
WAY... THAT IS THE
QUESTION!



as are the voices and samples.

Look past the graphics and you have yourself a decent conversion. There's still plenty of targets to blow to pieces, and every enemy now spurts slimy red goo when shot. Above all, the game-play is virtually intact, which is why this isn't a complete loss. Remember... *Music is the weapon!* -The Stalker

P PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - CORE
PUBLISHER - US GOLD
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - JANUARY



THE STALKER
ALL YOU NEED IN
A CHOPPER SIM



THUNDERSTRIKE 2

Chopper games have come a long way since the days of *Tiger Heli* and *Airwolf*. Core's new 32-bit creation, *Thunderstrike 2*, is shaping up to be the chopper game to beat.

Thunderstrike 2 seats you in the cockpit of an Apache helicopter carrying out sorties all over the globe. Your role is something of a peacekeeper/missionary in a world where limited military action is the only way to keep things under control.

TS2's intuitive control, multiple views, and user friendly play mechanics are an invitation to those who have gone their whole lives without playing a game of this nature. Additionally, there's plenty of action for even the most hard-core chopper freak. You'll find a vast assortment of goodies to destroy: ships, bunkers, tanks and anything else you can place inside your cross-hairs. It's even possible to lock onto individual ground troops and fill 'em full of lead... Just let 'em TRY to run away! Thankfully, TS2 also offers diversity within its levels. Sometimes you'll fly straight into a jungle ambush, or have to approach and defend a "friendly" aquatic area. There are a total of seven main areas, and each has different arenas of combat to fly through.

Now I must take a second to speak of the things about this game that should be changed. Core's new 3-D engine is very cool and it plays well, but the graphic layout is simply not there. The built-in excuse for the



heinous pop-up everywhere is that the game is designed to build around you... You get the idea. It seems only natural that the

PlayStation version should have better 3-D than the Saturn version, but as of late that isn't the case. Also a must-change is the operations map, which just shows you as a white blip, not even telling you what direction you're flying in.

If Core just tweaks out the poly-breakup, *Thunderstrike 2* will be a nearly perfect chopper combat game. The textures are dead-on and the rotation and scaling are very nice, once the on-screen sprites have popped, er, appeared. It has the gameplay, now it needs the look!

-The Stalker



SILVERLOAD



Here's a quick look at *Silver Load*, Vic Tokai's next offering for the PlayStation.

You play the role of an outlaw cowboy in the wild west (the year 1879), searching for a young boy who has been kidnapped by an evil group called "The Raiders." It's up to you to return the child to his parents and bring law and order back to the town known as *Silver Load*.

Silver Load is a combination of 2 genres. First, you have the text adventure sequences (similar to *Monkey Island*), where you talk to people, accumulate items and discover vital information about your quest. SL also incorporates 3-D action sequences. This part of the game places you in a quasi-*Doom/Virtua Cop* game environment with real-time 3-D texture mapped polygons and multiple weapons.

At this point in time, it's hard to tell what kind of impact *Silver Load* will have when launched. When a review copy becomes available in the months ahead, we will scrutinize the pros and cons of *Silver Load*. -K. Lee



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - VIC TOKAI

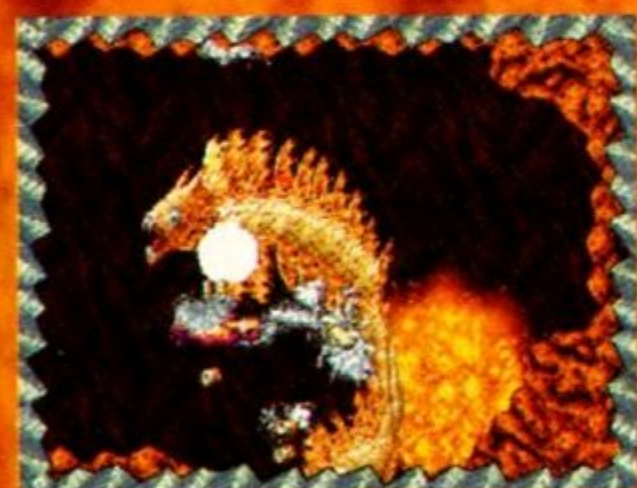
PUBLISHER - VIC TOKAI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - NA

AVAILABLE - FEBRUARY



I have a big soft spot for shooters. *Darius*, *Life Force*, *Gradius*, *Xexex*, *R-Type*... I'll take them any day of the week. *In the Hunt* for the PlayStation is a 100% perfect conversion of the Irem (the same people who made *R-Type 1-3*) coin-op game.

The graphics in this game are truly a sight to behold. It's very obvious that a lot of detail work went into every frame. The sprites have a vast amount of shading lending a very rich look to the graphics. Every torpedo shot has a smoky trail behind it, the windows in the buildings (level 2) shimmer realistically in the sun, and even ice looks surprisingly realistic. The attention to detail is stunning. The overall look and style of *In the Hunt* strikes me as Neo-Geo-ish and I like it.

Two different soundtracks are selectable, the original arcade tunes and a new arranged ensemble. The arcade music is exact, but because the coin-op's sound driver isn't very sophisticated, they have a crude and static-sounding sound. The arranged music features crisp CD sound.

Too bad the tunes weren't very exciting to begin with.

The best part of *In the Hunt* is the gameplay. The control is accurate enough to get you out of the tightest situations and the power-ups you accumulate will save your hide in many occasions. Unlike most shooters, you move ahead at your leisure stopping to clear the screen of enemies as often and for as long as you like. There are huge amounts of sprites on-screen, enough to make staying alive a challenge. However, the difficulty is perfectly set, so you are never bored at its ease or frustrated at its impossibility. If you stay at the edge of your seat, you'll be fine.

When I really think about it, other than the so-so music, there really isn't anything bad about this game. The shooting action is superb, the control is set just the way it should be, the levels are long and hard, and the graphics are outrageous. I recommend *In the Hunt* to all fans of traditional 2-D shooting games. You guys will love it.

-K. Lee

R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - XING

PUBLISHER - THQ

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW





R REVIEW



DEVELOPER - PROBE

PUBLISHER - TWI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW



SLASHER QUAN
BETTER THAN THE
ARCADE?

Primal Rage's graphic superiority and splendid stop motion animation made it an instant success nationwide. Equally revolutionary is the premise - prehistoric characters in a one-on-one fighter.

People went nuts at the mere sight of it, and, as a matter of fact, are still to this day. And now, finally, after quite a few stabs at bringing home a tight conversion of the coin-op, TWI has added a feature I have wanted quite literally since the first time I played the arcade game: six-button control to match the six different basic attacks.

To clarify, *Primal Rage* was a four-button arcade game which had six attacks, so the most powerful two were executed by a simultaneous press of two buttons a la *Samurai Shodown*. Obviously, this is a less than desirable situation, and in bringing home the game to SNES, Genesis, 32X, and 3DO, systems all armed with six-button controllers, one would have thought TWI/Probe would have provided at least the option to use buttons five and six to execute the two Power attacks. Unfortunately, this was not the case; instead the developers saw fit to make those extra buttons automatically do special moves a la *Toshinden*.

So, the glisteningly good news is that the auto-



special move option has disappeared in the PS (good riddance), replaced by two Power attacks as their own, separate buttons. This is reason enough for many *Ragers* to buy this version outright.

Other than this fundamentally important issue, PS PR is, in almost every aspect, the spitting image of the coin-op. The backgrounds are the arcade, the music is the arcade, etc. TWI has even added an impressive CG intro depicting the apocalyptic storyline behind the storyline. I haven't been altogether pleased with the home renditions of this fighter thus far, but I must now congratulate TWI/Probe on a seemingly better-than-the-arcade translation. If you in any way hold *Primal Rage* dear to your heart, and you've managed to hold out against the marketing/conversion onslaught thus far, the PlayStation version is unquestionably the one to get.

-Slasher Quan





P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER: N/A

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

FORMAT: CD

1-2 PLAYERS

DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE

AVAILABLE FEBRUARY

DARKSTALKERS

Here's a game I thought I'd never see... *Darkstalkers* for the PlayStation! Though delayed for almost a year, DS is nearly ready for home release. The PlayStation RAM problem seems to have been solved, as nearly all of the parallax, special effects and arcade frames are here. At this point in time, however, two somewhat important elements are all but missing:

gameplay and smoothness of movement. I don't mean jerky animation, I mean jerky frame update as in the 3DO version of *Super Turbo* or *Dark Legend* on Saturn - things just jitter along at a shockingly slow speed.

I'm begging that the game doesn't stay this way. Don't get too worried, though: I can't see Capcom dar-



NICK ROX

ing to

release DS in its current form.

On a more positive note, the regular collection of improvements like a VS mode, the option to stop the timer and a button config have been added... usual Capcom goodness. There's also (surprise!) a CG intro accompanied by some hurtin' rock song that must go away. The coolest DS enhancement, however, are the godly arranged tunes. The problem that plagues most arranged arcade music is that... well, the "arranged" has little or no relation to the original. This time around we get the same beat and samples from the arcade, run through a much higher-spec synthesizer. The result brings tears to a *Darkstalkers* fan's eyes. While on the subject of sound, I must mention that some samples were out of place and reused at higher or lower pitches... hopefully this will also be corrected.

Getting back to gameplay... I suppose this version would play alright if it didn't move at Turbo minus 5. The two-in-ones two-in-one and the mid-air and ground chains chain... they're just hard to do slowly. As a huge *Darkstalkers* fan, the pain displayed in this version (and the perfection featured on Saturn, by contrast) hurts me. It remains to be seen whether this game's developers, who, by the way, have never done a 2-D game on the PlayStation, will be able to fix DS up by February. -Nick Rox



R REVIEW



DEVELOPER - ZOOM

PUBLISHER - TWI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW



TAKUHI
TWI PICKS A
WINNER!



ZERO DIVIDE

I was sure that *Zero Divide* would never come out here. It's an incredible game, yes, and was hugely popular in Japan. It was entirely in English to begin with, and would require absolutely no translation... But I'd wake up in the middle of the night with disturbing visions of it being killed at the highest corporate levels, because, I don't know, it would take too much attention away from *Criticom*, or something. But no! Enter our hero, Time Warner Interactive. Time Warner is our friend. Time Warner cares. And Time Warner has brought us *Zero Divide*, in all its majesty, totally unmolested by the dark forces of bad translating.

Now, before I start my drool-fest, I'd like to give you a little warning. *Zero Divide* has a block button. YES! A BLOCK BUTTON! I'm warning you of this now because whenever I bring up the topic of *Zero Divide*'s excellence with the other editors here, the response is invariably, "But it has a block button!" They say it in the same tone of voice you'd say, "But it was programmed by child molesters!" or, "But it gave my wife a lethal epileptic fit!" WHAT IS SO WRONG WITH BLOCK BUTTONS!? You press it, and your character blocks. When you press back, you don't block, you move back. IS THAT SO HARD TO GRASP? IS THAT SO HARD TO GET USED TO? But if you're one of those people who

had some childhood trauma involving a block button (like someone dropped a *Virtua Fighter* machine on you, or something), then by all means, stay far, far away.

But if you think that maybe you're at that point in your life where you're ready to deal with *Virtua Fighter*-style play mechanics, then you will love *Zero Divide*. The play control is perfect, with dozens of tap-tap style moves for each character, all easily accessible with your standard control pad. The influence of *Virtua Fighter* is obvious from the first round you play: Moves, combos, jumping, and throws all work exactly the same way, with the only game play enhancements being the addition of a bit of juggling and the ability to hang off of the ring and jump back in.

The computer's artificial intelligence is exemplary... The computer can be a very tough opponent, but doesn't need to resort to such cheap tactics as pulling off a constant stream of impossible-for-humans 12-step moves, or taking off extra health. As you play through later stages and harder difficulty levels, it just learns how to block better, how to counter more effectively, and sometimes how to maneuver you right out of the ring.

The characters are incredibly well designed, and, with a few exceptions, don't fit the ultra-cliché molds that most recent fighting game characters seem born into. I'm





at a loss when I try to think of contemporaries for such innovative characters as drill-based Nereid, whose techniques actually make him more dangerous when his back is turned, or tail-slapping, fire-breathing Draco the dragon. This isn't the type of game where one character quickly emerges as the best and no one ever even thinks to choose anyone else.

Visually, the game is astonishing. While it isn't as impressive as upcoming 2nd generation eye-poppers like *Soul Edge*, it's the most visually impressive fighting game currently on the market, save perhaps for *Virtua Fighter 2*. The animation is smooth and detailed, the textures have an insane amount of detail, and the scenery is always (well, almost always) stunning. There's also a very well done replay feature which allows you to carefully examine the bouts from the perspective of a floating camera you control, and save the ones you like to your memory card.

In the sound department, there's an excellent soundtrack, ranging drastically from techno to wah-wah style porn music, and even the *Phalanx* mini-game's music is arranged. Sound effects are good, but

the not-quite-a-native-speaker voice hurts... you can turn most of his lines off, but not all.

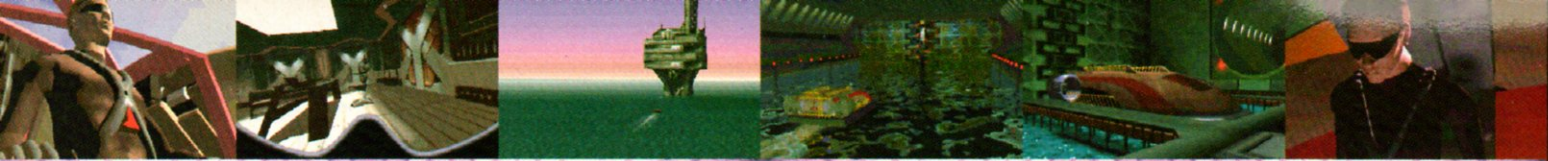
And I have to mention the bevy of hidden bonus stuff in this game... I've never seen a better collection of hidden stuff - none of that look-I-can-make-the-flag-move crap, but tricks with real meat. Among

them are the ability to choose 16 colors for each character, 3 perfectly translated levels from the SNES shooter *Phalanx*, the ability to play as 2nd-to-last boss Zulu, hidden final boss XTAL, Zoom's mascot (a big chubby cat named Neko), and God only knows what else.

So, what else is there to say? This is an incredible game, which you should all go run out and buy, if you can stand that block button thing. And as a tidbit for all of you who are already enjoying *Zero Divide*, Zoom (the newest member of the Squaresoft family) is hard at work on the sequel, which they say is about 15% done. If *Zero Divide* does well, I'm

sure they'll bring it out here, so if it doesn't, I'm holding you all responsible. Get down to your local video game stores and whip out that credit card, 'cause I need my *Zero Divide 2*. -Takuhi





R REVIEW



DEVELOPER - INTERPLAY
PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - JANUARY



K. LEE
A LITTLE OF THIS
AND A LITTLE OF
THAT...



The hit PC CD-ROM title, *Cyberia*, is making the transition over to the hard-core gaming consoles; in this case, the PlayStation.

Due out in January, the PlayStation version of *Cyberia* features all the action/shooting sequences of the computer game (11 in all), a blazing musical score by Thomas Dolby's Headspace, mucho puzzle-solving, multiple story lines with fork-in-the-road type multiple plot paths (which provide different results and endings), and 100% SGI rendered graphics and characters featuring full motion-captured animation. Intrigued? Then listen up.

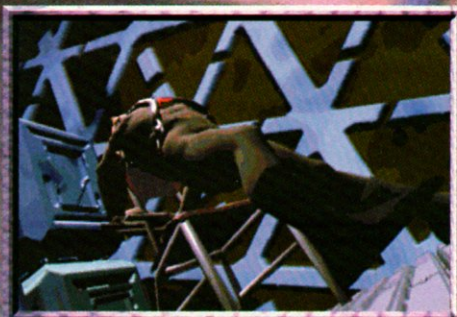
The year is 2027, five years after the global economic collapse. As Zak, an outlaw computer hacker on death row, you have few choices. You can languish in prison, or undertake a suicide mission into the secret installation code named *Cyberia*. Once there, you must find the mysterious superweapon that may trigger doomsday... No pressure.

The levels in *Cyberia* are a combination of pre-rendered action sequences (where you walk about, talk to people, and solve puzzles), and various in-cockpit shooting sequences. You can customize the difficulty of the puzzle sequences and the shooting action. Whether you've got the reflexes of a cheetah and have little in the way of gray matter, or if you are a master at puzzle solving but your twitching abilities are a little dull, fear not; you can tailor this game to your liking. The easiest mode *Cyberia* can be set for is either:

1) medium shooting difficulty with easy puzzles, or 2) medium puzzle difficulty with easy shooting (ah, ah, ah... no cheating).

If any and/or all of the things mentioned above interest you at all, you might want to give this one a try. Can the PC genre stand the test of true console gamers? You be the judge.

-K. Lee



CYBERIA

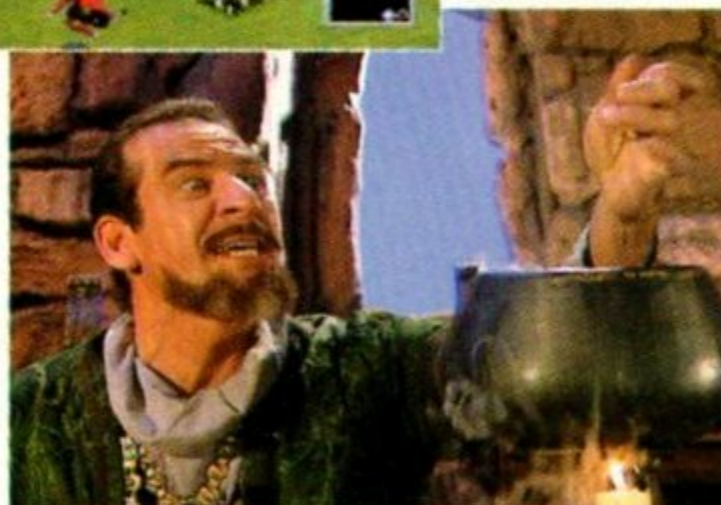
Build it. And they will come. Then you can kill them.

Critically acclaimed
by everyone and
their grandmother.
Maybe it's the cool
3D characters or
texture-mapped
backgrounds.
Maybe not.

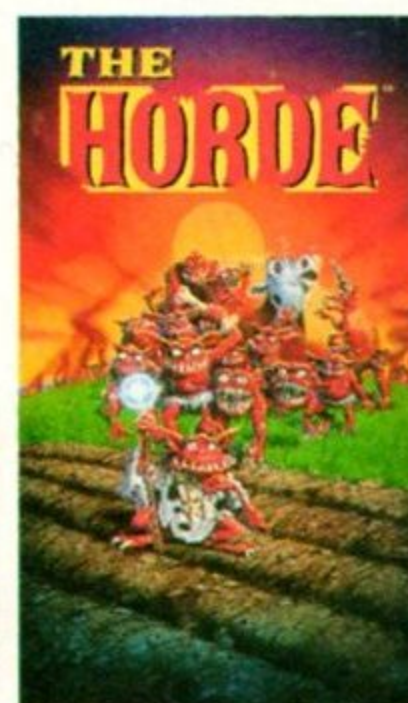


You're overrun by
mobs of ravenous
Hordlings, each
blessed with huge,
colon-blasting
appetites.

35 minutes of
video explains how
piss-boy Chauncey
saves the King and
is rewarded with
the old man's
Grimthwacker
(It's a sword).



Forget about fields of dreams.
With **The Horde™**, it's more like
little slaughter-house on the prairie.
See, we've injected arcade-style,
belly-slitting fun into that
sleepy-ass commune you call home. And
between digging **death pits** and
hiring archers, enjoy some
serious, gut-popping swordplay.
'Cause man, these neighbors
really **bite!**



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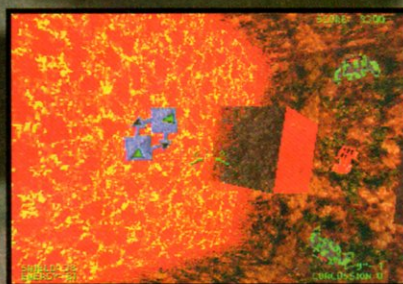
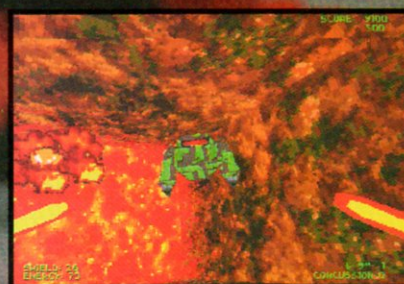


Available on Sega Saturn™.

This official seal is your assurance that this product meets the highest quality standards of SEGA™.
Buy games and accessories with this seal to be sure that they are compatible with the Sega Saturn™ System.



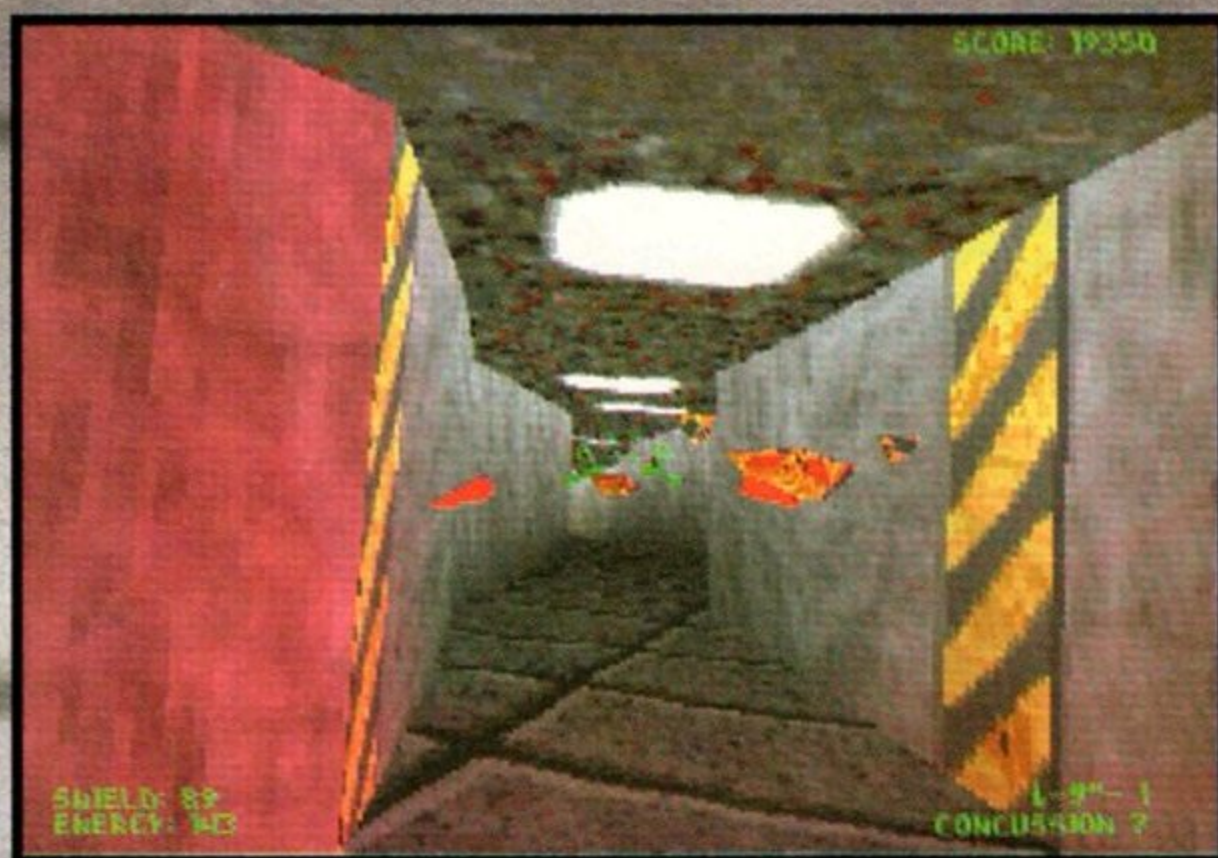
DESCENT



There are a select group of PC games so popular that even "console-only gamers" (me for example) are familiar with the names. *Doom*, *Might and Magic*, *Zork*, *Wing Commander*, *Myst*, *Wizardry*, and, of course, *Descent*. All are household names. It is because of their popularity (and possibly the desires of their publishers to make a quick and easy buck) that, one by one, each title is making the journey over to dedicated video game platforms. This time around the marriage is between *Descent* and the lovely Sony PlayStation.

I've only played arcade and home console games my entire life (no PC background here). Let me say this: Even though I'm not supposed to give anything close to an opinion in this preview, I must say that I'm intrigued and impressed by the PlayStation version of *Descent*.

Like *Doom*, the PlayStation version of *Descent* is even better than the PC game. *Descent* PS looks as good and runs just as fast as the Pentium PC game; plus it has colored light-source effects, all new levels in link-



P PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - INTERPLAY

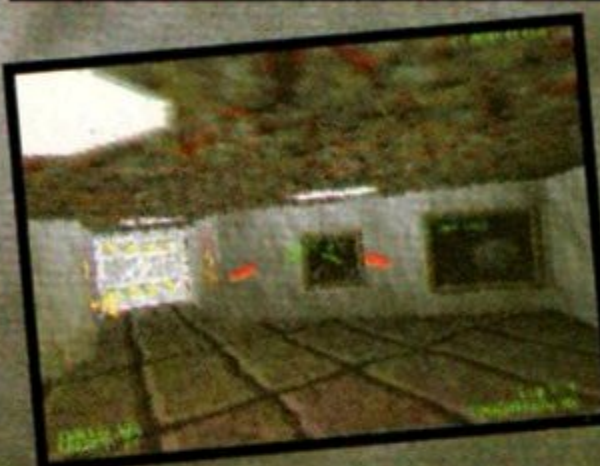
PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - FEBRUARY

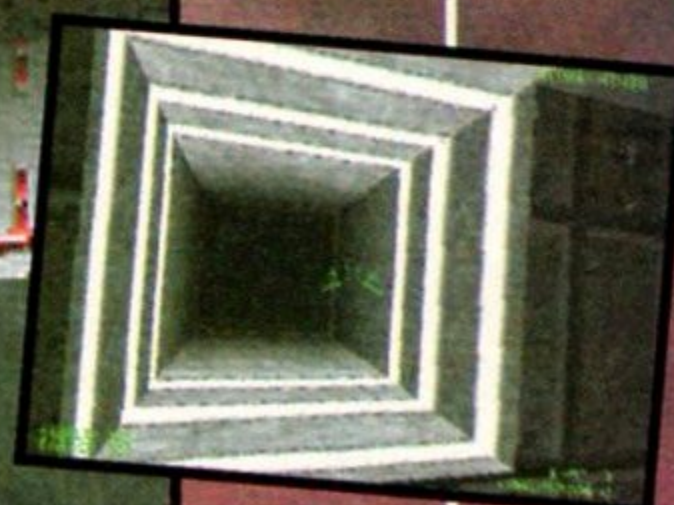
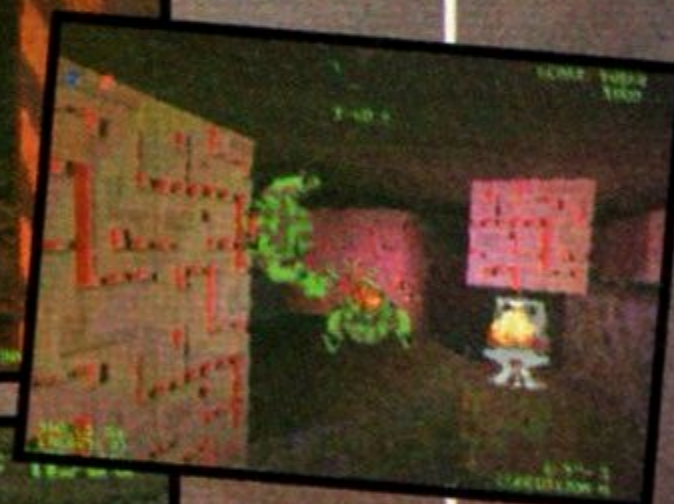
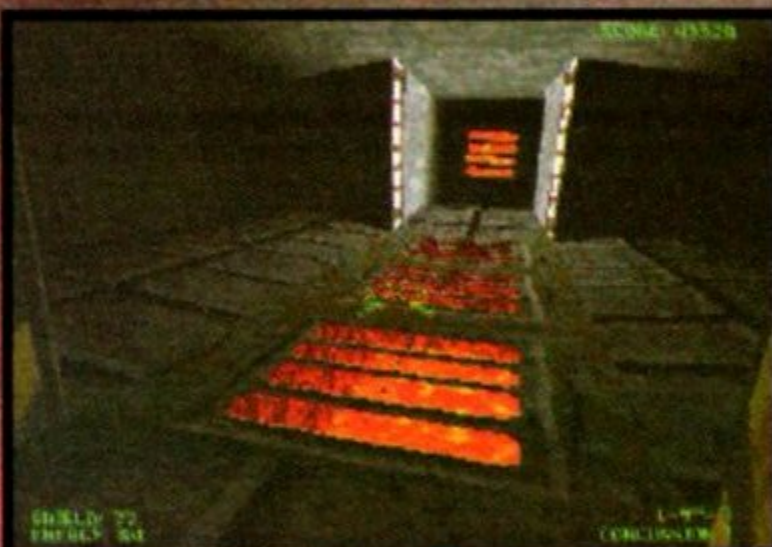


K. LEE
A DIZZING SUCCESS
ON THE PS!

up mode, and new music (including original music from Skinny Puppy and Type O Negative).

Those of you who have played *Jumping Flash* know that "queasy" feeling you get in your gut while taking a huge leap from a platform, the ground rushing toward you. If you suffer from vertigo, stay away from *Descent* because this game destroys JF in the nausea factor. You see, in *Descent*, there is no preset up, down, right, or left. In theory, any surface can be a ceiling or a floor or a wall, depending on how you manipulate your floating ship - a 3-D game in the truest sense. Not only that, but doors and hallways can be on the floor or on the wall or even on the ceiling. Process all these parameters in your brain, and not only can you see how confusing *Descent* can get, but it can also keep you from getting up and walking in a straight line after you've finished playing it for hours and hours... barf! Next month, we will give you the full lowdown on *Descent* in our PlayStation review.

-K. Lee



JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - US GOLD

PUBLISHER - US GOLD

FORMAT - CD

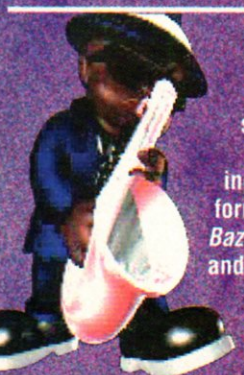
OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - NA

AVAILABLE - JANUARY



THE STALKER
US GOLD MAY HAVE A
HIT ON THEIR HANDS...



The evil Diablo has not only stolen Johnny's prized guitar, but was so steamed he couldn't play it the way Johnny does (JB's like the biggest rock star on the planet), he's kidnapped all the heavy rockers and silenced the entire world! Even Snoop Doggy Doo! So, like any jammin' action dude, JB sets out to destroy the villain and restore tuneage. JB begins with you (the long lost cousin of Blue Suede Goo from *Clay Fighter*, no doubt) fighting your way through the dreaded "Sin Sin Penitentiary." It's a cold, nasty place, filled with wacky enemies and dangerous obstacles. Each level has a tough end boss that will often require a bit of practice to destroy. After you beat a level, you'll rescue a captive of the Devil (Diablo).

Johnny must use his gun/guitar to do a lot more than just shoot. It can be used as a vacuum to suck things up (to be used later) and, very frequently, as a vertical propeller when aimed downwards and fired while airborne. Johnny can also attack with a spinning leap with his guitar or charge up to deliver a huge burst of energy. It's already evident that learning the play mechanics early on is going to be vital if you want to see the big man fall.

JB has over thirty sub-areas, and these are very often difficult to master. A lot of harmless-looking things can hurt you, and almost every area requires a bit of reasoning (and trial and error) to pass. Figuring out how to get up onto the ledge that leads you out of a courtyard or how to avoid an underwater hazard is a big part of the game. What makes JB fun and keeps repetition to a minimum is that different stages require you to do extremely different things. Some areas are relatively basic platform levels, with some sort of obstacle or object being the focus. In water, you glide and shoot downwards as your only means of propulsion. When you find yourself in a ventilation shaft, you have to take the rushing gusts of air (and massive light-source shaded fan blades) into serious consideration. There's even a sequence where you relive Indiana Jones' *Temple of Doom* mine cart ride... in a rocket-wheelchair.

JB shows off all kinds of graphic technique. Johnny, the enemies and all of the other sprites are painted with bright, iridescent coloring. The characters contrast beautifully against the drab, line-scrolling backgrounds. There are countless enemies that scale and rotate with amazing fluidity, usually with several other things going on in the same scene. Things come bouncing in from the background, fly out towards the distance and swing around in the foreground, all with minute loss of detail.

Jazzy music drives the entire experience home. I'm no huge fan of jazz, but JB's soundtrack is certainly worth praise for its innovation. If you're into club-style sax jazz, you'll love the music in this game.

JB is nearly completed and, with some tender tweaking, could easily put US Gold on the 32-bit action/platform map, a place occupied by a choice few. *Bazookatone* is an action platformer with more fresh ideas and originality encased in the course of a single game than some companies can muster in an entire series. 32-bit 2-D is here to stay! Look for a review next month. - The Stalker





Aliens are attacking the earth, and the only one who can save us all is a hyperactive Russian colonel in charge of a pre-cold war battlesuit. Together with his slight loopy team, *Krazy Ivan* travels the world destroying aliens, and fighting for good ol' "mom and apple pudding."

Each stage has a number of bosses, awaiting in cratered arenas. Blow away minor enemies for power-ups between the bosses, and once you've destroyed them all, you can try to take out the alien's main shield... There's a good dose of strategy in quickly changing weapons so they don't overheat, using your radar, and deciding what enhancements to buy at the end of each round, but otherwise, there's not a whole lot to the game. A bit more variety definitely wouldn't have hurt.

After *Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby*, I expected Psygnosis to do a lot with the visuals. Their command over the hardware is, as usual, impressive, but the graphics are of mixed quality. The boss design is fantastic, and all the enemies look and animate very well, but the backgrounds aren't so great... Even with the oh-so-popular mist effect that blocks long distance vision, things tend to flit in and out of existence when you turn around rapidly. There's no pop-up on enemies, though, thanks to an ingenious little trick where the enemies don't even appear until they're fairly close to you. They appear as white outlines, and then sort of phase into existence, as if dropping out of warp or something. There's a great variety of enemies, but almost none in the backgrounds. Sure, rural Russia is made up mostly of craters, mountains, and trees; I'd expect that. But suburban France? Central New

York? How about Tokyo, specifically in the "heart of the financial district"? Sure, maybe I haven't been to the heart of Tokyo's financial district, but I'm willing to bet that it's made up of a bit more than craters, mountains, and trees.

The music has its moments, but it's really nothing you'd want to hear outside of the context of the game. The intermissions are actually pretty cool, with lots of groans but an occasional actual laugh. The actors (extras from *Zhadnost*, no doubt) deliver their best mock

Russian accents, and everyone involved earned the 6-pack of beer they were no doubt paid for their performances. The video's all spiffed up with some very impressive effects, and run through crystal clear, luscious PlayStation FMV.

Krazy Ivan's a lot of fun, but the repetition sort of kills it. While all of the bosses are very cool, there are really only a handful of strategies to pick from when you fight them, and aside from that, there's not much to it. Fighting the same last boss shield

thing in every level gets really tiresome, and the scenery never really changes. Still, *Krazy Ivan* is something you must at least check out, if only to see some amazing textures and amusing video. -Takuhi

KRAZY IVAN



R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS

PUBLISHER - SONY INTER.

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

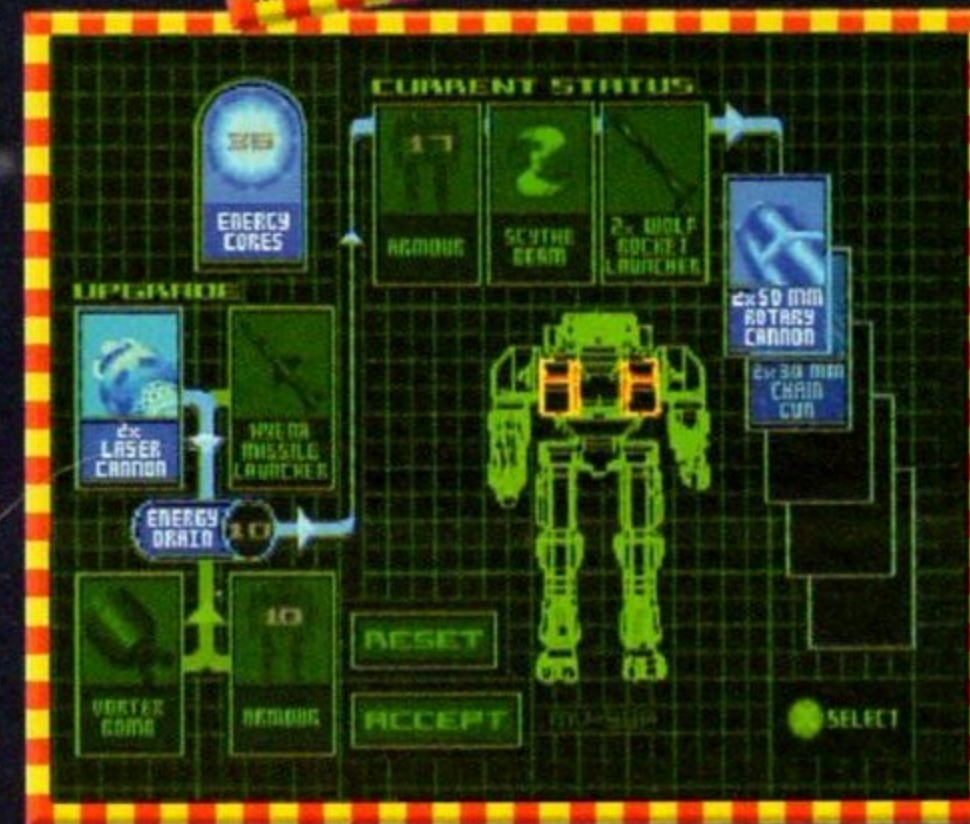
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

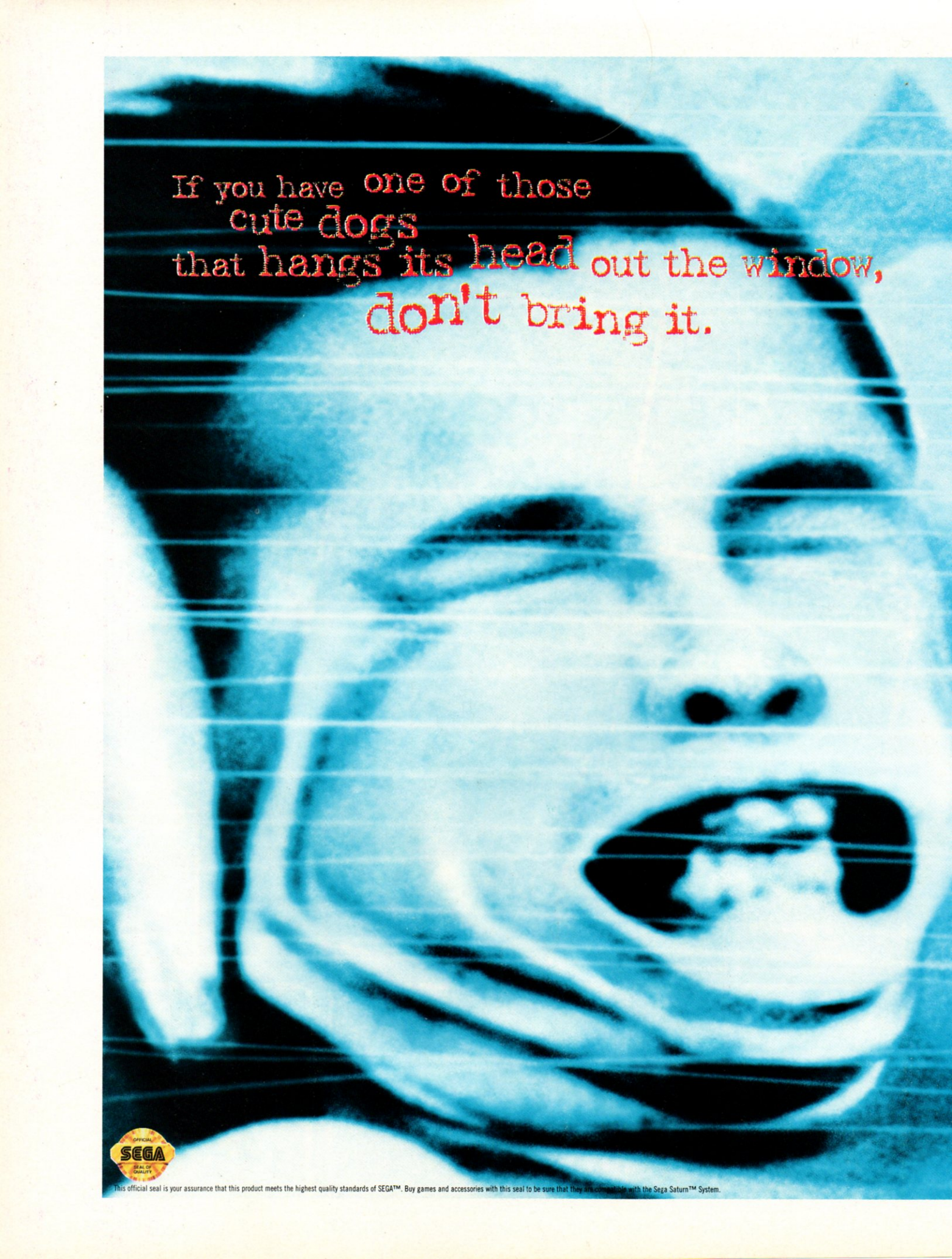
AVAILABLE - NOW



TAKUHI
BETTER ACTING
THAN GOLDENEYE!



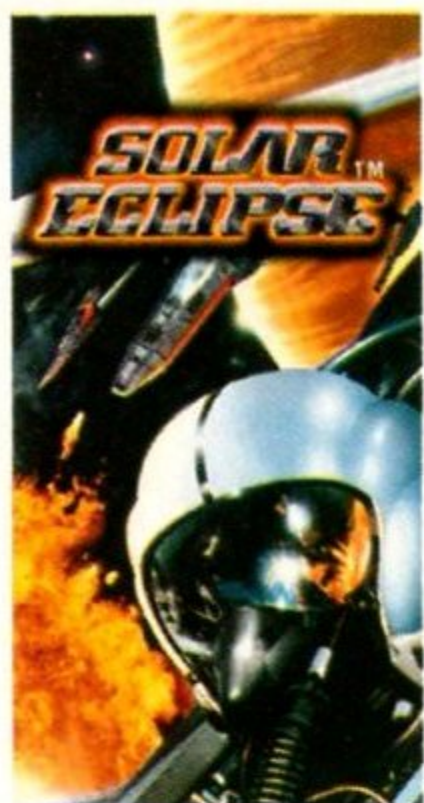




If you have one of those
cute dogs
that hangs its head out the window,
don't bring it.



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Saddle up. 'Cause at dawn you ride
the **death pony**. And it's gonna be
pure neck-snapping, retina-tearing
speed! You see, **Solar Eclipse™**
boasts third generation 3D technology

for the highest frame rate ever. That means
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than some cosmic **speed trip**. Your mission's
to battle a computer gone HAL—with all the
high-tech weaponry your top gun **wet dream**
can handle. And where are you dancin'
this metallic lambada? On the new
Sega Saturn™, of course. Oh yeah, you'll be
smokin' mister. But don't bother cracking a
window. It's 32-bits of **solar**
windburn out there.



Pick from a shiny collection of do-it-yourself death tools. E-Z
High Explosive Plasma Guns, convenient Thermal Tracking
Missiles, handy Pulse Laser Cannons. (Tool belt not included.)



Choose cockpit or chase plane view while screaming thru 3D
texture-mapped worlds. Jagged asteroid fields, fiery planet
surfaces, lava filled caverns, and other sunny destinations.



Working around the clock, scientists in our speed lab achieved
hyper-realistic Full Motion Graphics. Our secret? Ass-kicking
proprietary engine parallel processing with Ed's '72 Pinto.



Meet Claudia Christian as the tough Major Kelt—She's nursing an intergalactic grudge against
you the size of Uranus. 40 minutes of Full Motion Video let her hone her ball-busting ways.



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SATURN

SECTOR

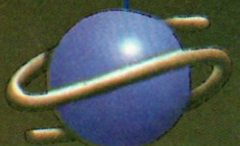


Scavenger is host to some of gaming's most talented design teams, and their latest offering, Lemon's *AMOK*, is one of the best third party Saturn games thus far. Combining fluidly animated polygons and bit mapped sprites in breathtaking real time environments, *AMOK* will take you places you

YOU WANT SOME?



P
PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - LEMON

PUBLISHER - SCAVENGER

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - FEBRUARY



E. STORM
THIS IS HIGH POWERED 3D GAMING!



and your Saturn have never been. *AMOK* revolves around increasingly complex mission ops set in grim, dimly-lit futuristic environments - post-war 2047. You pilot a futuristic land crawler on land and an underwater sub-craft by sea through each mission as you search and destroy, secure items, aid allied forces, search for secret hidden areas, and complete each scenario of the complex missions.

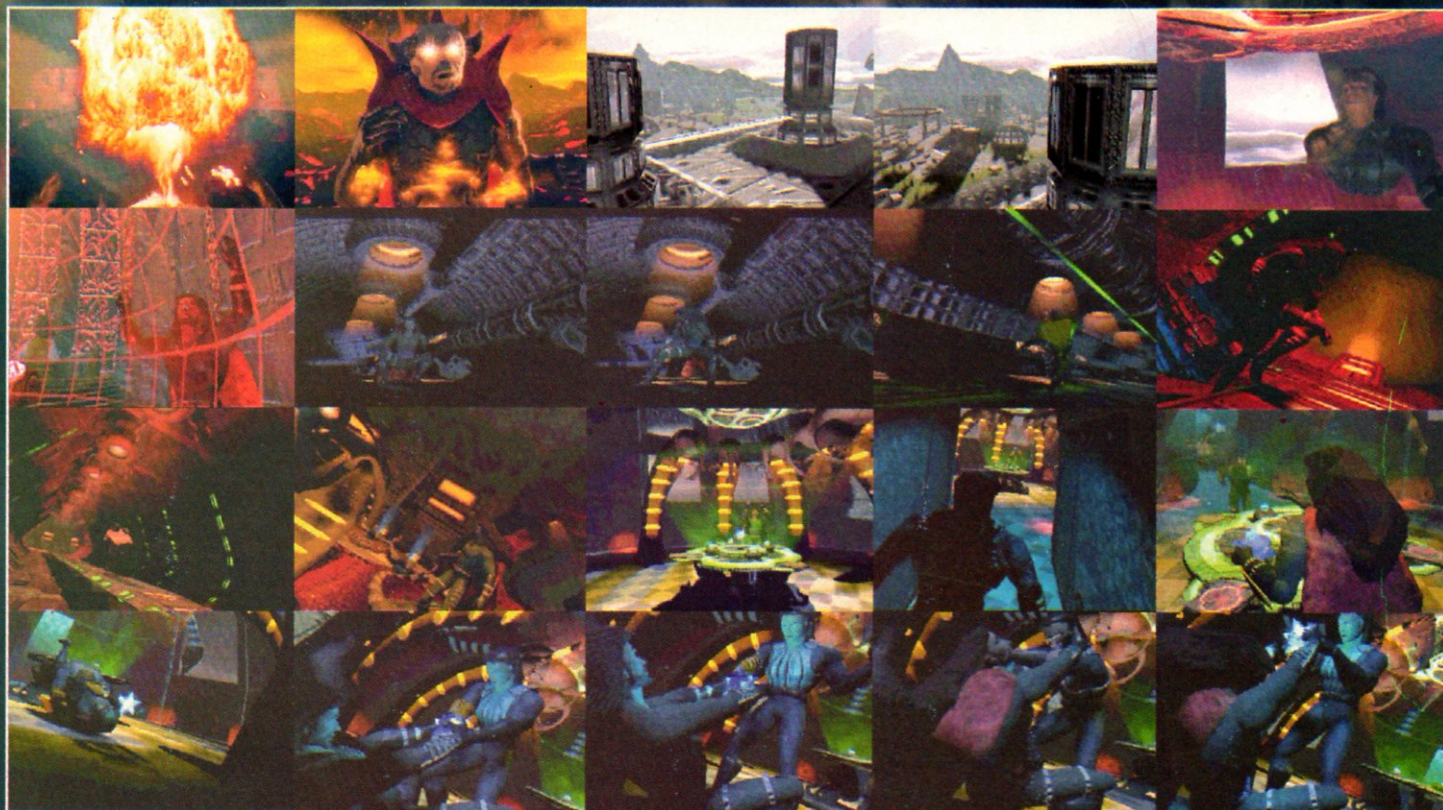
The 3-D environments in *AMOK* are fast and seamless, and while there is some pixelization on the terrain itself, the enemies, even when scaled all the way in, remain very detailed, something usually not afforded the 3-D action



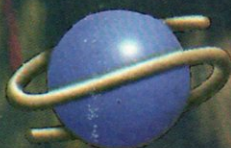
genre. I'd have to say that Lemon's is the best 3-D engine I've yet seen on the young Saturn. The gameplay in *AMOK* is both complex and extremely challenging, requiring much strategy, patience, and shooting prowess. You won't beat this game in one sitting; *AMOK* is the real thing. The missions - which by the way aren't timed, allowing you the freedom to explore - require memorization of enemy soldiers, and other hazards that lie in your path. The best on screen compass I've ever had the pleasure of following is in tow as well, to help you find your way. The control in *AMOK* is, simply put, perfect. Never have I controlled a polygon character that reacted so well to its environment. These hyper animated lil' beasts look utterly fantastic when they're moving. The land crawler can climb small mounds, and romps around like a pissed off little dude, and the sea craft can float higher than the standard plain to reach power-ups, missiles and what not. And finally, bringing all this 3-D joy together, is a perfectly matched soundtrack. The music in *AMOK* really puts you in the mood of the game, adding an air of despair and paranoia. In the effects department, even though the Saturn cannot do light source shading you'd swear it's in here; the explosions are transparent, and the scaling is, as I mentioned, excellent. The art and overall presentation of *AMOK* are also of the high-

est quality. Quite simply, 3-D gaming doesn't get much better than this. *AMOK* is high action with wild shooting and bombing, but it's not just mindless mayhem. I can pretty much guarantee you, if it says Scavenger on the box, there's power inside. -E. Storm





R REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - NEVERSOFT

PUBLISHER - PLAYMATES

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW



E. STORM
IT DOESN'T GET MUCH
BETTER THAN THIS!



As the city of Luminicity mourns the death of its king, the heir to the throne must be on guard from the sinister Baron Dark. For the king's cousin has brought rumors that the Baron is plotting to steal the Light Star Crystal, the mystical source of Luminicity's power. In his time of sorrow, the young prince does not take notice of the baron's shadowy figure gaining entrance to the Light Star Chamber... As the crystal is torn from its home, sirens are triggered throughout Luminicity summoning the prince to save the kingdom from destruction.



Prince Justice lunges at the baron. The struggle splits the crystal, unleashing its enormous powers. The power of the crystal has transformed Baron Dark into a living skeleton. The heroic Prince Justice has now become Prince Light Star, the only mortal with enough power to battle Baron dark and destroy his *Skeleton Warriors*.





Picking up where we left off in our last SW update, as you'll recall all that was supposedly left to complete this ultimate Saturn adventure was some fine tuning... and tune they have. The finished product is as spectacular a Saturn adventure you may ever take and, is accompanied by hands down the best game soundtrack in US gaming history. Tommy Tallarico dug deep and exhumed a soundtrack that goes beyond bone chilling, straight to down right unbelievable. Major motion pictures aren't scored this well. *Skeleton Warriors* is high drama.

Accompanying this Conan-esque music is a game full of rendered glory. Prince Justice, the

Skeleton Warriors, the backgrounds... They are all absolutely breathtaking. If there is one reason to hold your Saturn dear, while we wait for more power from Japan, this is it.

As previously stated, SW is comprised of three play schemes: action/swordplay, platforming, and 3-D shooting. The latter half of the adventure sticks mainly to solid adventure while the back half is laced with zoomed-out high intensity platforming. You'll dangle over cavernous regions while battling both airborne and oncoming enemies, and be required to pull off some

pretty accurate leaps of faith. This aspect of SW is welcome indeed and quite a surprise, being that the game is made up of a completely rendered cast of characters. Between the tri-stage areas lie impressive 3-D





shooting sequences over a vast playfield.

When it comes to special effects, well... this game *is* a special effect. In literally each and every level, you will see eye-popping visuals, such as scaling in and out of the environment, transparencies galore, snow, beautiful explosions, mega line scrolling, ani-

Put your platforming skills to the test in "The Arcuba Temple."

mated backgrounds, translucent enemies, huge scaling boulders, and, of course, truly demonic bosses worthy of the game's dark theme.

I do, however, believe it or not, have one small complaint. Hey, it's my job. When the prince negotiates downhill terrain, if you simply let him walk down, he'll simply slide stand-



ing upright. This really only happens once during the mountain top scene. I just thought a slide maneuver might be in order. As a matter of fact, one of the princess idols is a slide. Personally, I just leapt off the peaks anyway, in the interest of realism. There are certain limitations that go along with rendered characters, especially this early in the 32-bit game.



Shriek's a nasty old bag o' bones and she's got an evil bird in tow. Survive her swinging cicle and say hello to Luminicity, a place of hellish splendor and the toughest obstacles yet.



Prince Light Star discovers why they call this place "Siminia."

Speaking of early, can you imagine what Neversoft's second Saturn game will look like? Scary. This is their first time out on the Saturn and I'm aching for more. Playmates has definitely struck programming gold. As you can see in my hyper-dinky intro shots, there is a detailed and fantastically narrated and animated opening cinema that opens *Skeleton Warriors*. It's full screen and rivals PlayStation FMV. Absolutely no low budget actors involved, it's all SGI, and it's as dark as the game itself and the evil that lies within it. If you own a Saturn you simply must have Playmates' *Skeleton Warriors*. It's that simple. -E. Storm



In "Luminicity" scaling platforms test your skills while the enemies complex attack patterns test your patience. Everyone's got a gun here.



Ride the royal Harley between acts and blow off some steam.



闘神伝

TOSHINDEN S



R
REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SEGA/TAKARA

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW



NICK ROX
I DON'T KNOW IF THIS
WAS SUCH A GOOD
IDEA.



One of the main things the original *Toshinden* had going for it was its disarmingly lovely visuals, and these have become somewhat mangled on the Saturn. It's not as if this is the best the system could do. A much better version should be possible.

At GameFan we review games in comparison to others on the system, but I feel I have to compare this incarnation of *Toshinden* to its predecessor. First off, the beautiful Gouraud-shaded characters are gone, replaced with rough-edged doom-dudes. Ellis's translucent lacy undergarments are now clusters of pixels and the explosions caused by special moves are no longer transparent. The polygonal backgrounds have even been replaced with VF2-esque parallax, and Gaia's mind-blowing donut stage has been reduced to the barrel effect in *Castlevania IV*. On the plus side, the game never slows down, each fighter sports many new samples, the gameplay seems a tad tighter, and there's a cool new CG intro... to say nothing of all the new modes and features of the Saturn version.

The only redeeming features in this game are the ultra-slick Retsuden Mode and the somewhat cool new character, the "Scarlet-Eyed Degenerate Angel" Cupido. The Retsuden mode is a story mode in which you only fight four characters, plus the three bosses, but before and after each match you hold a lengthy conversation with your opponent. Often times these cinematics give you no desire to defeat your opponent - if you beat poor Ellis she'll never meet her father; Kayin'll never get to avenge

his father's death and Eiji will never meet his older brother. That just ain't right! Now I have to live with the fact that I ruined all these lives. Ah well, the prices I pay for gaming...

The new character is, in all truth, fairly lame. Cupido was obviously crafted with the Saturn in mind... she's mostly flat-shaded. Her voice is extra-pathetic and her moves - the Gale Shooter and Cannon Slash - are generic Ryu/Ken maneuvers. The Tsukasa Kotobuki character design itself is very cool, but in the *Toshinden* storyline she's supposed to be one of the four grand evil dudes, a group comprised of Gaia (the boss), Uranus (yet to appear), Chaos (a character in 2), and Cupido... and she just doesn't fit. The other members of the group brandish scary equipment like sickles, eight foot long blades and outlandish armor... Cupido wears a shawl and carries a spear. Lame. But hey! Her stage is amazing,

with four layers of cool parallax and a transparent arena... and she has a neat win quote: "Towa ni nemure," or "Sleep for eternity." (Sorry, after certain people claimed I couldn't read Japanese after my *Lunar: Eternal Blue* review, I have to stress the fact I do every chance I get!)

If you've never played or seen the PlayStation *Toshinden* or you're a *Toshinden* freak that must know each character's storyline you may think *Toshinden S* is pretty cool, but there's a much better alternative: VF2. In the meantime lets pray they don't attempt *Toshinden 2*.
-Nick Rox

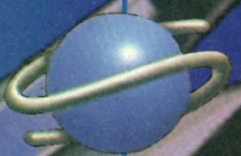




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R REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - CAPCOM

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - 1ST QTR.



NICK ROX
CLOSE ENOUGH?

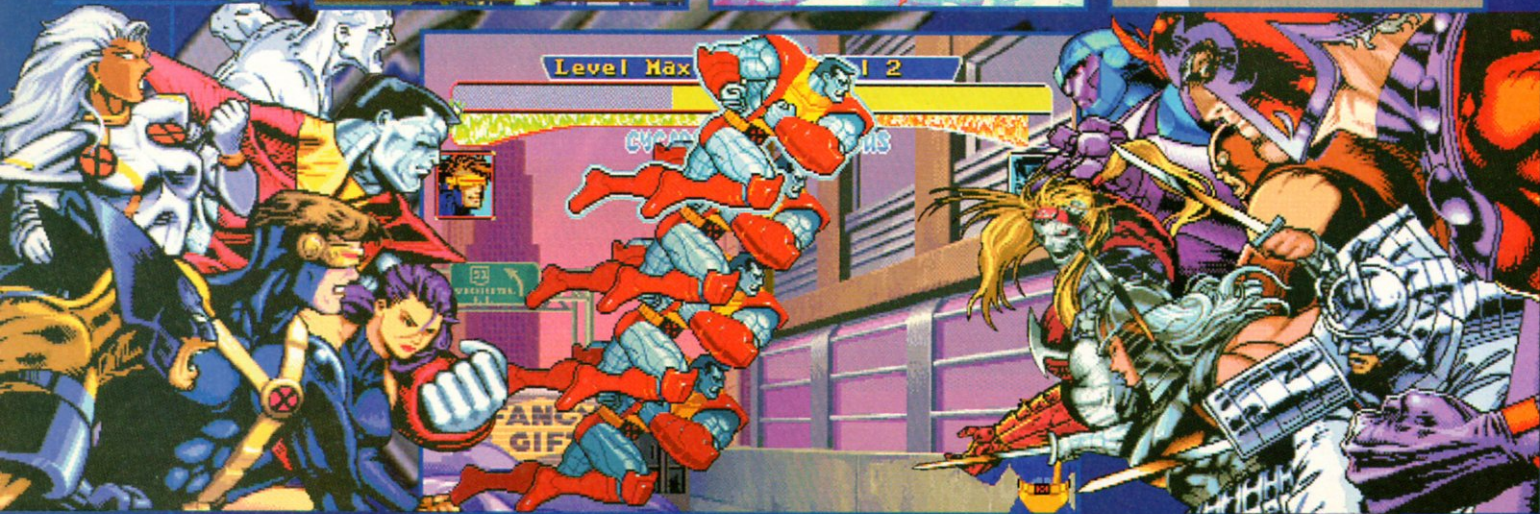
X-MEN



Capcom is getting shockingly fast at these home conversions. *Alpha* in three months, and *X-Men* in less than half a year. This is all well and good, but they always time the home releases with a new arcade upgrade. Yes, we're getting near-perfect translations, but it's just not as exciting when the shiny new sequel is out at arcades.

Still, *X-Men* is a must-buy for fans of the arcade game. It plays exactly and looks relatively like the coin-op: All the insane, twenty-screen-high backgrounds are present, but the animation has suffered slightly because of RAM limitations. The cut-off point hovers somewhere around 2/3 of the original frames, but in extreme cases some characters have been

reduced to 50% frameage. There's probably no way that even the best Saturn programmers could have created a perfect arcade port, as 32 megs of RAM just ain't enough to store all the frames of the 300-meg arcade original. I must stress, however, that the gameplay is 100% intact, and the game is still breathtaking; the backgrounds alone display non-stop feats of graphic ingenuity, from the three-level Mojo World to the astounding Danger Room which shimmers in and out between three holodeck-style background themes, each complete with their own scenery. For instance, the underwater theme has manta rays and schools of fish swimming around your feet. I'll be back with a review of this excellent Saturn fighter next issue. -Nick Rox





U UPDATE

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SCREAMING PINK

PUBLISHER - PLAYMATES

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JANUARY



E. STORM
HE'S BACK! AND THIS
TIME HE BROUGHT
ELVIS.



Along with the shimmering *Skeleton Warriors* ROM, we so graciously received from our friends at Playmates, came our second update on Saturn Jim; *Jim 2* that is, swimmin' pools-movie stars. Lemme tell ya, *EWJ 2* is lookin' mighty fantastic. They've added quite a bit since last time as *Jim* is currently at 80% completion (as of Dec. 16) and should be ready for a January release. Take note, *Jim* fans... New Peter Puppy, BIG castle in Anything But Tangerines complete with mind bending parallax, gobs of scrolling contracts in ISO 9000, and so many colors that if you "play with it long enough, you'll go blind." To top off all this wormy joy, the soundtrack is sparkling in vivid CD sound and the voices are terrific. Saturn Jim, Jim Saturn, there you have it. I'll see ya next month with a big ol' *EWJ 2* Saturn review. 'Til then, remember, it's the size of your worm that counts! -E. Storm

anarchy = canyon shredding will fest.



It's 26 levels of car-to-car combat. Customize buffed monster-stompers with trick engines and air-grabbing jump jets.



Hate cheesy acting? Watch two trash-talkin' jerks rip on the gratuitous video.

With our unique, head-to-head 2 player game, grind a pal's ego into the asphalt. It's cruel. But there ain't no 2nd place.



Get a load of **Off-world
Interceptor Extreme™**,
the chaotic death-capade featuring wicked
4x4s and a blood-thirsty arsenal.
Red-line across the galaxy's most intense,
32-bit texture-mapped terrain,
switching on the fly between **cockpit**
and chase view. Careful, though. Grabbing
massive air could
crush a kidney. Or two.



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CYBERIA



Our doom will soon be upon us, unless you can stop it! *Cyberia* was one of the nicer FMV adventures to hit the PC back in 1993. Now, as a two-year-old game with a new eye-candy shell, it's set for its debut on the Saturn.

Cyberia is set in May of 2027. You, Zak, are a prisoner being held on charges of grand theft (you stole one-half-trillion dollars). During your horrifying stay at the Pentagon's prison, you've been brutalized and left to ponder your own fate. One day, for no apparent reason, you were suddenly taken out of your cell and down to the local Free World Alliance commander. He was all smiles as he announced that he had a job for you. A mission... undercover.

From there on, the story unfolds. You are to enter a mysterious floating complex located in the middle of nowhere. Once inside, you will find your way to the awesome *Cyberia* weapon. When you asked what you were to do with it, you were simply told to stay with it. You were also told that a "clean up" crew is only 24 hours behind you, so watch out.

Those who enjoyed the original VGA version will find this one much more appealing than it was in 256 colors. The rendered movement is much, much cleaner, and the visual effects have been touched up to 32-bit level. In most places, everything moves, animates, and basically "clicks" together to form a smooth, continuous gel. Challenging puzzle and arcade elements make up the game.

The puzzle elements are excessive. One puzzle that comes immediately to mind is the disarming sequence of a time-bomb counting down to detonation. This sequence, like the others, is ruled simply by the law of averages: fail, fail, fail, pass... Eventually, you have to get it right!

More enjoyable are the arcade sequences, where you find yourself in the middle of a shoot-out, defending the complex from attack, or in the cockpit of an attack aircraft, actively seeking the enemy. Your targets in the aerial attack scenes are enemy ships and aircraft. Some areas can simply be blasted through with a nominal amount of shooting prowess, but some other areas require a bit of intuition and strategy.

The vast majority of the game is spent exploring in one way or another. When you come to a proverbial "fork in the road," it's best to examine all options carefully. The "fork" can be anything from a choice in paths to whether or not to kiss Gia, your friendly female contact. Other areas will involve timed actions, such as deciding when to pull your firearm and blow away an enemy century. In the end, the choices you make will have a big impact on the story and how the game progresses.

After playing through two versions of *Cyberia*, I'd say the Saturn incarnation is easily superior to the PC version. You get more of everything, and the ease of use that comes inher-





R REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - INTERPLAY

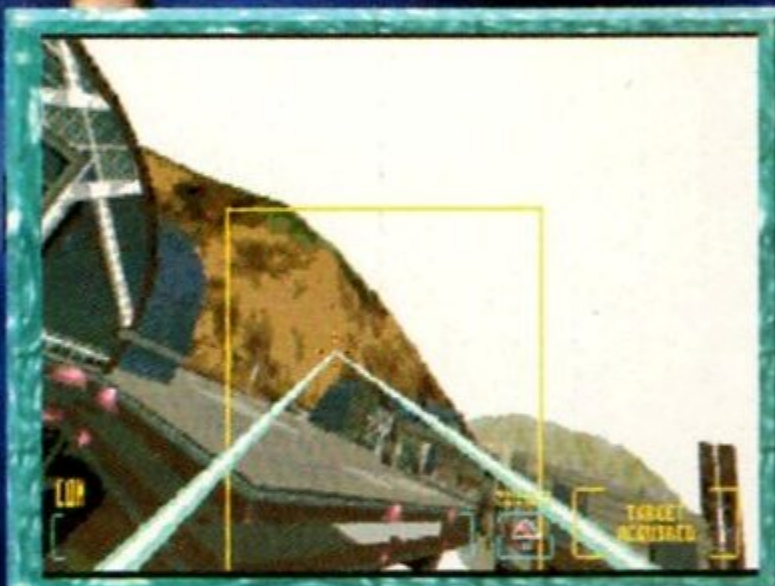
PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY

FORMAT - CD

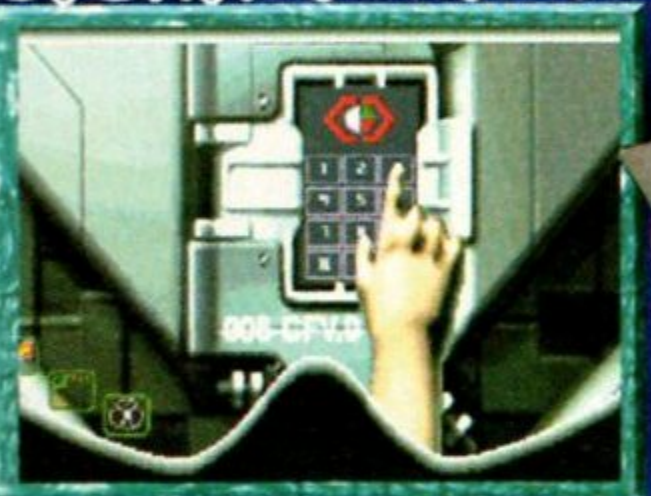
OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

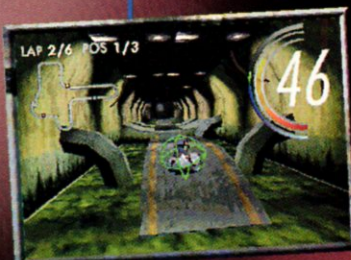
AVAILABLE - JANUARY



THE STALKER



ent with a game console. Still, the game is over just as soon as you figure out the tricks of the trade, so it really lacks replay value. If you liked the original version and want to see more of it, you should consider this one. Those with a short attention span and/or an uneasy feeling about FMV-based games, however, may want to pass. This is one for the PC crowd. -The Stalker



UPDATE



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - ZYRINX

PUBLISHER - SCAVENGER

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - FEBRUARY



E. STORM
UNBELIEVABLE!

Just when you figure Sony has the 3-D battle for supremacy well in hand, here comes an unbelievable game, not out of AM2 or some multi-million dollar mega effects house, but from the yet undiscovered Scavenger. If I were Sega or Sony I would be camped at their doorstep, but hey, what do I know? Well, I know that the Saturn cannot do light source shading, 3-D transparencies, and has major re-draw problems inherent in the hardware.

Scorchers

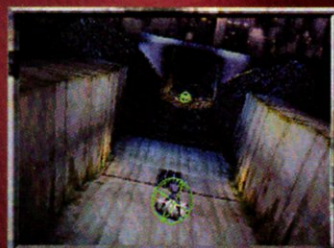
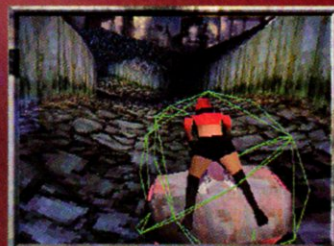


However, *Scorchers* has no pop-up, what looks like light source shading, and visuals to die for.

Scorchers is, simply put, beyond anything we've seen in the genre. Previously I'd only expect this power from a coin-op.

As we go to press, Scavenger's Zyrinx team are assembling the final product now that the amazing engine and rendering is complete. If all goes well, we'll have a review for you next month. Prepare for the ultimate in 3-D combat racing.

-E. Storm





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P PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - ARGONAUT

PUBLISHER - DATA EAST

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - FEBRUARY



SLASHER QUAN
ENOUGH WITH THE PC
PORTS, ALREADY.

Upgraded from the PC version with faster frame rate and better sound, Argonaut's *Creature Shock* is on the way to Saturn, courtesy of Data East. This 3-D point, click, fly, and blast FMV corridor game was received fairly well in its last incarnation, but many critics and players wondered why the flying sequences were so... well... lame. The good news is Argonaut (developer of *StarFox*) is spending all the time necessary to COMPLETELY redo the flying sequences, so even if you've played CS before, you should view it with a fresh eye.

Creature Shock starts off with a killer FMV story segment, of which there are many scattered throughout as the story unfolds. It's the 22nd century and, due to the overpopulation of Earth, probes have been launched to determine the most hospitable new home for the masses. One ran into a nasty organism... now you're a solo pilot on a recon mission to find out what happened. After you get swallowed up, you step out of your ship to explore on foot.



From there it's classic *Sewer Shark*-type gameplay, but on foot. You point and click on which of up to three corridors/directions to take, then the game automatically plays the FMV. Your movement cursor turns into a gun site when danger threatens, which can take the form of bats, slugs, alien soldiers, spiders, and multi-tentacled bosses. You have regular guns, a flare bomb, a smart bomb, and a shield move, so there's actually a bit more strategy than just how fast you can aim and press the button. Most of the larger enemies have very specific weak points, so you have to be creative to bring them down.

The full-screen, light-sourced visuals are extraordinary in this game, but keep in mind that's due to the pre-rendered FMV, not generating graphics on the fly. We'll be back with a more in-depth review, with shots of the forthcoming flying sequences, when Argonaut finishes this one off.

-Slasher Quan



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Williams

JAGUAR'S DOMAIN

R REVIEW

JAGUAR

DEVELOPER - ATD

PUBLISHER - ATARI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - JANUARY



TAKUHI
AVOID THE GROUND.

Cybermorph was without a doubt the best game available at the time of the Jaguar's launch. It had action, it had exploration, and it had a sultry little blue head, all adding up to make an excellent 3-D shooter. Now *Battlemorph* looks like it's ready to follow in its predecessor's footsteps, and do the same for the Jaguar CD.

Nothing's changed too drastically from *Cybermorph*. You still pick a planet, fly around looking for stuff, and basically just explore lots of weird alien worlds. As you'd expect from a CD-powered sequel, just about every aspect of the game has been improved, though some only subtly. Graphically, your ship has better animation, the worlds for the most part have remained gouraud-shaded, and the structures have been texture mapped. The biggest change, however, is in the audio department. Yes, thanks to the power of CD, weird vibrations emit constantly from the speakers of your TV, enter your eardrum, and are translated by your brain into something the Atari calls

"music." What an exciting new concept! This "music" is generally quite pleasant, in a techno-ambient sort of way. And of course, the blue head is back, saying simple 2-syllable words like "mapping" in the usual ultra-erotic manner.

BATTLE MORPH

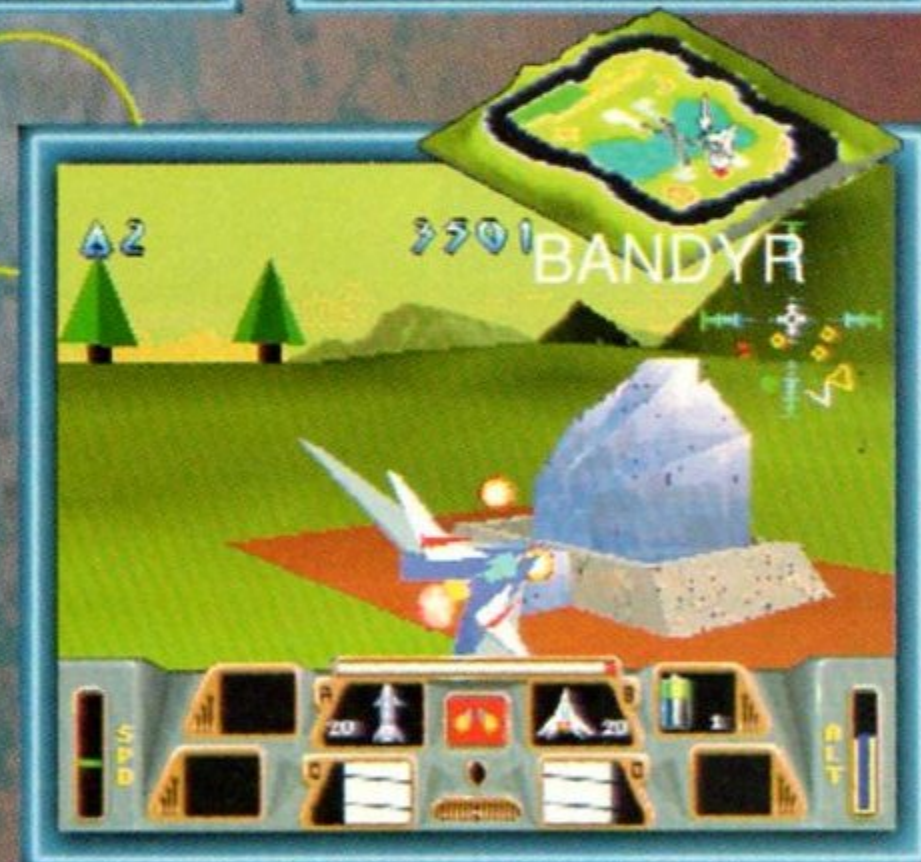
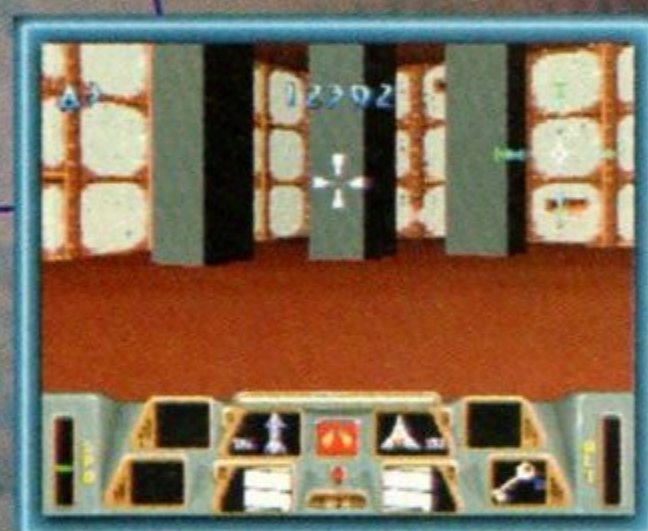
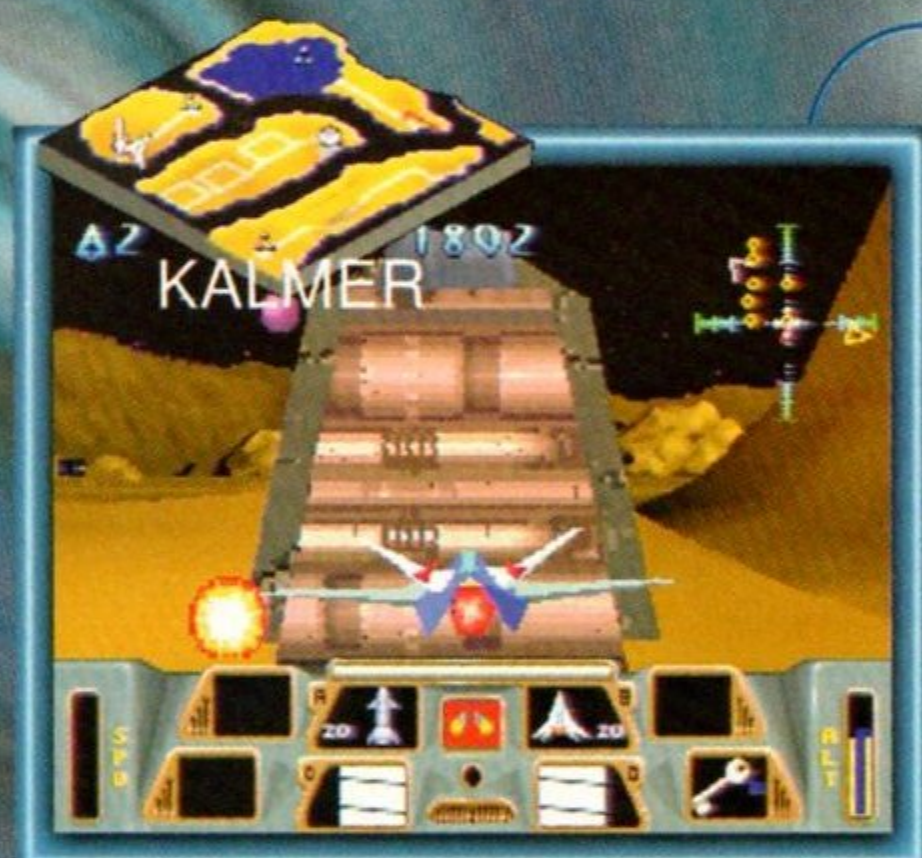
Lots of exciting changes in the play mechanics department as well. Levels are bigger, and have more varied objectives. There's lots of little *Descent*-like twists, such as switches on walls you can shoot to open doors, and very cool warp tunnels that take you to hidden locations.

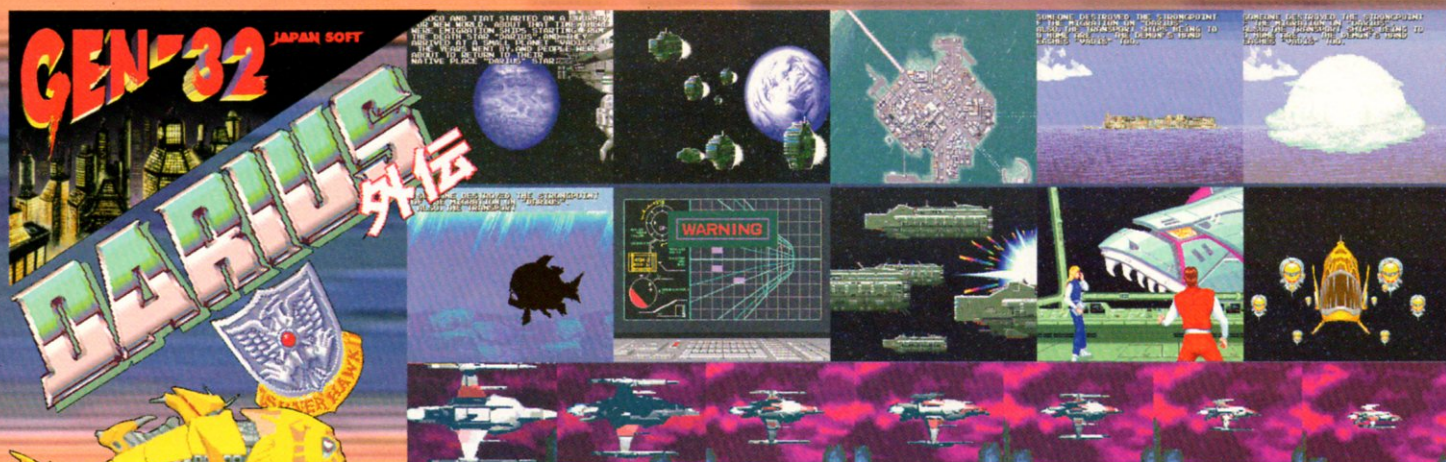
You can now go underwater, complete with waving seaweed and a rippling effect that even changes the music.

Battlemorph certainly won't blow anyone away with its 3-D capabilities, but it has everything you liked about *Cybermorph*, to a much greater extent. There are more worlds, more ways to explore, more weapons, and more mission types. This one will definitely keep you busy for as long as it takes for another good Jag CD title to hit.

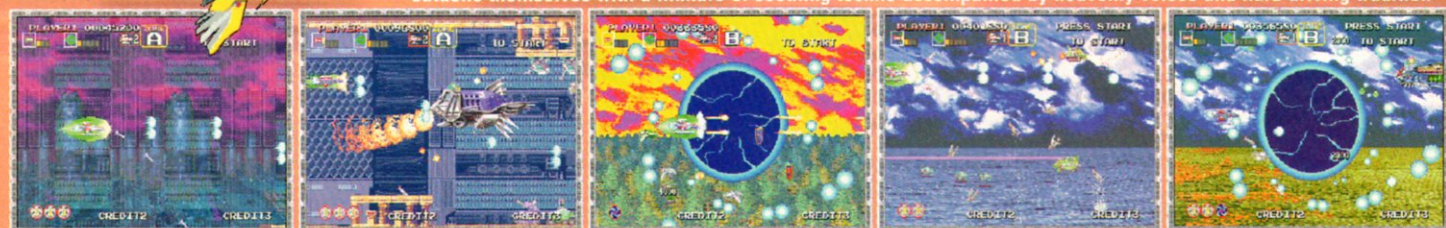
-Takuhi







Taito has achieved what can only be described as pure unbridled shooting power. This never-seen-in-the-US arcade masterpiece has found a fitting home on the Saturn... in Japan. Those familiar with the *Darius* legacy should be brimming with anticipation as this is everything that you love about *Darius* times 10. One of the many wonderful aspects of any *Darius* is of course its infamous Zuntata soundtrack, and this time out, they have truly outdone themselves with a mixture of soothing techno accompanied by heavenly voices and hard driving tradition-



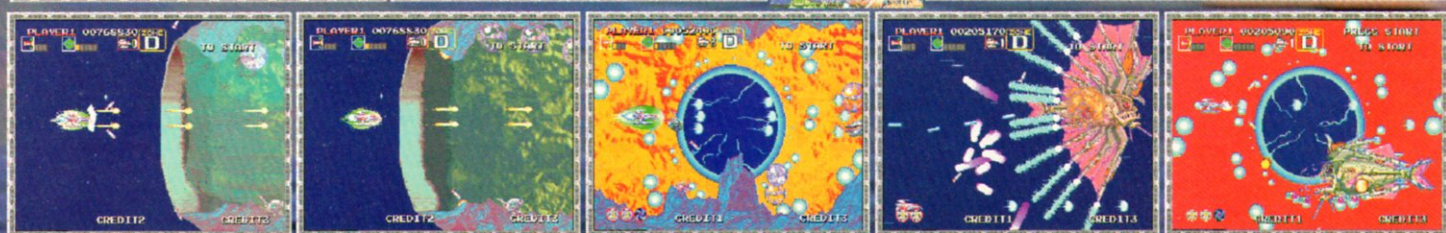
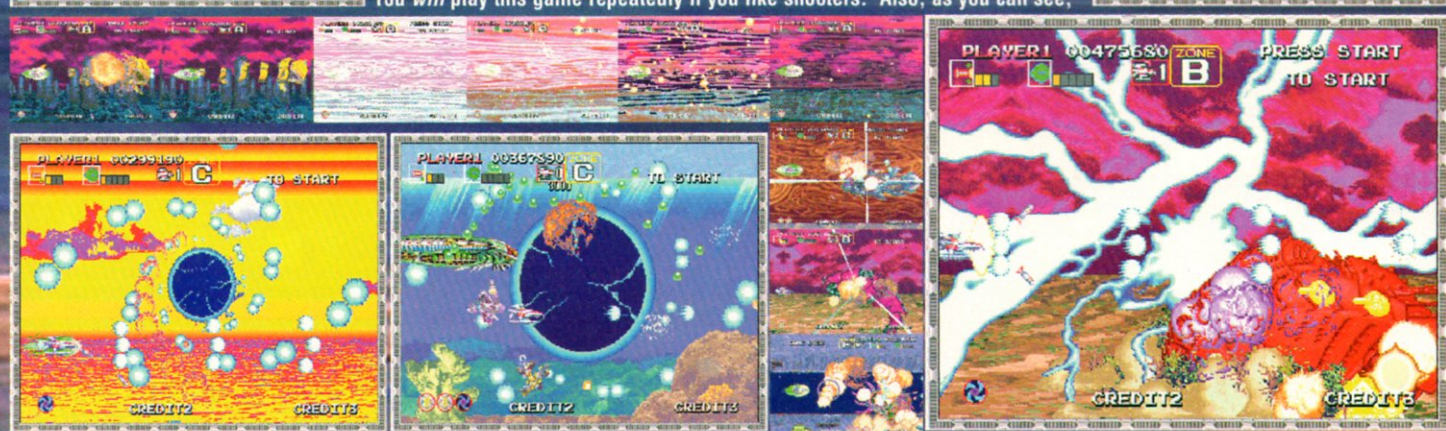
al shooting music. Things only get better from here.

First, and most importantly in my opinion, is the fact that *Darius Gaiden* requires a certain strategic element in each and every adventure. You won't simply shoot, dodge, power up, and beat *Darius*. The object of each level is to gain power and carry it over in an effort to quickly annihilate *Darius'* ungodly bosses. None of them are easy. In fact, many last nearly as long as the levels themselves. Show up shield-less, and even after three huge special blasts



(pictured all over this layout), they just get madder.

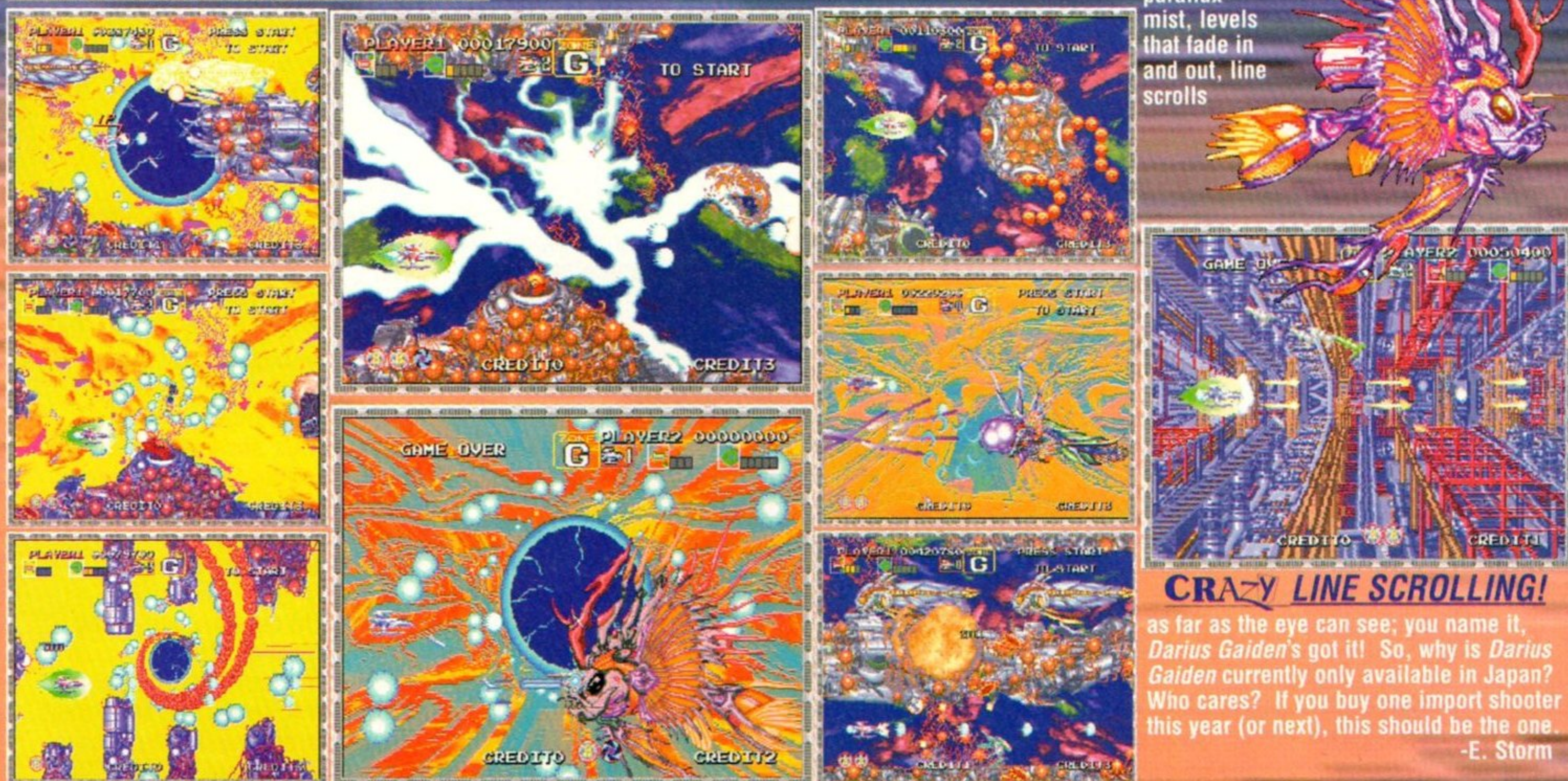
The beauty is that patterns can be mastered in each area. The game is totally do-able for hard core shooters. It just lasts a good long time... like forever. You will play this game repeatedly if you like shooters. Also, as you can see,





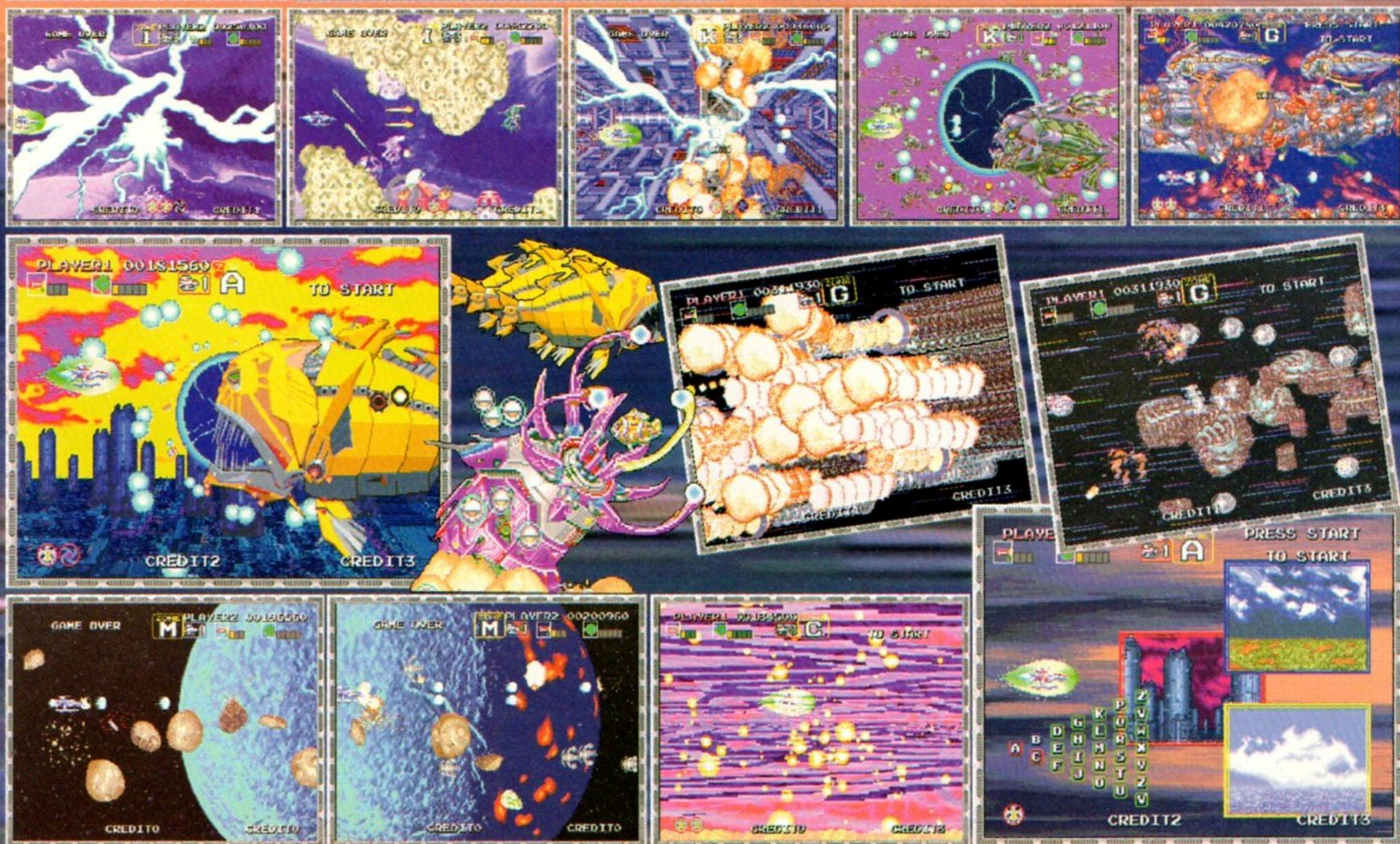
the infamous multiple path scenario is ever present, giving you the opportunity to make your own way through the game, many times over. Finally, *Darius* is full of effects you simply will not believe and I cannot merely describe. Rolling

parallax
mist, levels
that fade in
and out, line
scrolls



CRAZY LINE SCROLLING!

as far as the eye can see; you name it, *Darius Gaiden*'s got it! So, why is *Darius Gaiden* currently only available in Japan? Who cares? If you buy one import shooter this year (or next), this should be the one.
-E. Storm



R REVIEW



DEVELOPER - WARP

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



NICK ROX



I never thought I'd say this, but, yes, a full-motion game has entered my personal Top 10 of gaming. I loved *D* on Saturn and 3DO, but its hyper-grain bothered me. Now *D* can finally be enjoyed the way it was meant to be; with crisp, vibrant, television-quality visuals and all of the little scraps that were left on the cutting room floor of the original intact.

The *D* plotline has been told many a time in the pages of GameFan, but I will recap: Richter Harris, a well-respected and upstanding doctor, has shot and killed several patients at the Los Angeles Community Hospital. Unable to enter the building for fear Richter will slaughter the remaining patients, the police are helpless. Richter's daughter Laura sees all of this on the evening news and races to the scene. The officers allow

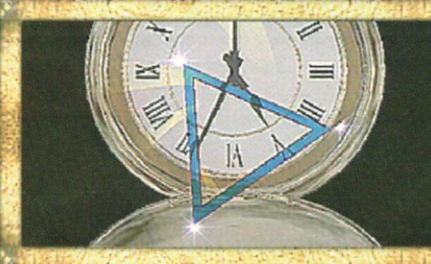
her to enter the hospital, thinking perhaps that Laura might be able to calm her father down...

D is, at most, a little over an hour long. You have very limited options; all you can do is move and use items. "How can it possibly be such a great game then?" you may be musing. The main component here is theme... *D* is 70% theme, 20% brooding, atmospheric music, and 10% gameplay. There are no challenging puzzles to be found here and nothing that will stump you for very long. You may not complete *D* your first try (you are timed) but

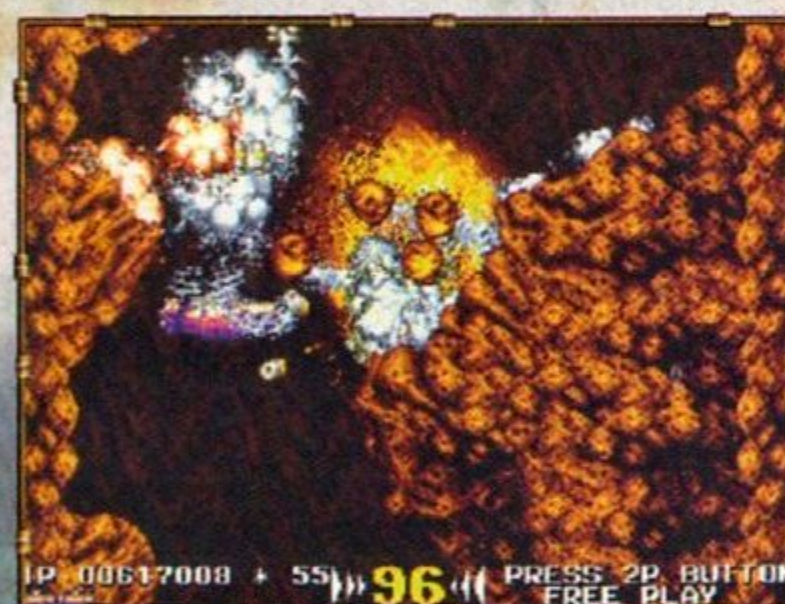
you'll surely beat it the first day.

Part of the game's severe length problem is that once you begin the game, you simply *need* to play it all the way through... You *need* to know what's behind that door, what's in that chest... *D* is totally addicting. And totally frightening. Imagine strolling down your hallway, opening a door, and seeing two corpses impaled on spikes, accompanied by masterfully composed suspenseful tuneage. *D* is full of scary little tidbits like this, such as a hand reaching out from a mirror, a bowl of water becoming blood, and a mosaic eerily smiling and giggling at you. The most frightening parts of all, though, are the ultra-psychedelic flashback sequences, one of which features our heroine nibbling on a human forearm! Yeah! That's what I want in my game!

D can be completed with no knowledge of Japanese, and should therefore be purchased by all import buyers. Even if you've played the 3DO version, you need this one - the visuals are improved 100%. Acclaim, who published *D* in Japan, would be insane not to release this in America. Warp's next project on the PlayStation is the mysterious game *Eo*, which carries the unlikely slogan of "You Get Them Open." *Eo* features Laura in a parallel universe. Hmm... was this because Warp loved her so much, or were they too cheap to model another character? We'll be back with more info on *Eo* as soon as possible. -Nick Rox



IN THE HUNT 海底大戦争



R
REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - IREM

PUBLISHER - IMAGINEER

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



TAKUHI
POWER PLAY ABOUT 2/3
OF THE WAY... IMAGINEER?

One of the many lost gems of the Irem legacy, it's nice to see *In the Hunt* finally making the rounds on all the home systems. If you haven't played *In the Hunt*, you shouldn't assume from the shots that it's going to be another *R-Type* or *Darius*... *In the Hunt* really is a breed apart. The action is slow, but intense. An apparent contradiction, but you'll understand when you play the game - there's so much stuff coming at you, that the action has been intentionally slowed down to give you a second or two to think about it. In addition to that, you have to cope with enemies both above and below the waterline, and it'll take some serious thumb-twisting to handle both zones adequately.

In the Hunt for the PlayStation was featured in our last

issue, and wins hands down when compared to this version. The Saturn version has an unfortunate excess of choppy slow down, erratic animation on your ship, and no arranged soundtrack. In return for these trade-offs, all we get is a nice little CG intro... That's not a fair trade. If a Saturn's all you've got, this certainly isn't a worthless title, but when compared to *Darius Gaiden* and *Layer Section (Galactic Attack)*, its age and poor programming definitely start to show. -Takuhi





R REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SUNSOFT

PUBLISHER - SOJ

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN

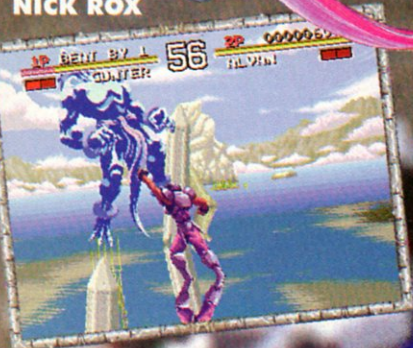
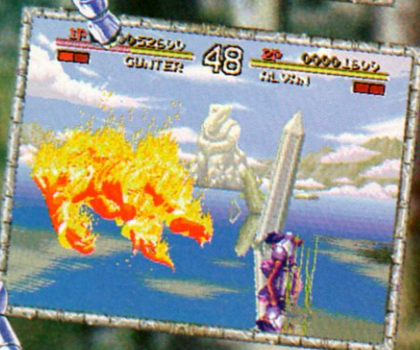


Few, if any, of you will remember Sunsoft's excellent arcade game *Galaxy Fight*, the title that stretched the limits of the Neo-Geo farther than ever seen before... or since. Although the game system wasn't the greatest, it was well worth playing if only to gape at its incredible visuals. These 16-bit effects are quite impressive even on Saturn... five layers of parallax, full-screen scaling, and a line-scrolling floor are commonplace.

Happily, Sunsoft has ported *Galaxy Fight* to the Saturn... with excellent results. What you get is exactly the arcade game, with a new *Toshinden*-style mode that allows you to perform special moves with one button press. The game play system is based around three attack buttons of increasing strength and a taunt button - there are no buttons specifically for punch or kick. Combos require literally no skill to perform in GF - slamming the buttons will get you a devastating six or seven hit combo. In a way this is



NICK ROX



THE FIGHT -UNIVERSAL WARRIORS-



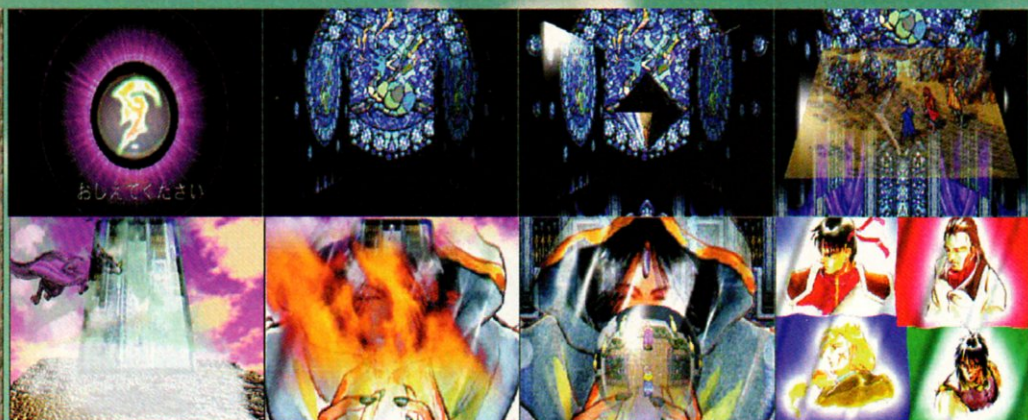


cool, but seasoned fighting enthusiasts will probably prefer a talent-based system. The most interesting aspect of the game system are the stages with no boundaries... corner traps do not exist in *Galaxy Fight*.

The background graphics are gorgeous, replete with dazzling parallax, line-scrolling effects and *Samurai*-esque scaling. The characters are a tad small (probably so that the Neo could handle the BG's), but the art is exceptional. The music may be the best thing in GF next to the visuals. You'll find a hyper-cool mix of rock and traditional Japanese tunes that fit the game perfectly.

If you're searching for a visually mind-blowing 2-D fighting game for the Saturn, or if by some strange chance you actually played the arcade game, *Galaxy Fight* is well worth a purchase. I'll be back with a review of the upcoming PlayStation version soon. -Nick Rox





P REVIEW



DEVELOPER - KONAMI
PUBLISHER - KONAMI
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - NOW - JAPAN



TAKUHI
KONAMI, PLAYSTATION HARDWARE, AND A GREAT RPG CONCEPT. HOW CAN IT FAIL?



Oh, the joy! First there was *Arc the Lad*, which was a great RPG... for all 8 hours it lasted. Then there was *Beyond the Beyond*, a true conventional RPG with a long quest, that was just so incredibly dull and unoriginal I could barely take it for 4 hours. And then there was *Fujimaru* (shiver), but I don't even want to talk about that. But now, thanks to Konami, the PlayStation has its first epic RPG, with plenty of length, plenty of originality, plenty of 32-bitness, and the most enthralling quest I've played in a long time.

As the son of Tao MacDonald, the military commander of the Red Moon Empire, you have a lot of expectations to fulfill. As the game begins, your father is sent off to battle, and you begin your service to the emperor, taking over some of your father's responsibilities. The experience proves to be an eye-opener, as you and your friends discover the empire's leadership to be corrupt, immoral, and oppressive. When your close friend Ted is targeted by the empire because of a 300-year-old grudge, you must stand up to defend him, defying the empire and bringing shame upon your family. At that point, your only friends become the members of the underground revolutionary movement, and after a series of similar conflicts, you find yourself at the head of their army, scheming to overthrow the empire, even if it means going to war with the father you love and respect.

Now *that* is a storyline with teeth. To back up this powerful plot, the game has an army of supporting characters, many of whom have actual personalities, and emotions, and character development. Characters grow, mature, change, and even die (Odessa! Noooo!), and, in a rare twist, you, the player, *actually* care. Ah, the power of strong characters. It's a shame we see it so rarely.

The first part of the game is your standard RPG quest, as you run errands for the emperor, and then the revolutionary army, meeting people and assembling party members. You can only have 6 at once at this point. But a

幻想水滸伝

GENSO SUIKODEN

few hours into the game, you come across the deserted, monster-infested tower was the rebel's army in days of old. If you can reclaim it, you'll have a place where you can assemble an entire army...

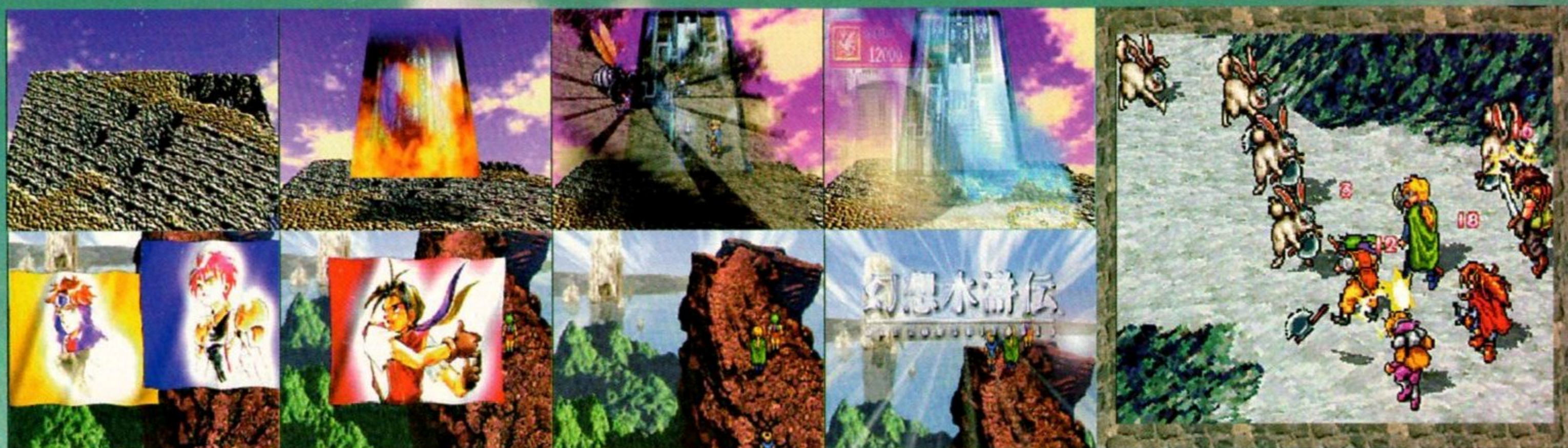
Up to 108 characters. Now your task is to set out in groups and look for society's discontents, in order to persuade them to join your cause. Once your army is assembled, you can go to war... And the battle system changes to allow you to fight army to army.

Visually, *Genso Suikoden* is fairly impressive. The battles are cool, with lots of animation, a few awesome effects (spells are particularly impressive), and a variety of camera angles. The over-head map, towns and dungeons are a bit weak, though. There's almost no animation in the game's world, and there's little variety in the dungeon. It's certainly not bad, but it pales in comparison to *Arc the Lad* and *Rayearth*.

Musically, however, the game is astounding. Its only peer is *Arc the Lad's* stunning soundtrack. Typical Konami.

We got *Genso* at the last minute, so I haven't had time to play it for more than 5 or 6 hours. But what I've seen so far is impressive: good graphics, great music, a spectacular storyline, and an army of characters worth caring about. Ah, Konami... If only you made RPG's more than once every 3 years... -Takuhi





MAGIC

On your quest you'll find a number of sealed orbs, each bearing the crest of one of the 27 (!) types of magic. An attendant at a magic shop will bind the contents of these orbs to a character you choose, and they will start accumulating the spells for that magical class. Each class has about 4 spells, and instead of MP, you can cast each spell a limited number of times, depending on your level, until you rest and regain them. Fragments of these crests can also be found, and weaponsmiths will forge these onto your weapons to give you the benefit of that magic.



BATTLE

Genso eliminates the tedium of turn-based combat by having all the participants in the battles act at once. Give them your commands at the beginning of the turn, and they'll carry them out simultaneously, and at lightning speed. Strategic elements include a variety of spells and attacks that require more than one person, a la *Chrono Trigger*.



When the game begins, you can have only 6 characters in your party at any one time. But when your headquarters is established, you'll have a place to store all 108 of them. You can stop in at any time to get fresh party members, pick up a new vehicle, and see the stats on your army. As your ranks grow, more floors of the tower are refurbished, and if you get Sergei, he'll even build you an elevator. Nice.

PARTY





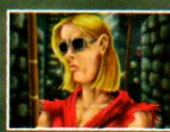
Just few scant months after the American debut of the original, *Ridge Racer Revolution* is almost here. Was this upgrade necessary? Probably not. Is it worth purchasing? Without question. This version offers you fifteen cars, eight tracks, the option to select what time of day you're racing in, twice the music tracks of *RR1* (from the arcade *Ridge Racer 2*), a rear-view mirror, and vastly improved 3-D. Most of these features have to be earned by placing first on all of the tracks, or by beating

certain cars in time trials. All this is well and good, but by far *Revolution's* best feature is the godly link-up mode. You simply haven't played two-player VS games until you've played a link-up game of *RRR*. My only gripe with the recently-released Japanese version of *Revolution* was the fact that both original tracks from *Ridge Racer 1* are only selectable in link-up mode... Why? Let's hope Namco changes this in the American release. I'll be back with a review next month!

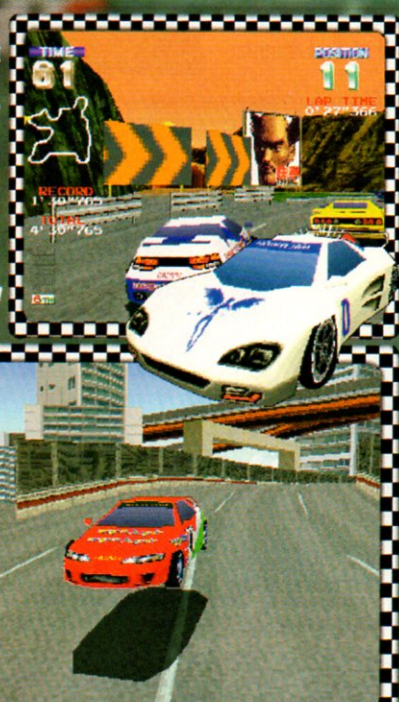
- Nick Rox

P
PREVIEW

PlayStation

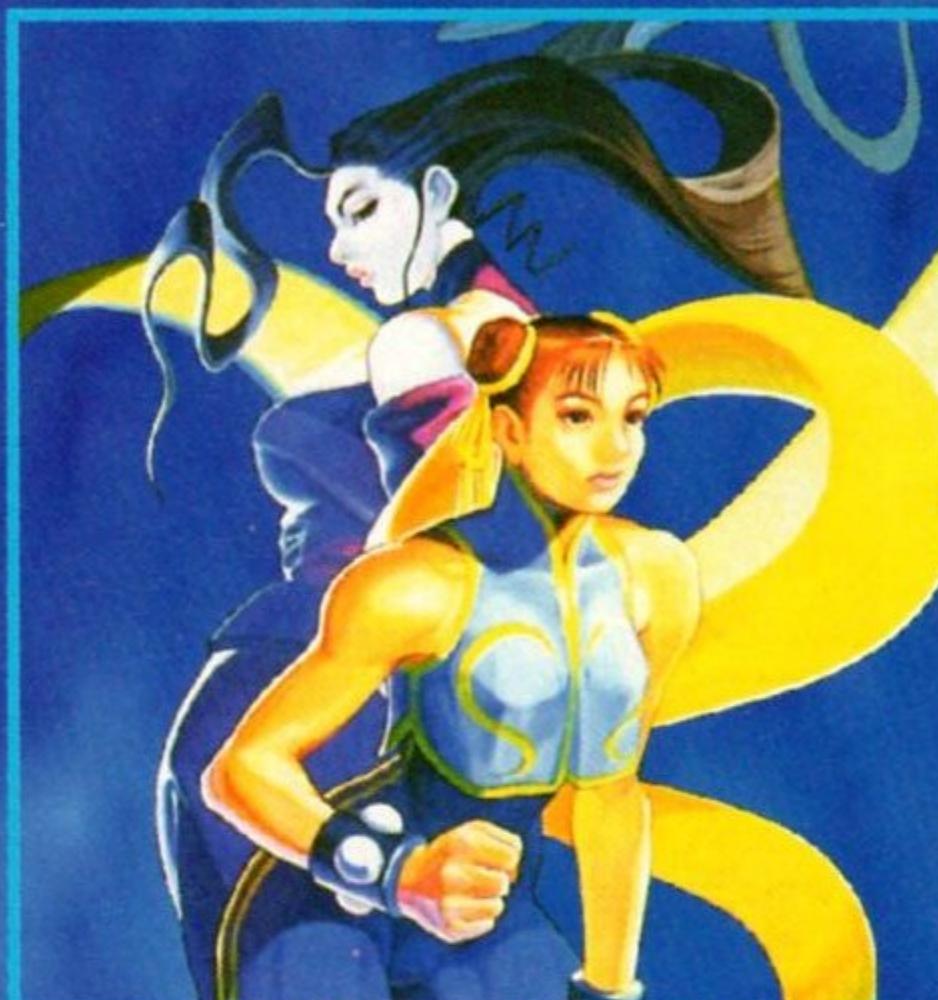


NAMCO • CD • TWO-PLAYER LINK-UP • AVAIL. NOW JPN.





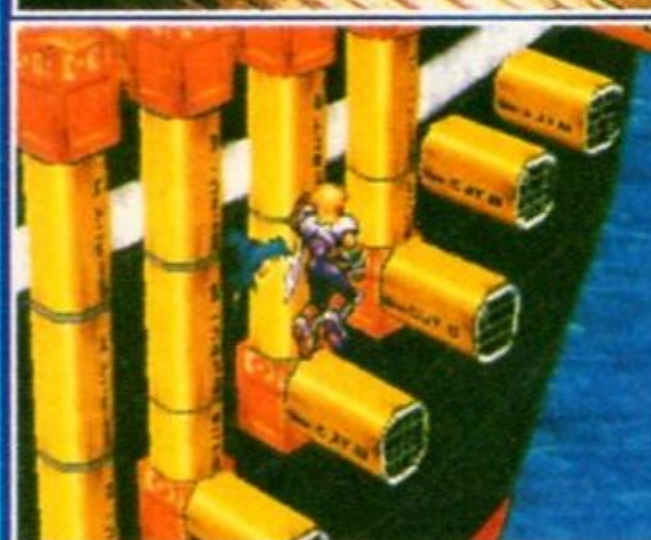
VAMPIRE HUNTER RELEASES THIS FEB. IN JAPAN AND WILL HOPEFULLY MAKE A BRAVE ATTEMPT AT MIMICKING THE COIN-OP'S AMAZING ANIMATION.



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA
WE'LL PREVIEW THE SATURN VERSION OF SF ALPHA IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE. AS YOU'LL SEE ON PGS. 24&25, THE COMPETITION IS FIERCE. TUNE IN AND SEE WHICH VERSION REIGNS SUPREME.



AFTER VIEWING FOOTAGE OF THE AMAZING SEQUEL TO PANZER DRAGOON, PANZER DRAGOON ZWEI, I CAN HONESTLY SAY IT IS UNBELIEVABLE! YOUR DRAGON IS THE OFFSPRING OF THE DRAGON IN PART 1 AND MATURES WITH YOU THROUGHOUT THE GAME! I'LL KEEP YOU UPDATED ON PD2 IN THE MONTH'S AHEAD.



CLIMAX'S ULTIMATE ISOMETRIC ADVENTURE DARK SAVIOR HAS BEEN DELAYED AND WILL NOW APPEAR SOMETIME 1ST Q. '96. CASEY AND NICK HAD A CHANCE TO PLAY DS AND BOTH AGREE THAT THE 3-D IS THE BEST WE'VE SEEN ON THE SATURN YET. MUCH TO OUR DISMAY, A US VERSION HAS NOT BEEN ANNOUNCED. I'M QUITE SURE HOWEVER THAT SOA IS SIMPLY KEEPING IT UNDER WRAPS. THE US SATURN NEEDS THIS GAME!



GAME ARTS' SATURN REMAKE OF THE ORIGINAL LUNAR WILL BE COMING TO THE U.S. VIA WORKING DESIGNS. THE GAME IS DUE OUT (JAPAN) APR/MAY. A U.S. RELEASE SHOULDN'T BE FAR BEHIND!





After two heinously un-Technosoft like games, *Hot Blooded Family* and *Kyu Tenkai Pinball*, I was beginning to think that all was lost. Had the Co. responsible for my all time favorite 16-bit shooter, *Thunder Force 4*, become a mediocre developer at best? If *Reverthion* is any indication the answer is thankfully, no. Rather, they hadn't departed, just taken temporary leave of their senses.

gon based, *Reverthion* does ooze that old Technosoft magic, incorporating great detail, sound, and overall game presentation. Still finding their legs in a 32-bit world un-receptive to the side scrolling shooter and practically dominated by the 3-D polygon fighter, TS has combined elements of the two aforementioned genres in an effort in an effort to attract fans of both and has succeeded to



REVERTHION

リヴァーシオン





some extent. *Reverthion* plays like a cross between *Virtua Fighter* and *Cyber Sled*. You can jump, dash, and duck around in each playfield while performing an array of fighting and shooting moves, all with dramatic results. The graphics in *Reverthion* rival anything on the PS and have an almost Model 2 look and feel. Camera angles are fast and sweeping and the specials result in an impressive display of clashing polygons.



The characters themselves range from the slow and strong, to the fast and weak with a variety thereof in between. Each is piloted by a human bearing the characteristics of their respective insectuous/animalistic vehicle. The game is quite balanced, except for the close range killer crab Jex piloted by Kuryu, who simply annihilates all com-

ers with his fierce clasp and throw, which is one of the many visual high points in *Reverthion*. If you want to race through and fight the main boss Kuryu will get you there in a hurry. Along with all of this texture-mapped splendor, the game features three modes of play (including a hi-res split screen vs. mode), a beautiful CG intro, and a memorable soundtrack. The only negative in the equation is *Rev's* simple play mechanics and subsequent lack of depth. You won't be doing any combo's or two-in-ones here. For their first true endeavor in to the competitive world of 3-D polygon gaming I'd have to say that Technosoft has nearly redeemed themselves. Of course, to complete the healing process I'll need a 32-bit version of *Thunder Force*. -E. Storm



Nick Rox's PLAYSTATION PREVIEWS



HORNED OWL from SCE

SCE's answer to *Virtua Cop* is coming Dec. 29th, and as usual they've spent a lot of money on their rip-off, with characters by Masamune Shirow of Appleseed fame, a gun by Konami, and animation by a famous studio.



ASUKA 120% by FamilySoft



ADVANCED VG by TGI

CHICK FIGHTING GAMES

The two most popular chick fighting games on the Japanese PC-98XX series are coming to your PS, in March and on February 23rd, respectively. Both add new features, like cinemas, line-scrolls, etc.

POLICENAUTS from KONAMI

Policenauts, the popular PC-9821 and 3D0 sequel to the mighty *Snatcher* will make its way to the PS on January 19th. The graphics have been completely retouched for the PS version, new effects have been added and polygonal driving/shooting scenes have been added. We'll bring you a review of *Policenauts* next issue.



FIREFLY by PIONEER LOC

Pioneer is planning on melding *Jumping Flash* with a puzzle game and a shooter for release early next spring, and the result is the happy fairy game *Firefly*.



SIDEWINDER by Asmik

Asmik's first PlayStation title is the *Air Combat*-esque *Sidewinder*, due in January. This one uses the link-up cable and Sony's new analog flight stick. We'll review *Sidewinder* next month.



ALIEN TRILOGY from Acclaim

With the latest *Aliens* movie, *Alien Resurrection*, where Ripley is cloned via DNA (charred DNA) in the works, and a new high powered corridor game on the way, it looks like the greatest science fiction adventure of all time will remain alive and well (despite the horrid 3rd movie) in the nineties. *Alien Trilogy*, based for the most part on the entire film series, looks like it has a chance to become the biggest thing since *Doom* in the world of 3-D gaming. What I find most promising is the amount of time Acclaim is allowing Probe to make *Trilogy* all that it can be. If all goes well, we'll have an actual preview of AT real soon. Wow! That means you'll finally get to see good screen shots... these slides really sucked. But they're better than the ones in...





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CLIP AND MAIL

Sword & Sorcery

(Lucienne's Quest)



R

REVIEW



DEVELOPER - MICROCABIN

PUBLISHER - PANASONIC

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW



TAKUHI
A real 3DO RPG, and one of the system's few truly great games. This must come out here!

I have to give Panasonic credit, they're really the only hardware manufacturer who can brag that they've domestically released nearly every good Japanese game for their system. And since they brought us *Guardian War*, Microcabin's first 3DO game, I think there's an excellent chance that they'll bring us *Sword & Sorcery*, Microcabin's newest and most impressive game yet.

Yes, this is Microcabin's 3rd attempt in the 3-D RPG field (their 2nd being Saturn's *Riglord Saga/Mystaria*), and probably their best. Unlike the drastic 3-D angles *Riglord* employed, *Sword & Sorcery* has a simple-but-impressive clean 3-D look. I can't believe how much attention PlayStation's *Beyond the Beyond* got for its cheap little 3-D overworld, when *Sword & Sorcery* beat it out by 2 months and had the entire game in the same style, including towns and dungeons. While the frame rate kind of hurts, the effects are of nearly *Beyond the Beyond* quality (as if that says a lot), pretty impressive considering that this is the 3DO (home to 3 frame-per-second *BC Racers*) we're talking about.

If *Powers Kingdom* taught Microcabin anything, it was that people like a little story in their RPG's. After a good but cliché-ridden attempt at a storyline in *Riglord*, Microcabin decided against an overly dramatic save-the-world kind of story, and came up with a light, refreshing little quest.

You play Lucienne, a giggly young lady with a lot of magic power but not too much common sense. Her master, the greatest mage in the land, left on an assignment of great importance, entrusting the tower to Lucienne. When Elgort, a man transformed into a werewolf, comes seeking Lucienne's master for a cure, bored Lucienne takes the quest herself, and a series of adventures ensue. Instead of the usual mage-fighter-thief party members, your

supporting cast includes a charmingly weird selection of non-human species, including a Molebear, Golem, and winged Lizardman.

Unlike their previous two releases, *Sword & Sorcery* is a real RPG, and is the first Microcabin game that's been able to hold my interest the whole way through. The battles are well done, with lots of cool spells and techniques, and a bit of strategy in dealing with obstacles. And since the battles occur only in set locations, they never become so excessively frequent that you're afraid to explore the dungeons.

The music is, as in *Powers Kingdom* and *Riglord*, masterful. Believe it or not, all three were done by different composers... I think the Japanese government should raid Microcabin's offices and force them to redistribute their extra musicians to other needy companies (cough, cough, CLIMAX, cough)... No company should have that much genius under one roof. Fortunately, Microcabin is finally releasing soundtracks, and *Sword & Sorcery*'s is definitely a must have.

One warning for those of you who don't intend to hope and wait for a US translation: This is one of the few Japanese 3DO games that requires the Kanji Buffer RAM that is found only in Japanese 3DO systems. So if you bought your 3DO on this side of the Pacific, you're out of luck.

Sword & Sorcery is a light, cute (but not childish) game that may not appeal to fans of the usual ham-fisted drama. But if you want a charming, well-designed, visually impressive and musically-stunning RPG on your 3DO, write to Panasonic and hope for the best. -Takuhi

Or don't! Mere minutes before this page went to press, we got the word from Panasonic... It's coming here, it's gonna be called *Lucienne's Quest*, and it'll be out 'round the time you read this. I knew Panasonic wouldn't let us down!



Lucienne has a Visitor...



Head south from the castle, until you get to the signpost. From there, northwest will take you to a small mining town where you can get weapons, or keep heading southeast for Papachop.

Elgart's fellow townspeople were slaughtered by werewolves, and now Elgart's been turned into one as well. He's not happy about this, and comes to Lucienne's master for help... Instead, he gets Lucienne, and the two set off on a quest to save him.



Next, to Babachop

To get to Miradore, the land of the wolfpeople (how PC of me...), you must go through the Chichibora cave. But there's no getting through there without involving yourself in the war between the Molebears and the Ogres.

Help the Molebear leader with his wounds, and he'll loan you his cowardly son, Miminaga, and send you to take care of the Ogres that guard the cave.

Miminaga has a powerful earthquake attack, and his bow can hit two enemies at once, so always aim towards the back row.



Chichibora Cave

The direct route to Miradore is blocked by stalagmites that can only be destroyed with the Ogre leader's bludgeon. To get to him, you'll need a pickaxe or club from the weapon shop in Babachop, to smash the obstacles in your way. Before you fight him, make sure you get the Tsuchi no Mashin in the chest outside his cave! This item can be used as often as you'd like, provided whoever uses it has the 100MP to spare. Since Elgart and Miminaga have nothing else to spend theirs on, they should take advantage of the opportunity. After his defeat, Miminaga will join you on your quest to Miradore, now that he's past his cowardice.

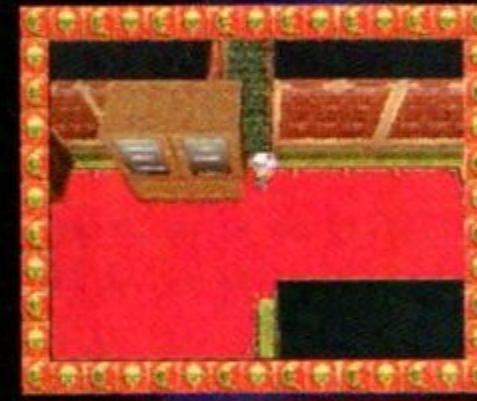


Miradore



After a hostile reception at the town gates, Elgart confronts the werewolf leader. She claims that she turned him into a wolf to save his life, as he was dying when he found her. Although she claims she did not attack his town, she admits her people have been invading other towns. They have no choice, she explains, as a mysterious assailant named the Black Warrior had taken their children hostage, and were using that to force the wolfpeople to comply.

Elgart is not impressed by her stories or her affection towards him, but reluctantly agrees to help save the werewolf children in order to save other towns like his.



Wilderness



Although the Black Warrior is now dead, he was not alone. Lucienne, excited to have defeated one of the 3 great warriors of evil, begs Miminaga and Elgart to join her as she embarks on a quest to destroy the other two. Elgart declines the wolfpeople's invitation to transform him back to human, in order to accompany you, and the leader of the werewolves gives you a spell that lets you summon a golem as your 4th party member. Head east to the desert town called "Wilderness," for your true quest has just begun.





KONAMI

XXL

SPORTS SERIES



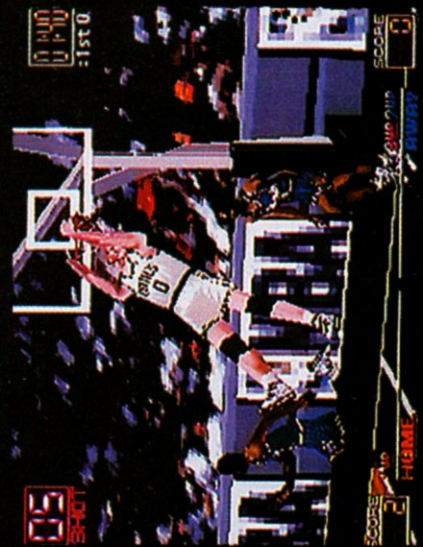
**3-D TEXTURE
MAPPED POLYGONS**

NO-LOOK PASSES

ALL 29 NBA TEAMS

**REAL-TIME MOTION
CAPTURED ACTION**

IF YOU'RE NOT IN THE ZONE



ON-S ACTION

**MULTIPLE
PERSPECTIVES**

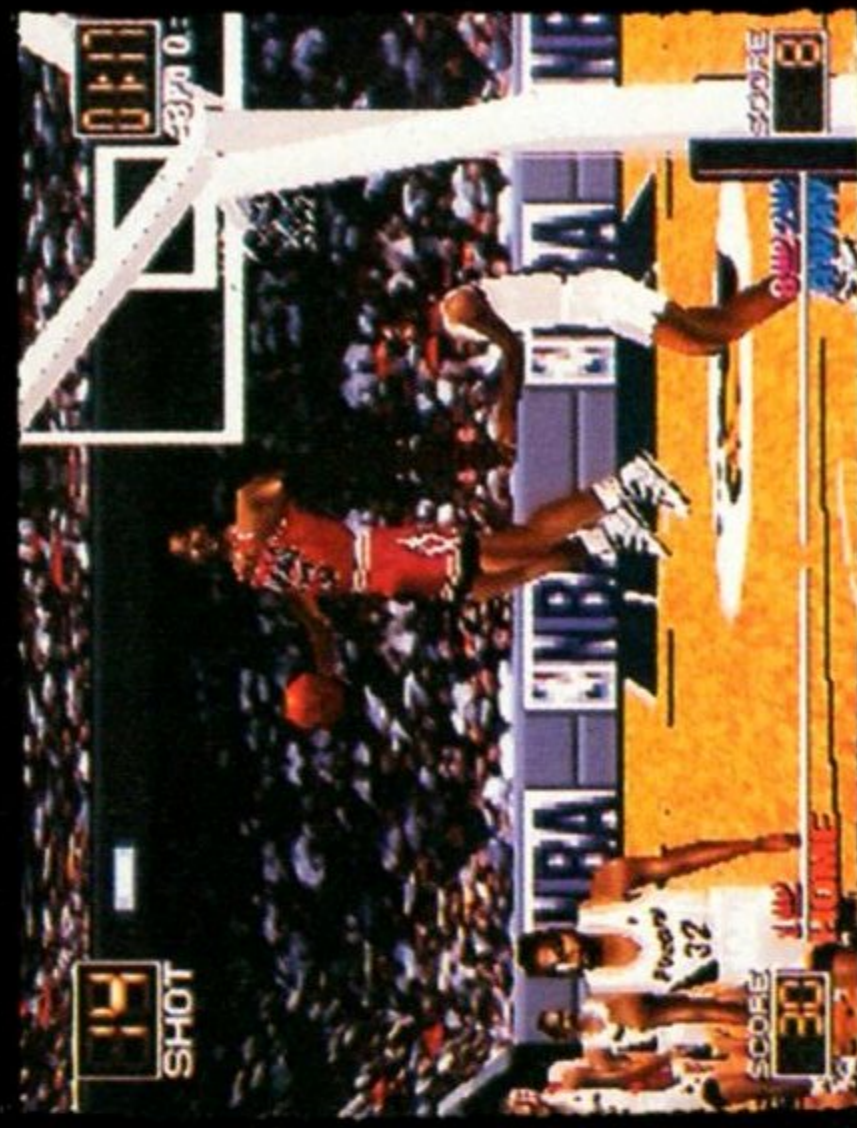
REBOUND DUNKS

NBA PLAYERS

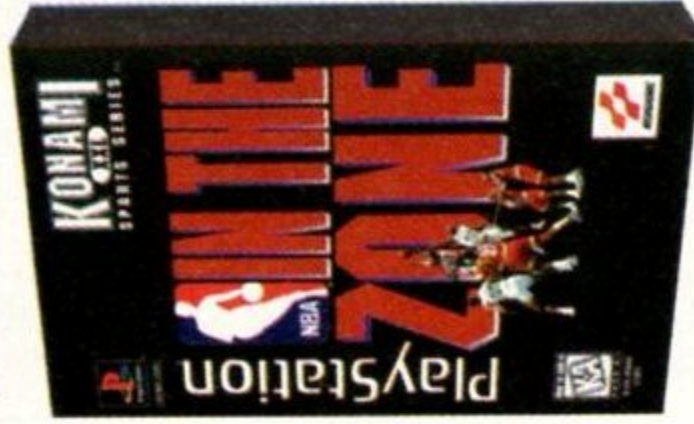
PLAYOFF MODES



YOU'RE NOT IN THE GAME



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#2

GAMEFAN

TONKIN'S V-TENNIS
MAKES QUITE A RACKET!

SPORTS



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CAL'S CORNER



"Chip"

"Cal"

Cavallier"



By the time you read this, Dallas will be playing the upstart, wild card Chargers in the Super Bowl (my prediction), and a full line-up of 32-bit sports will have arrived for the new year. So, in case you've missed GF over the past six months (God forbid), this is the best buyer's guide you're gonna get. GF Sports proudly presents: **GAMEFAN SPORTS MEGAWARDS '95**

Chip, K. Lee, and I voted on each category, but as you can see there wasn't much controversy! A literally **GENRE-REDEFINING** game was unveiled in every meaningful category this year, and sports gaming has never been better. It goes without saying that we can't wait for '96. See you next month with more 32-bit power!

Football Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *NFL Gameday*, PlayStation (Sega Sports)

Baseball Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *World Series Baseball*, Saturn (Sega Sports)

Basketball Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *In the Zone*, PlayStation (Konami)

Ice Hockey Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *NHL Face Off*, PlayStation (Sony)

Golf Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *Pebble Beach Golf Links*, Saturn (Sega Sports)

Soccer Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *Worldwide Soccer*, Saturn (Sega Sports)

Tennis Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *V-Tennis*, PlayStation (Tonkin House/Japanese import)

Racing Game of the Year:
Unanimous decision: *Sega Rally Championship*, Saturn (Sega Sports)

Overall Sports Game of the Year:
K. Lee: *Sega Rally Championship*
Cal: *V-Tennis*

Chip: *Sega Rally Championship*
Winner: *Sega Rally Championship*

Super Tennis defined the word "addictive," and the tennis masters at Tonkin House have kicked butt again. This is the best-playing tennis game of all time, destroying everything in its path with nine viewpoints plus the ability to edit views. Don't even stop to think, just buy *V-Tennis* and experience what it feels like to be "Wagassi."

G C P M O 96
(9) (10) (10) (7) (9)

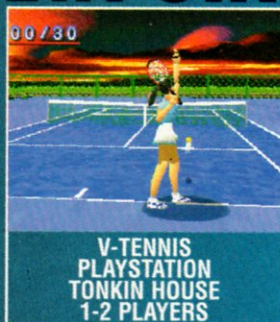
I really wanted to like this game (and I do), but it came up just a bit short. It's not the graphics... very nice texture-mapped polys. It's the gameplay. The controls are way too touchy, and the feel is a bit off. Still, a recommended addition to your Saturn sports library. The music is death, by the way; hit mute.

G C P M O 72
(8) (6) (7) (6) (7)

I'm not as much of a soccer enthusiast, but this is definitely a quality title. The animation is nice (but a bit framey), the screen movement is generally smooth (but a bit choppy), the soccer play mechanics are EA solid... Not up to the 3DO version but quite good.

G C P M O 84
(8) (8) (8) (7) (8)

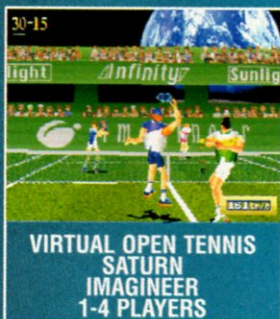
VIEWPOINTS



V-TENNIS
PLAYSTATION
1-2 PLAYERS

Tonkin House has done it again. *V-Tennis* is the defining 32-bit tennis game with all the playability and smoothness of *Super Tennis* for the SNES (albeit in a completely different package), and the texture-mapped polygon glory of PlayStation. The nine perspectives (plus edit mode) truly define this game; there's just so many ways to play this game, I can't imagine any tennis fan not flipping out. The PCM music is actually very good, and I can't get enough of the announcer.

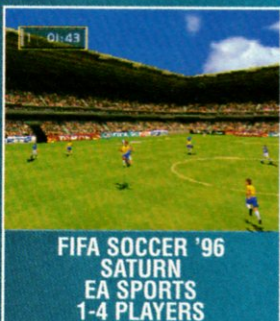
G C P M O 96
(9) (10) (10) (8) (9)



VIRTUAL OPEN TENNIS
SATURN
IMAGINEER
1-4 PLAYERS

V-Tennis is clearly the choice among the two, but *Virtual Open Tennis* is a reasonably good game. *Virtual Open* plays fairly well with an amazing variety of shots plus dashing, but the designers went a bit overboard on the realism... accelerating and turning are a bit frustrating. The texture-mapped polys are nice and there are many modes of play, but the music is pretty unbearable. Worth playing, but I know better will come along for the Saturn.

G C P M O 83
(8) (8) (8) (5) (6)



FIFA SOCCER '96
SATURN
EA SPORTS
1-4 PLAYERS

3DO *FIFA* was so outstanding that I expected even more on the Saturn, but somehow I got less. The Saturn edition (for whatever reason) simply doesn't match the 3DO, in the movement of the screen or the frame rate of the player animation. However, *FIFA* is still a superb soccer game in every respect. There are many camera angles, seemingly never-ending leagues, solid control, and decent sound FX (although the announcer's twisted).

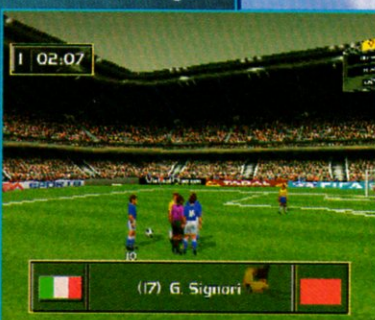
G C P M O 86
(8) (8) (8) (7) (7)

GameFan Sports Preview

PlayStation



We've got an in-depth *FIFA* Saturn review this issue, and the PS version just didn't fit... So here's a quick peek. This game is in all aspects identical to the Saturn version, right down to the amazing FMV, solid gameplay and control, and amazing number of leagues and teams to choose from. I still don't get why these versions aren't close to the 3DO. Oh well... still an amazing game.



FIFA 96

VIRTUAL STADIUM SOCCER



EA Sports has powered directly onto the 32-bit scene with its entire line-up, but the competition in the sports arena has increased exponentially. With games like *NFL Gameday* and *NFL Full Contact* to take on *Madden*, *In the Zone* and *Total NBA* to take on *NBA Live*, and *NHL Face Off* to stare down *NHL '96*, the 32-bit sports war will be the biggest ever, and I can definitely say the winner will be you. However, with *FIFA '96* for Saturn and PS, I can definitely say that EA's worst enemy is itself.

You see, the problem is *FIFA* for 3DO was, is, and for quite some time in the future could stand as, the greatest soccer game currently available. I really thought that the Saturn version would be just a better rendition of the original, but unfortunately it's actually not as good. The screen movement is a tad choppy, and the frame rate just isn't up to the 3DO's. It's hard to dismiss such a sin as creating a worse version for a higher-powered system, but seeing as how many Saturn owners skipped the 3DO, I will set this aside for now.

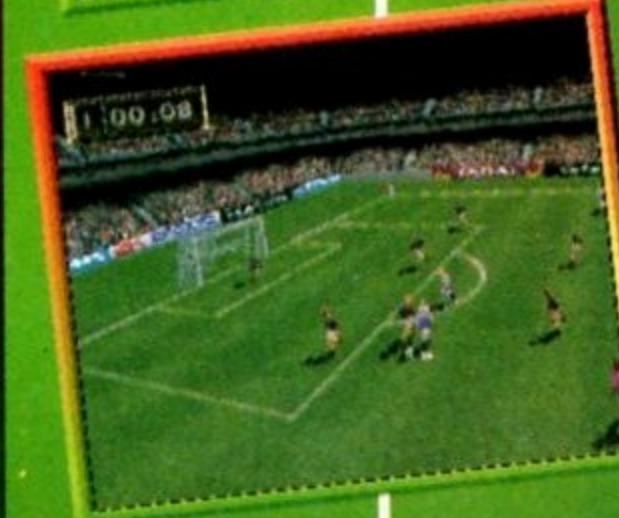
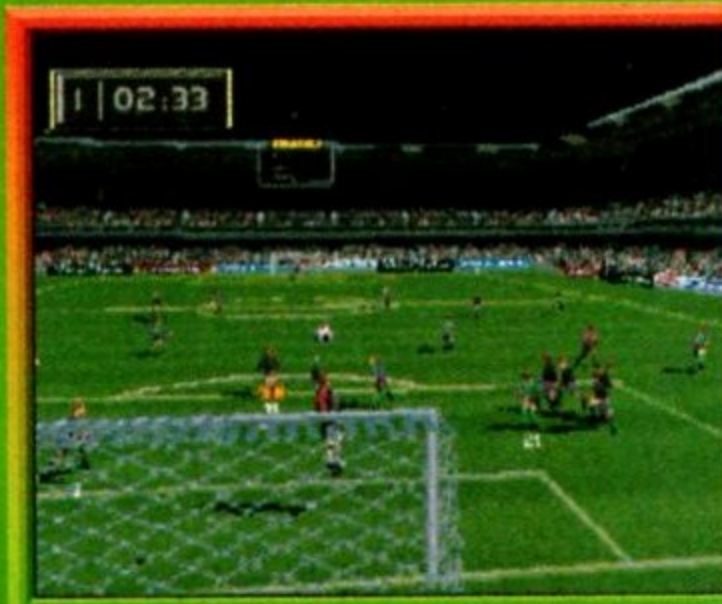
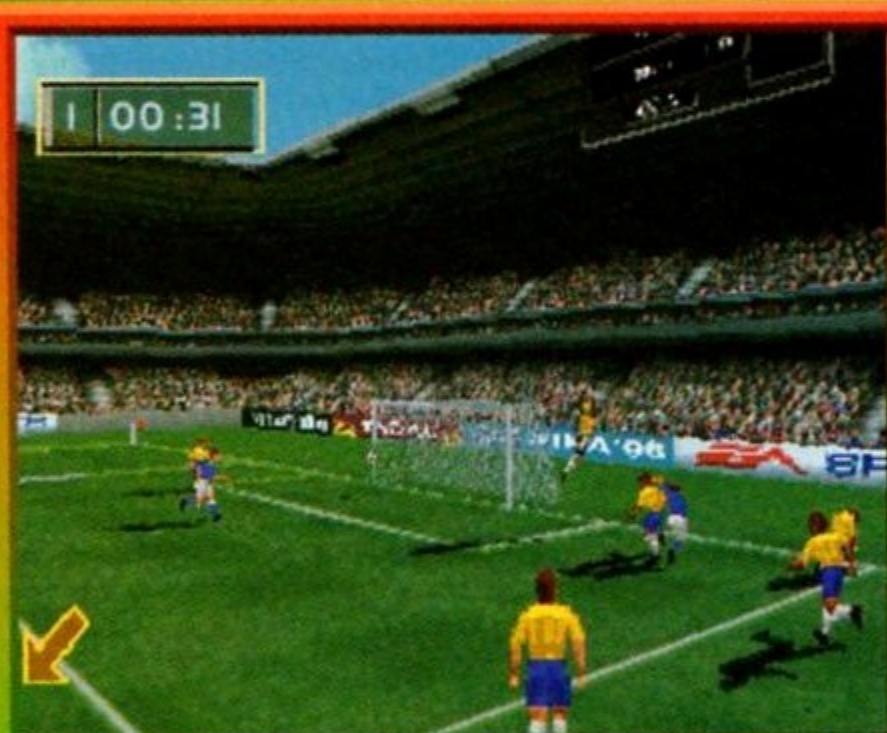
FIFA offers seven glorious camera angles you can choose from, and once you lock on in, the game does some very nice on-the-fly shifting depending on the action. There are a variety of stadiums based on the many countries and leagues, which keeps the environment fresh and the texture-mapped polys look pretty nice from far away and up close.

The gameplay is reasonable, albeit fairly basic by the standards I would expect from 32-bit. *FIFA*'s a three-button game and I would have liked the extra buttons to perform a few extra functions, such as a bike kick or header (as opposed to the auto-specials activated by proximity to the ball, which could certainly have remained an option). Turning could also have been smoother, it's just a little too deliberate.

The sound in *FIFA* is definitely average. Not much is remarkable, but the announcer has big problems. Instead of a smooth transition from phrases to player names (fake by the way), the player names sound as if they were often recorded at completely different pitches from the action statements, which translates into noticeably choppy commentary.

FIFA '96 will definitely keep anyone who buys it busy, because there are countless leagues from around the world to play in, plus various gameplay modes. The FMV CG stuff in this game is some of the best I've seen, but that is pretty irrelevant to the actual game. Bottom line: worth playing, but either Sega's *Worldwide Soccer* for Saturn or the previously-mentioned 3DO *FIFA* would be money better spent.

-Cal Cavalier



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REVIEW

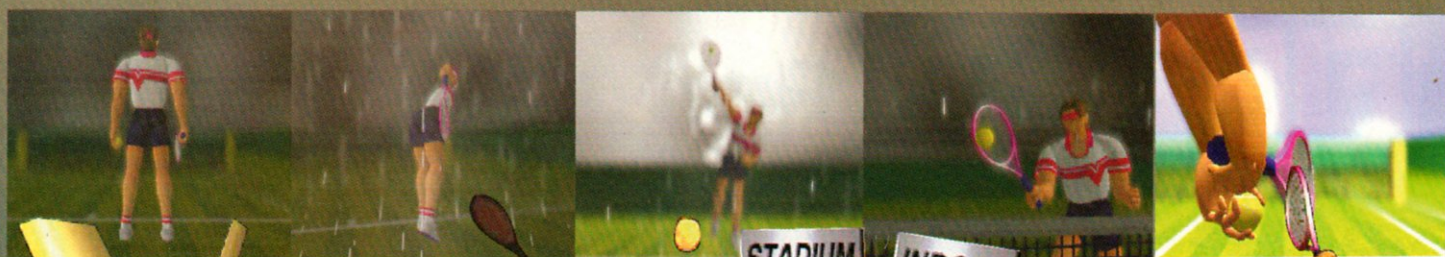


SEGA SATURN

| |
|-------------------------|
| DEVELOPER - EA |
| PUBLISHER - EA |
| FORMAT - CD |
| # OF PLAYERS - 1-4 |
| DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE |
| AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN |



CAL CAVALIER-
HAD ENOUGH SOCCER
YET?



V-Tennis

GAMEFAN
SPORTS



REVIEW



DEVELOPER - TONKIN HOUSE

PUBLISHER - TONKIN HOUSE

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



CAL CAVALIER
THE NEW KING OF
TENNIS GAMES.

My two favorite game systems of all time, the NES and SNES (in that order), except for in a select few cases, didn't have the ability to hide a lack of substantial gameplay behind texture-mapped, polygon SGI ACM CG/FMV B.S., and for that reason I kinda miss the 8/16-bit days. (You say they aren't gone yet? Could have fooled me!) Anyway, if you ask a casual gamer to name the top 5 sports game of all time, not one will include *Super Tennis*. However, ALL diehard sports fans know *Super Tennis* was the best-playing tennis game of its time, despite the cutesy Japanese appearance (which I personally liked).

So, the GameFan office was brimming with anticipation for the next tennis game from Tonkin House, creator of *Super Tennis*. Well, *V-Tennis* dropped the cabbage patch kids in favor of a more predictable texture-mapped polygon, fake-pros look. But without a doubt, the superbly playable feel of *Super Tennis* has been captured, upgraded, redone, and quite optimized for the PlayStation.

First, I must discuss the insignificant details that matter more than any non-tennis fan realizes. In *V-Tennis*, you ARE playing tennis. Don't believe me? Try out these two literally extraordinary details for size: To decide service at the beginning of the match you SPIN A RACQUET, and after a point, in addition to the many predictable animations you've either seen before or could have anticipated, the geniuses at Tonkin included the losing player ADJUSTING THE STRINGS ON HIS RACQUET.

Now that tennis fans have recovered from their double cardiac arrest, I will discuss the features any gamer/generic sports fan can appreciate. There are nine unique different camera angles, and yes, ALL of them are playable. However, I would consider some just fairly playable and others PERFECTLY playable, but each to his own. The main point is, this is not one of those 3-D tennis games that scrolls you off the screen at times, or forces an unbalanced match because the near side is much more playable than the far side (depending, of course, on the perspective you

choose).

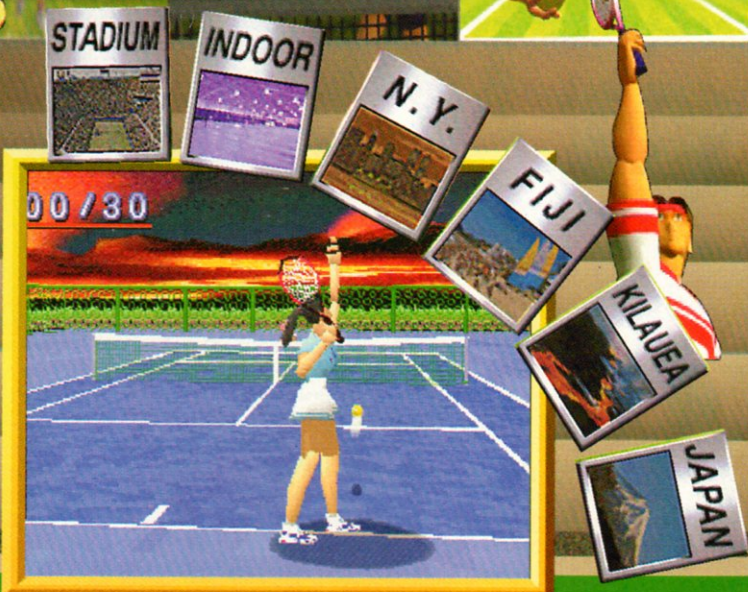
The most shocking thing is that you can EDIT any of the perspectives by adjusting the rotation of the camera angle and its distance from the court, and then play from a newly-adjusted version of one of the pre-set nine views.

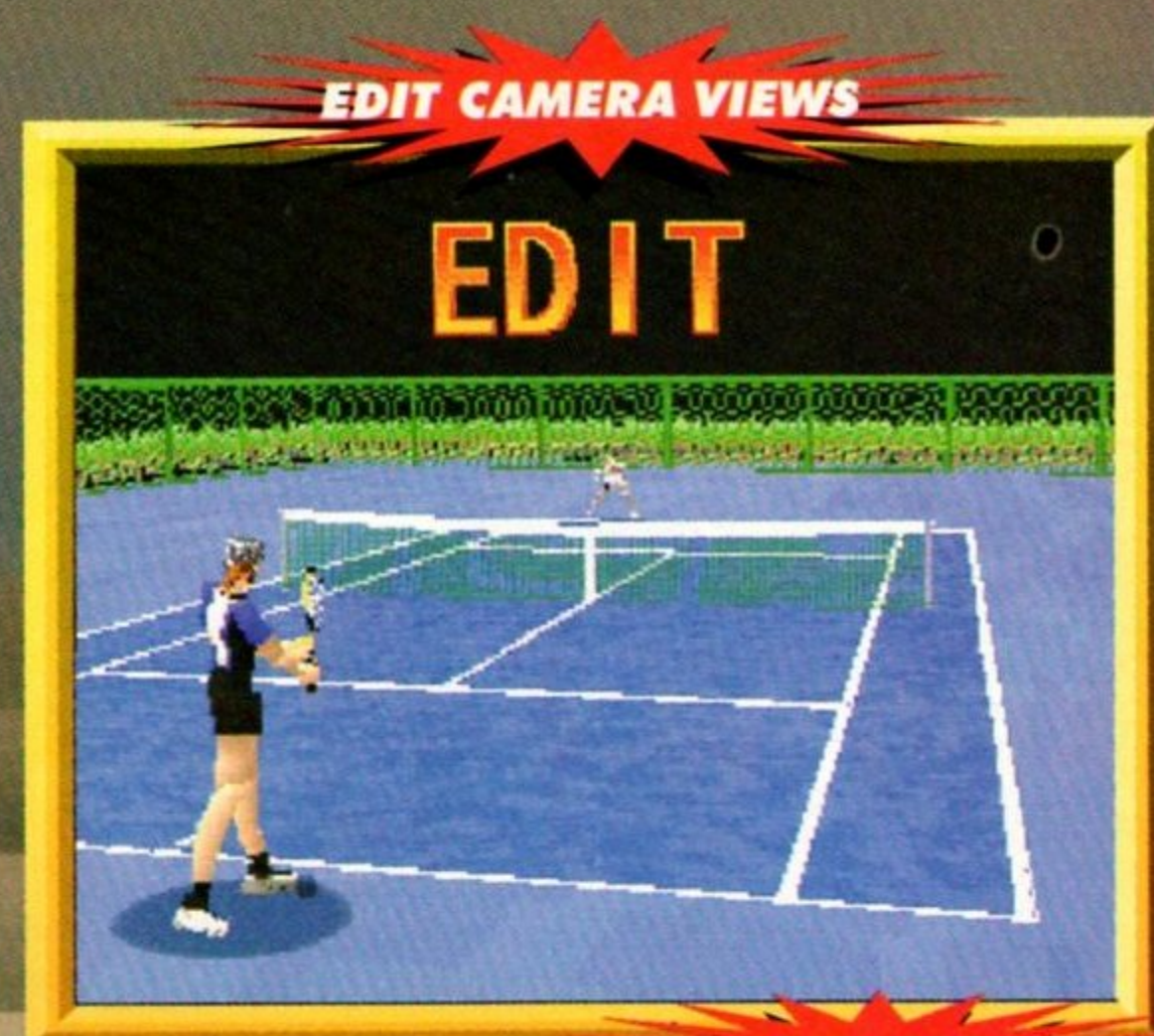
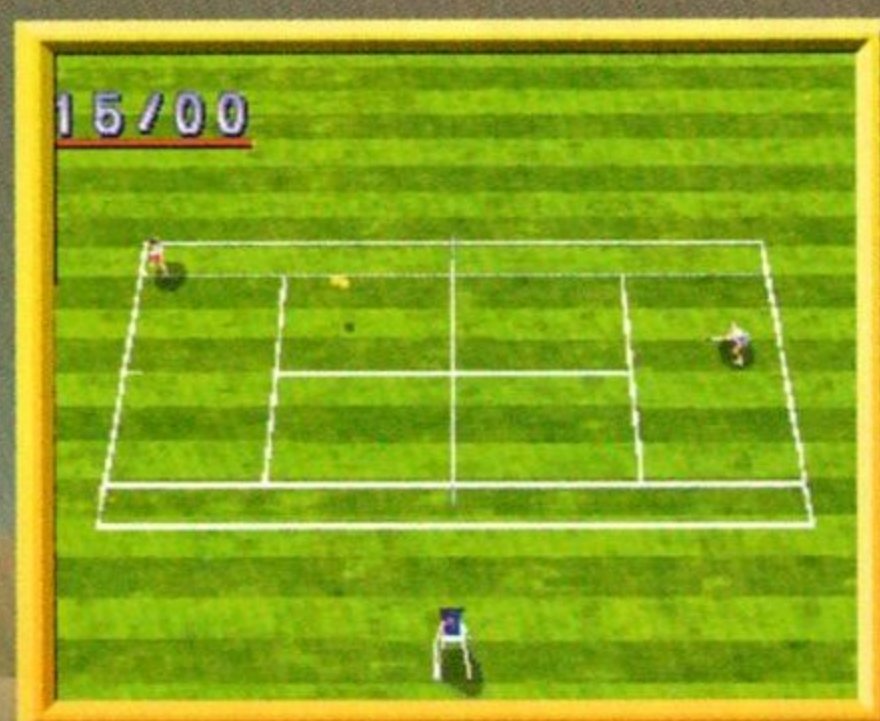
Many tennis games suffer from a lack of variety, but not this one. There are four different surfaces (hard, clay, grass, and carpet), with all the realism and varied gameplay afforded by the physics of the surfaces. There are 16 total characters to choose from, and they even have the same phony names so you can identify with them ("Wegacy" instead of "Agassi"). But, best of all, there are seven different settings (ranging from stadium to indoor to different countries), and this adds SIGNIFICANT variety to the graphic images... the backdrops are fully rendered.

The music surprisingly is also very impressive, for a tennis game. The announcer is entertaining, and there are some again extraordinarily realistic effects, such as the horn for shots that travel out on certain courts.

Gameplay-wise, other tennis games have failed because they try to be too realistic and every single shot is a challenge (such as *Power Serve*, you DON'T want to go there). This was not true in *Super Tennis*, and fortunately this is also not the case with *V-Tennis*. The game has just the right blend of realistic challenge and video game playability, and a huge variety of shots plus dashing can be executed with the PS controller. I wish that dives were a bit more under your control, but I won't nit-pick near-perfection.

To my knowledge, No U.S. co. has picked up VT... yet. If it doesn't surface soon I strongly recom-



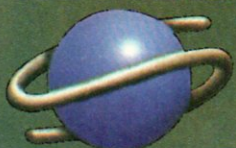


ment that you pick the import. *V-Tennis* is the current pinnacle of tennis games, and seeing as how *Super Tennis* is still the pinnacle of 16-bit tennis and it was released back in '91, you might well be wise to grab this one sooner rather than later.

-Cal Cavalier



REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - IMAGINEER

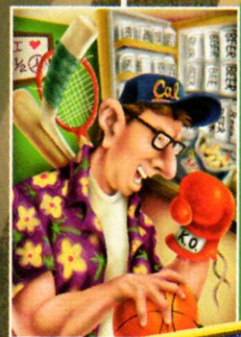
PUBLISHER - SOJ

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



ALEXEI IVANOV

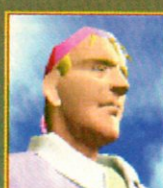


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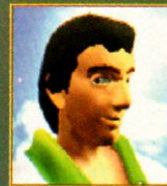
Virtual Open TENNIS



ANDERS ROSE



FOX ROSE



JASON LEE



JIMMY
WALKER



LORENZO
SUAREZ



ROBERT
SCHULDINER



RYO IBUKI



SIMON LOPEZ

The world of 32-bit sports is often marked by certain cross-platform, cross-genre qualities: astonishing texture-mapped or CG rendered characters, crazy multiple perspectives, and gameplay depth unheard of on 16-bit. While *Virtual Open Tennis* surprisingly doesn't offer the many selectable or auto-shifting viewpoints I would have expected, the gameplay is much more solid than, say, the unbearable *Power Serve*. And for this, I am more than happy with what was attempted and what was delivered.

Virtual Open Tennis offers ten fictional characters who bear slight resemblance to the real pro's, such as, well, let's just call 'em Waggasi. The cinema/portrait screens are gorgeous CG (as is the intro), but the game is texture-mapped polys. The one and only high-view camera angle is very playable, but you never really get close enough to the players to appreciate the graphic details... not even during the replays.

Open's gameplay completely satisfied me. The game uses nearly the entire Saturn button spread with a variety of normal, slice, and spin shots. However, I felt that not everything should have been so automatic, i.e. the player should

control diving, not the game. Second, the game seems a little bit overtouchy. I recognize the realism provided by slowly increasing, stop-to-dash acceleration, and the delay when turning on one's heels, but this makes the game just a little bit too clutzy and a little less playable.

There are three gameplay modes (exhibition, championship, and training), and the training mode has some nifty exercises any real tennis player will recognize from their days with the local club pro, such as the old hit-the-can service game. One feature in this game that I would describe as a bug if I knew it wasn't intentional is the music. Vegas lounge music? In a tennis game? A word to the wise at Imagineer: hiring *King of Casino's* composer was NOT a good move.

Lacking the many pleasing perspectives and ultra-tight gameplay of *V-Tennis*, I would rank VOT second among the three current 32-bit tennis games... of which only one, that being the worst, is currently available on these shores. Someone best pick these up before people decide to go play the real thing. A very good game for Saturn, but if you own a PlayStation, the choice is indisputable. -Cal Cavalier





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GAMEFAN
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REVIEW



DEVELOPER - YUKES

PUBLISHER - TOMY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



THE STALKER

I've been a loyal fan of the New Japan Pro Wrestling group out of Tokyo, Japan for the last ten years. During that time, NJPW spawned three Super Famicom games, and one PC-Engine Arcade Card game. Much to my horror, all of these games were weak at best (by any wrestling gamer's standards). That's all behind us, as now we have the first 32-bit taste of NJPW wrestling.

Toukon Retsuden is without a doubt the most graphically intense, perfectly realistic wrestling game ever conceived. Besides the obvious beauty visible in still shots, the player will see that the wrestlers are unbelievably well animated and responsive. Every featured wrestler has his own host of signature moves, and to my astonishment, his own range of personal quirks, mannerisms and movements. The wrestlers play to the crowds, breathe heavily when knocked down, flail around in pain and do everything else a real wrestler does when in a real match. All of the top twelve names in NJPW are represented here in all their glory, each rendered in excellent detail.

You can enter one or two player competition in a G1 round-robin tournament or quest for the IWGP (International Wrestling Grand Prix) Championship, and save your progress along the way. You can even save your best matches to memory and replay them (from any angle) exactly as they happened. One can toggle between any of four camera angles at the touch of a button and even choose between "normal" camera mode or a more panoramic "second floor" view. There's just an astounding amount of realism to this game.

Toukon Retsuden's astoundingly perfect control is what ultimately made me decide it's the greatest wrestling game ever. Instead of using the traditional lock-and-struggle wrestling gameplay engine, this game gives the players complete control over their actions. Different buttons are used for different techniques, and the player always has many choices in which maneuver to use

闘魂烈伝 TOUKON RETSUDEN

next. Using the directional pad in conjunction with the buttons will yield various results. You can also perform different attacks based on where you are in relation to an opponent. There's no end to the number of moves and maneuvers you can do once you've learned how to control your character.

Real wrestlers, real control, and real moves. You

can't call yourself a wrestling fan without owning this game. I've never seen a video game as close to the "real life" entity that it's based on as this. *Toukon Retsuden* is, quite easily, the best wrestling game ever. Next month, hopefully, we'll have more space to spare to show you more of this incredible game. -The Stalker



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PREVIEW

NEO
GEO

DEVELOPER: SNK

PUBLISHER: SNK

FORMAT: 282M CART

1-2 PLAYERS

DIFFICULTY: ADVANCED

AVAILABLE NOW



NICK ROX

Once again it is Samurai time. I must say, I was afraid SNK's five-year-old hardware wouldn't be able to do the exalted Samurai name justice once more, and of course I was wrong. The programming masters at SNK simply shouldn't exist. As usual, they've made the Neo do things that can't be done. This time, it's almost-perfect transparencies (achieved by rapidly interchanging pixels at 60 times per second) and line-scrolls that stretch convincingly when one jumps up. Combine these feats with Capcom-quality animation, much parallax, and backgrounds that change completely at least twice per match, and you have visuals beyond compare in the 2-D realm.

But how is the game play? There are many new additions to the traditional Samurai system, and in my opinion, it's overkill. Let me describe the button configuration... bear with me: A, B, C are now slashes. B+C is an unblockable top-down attack. Forward, down-forward, neutral, back + D are different kicks. A+B is a KOF-style dodge. A+B+C charges the rage gauge. Forward and A+B when close allows you to get behind your opponent to face his back as in VF. Forward and B+C breaks through crouch blocks. C when close is a push-out tactic. Did you get all that? Me either. I just can't adjust to all that fruitfulness in an actual fight. Another sad trait of the gameplay is the eternal SNK problem: outrageous damage. If you're hit during a special move, double the damage is inflicted; because of this, any enemy can be defeated with three well-timed button presses. Oddly, normal "C" slashes take off more energy than some supers and special moves take off very little damage. Further cheapness is added to the game by the "expert" option, which takes away your ability to block, but enables you to do your super at any time. Most human opponents fall prey to this dishonorable tactic. Samurai 3 has one unbelievably cool gameplay





HISAME SHIZUMARU



addition that SNK must be commended for, however... the personality system.

With the personality system, you choose either "Bust" or "Slash," which changes your character entirely, from their moves right down to their win poses. In Japan, Bust and Slash are Rasetsu, or Chivalry, and Shura, or Treachery. Why did SNK figure Americans wouldn't be able to comprehend the traits of chivalry and treachery? I suppose "Bust" and "Slash" are easier understood by us unwashed heathens, eh? Oh well... the game's the same. Most of the time, the Bust

and Slash forms of each character are radically different. For instance, Nakoruru's Bust form is equipped with Shikuloo, a wolf, instead of her usual companion, the eagle Mamahaha; Galford's Bust incarnation is without his faithful ninja dog Poppy; and Haohmaru's Slash Sempuretsuzan can be done in the air, but does not juggle like his Bust form's.

The new characters are a mixed bag in terms of design and efficiency. The returning characters are Haohmaru, Genjuro, Hanzo, Galford, Ukyo, Nakoruru (Why?? She DIED in her Samurai 2 ending!), and Kyoshiro. The new fighters are Nakoruru's useless sister Rimururu, Nicotine's grandson Caffeine Gaira, the truly disturbing Kubiriri ("Neck-Cutter") Basara, Amakusa Shiro Tokisada, the SS1 boss, and the new main character, a little boy named Hisame Shizumaru who wields an umbrella. Of these, Basara and Shizumaru are the coolest, in design and in the way they play. Basara is THE scariest character in a fighting game yet. Not only is he visually terrifying, but in one of his win poses he cradles the naked ghost of his lover who promptly decomposes, and Basara is none too happy. His dying quote is "What a wonderful nightmare." You can tell this boy needs some serious help.

As you can see, the graphics are unbelievably detailed. The animation is, for the most part, Capcom quality. The backgrounds may not seem very cool in still shots, but they are gorgeous in motion. Each background completely changes at least once during a match, and some change three times, accompanied by the ceasing of all music. These range from mundane changes such as bursting into flame or suddenly becoming stormy to supernatural oddness like darkening and becoming plagued with spirits, or completely changing, like going from a ghost-

town to a vast desert with ominous red clouds color cycling overhead. This effect is extremely cool and adds much to the game. The music is typical Samurai, with minimalist biwa, shakuhachi and koto aplenty.

Despite my complaints, this game is definitely worthy of the Samurai name. As I've said, it's visually the best-looking Neo-Geo game of all time, and is well worth a purchase just to stare at the breathtaking art. For gameplay, however, you should probably stick with KOF '95. I'll be back with more joyful Samurai goodness soon, when the Samurai RPG is released!

- Nick Rox



RIMURURU



THE COOLEST WIN POSE IN FIGHTING GAME HISTORY...



KUBIRIRI BASARA



R
REVIEW

SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

DEVELOPER - TRAVELERS TALE

PUBLISHER - DISNEY INT.

FORMAT - 32 MEG CART.

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW



K. LEE
GREAT MOVIE,
GREAT GAME!

TOY
STOP



Last month we reviewed *Toy Story* for the Genesis and were blown away by the unbelievable visuals and the pure diversity of the levels. Now the SNES version has arrived and again, I marvel at the sights and sounds of Disney Interactive's CG game.

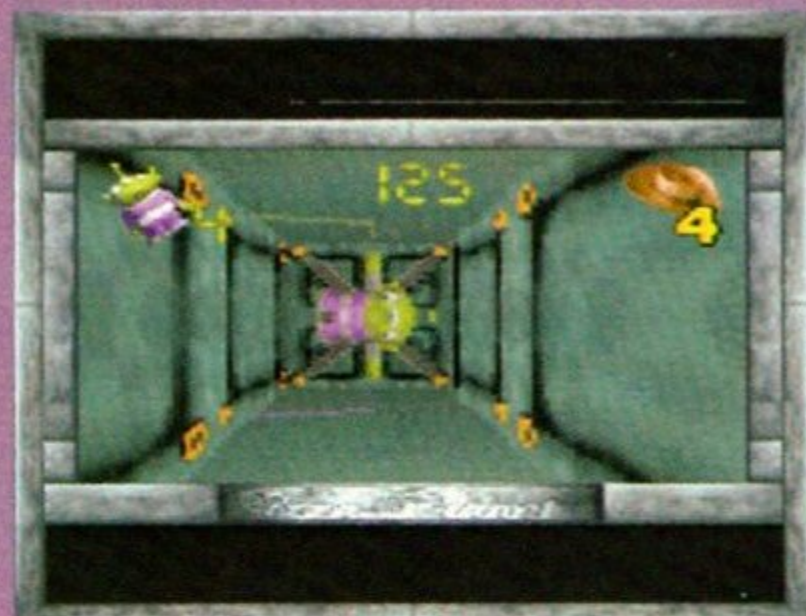
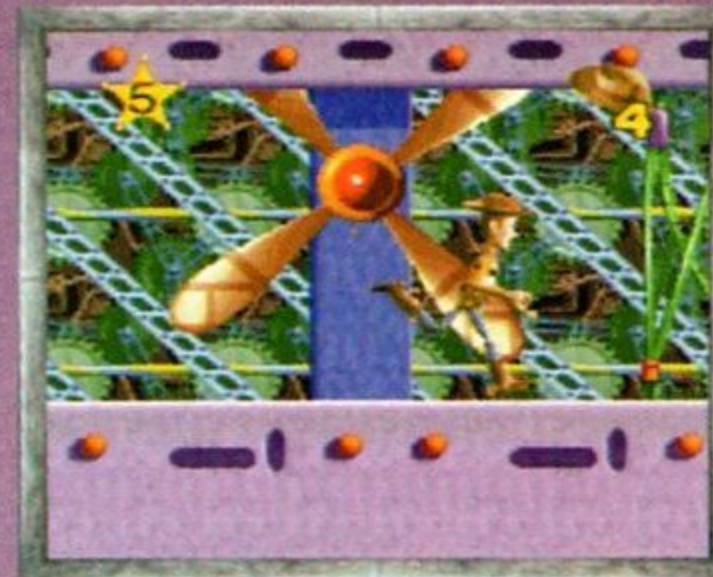
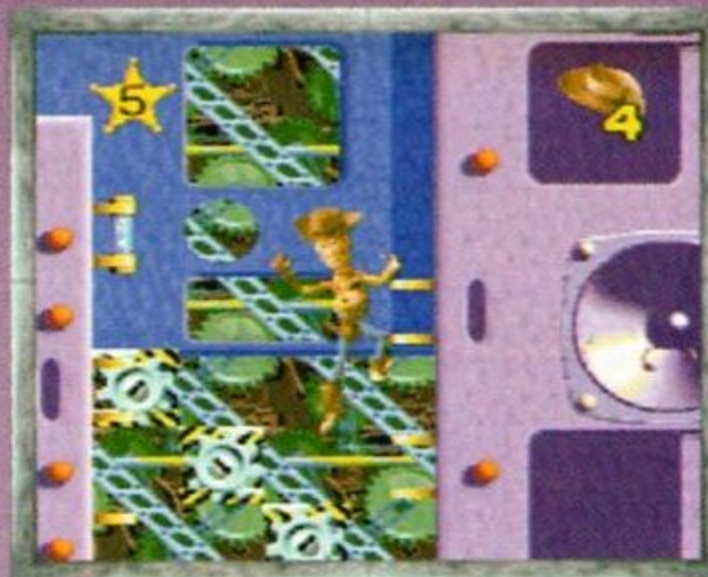
Before I go on about the graphics in *Toy Story* (and believe me, they are great) there is one thing I must address. As a Genesis game, TS's graphics are revolutionary, eclipsing any other game on the system you care to name. As a SNES game, however, the competition is a bit stiffer, with games

like *DKC*, *DKC 2*, *Killer Instinct*, and *Super Mario RPG* sporting the best CG graphics in the history of

the 16-bit console. With that out of the way, I still feel *Toy Story* has some of the best graphics I've ever seen on this system (save those 3 Nintendo powerhouses, of course). Almost every level has a cool, *Clockwork Knight*-style line-scrolling effect on the floor and objects in the background (toy horses, furniture, and the like). The levels that aren't side-scrolling feature some cool visuals as well (the *Doom*-ish 3-D sequences and the *Super Mario Kart*-like driving scene).

In the audio department, things are also very impressive, but not to the extent of the graphics. The music from the movie has been well translated and even the voice is directly sampled from the motion picture (you'll hear Buzz say, "To infinity, and beyond!" and the toy soldier captain yells, "Move, move, move!"). It all sounds great, but it's





nothing overly spectacular considering the power of the SNES sound chip.

Where things stumble a bit is in the gameplay. Now I know this game is targeted towards the younger gamer, but why did Disney Interactive incorporate "family friendly" features like non-violent gameplay and cutesy themes on one hand, and then spike the difficulty level way up over the top on the other hand? This game is hard!

In the end, *Toy Story* does Pixar's masterpiece justice. The graphics incorporate a dazzle and sheen worthy of the Disney movie. If DI can improve the gameplay in their games, they'll write history. With *Gargoyles* and now *Toy Story* under their belts, DI has made a fantastic debut in the gaming industry. If this is just the starting point, then I think we have a lot to look forward to from Disney Interactive in the future. -K. Lee





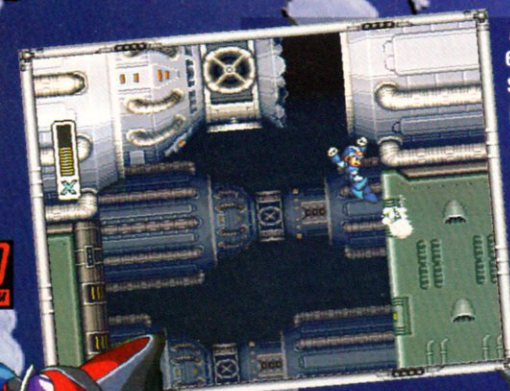
R
REVIEW

SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

DEVELOPER - CAPCOM
PUBLISHER - CAPCOM
FORMAT - 24 MEG + C4
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED
AVAILABLE - NOW



E. STORM
A SHIMMERING
FAREWELL TO 16-BIT
MEGA MAN.



As I'm sure you already know, *RockMan* is the Japanese equivalent of *MegaMan*. The absence of a completed US version urged me to whip out my released import for a review of perhaps the last and best *MegaMan* on 16-bit. Some would argue that the original *MegaMan*, in all his Pillsbury Doughboy splendor, is the true hero and therefore this new more boyish version of *MegaMan* cannot possibly surpass MM7. It's a good argument; the cartoon series is low budget and the last two games starring Capcom's new 'boy' haven't had the depth of the originals, but honestly, MMX3 is an inspired effort.

Using Capcom's C4 chip for added power,

X3 features more speed, diversity, special FX, and power up's. In this third installment we find *MegaMan*, who is saddened by the loss of his companions after the destruction of Sigma, encouraged by his friend Zero as they go up against a new foe, Doppler. During much of the game you can select and play as Zero! Dr. Light, *MegaMan*'s creator is also along for the





IS MMX ON ULTRA NEXT?





JAPANESE VIDEO GAME TOYS

It's depressing how much cool stuff Japanese gamers get that we don't. Check out these game toys... just a minuscule sample of all the joy available in Japan. You can get anything from stuffed Mogs and Chocobos from *Final Fantasy* to the *Donkey Kong* on the left. Unfortunately, such premium joy-items don't come cheap: The *DarkStalkers* characters below cost 9800 Yen each, or about \$100. Ellis from *Toshinden* on the left is 7800 Yen (\$80), and *Donkey Kong* is 6000



(\$60). You may be able to find a Japanese toy store in your area that can special order these, and for that reason here are the makers of each product: Ellis is by Takara, the *DarkStalkers* are by Medicom and DK's by Estona.



NEO-GEO WORLD

SNK's new Neo-Geo themepark opens on December 23rd, and features rides, restaurants, karaoke and bowling in addition to many, many Neo units. Think of how cool it would be to have game theme parks in the US...

CAPCOM ILLUSTRATIONS

I've believed for many years that Capcom has THE most talented artists in the industry, and this book proves it. Go to your local Japanese bookstore and special order it. The publisher is Shinseisha.



IN OTHER NEWS...

- As of 11/24, the PlayStation's Japanese retail price is 24800 Yen, or about \$250. This was probably to counter Nintendo's Nintendo64 announcement. Sega immediately retaliated with a cash-back campaign that requires you to buy a Saturn at full retail price. When you buy your system, you are given a mail-away coupon redeemable for 5000 Yen.
- Game Arts, the maker of the *Lunar* series of games, has announced that the entire staff of *Lunar: Eternal Blue* is working on an original Saturn RPG. Game Arts has stated that this new project is not a *Lunar* game.
- Namco has announced that they are currently porting their popular arcade titles *Rave Racer*, *Air Combat 22*, and *Tekken 2* for a PC polygon accelerator board by NEC. These games will run under Windows '95 and are due out in May. The board itself is due in March.
- Virtua Fighter* has been officially announced by Sega for the Game Gear. No kidding! VF has no release date.

LUNAR III ON THE GAME GEAR?

No, it's not Lunar III, it's the 4-Meg Lunar: The Strolling School, a side-story to Lunar on the constantly floating island of layne which "strolls" randomly across the oceans of Lunar. You play as two new students in the



layne Magic Guild, Eri and Lena. The game system is entirely Lunar, but the battles are now first-person. Lunar is out January 12th... look for coverage in our next issue.

RENDERED FIGHTING COMES TO THE NEO!

The Neo-Geo game you see here is *Shin Oh Ken*, or *Fist of the Phoenix God*, by Saurus. The first in what is sure to be a gamut of *Killer Instinct*-inspired rendered fighters, *Shin Oh Ken* combines *Night Warriors*' chain combo system with *X-Men*'s super jumps. What I don't understand is where Saurus, a third party that until now has ported Neo games to 16-bit systems, obtained this CG power. *Shin Oh Ken* has no release date.



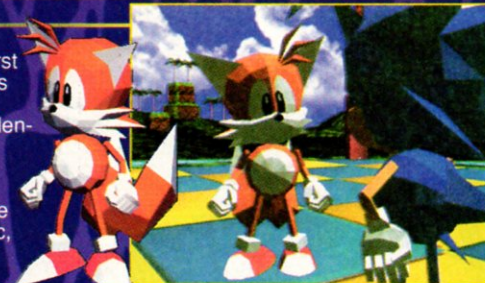
REAL BOUT: FATAL FURY

Oh boy! The fifth *Fatal Fury* game is almost here. This is basically *Fatal 3* with new backgrounds, Duck King, Kim Kaphwan and Billy Kane. There are new features like... uh... ring outs. Another interesting aspect of *Real Bout* is SNK's announcement that this will be Geese's last appearance in any game.

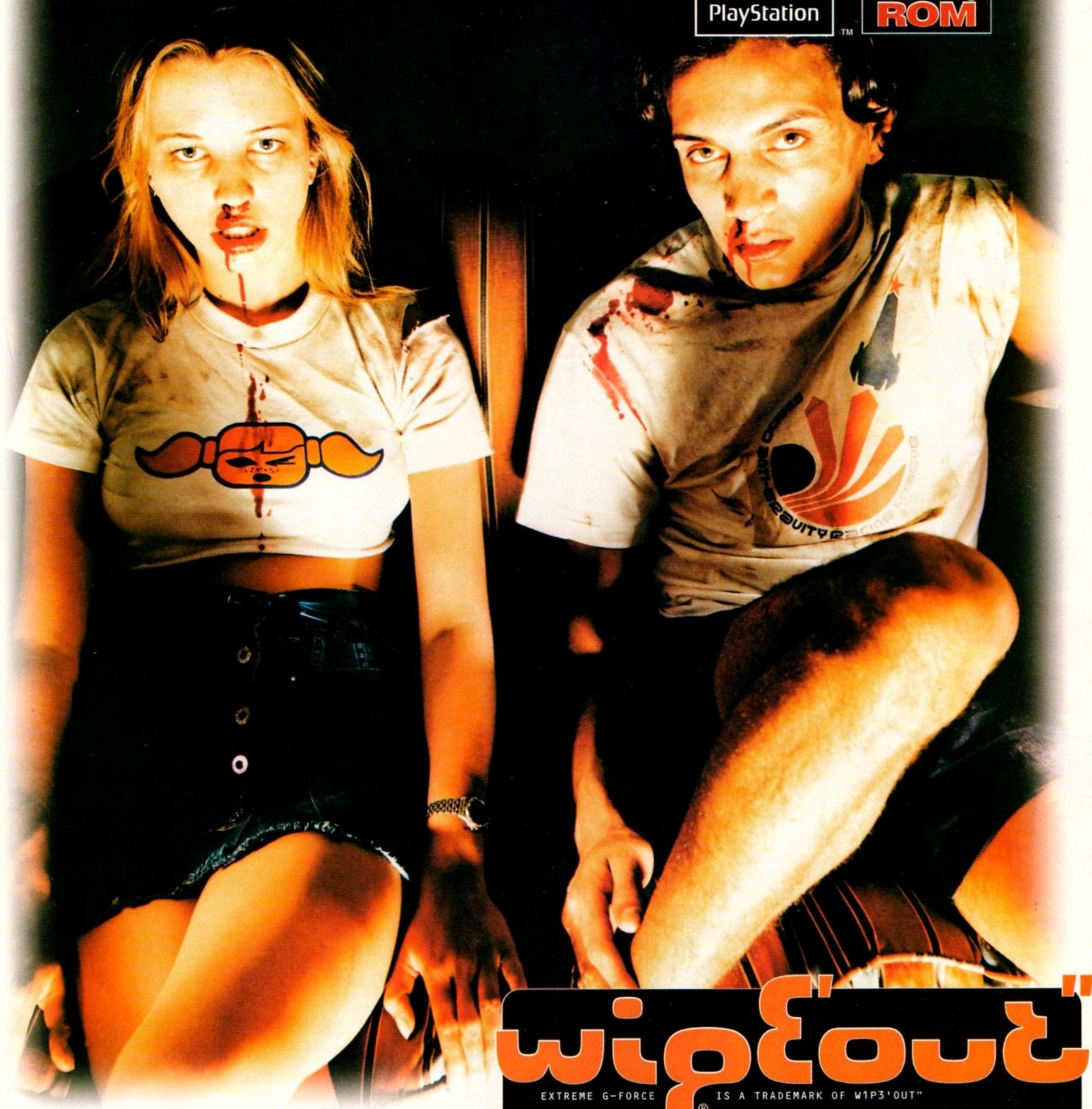


AM2'S "FIGHTING SONIC!"

AM2 seems to be getting fruitier and fruitier: first *Fighting Vipers* and now *Fighting Sonic*. FS is extremely early, and has only two complete characters. The gameplay is supposed to be identical to *Vipers*, but you will now have the ability to bounce off the ropes to perform spin attacks. The Model 2-powered *Sonic* has no release date yet. Characters that will supposedly be in the final game are Amy Rose, Dr. Robotnik, Knuckles, Metal Sonic, Super Sonic, and, of course, new fighters. We'll bring you more as information develops!



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"More flash and substance than most games were ever meant to have" - **Next Generation 5/5**

"Best home racing game ever" - **Die Hard Game Fan 93%**

"Will leave you drenched in sweat and grinning" - **Game Pro**

"The best reason to own a Playstation" - **Ultimate Gamer 9/10**





P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - CHUN SOFT

PUBLISHER - CHUN SOFT

FORMAT - 24 MEG CART

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN

Furai no Shiren is the 2nd Mysterious Dungeon game, so, good news, the game randomly creates the dungeon layout so it's a different game every time you play. Bad news, it deletes your saved files after you reload them so whenever you die it's back to the beginning; all that carries over are any items you left in the towns' storehouses and any events you've cleared. Items, enemies, and traps are also randomly placed, and the abundant items (uh!) have random effects. The turn-based combat isn't really action, but it does take strategy, and figuring out what all the weapons, pots, staves, scrolls, and meats do is half the fun. Graphics range from blah to incredible, but the music, by *Dragon Quest* composer Koichi Sugiyama, is 100% genius. The story involves a big old plateau, a waterfall, a city of gold, and a weasel named "Kappu." More next month, maybe. -Takuhi



WHAT THE CHARACTERS LACK IN SIZE THE GAME MAKES UP FOR IN DETAIL!



TAKUHI

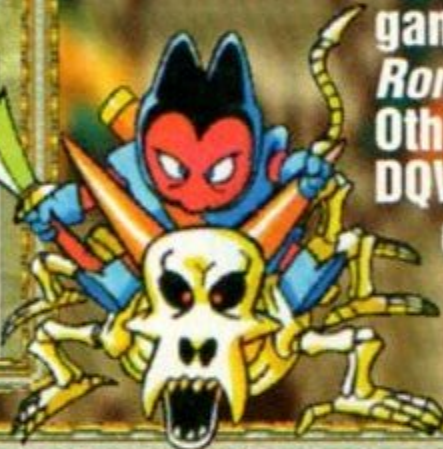




VI

DRAGON QUEST

The Lands of Illusion



Other new additions to DQVI include fully animated enemies and refined versions of the class-change and in-party monster



P

PREVIEW



SUPER FAMICOM

DEVELOPER: ENIX

PUBLISHER: ENIX

FORMAT: 32-MEG CART

1 PLAYER

DIFFICULTY: ADVANCED

AVAIL. NOW JAPAN



NICK ROX

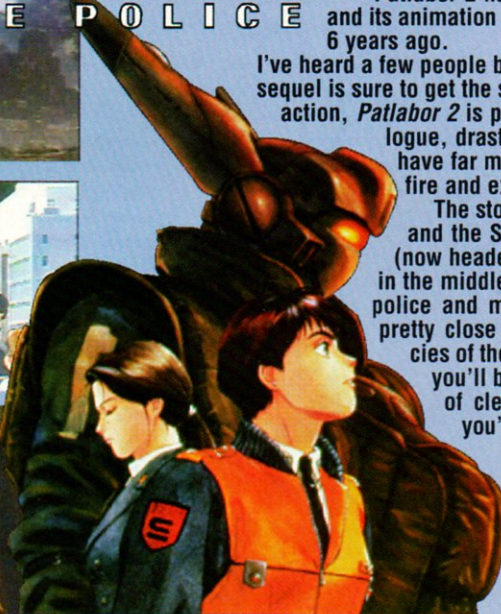
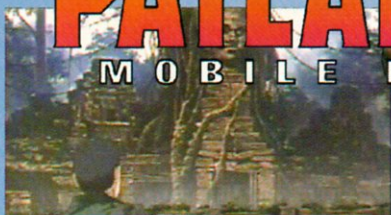
Can it be...? Yes, Dragon Quest VI is finally out. I'll tell you if it's the best RPG of all time next month...

systems from III and V. As you can see, the graphics have been vastly improved, with many cool effects like lens flares, transparent, line-scrolling mist, godly color-cycling spell effects, and lightning that casts long shadows on everything in the room. The music... I can't even begin to describe the music. This is probably the best SNES sound programming I've ever heard, and of course the Koichi Sugiyama composition is beyond belief. I wish I could tell you more, but I'm running out of space... I'll be back with an in-depth review next month! -Nick Rox

TAKUHI'S

PATLABOR 2

MOBILE POLICE



Ghost in the Machine's getting a lot of attention these days, and Manga is wise to capitalize on that to sell Mamoru Oshii's earlier effort, the *Patlabor* movies. Although it's been around in Japan for years, *Patlabor 2* has lost none of its timeliness or impact, and its animation quality is no less stupendous than it was 6 years ago.

I've heard a few people brand *Patlabor* as painfully slow, and the sequel is sure to get the same complaints. But despite its lack of action, *Patlabor 2* is packed with intensity. The powerful dialogue, drastic camera angles, and constant tension have far more impact than the usual non-stop gunfire and explosions.

The story takes place 3 years after the original, and the Special Vehicle Division of the Tokyo PD (now headed by main character Nagumo) is caught in the middle of an internal conflict between Japan's police and military forces. You have to be paying pretty close attention to understand all the intricacies of the political situation, but if you're willing, you'll be rewarded with a brilliant storyline full of clever plot twists and deep dialogue. If you're in the mood for something with teeth, I can't recommend *Patlabor 2* enough.

108 Minutes, parental discretion advised

\$19.95, dubbed or subtitled

By Manga Video, available now

THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER



You probably know *The Secret of Blue Water* better as *Nadia*, the name under which it was released here a few years ago. Now, as the first Streamline release in a long time, *Nadia* and Jean are back in affordably priced, well-dubbed 4 episode sets.

Nadia is a late-80's Japanese TV series that enjoyed great popularity and became an instant classic. Although it's primarily for children, serious anime fans won't find it as preachy or ridiculous as American cartoons... Like last year's big child-oriented success, *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Nadia* is free of all the archaic ideals and ham-fisted morals most Americans are used to. Instead we get a believable world, filled with emotionally deep characters that must cope with many of the harsher aspects of life that Disney prefers to sweep under the rug. Although basically light-hearted and fun, there are elements of tragedy and depth that give *Nadia* an unexpectedly serious undertone.

The series is a chronicle of the adventures of Jean, a young French inventor, and *Nadia*, a mysterious young woman of unknown origins. As they attempt to escape a trio of bumbling fiends who want *Nadia's* amulet, they end up far away from Jean's native France, and in a constant string of adventures. The setting is late 19th-century Europe, and the cute accents and archaic inventions give the series a charmingly original mood.

At only 15 bucks for 4 episodes, everyone can and should give *The Secret of Blue Water* a chance.

94 minutes (4 episodes), fine for all ages.

\$14.95, dubbed.

By Streamline/Orion.

Volumes 1 & 2 available January 10th.



The latest from manga god Yuzo Takada (creator of *3x3 Eyes* and *All Purpose Cultural Cat Girl Nuku Nuku*), *Blue Seed* is finally coming to the states this February.

Our heroine, Momiji, is in serious trouble. She's the unknown twin sister of the heir to a famous Japanese mythological figure, and all of a sudden everyone wants a piece of her. Her school's being taken over by a gigantic, many-tentacled tree, and the only one who can save her is sort-of-hero Mamoru Kusanagi, who actually just wants to kill her himself. Worst of all, she's drawn by Yuzo Takada, who has a serious panty fetish, so she has to deal with being partially exposed in nearly every frame of the 2-part pilot. Her only chance is to join the Japanese government agency that's responsible for such things (the ones that coordinate the defense whenever Gamera attacks, I suppose), and fight back in whatever capacity they'll let her.

For a TV show, the animation quality on the pilot is astounding, although it slips a bit in later episodes. Fortunately, the soundtrack is great the whole way through, and Takada's eccentric supporting cast never really gets old. Definitely a series to watch for.

60 minutes (2 episodes),
some parental guidance suggested.

Price
unknown,
dubbed or
subtitled.
By AD
Vision,
Volume 1
available
Feb.

BLUE SEED



There are two exciting *Devil Hunter Yohko*-related events this issue. On the left, we have *Devil Hunter Yohko 6*, the first of the new style episodes that is actually worth watching. I loved DHY, but after the ultra-cheese, ultra-cheap, presented-by-absolutely-no-one-who-had-anything-to-do-with-the-original sequels, I rapidly lost interest. Another victim of the *Project A-Ko* syndrome.

But the series has been pulling up in quality, and after a not-so-bad part 5, I found myself actually impressed by part 6. The animation quality was excellent, and they managed to retain more of the humor from the original, without reverting to the just-plain silliness of 2 and 3.

In this episode, Yohko meets Ayako, her whip-wielding cousin, from a branch of the family that believes they should be the true devil hunters. In her quest to destroy her cousin, she accidentally frees a sinister demon, thoroughly ruining Yohko's day.

Every frame of Ayako and Yohko is pure beauty, and the final confrontation with the demon was especially well done. Let's hope this trend continues.

45 minutes, parental guidance suggested. \$29.95, subtitled.
By AD Vision, available now.

If you're not yet familiar with the *Devil Hunter Yohko* series, you're about to get a second chance. AD Vision is releasing a dubbed, special edition of the classic *Devil Hunter Yohko*, featuring new footage and a special low price.

The new footage is around 12 minutes that was cut from both the original American and Japanese releases. No whole scenes were cut, but there's a lot more dialogue and character-building this time around. I haven't heard the dubbing yet, but it's too bad that there's no subtitle version of the rerelease planned. After all, you can never have too many versions of a classic.

Yohko mixes demonic warfare with some fairly risqué humor, all of it excellently animated. Though many elements of it have long since become cliché, *Yohko* is one of the best in its class, and its premiere was by far the best in the series.

Yohko mixes demonic warfare with some fairly risqué humor, all of it excellently animated. Though many elements of it have long since become cliché, *Yohko* is one of the best in its class, and its premiere was by far the best in the series.

50 minutes, parental guidance suggested.
\$19.95, dubbed.
By AD Vision, available Jan.

DEVIL HUNTER Yohko





Killer Instinct 2 Arrives!

KI 2 will hit arcades across the country by the end of January. The game has 11 characters (10 playable and one boss). Only seven of the original fighters made it to the sequel (Jago, Gladius, Orchid, TJ Combo, Sabrewulf, Spinal, and Fulgore). The 4 new characters are: Kim Wu (a martial artist), Maya (a Mayan warrior), Tusk (a Barbarian), and an all-new final boss (not Eyedol). The 12 backgrounds are all new, and there are rumors of up to three hidden stages.

As for gameplay, the combo engine has now been enhanced. Each character is capable of doing (technically) 1 million combos, including big KI-style combos and more traditional SF-style combos. No Mercies (fatalities) are completely gone, replaced by a multitude of Ultimate combos where you finish the enemy during game play. There are also now Super moves; each character has FIVE Supers

plus possible hidden Supers. Another big addition are throws and throw combos. Stay tuned for an immense blowout on this Ultra sequel very soon! (P.S. KI 2 should be making its way to the Ultra 64 at the time of its U.S. launch or soon thereafter, stay tuned!)

Ultra 64 Delayed AGAIN

Well, it's official: the Ultra 64's U.S. launch has been delayed yet again due to manufacturing constraints. The date is currently approximated at sometime between May and August of '96. The April 21st Japanese date has not changed.

More Developers Sign for Ultra

On December 14th in Japan, Nintendo held a development conference for the Nintendo64 (Ultra 64) to solicit third-party support. According to sources, some 85 developers who attended (including Capcom, Konami, Warp, Enix, and Namco) intend to sign on.

32-Bit Konami Update

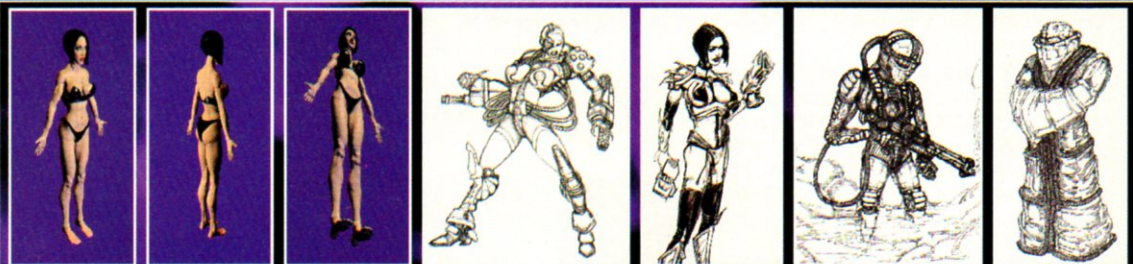
Konami has confirmed that *Contra* for PlayStation and Saturn is well into development, and will be released in the summer of '96 for both systems. The latest on *Castlevania* is that the US Saturn version is now cancelled, and the PlayStation edition is about 20% done. The game will hit Japan in May and the U.S. in October. Also in development from Konami is a new 3-D fighting game for the PlayStation that will mix 3-D graphics with *Street Fighter* gameplay.

Credit Where It's Due

Sometimes we just have to speak out against injustices in this industry. Sega of America has been perpetuating the myth that its in-house developers have been in some way responsible for the content of Japanese-designed games such as *Clockwork Knight 2*. In the U.S. manuals of games such as *Sega Rally*, not ONE

Japanese developer is listed in the credits. Second, in a recent interview conducted by another publication Away Team members made comments that would lead readers to believe they created or were in some way responsible for the creative direction of these games. We are here to clarify this giant misconception.

In the case of Japanese-developed games, the Away Team/Sega of America (or any other U.S. publisher of Japanese games, for that matter) does the following things: 1) translates the text, 2) suggests extremely minor changes such as making bosses/levels more difficult, 3) invariably creates horrendous, degrading box art, and 4) once in a while, censors anything that would be "inappropriate to the U.S. market." Developing is a thankless job as it is. The real heroes seldom get the credit that is due them.



TERMINUS BY SCAVENGER Choose to play a man or a woman in a game combining real time 3-D graphics with fully rotating, rendered, texture mapped environments. All shadows and lights are ray-traced on the textures to give each scene a realistic look. The characters are built as 3-D models, then motion captured for the ultimate effect. This amazing third person game uses an engine that alone took a year to develop! We'll have more *Terminus* news next month. Including the twisted story and ingenious game scenarios. How 'bout that rendered beauty for an action character? Wait 'til you see *Terminus*.

SINGLETRAC PLANNING TO DEVELOP NU64 GAMES

SingleTrac Entertainment Technologies, Inc., recently announced that they will be developing software for the Saturn, Windows '95 and the Nintendo Ultra 64. Based in Salt Lake City, Utah, SingleTrac developed *Twisted Metal* and *Warhawk* for the Sony PlayStation. According to Todd Kelly, chief financial officer, "SingleTrac's evolution as an entertainment provider will be evident as we move toward the publisher role and take advantage of opportunities in the out-of-home market. Our strategic relationships in distribution and technology will accelerate our growth and leverage our strengths."



SingleTrac's *Warhawk* for the PlayStation

PARADIGM SIMULATION TO MAKE PILOTWINGS 64

Paradigm Simulations, Inc. is currently developing *Pilotwings 64* for release on the Nintendo 64. The original blockbuster hit was created by Shigeru Miyamoto for the SNES. This fully interactive 3-D game includes several aircraft and characters to choose from, as well as first and third person

views, lush landscapes, and variable skill levels.

ACCLAIM LAUNCHES 50 TITLES WITH A \$10 MILLION MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. will launch more than 50 titles this holiday season with a \$10 million marketing campaign, which will include broadcast commercials, print advertising, radio promotions, cross-promotions with on-line services, and direct marketing. The president of Acclaim, Robert Holmes, says, "With games covering every genre from sports simulations and arcade translations to movie adaptations across all the new 32-bit formats, PC and 16-bit systems, we believe this will be a successful holiday selling season for Acclaim and the industry."

SONY PLAYSTATION HOLIDAY SWEEPSTAKES

Sony Computer Entertainment America and Sony Theaters have teamed for the "Sony PlayStation Holiday Sweepstakes." In this promotion, theater-goers at 75 Sony Theaters nationwide will have the opportunity to win one of the PlayStations to be given away at each locale. There will also be PlayStations displayed in the theater lobbies as well as a 30-second trailer which will run before selected movies. "By working closely with SCEA's sister company, Sony Theaters, we are able to expand theater patrons' entertainment experience by providing an opportuni-

ty to win a PlayStation," said SCEA's vice president of marketing.



NINTENDO ANNOUNCES 2 ULTRA64 SPORTS TITLES



Nintendo of America has announced two sports titles for the Nintendo Ultra 64: Electronic Arts' *FIFA Soccer* and Time Warner Interactive's 3-D hockey game with Wayne Gretzky.

The *FIFA Soccer* title will be an NU64 exclusive version. Nintendo expects it to be "one of the most realistic video game soccer simulations ever, featuring hundreds of international teams, amazingly fast gameplay... and game control functions only possible on the Nintendo Ultra 64." The game should be released for the 1996 holiday season.

Based on their coin-op hockey game (due out in spring 1996), this 3-D rendered hockey game will be a 3-on-3 plus goalie competition with "visually stunning, immersive, lightning fast game play." The National Hockey League Players Association has already agreed to allow the use of players names, statistics, and likeness-

es to add that extra sense of realism. Gretzky's own skating style was digitized to reflect real skating and competitive hockey moves. Time Warner is planning on a fall 1996 release.

3DO SELLS 64-BIT TECHNOLOGY TO MATSUSHITA

3DO Co. announced that the company will license its next-generation video game technology to Matsushita Electrical Industrial for approximately \$100 million.

The deal specifies that 3DO be paid the money in two installments by June, 1996 - and that the company receives royalty payments of \$3 per CD game sold for 3DO's M2 game technology. 3DO will retain rights to license M2 for use on PC's and coin-op arcade games, and will also maintain control over advancements beyond the technology.

Matsushita Electrical, a manufacturer of the Panasonic 3DO REAL game machine, will sublicense the M2 technology to other corporations in addition to also manufacturing the game platforms, which will debut in the US market in the latter part of 1996.



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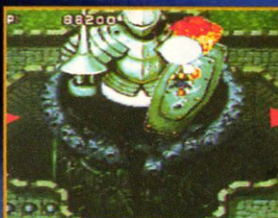
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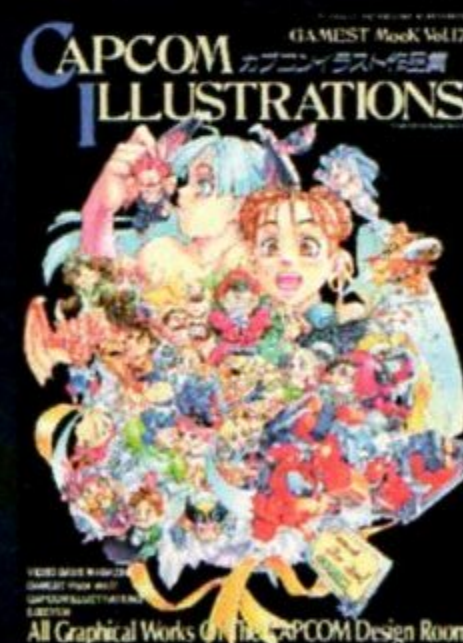
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And now...THE WINNERS of The Killer Instinct Mix 'N Match Contest. Let me just say that the art we received for this one was just amazing! And there was a lot of it! All of us here were truly overwhelmed. Thanks to all who entered and now enjoy these 2 pages of bliss!

WOLFINGER'S WALL

GRAND PRIZE WINNER

And it's Vuck Krcmar Grkavac of Vancouver B.C., Canada, Age: 15 (15!) that takes all the loot; the TV, the SNES, Killer Instinct for the SNES, a years sub. to GameFan, and G.F. T-shirt! Wheeew! Congrats, you earned it, you do awesome work.

1ST PLACE WINNERS 19 & UP



Zarex Domingo
Waipahu, HI
Age: 19



Mike Vary, Phoenix, OR
Age: 20

Nick Zuccarello
Cattawissa, MO
Age: 20



Prince Fitzgerald
Chicago, IL
Age: 20



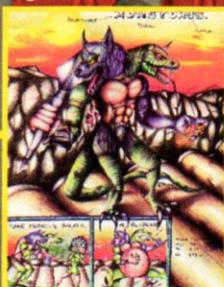
Rick Brown
New Castle, PA
Age: 18



1ST PLACE WINNERS 16 - 18



Drew King
St. Albans, WV
Age: 18



Vo Tran
Ontario, Canada
Age: 17



Long Vo
Berkeley, CA
Age: 18



Michelle Sinsel
Miami, FL
Age: 18



Rick Brown
New Castle, PA
Age: 18

1ST PLACE WINNERS 13 - 15



Boa Ngo
Ont., Canada
Age: 15



Kenneth Morrison
Marion, TX
Age: 14



Hal Forsstrom
Peabody, MA
Age: 14



Mark Vick
Napahee, ON
Age: 14

Arturo Ramirez
South Gate, CA
Age: 15



1ST PLACE WINNERS 8 - 12



Richard Saethang
Panorama City, CA
Age: 11



Garner Dungey
Bronx, NY
Age: 11

Scott Green Shaker
Heights, OH
Age: 12



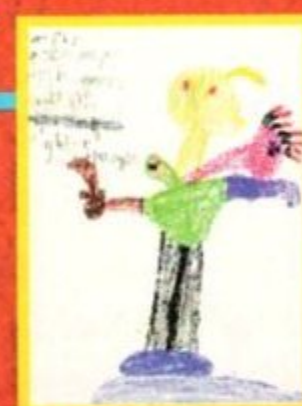
Hau Hoang
Garden Grove, CA Age: 8



Ryan Mulholland
Vineland, N.J.
Age: 12



Jeff Warren
St. Pete., FL
Age: 7



Keith Powell
Ont., Canada.
Age: 7

Lacey Petekavich
Pierrson, IA
Age: 6



Steve Flesher
Lake in the Hills, IL
Age: 7



Jordan Coon
Richardson, TX
Age: 1.5

2ND PLACE WINNERS



Arturo Ramirez
South Gate, CA
Age: 15



Paul Beck Florissant,
MD Age: 31



Jaisyn Ross
Greenville, PA
Age: 22



Daniel Botella
Albany, CA. Age: 13



Robertom Pimentel
Miami, IL. Age: 21



Yoosuk Chung San Jose,
CA. Age: 19



Roberto Rodriguez
New York, NY Age: 20



Jeff Henderson
W., NV. Age: 22



Bob Dill
Davenport, OK. Age: 22



Tristan Garcia,
Diamond Bar, CA.
Age: 22

3RD PLACE WINNERS



Jimmy Ng
New York, N.Y. Age: 19



Craig Cochrane
Belfast, N. Ireland
Age: 22



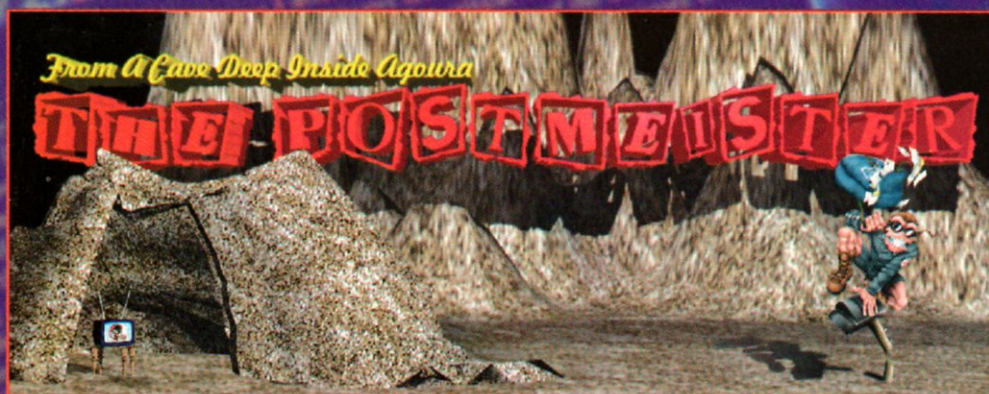
Orlando Moore
Westwego, CA. Age: 23



Cory Carnes
Meadford, OR
Age: 17



Kevin Truong
San Gabriel, CA
Age: 15



From A Cave Deep Inside Agoura

THE POSTMEISTER

Hello and welcome to yet another exciting Postmeister. I know you're all upset that I got only 1 page last month (you are upset, right?), but that's no excuse for the many desperate and, yes, pathetic techniques writers have been attempting to get their letters in. I call special attention to young "Daniel Patao," or "Keith Axe," or "M. Gonzales," or whatever your name is. You poor, misguided youth. Did you really think that I wouldn't notice that all of your letters came from the same printer, addressed in the same handwriting, with the same pen? Like I wouldn't find it suspicious that I got 4 letters about the PC-FX, all from different places in Anchorage? We've got the forensic evidence to put you away for good, friend, so just back off. Screwing with the Postmeister is, after all, a federal offense. If you want PC-FX news, go buy Zenki, it's a Final Fight-style fighting game, looks good, out now. There you go. Now get help before your growing interest in white collar crime becomes a life-consuming obsession! Now back to the regular folk:

Dear Postmaster [that's MEISTER! -PM]

First of all, please print more letters, this is a great source of info and it seems to be getting smaller. And now for the Ultra 64 questions, please answer them to the best of your knowledge, and pleeeeeease, I am begging you to print this letter so that my questions get answered, thanks.

1. When will Cruis'n USA be released for the Ultra 64?
2. In the September issue of your magazine, you mentioned a game under development by Angel Studios and Shigeru Miyamoto titled *Real Time Renegade*. When will this come out and will it be better than Cruis'n USA?
3. Will KI 2 make it to the Arcades? How many megs is it?
4. What RPG's are planned for the almighty Ultra?
5. Will *Golden Eye* really be coming to the Ultra 64, and if so, when?
6. Will SF 3 really be a one year exclusive?
7. Is *Ultimate MK3* really going to be an Ultra exclusive?
8. Is the Ultra really more powerful than the M2?
9. What about *War Gods*, will that be an

110

Ultra title, and when will you get pictures of that?

Thank you very much, I love your magazine and read it 4 times a day.

Mike Lauter
Boca Raton, FL

1. Cruis'n USA should be a launch title here.
2. *Real Time Renegade* (tentative title, I pray) has no connection to Miyamoto or Angel Studios. It's actually by Evans & Sutherland, the military contractor that Singletac's staff came from. Singletac, makers of *Twisted Metal* and *Warhawk*, is now making games for the Ultra and Saturn, by the way. Anyway, we don't know much about RTR... We saw it running on SGI hardware and it is ASTOUNDING, but where and when it's coming home is not yet known. All we know for sure is that they're currently evaluating hardware formats for it.
3. KI 2 will probably be in arcades when you get this issue... 64 megs for Ultra.
4. Outside of *Zelda 64*, *Final Fantasy VII*, and *Dragon Quest VII*, I don't know of any. But when you have those 3, who needs more? They're all Bulky Drive, BTW.
5. Really yes, look for it later this year. There will probably be driving scenes in addition to the Doom-ish scenes.
6. We're not supposed to say, but... um... Yes. Didn't hear it from me, though.
7. No. It isn't even planned for Ultra.
8. Only time will tell.
9. Almost certainly. We should have had pictures by now, actually.

Dear Postmeister,

In Volume 3, Issue 12, you said *Arc the Lad* and *Beyond the Beyond* would probably not come out on the U.S. PlayStation. I want to know why not? It would be stupid not to bring them out over here, because the people who make the games would be making lots of money from sales of the two games because U.S. gamers like RPG's just as much as the people in Japan do. Is there someone we can write to, to beg them to bring those two games out over here? Please help!

Dan Bahman
San Diego, CA

Evidently Sony couldn't argue with your logic, 'cause, ta da, they're both coming out here. Look for 'em first quarter '96, 'round March-ish. That's a kind of long wait, but in the meantime, might I suggest *Kings Field II* (just *Kings Field* here), coming here from ASCII, probably January-ish? Review next month.

Dear Postmeister!

Please help! All NINE of us are in the process of video game decision making. First of all, our ages range from 22 to 26. Also we don't like *Mario*, *Sonic*, *Rayman*, or even *Earthworm Jim*! To help us, our mutual interests are RPG's, fighters, side-scrollers, action, and shooters. All with great game play and somewhat serious action and plot. Last, we collect Japanese anime, action/sci-fi movies and import games (Megadrive and Famicom).

What systems (because some of us are going to buy two) would we qualify for? Will all systems have a converter for import games? Finally, I have some questions. Can we have an update on *Turok*, *Final Fantasy*, and *Robotech* for the Ultra-64? An update on *Lunar*, *Lobo*, *Guardian Heroes*, and *Steamgear Mash* on the Saturn? An update on *Gundam*, *Falcata*, *Metal Jacket*, *Goemon*, *Gunner's Heaven*, *Bounty Arms*, *Z-XED*, and *Toh Shin Den*?

I am confident that you can lead all NINE of us to the right systems!

Todd Raymond
Kansas City, MO

Hmm. Well, it's always a treat to get a letter from the Borg empire, or someone with multiple personality disorder, or whatever you, uh, "nine" are. Personally, I don't buy this "nine" stuff. I doubt you could find 9 human beings anywhere who dislike like *Mario*, *Sonic*, *Rayman*, and *Jim* (I mean, all four of them!). But as I aim to please, I'll do the best I can. The Postmeister can't endorse specific systems, but I can tell you about the games and hardware and let you pick which systems' games appeal to you most. The Saturn has a nice converter for Japanese games, but I've yet to hear of a reliable PlayStation converter. No news on an Ultra converter yet, of course.

Turok: It's coming out, probably a launch title.

Final Fantasy: December '96, or later, for the Bulky Drive.

Robotech: No news on release, but I hear it will be action/adventure.

Lunar: Proceeding smoothly, it's coming in spring, new graphics, new mini-quests, new music, new intermissions.

Lobo: Not yet announced for Saturn... 16-bit versions out within a month or two, tho.

Guardian Heroes: IT'S COMING HERE! Yes! It plays like *Yu Yu Hakusho*, except

with spells and level ups and stuff. Graphics are stunning. Great anime intro. Review next issue!

Steamgear Mash: Atlus bought it for American release, so look for it 1st quarter.

Gundam: Came out in Japan, and seemed pretty lame. No U.S. release planned.

Falcata: Ugh. Looked pretty bad. Same as above.

Metal Jacket: HIDEOUSLY bad.

Goemon: Coming early next year in Japan, no US release planned.

Gunner's Heaven: No US release announced yet, but with companies like Atlus quickly buying up and releasing all the cool unreleased Japanese game, it's definitely a candidate for a quick release.

Bounty Arms: What happened? This was supposed to come out last March. Canceled, I suppose.

ZXE-D: Bandai's mysterious plug-the-toys-into-the-PlayStation fighting game. No date in Japan.

Toshinden 2: December 29th in Japan, probably not 'til mid-year here.

Dear Postmeister,

I'm writing to say that I "love" your magazine, and to ask you a few questions.

#1. I own a Saturn and I would like to know why Sega isn't bringing out all these sweet RPG's. *Magic Knight Rayearth* looks amazing because of the drawn anime, *Legend of Thor* looks cool as well.

#2. How is *Fighting Vipers*? Do you know if they have started the Saturn version of it? Oh, and *Desert Tank*, I played that in the arcade, and it was wicked. Is it coming for the Saturn anytime soon?

#3. Are these games coming out on Saturn in America?

- a. *Virtual On*
- b. *Ayer's Adventure*
- c. *Dragon Force*
- d. *Dark Savior*
- e. *Guardian Heroes*
- f. *Indy 500*

Thank you for your time.
Paul & Dan Summerhill
Stouffville, Ont.

1. I don't know why Sega isn't, but Working Designs is bringing out a ton of 'em, including *Rayearth*. Sega might bring out *Story of Thor*, since they brought out *Beyond Oasis*.

2. *Fighting Vipers* plays and looks fantastic, it's just that the characters are so... so... SO LAME! Actually, it is currently in the works for Saturn. I have no idea about *Desert Tank*. I mean, recently Sega's been announcing the Saturn versions of their games before the arcade games are even out, but we've heard nothing yet about *Desert Tank*. Still, I give it an 80% chance.

3 a. *Virtual On* is in the works for Saturn in

Japan, and will no doubt come out here. b. *Ayer's Adventure*; no word on that yet. c. *Dragon Force*; no word yet. d. *Dark Savior* just got pushed back for a while in Japan, I don't know about an American release. e. *Guardian Heroes*; coming our way March. How uncharacteristically prompt... f. *Indy 500* was announced in Japan, but oddly enough, not here. I'm sure it'll come out here, tho, especially if *Sega Rally* does well.

Dear Postmeister:

Is it just me, or does it seem that something in the video game industry is becoming more and more scarce, sort of like the rainforest? I believe it's the extinction of the classic video game feeling, which is dying out in the post-fighting and 3-D game era. Didn't you feel it when you saw the *Mr. Do!* remake for Neo Geo? But things were fine even a couple of years ago. Could somebody please tell me what in the hell has happened to Wolfteam/Renovation Products? *Gaiques* and *Whip Rush* should be featured in "The Graveyard." Where are Falcom, Game Arts, Technosoft, Hudson Soft, and Compile? Ah, like I haven't been waiting more than EIGHT years for a sequel to *Golvellius: The Valley of Doom*. Even if these old companies never rise from their graves, I am starting to lose that feeling that got me playing in the first place. *Astal* and *Jumping Flash* are good, but what I really want are *SONIC* and *Streets of Rage* back! All I want is for things to be the way they were. Why does it have to be this way? Why don't they make great games like *Valis* anymore? Or *Y's*? Or *Herzog Zwei*? Or, hello, *Monster World*?

Finally, a suggestion, or more like a thought. The parent company of "Diehard" seems like it has the financial ability to become a small software publisher in the likes of Working Designs and Vic Tokai and Atlus. And there are so many games out there that are passed on by Sega of America and now SONY - and these games are perfect (except for the fact that they do not fit into the "fighting" or "3-D" category), and we deserve them, badly. Just imagine, "Diehard Games." Nice day-dream.

Sincerely,
John Dalem
San Antonio, TX

Ah, John, you and you alone know the only sure-fire way of getting a letter into the Postmeister. Ask about *Golvellius 2*. WHAT HAPPENED? Okay, 'twas so many years ago, but I remember it clearly, the hero, *Golvellius*, and *Golvellius'* sister walking off into the sunset for their next adventure. There's no reason Compile

can't make that promised sequel... The only danger Compile is in is from drowning in all the money their Puyo Puyo series pulls in in Japan, but what about *Golvellius*? What about their *Aleste* series, which included 3 of the best shooters ever, *M.U.S.H.A.* (The Postmeister shows off: *Metallic Uniframe Super-Hybrid Armor*. Bet you didn't remember!), *Spriggan*, and *Space Megaforce*, and many others. What about *Monster World*? Did you know they made 3 different *Monster Worlds* (in addition to the 4 we got) that never made it here, for the Master System, Megadrive (excellent game!) and PC Engine CD-ROM? Their last non-Puyo Puyo effort was the brilliant looking *Shadowrun* for the Mega-CD, but that was canceled only a week before its release. I'm sick of Puyo Puyo, do something new!

Most of the companies you mentioned are still around, though. Let's see...

Wolfteam/Renovation/Lasersoft/Telenet is very, very dead. I miss the *Valis* series too. Falcom is making "renewal" versions of all their classics for Japanese PC's, and *Y's V* (from them, not Hudson, like *IV* was) will be out just before Christmas for the Super Famicom. Game Arts is very busy, and are hard at work on *Lunar* for Saturn, another RPG by the *Lunar* team (*Lunar 3*, mayhap) and a polygon robotech-ish kinda game. Technosoft has a hit with *Reverthion*, but, hello, *Thunderforce V*, and I want it now. Hudson Soft is also very alive, and we can look forward to Super Famicom, Saturn, and PC-FX *Tengai Makyo* games in the next few months.

And hey, as much as I miss the past, I just know that 5 years from now I'll be looking back and whining that, "ya know, *Panzer Dragoon*, *Soul Edge*, *Virtua Fighter II*, *Jumping Flash*, *Skeleton Warriors*, *Resident Evil*... they just don't make games like that anymore..." New video game eras don't come very often, so enjoy it...

As for your final comment, well, what can we say, 'cept that we've been thinking the exact same thing...

Write to me or I'll run for President!

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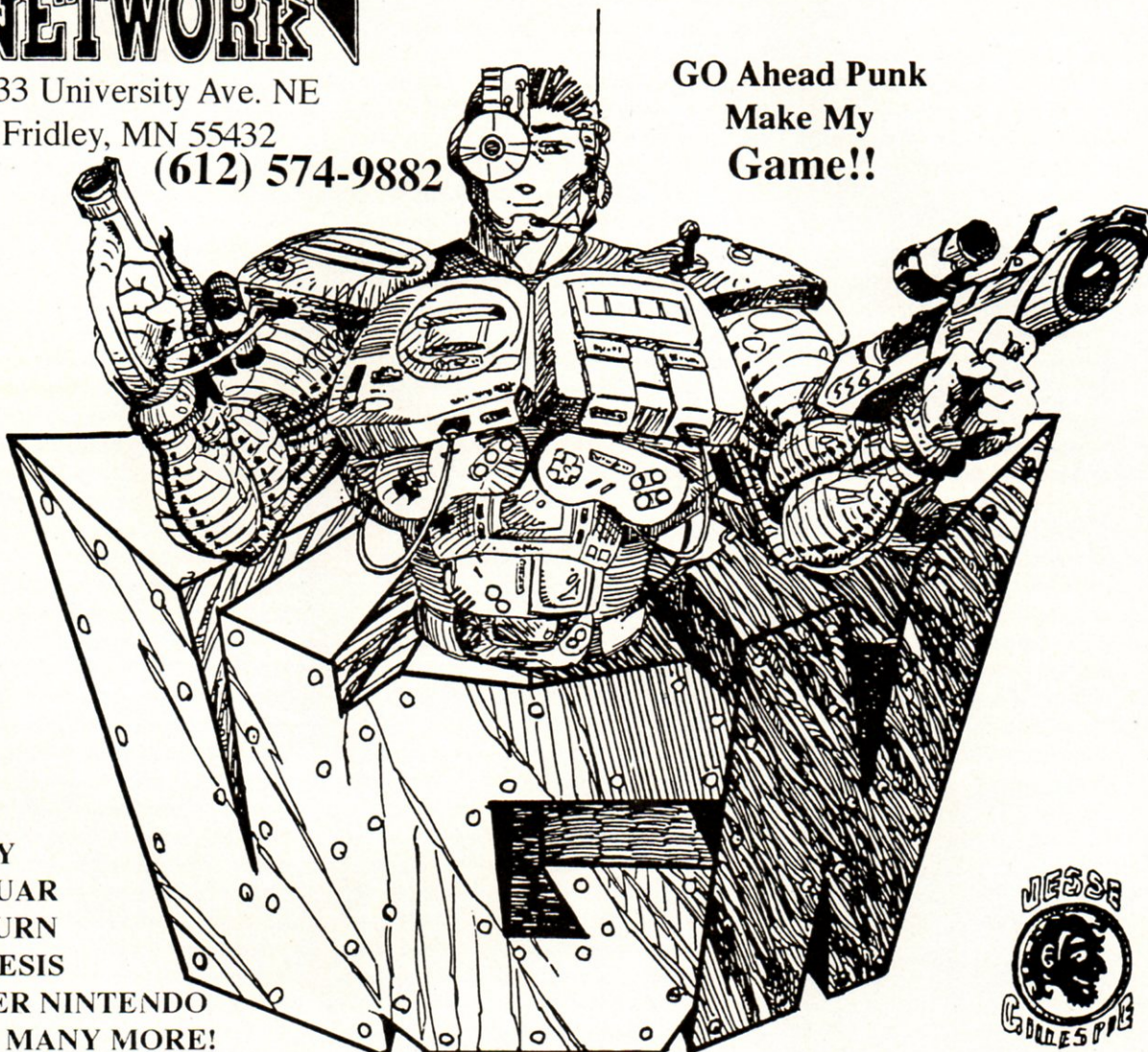
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