

A DIFFERENT KIND OF MEGA DRIVE MAG

MEGA ACTION

CHRISTMAS 93
ISSUE 8 £1.75

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MEGA
CD
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100% MEGA DRIVE



Streetfighter II
the definitive
guide!

IT'S THE RINKY DINK PINK PANTHER

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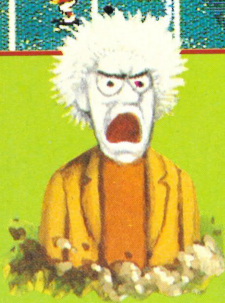
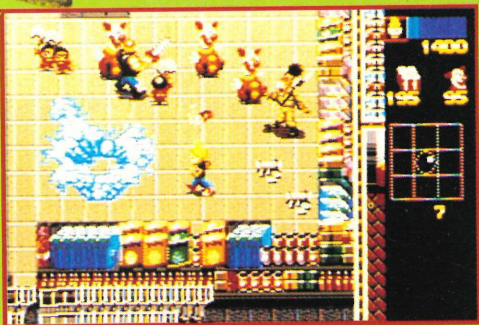
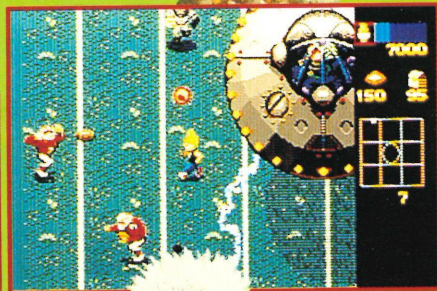
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INTERACTIVE



55 monster levels

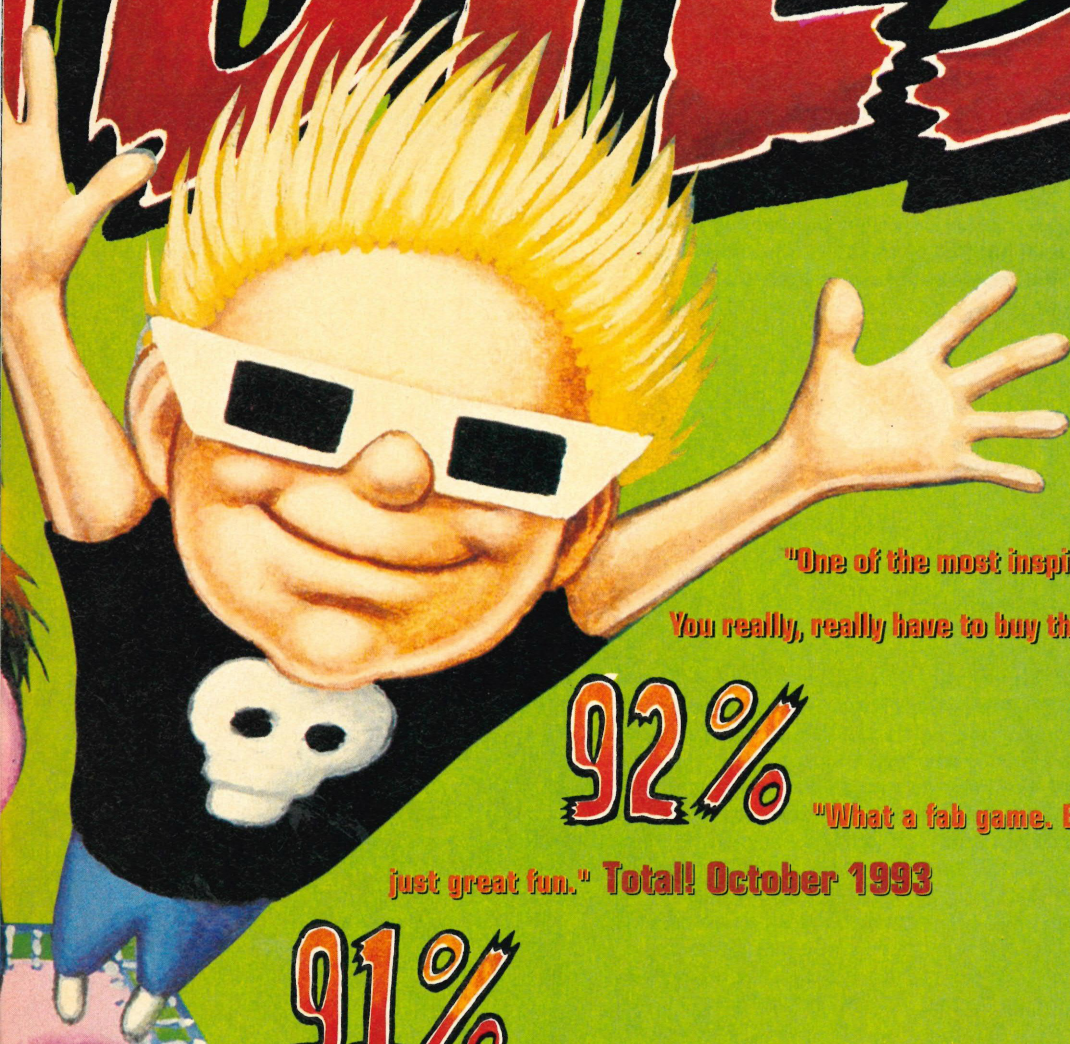
of manic mayhem with monsters,
mummies werewolves all trying to kill
the neighbours! These scary psycho's
must be terminated and **it looks**
like it's up to you.

ZOM



SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

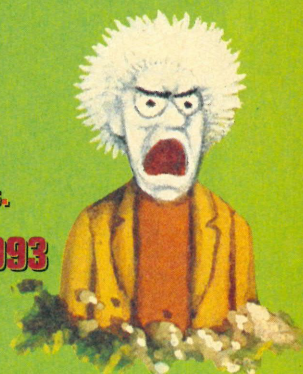
PRIS



94%

"One of the most inspiring new releases in years.

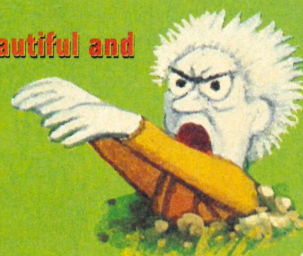
You really, really have to buy this." **NMS, October 1993**



92%

"What a fab game. Big, beautiful and

just great fun." **Total! October 1993**



91%

"What more can I say? I have seldom played a game as good

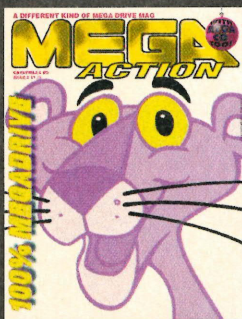
as this one..." "It's a game every person should own."

Games Master, October 1993



KONAMI

MEGA



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Welcome

To the Christmas issue of Mega Action! We've a stocking or two full of the very latest in games and ideas that just could tempt you for this Christmas! Packed in this Pink Panther edition is *Lethal Enforcers*, the superb *FIFA Soccer*, *Pirates Gold* and a day out at the arcades seeing the very latest Sega has to offer. Also, the best guide ever to SFI. Don't forget Mega Action is by far the best magazine, offering you 84 pages at a price you cannot refuse!

WORLD NEWS

6 Fact or fiction? Is this the new console from Sega or just a big fuss over nothing? Mega Action delves into the news sources of the world to bring you the latest gossip regarding this 32 bit wonder machine. You can help raise a MILLION pounds too for a worthwhile cause by simply putting those gaming talents under sponsorship.

REVIEWS

10 As Santa wraps his presents, have you placed that order in time? Check out this bumper reviews session for the best advice that money can buy. Only in Mega Action is this, the most careful testing made available to you!



ON THE OTHER HAND

17 This month we take a trip down memory lane and sum up the best games of the year. Which games took the coveted Mega Gold award and why did they deserve such status? It takes a game of quality to impress us here you know.

ON THE SEVENTH DAY

44 Ever wondered what it's like for the guys who spend months creating the games that we spend months playing? David took a trip to the makers of *Spiderman* and the *X-men* to find out what they were up to next.



Using the animators who have worked on *Danger Mouse*, they have just completed a *Beauty and the Beast* conversion and are working on their own title, *Plok*, featuring a little character with a lot of life in him.



TURNING JAPANESE

48 With Sega promising to open a new arcade every two months it was an opportunity not to be missed when one appeared in Collindale. Glen and Steve take the big road south and discover just what might be appearing on the consoles of tomorrow by thoroughly testing the arcade of today! Find out the latest spinning, undulating and general clockwork that makes a thousand pound console the most desired objects around.

SONY CDS

52 They were available on import about six months ago but now they are here officially. These CDs are the very latest in live interaction with you the player mixing videos of the famous, conquering prehistoric hell or just plain cleaning out the drains of the future. Are these offerings the way ahead for the humble Mega CD or are they just hype? Mega Action, as ever give you the full story.



PREVIEWS

56 Looks like Christmas will last all year with the list of games due for release around now and in the near future! Mega Action have brought you the very latest and greatest games that are destined to be launched in the New Year with *Pink Panther* firmly top of our list!

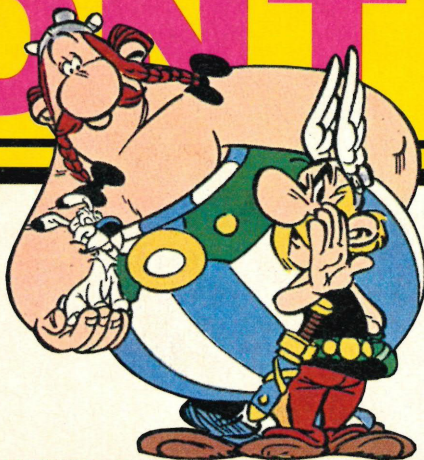
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PINK PANTHER

Taking the magazine by storm, the Pink Panther has become this month's mascot. Now you can win a Pink furry friend of your own and some exclusive T-Shirts and clothing by entering our fantastic competition. Only the magazine that costs you less can offer you so much more! Why not enter today and try your luck – you could be the lucky winner of some great prizes and Pink Panther collectables.



PINBALL COMPETITION

60

Now is your chance to win one of the very latest FULL SIZE Pinball tables on the market today with our exclusive competition with Electronic Arts! Just answer the six simple questions, pop your answers in the post and who knows what luck will bring?

LETTERS

70

This month we look again at the Saturn system from Sega, we answer the big issue over Mega Bits and we even tell you the answer to life's mysteries. Well, Maybe we don't question life itself but we do put a Mega Drive existence into perspective.

DR BARRY DIABLO

72

From outer space (or at least the very end of the number 108 bus route) comes the amazing advice of the creature they call Barry. Where else but Mega Action can you obtain such wisdom and benefits to the gaming population?

STREETFIGHTER GUIDE

74

Barry has done himself proud this month with the best and most comprehensive guide ever created for this king of combat challenges.

MEGA WORKSHOP

80

This month we bring you the perfect fighter's companion, the greatest head-to-head ever to enter the gladiator's ring. The definitive guide to beat 'em-ups written by our resident sparring partner's Barry and Glen. Find out if Streetfighter sweeps home!

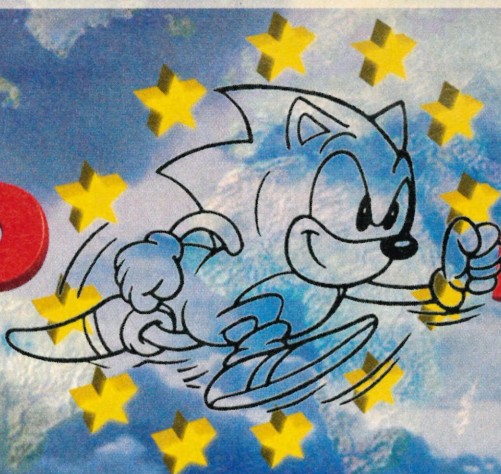
THANKS THIS MONTH: Freewheelin' front-crawl Franklin Forbes, Father Christmas, Jimi Hendrix, 20Mb RAM upgrade, the weather, not, the communal Ethernet cable (or busom) and the Photoshop Bible. Mint!

TYPOGRAPHY AND DESIGN THIS MONTH: Adobe® Dimensions, Photoshop, Illustrator, Quark Express. Futura (I know), Franklin Gothic, Palatino, Helvetica and Zapf Dingbats, Groovy Fantastionville.

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WORLD NEWS



O-o-o-ps

Sega's latest ad has been pulled off air after Nintendo complained saying it was unfair and denigrating. The ad takes the rise out of the current Nintendo stake placed in Rik Mayall of the Young Ones fame by adding a sort of endorsement to the Sega Aladdin game in the form of "My name's R-R-Rick and I want one". The voice was not that of Mayall but an actor impersonating him. Apparently the ad falls foul of section 26 of the ITC's rule-book which states that an advert "must not unfairly attack or discredit other products, advertisers or advertising directly by implication." Nintendo are said to



▲ It's all in the name of healthy competition, so they tell us.



be secretly chuffed about the whole thing which has led to the Sega ad being re-edited. No doubt with the run up to Christmas, more of the tit for tat strategies will emerge and give the Press yet more excuse for looking down their noses.

Segathon- Raise a Million Pounds!

With Sonic The Hedgehog getting more and more planet conscientious in his game plots it really is nice to see that at last his crusades are spilling into the real world. With Segathon, you get the chance to prove that you have the power to help others because gaming can raise money! Playing Sonic against the evil Robotnik can actually help benefit thousands of children up and down the country. All you have to do is get people to sponsor you or a group of your friends to play *Sonic the Hedgehog* for 15 min-

utes, the more points you score the more money you raise. It couldn't be simpler! The money raised will go to the BBC charity Children in Need and will help children who are sick, badly treated, homeless or have mental or physical disabilities, children who will never get a chance to do things that are taken for granted by many of us today. You can play for 15 minutes on any Sonic the Hedgehog game or format be it Sonic One or Two, Sonic CD, Sonic Spinball or Sonic Chaos on Mega Drive and Mega CD, Master System or Game Gear. For your own sponsorship form simply find the nearest Blockbusters or Ritz video store and then start playing! This is a great idea so join in the fun and help someone with your gaming skills. Good luck!



▲ Sega, Sonic and the BBC have joined to give you all the opportunity of helping children who are less fortunate.

COSMIC EXCITEMENT

Saturn Saturn Saturn. That's all we ever hear around here. Is it coming out? How much? Will there be a *Streetfighter II* game on it? Life on a magazine is never dull and in the true spirit of research we delved as deep as we could. According to the bulletin boards around the world it is no great secret that Sega have signed an as yet unspecified deal with Hitachi, the makers of custom computer chips. The whole deal seems to revolve around a piece of silicon called the SH7032 and as the registration number suggests it is a 32 bit processor. What makes this chip so special? It's all in its capabilities for handling graphics at a very high speed. Therefore it would seem ideal for use in the consoles of tomorrow especially if things are to go towards

the Virtual Worlds we have been hearing so much about. Basing the new unit, nicknamed Saturn by the industry, on this chip means that games such as *Virtua Racing* and *Virtua Fighting* can easily be translated with little or no loss of detail from the arcade version. But of course there is a lot more to launching a system than just a bit of fancy hardware and many manufacturers have learnt this to their peril. Sega have now been in the market long enough and gained enough experience to pull off a new launch of this technology and the expected launch date is set to be very late next year at a price yet unspecified. Of course we'll keep you posted on this one.

Don't get too excited, this is only a Japanese artist's rendition of what might be.



Wakey wakey!

Looks like all those rumours were true and the little spikey friend of millions has hit the big time once again. Sunday mornings will never be the same as Channel Four will be showing a series of fast action, gag-driven animated adventures based on Sonic. The cartoon plot evolves around, well you guessed it Doctor Robotnik, a crazed tyrant hell bent on the destruction of Sonic's homeland Mobius. Sonic leads a group of fearless freedom fighters against the dreaded S.S.S.S.S.S. That's Super

Special Sonic Search and Smash Squad to you and me. They are out to get our little hero as he constantly gets in and out of mischief. All your favourite characters are there and many new faces make an appearance including fellow freedom fighters Princess Sally Acorn, Bunnie and Nate Morgan. Of course Sonic always wins in the end. It should be running by the time you read this and rumour has it in the USA it is currently the most popular animated series.

Future Shooters

Just in, the latest fashions from Sega, designed to make you look cool whether you are clutching a gaming device or not. Named Future Shooter Wear, these T-Shirts are of the highest quality and have cartoon-style characters printed on the front. They are hard wearing so we are told, so now there is no excuse not to immerse yourself in the whole gaming experience and look the part too! You will be able to get them in the sigh street Stores before Christmas as no doubt they will make ideal Christmas presents!

There's more to come too with bobble hats and gloves still being designed.

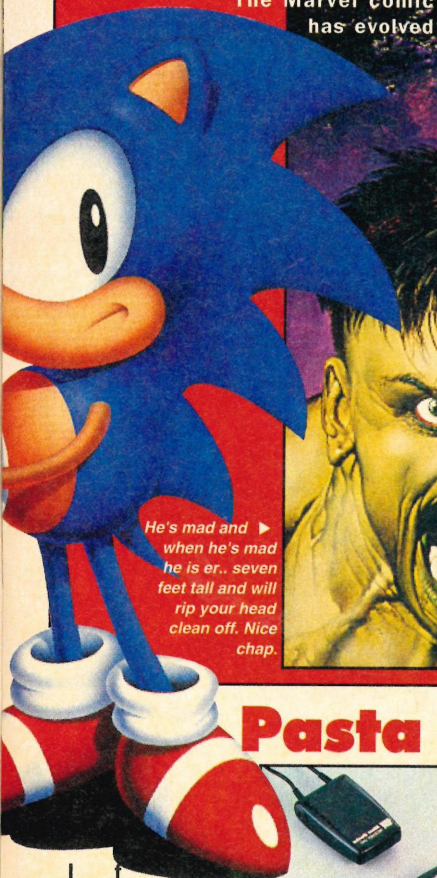


Incredible Green Fighting Machine

We all know the story, famous physicist Dr Bruce Banner gets caught in a freak gamma ray blast and lives his life constantly turning green and ruining his current wardrobe of clothes.

The Marvel comic has evolved

into a major television series, popular in the eighties. In 1994 it sees a rebirth onto the home console. US Gold are proud to announce The Incredible Hulk where you, the player take on the role of Hulk and battle your way through five varied scenarios, each with a nasty boss to defeat. The game is set for launch in March 1994 and of course Mega Action will be there to cover the whole event!



He's mad and when he's mad he is er... seven feet tall and will rip your head clean off. Nice chap.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

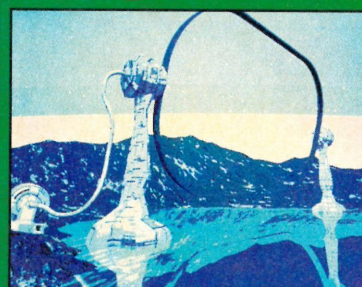
Pasta Perfection!

back on the sofa, favourite game loaded then pulling the entire assembly back with you, including the TV and half the contents of the room. Well all that can be behind you now as the spaghetti of wires need not be there with the Micro Genius from MSU. This infra red remote controller can give you control from up to 20 feet and also provide slow

There is one thing about the Mega Drive that sticks in your head it's the vain attempts to untangle the complete mess of joypad wires before you start playing. Nothing is worse than trying to sit



Mega Racing Mayhem



▲ Film introduction sequences are all the rage these days and Mega Race is no exception.

Mindscape International are about to unveil their first Mega CD title early in 1994. Named *Mega Race*, the game is a head-to-head simulation set in the future. You must drive your car through cities and landscapes of the far future in an attempt to achieve the ultimate prize. Graphics look to be stunning and no doubt the CD capabilities have been pushed to



▲ State of the art wheels in a world of the future, what more could you ask?

the limit with an equally big sonic treat for you as well. We hope to get more information on this game in the months to come and we have also been told that Mindscape are busy developing several other products for the Mega CD! Seems the CD boom is under way. We'll keep you posted.

More Festive Joy!

Streetfighter 2 has been responsible for a lot of things and one of them seems to be the six button joystick craze that is currently underway. You see you need six buttons to play *Streetfighter* with all its blocks, high and low punches, special moves and such like and with the standard pad only having three buttons, you are left slightly short. Sega were quick to bring out a special joypad but for the total enthusiast it was sadly lacking. To the rescue comes the Asciware Fighter Stick SG6 range. These are purpose built fighting sticks with the mother of the two sturdily built and closely resembling an arcade controller.

Six big buttons are close to hand with both selectable slow motion control and turbo fire options. Without doubt this is the best stick yet for any fighting game and should



▲ Just the thing for seven rounds with the boss of your choice.



◀ The more compact version has all the moves too!

be very much sought after for Christmas. Also

available from Asciware is the smaller version which uses a more conventional layout but retains the same six button option. The joypad is more in keeping with the SNES controllers that have proved so comfortable and have the two extra buttons situated on the top of the joypad. Turbo and slow motion facilities are also provided. The two sticks should be available from your local stockists by the time you read this!

Oh and a Merry Christmas!

From all the Mega Action team we would like to wish our readers a very Merry Christmas and judging by your letters we hope Santa has got hold of enough *Streetfighter 2* cartridges to supply the entire world.

motion control. Two players can play on one controller by taking turns and there is also the option to get hold of another hand controller. The unit can be used to control games or in conjunction with the Mega CD allowing you to control audio CD's! The Micro Genius sells for £29.95 with an extra controller available for £19.95.

THANK YOU

Thanks must go the following for supplying software;

Game Tech

Tel: 061 831 7857

Bits 'n' Pieces

Tel: 0625 501810



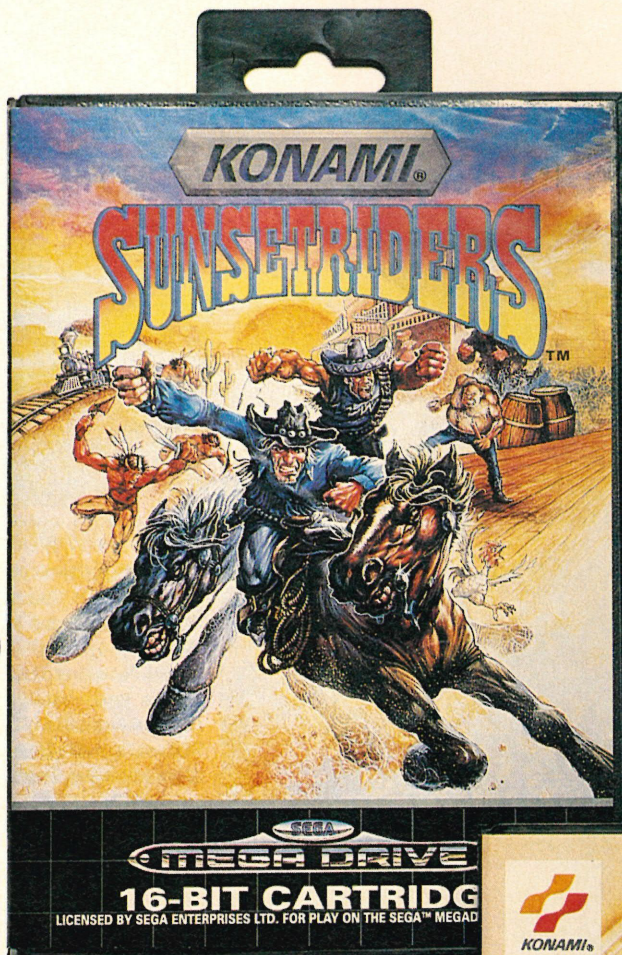
KONAMI

SUNSETRIDERS

It has obviously had a lot of attention paid to every aspect of its production... it's superb.

MEGATECH 87%

Very impressive SEGA PRO 87%



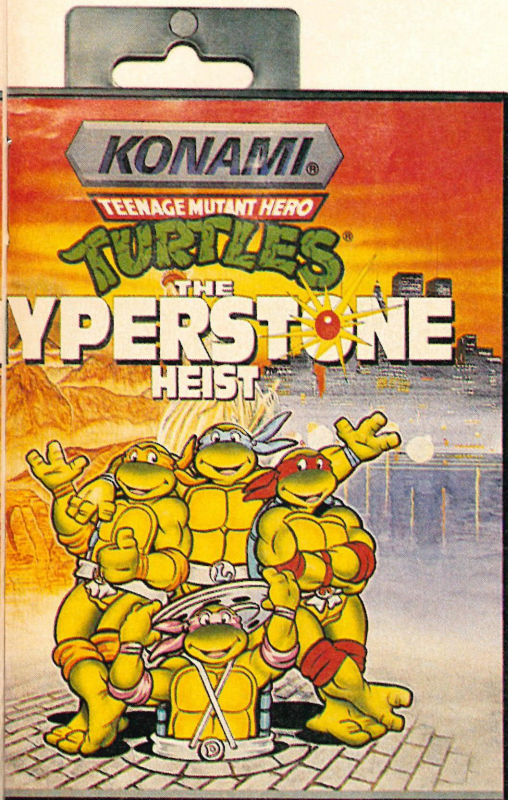
ROCKETKNIGHT ADVENTURES

A top class product with attention to detail second to none. Amazing. **MEGA ACTION 94%**

RKA is possibly the best game on the Mega Drive ever. **GAMESMASTER 92%**



MI KRED!"



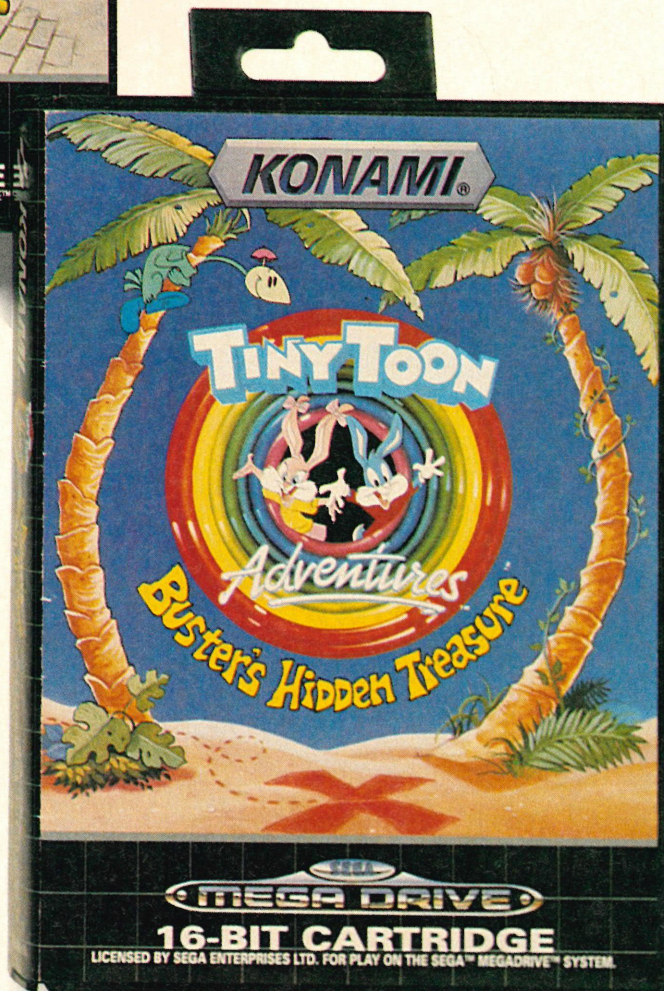
TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES® THE HYPERSTONE HEIST™

Good clean amphibious fun. **SEGA PRO 87%**

Turtles really is a visually stunning game

MEGA TECH 87%

SEGA
MEGA DRIVE
16-BIT CARTRIDGE
A ENTERPRISES LTD. FOR PLAY ON THE SEGA™ MEGADRIVE™



One of the best plat-formers
ever. *Megatech 95%*

a fast paced platform game
that is similar to Sonic,
but....better fun.

*Mega Drive Advanced
Gaming 93%*

REVIEW



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Sega

RELEASE DATE

Out Now

PRICE

£39.99

■ A vast magical island awaits you. But let me warn you, you might never find the way back home.

Basically this game revolves around two characters, one an elf-like humanoid called Nigel and the other a Tinkerbell look-a-like named Friday. Exciting stuff eh? These two inexperienced but brave adventurers have embarked upon a dangerous but promising adventure to find some ancient King's treasure. But due to their lack of knowledge in the art of adventuring they require a little assistance in making up their minds, i.e. you.

Playing from a 3D aerial perspective you have to guide your primary sprite, Nigel, around the surrounding landscapes. Friday is just a helpful computer-controlled fairy. Overcoming various obstacles like monsters of various descriptions and puzzles that require a deal of thinking and planning. The most interesting aspect of this title is the arcade

▼ This rather artistic map reflects the talent of the programmers behind this game.

LANDS



complexity involved. Instead of raw role playing enjoyment, the developers have included a dexterous element to help keep eager players on their toes.

This has rarely been successful in titles on the Mega Drive, the only comparison in my eyes to this game being the SNES' *Zelda*. SNES owners

be warned, *Landstalker* boasts better graphics and deeper gameplay. Not forgetting the non-stop twisting storyline as you journey from city to city.

The controls are simple to get to grips with. All you've got to remember is to press A to swing your sword whilst B commands the sprite to jump. Before anybody asks, C is just

another variation for button A. Anyway, like I said, simple. Pressing Start on the joypad will result in an inventory screen being summoned. From this chart of goodies you can alter your character's weaponry and armoury to any extent. Also you can use any items you have found such as keys or spe-



▲ Oh no! They've got Nigel. But wait a minute, Friday is casting a spell using Eke--Eke.

STALKER

cial magical potions to help solve any problems that may occur during the course of your adventuring.

Along the top of the screen is your character's health meter and gold status alongside your sword's power potential. The bar representing the sword indicates how much damage can be inflicted, the longer the bar, the greater the wound. This only applies once you've obtained a magical sword that requires this operation. The sword is not the only way of indicating your character's limitations in combat. The health gauge also establishes the character's current level of experience, the number of hearts reflects the combat rating.

Interaction with other characters is also of great importance. If you're the quiet type and avoid talking to every person encountered you may miss out learning invaluable information. This will become evident in the later stages and often results in one rather lost and confused player. Clueless mate. Absolutely clueless.

There are all the usual things to be found in the game: shops, houses, frightening monsters, magical herbs, potions and many more - almost endless. It's one of those games that requires your time to search every nook and cranny to assist your quest.

The game is battery backed-up so you don't have to play in fear of dying halfway through - that's if you're a games genius and you've

▼ No. They're not the Ewoks from Star Wars. But they are being helpful by clearing the road.



played for three days solid of course. The only snag is that you have to visit a church

to save your progress, a bit annoying if you're

five hundred miles away from the nearest one. Purchasing and executing various commands in such establishments require you choosing the right book or item. Perched along a series of shelves may

be many books or plants. As you pick each item up the shopkeeper or other resident will inform you

what item you hold in your

hands. To successfully complete the transaction you must take the chosen item to their desk and place it there. This is about the only criticism I have against Landstalker. I would have

▲ Now, I wonder what is in this rather dark, secluded house. Treasure, obviously!

thought normal text options would have been more appropriate but this really doesn't matter.

Presentation is of Sega's usual high standards, nice box, artwork and handy booklet explaining many items and their purposes. Graphics are certainly the most outstanding feature with a beautifully drawn sprite, lush forest backgrounds and intricate

dungeons to explore. The sound is a pleasing melody but isn't amazing, and you tend to block this out during the intensity of the game (although I've had numerous

▼ "As you can see sir, the rooms are quite spacious at the hotel Royale".



▲ Take that you big brutish Orc. You rancid smelling hog!

▼ The old witch won't deal with you until you've completed another quest.



members of staff reminding me to turn the music down as they claim it is repetitive). It should also be noted that this game is massive. A vast mystical island awaits someone who is willing to take the time to discover all of its secrets. If you're looking for a game with a huge mixture of ingredients that make up a fantastic gaming experience then this could be the one for you.

▼ Pop into the local shop and buy some health reviving Eke-Eke.



TIP
Take a tip from the computer role playing gamers out there and carefully map your progress around the island.



MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

85%



It has it all - graphics, sound and most importantly longevity and gameplay. I really must stress that this game holds a major value for money ticket. I don't care what you have to do for this, steal, beg or borrow, but make sure you get hold of a copy. But honestly, you must get down to the local games emporium and check this out. Truly addictive and devastatingly awesome. Best I've seen for a long time and reminds me just how bad some other games are. ■ DAVE

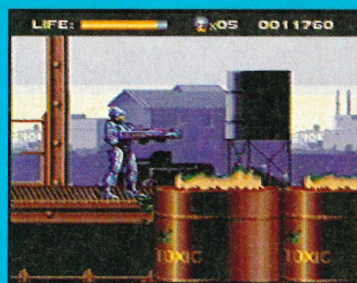




OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Virgin
RELEASE DATE
December
PRICE
£44.99

▼ Face to face with the Terminator, it's either you or him, so prepare yourself.



▲ Try to avoid falling into these tanks of toxic waste. Remember that bit in RoboCop?



▼ That blood splattering violence in full. Kids under 16 don't look.



▲ After RoboCop's cleaned up the streets, who's going to clean up the mess, I wonder.



▲ The Terminator has shed his exterior skin and is down to his underwear.

ROBOCOP VS TERMINATOR

■ Oil those joints and polish your body armour, the task of changing the future lies in your hands, so come on, kick some endo-skeleton butt!

As you may have guessed, this game pits the meanest characters on our cinema screens against each other - RoboCop, the half man, half machine law enforcer against the Terminator who needs no introduction. Their movies are full of very expensive special effects and horrific

TIP

Save your most powerful weapons until the end of level bosses, that's where you need them most, believe me!

scenes of violence, where hundreds of lives are quite literally terminated without a second thought. The game follows suit.

While RoboCop is now making his third,

Arnie's last on-screen massacre was the infamous T2 Judgement Day. But this game includes snippets from

their first films. And the original idea comes from the 'dark horse' comic series. Either way it's a fine excuse for a shoot-em-up.

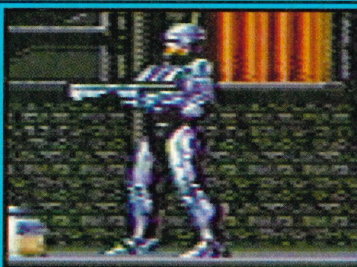
You really don't need to know the plot, but for the record it goes something like this... Cyberdyne Systems are the guys who built the revolutionary robotic machinery for the Skynet Defence Network. But before they introduced the full endo-skeleton (Arnie as the Terminator), one project they completed was to rebuild

part of Murphy. A cop who came off a little worse for wear in a street battle, Murphy was transformed into RoboCop, and became a proto-type in cybernetic research. Once the resistance find out about the link between RoboCop, Skynet and the future domination by the cyborgs, they send soldiers back in time to destroy Murphy. The future Skynet then transports Terminators back to Murphy's time.

If you followed that then you are doing well but it gets worse as the plots of both films become more entangled. All you really need to know is that you are RoboCop, you've got a gun and you've got to use it to survive. De-activate the Terminators and shut down the roaming cyborgs with whatever you have to hand. The animation is quality and RoboCop stomps around in the same robotic-style moves as in the movies. The explosions and fatalities add a certain atmosphere to the game and give it a cutting edge. Flying glass from shattered windows and the blood baths you yourself leave wherever you go score 10 out of 10 on the gore chart, as your foe's body disintegrates in a mass of red. Poor chap.

Full-on firearms

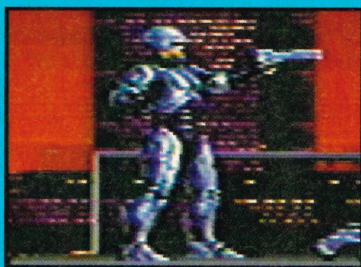
RoboCop can carry two weapons at any one time, the icons representing the different weapons he has are displayed in the top right corner of the screen. Work out which weapons are the most effective in certain situations. If you're unsure about the zone you are about to enter, go in blasting with a heat seeker. That always works for me. The weapons can be found scattered throughout the levels, and some of them are hidden behind windows or in trash cans. So go ahead and be reckless, destroy everything. If any of the films our main man has starred in are anything to go off, nothing should be left intact. Take aim...



▲ The shotgun fires the fastest and is the most effective. It's rather less flash than some of the others, but it's very reliable.



▲ Find the flame gun and you're laughing. Just walk about incinerating anyone in your path and then watch the fireworks.



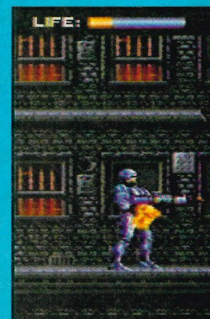
▲ You are sent out into Detroit with nothing but your faithful hand gun. It does the job but you soon require something more meaty.



▲ The grenade launcher releases multiple explosive canisters that follow the trajectory of your gun until they hit a target.



▲ The heat seeker fires bullets that loop around for a bit then home in on the nearest hot object, whether it's a human or robot.



■ This is the first UK game to receive a '16' certificate for its excessive violence.

ROBOCOP VERSUS THE TERMINATOR



▲ Keep your weapon full on as the endo-skeletons take some beating, but make sure you get them before they get you.



Some of the Terminators have to be decked several times before they are really out of action and each time they get up, part of their human "disguise" is lost, revealing their true identity, that dreaded endo-skeleton thingy!

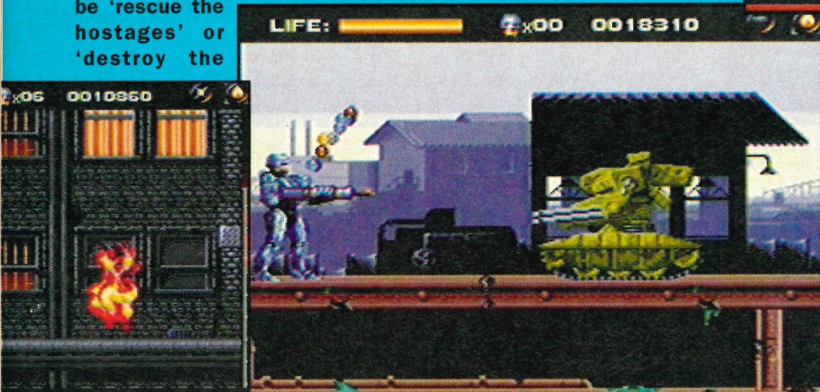
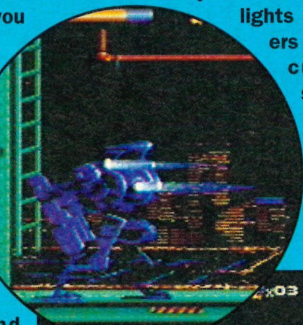
The backdrops and settings for the game recreate the mood set in the Terminator film quite well and with 12 levels to blast your way through there is plenty to take in. Soundtrack and sonics throughout the game fit the mood well.

Before starting each level, you are given a 'prime directive' which you follow throughout that zone. It may be 'rescue the hostages' or 'destroy the

office', but ultimately it means 'shoot everything in sight'.

Your first task before you move on to the streets of Detroit is like a quick training exercise with a prime directive that simply tells you to 'avoid the bullets', and indeed this trainer level is full of gun-toting guys who want you dead. You follow the route around Detroit, over roof tops and along wires, releasing any hostages along the way.

The sprite is very mobile, most noticeably when scaling ladders and climbing across ropes at an alarming speed, so there is no need to worry about the



The carnage of the comic strip lives on...



The original concept and storyline of combining these two big screen heavyweights came from the comic magazines by Miller &

Simonson. Though they are presented in cartoon style, the action is non-stop. And because the same style of violence is portrayed in Virgin's new release, the game has just received a 16 certificate, which Sega hope will act as a guideline for parents and retailers.

screen slowing down when the action hots up, more the opposite.

You can cover most directions with your weapon, and even when you're caught on a ladder you can blast away. Hidden behind darkened windows are little surprises, some nice, some not so nice. You'll find weapons, life jars (to top up your energy) and the odd extra life but try to avoid fizzing bombs and sticks of dynamite. In the rooms with lights on lurk sharp shooters who peep round the curtains and take shots at you. Waste these guys and watch them drop their guns while they share their blood supply with the window.

Aside from the trail of dead bodies, the street suffers other indecencies. Fire hydrants explode like fountains and some manholes hide the enemy. The best advice is to destroy everything, as even dustbins contain the odd power up. And it's quite a fast game, so stay aware.



▲ Search through each level carefully and release any hostages that you come across.

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

91%

GOLD

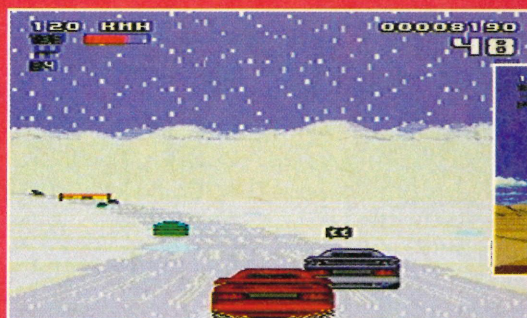


After your first romp through this slick blast 'em-up you'll be under the impression that on your next attempt you'll have this one whipped, but it's not that simple, even on wimpy level. As the game's pace increases you get to really appreciate the speed at which you control your character. If you fancy the challenge as a half-robotic killing machine and you don't mind blood splattered on your bodywork, this one's for you. But it's not for the queasy ■ **GLEN**



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Electronic Arts
RELEASE DATE
December
PRICE
£44.99



▲ You will need some impressive tyres to get you around this course.



▼ An in-car CD player is just one of the extras.



spooky coincidence, the other racers, as well as innocent but rather annoying Sunday drivers, are all driving S4s.

Perhaps the most contentious issue of rear-view race games is the speed and smoothness of scroll. Lotus set the pace by which all others aspired and it still holds the winner's laurels today for sheer speed without poor, simplistic and repetitious roadside graphics or striped road graphics, always a trusty old yeoman for lesser race games. Cracking pace and amazing clarity of vision even on the horizon which again is often an optical mystery on the many race titles.

Monotony is not a word that is likely to be associated with this rip-roarer, but just to make sure, the design team has included a wide variety of landscapes from dusty desert complete with typical props, cacti and tumbleweed, to dark and gloomy storm. The aerodynamic-testing 'wind-swept' and 'snow-scape' is white knuckle stuff requiring real power-drifting technique and a good sense of humour. The primary objective, of course, is to get to the chequered flag first.

Spend some time in the one-player option, before trouncing a chum.

▼ It's the two player head-to-head that makes this game so worthwhile.



LOTUS CHALLENGE

The sleek lines of the Lotus Esprit have become synonymous with pace-setting race action.

When games publisher Electronic Arts were scouting round for the best racing title around, the Amiga version of Lotus 3, the last and best of the Gremlin series, fitted the description as snugly as one of those highly desirable nylon strobe-effect car seat covers.

Much of the seminal original remains intact except the title was altered to 'Lotus 2' and subtitled humbly and without a hint of pretence 'The Ultimate Challenge'.

Their challenge was in fact to improve on the original, a trip to Lotus was arranged and one of the crew had a brainwave. Record the S4's powerhouse of an engine, then back at base, digitize the heady mix of sexy growl and turbo whine. Heathens who can't dig the sweet symphony of tapits and turbos can

tune into some happening tunes supplied by an in-car CD player, rekindling fond memories of Out Run... although the blonde chick's done a bunk in this game.

Featureful in every sense, Lotus' front end copes manfully with a veritable cornucopia of options, from choosing whether to race the S4 or the M200 - ah, decisions decisions - to actually setting the driving environment and the type of race. An extensive range of roadside obstacles and track features combine to make what is to all the world a full race editing suite. This so-called RECS system boasts an extraordinary range of racing environments from a mud track rally, not normally associated with a supercar with a body skirt and spoiler hardly three inches from the deck, to a rear

wheel-driven mid-engine that would make handling unpredictable to say the least.

The design team request us to turn a blind eye to a bit of rule bending... after all, the rally option is great fun. Even more unlikely, but equally enjoyable, is the future world track which features outlandish hazards such as trackside magnets which repel and attract the Lotus. The fact that the Lotus is made of fibreglass doesn't matter a jot

TIP

When you're experienced, choose the manual transmission to gain vital fractions of seconds on corners.

- this is after all just pretend.

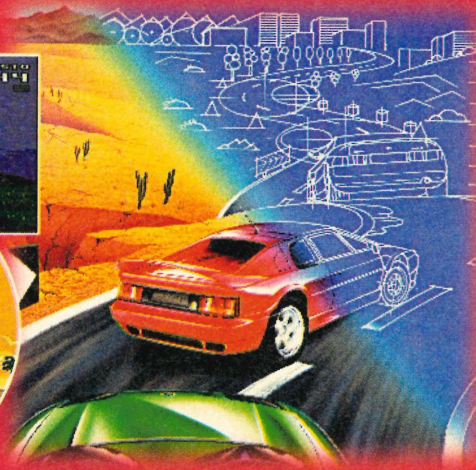
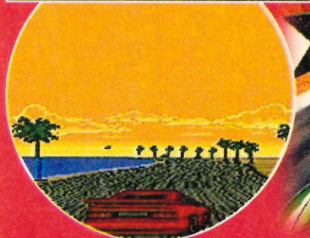
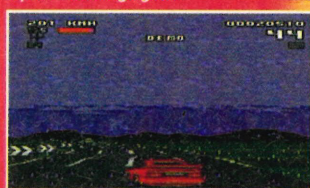
The ability to experiment with driving in rain, snow and at

night on a variety of road surfaces without fear of wrapping a fifty grand car around a stout oak is quite an opportunity.

But if the thought of all these options seems daunting, the amount of time spent preparing is up to the individual. It is possible to just select the car, opt for manual or automatic transmission, select random track and be straight on the starting grid anticipating the green light.

In the one-player race mode, the grid line-up features computer-controlled competitors of varying skill, speed and aggression... by

▼ Night time and all you have is a pair of driving lights.



Time to admit that car racing is my favourite theme and having played probably every title released, Lotus with its cracking pace and thrilling race action is stunning in its state-of-the-artness. It is the Ghia model of the range with the design team making absolutely sure that the program contains every intelligently timed, beautifully executed feature. Smashing presentation, including a great arcade-style, adrenalin rush two player option. ■ JASON

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

86%



■ An American driver once got 10 traffic tickets, did four hit and runs and caused six accidents, all in the space of 20 minutes.



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Electronic Arts

RELEASE DATE

Out Now

PRICE

£44.99

F117 NIGHT STORM

■ The Stealth bomber is top secret. You can't see it and we know nothing about it, so who's to say it actually exists? We are, we've seen it.

Latent armchair pilots who enjoy wiggling flaps and pulling yokes rejoice, as the Stealth has its inaugural flight on Mega Drive. Take control of the most advanced aircraft in the world. A shroud of mystery still surrounds this ungainly looking bird and when questioned by the enthusiastic game designers, USAF spokespeople remained tight-lipped. Since then, one of the game design team is always followed on his moped, by a dark-coloured Buick.

The Stealth is a bomber designed to infiltrate enemy airspace and remain invisible to radar. In close quarter combat, it can scramble radar and lock-on targets and even evade in-coming homing missiles. It is made from a material invisible to

▼ The plane is expensive and fast. Crash this and you have some fast talking to do.



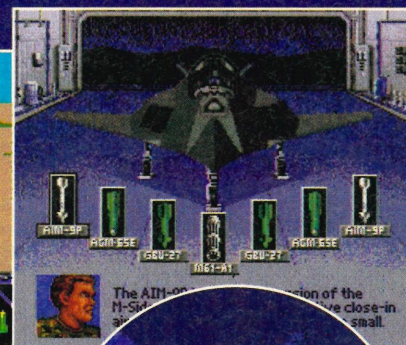
▲ The cockpit tells you all you need with enemy planes clearly shown.

▼ The red triangle announces you have a lock on the target so missiles away!

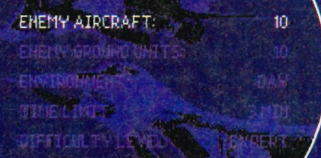


◀ Impact! The target, here a missile launcher goes up in a ball of flames. Time to move on to the next victim.

You are up ▶ against everything the known Eastern world has to offer, so careful with those traces you leave.



The AIM-9 Sidewinder is the closest-in small.



radar and can fly in the outer hemisphere, making it invisible to the naked eye.

A simulation of an aircraft that is never likely to be intercepted sounds a pretty dull affair. And the designers certainly had a daunting challenge to satisfy video game players who expect non-stop action. Yet the hi-tech image of the plane demands an acceptable level of believability and realistic simulation to justify the title, not to mention an extravagant exercise in vector-graphics.

And with the limited information available, there was a need to suspend belief with a convincing portrayal of piloting a Stealth without patronising players.

Thoughtfully, the game has an arcade

mode, a melée of frenetic combat action where a player can choose the amount of ground targets to engage and the level of airborne opposition. The impatient can get straight up into action with rudimentary preparation and the bird reacts remarkably well to control-pad manipulation. The instrumentation is primarily digital and so immediately understandable and the move from auxiliary view to bomb and weaponry sights is smooth. A gungho-fest indeed, with a rush of vector graphics, plenty of action but somewhat indiscriminate and aimless.

More serious intentions come courtesy of nine mission scenarios ranging from full-scale international war theatres to civil skirmishes in trouble spots of the world, some 30 scenarios based on actual Stealth campaigns and a number of fabricated ones. First impressions are that F117 is very much in the tradition of air simulations normally associated with conventional machines,

although in the absence of a conventional keyboard, the Mega Drive control handset required considerable simplification, a great improvement on stuffy, time wasting commands.

Actual mission scenarios maintain the open-faced approach of easy controls and access to the skies. Mission briefings are thankfully just that, brief, radar readings ultra-friendly, and auto-pilot kicks in while all around onscreen indicators display zoom factor and countdown. Objective - maintain the target in the centre of the sights until impact is indicated... "Whamo!"

Design team LHX has taken its experience with Attack Chopper and lavished F117 with high quality vector design and a well tuned scroll engine. Filled sprites give adequate terrain detail, which goes some way to humanising what is a rather clinical, futuristic environment.

TIP

Don't let loose any of your weapons until the triangle goes red. Then, sure of a hit, get out of there.



F117 has something for everyone and shows a level of commitment to more serious gamers not normally associated with video game design. It is highly detailed, using all the 16 meg capacity. The control interface proves to be ideal for the task, simplifying an annoying aspect of air-sims. Despite trepidations about the relevance of a Stealth simulation, the simulation requires tactics while the arcade mode enables you to let loose with awesome firepower. ■ JASON

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

86%



▲ Silly name I know but I didn't make it up, honest. It was my leader.

■ In Operation Desert Storm, all 56 Stealth bombers were used, flying a total of 1272 sorties and yet no one saw them.



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Sega

RELEASE DATE

December

PRICE

£44.99



▲ An ant from a dimension of thought and imagination can mean only one thing! Ermm, but I'm not too sure what.



▲ The backgrounds are just a tad busy and sometimes it's difficult to make out where to go or who you actually are.

■ Zool, the ninja master from outer space leaps from Amiga to Mega Drive!

Zool first saw the light of day on the Amiga home computer some while ago and quickly achieved cult status amongst the disk-based platform explorers. With national press coverage, the game sold a fair few units and Bell Fruit picked up the licence to produce a coin-op version for the large screen. At 50p a go this may have proved a false economy for the more dedicated platform abusers amongst us, so take comfort in the arrival of the Mega Drive version.

Now I am not the greatest fan of platform adventures – to be honest they are not all bad but you always enter into the game with a sense of déjà vu. Not only with the game-play but also with the cute and gimmicky character you usually have to play with in these sort of games and, well, once more into the breach and all that.

Zool is a Ninja of the Nth dimension, this

Hi-fi Land and all things ▶ loud and dangerous live here, including the remote control and possibly a secret level.

ZOOL



▲ Candy Land! Rivers of chocolate and the odd mountain of sticky rock, brought in from Blackpool, I'm led to believe.

dimension being a non-specific place, more a sizeable entity of creative thought. Our martial ant has crash landed on a distant planet and must battle through various worlds to return

to his own dimension and mother universe. It just about makes sense if you don't think about it too deeply.

Getting home means sticking to walls, climbing structures and fighting foes. The deadly foes you

encounter are the creations of the unlikely duo Krool and his assistant Mental Block. They have turned unsuspecting creatures into pea-pods, liquorice allsorts and even the odd electric guitar. But hey wait, where would a platform romp be without the odd end-of-level boss? Where indeed?

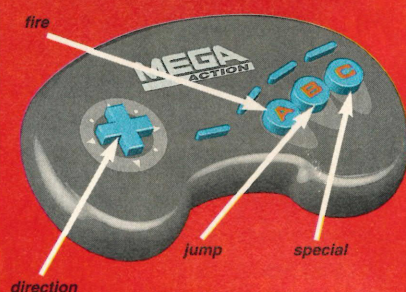
To be fair, Zool has some imaginative creatures to jump on, run around and fire at. Couple that with the speed of play and things really get quite hectic when access to the next level is up for grabs.

The whole screen is used to show this little warrior's progress and the increased playing area allows for hidden levels, plenty of sub-games and of course power-ups and re-start points. The backdrops are extremely busy and some-

▼ More fun in the land of sweet and sugar. This time it looks like a serious liquorice all-sort incident going on around here.



More of the same but, like many of these platform games, just a tad different. Zool is fast and extremely hectic. Being able to fire does make for a more challenging game and the 'special move' he does, spinning up and over, helps wipe out the screen of enemies well ahead. Perhaps the speed of the game is a little too fast – it does sometimes seem like you are not quite in control. Secret levels and sub-games make for lasting appeal but in the Christmas consumer choice stakes it might lose out to the more original formats. ■ **STEVE**



times the brightly coloured ant disappears from view with all the pixel-related mayhem going on around you. Themed worlds range from 'Sweetie Land' through to the world of the hi-fi and on into such lands as 'Meccano' and even the 'workshop at the bottom of the garden', – I presume that's where it is. Zool can stick to walls and climb up them, and has a medium range firing capability. And of course no platform creation would be complete without flailing the old arms around like no tomorrow when teetering on the edge of a platform. Zool has it all.

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

80%

ON THE OTHER HAND...

What a year for the Mega Drive. Well, I say year, our year actually began in April with the launch of what was and still is the most plugged-in Mega Drive mag around, Mega Action. We've had some quality games since then and we thought we'd use this section to give a quick resumé of the mag's gold awards.

For starters there was the flight sim *Jungle Strike*, bound to be a hit after the success of its predecessor, *Desert Strike* and it scored 90% back in July. *Flashback*, a twist on an RPG with a platform, some detailed graphics and a hint of sci-fi mystery got 92%. 91% *Wonder Dog*, Sonic's only real challenger to date is probably the only game where you have to think twice about killing the cute

enemies. *Batman Returned* in August, with a 90% superhero of an arcade conversion. Slick shoot 'em-up *Ex-Ranza* was another 90%-er.

I know we go on about it, but *Rocket Knight Adventures* is a really great game. The 94% super duper graphics left us drooling all over our Mega Drives back in September. It has to be the most original idea for a game yet. I ask you, a possum in a suit of armour! Anyone out there still playing *Micro Machines*? We are. Racing dinky vehicles has never been so much fun. 100% addictiveness comes included with this 92% game.

October saw the release of 92% *Gunstar Heroes* where you shoot your way through endless levels of explosive fun. And then there was *Mortal Kombat*. It lived up to the hype, the

best beat 'em-up around at the time and worthy of a 90% score from us. Fast, furious, full marks for the gore score. One of the hippest cartoon conversions around is *Bart's Nightmare* at 90%. You play the naughtiest kid on the block and run riot while you're dreaming.

In November we saw American football in a new light with 92% *Madden NFL '94*. This was EA sports sim at its best and also gave you a chance to use their four way play thingy. CD came into its own with 93% *Thunderhawk*. The visuals were so impressive, the gameplay so crucial (if you were into fast paced gunship action) as to convince us that there is a bright future for our beloved Mega CDs after all. But the cart isn't dead. *Aladdin* proves that. The best looking game on our consoles



and it got our top score of 95%.

We welcomed Sonic back with a 91% score last month, this time spinning round a pinball table. The extreme violence of *Robocop 3* got a 91% vote of approval from us and the first 16 certificate from the censors. Completing our trip round the year is SFII, probably the finest game yet.

A year of firsts and the future promises many more great games.

▼ Save the planet, shoot things AND hang upside down in trees!



This month's position	Last month's position		Publishing company	Price (£)
1	-	Streetfighter 2 Champ. Ed.	Sega	£59-99
2	1	Mortal Kombat	Arena Entertainment	£49-99
3	-	Aladdin	Sega	£49-99
4	-	F1	Domark	£49-99
5	2	Jungle Strike	Electronic Arts	£44-99
6	9	Sonic the Hedgehog 2	Sega	£39-99
7	-	Ultimate Soccer	Sega	£44-99
8	4	Micro Machines	Code Masters	£34-99
9	3	Jurassic Park	Sega	£49-99
10	-	PGA Tour Golf 2	Electronic Arts	£39-99
11	-	NHLPA Hockey 1994	Electronic Arts	£44-99
12	-	Lemmings	Sega	£39-99
13	-	Mega Lo Mania	Virgin	£44-99
14	-	Terminator	Virgin	£39-99
15	-	Davis Cup World Tour	Tengen	£44-99
16	8	Ecco	Sega	£39-99
17	14	Road Rash 2	Electronic Arts	£39-99
18	20	European Club Soccer	Virgin	£39-99
19	-	Landstalker	Sega	£59-99
20	11	Super Kick Off	US Gold	£44-99

This month's position	Last month's position			
1	-	Night Trap	Sega	£49-99
2	2	Batman Returns	Sega	£49-99
3	1	Final Flight	Sega	£44-99
4	4	Ecco	Sega	£44-99
5	3	Road Avenger	Sega	£39-99

Telephone numbers

Sega:	071-373-3000
Virgin:	081-960-2255
Acclaim:	0962-877788
Accolade:	081-877-0880
Electronic Arts:	0753-549-442
Sony:	071-734-5151
US Gold:	021-625-3388

Best of the Best

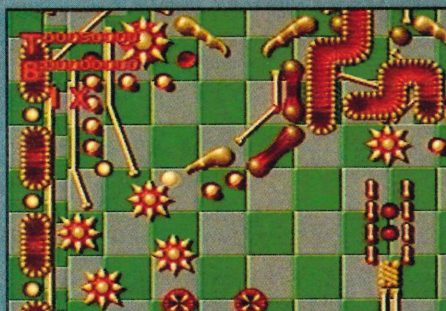
Here are the office favourites, the best this year has to offer though in no particular order.

<i>Aladdin</i>	Sega
<i>Streetfighter II</i>	Sega
<i>Thunderhawk CD</i>	Core
<i>Rocket Knight Adventures</i>	Konami
<i>Flashback</i>	US Gold
<i>Sonic Spinball</i>	Sega
<i>Micro Machines</i>	Codemasters



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Electronic Arts
RELEASE DATE
December
PRICE
£44.99



▲ Tables can be as complicated as you wish and the speed settings make it a harder and harder challenge.



▲ The controls couldn't be simpler and the multi-ball facility makes high scores within everyone's reach.



▲ Gravity has been included too don't forget!

VIRTUAL PIN

■ Pinball design proves to be as much fun as playing the game... well, virtually!

The '70s era comes clumping back into vogue perched atop unfeasible platform soles, flairs flapping hilariously in the breeze, and this unlikely revival is reflected in the arcades, prompting a return to more traditional machines. Virtual reality might have the power to churn the brain to an unset blanchmange consistency and leading edge hydraulically-powered arcade machines promise under-pant-filling thrills, but the humble pinball tables are once again the biggest crowd pullers. Pinball table styles have always reflected the era, particularly the movies and

television, featuring the likes of James Bond in the early seventies, The Six Million Dollar Man in the mid-seventies and Knight Rider in the early eighties. Now with the current resurgence, the latest tables feature the hot movie licences such as T2, The Addam's Family, Batman and Lethal Weapon.

TIP

Contain the ball within a certain target area so all the bonuses can be collected before moving on elsewhere.

Even working within the traditional parameters of the flipper and buffer set-up these theme-inspired designs in the arcade are ingenious and astonishingly diverse.

Hence the idea that the design stage must be almost as much fun as playing. Electronic Arts, with its natural bent for simulation and construction-based games decided to



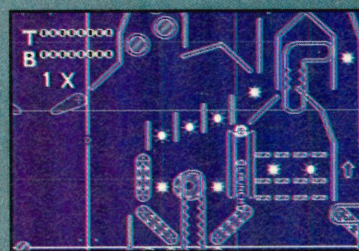
combine both design and play in one, with five basic tables with simple multi-drop ball facilities and drop targets. It also has a really wild pre-designed table which won a nationwide competition for the most inventive concept.

The pinball workshop is a full and comprehensive table design suite which can store blueprint designs for inspiration and 10 memory slots to

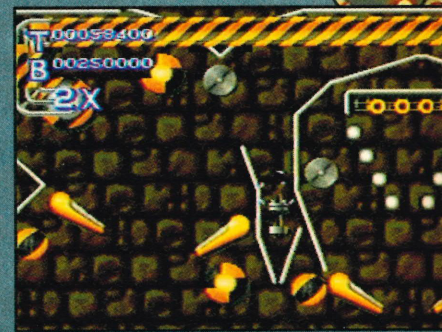
save the best designs. The process is ingeniously simple and easy to pick up, with a selection of backdrop table designs and a well stocked parts department featuring basic bumpers and flippers and some highly inventive features inspired by some of the best tables. The inventory includes kick walls, sling shots, moving targets, worm holes and spinners. Not to mention ghost ball, roll-overs and the rip roaring jackpot. The designs cover different themes and the workshop has the facility to change the colour and design of all the parts to match the backdrop.

Using the design suite

▼ Expect the unexpected when the ball touches something odd!



▲ The blueprint table means that all you get is some very sketchy outlines to play with.



■ The surgeons of tomorrow will be operating in virtual theatres on real patients.



Anyone who has played pinball will have experienced the ball suddenly changing direction and speed as if by an invisible hand when magnets and hyper-charged buffers propel the ball with pin-point accuracy just out of reach of the flippers or hopelessly into the side slots. So naturally this all-encompassing designer incorporates ball speed change with 'Action' changing the bounce of the ball. The so-called 'Progression Balls' add a special spin to play; 'Compulsion', 'Your Break' and 'Flip-in' are designed for the experienced and represent a very inspirational part of the design process, displaying a level of complexity that would baffle mere novices.

Game	Score (0-15)
MEGA	14
SOUND	14
GRAPHICS	14
ADDICTIVENESS	14
PLAYABILITY	14

OVERALL
84%

 With a design workshop as extensive and malleable as this, a designer can achieve a wide variety of pinball challenges to keep friends on their toes. With a wealth of features and parts there really is no limit to the configurations, although the real aim is not to make a table too difficult or easy. Very nice graphical presentation, the real joy of Virtual Pinball is its simplicity and its seemingly limitless potential. Then there's the great game of pinball to look forward to which has proved to be one of the best themes to simulate on video game. **JASON**

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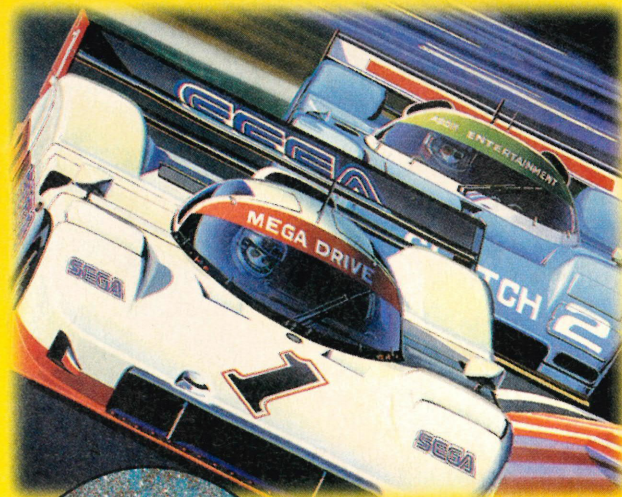
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OFFICIAL
PUBLISHER
 Sega
RELEASE DATE
 Out Now
PRICE
 £39.99



▲ If you can't pass the other cars on the straight, try to sneak through on the inside of the corners to take the lead.



DOUBLE CLUTCH

■ Yet another racing game, this time with no gears. You might say it was clutching at straws.

Racing is a dangerous sport, with high speed starts and the risks that have to be taken on the sharp corners just to gain the advantage required to take the chequered flag. Each race will vary, so decide on your personal racing style and climb into the hot seat for the qualifiers.

First, decide on the race strategy you are going to use. If you want to race around in the fastest car, then you can either play Lance Quick or John Fastlane, but if you want better performance on the corners try Joe Thunder or Jimmy Faster, as their cars handle the turns easier. There are four types of car to drive and then two drivers to choose between, making a total of eight drivers. Select the appropriate type of car and driver for the type of course you are about to race. There are 12 courses to race on, littered with hazards like oil slicks and water or ice (depending on the weather conditions). You will also find power-ups on the track – the tools symbol partially repairs your damaged car, the dollar sign increases your

spending money and the nitrous injection acts as turbo when button A is pressed. Save this for a straight section or the run for the finishing line when you need it most.

TIP

Accelerate like crazy out of the starting grid to gain the best lead advantage over everyone else in the race.

Use the left and right directions to swerve your car round the bends. Sounds simple enough but in practice it's not that easy. Your vehicle seems to slide about a bit too much, which usually sends you zooming off the track and into the rough. The controls respond too well, and slight manoeuvres seem over emphasised. That's where other cars will pass you if you're not careful, so wait until the straight and see if you can

catch up with any other racers. Things get a bit rough when travelling down the straight or just after the start grid when you have to jostle your way through the other competitors to reach pole position. The damage sustained by your car is recorded on a small bar at the top of the screen. Bump another car or run off the track and into a tree and your damage goes up. Hitting rocks causes most problems – as well as increasing the damage meter, your tiny little motor is pinged about as though it's made of rubber.

The first three to finish will be awarded prize money, which will be added to any cash bonuses collected around

the course. Once enough money has been won, a player can move on to the racing shop where a selection of parts can be added to your car to improve its performance. Invest in some decent brakes and the car won't spin or skid as much on the corners or choose high performance petrol to increase the rate of your acceleration.

It does have a two player mode, but there is still something missing that special something necessary to create an impact on anyone interest-



▲ As rain pours down, watch out for the puddles or you'll end up spinning off the track.



▲ Feel the power as you step on the gas and put the pedal to the metal. What power?



▲ Spend all your prize money on the important things in life, like upgrading your car.

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

64%

It's not really a game to write home about. The graphics are dull and the soundtracks get a bit annoying after the third lap. There may be 12 different courses with snow or rain affecting the racing conditions, but you feel more like a spectator watching the race out in the cold, rather than a competitor, fighting for a place in the final three. Check out Micro Machines if you want a fun racing game that's viewed from above, but if you're looking for the real racing car experience I'd advise sticking to your scalextric. ■ GLEN

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OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Sony

RELEASE DATE

Out now

PRICE

£TBA

■ With an all star cast, and stunning locations and soundtrack, Hook the movie was bound to be huge. Hook the game clings to that recipe for success.

It seems an age since the country was caught up in Peter Pan fever, and all the media hype surrounding the Spielberg movie Hook, starring Robin Williams, Dustin Hoffman and Julia Roberts is a distant memory. Since then there have been other distractions, not least Spielberg's latest extravaganza Jurassic Park.

But now Hook has been converted into game form and its loyalty to the original makes it a worthwhile trip down '91 memory lane. If you liked the movie you're gonna' love this. The opening balcony scene where a filled out Robin Williams meets a shrunk down Julia Roberts is instantly recognisable from the film and challenges, characters and backdrops throughout stick close to the original.

If this all seems a bit much, then



HOOK

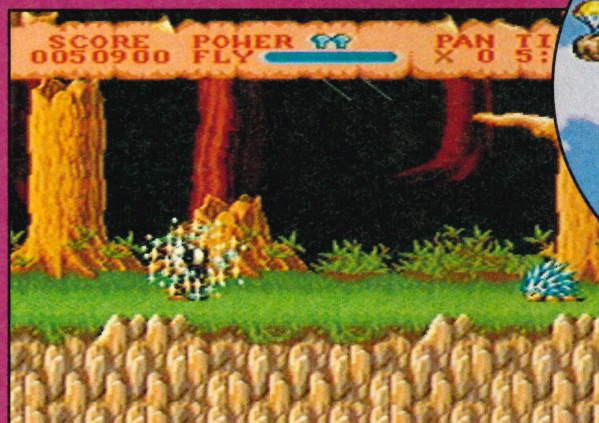


▲ Toys R everywhere. The clown's harmless, but the boxing gloves will lay you out cold.

just cast your mind back to the film and you'll see that this plot was made for a game conversion. The fighting and flying challenges facing Pan in the magic

of Never Never Land translate readily into a lively platform game.

But first our hero has to get to the magic island and lawyer Peter Banning is a sad reflection of his former Pan. He's committed the dreadful sin of growing up. He's sold out, married and had kids. But now Dustin Hoff... I



◀ Peter, magically into Pan form, faces a prickly porcupine (no, that's not Sonic).

mean Hook has kidnapped his little brats, so little Julia Rob... sorry Tinkerbell, transports him to Neverland where he has to persuade his old mates the Lost Boys he is the true Pan and win back his golden sword. And there you have the first level.

Pan battles his way through their

treehouse and boys appear from all over the place, threatening him with balloons on the end of sticks. They swing from trees, scoot in on skateboards, and a fat lad rolls up to meet you, before you can challenge the amazing flying Rufio who has the sword. This is playfighting though - Pan sort of slaps the cheeky lads and they



▲ Pirates in the Captain's employ march to and fro along the branches.



◀ These failed circus performers can roll their logs back up the slopes too!

■ J.M. Barrie's book Peter Pan actually caused quite a stir because it was encouraging kids to disobey their parents.



put their hands up in surrender.

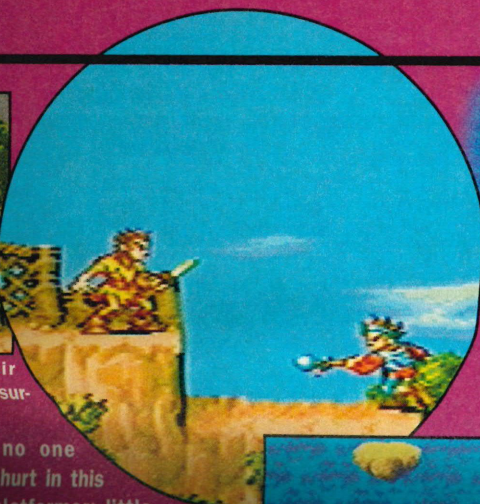
In fact no one really gets hurt in this delightful platformer; little porcupines just bounce back for more, bows and arrows look like toys and nasty pirates just fall out of the trees where they are perched.

Even the end of level bosses, smite thrice by your mighty sword, are only stunned and sit down, dazed. The bosses are benevolent characters, such as the clown who plays hide and seek with you, popping in and out of hollow trees. But your problems are created by jack-in-a-box fists springing out of the other trees and the acorns which fall around you.

Never Never Land is a children's nursery of a place, a rather large children's nursery with 11 levels to complete. You start in the forest and by the time you reach the shore, you are wondering if it would be quicker to just cut across the middle of the island rather than going right round the outskirts. Ok, so it's all part of the fun, negotiating rocks, caves and lagoons, but to add to the difficulty, Pan has forgotten how to fly, so reaching slabs of stone suspended in mid-air is not easy, especially when the ferocious tigers sitting on these slabs start breathing fire at you.

To get airborne you need some magic from Tinkerbell and she's always there when you need her. Pressing the jump button to take off, you ride the air cur-

▼ "I'm just a fat lawyer Ok so you can stop all this nonsense about Pan."



▲ The enemy, in hot air balloons, start shooting at you with blunderbusses. What ho!

rents like a bird, and all the time your supply of magic is diminishing fast. Tricky one this for apprentice Pans. Pan swims as badly as he flies, but when he sinks a completely naked (yes completely naked!) mermaid pushes him back to the surface. Pan would love to hang out with the mermaid for a while, but unfortunately these guys in hot air balloons are throwing barrels of explosives onto the surface of the water. Bummer!

Animation of the hero is superb. He looks positively elf-like in his green smok and tights and leans against a tree like only Errol Flynn's Robin Hood can. And in true fairytale fashion, our hero picks up cherries and apples for health power ups.

Pan has to leap from branch to

▼ Don't worry it's only playfighting. Poor kid looks pretty frightened though.



▲ Tigers breathing rings of fire, little fairies sprinkling flying magic? In Hook anything goes.



◀ The island is rather large, but why can't Pan take the short cut?

graphics rendered sequences" being quite unique, but there's loads to get through first. I can vouch for the digitised shots from the actual film, beautiful shots of the ship at sunset and ariel photography of the island.

The CD version has the added delight of the original film music. And what music! By John Williams of ET/Star Wars fame, it features a full orchestra and really shows off the capabilities of the CD. Kettle drum rolls and huge string crescendos fire you up for the task in hand. And the theme tune draws you even closer to the original movie.

Bringing out CD and cart simultaneously is sure to make you feel inferior if you don't own the hardware.

branch through forests, swim through treacherous waters and fly over wide chasms until he reaches Captain Hook's ship. I'm told the footage of the ship is special, the "silicon



▲ If you go down in the woods today... look out for arrows, bees' nests and porcupines!



▲ Beware Pantraps. Others spring into life when you step on them.



More of a movie experience than a game, this brings the original film back to life. But don't be put off if you didn't like the film - there are enough clever touches in the game-play to keep you glued to the console for weeks. Flying par example is tricky to master, but a joy once you have it. The only problem with the experience is that it's rather slow and consequently too big. It really will take you weeks to master, but it will be a joyous experience. ■ DAVID

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

88%



OFFICIAL

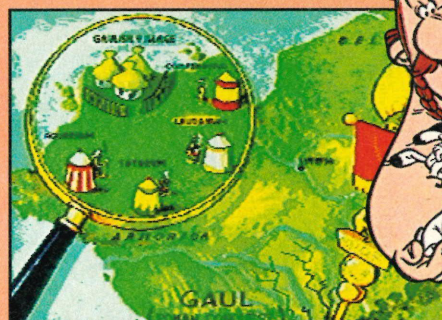
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Sega

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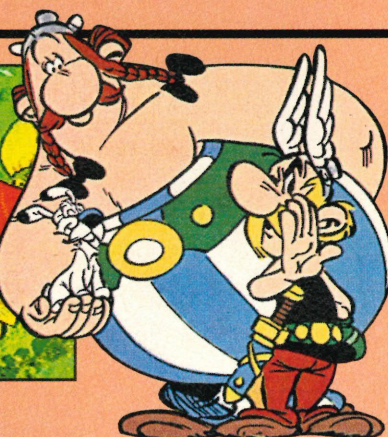
PRICE
£44.99



▲ Using his infamous punching capabilities, Asterix can knock this tree for six.



▲ Surrounded by Rome and all its legions, it's amazing that this one village has held out.



ASTERIX & THE GREAT ESCAPE

■ The year is 50 BC. Gaul is entirely occupied by the Romans. Well not entirely... one small village still holds out.

Asterix is from a little place under a magnifying glass in Gaul and everyone knows just how much of a punch this little village can pack. The head druid Getafix has rustled up a power potion which has so far enabled the village to withstand the might of the Roman army, which is surrounding them on all sides. Asterix, as with all heroes, is not alone in his battle against the odds. With his trusty companion Obelix, who fell in the magic potion at birth, he sets about humiliating and flattening any centurion in sight.

You can choose either Asterix or Obelix for the quest and for a change it can actually matter which character you choose. Asterix is a small chap, so he can get just about anywhere on the screen at his



leisure. Obelix on the other hand is just a tad overweight and therefore suffers when trying to squeeze in and out of tight spaces and it goes without saying the plump chappie takes just a little while longer to get through a level. You must work your way through the levels, each based on a different country in Europe to

meet up with the final challenge in Rome - a show-down with the Emperor. All this must be

achieved against a not too generous time limit which ticks away annoyingly, ending in removal from the game. It does allow for the odd mistake but

when you are up against some pretty head-scratching puzzles it's totally inadequate. In fact this level situation got me quite wound up. After all, it's one thing roaming at will discovering the odd key and even a secret level or two but having to do

TIP
Not every inch of each level needs to be explored. Sometimes the exits can be halfway through.



▲ Work your way through Europe and into Rome for the big fight with the Emperor.

▲ As odd as it looks, this represents somewhere in Europe. Where, I have no idea.

it against the clock with more than a quarter of the level thrown in for good measure is frustrating, let me tell you. There is even a level that you must complete in 30 seconds. THIRTY seconds I tell you! It becomes a case of just running like the clappers and hoping you don't bump into anything hostile. It can be done though. I finally did do it.

Of course no game, especially a platform game, would be complete without the old chestnut, the end-of-level boss. Asterix is no exception, with the likes of raging tigers out to get you before you take out Rome and win the game hands down.

There are three skills levels. If the easy level was what I would class as hard then the hard is what I would class as so difficult it can't be done. It simply gives you a near impossible time limit to attempt. You would simply have to know the level inside out and back to front to stand a fighting chance of completing it.

One other point to mention is that the game appears to have been programmed the wrong way round. Instead of you getting into the swing of things with a few choice easy levels, the game throws some real corkers at you and maintains this pace right up to about half way through where things suddenly

start getting real easy and it isn't until you find yourself in Rome that the true lack of difficulty presents itself. I have no idea why this is so but it does seem a slight error in the programmers' ideas. Still at least you can sit back and enjoy the later levels in all their glory.



▲ Collect the potions. Then decide which should be used where in the game.

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

80%



It's a bit of a laugh really and the time limits used make for quite an interesting little game. There is plenty to do though I'm afraid it all comes back to the fact that it is a platform game and nothing much more is going on. If you are a great fan of Asterix (or even Obelix for that matter), and I know there are a lot of you out there, then look no further as the guys could not have received a better sprite interpretation. If, however you are a great fan of platform games then I'm afraid you might not be raving about this much. ■ STEVE

■ What did the Romans ever do for us? Well, they invented central heating, roads and aqueducts for a start.



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Sega

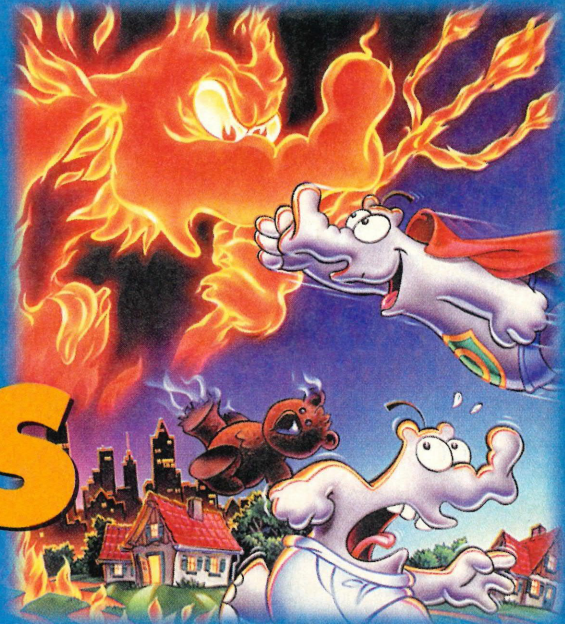
RELEASE DATE

December

PRICE

£44.99

Based ▶ on those ever so popular German funsters The Ottifants. You must discover new lands and treasures untold.



OTTIFANTS

■ Ottifant means elephant in German. Just how the humour and plot translates we shall have to see.

Apparently, according to our A-Z of worldwide cartoon characters, the Ottifants are a humorous family of elephants that keep getting into mischief. They started life in some German variety show and gained popularity, eventually ending up with their own series. Now call me prejudiced, but the Germans aren't exactly renowned for their side-splitting views on life, and there might just be an outside chance that British folk would miss the whole point altogether. But Sega in their true spirit of enterprise have cleared this platform romp for release on all their formats so perhaps we

shouldn't judge it so quickly.

The plot is perhaps a little complicated but certainly makes an interesting game. Bruno, the baby Ottifant of the family, has a very active imagination. For reasons which are not made too clear, he believes his father has been kidnapped by aliens. As with all potential heroes he also believes he is the only

Ottifant capable of saving the situation and therefore sets about a plan of rescue. In reality father Ottifant has merely been working late and is probably dreaming his time away. On his way to work father

has also managed to cram his suitcase, or should I say briefcase, full of what appear to be jelly teddies. The reason we know this is because some have fallen out, leaving a trail for any rescuer to follow. Rooms and objects take on new, evil meanings when you're hell bent on apprehending the figurehead of the family. It's up to Bruno. And time is running out.

TIP
Don't be tempted to go "Super Otti" all the time or you will miss out on a lot of the ground-based bonuses.

▼ Jump onto platforms and generally enjoy yourself for it's all in good humour, or so I understand.



There are six lands for Bruno to explore, all based on everyday rooms or situations. The basement turns into a dark mysterious cavern of doom while the humble garden becomes tropical and the study turns into a spaceship. As I said earlier the little elephant has an imagination working overtime.



This will sell well in Germany. As for the UK where we still regard anything German that is not a sausage or endorsed by Frank Muir as dubious it may not fare well. The Sega market in Europe is still in its early days and to produce a game for this small niche is indeed a brave step. Still, it's all there for the average platform player with erm... platforms and erm... cartoon characters. Graphics and music are OK but that's about it. Pretty run of the mill stuff here, unless you are a fan of The Ottifants and you are German. ■ STEVE

Of course living in each land are some wild and wacky creatures that defy description, even to the most successful stand-up comedian in Germany. Spikey spinning tops get right up your nose as does the odd dragon killer somewhere in the basement. But to dispel any sense you might have of doom and dismay, there are plenty of bonuses to retrieve and utilise. Pick up jelly teddies or jelly babies for points or get bonus items to become 'Superfant'. When this happens you can fly around the screen for a limited time at ultra Superfant speed, defeating all enemies that get in your way by simply touching them. To complete the game you must collect all the papers that are also left lying around. Without every one of these you cannot proceed.

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

75%



▲ Even toy airplanes take on a menacing appearance, dropping bombs on you.



▲ You can suck up things and fire them at your enemies for added mirth.

■ In Namibia, one of the tallest elephants recorded, 14.5 feet from shoulder to foot, was shot after killing 11 people.



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Acclaim

RELEASE DATE

January

PRICE

£39.99

CRASH DUMMIES

■ Bash 'em-up, crash 'em-up, trash 'em-up, they always come back for more. We ask: are they gluttons for punishment or simply limbless wonders?

If you've ever wondered how a Crash Dummy survives a stressful day at the test centre without going to pieces (hahaha!), now's your chance to step into pile-up city. These guys may get to test the latest proto-type vehicles but they always end up worse off. Things can get pretty hectic.

We catch up with our two repairable heroes chatting with Doctor Zub, your typical mad professor kind of guy, who has just invented a new body armour to protect our Dummies,

called T-9000. The three friends are standing around in the lab discussing the terrible problems that would arise if the devious Junkman ever got his hands on the doctors latest invention, when

the walls crash around them to reveal none other than... the Junkman! In the mayhem that follows, he grabs Doctor Zub and kidnaps him.

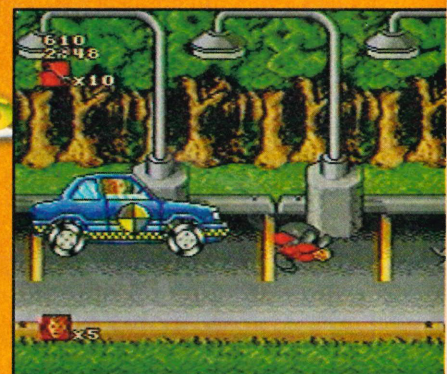
The dummies must take on the role of super sleuths and track

down their friend and creator, Doctor Zub. Slick remains at the lab to guard it, while you, Spin, go after Junkman and his hostage. The chase

takes you through

nine different zones where you risk life and limb (mainly limb) to rescue the Doctor.

The parking level is the first zone, and it's littered with smashed up cars, bouncing parking meters and rogue crash dummies in

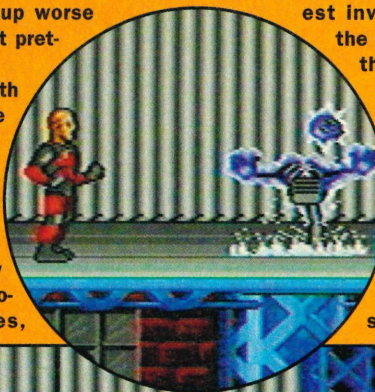
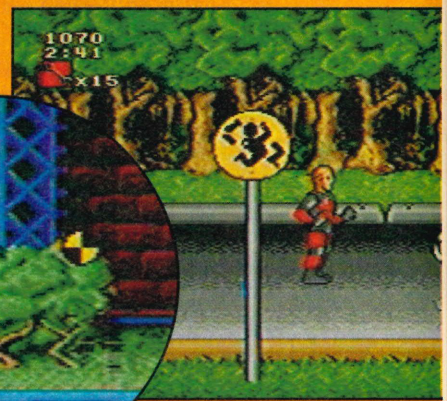


▲ Rolling down the road is not the best way to travel. I suggest you use the pavement, mate.

test vehicles out to dismember themselves and take you with them. And rather than losing a life or power up, as you would in any sane game, part of your body falls off.

And this is where the sicko factor kicks in. If you can't dodge or destroy the numerous obstructions in your way, then say goodbye to your leg. But don't panic, you can still hop along the rest of the level. And if you're hit again your other leg disappears.

▼ Hop-a-long Cassidy never had this trouble. A one-legged dummy v. a moped, that's fair!



■ Don't be a dummy, when your in the Car with Mummy (or Daddy), buckle up your safety belt.

DUMMIES



▲ Watch out for this nasty guy, he's ready to trim you down to size.

appears, but you still battle on, dragging yourself through the level. You might think this would make jumping rather painful but you valiantly bounce along on your stumps. Another hit and you become armless. You can still throw spanners though, so you're not really 'armless'.

The Junkman has created several mechanical henchmen to make sure you don't reach your destination. Rogue dummies stand in



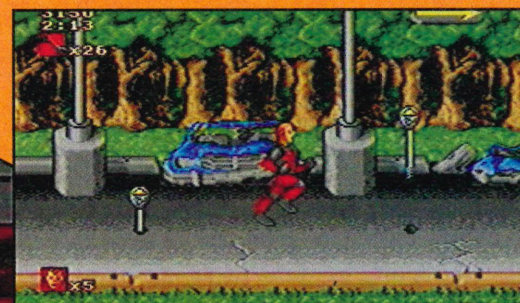
your way, throwing little yellow planes at you, which in turn drop bombs on you. And in the car park you have to dodge test cars and scooters which have a tendency to explode and shower you with debris which can prove fatal. Watch out for the tyres which bounce after you determinedly.

The huge robotic rottweiler dogs in the 'Construction Zone' would be enough to scare the pants off most intruders. But Spin just gets ready to lose a limb. Rogue dummies can also be found roaming around in what looks like go-carts and are sometimes lurking behind plants, waiting to pounce. One particular rogue turns out to be a bit of a shocker. He's a normal dummy one minute then suddenly becomes electrified and bolts of electricity shoot from him.

Spin definitely has a hard time of it. The sight of his torso bobbing down the street is pretty weird but just goes to show the dedication of the crash dummies to their maker and adopted father. To help Spin, strewn along the length of the car park are items to collect which he can use to fight back with.

The first end of level boss, situated in the test centre itself, seems to be some kind of breakfast making machine, firing out tomatoes, fried eggs and toast that pops up from the top of the contrap-

▲ After the first level, Spin moves on to the Vehicle Test Centre. You have to guide Spin and his car over an obstacle course of cans and barrels in an effort to complete the run in a short time as possible, for a full bonus. Hit anything and it takes a while to pick up speed again. As the wall at the end of the test centre looms closer, Spin is still roaring along. The next thing you know Spin is at the wheel of a total wreck, with tyres and seats are thrown from the wreckage. This just proves the risks of hazardous driving.



▲ Spin has to avoid the bouncing parking meters if he wants all his limbs intact.

you'll be finishing the level short on legs and that would never do.

The gameplay changes on each zone, from left to right scrolling obstacle course, to fast moving multi-directional platform game. My

favourite zone is the 'vehicle test centre', where Spin is driving along in his test car, timing the jumps just right to clear petrol cans, barrels and other objects in the fastest possible time to gain a bonus score. But when the end of the test centre appears, he can't apply the brakes so he just smash into



▲ Spin by name, Spin by nature. Collect all the icons to repair those lost limbs.

tion. You are only given 15 spanners to destroy this meal maker, so to finish him off you jump on top of him repeatedly, timing it just right or

the wall and you watch in amazement as the car crumples and seats and bodywork fly from the wreckage. If that level had been a bit longer and had more to accomplish, it may have kept me at the console a bit longer. Novelty value second to none, and a fine range of toys too!

The sound is fun, but, like the game, it gets on your nerves after a long playing session.

Power-up-tastic...

- Each spanner icon you pick up gives you five spanners to throw at passing rogue dummies and clear a path through the carnage.
- The screwdriver restores one arm or leg at a time, so you're not left limbless for too long. Pull yourself together and so on...
- Collect the yellow and black discs to increase your points, but don't confuse them with the larger discs which are trampolines actually.
- The red and black discs restore the time, as each level is against the clock, but don't go searching for these - it's in plentiful supply.
- The flashes are simple speed-ups, allowing you to race around the level for a limited period like a crash dummy road runner.



The idea is certainly original - no other game has you losing limbs and staying on your feet. The gameplay is fairly fast as you are against the clock and keeps you on your toes (if you've still got them). You really won't know what to expect next. The graphics are nice and colourful but it looks as though something is missing - maybe they could have been smoother. So long as any younger gamers understand only crash dummies can complete the tasks within the game and still carry on, I think the general public will probably take it to their hearts. ■ GLEN

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL
82%



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Electronic Arts
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£44.99



Friends of yours?

◀ The huntress (left) is the best looking choice, with lithe, long legs and charming stances. She isn't as strong as the men but she's more nifty and you just hope the beasties will avoid her out of courtesy. Her special weapon is a three way crossbow attack.

◀ The barbarian (middle) is a distant relative of Conan and is just as fierce and powerful. When he swipes with his mace the enemy either disappear or flee. Unfortunately he's a few rolls short of a picnic and his English isn't too hot. For the special attack he whirls his mace.

◀ The wizard (right) is my recommendation. He doesn't really slash, but hurls balls of fire, so he can stand at a distance, from the safety of the other side of a chasm. He's also faster and smaller than the others, but his attacks aren't as powerful. When wearing his special robe and hat his attacks have extra power.

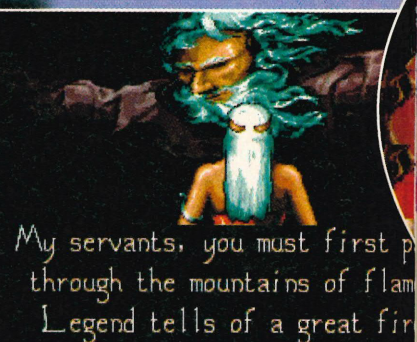
BLADES OF V

■ Now for something slightly different – after all those beat 'em-ups and shoot 'em-ups, a design innovation – the slash 'em-up.

What's all this about 'vengeance', then? 'Blades' all right – though one of the three characters, the Wizard, sports a Gandalf-style staff rather than a sword – but 'vengeance'?

▼ Just because she's good looking doesn't mean she can't fight like a man.

Just get a load of this. "The Kingdom has been conquered by Mannax the Dark Lady, and the forces of good have been put to flight. The Master has summoned the only three remaining adventurers who can defeat Mannax. They are the kingdom's only hope." The story is the weakest excuse for a game I have ever heard. Come back Sonic, all is forgiven.



▲ Bridges collapse revealing chasms full of molten lava. Phew, must be hot.

before? Yes, it's that safe, tried and tested formula.

Along the journey from left to right you meet various characters to slash, but many of them seem

like old friends. It's easy enough to put the zombies out of their misery, and from the look on their face you're doing them a favour, like they've spent their lives walking

up and down this little stretch of rice crispy-like platform. Red zombies take a few more slashes, cavemen and dwarves more and guess what ingenious move defeats the end of level boss? You got it, even more

▼ Death and a primitive caveman stroll by, but luckily they don't look up.



▲ The barbarian ain't afraid of no seven foot armed lizard. Eek!

And this game really needs an excuse because it's one of those you can just pick up and play. You wander round the levels and kill baddies in various guises, avoiding fireballs and leaping on lifts and collapsing bridges. Collecting treasure along the way, you cash it in at the end of the level after defeating the boss. Seen it all

TIP

Use the wizard character to clear one level and then get a mate to join in as the barbarian at the start of the next.

Hocus pocus...

Eleven spells and items to help you defeat the more tenacious enemies, including armour which gives you special attacks.



▲ Blows everything away, like a rocket launcher. But unfortunately, you can't use it against the end of level boss.



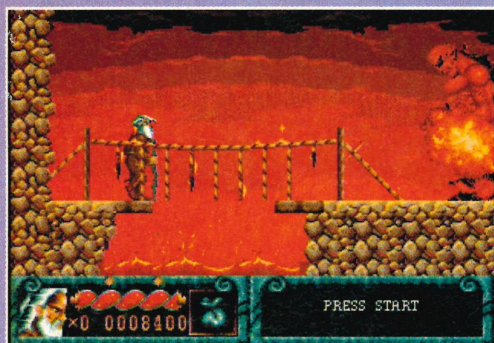
▲ Does any budding H.G. Wells have the recipe? This would be a useful one to take in the office sometimes.



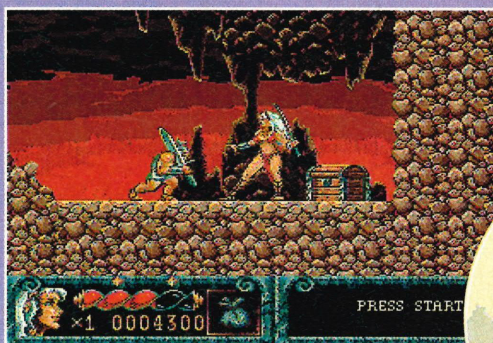
▲ Gives you a Ready Brek glow. Useful when you're looking for hidden areas, and have to scout around under the lava.



▲ The standard power-up. Drink this elixir of life and your health bar is resored a little. Bet it's just Guarana, though.



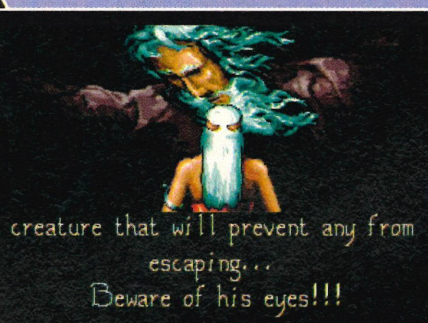
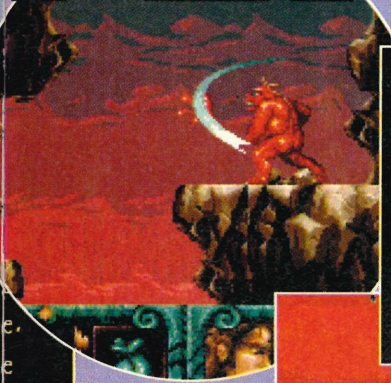
◀ Facing the great fire creature across this chasm, the wizard feels quite safe, because although this ball of fire gets quite heated and lets off sparks which turn into little men, they just fall into the chasm and can't get up the other side. Ha!



◀ The dwarf is no gentleman and he carries a ridiculously large sword which he swipes indiscriminately, killing all in his path. Sprites like this one are very nicely drawn but incredibly dumb and limited.



VENGEANCE



creature that will prevent any from escaping... Beware of his eyes!!!

slashing. To relieve the tedium of repeated slashing you acquire potions and treasure, either by opening chests or by stealing bits and pieces from your victims. When you complete the level, you can cash in all your treasure and, with a spot of bartering, acquire more potions to make combat easier. Spells and items are the game's saving grace, but are complicated to use, as you have to pause the game, scroll through your inventory and then restart it.

Later on in your vengeful life, you might meet some interesting characters, like the dreaded



▲ A bit of ducking and weaving is required to avoid the nasty fireballs here and there.

▲ Don't be fooled by the dwarf. He's got a huge sword.

Medusa, the dragons or vampires. The fireballs which turn into little fiery devils are ingenious enough and

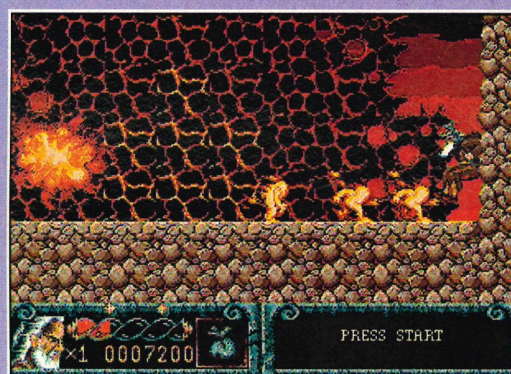
the standard of animation is high. The flying spheres too are nicely executed and swoop to attack in a very graceful, rather lethal way. But the grim reaper-type figure carrying a scythe is supposed to be the ghost of an old king and is just another example of where the visual outshines the crummy plot.

The Master gives you tips on how to defeat

▼ Stock up on potions at the end of each level.

some of the baddies, rather pointless tips as you discover, like "watch out for his eyes", when this huge fireball man is shooting rays of heat in your general direction.

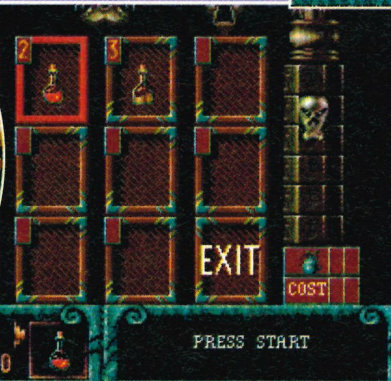
You would think the two player option would make it easier to defeat the baddies, especially when facing end of level bosses who need to be slashed a trillion and one times. But in fact having another player on screen isn't much help since sinking lifts and collapsing bridges don't reappear for your companion and he just tends to get in the way. What is useful is having your companion, say



▲ Balls of flame turn into little vengeful men. Don't laugh, this is serious this is.

the wizard, wait at the beginning of the level while you clear the way then both of you can fight the boss. But at intermediate stages you both need to be there to move on.

▼ These balls shoot a load of gunk at our beautiful heroine. Chivalry is dead.



It's a pity they didn't think about this one a bit more, because it has some great refinements and detail. The phial, for instance, which indicates your life force, looks just like a twisting glass jar. Sprites too are well drawn and quirky – the dumb bear marches up and swipes with his club, but misses you most of the time. But the tired concept and standard platform design ensures there's no way this game can stand as anything special. It's not a poor game by any means, it's just that all this has been done before. ■ DAVID

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

73%



IMPORT

PUBLISHER
Microprose
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£44.99

Shore leave...

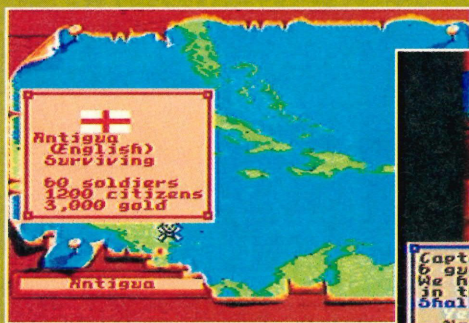
Panama, Port Royale, Curacao, these exotic sounding locations in the Caribbean are the settings for your adventures and the ports and forts are just as much part of the adventure as the cruel sea. There are 40 towns dotted around the Caribbean, some on tiny islands, others are 'lovely seaside towns' and some are further inland. Most of the land is still forested, so travelling around is difficult and rather poorly animated.

Incredibly, the buildings are the same in all the towns, but at times certain doors are closed to you. The bank is where you divide your plunder before retiring. At the merchants, you can buy sugar, food, 'goods' -

whatever they are - and cannon. This chap's a funny clerk who jots things down as you buy them. The shipwright isn't much use to anyone, until you want to sell your cannons and ships and retire that is. The tavern is a delightful drinking joint where you can meet all sorts of interesting people and glean useful information about cities and treasure. This is also the place where you recruit your men when you are starting out. And later on, your reputation can count for something in here. Pop into the governor's mansion and you can have a chat with the man himself, either bribe him to give you a letter of Marque or he might send you on a mission or you could even get to marry his very, very ugly daughter. Well, you're no looker yourself, mate.

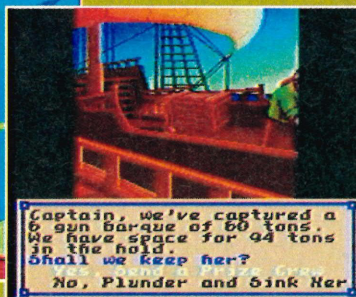


▲ The merchant has to jot down every transaction that he makes. He's one of those sorts.



▲ A useful wall chart gives you the vital statistics of all the main towns.

▼ This burly sailor is already unloading, so you've no choice.



Shiver me timbers! Can such historically correct piracy ever get its sea legs?

I'm dancing a hornpipe on the poop deck. I'm climbing up the main sail, fixing the rigging. I'm swashbuckling with Errol Flynn for the prize of a huge treasure chest. It's amazing how you can get drawn in to all this period stuff. It recreates the atmosphere of the 17th Century Caribbean pirate's life so well that only a landlubbing yellow belly could fail to play the role.

The game is vast and highly detailed, covering the high noon of piracy from 1560-1700. And this means an entire life to you or me, an entire career spent in the pursuit of gold, treasure and booty, attacking ships and towns and bringing respectable folk to their knees.

But ship shape! First you need a history lesson with a difference. The players are France, England, Spain and Holland and the scene is the

▼ On guard. Perfect your fencing technique against the computer.



Caribbean. Our period of study dates back to 1560, when Spain was at its richest thanks to her silver mines in Mexico and Peru. What you need here is a letter of Marque from a Spanish governor, effectively endorsing your piracy of the seas, and you're away. So go ahead, bribe the man.

1600 and Spain's in decline, while France and England are on the up. It's a good time for trade, so the pickings are rich. 1620. With the great powers at war in Europe, the colonies are growing up in the New World. So it's a boom time for pirates, until 1640 and the end of the 30 years war. 1660 is the best time for swashbuckling, when the colonial empires use

TIP

Make sure you are carrying plenty of food. It's amazing how soon you can run out in the middle of the ocean.



Letter from Rio... offers... for 110

buccaneers to do their dirty work. By 1680 though there are big fleets roaming the waters cleaning up.

You're not all at sea with a lot of time spent in conversation with governors of colonies, buying provisions and recruiting of men. But when you set out on the ocean wave, the open seascape is primitive and disappointing. Clouds blow by tiny ship like mice scurrying across the floor.

Sea battles, the staple diet of the pirate's life are pointless I'm afraid.



▲ Good old barman, humouring a drunken sailor.

PIRATI



▲ The crew status screen shows quite a happy scenario. You can save positions, too.

The ships circle each other firing off cannon blasts broadsides occasionally and they can surrender or lose a ship or two. But nothing really happens until they crash into each other and you, the pirate captain 'see the other captain approaching through the smoke'.

The sword fight is really the basic unit of the game, as you take on the

▼ The date, your location and your allegiances should be ignored every time. Just fight, pirate.





▲ On arrival at an enemy town, you can attack it or sneak in at night and have free run of the place. I wouldn't recommend attacking until you have some serious guns.

▼ Banks are only there to rip you off. Just like real life.

Are you sure you want to divide the plunder?
No



▲ The main street of the town. This one happens to be English, but it's funny how they all look exactly the same, even when they are Spanish or French. The governor lives down that alleyway to the left.



▲ But I became reckless in my greed for ever more booty.

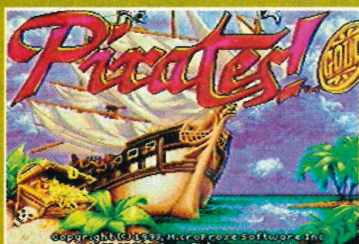


▲ I spent my days in prison dreaming of the treasure marked on a map I had found.

PIRATES! GOLD

Captain or Governor in a single combat which is representative of how well your whole crew is doing. And it can require some skill when you face another revered pirate to parry his blows and thrust and slash him into submission. If you have him on the run, your mens' morale rises, but if he proves too strong, you either flee or are thrown in prison or locked in Davey Jones' locker for the rest of your life.

The importance of reputation and morale in the game are welcome additions, especially when hundreds of men come from miles around to join your crew. The aim is to go into retirement rich and contented. I'm afraid that means married too and wooing the governor's daughter is one of the hardest tasks you face. The odd decoration from her father would put you in with a chance.



The adventures of Captain Hogwash

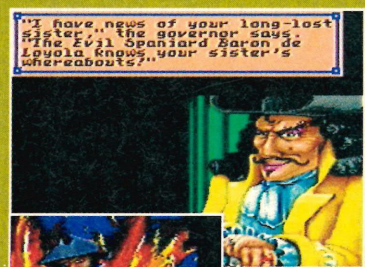
Sail the seas they said! See the world they said! Clash swords with infamous buccaneers and hold court with respected governors! And they were right. Let me tell you my story, about a certain pirate and his lust for gold.



▲ My name is Pirate Dave and I'm a bastardised Englishman of dubious parentage.

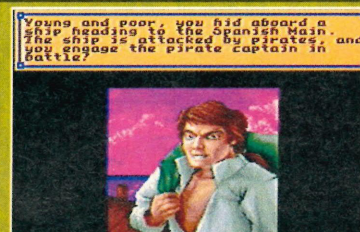


▲ I had always dreamed of a life at sea and one day finally had the courage to stow away.

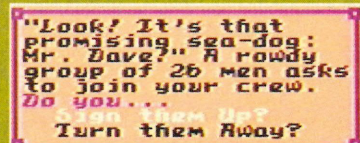


Which weapon will you use?
Longsword
Cutlass

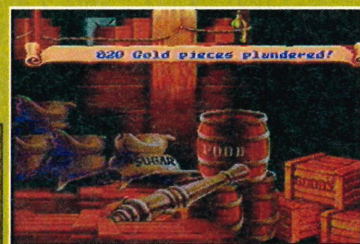
▲ The longsword is probably easiest, as you don't have to get in so close.



▲ I beat a pirate captain in a sword fight and took on his ship and crew.



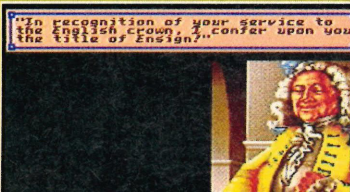
▲ So I went to shore and found a motley crew. Together we sunk many a fine ship.



▲ One Dutch Merchantman was loaded with treasure and cannons.



As far as RPGs go this is one of the most detailed. The ships, the enemy and even the time scale are laid out before you to an amazing extent. And not only can you have an entire career at the helm, leading a crew of surly rogues, but you can even re-enact a famous expedition such as Francis Drake's famous Silver Train Ambush of 1573. Poor game-play and stilted graphics let the project down, but that just means you need a bit more imagination. Before this, piracy was for little kids and Robert Louis Stevenson, but now it's here for us all. ■ DAVID



▲ So when I got out, I found the treasure, and stormed a Spanish town for the English.



▲ I retired rich and honoured, but I still dream of returning to sea one day.

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

83%

100% A L V E

Pick up someone else's litter

Send your mum some flowers

Strip right down to your underwear

Go for a run around the block

Ring 071 700 3100 and tell London something it needs to know
Tune your radio to Kiss and pull the knob off

Believe in yourself

Eat a pineapple

Write the alphabet backwards

Order an empty skip and leave it outside your house for a week
Meet an old friend you haven't seen for years

Make a record

Dance the dance electric

Plant a tree

Phone someone you love

Learn a second language

Every day at the same time stop and think about something wonderful
Go and see Ryan Giggs

Get your nipple pierced

Read a page from a book by Charles Dickens

Play football in the street

Give £100 to a down and out

Put your change into a bottle for a year and give it to charity
Make a statement

Visit Great Ormond Street Hospital
Begin something you've always wanted to begin
Go to the market and spend 10p
Learn something new every day

Throw away your watch

Laugh

Take a picture of your back

Make a cake

Go for a day without speaking

Write to Mother Teresa

Turn your radio up full blast

Say a prayer every night

Have a day without TV

Stare at the clouds for a full ten minutes

Hug someone of the same sex

Buy Marvin Gaye's 'What's going on'

Tell someone a secret

Think purple

Wallpaper the inside of your car

Go on holiday and don't take any luggage

Run up a downward escalator



TUNE TO 100FM,
CLOSE YOUR EYES,
STICK A PIN IN THIS
PAGE AND DO IT.

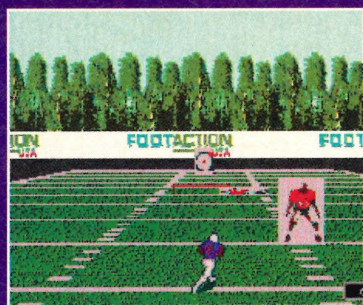
- Give up your seat on the tube every day
- Take a bath in milk
- Climb a tree
- Watch 'It's a wonderful life'
- Get on a bus you never got on before
- Drink a glass of water
- Clean your ears
- Dream for the day
- Visit New York
- Listen to Jazzie B's next show
- Get up an hour earlier tomorrow
- Do 100 press-ups
- Eat something you've never tried before
- Ride a Merry-go-round
- Say hello to a policeman
- Spend an hour in a place of worship
- Send someone a telegram
- Put your sofa in the kitchen
- Go to a museum
- Go home a different way every night for a week
- Learn to listen more
- Sing a song at the top of your voice
- Help a stranger with their shopping
- Write a fairy-tale
- Make a wish
- Put on a dress
- Write to your MP
- Stop saying no for a whole week
- Paint your toe-nails
- Take your granny to the movies
- Give your favourite possession away
- Memorise a Woody Allen joke
- Tell the truth for a day
- Scream
- Put the kettle on
- Take up knitting
- Listen to Rodigan's next show, in the park
- Photocopy this ad and get someone else to do it
- Only boil as much water as you need
- Learn a new word every day
- Do one thing to make the world a better place to live
- Forgive someone
- Spend an afternoon speculating on how to make a million
- Buy a friend your favourite book
- Tune into Caesar tomorrow morning at 4am
- Tell someone you appreciate what they do
- Buy your boss a present
- Buy the next record you hear on Kiss
- Wink at someone ugly
- Talk about God with a friend
- Make a million pounds
- Walk on the grass
- Tell someone your dreams
- Do a cartwheel
- Learn to fly
- Stop someone getting AIDS
- Put your name on a star
- Say yes for a day
- Croon to your partner under a full moon
- Do a jigsaw puzzle
- Get your hair cut
- Dance in the rain
- Fast for a day
- Buy a hat
- Use a fountain pen
- Walk home today
- Feed the dog
- Invite your neighbour to tea
- Give your favourite possession away
- Memorise a Woody Allen joke
- Tell the truth for a day
- Scream
- Put the kettle on
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- Tell someone your dreams
- Do a cartwheel
- Learn to fly
- Stop someone getting AIDS
- Put your name on a star
- Say yes for a day





OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Konami
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£39.99



▲ The fastest quarterback on the planet, Warren Moon runs at the speed of light.



▲ The dirty dozen? The ugly bug ball? No it's 12 of the finest sportsmen in the NFL.



▲ Practice makes perfect, but why you need to read to be a quarterback I'll never know.

NFL QUARTERBACK

■ Grab your helmets and put your padding in position, because it's time to touchdown!

All 28 football teams making up the NFL are ready and waiting for a head-to-head battle for Grid Iron supremacy in this, the latest sports sim from Acclaim.

You take on the role of quarterback calling the shots and making the plays work – an awesome responsibility – and hopefully taking your team through the playoffs and on to the Super bowl!

But before trying to control a full-blown game, give the 'Quarterback Challenge' a try. Choose from 12 of the finest quarterbacks, each with different levels of the skills required for the organisation of their teams.

▼ Whoops, slipped up on that icy surface. The all-weather options make for interesting play.

TIP

If it's fourth down and you are worried about a turnover, try for a field goal, if you are close enough, or maybe risk the hand off.

To perfect these skills, your Club QB has four challenges to compete in. Accuracy, distance and read and recognition trials are all based on the quarterback's ability to throw at targets (some of which are moving), to gain points. The speed and mobility trial puts the quarterback through a vigorous obstacle course, in case you decide to make a run to the end zone all by yourself. The 'Quarterback Challenge' adds a certain competitiveness to the pre-game training, allowing you to sharpen up your co-ordination on the throws or high speed rushes through the opposition.

As a QB you will find yourself setting the field for



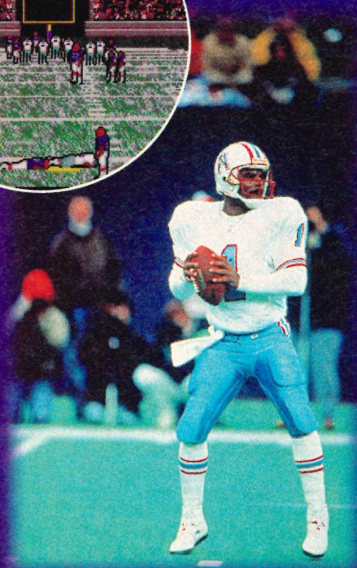
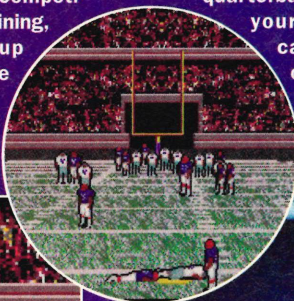
▲ After a touchdown completion, earn an extra two points for a successful field goal.

the next play, in an effort to gain yardage. The choice of plays that are available to you would take the rest of my natural life to explain in detail, so I'll side-step all that for a second. It seems that every play that has been created within the world of American Football has been transferred into this game. Even when the quarterback is not in play, your defensive team can counteract the opponent's push forward and try to



regain the ball with an interception.

The play is viewed from behind the quarterback, so you can scan the whole field in front of your team and assess which play would be the most effective. You can make the long throw to a wide receiver deep in the field or leg it through the hustle and take all the glory yourself and score the winning touchdown. The decision is yours once you've taken the snap.



▲ Warren Moon: Probably one of the highest ranking quarterbacks during the 1990 season. It must be true that they earn big bucks as he donated \$200,000 to a Houston area church.

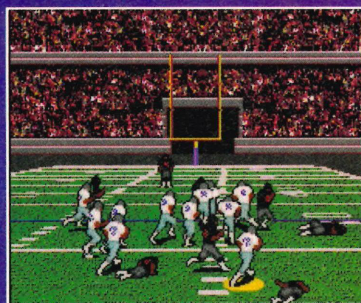


▲ John Elway: Before his football career took off as QB for the Denver Broncos he played minor league baseball for the New York Yankees. The change in direction was a good move – soon after his transfer from the Colts in '83 he smashed all their offensive records.

■ The morning after the first late night Super Bowl was shown in this country, 8.2 million employees arrived late for work.



▲ Team mis-match up – looks like the Cowboys have the advantage in this game.



▲ That's me making a move – last one to hit the showers is a sweaty sock.



▲ Eye's down boys – that contact lense has to be around here somewhere.



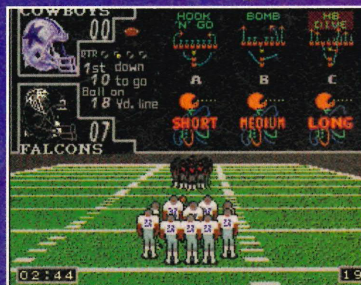
▲ The larger than life, big screen ref doesn't miss a trick. He saw me move too soon.

ERBACK CLUB

The choice is yours....



▲ The strong zone play is put into action by the defensive team in an effort to stop your opponents dead in their tracks. Just one of many defensive plays available.



▲ Offensive plays include the bomb, when wide receivers or tight ends run deep ready to receive the pass from your sweaty palms in the quarterback position.



▲ Fake Field Goal Pass: the diagram explains this play. The field is set for a goal attempt, but when the play is activated the ball is thrown instead of being booted.

When the play commences, things get slightly confusing as all the players seem to merge into a heaving, grunting mass of American attitude. With a bit of luck one of your fellow team members has made a break for it and run deep, ready to receive the throw,

allowing you to change character and become that wide receiver and rush to glory for a touchdown.

Each team has an array of players to hand, all of whom perform a different task. The three main groups are the offence, defence and special teams. The quarterback controls the play when the offence team are on the pitch in a bid to advance 10

yards (or more) up the field. If successful after four attempts, then the process starts again. But, if the 10 yards are not completed or the ball is intercepted then the opposing team take control.

This is where the defensive team come on. These are usually the

biggest guys on the pitch, whose only objective is to retrieve the ball, any way they can! This can result in the quarterback being "sacked" by the defence squad which looks quite unpleasant, as the quarterback ends up at the bottom of a pile of men, who all weigh around 260 pounds. Probably the most famous of these is William Perry, 'The Refrigerator', who plays for the Chicago Bears. Weighing in at an astounding 318 pounds, he's not too fussy about what he eats.

When it comes to punts or field goals, the special team takes over. They can punt the ball mid-game or, to score extra points after a scoring a touchdown, kick the ball through the raised goal in the end zone. At which point the crowd goes wild and the referee raises both arms. The glory!

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

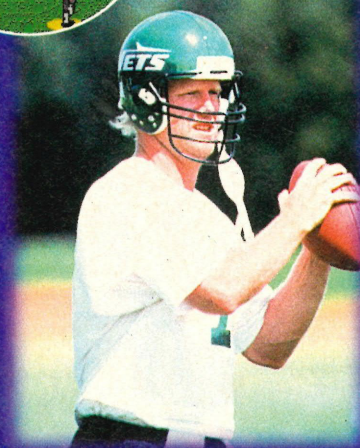
85%



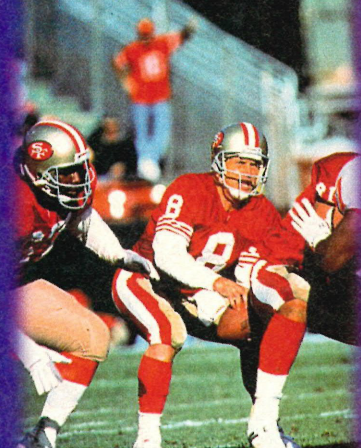
▲ The throw is made but in the confusion a fight breaks out. 500 stone of crazy wrestling yank.



Originally I was slightly put off by the complexity of all the different plays that were available. But the game does hold up a good challenge factor to the armchair sports fan. What keeps you interested in the play is the fact that you can personally create thousands of scenarios. You choose the teams that compete, the weather conditions to play in, and you can change the course of history and swap quarterbacks amongst the team. You will find yourself coming back to this one, even if it's just to figure out all the plays. ■ GLEN



▲ Boomer Esiason: Now playing for the New York Jets, this 6'4 32 year-old likes to take control of the game and his enthusiasm and confidence are backed up by his remarkable track record. He was voted the NFL's most valuable player back in 1988 when he played for the Cincinnati Bengals.



▲ Steve Young: Originally introduced into the sports arena through football at Brigham Young College, he started with the Buccaneers nine years ago and now calls the shots for the San Francisco 49ers.



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Konami

RELEASE DATE

Out Now

PRICE

£39.99

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

■ Soccer's popularity means that a good game will be a chart buster, but a great game will go down in the history books.

As the most popular team sport in the world, soccer crosses the globe from the slums of Brazil to the deserts of Ethiopia to the suburbs of Rome. A tin can or tennis ball, discarded jackets as goal-posts, a melee of youth and enthusiasm and the deep desire to become great. From this flailing of arms and legs will come the next Pelé, Cruyff or Best?

EA Sports, the most revered producer of sport simulations, have made the field of American sport their own, producing supreme simulations of basketball, American football and baseball. But the worldwide appeal of soccer presented an irresistible challenge to the designers to produce the very best. The fact that the controlling body of world soccer, FIFA, was inspired to put its name to the game was a good omen indeed.

▼ Flash point. Goal keepers can be computer or manually controlled.

TIP

Play with manually controlled goalies and keep shooting from off the screen. Your opponent's goalie won't stand a chance.

Reflecting the diversity of teams and worldwide appeal of the game, the designers have based the game around the summit tournament, the World Cup. The program features all 48 competing countries, as well as individual player attributes including the skillful and tenacious African countries such as Cameroon

who burst into the spotlight of international soccer during Italia 90. This level of accuracy shows the determination of the design team to produce the most complete and realistic tournament scenario ever seen in video gaming. For those who just want a quick kick about though, the program has a one-off exhibition friendly option.

The full tournament option pits the player's chosen team against six qualifying groups of four teams in a knockout situation. All the teams play one another, making a possible



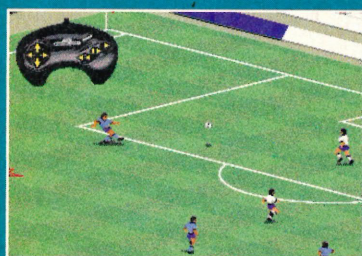
eight matches and the top two go forward to the play-off stage. You can cheat by missing the qualifying rounds and going straight into the knockout stage with the 16 qualifying teams. The stages would still take months to complete, so a password feature enables the player to rejoin the tournament at any time. You can also create a league of eight teams for a championship. A team selection screen displaying status and skill gauges aids the selection of balanced groups, a bit fairer than the traditional bingo-call method used in reality. This information highlights strengths and weaknesses including passing, tackling, defence, attack, goalkeeping and a general overall rating.

The option suite continues to unveil choice after choice, from choosing match duration from four to a glorious 90 minutes, to whether the players are susceptible to exhaustion and tiredness which

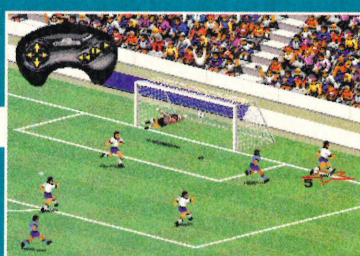


▲ American-style commentary, as the game sadly seems to be aimed across the Atlantic.

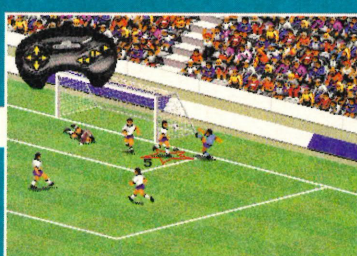
affects each individual's running speed and distance as well as shooting and passing. Immunity to tiredness produces a more arcade-style game. As for the goal keeper, the choice of manual or computer-controlled goalie is debatable and only by experimenting with both can the player decide which affords the best goal defence. Managers might think their God EA Sports has given them divine powers in selecting the weather for a match because stifling heat or a drenched pitch obviously affects the speed and bounce of the ball.



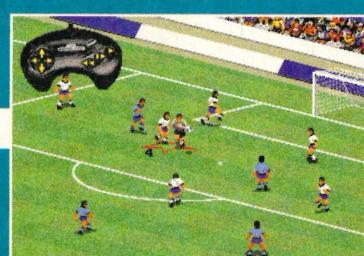
▲ Using the special action replay system you can play back such great moments as these.



▲ He shoots! It's on target and only a freak act of God can stop it now! Oh, the goalie saved it.



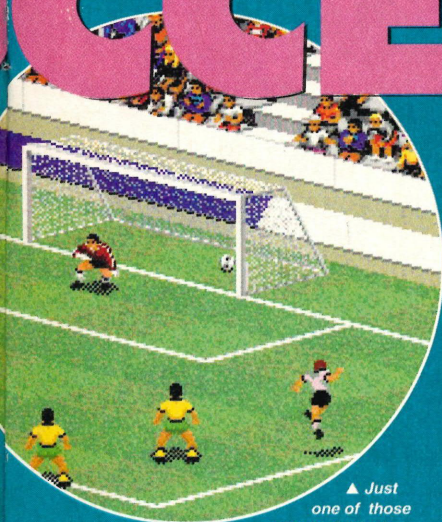
▲ But wait! A scuffle at the post has produced yet another opportunity for the boys!



▲ It's crossed deep into the box and with precious seconds running out

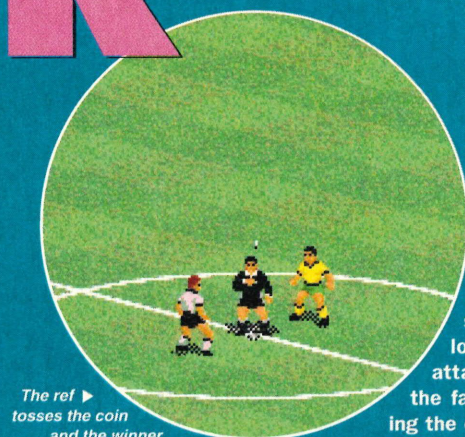
■ The US have entered the World Cup every year, but have only qualified four times. In 1990 they lost all three of their matches.

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER



▲ Just one of those 2,500 individual frames of animation, the power shot.

Very useful will be the one and two-player mode, as well as that Electronic Arts 4-Way Play which enables two against two or four players against a computer-controlled



The ref tosses the coin and the winner chooses their end and takes the kick-off.

player. The final pre-match task is to adjust the players' pitch coverage, which is effectively controlled by position parameters, and in this process define the team's formation in conjunction with play strategy. Once experienced, a player will be

Direction is not as simple as it seems. The 3D effect of the slightly diagonal view can make this confusing. But you can bias the pad to suit you.



The lob kick. Useful when you want to achieve that delicate chip over the goal keeper.

For gentle passes in play, and all the throw-ins and kick-offs. Also for heading.

The searing shot. You can end up using this all the time, but it won't pay off.

able to match the most appropriate formation to his style of play, whether it be long balls, all-out defence or attack. An excellent feature is the facility to change tactics during the course of the match to counteract changes of play.

EA Sports designers have adopted the state-of-the-art TV camera perspective, employing an ultra-smooth rotoscoping technique which keeps pace and moves with the ball unobtrusively. But graphic definition has certainly not been sacrificed with clearly-defined sprites and superb player animation with amazing individual player idiosyncracies.

Behind this thoroughly realistic graphical presentation is the most ingenious team control ever devised. The system is quite simply a large colour star which travels on the pitch beneath the player in control. Once the player loses possession, the star appears only as an outline but colour returns when in control of the ball. When attacking, a crosshair sight appears beneath players that are in a good position to receive the ball. The system is surprisingly effective, keeping the flow of the game and presenting a level of passing accuracy never attained before in a soccer simulation.

Use of the control interface has been intelligently designed to make the direction, speed and height of passes and shots more

controllable than ever before. The controls take a bit of getting used to, but once mastered they just add to the realism of the whole experience. This is just like playing the game, without the effort. You can even commit spectacular fouls.

Full interactivity with all aspects of play includes free kicks, corner kicks and throw-ins, all of which are aimed with a red directional box for pinpoint accuracy. And the 2,500 individual player animations demonstrate only too well the designers' painstaking efforts to make FIFA Soccer the best.

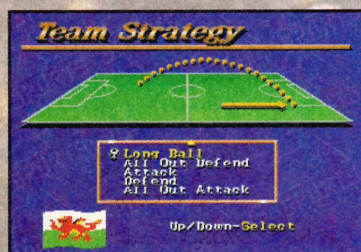
Play the Field Son



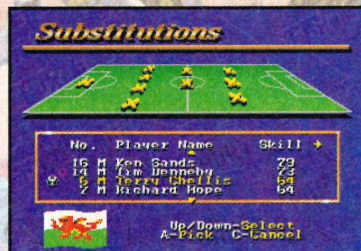
▲ Players cannot go outside their position's coverage, so you might want to change this.



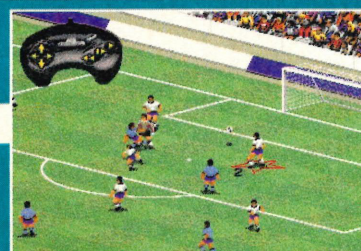
▲ 3-5-2, I ask you. Who would be stupid enough to use this formation?



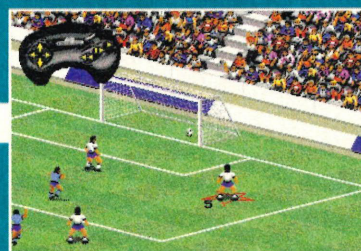
▲ You must make use of the strategy too, bringing a managerial element into the game.



▲ Names are fictitious, but Richard Hope might just be the man you're looking for.



▲ He sidesteps and aims a choice shot just past the keeper's reach!



▲ It's a goal! Not only that but to rub it in further you can rewind the whole triumph again!

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

93%



You'd have to be madder than Mad Jack McMad not to add FIFA Soccer to your Christmas list. Try as I might, I couldn't find anything worth moaning about! It succeeds as a soccer simulation and an arcade kick about. With a level of game control never experienced before, this is the best soccer sim yet. As LA 94 looms, many publishers are vying for gold, but FIFA Soccer is already making its way up the steps to seize that 24 pound chunk. ■ Jason



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

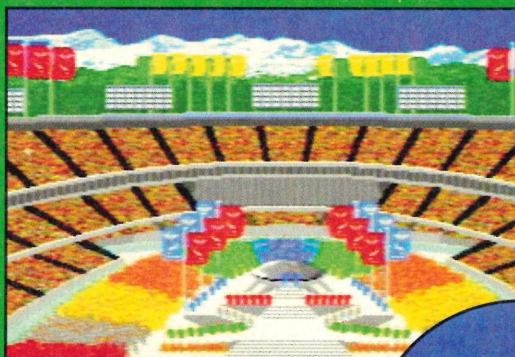
Accolade

RELEASE DATE

Out Now

PRICE

£19.99



Before the contest begins, join all the other competitors, as they come together in the opening ceremonies. This symbolizes the start of the eight winter sports you're about to enter.



The downhill. Travel at speeds reaching 80 miles per hour down slopes which have 1000 metre vertical drops. Not for the faint hearted.

WINTER CHALLENGE

Grab your scarves kids, we're going sledging, but this time there's a gold medal at stake.

To the Scandinavians it's known as the 'The Hunger'. To you and me it's better known as the challenge of taking on the vast snowcapped mountains. Hundreds take up this challenge, and compete against each other, to be the best in their sport and claim a bronze, silver or gold medal. The Winter Games create a greater competitive spirit amongst all the contestants, because as well as trying to win a medal, they have to compete in very cold conditions.

Winter Challenge enters you straight into the Olympics. Your goal is to achieve the fastest

speeds, the highest scores and the longest jumps. Before the challenge commences you must select the competitors and up to 10 players can get involved, which is ideal for those of you with too many friends. For each player you select their name, nationality and even the face which you think best suits your character. You also select the level the competition is played at. Start the game off on Amateur level, as you can progress on to Professional and World Class levels later.

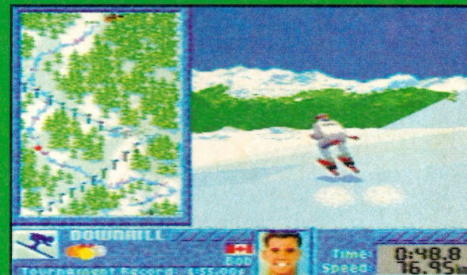
TIP
On the skiing events, assume the "tucked" position a.s.a.p. for less wind resistance.

There are eight events to take part in, each testing you on a different level. First, strap on your skis for the downhill skiing. Race round the designated gates at speeds reaching 80 miles per hour. If you make it to the finish line you're only half way there but you must have completed the ski run in a pretty fast time even to qualify.

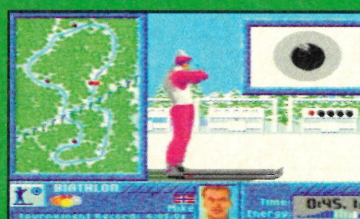
Keep your skis on for the next event: the giant slalom. You won't reach the same speeds as on the downhill, but there is a larger, more complex course to deal with.

Cross country skiing is the 100% endurance test, so keep an eye on the energy bar as well as the course map. Combine skiing 20 kilometres with shooting and you have the biathlon and this will put the strain on your stamina. The Bobsled is an all-time favourite. Clock the fastest time on the track of ice and you're in with a chance, but watch out for those nightmare hair pin corners - time it wrongly and you disappear over the edge of the track. Luge is based on a similar idea, but instead of being encased in the metal shell of a bob, you lie flat on a four foot sled and hold tight! Hit the ice rink with speed skating for three laps of button thumping madness. And if you've got the nerve, you can attempt the ski jump. Control is the name of the game here, so aim the skis straight off the ramp and correct any errors that arise when cutting through the icy breezes high above the spectators.

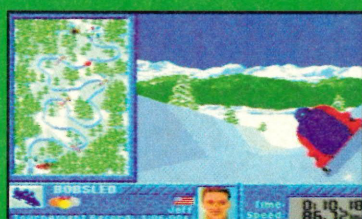
The judge's panel shows the event currently being played and also the Tournament Record. You are given the option to clear the score board before each Tournament, or leave the best scores on for further



challenges. Loads of options and fast gameplay ensure that you get really involved. And the vector style graphics create realistic images that are pleasing to watch. Altogether it makes for good simulation, so go ahead and see if you have "The Hunger" for that big freeze.



Once you've completed a skiing section on the biathlon, move on to the shooting range.



Bank round 180 degrees corners along the 1500 metre long track, made from pure ice.



Spend a bit of time sorting out the controls for each part of the Tournament before getting your snow gear on. You'll get more from the game if you fully understand what you're supposed to do. This is an excellent choice of game to re-release with the Winter Olympics due next year and at the budget price of £19.99, Accolade could be on to a winner. Lets just hope it snows this Christmas so we can all get some practice in. We're going to need it. ■ GLEN

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

86%

SILVER

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Europress/Xmas93

IMPORT

PUBLISHER

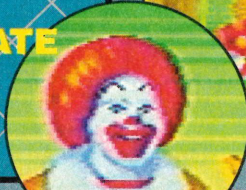
Sega

RELEASE DATE

Out Now

PRICE

£44.99



▲ Ronald's out looking for ingredients for his burgers...

▼ ... but these mutated vegetables won't make his day.



McDONALD'S TREASURE LAND ADVENTURE

■ Another meaty offering from the company that brought us the Big Mac, this time featuring the clownish Ronald himself.

It's hard work out here in description land readers, especially when you're reviewing an import with all the instructions in Japanese. Fortunately, this kid's game from Sega is a fairly straightforward platformer.

But it's no less stunning for that. Level after level of ingenious play leave you wondering if there will be any ideas left after this lot have finished. The four stages are called 'magical' - 'forest', 'town', 'sea' and

'moon' - and it's an adjective that's certainly merited.

What's Japanese for Abracadabra? Ronald knows. He sprinkles magic on the bad-dies to make them disappear in a puff of smoke. Among these are dwarves who have magic themselves, making a bolt of lightning fall from the sky. And, as if by magic, the backdrop comes alive

as an alligator or a huge tree-like monster with branches for arms, and slits for eyes and mouth.

I suspect the many mutated animals you meet along the way have something to do with the magic too. A snail on wheels isn't such an odd sight, nor is a leaping fish, but what about a huge fish spaceship, or a strange sort of tom cat or some delicate dancing bunnies?

This neighbourhood is decidedly aquatic and water flows all around the hapless clown. Upturned urns which gush water past his head are just harmless, oasis-style decoration, but the rapids work against him and waterfalls are definitely to be avoided. When the water really falls, Ronald has five seconds to get to one of the dry safety zones, there to wait for the deluge to finish and then make a dash for it to the next zone. It's like hanging around in a shop doorway for a particularly heavy shower to finish.

The aim of the game, as far as I could gather, is rather disappointing. Collecting silver and gold rings, jewels which look like strepsils and McDonalds symbols, you increase your gold rating. That's it. There has to be more to the game, but I'd be Japanese if I knew what it was. There's an option to go inside for a bit, but just to count your treasure.

Ronald McDonald always gets his burger. And the end of stage boss is accordingly a huge tomato, breathing his chilli breath in our hero's general direction. Huge impressive sprite upon huge impressive sprite bound around the screen and Ronald's interaction with these intriguing figures is just mad. Crazy. Insane. What are these Japs on?

TIP
On the scrolling levels, be careful not to get caught by the left hand side, and jump quickly or you lose the chance.



▲ Using his scarf, Ronald can travel in style on this chair lift type contraption.



▲ These steam-driven totem pole pistons release wasps. Honest!



Flair and imagination, the designers of this game have it all. And innovation. What innovation. Travelling on the back of frogs and fighting magic dwarves make this worthy of Lewis Carroll. Ronald in Treasureland? Ronald himself is delightfully reproduced - he actually looks and acts like a clown. And the sprites move very smoothly, without the graphic glitches you sometimes see with that size and detail. It's basically a kid's game, so I guess I'm a big kid. ■ DAVID

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

88%

SILVER

■ In the States, they eat 257 lb of meat per head. In a poor country like India, they only eat 7lb.

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Electronic Arts

RELEASE DATE
Out Now

PRICE
£39.99



▲ Your team coach either praises you or slaps you off during the time outs.

Years from now there will be a number of cataclysms and the universe as we know it will be changed forever. Other life forms will contend with humans in the struggle for survival. The land will be torn apart by war and it'll surely be extinction for us all.

After several conferences, it was decided that all conflicts should be taken to a sports field and fought out during a game of old fashioned American football. But you can bet your life the rules won't be strictly applied. Even though the sport was deadly, the players and spectators thought it much more enjoyable than conventional rules. Soon the pitches were littered with deadly devices to mutilate the opposition with. They

▼ Choose what team you play as or against in the options screen.

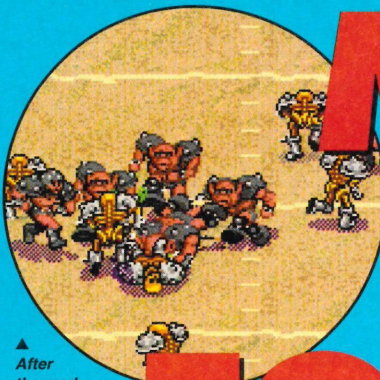
AWAY TEAM	GALAXY ACES
SIXTY WHINERS	HOME TEAM
SEGA	PAD 1
GAME MODE	SINGLE GAME
QTR LENGTH	3:00
FIELD	BATTLE FIELD
RESERVES	OFF

STATS

1/4 - Scroll
Page 1 of 5

	0	1
First downs	17	51
Total yards	6-(-19)	8-27
Rushes-Yards	19	-7
Passing yards	2-6-1	0-1-0
Comp-Att-Int	1-10	1-7
Sacked-Yds lost	0	3
Deflections	1-49	1-16
Punts-Avg	17	31
Return yards		

▲ At the end of the match there is a score sheet displaying who had what and where.



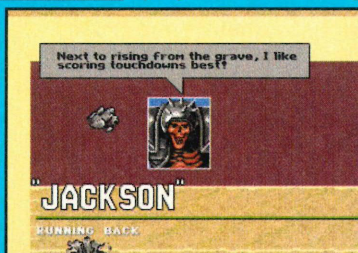
▲ After the mad frenzy when the ball is placed, a severe battle ensues with heavy injuries.

Roll over John Madden and his band of sissy players. Make way for a new breed of sportsman.

even took the game to asteroids, patrolling the deepest parts of space where gravity hardly exists. These combinations of dangers made history as many species competed against each other like humans do in today's games.

If you've played any of the Madden series before then you'll know what to do here. It is basically American football with different sprites and a few optional extras. The rules are the same as AF (American Football) as far as the scoring goes, but there's more to it. You can for instance play nasty on purpose, often killing the referee or maiming the opposition. If you employ these cheating tactics you're subject to harsh penalties such as a five yard loss of ground, thus pushing back.

What is disappointing is the lack of gore. After a first glance at the box, you're led to believe that this game is highly gruesome in detail. But the only green blood you're likely to see is when the other players are being



▲ The team player says something witty or intelligent each time you score.

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL



◀ The back stabbers against the maniacs, a frightening showdown.

before the ball is put into play. You only take control of a single player, normally the receiver and you should concentrate on hurling the ball up the field to another player, who will hopefully complete the touchdown.

It's quite complicated if you know nothing about the sport, with tactics to learn and loads of teams, each with different playing styles. As far as sport sims go, there's not much better. If there is you can bet your life it's done by EA.

punched or kicked and that only looks like sweat. When the referee gets killed it's a bit different. The helpless chap is decapitated and disembowelled in front of the crowds. Now that's a bit more like it.

Like AF you have to instruct your players where to position themselves by selecting various formations



▲ And the crowds go wild as the galaxy aces score yet another touchdown.



Once again EA have demonstrated that they are at the top of the pile when it comes to sports simulators. The only drawback and a big one at that, is that this is John Madden with different graphics. If you're the proud owner of one of the Madden series then you should give this a miss. But even if you're not I would still strongly recommend the Madden series over this. It's graphically pleasing, but at the end of the day it's a rehashed version of a brilliant game that was released a couple of years ago. ■ DAVE

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

78%



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Sega

RELEASE DATE

Out Now

PRICE

£44.99



▲ Robotnik orders his henchmen to go to Beanville and capture more slaves for him.



▼ When you win the round, watch the boss as they pull some pretty funny faces.

DR. ROBOTNIK'S MEAN BEAN MACHINE

■ Doctor Robotnik is back with a jellified version of *Columns*. Are you good enough to stop the jelly bean massacre?

This is a strange concoction Sega have cooked up for us. Taking time out from being chased by the infamous blue spikey one, Robotnik has decided to take control of all the jelly beans he can lay his hands on. The Doc wants to transform them into robots, by using his latest invention, the Mean Bean Machine. And your humble job is to free the bean victims by joining four of each colour together. As jelly beans go, these guys are pretty cute as they wobble down the screen looking around for the same flavour. When they fall next to a bean they recognize, (one of the same colour) they link up together, joining as one blob.

If you have played *Columns* then you'll have no problems picking this

one up. Beans fall from the top of the screen in pairs, leaving you the simple task of placing them along the bottom of the screen. You can rotate the beans so they fall in any configuration. You then have to try and match up four or more of the same colours in an effort to reduce the pile of

TIP
Keep your cool when things get tough. Panic and you'll only put the beans in the wrong column.

beans before they have chance to build up. Points are awarded

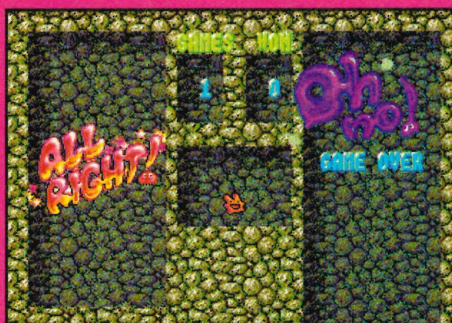
when a group of beans are joined, but if a number of groups are 'freed' in one go, tiny balls of energy zoom from your playing area across the screen and mutate into refugee beans. These beans cause the problems, they block your plans for reducing your bean pile and can only be removed when they are put next to another escaping group. The best plan is to try

and get multiple groups freed together, as the knock-on effect will create big problems for your opponent with more refugees than they can handle. If you can't control the beans, the screen fills up and it's bye-bye jelly beans, and the evil Doc wins his battle for mechanical henchmen. At the start of each level you are introduced to your opponent, one of the robots who are under the control of the Doctor.

The middle section splits the two playing areas, showing the next pair

of beans to fall as well as the current scores. You also view your robotic opponent for that level, who starts to panic if you're beating him. Watch him sweat as you stack more and more refugee beans on his side. There's also a two player mode which is great fun, especially when you both come close to running out of spaces to put your jelly beans. Oh crikey, what fun!

Oh yeah, and if your mum calls you for your tea and you're in the middle of a heated challenge, don't panic. There's a password option at the end of each level so you can continue when you've finished your dinner.



▲ Two player mode is great but there can only be one winner.



▲ It's quite a moving moment when you lose and the beans float away to jelly bean heaven.

▲ Each level has a different boss, who has been sent to stop you freeing the beans.



If you played *Columns* to death when it was first released, you will love this. The game is made more addictive because you feel a certain need to save all the tiny, wobbly beans from the clutches of Doctor Robotnik. Gameplay is easy and the colours are really bright, so gamers of any age will be attracted to Dr. R's M.B.M. Make sure you have plenty of time free when you start this one, it's tough to put down. Get ready for some sleepless nights when you get this one. ■ GLEN

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

89%

SILVER



PUBLISHER

Accolade

RELEASE DATE

January

PRICE

£44.99

PELE

■ Name: Pelé. Qualification:
The greatest soccer player the world has ever seen.

Pelé (full name Edson Arantes do Nascimento) began his international career at the age of 17 at the insistence of older players in the Brazil side. The match was a rather important one, the 1952 World Cup which Brazil won.

Pelé is the greatest goal scorer in football history. For his club side, he scored 1088 goals in 1114 matches and for the Brazilian national team 97 goals in 106 games. He retired from Santos only to be made an offer he couldn't refuse by New York Cosmos where he scored 70 goals in 108 matches. Pelé held the World Cup three times, was awarded 'Sportsman of the century' and is the Chairman of FIFA. Twelve films and six books and the man still finds time to be a ceaseless worker for youth sports programs, president of numerous Pelé soccer camps around the globe, and Chairman of the Pepsi International Youth Soccer.

So the news that THE soccer supremo had endorsed a video game created a buzz of anticipation and expectation which placed a lot of pressure on the Canadian design team. With World Cup '94 just a few months away, the competition for video soccer games is hotting up. Pelé had his own ideas of what he expected from a game bearing his name, the criteria being a simulation and tutor to pre-

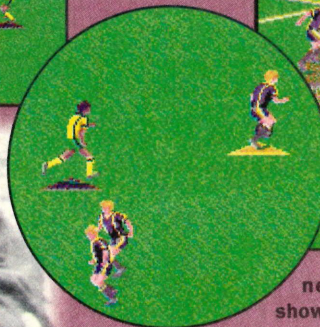
Definitely a Sunday ► league match. These guys are paying for the night before.



◀ **Caught on the break.** Notice how this game goes all out for realism, with defenders actually skipping backwards before the attack.

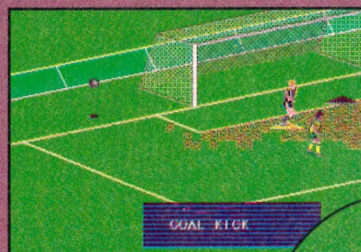


▲ Goal mouth action and still no one can take their eyes off the ball. Sprites are less detailed but more realistic than rival FIFA.



needed to show each angle of a player on the pitch. In addition, a powerful rotoscoping engine must be devised to smooth scroll the pitch.

Technically, Radical have achieved this. But the most important aspect of a soccer video game is the level of player control. This also proves to be very effective and able to feature numerous configurations, and with practice, the desired shot power is easily achievable, not to mention a few of Pelé's



▲ The keepers not on yet, but I am assured he is Shilts quality.

sent players with the ability to improve their soccer skills. The competition demanded that this game must be at the leading edge of soccer game design featuring state-of-the-art perspective and con-

need to capture the character of the man and the Brazilian team.

**Who you are
the question isn't
the answer.**

The latest soccer games show the pitch and players viewed as if from a TV camera raised slightly above the pitch which results in a more realistic perception of the pitch dimensions and the position of play during a match. Although visually more spectacular, this TV camera perspective presents numerous technical problems in design. Some 2,000 separate frames of animation are



TIP

Choose your formation according to who you are facing. Agression isn't always the answer.



 In a hotly contested arena of video games entertainment, this is a valiant bid. The opportunity to re-create the triumphs of the greatest player of all time is a treat indeed. A very competent piece of work with some noteworthy player animation and capable scroll engine. But it is up against strong competition and whether the character and respect of its revered patron will prevail in this bitterly competitive market, only time will tell. ■ **JASON**

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



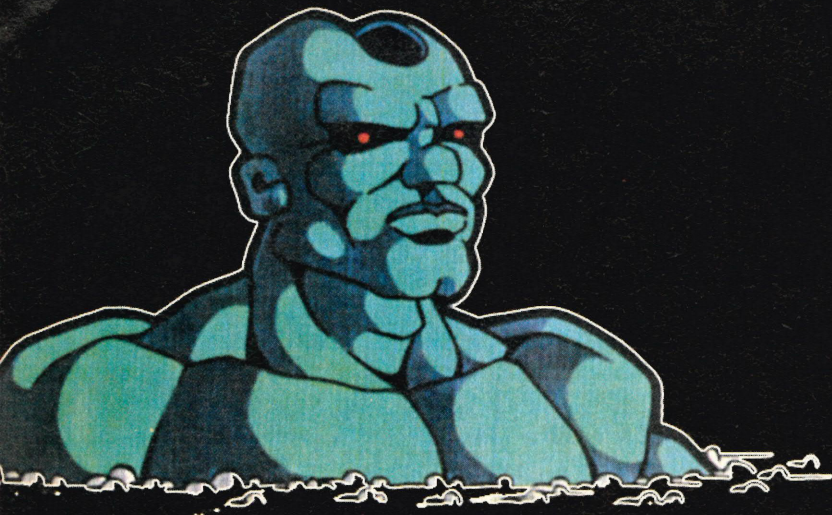
PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

86%

SILVER



AND ON THE SEVI

It's the day before Bonfire Night and Richard Kay, managing director of Software Creations has cancelled a firework-buying trip with partner Mike to speak to me. But later Mike re-appears with the biggest rocket you have ever seen and all the office gather round admiring it.

"We're all just big kids here," says Richard. "A lot of people who are coming through the industry now are

into toys and collecting things. One of our designers, Brian, collects Thunderbirds models. You certainly couldn't get us out of the toy shop, we'd spend all day in it."

Still, working on a Barbie game, aimed at three to seven-year-old females, isn't it difficult knowing what they want out of a game? "You know what works on the computer," says Mark Dawson, the project manager, "and it's just a case of slotting the different characters in."

Richard Kay takes the business very seriously. His staff of 48

▼ Chris is one of the musicians, responsible for the critically acclaimed game music.



includes five managers and producers, who oversee each project and ensure the games will be approved by Sega first or second time. One game was turned down by Sega because there wasn't a comma between 'Sega America' and 'Inc.' and this can lose the company three or four weeks.

"Everything's stacked up, everything's detailed, but not as much as I'd like. This time last year we only had one producer, 18 months ago we had none." Richard is very proud of the fact that the animation on *Beauty and the Beast*, out now in the States was approved straight away by Disney. "Sometimes the picture you have in your head is completely different to their idea, so it's very difficult to get the characters just right."

The animation on *Beauty and the Beast* was largely drawn by a number of animators from Cosgrove Hall, the studios responsible for *Danger Mouse* and *Count Duccula*. "They are now working on *Spiderman 2*" says Richard, "and it really looks just like the cartoon. I'm taking a risk in training people and it's really expensive. But it pays off in the long run with fresh ideas and you don't have any of the egos to deal with that are common elsewhere in the industry. In the



▼ Quality animation? Attention to detail? It's the Creation's stamp.



States they want people who have been in there a long time. What happens when they get to 35 or 40? They are not going to want to do this for the rest of their lives and their

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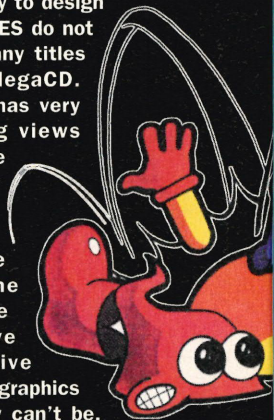
▲ If this screen isn't just right Sega won't pass it.

games are going to become stale."

It is surprising then that a company who were the first in the country to design for the SNES do not produce any titles for the MegaCD.

Richard has very strong views on the subject:

"We have never sat on the fence, but the adverts for the Mega CD have been deceptive saying that the graphics are better. They can't be. They haven't changed the hardware, it's just a disc drive



Play time?

Chun Wah Kong is a games tester. He has to sit in front of a screen playing games all day long. What?



▲ This man plays games for a living. But it's not as great as it sounds, playing all day.

Sounds great you might think. And he does become something of an expert, demonstrating how he can get every possible bonus on a *Plok* bonus screen. But it's not all fun as he has to explore every square inch of the game in mind-numbing detail.

▼ Spiderman is the company's best Mega Drive game to date.



■ Game design is a fun business, but producing quality

software is far from child's play. So say

Software Creations, the people behind

Spiderman and the X-men.

ENTH DAY...

tagged on. People haven't got it right yet on the Mega Drive - they are just going to make a bigger mess of things on the CD.

"The future lies in the 64 bit machines and the

Jaguar when it comes out. We're already looking at 24 Meg with *Streetfighter 2*, so it won't be long before we have 32 meg. The whole industry is going to change completely then. Developers like us won't exist. You'll be talking about film budgets, paying for studio time to develop games and there'll be partnerships with the publishers.

At the moment their relationship with publishers is based on their

reputation.

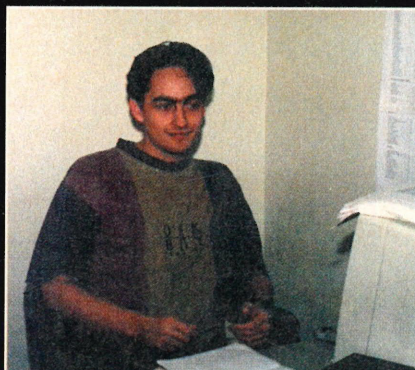
"Certain publishers use us a lot, like Sunsoft and Acclaim. Having already done a Disney game, we're certainly going to be favourites if they're putting out a Disney title. For example, Sunsoft have just commissioned us to do *Roadrunner 2*."

Richard has built up this sort of reputation for his company from humble beginnings. He began as a gofor and box packer for Ocean software in 1982 and taught himself to program. He set up his own company in 1986 and has never looked back, with some 48 titles to his name, including the excellent *Spidey*, *Plok* and *Beauty and the Beast* are out soon.

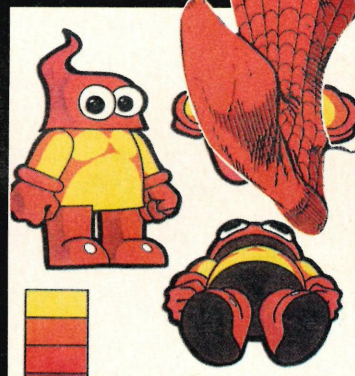
The creator.

John Pickford conceived of Plok five years ago. "We were throwing ideas

▼ One of the designers John has done a great job of fleshing out the character of Plok.



important part of his team. "Instead of the programmer wondering at the end why it's crashing, we give them to the tester to play while the game is developing. And they play it all on video too, because the programmer would never believe them otherwise, if they said there was something wrong with his game."



▲ Plok is the king of the island Akrillic and can literally 'throw' a punch.

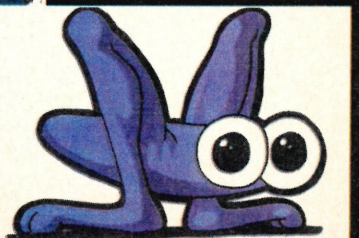
around and came up with Plok the exploding man. But we had almost given up any hope of ever seeing it on the shelf, when Richard came on the scene."

Two years later, the game is complete. Now begins the process of making this endearing character a celebrity of Sonic status. John has his high hopes for the game. "If you spend two years of your life on something it becomes pretty

important to you." The programmers are working on the conversion from the SNES at the moment. They get very excited when they are showing it to me. "Steve, you've got to show him the rotating spider's web!" cries someone. I'm all eyes. Plok is a top class platform game with a multi-talented hero. This arm-throwing character can spin like Sonic and turn into a

chainsaw in the process. When he gets very annoyed he starts throwing shells at people, for some reason. He can flag down various forms of transport such as jet packs, flying saucers, jeeps and springs. And he can turn into a boxer. On one level he goes in search of his grandfather's hidden treasure on Legacy Island. A character indeed!

▼ A hopping mad flea. Plok is committed to ridding the world of them.



▲ Rockyfella, the spirit of the soil is mad at Plok for sticking some flag poles in the soil.

▼ Spidey swings from building to building clearing the rooftops of all the criminals.



So does he play games outside work? "I go home and play the games I want to play," he says "It's good to be seeing other games. I want to be a designer one day and so it's important to have a wide knowledge of the games world." Richard Kay says the games testers are an

Disney *Beauty* and the **BEAST**

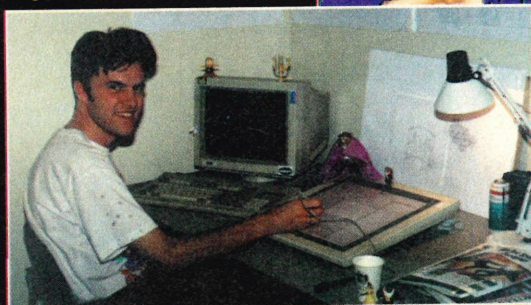
Beautiful Creations.



▲ Notice the Barbie dolls strewn around the place. Big kids like the lot of them.

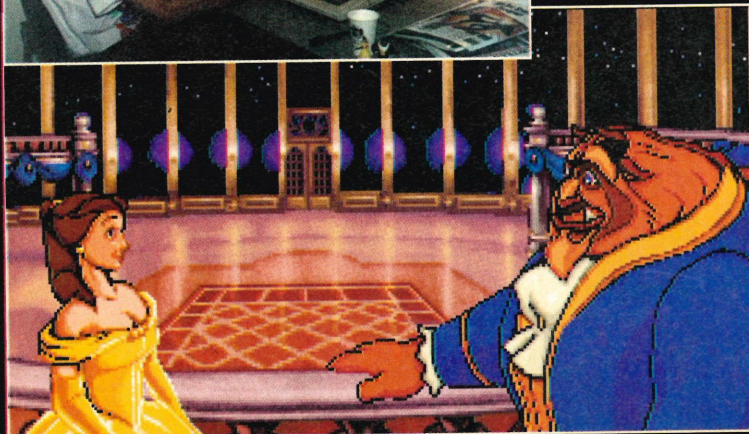
Beauty and Beast, out now in the States, incorporates a novel concept in games design. There are two versions, a male and a female one, to appeal to both sexes. In the macho male version, you are the beast and you have to hit and knock the baddies, like the walking candlesticks. The more delicate female version is more of a

▼ Designers actually animate their images straight on the computer.



▲ Aaah. Why does everyone go soft when they see this cartoon?

▼ Now then, would you want to dance with a huge ugly beast. Or Meatloaf for that matter?



role-playing adventure where you have to use your feminine intuition and superior intelligence. This means showing a bit of a leg to suitor Gaston to persuade him to move a boulder out of your path.

The game's animation is comparable to *Aladdin*, though there are of course no sword fights in this story. The cartoon

has some great characters though, such as the flying cutlery you have to avoid, the speaking clock and walking candlesticks.



Software Creations are best known by us for their *Spiderman* and the *X-men* game, which scored 84% in this magazine. Marvel comics are famously touchy about giving out the licences for their games, not wanting to tarnish their high class image. But *Spidey* and the *X-men* did nothing of the sort.

But there were restrictions. Each character in the game had to behave exactly as in the comics. And the story had to follow the original *X-men* storyline closely. The homicidal maniac Arcade has kidnapped Spidey's close superhero chums the *X-men* and put them in nightmare state designed to make them go mad.

The player can control any of the *X-men* – Gambit, Wolverine, Cyclops or Storm – as they face their worst nightmares. Storm is scared of drowning, so her level is conducted underwater. And Wolverine battles with the all-powerful Juggernaut, a freight load of obesity. The enemies are large, well drawn, frightening sprites and the action is rather heavy handed. Arcade himself is the most fearful enemy and he keeps popping up throughout the game, in various disguises, cloned as other characters.

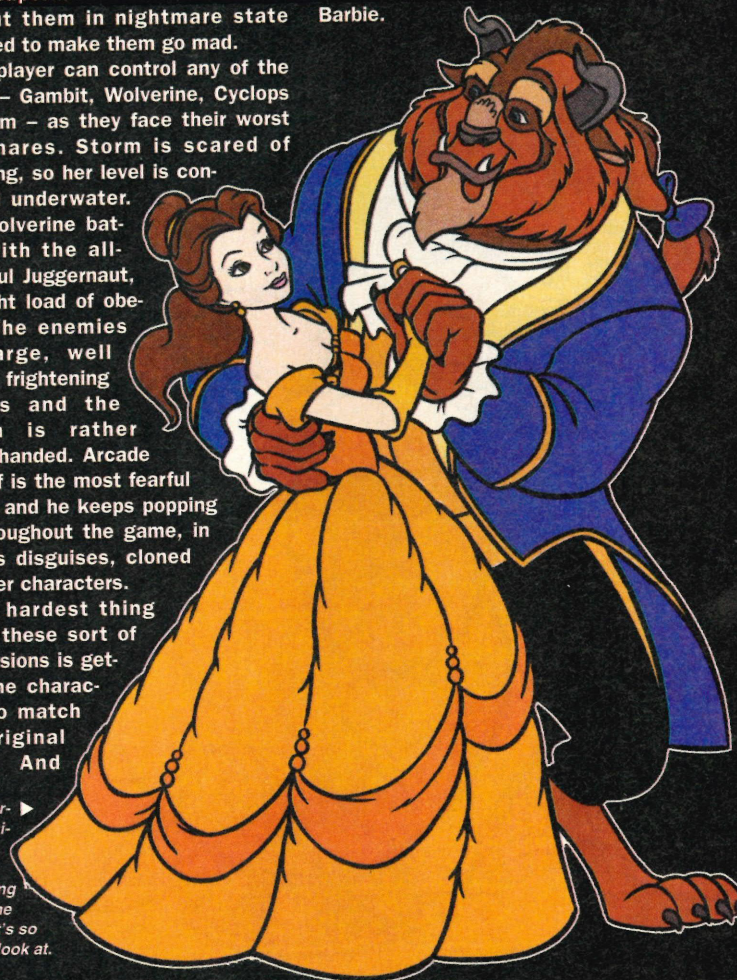
The hardest thing about these sort of conversions is getting the characters to match the original idea. And

► The character animation is the best thing about the game. It's so nice to look at.



▲ No it's not Downing street but a dingy alley in Manchester, home to Creations.

the specifications for these characters can only ever be guides. "If you move just as much as one pixel then it could change the face of a character completely," says Richard. Can't wait to see what they make of Barbie.



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Our greatest respect and thanks must go to the proprietor of Sega World Colindale Tony Markou who made us feel more than at home with unlimited free credits and some fantastic staff to help us in and out of the various machines. The Sega World Centre can be found at 399 Edgware Road, Colindale, London and is open 10am to 11pm Monday to Sunday.

TURNING JAPANESE

Colindale, London. Centre of the known Japanese world in the south of England. Rumour had it that another Sega World Arcade had opened so your Mega Action team went to have a sniff around. We were told to head for the Yoohan Centre, a sort of exclusive Japanese shopping mall selling everything from Japanese books to the latest Hitachi Hi-Fi's and even a supermarket and a chain of fast food restaurants – all Japanese again you understand.

In the midst of this cultural jamboree is Sega World, the second Sega-only arcade in the country, one

of which is to be opened every two months. This heralds perhaps the best lateral expansion plan ever seen – console sales are guaranteed when you test in the arcades then develop for the home market. Eager to bring you the very latest in releases we ventured into the world of the big bucks and pneumatics to gaze into the future of Mega Drive and CD.

The arcade is Sega only but contains many other formats, for instance we saw several Neo-Geo games and engines which were surrounded in Sega console cases. So, although Sega appear to have a lead in the technology and choice of

games in the arcade, the average gamer can now get to grips with all formats and makes. After all, no arcade is complete without a bit of *Lethal Enforcers* or the odd bit of *Street Fighter II*.

After some serious research and gameplay there can be nothing like retiring to a short, stout table, ordering something you can't pronounce – squid tentacles in brine and eyeball mousse – and pigging out. Surrounding the centre of the mall are some fast food counters all serving authentic Japanese food. To order, you quote a number corresponding to the picture of the food

then wait for your number to be called! The food is presented in massive bowls and just getting halfway leaves you firmly bloated. There is a fine selection from fish based stuff right through to the likes of pizzas and frozen yoghurt. Now in the interests of you, our readers, we just had to sample everything....

The Yoohan centre has two floors, with many Japanese cultural displays which we Europeans just cannot comprehend. The centre has been open since August and according to the many shops we spoke to has been doing a roaring trade. Take a day out to take it all in!

Verging on the virtual...



▲ It's difficult to tear anyone away from a game such as this – especially when it's free!



▲ The coloured buttons on the left adjust the view of the car for ease of play.

A great example of testing the water in the arcades is the game *Virtua Racing*, a state-of-the-art F-1 polygon

racing game that breaks the mould in playability and design. The unit is a cut-out formula one car with a motorised seat adjustment making

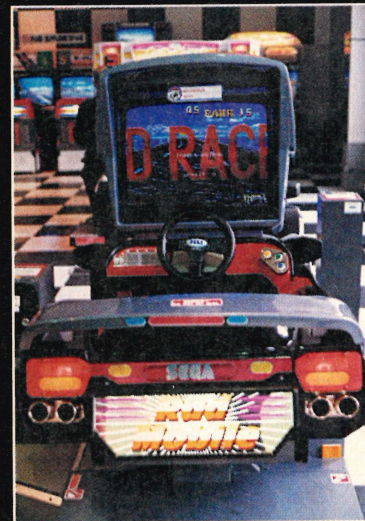
you feel like you're really racing. Opting for six gears, change gear with a small yellow butterfly shift lever on the steering column, apparently similar to the semi-automatic system used in F-1 today. Brakes and accelerator located on the floor respond as a normal car. With no clutch there's no chance of

these default starts that are so common with certain highly paid drivers.

Realism is given the final touch with pressure points on the seat – hit the breaks and you get jolted forward, accelerate and it kicks you in the back. Three courses can be attempted in beginner, intermediate and hard settings. Graphics are absolutely stunning – the fairground on beginner level and birds flying off the track on Intermediate are breathtaking. Without doubt this blows all competition off the track and the added bonus of linking up to eight machines together for some serious head-to-head fun must make this the best simulation in the arcades.

At a mere £1 a go, the challenge will almost always remain fresh, that is unless you are lucky enough to own your own personal machine. (Which I believe is around £10,000). Gets just a little bit hectic when there's eight of you are yelling at each other to pull over! The console version has already been shown to a select few (including us), and at 32 meg this is the biggest game ever to be conceived on the Sega Systems. The £100 price tag might seem a quite a bit over the top but considering this is such an arcade classic, it's well worth saving up for. That's only £1 a day for the next 12 weeks.

Virtually Rad



▲ Rad racer takes on a coarser edge with the rules of driving thrown out the window.

In the same vein as *Virtua Racing*, *Rad Racer* is again cockpit based and has both tilt and slide effects to enhance the whole experience. You must drive the car through various checkpoints within an allotted time to keep playing. The course is cliff top stuff with



▲ You can play solo or linked to a whole multitude of other potential F1 race drivers.

■ *How could we resist? With the offer of getting a day out in the arcades and having the whole experience payed for,*

Glen and Steve set off for Sega's latest business venture, the SegaDome.

SE (I really think so)

Yeah! Now we heard *Stadium Cross* was destined for some conversion treatment so how could we resist a quick race? It allows up to two play-

▼ *Stadium Cross is the next racing game destined for conversion, so we believe.*



ers to compete on a rather packed course of world class riders.

Sitting astride the bike, you turn by leaning it over and letting it slide. But timing is all important as there is quite some drift on the machine and the courses are tight and very narrow. Littered with jumps and obstacles, any sudden move or class piece of overtaking starts all the stadium cameras clicking and the background becomes a sea of strobing lights. To make the all important jumps, you pull up on the handle bars of these bikes, direct copies of the latest in Super Cross. The game makes suggestions as to when you should jump and if you feel just a tad

daring there is also the option of pulling the odd 'table top' at the peak of the mound.

But there's more. On the handle bars is a small inconspicuous green button that allows the rider to lean into a fellow rider and plant an elbow firmly where it hurts. So, in tight corners, overtaking can at last be achieved by the rider smashing his way through. Just how this will convert will be quite a story in itself as I can't see a stadium bike being mounted on the Mega Drive game box somehow. Still, the graphics are well within the capability of the Mega CD and the Virtua Racing customised processor has been dropped

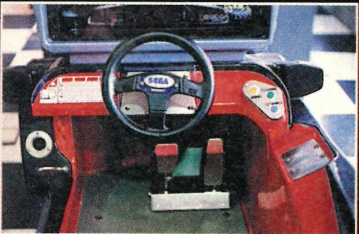
in favour of good old fashioned big sprites, giving a chunky feel to the game.

Pretty soon you feel quite at home in the mud. Who won? Well Glen took a swift lead but pretty soon paid the price, and the Cinderella story came through with a few short elbow jabs and Steve took the flag.

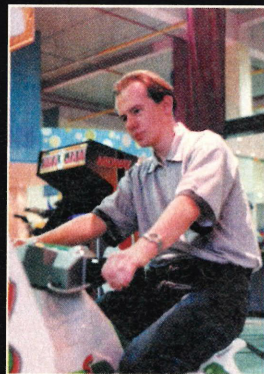
▼ *Glen takes time out to demonstrate his driving skills on the innocent machine.*



▼ *A simpler cockpit layout without the use of gears makes for an exciting trip.*



windy mountain passes populated by rather slow drivers who don't want to get out of the way! Gears are automatic and if you can put up with the various weather conditions and that little Sonic the hedgehog swinging from your rear-view mirror, it's a sure fire winner! This game looks destined for a conversion to the console and, according to arcade returns, has been performing well.



▲ *Pulling up sees you flat on your back, embarrassed.*



▲ *It's based on the real thing you know. That's what we were told.*



▲ *Finding the appropriate fast food counter you order the food, which arrives just a few moments later. What we ordered is still a mystery to us but we can tell you that it tasted great and we made a special detour to get back for some more later! This entire presentation set us back £8.00, not bad eh?*

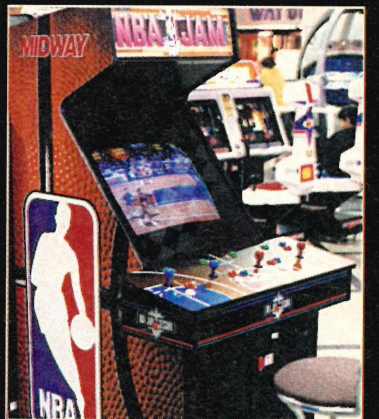
▼ *The Segadome is the latest. They are due to open at an estimated rate of one every two months. Arcades have come a long way and there is plenty to do whether you like arcade machines or not. We know, we did it all!*



▲ *You can roll and even fly upside down! The action is as fast as the blood rush!*



▲ *Another helpless Mega Action reporter being helped out of the machine.*



▲ *NBA Jam! Our favourite game in the office at the moment and awaiting a Mega review!*

▼ *That little cute face peeping up is in fact our resident games writer, Glen. Smile Glen.*





OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Konami
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£54.99



▲ Go on, just try and resist blowing away that tramp sleeping on the bench. It's hard.

Those of you who hang around arcades are sure to have seen or heard of this game. It is based on the simulators that the American police are using at the moment, which test reactions and split second decisions. You point a gun at the screen, then when the baddies come into view you must shoot them and take care not to shoot innocent bystanders. I have it under great authority that this sort of training program works wonders in the States and has gone a long way in preventing meaning-

TIP

Don't always wait till you are down to the last bullet to reload. Take time out to ensure your gun is full at all times.

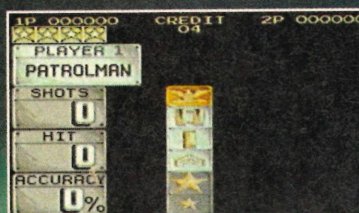
less deaths by rookie cops making the wrong decisions when under pressure.

The game uses digitised images of actors and they basically go out of their way to surprise you and deplete your vital energy reserves. Every time you take a hit,

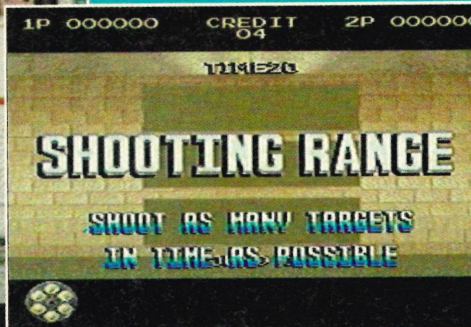
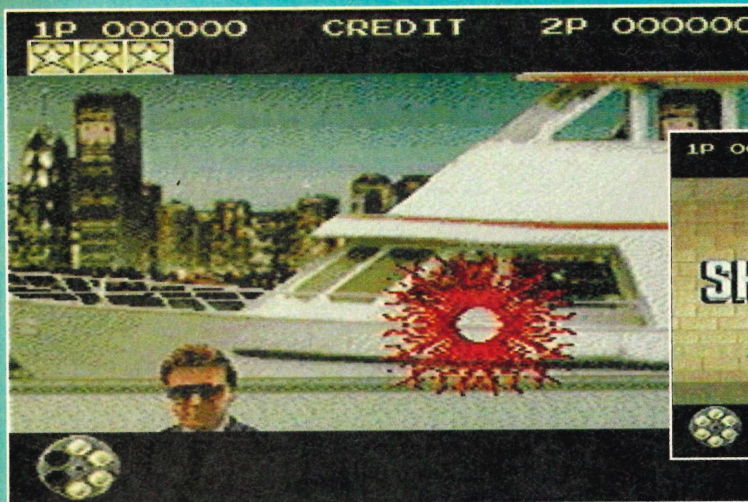
the screen shows a crack in the glass and some rather distinctive blood surrounds the wound. Does this mean you are made of glass? Does this mean the latest in body armour is perspex and you might do better hiding behind a piece of tinfoil? I think so, since you seem ill-equipped for this escapade of taking on every baddie in the (unnamed) city.

The game starts with the option of having some much needed target

▼ Nice yacht. Pity you have to scar the paint-work with the odd burst of machine gun fire.



▲ Take it on the chin and learn just how bad or good you are in the heat of combat.

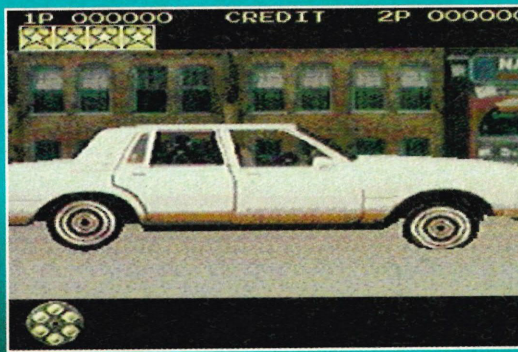


▲ Take to the shooting range and touch up on a few minor skills of combat.



◀ Take it easy and save as many of the innocents as you possibly can.

If you take out the wheels, the car tends to slow down.



LETHAL EN

■ It carries a certificate. Little wonder as the aim of this game is to blast away as many crooks as possible. Great fun, but strictly for mature audiences!

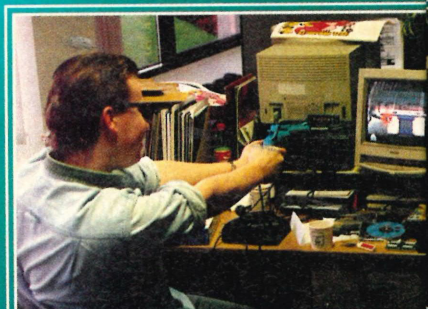


practice which takes place at, well a target range of course. You must empty your gun within the time given and knock out as many targets as possible. In the arcades it must be said the screen was about 64 inches and to hit a target all you had to do was point in the general direction and nine times out of ten you'd be successful. With this translation to the smaller screen, and in most cases the portable TV, you have to

▲ Watch out! He's armed and dangerous. He is also pointing a gun at you. Eek.

be a lot more accurate in the approach. There's little room for error and this means the shooter needs to squint down the barrel of the gun, making the screen area covered just a little bit more difficult.

Rubbing salt in the wounds is the percentage hit indicator which at the end of a level reminds you of just



▲ The gun provided fits comfortably in the palm of the hand and is even well balanced for accurate targeting. The shades of course are entirely optional. Though not for some.

■ In the States, the murder rate has increased to 20,000 a year, that's one person every 26 minutes. The worst city is New York.



Where did he come from? Take aim as fast as you can or take a hit!

More ► airport frolics. Things get even worse so fingers ready!



FORCERS



◀ The train brings more and more gunmen into the battle so careful.

how well you have done – or not done as the earlier attempts will prove. Achieve a greater score rate than 70% to progress to the next round.

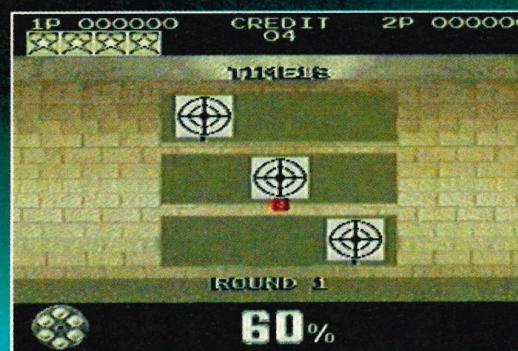
The game begins with a bank robbery and you must deter the masked baddies from achieving their aim of taking over the bank and its contents. As things progress you will notice a couple of things. Firstly, there seems to be only two guys in the bank, one with a mask on and one who looks like Chuck Norris in a tacky suit. They insist on popping up from behind cashier desks, rolling out from behind litter bins and generally giving you minor frights.

Of course no bank is complete without the odd punter and this

Unload within the time limit and hit all the targets to proceed any further.

bank is no exception with the odd 'hostage' wandering into view. This is probably the biggest test of nerve you will encounter as the temptation to blast away is just about unbearable. It's naughty I know and I'm sure a social worker would have a great deal to say about it.

Further rounds see you battling it out with cars, packed with eight baddies. I'm sure they weren't strapped in and there must be a law against all hiding in the back seat. Later levels see China Town explored with once again reason and good old fashioned virtues dictating that



you should take on the might of the Triads and rid the local take-aways. From there you can go on to more car-to-car battles, a rather hectic airport hostage situation and even a spot of Miami Vice with the harbour a suitable backdrop for a multi million dollar yacht which you must shoot at at will. All in all working your way through should see the end of crime as we and you know it in one of the major (as yet unnamed) cities of the world.



▲ You can only take so many hits before your armour finally gives up the ghost.



▲ As the boat sails past, more and more gunmen jump up and take aim.



▲ Back in the bank you must foil the robbers' attempt to take over the complex.



▲ The top gunners are placed on a screen of their own. Rank is according to achievement.

You need some protection and here is just what is available to the lone lawman on the beat.

Uzi

9mm? Yep! Loads of bullets? Yo! Deadly accuracy with infra-red targetting and heat-seeking, individual bullets, tailored to each separate baddy? Er no. Still with this amount of bullets you can let loose a serious quantity of ammunition and if you've done your target practice then it will see you through a level. No reload, just a reduction to the pistol once expended.



Semi-automatic

Why not upgrade to the latest in ghetto culture, a wonderful handheld status symbol. This handgun lets you release up to 12 bullets at one time so there really is no excuse for not getting part way through a level intact.



Pump Action

For starters why not settle down to a pump-action shotgun? Nice lines, comfortable feel and the tool of the stars. Join Arnie and his merry men with this device. This six shooter is quite accurate but has limited bullet capacity.



M16

Three bullets fired in one brief second makes this the killing machine every law enforcer dreams of. Good accuracy and even greater penetration of the most stubborn Ford Sierra and Transit van. Sounds a lot more purposeful too, just like the real thing. So I'm told.



MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

85%



▲ Different target patterns are used so that things maintain a degree of variety. Only 60% hits needed.



The age restriction allows you to talk about this game in the flippant way I have. This arcade conversion would be nothing without the guns and to be honest I wouldn't object to paying the £10 or so more for one of them. I know a lot of people are going to be wondering if more games will be compatible with these guns and we will keep you informed on any developments. Till then sit back and blast away, but watch out for the hostages! ■ **STEVE**



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Sony

RELEASE DATE
Out Now

PRICE
£44.99

SEWER SHARK

You've just completed your training at 'TopRat' but nothing can prepare you for combat down in the real sewers. You are taken on by Commissioner Stenchler to clean up

▼ Do not feed the animals. Watch out for the hungry ratigators waiting to feast on you.



Just one of the nasties that has to be wiped out while in the sewers, where others have failed and "retired". To help you get through the "tubes" in one piece, Ghost, your co-pilot will shout a series of commands which you must execute otherwise you'll find a tunnel with no exit! Pilot your customized 'Hole Hawg' sewer shark through the darkened tunnels and destroy all the ratigators and other freaky creatures that lurk within them.

Remember the order in which you must complete the directions given by Ghost, then concentrate on shooting everything that moves. Once you get into *Sewer Shark* and you suss out the plan this will grow on you as you're pulled deeper into the game. The graphics and stereo sound make this a must for your collection.

The Hole Hawg is launched on another mission in the tubes.



MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

82%



OFFICIAL

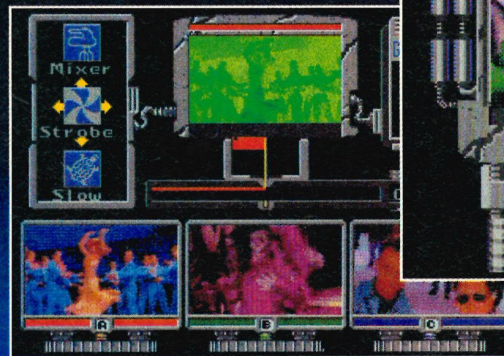
PUBLISHER
Sony

RELEASE DATE
Out Now

PRICE
£39.99

KRIS KROSS CD

This is Boyd Packer who will guide you through the editing process.



▲ Gasp in amazement at the finished product.

and it all gets terribly repetitive after a while. The film footage is fairly extensive but it's not that clear on the small monitors on screen – squint slightly and it becomes a tad clearer. The choice of clips available is nice but limited. The fact is though, that if *Kris Kross* isn't your cup of tea and you prefer to wear your clothes the right way round, then steer clear. It

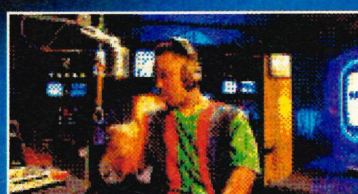
Being able to make your own music video by piecing clips of films, current videos and news reels together seems a pretty smart idea, doesn't it? The effects you have at your disposal look fairly impressive at first glance and it's easy enough to work. But don't be fooled by the wrapping paper – the gift inside is not all it seems. You only have three *Kris Kross* tracks to put visuals to

▲ MC Boyd rattles on about what to use in the video for the best effects.



▲ The bottom three screens show the snippets of video you can edit in with the effects.

won't be very long before that boredom factor will be kick, kick, kickin' in, big style.



MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

56%



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
SonyRELEASE DATE
Out NowPRICE
£39.99

CHUCK ROCK CD



▲ The rogue and ready features of the star of the show. Chuck's one mean lookin' guy.

While our stone age hero sips beer in front of the TV, his beautiful young wife, Orphelia, is kidnapped by Gritter while she's pegging out the washing. Chuck now



▲ Take to the skies for a prehistoric flying lesson.

has to rescue his beloved wife by travelling through prehistoric time and fighting off an array of dinosaurs. All the levels are full of funny characters and more power-ups than you can wave a caveman's club at. To access certain platforms, Chuck has to shift some rocks and build them up. He then stands on top and jumps across to collect any power ups. A quick tip: carrying a rock above your head while plodding along protects you from objects thrown at you from the

▼ Catch a ride on any passing dinosaur. Beats paying for a taxi.



▼ Knock out any little creatures that attack you by giving them a quick belly bounce.



trees. I especially liked the "belly-butt", which Chuck uses to bounce away any attacking dinos. It's a really colourful game and together with the addictive gameplay it makes *Chuck Rock* a fun challenge.



MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

89%



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
SonyRELEASE DATE
Out NowPRICE
£39.99

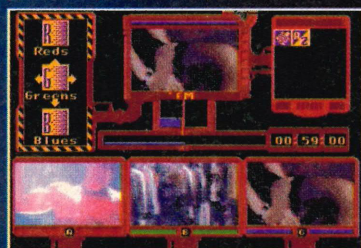
POWER FACTORY CD

The full length ▶ version in playback mode. Look it's that young lady again.



▲ The one good looking thing about the game is the babe who appears throughout the vid.

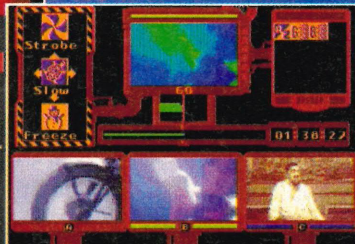
▼ Choose the best of the three screens to get your final tape approved by those at C & C.



▲ Select one of the many tracks available to make the video for. You choose from three!

Slip into your dancing shoes and warm up those video recorders, it's time to enter the C & C Music Factory. Basically it's the same as *Kris Kross CD*, with the same effects available like adding the lyrics, a strobe light or reversing the screen. Some of the effects are quite bizarre and if used together the picture gets pretty distorted and you can't make out what's going on. The three best

▼ Combine the effects to create stunning graphics as seen here. Wow.



known C&C tracks have been chosen. It's a shame that there aren't any more to choose from because you'll get sick of hearing the same tunes over and over again. Like the Kris Kross 'make my video', the novelty of being a video producer will wear off fairly soon. The only thing that kept me interested in this CD was the gorgeous babe vocalist who appears several times on the video during the chorus. Personally I prefer the tracks on C&C so I'd probably opt for this one if I had to make a choice, but I'm sure that I could find something better to spend my money on.



MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

67%



OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER

Virgin

RELEASE DATE

Out Now

PRICE

£39.99



◀ Taking to the helicopter type machine sees you flying into the sunrise and darting through strange landscapes.

Interact with ▶ all the members of the cast to determine your next move or business venture then gain the rewards!



DUNE CD

■ Dune was a funny old film, loads of steam engines and, unfortunately for us, an equally steamed Sting.

The book was better though, perhaps a little daunting being thicker than the average telephone direc-

tory but nevertheless a jolly good read. The movie was typically atmospheric in the vein of Bladerunner with hot sticky sets amidst the special effects of large worms (with large teeth). Sting, it must be said, didn't quite pull off the roll. I think, to be fair, he should have stayed closer to home with his Quadrphenia-type performances. Didn't have to say much then, fortunately.

Dune is about Spice. Spice has become the most valuable commodity in the universe and can only be found in abundance on one particular planet called Arrakis. Playing the role of Paul Atreides, you must mine the planet for this rarity. Of course being solely in charge of a planet means you have some serious connections and it comes to pass that your father is a Duke and you must carry out his wishes. The spice you so desperately seek is hidden under the surface.

The task of mining the spice is long and complicated. I mean you can't just venture out into the

Here you can customise the ▶ game set-up for maximum effect.

wilderness and start putting in your spade. In fact you desperately need

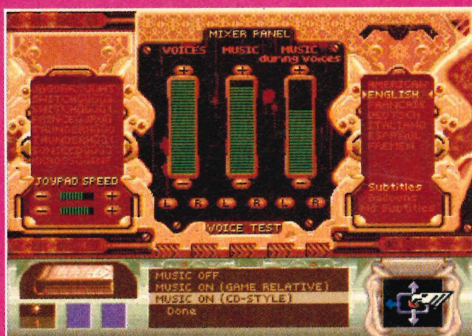
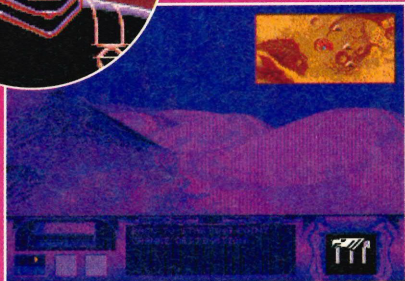
the help of the local skilled workforce called Fremen and spice rolling in constantly. These guys live in complicated tribes that must be kept well

payed and equally busy. So you must train them to discover new sites and keep the flow of spice moving. After all you wouldn't want to let your father down. You are not alone on the planet either and out to make a faster buck is the rival

house the evil Harkonnens. They will steal spice from under your very nose so defence and good prospect-

▼ It wouldn't be much fun if you crash landed all the way out here.

TIP
Make constant references to the diary which keeps a track of all your meetings and journeys.



ing can be the only way to success.

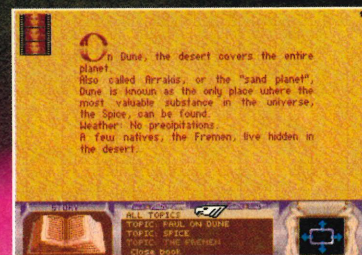
Interaction is the name of the game and with a game as vast as this, everyone has something to say. They talk to you in real speech and just in case you haven't a portable steam powered dictaphone to hand the interaction can be stored and some special points played back like a video recorder, complete with synchronised hand actions. As the game progresses, you find Paul's background catching up with him. He is in fact related to these sandmen and they all think he is



This is interaction at it's best. Every character you encounter has a particular voice and more importantly different characteristics. The darker side to your character's persona will unfold slowly through the game but try not to get too sidetracked with this, it will all come together eventually. The size of this game means you will return to it again and again to try out new strategies and areas. Of course it is aimed at the older Mega Drive users - I can't see your average Sonic 2 fan getting off on this in a hurry. ■ STEVE

▲ Consult your diary for any information that you may have learned over the days.

Muad'hib, the Messiah they have been waiting for. I'll say no more, but if you don't know the story you're in for a big surprise. There's a lot more to this than meets the eye.



▲ Here you discover that Dune is a sand planet. Useful that I'm sure.

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

83%

■ They say sand dunes move in a tidal fashion just like the oceans of the world.



IMPORT

PUBLISHER
Sunsoft

RELEASE DATE
Out Now

PRICE
£39.99



▲ What's going on here then? Part of the plot I believe and it seems an evil witch has turned your favourite character into a bunnygirl and insists on paying £100 an hour (excluding gratuities).

▼ How many games do you know that involve a bunny girl riding a cute dragon with some homing parrots for weapons? Not many I would think. Still, it is great fun provided you don't analyse it.



KEIO FLYING SQUAD

■ Climbing into a bunny suit, you hop on a dragon and start blasting the cute little animals into next Christmas.

Anyone got a satellite dish out there? Anyone just happen to watch that funny little German station called RTL Plus? Come on, you can own up, I won't tell. RTL Plus, for those of you who don't have a piece of circular wire mesh on the wall, is one of the saucy little stations your mother warned you about and the press like to slate. At about 10 o'clock (European time) it shows a programme called 'Playboy Late Night'.

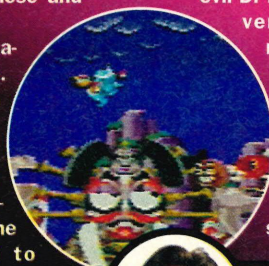
What has this got to do with the game Keio Flying Squadron you're wondering. It's simple. One of the girls who used to get her kit off for you has sneaked into a funny

Japanese shoot 'em-up. But that's not all. Puff the Magic Dragon appears to have crept in too with a few of his chums. This adds up to the most bizarre experience since Parodious, a SNES favourite amongst the Japanese and British alike.

Just how this strange situation comes about is simple.

Noah has been a busy old man. Since designing and skipping the Ark, he has managed to create a bit of a family and

▼ Shoot the big gun before it shoots you down, fast!



Shooting dogs on flying carpets or cute little diving racoons is an acquired taste and I must say you pretty soon acquire it. I've heard this is quite a hit in Japan and I hope it catches on in this country. The backdrops are great, the sound is wonderful and the actual playing is simplicity itself. Have a crowd of mates gather round to point out the things you miss while you are playing. The bunny girl remains a mystery but then again so does satellite TV. ■ STEVE

MEGA

SOUND



GRAPHICS



ADDICTIVENESS



PLAYABILITY



OVERALL

90%



▲ I'm saying nothing. Killer bald headed machines from hell.



WORLD PREMIERE



AERO THE ACROBAT

■ Despite being named after a chocolate bar, this little character's skills on the high wire are amazing.

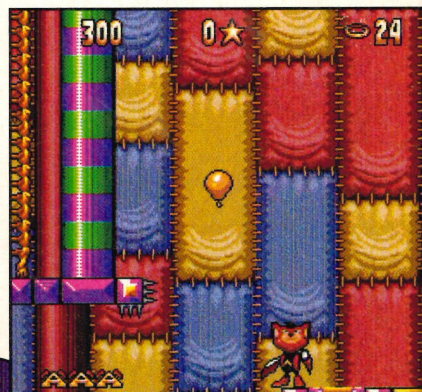
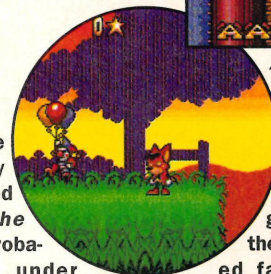
Ladieeeeees and gentlemen! It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you the one, the only... Aero the Acrobat! Right, enough of all this circus master nonsense, let's get on with the preview.

As if it isn't already a pain in the butt living in a circus (what with all that elephant poo and inane clowns wandering all over the place), the World of Amusement Circus and Funpark has been sabotaged by the wicked Edgar Ektor and his right hand man, Zero. Every one of Ektor's twisted, deformed henchmen have been given specific orders to destroy the fun fair, the circus and its inhabitants, including Aero the Acrobat.

▼ The little parachute icons help you float home without too much harm.

There are some games that just defy any category. Forced to label *Aero the Acrobat*, it would probably be filed under 'circus/fairground sabotage'. And it's also the type of game which makes you wonder under what influence the game designer produced it... and whether it's available over the counter!

The hero is a committee designed video game character with badge, tee shirt, and spaghetti shapes potential. A cross between Zorro and much misunderstood cartoon cult



▲ You can stop and have a quick look around anytime you like.

Batfink, his name suggests a death-defying trapeze-cum-tightrope artiste type of guy. This in a game that's got everything the average Scooby Doo haunted fairground episode has – including the ubiquitous runaway rollercoaster...

The player controls Aero as he is fired out of cannons, dives through hoops of fire and bungee jumps over treacherous rocks in a bid not only to entertain the crowd but also to save them. What a guy!

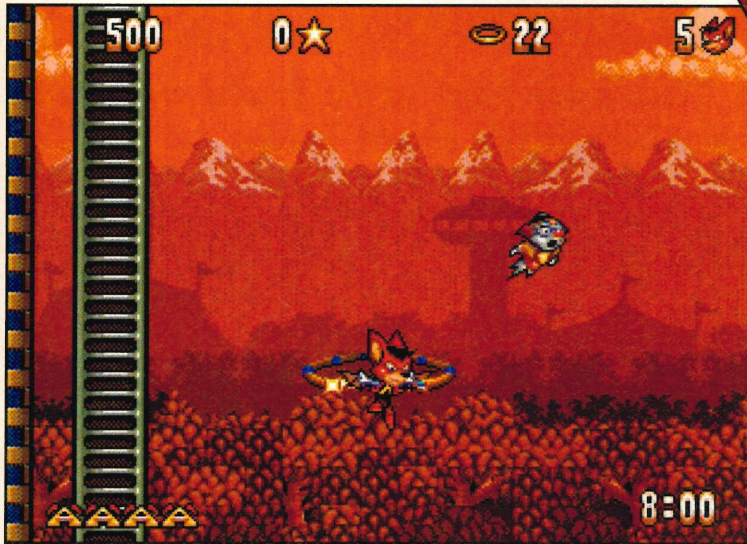
Aero's enemy are psycho fire-breathers who bid to toast our hero while knife

◀ Now where would the platform games of today be without the odd bit of small moving fluffy cloud?



▲ Water is easily crossed by a spot of back-stroke towards the nearest land.

RO THE ROBAT



▲ All manner of little creatures are out to get you in this cute little platform number.

throwers, erm... throw knives. They include the alarming spinning clown, a short clown with a real chip on his shoulder, evil Bruno the nasty trapeze artist and the really twisted man with a grudge, sacked trapeze artist Zero. Other fairground freaks are Bertha the less than gentle elephant ballerina and Ferris Freddy the clown.

The game is based on the scrolling platform game model with various circus icons kicking around the place. These include a cannon and fiery hoop, trapezes and tightropes, comedy balloons to float out of trouble, unicycles, trampolines and see-saws which Aero must use to avoid the barrage of knives and attempts to turn him into a mixed grill. Aero is armed with a startling power drill technique and has the



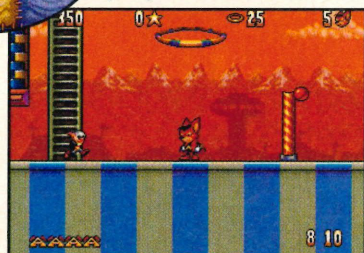
▲ A quick death spin here will see off any nasty clown type affairs pronto.

ability to throw stars, which is ordinary in comparison.

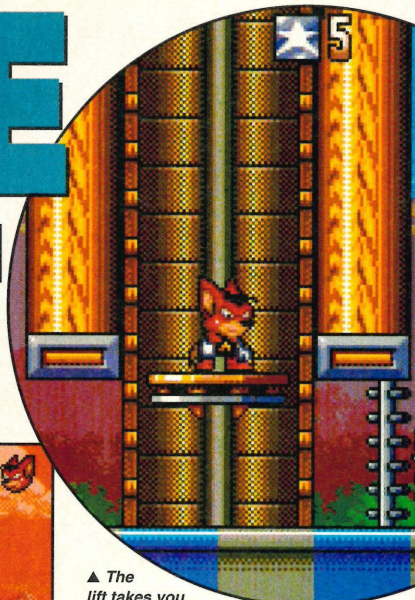
Whilst blasting from the cannon, bouncing on the trampoline and, er... see-sawing from see-saws, there are plenty of collectables in true platform tradition. Food replenishes energy and bonuses produce a bonus round to complete with a parachute and so called Aero-wings give Aero short-term, precarious and entirely uncontrollable flight. Meanwhile, lightning produces an even more startling doubledrill plus the old invincibility routine to take the pressure off weary digits.

After a final tussle with novelty act The Stilt Brothers, Aero heads out to the funpark. Here a dodgy rollercoaster ride provides hair-raising diversion to the four sub-level puzzles, involving keys and doors. A

◀ Flying through the hoops, flaming or otherwise, gives you plenty of bonuses.



▲ The marker posts allow you to return to that point should you loose any bats.



▲ The lift takes you up a few stages to the cannon where you can find the blocks to convert.

mechanical clown needs defeating here. Aero must doubledrill on his red nose until he cries. On to the woods and a dizzying barrel roll, precarious bungee jump, and a rocky ride down some rapids which gives a break from the dominant circus/fairground theme. Finally, you enter a horror museum for a showdown with evil clown Ektor. His weapons are green slime and bolts of lightning courtesy of Mechanical Mike and one Marvin Magician, who looks suspiciously like Paul Daniels.

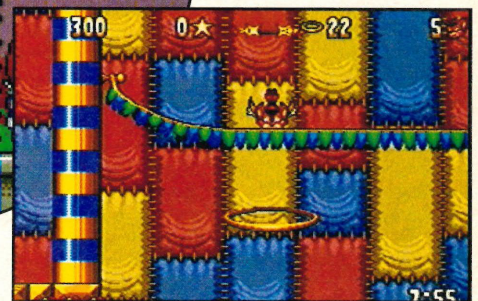
You have a limited ▶ flying ability which allows you to hover before making a decision.



▲ Climb the ladders to higher points then throw yourself off and fly back down.

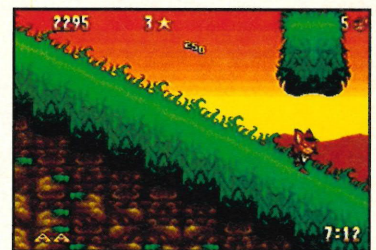
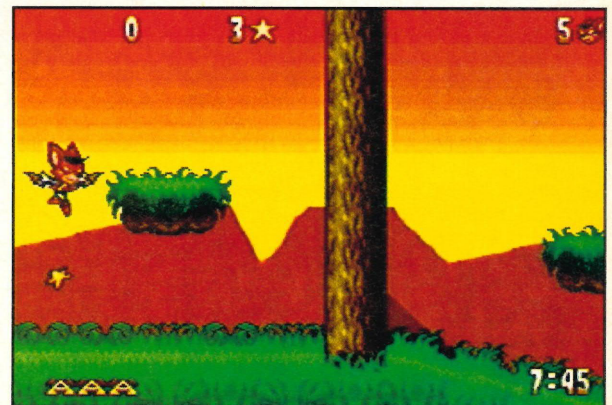


▲ Load yourself in then release the cord for height.



▲ I've never had a head for heights and certainly leaping for points sounds mad to me.

I don't think Aero's going to sell many badges but this is a pretty fair game. Try flying through the air with the greatest of ease.



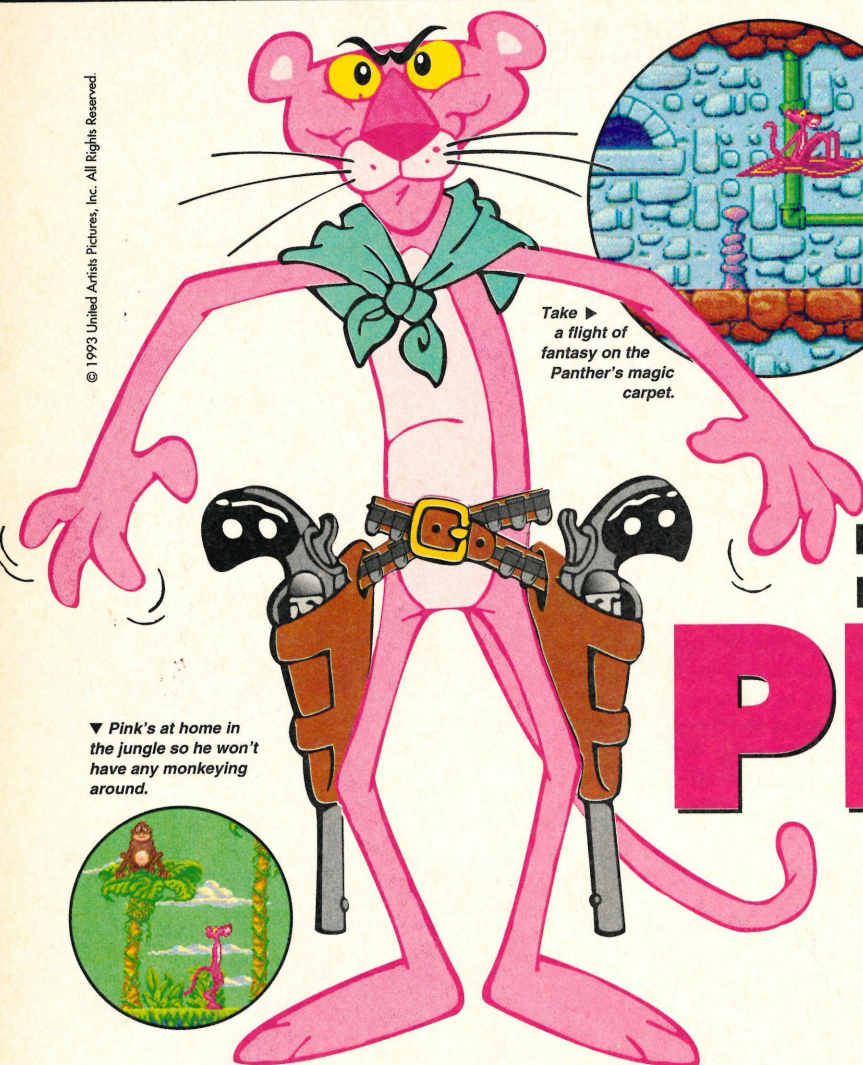
▲ Check your speed on these slippery slopes as you could run into danger!

MEGA VIEW

The circus/theme park presents some great arcade action. Aero is an advanced Bomb Jack type of character, and pseudo-nasties are warped enough to gain cultish status. The level of difficulty is surprisingly high for a game which on the face of it looks like it's being played for laughs. Nice animation, an ingenious game scenario and stunts all come with the package. It is a bit off the wall though, so might gather dust on the software shelves. This would be a shame... give it a whirl. ■ Jay

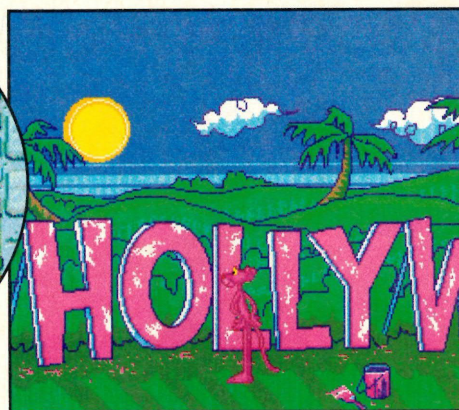
RELEASE: JANUARY PRICE: £44.99

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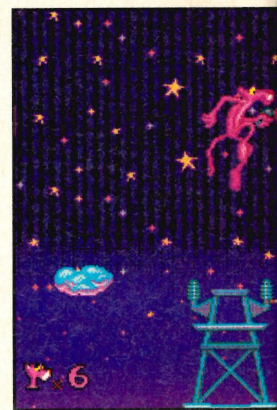


Take ▶ a flight of fantasy on the Panther's magic carpet.

▼ Pink's at home in the jungle so he won't have any monkeying around.



▲ As The Pink One arrives in Hollywood he instantly begins to leave his mark in a big way, as is his style. But surely he meant to paint the town red, rather than pink.



▲ Watch out for the cute little cat, he's not as cute as he looks.

■ The one and only truly original, panther pink from head to toe.

PINK PA

We've all gone mad. You'd think by now our trained staff could handle a nostalgic trip down memory lane, recalling childhood icons that shaped our future. Well they can't. The pages of this magazine have become a testament to the 30-year-old cartoon hero now in game form, courtesy of TecMagic.

It all began back in 1964 (the screen goes wavy and a distant harp strikes up), when Peter Sellers began his epic battle with a famous jewel thief who was to elude him for many years to come. To set the mood for the film, producer/director Blake Edwards commissioned a very

▼ Watch your footing, it's a long way down. Nice scenery though, don't you think?



▲ You mean you've never seen a five foot tall, pink panther before?

special cartoon character to frolic amongst the opening credits.

Frolic he did but in a very cool way, in fact even by today's standards this lanky pink cat had more than an even measure of the calm and collected. The creator of this trend setting state of mind was Friz Freleng and not one detail of the original drawing was touched before

it hit the silver screen. And it certainly was a hit, winning not only an Oscar nomination but the actual gold trophy itself for a theatrical short named *Pink Phink*.

Signed to NBC in 1968, the whole series of some 140 cartoon shorts were shown on Saturday mornings, with obvious success as a further 36 six minute features were commissioned by NBC in 1973. A few years later, the Pink Panther made a timely return to the big screen with more intro performances on *Pink Panther Strikes Again*, *Revenge of the Pink*

IN THE PINK

Pink jives his way round 12 levels of Hollywood film sets, becoming a cowboy, a swimmer, a ghostbuster, a real cool cat, the one and only... sorry. The various backgrounds are all accurate reproductions of classic cartoon scenes. The rooftops of the silhouetted city, the haunted house and the wild west scene are spot on and all the designs are sprinkled with humour.



Pink Ranger

Wild west time and all the flavour of the great outdoors is brought to you in this authentic town complete with tumble weed, cowboy boots and dancing chairs. There are even flying cows. From the town you work your way through, into and out of the gold mine on a wild mine car trip then head for the saloon to avoid flying bottles of best malt.



Jungle Pink

Ooops, deep jungle. Watch out for waterfalls and careful where you tread. Mapping is essential here as hut doors can lead to certain peril with dinosaurs, chimps and alligators. Just about every jungle mishap is waiting to happen to you so all that practice you put in earlier might now be paying off. You hope so, as it now starts getting tough!

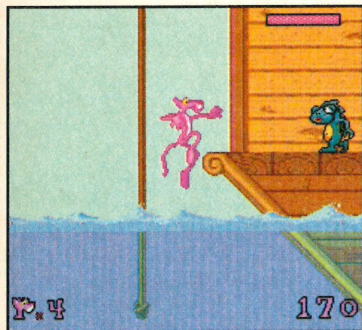




Pink takes time out to do this great Charlie Chaplin impersonation before jumping into action.



PINK PANTHER



▲ What you lookin' at fish face? Never seen a Pink Panther before. Go for it Pink!

Panther, Curse of The Pink Panther and A Shot In the Dark. Except for the last, all these movies featured the brilliant Peter Sellers, playing the equally famous Inspector Clouseau.

Of course no story as long as this could ever really be over and this is no exception, with a new series of 40 episodes commissioned for the

New Year. The difference this time will be the inclusion of a voice for our Pink hero to be provided by Matt Frewer of "Max Headroom" fame. Other character voices are to be provided by yet unnamed famous people. Gone are the raised eyebrows and narrator's voice, instead a sarcastic cat has hit the streets.

Friz Freleng, the creator of the original has a track history in animation that many budding creators would quite happily kill for. Born in 1927, Friz moved to California to work for the Disney Studios. However, things being what they are, he soon found himself Head Animator in an equally reputable company called Warner Brothers, responsible for the *Looney Tunes* and *Merrie Melodies* cartoons. From there it's been steadily uphill to where we stand now, just about to step off memory lane and right into the

game, a p t l y named *Pink Goes to Hollywood*.

All right, it's a platform game, but what did you expect? I mean where else could a character of this stature fit in? Things don't stop there either as the Pink actually goes to Hollywood to audition for a new film and stumbles on an important scene starring his arch rival, Inspector Clouseau. Things really start to wind up with 12 different movie sets to



▲ Right on Cowboy. Pink has ended up on the set of the new Clint Eastwood movie.



▲ Chill out Frank! Look out for this guy, or you'll be pushing up the daisies.



Pinkinhood

Take the book shelf to Sherwood Forest and you find yourself amongst the trees. You must negotiate the shrubbery to reach the castle far right. Clouseau has his many followers out to get you though and they take the form of archers or some annoying little squirrels. Oh, the eagle has a nasty habit of really putting a spanner in the works.



I Shrank the Pink

Our hero finds himself surrounded by giant sized everyday items. Clouseau searches for Pink with his magnifying glass and the chase is on through the house, the refrigerator and even inside a turkey where you must overcome vegetables, ribs and the odd bit of stuffing. Things go as far as skinny dipping in a huge pitcher of pink lemonade.

DO YOU HAVE A LICENCE FOR THIS PET MINKEY?



▲ Who can forget a Christmas holiday spent in the company of the bumbling Inspector hot on the trail of the infamous Pink Panther. Such famous scenes as the steam bath episode with the parrot up the vacuum cleaner? You just don't get that these days.

explore. The aim is to escape from the studios and elude the Inspector as he attempts to remove you from the game in any one of his bizarre disguises. Should you succeed in escaping from the movie lot, then you are named the star of the show and given the next movie..... erm *Pink Panther 2*.

The game features the renowned Henry Mancini theme music and it goes without saying there is more than a liberal sprinkling of slapstick humour – cartoon style of course! Each level has distinctive theme music and enemies, and the linking level between scenes are littered with obstacles and surprises that Pink must avoid. To give you a flavour of the game we include a few choice levels and the objectives you must carry out.

MEGA VIEW

I'm in heaven. I've died and gone to heaven. We are very lucky owning Mega Drives and having this much attention and quality games lavished on us. Since *Aladdin*, nothing but quality seems to have emerged for the discerning Sega owner. Allow me that fantasy because this game certainly keeps the flame alive. It is original, not in being a platformer, but because the flavour of the cartoon is more apparent than ever. Looking forward to the Panther mania which is bound to ensue. ■ **STEVE**

RELEASE: JANUARY PRICE: TBA

MEGA

Win a FULL-SIZE Pinball table

Part 2

Yes indeed! Thanks to Electronic Arts we still have that priceless full-size pinball table to give away to some lucky reader. You'll always get a replay on this table without putting a single coin in the slot because it'll be your table, all yours. And you can tilt it all you please without alarms going off and arcade owners getting irate. Guaranteed to brighten up any living room.

Electronic Arts' *Virtual Pinball* takes the old flipper flapping game

Rules:

The winner will be the first person pulled from a large sack with both sets of questions answered correctly. The winner will receive the pinball table. The Editor's decision is final and no amount of hard cash, foreign currency or Belgian New Beat records will swing his favour in any way. Employees of Electronic Arts and even Europress are forbidden to enter the competition and that is the end of that.

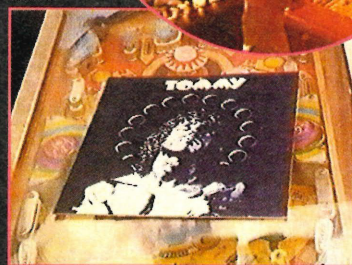
into a new dimension. Never again need you be bored or frustrated playing the same old table again and again. With five standard tables to choose and the opportunity to customise your own, the sky's the limit on this one. *Virtual Pinball* is reviewed on page 18.

We gave you the first three questions last month and here we repeat those and add three for this month – all you need to complete your entry coupon. Answers by March 1.

▼ The ideal piece of furniture. One of these beauties could be yours (or one very similar).

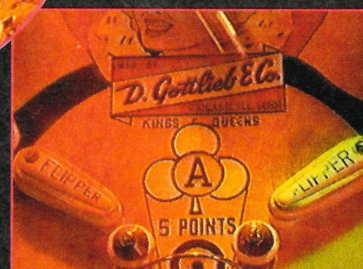


▼ Tommy has his own range of pinball tables.



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ENTRY
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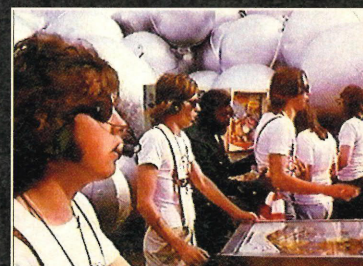
◀ Elton John may be the fastest keyboard player from London down to Brighton, but he can't keep up with Tommy when it comes to pinball. Maybe he should try some real glasses.



The questions

- Name the pop star famous for his crazy glasses who sang 'Pinball Wizard' in the movie version of Tommy.
- Name the rock group who wrote and produced the rock opera Tommy.
- Name the raunchy female singer who played the 'Acid Queen' in Tommy. (Clue: Chris Eubank's boxing signature tune was sung by her.)
- Name one of the three pinball table manufacturers.
- What table top game is pinball based on?
- What is the Japanese version of pinball, which hangs on the wall, called?

(If you need some help with the last three questions, all the necessary information is contained in last month's Pinball Extravaganza).



▲ Time warp with the wonderful Who rock opera Tommy. This here is a pinball temple.

Pinball table compo

My answers are :

-
-
-
-
-
-

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MICROCOSM CD

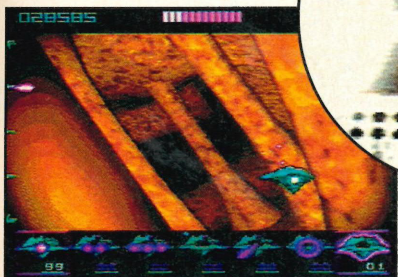
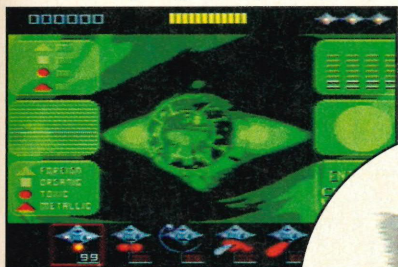
■ **Get to the heart of matter. Make like a blood cell and take a journey into yourself.**

In this nightmarish vision of the future, miniaturisation has become big business. Huge scientific research companies compete for the next breakthrough.

Cyber Tech have developed a project to implant an armoured craft into a human body. But Doctor Knowll, the genius behind the project has been betrayed by them and has now sided with Axiom, a rival company. Security try to stop the Doctor sabotaging project Microcosm, but they are too late – as they enter the lab the syringe has already entered the human 'guinea pig' with a fluid created by Axiom.

And, of course, there you are in the liquid, reduced to microscopic size with your pod. Your mission is to travel round the body through the veins destroying all the Cyber Tech craft already implanted. Simply keep your finger on the fire button and pilot your pod through the body, dodging any fleshy bits and bouncing

▼ You've been given the latest technology to deal with any foreign matter you bump in to.



▼ Why are there spikey olives floating about in this guy's viens? Oh well, I'll shoot them anyway. You'll come across loads of different nasties that need destroying. So get blasting.

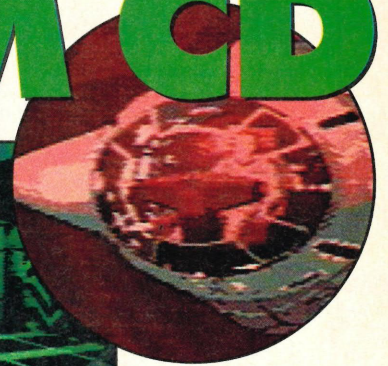
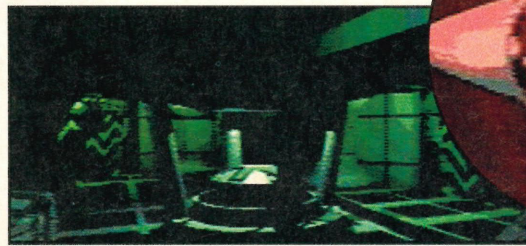


off the walls of your host's blood vessels. You start blasting away as soon as you are injected into the cephalic vein and opponents start coming at you in every shape and form. Some are miniaturised spaceships while others are what look like semi-digested food. Whatever appears, you just destroy it before it takes a shot at you. You have a wide selection of weapons at your disposal for blasting away at all those foreign bodies in the blood stream, and circles appear along your ready-plotted route which you must fly straight through to collect a bonus.

I feel quite sorry for the poor guy who is lying on the table, playing host to these miniaturised machines. He must be pretty sore from all the injections and his veins must be on fire with all that activity going on.

The introduction looks as if it has been taken straight from a movie, with helicopters flying about and combat troops guarding the top security research buildings, and all set in a

◀ It's hard to believe that you're zooming around inside somebody. Check this lot out.



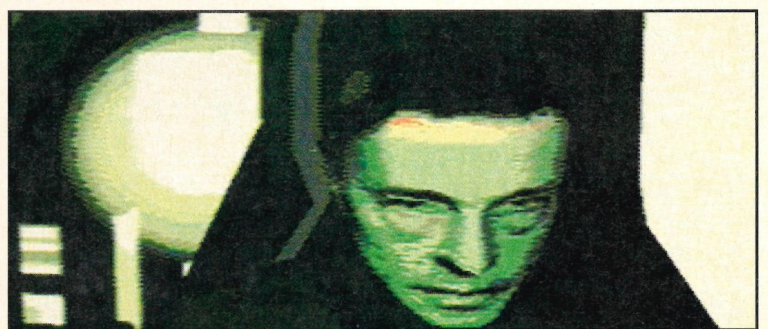
inside a huge complex towards an air-lock where you will find another ship waiting to be launched into a different section of the body. If you think how many veins run round the body, the mind boggles at where you could end up in your quest to rid the body of intruders. And whether you will ever escape from these bloody corridors is anybody's guess.

You may think the game looks quite similar to the film "Innerspace", where some poor bleeder is reduced and accidentally injected into a human instead of a bunny rabbit, but here you are strictly confined to blood vessels. Let's hope you don't bump into any nasty aids viruses on your travels.

▼ One of the rooms you walk through when changing craft while aboard the pod bay.



◀ The newspapers report the ongoing rivalry between the two major companies.



MEGA VIEW

The gameplay has been seen before, even on CD (in *Sewer Shark*) but it's original in that it takes place within somebody's body, and the quality of the graphics for the 'between level' sequences lookS fairly promising. You will notice that the veins are actually void of any blood, but it still looks pretty realistic. So if you have ever wondered what your veins look like from the inside, then watch this space for the full blood letting in the autopsy of the game. ■ **GLEN**

RELEASE: JANUARY PRICE: TBA



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ETERNAL CHAMPIONS

■ We've all been knocked down by recent fighting releases, but will this, the latest, be just as hard hitting?

After *Street Fighter 2* and *Mortal Kombat* have just broken out on the streets, any beat 'em-up to follow will have to be good to get noticed. There are already plenty of fighting games to choose from and people are prepared to wait until the ultimate game is available. Well to

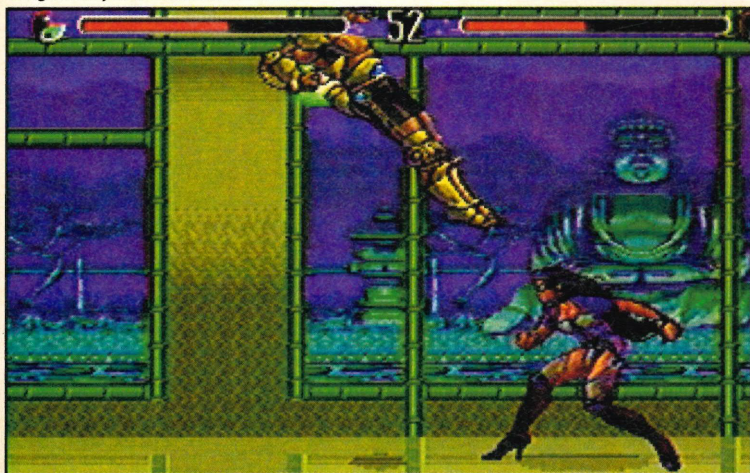
▼ Make sure you're the guy with the axe if you want to make it in to the next round.



▼ Tridents current occupation is a gladiator, but he has worked in nursing and loves kids.



▼ Rax boosts himself high off the ground, using his air jets to attack from above.



make your decision harder, *Eternal Champions* will soon be gracing our consoles, dishing up a large helping of violence and mayhem. The action looks colourful and fast, but what's it all about?

Several training programs help you work out how well your character responds and are good practice for your special moves. The 'Dexterity Spheres' are metallic balls that rotate around the screen and have to be hit to be destroyed. In the Holo training arena, you fight against a hologram image of another character. All this practice will pay off when you enter the first match. The fights are set up in similar style to *Street Fighter*. There are three rounds to each match, win two and you face the next contender.

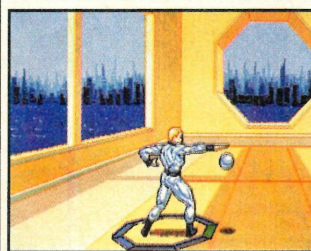
There are plenty of weird and wonderful characters to choose from, including mutant beasts with extraordinary strengths and mysterious fiends who control the magical forces. Before battle commences, you can check the character analysis for your player. This gives you the rundown on their background, strengths and abilities. Six categories have been selected and each fighter has been given a rating from

one to five, depending on their ability. As well as the usual (speed, power etc.), players are assessed on their rate of recovery and their equilibrium. The latter rates the players' state of balance and a low rating may mean the character is unstable during combat.

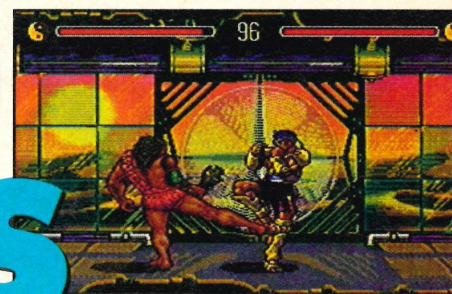
Each character possesses different fighting skills that can only be performed by that character. To complete all the special moves you're going to have to purchase a six buttoned joypad or find yourself an activator and the



▲ Has this beat 'em-up got what it takes to challenge the other big titles?

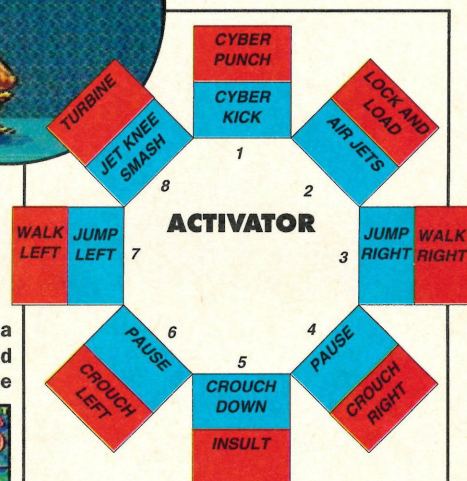


▲ A futuristic look at how the activator operates. Pretty cool or what?



▲ The fighters must battle through three timed rounds to decide the winner.

joypad will probably be cheaper. We're getting ready to memorise a load more fighting combinations and special moves so we can become champions for all eternity or maybe just for a short while when we get the game in soon for review.



Activate the circle of power and step into reality.

The activator is currently in use in the arcades and will be available soon for personal use, to help a player become more interactive with a game. You strap sensors to your arms and legs and step into a large, metallic censor pad. As your limbs break the censor beams being emitted from the pad, a certain move is activated. Similar to the virtual reality machines about.

How does it work on this game? Take Rax for example, a tough character who relies on his strength to win a fight. By stepping back the on-screen character will crouch down. Move your fist into area one and Rax will deliver an awesome punch to your opponent. If your leg breaks the sensors in area two, Rax fires up his jump and jets in an effort to avoid any attacking blow. Lock and load is another special move created for Rax, if area two is broken by your arm. You launch bolts of energy after locking on to your target.

MEGA VIEW

Sega were faced with a tough challenge here. With the latest run on beat 'em-ups, a game nowadays has to pack some power to get recognised. Everything seems to be intact though, with plenty of new players and new moves. But will people care to look at another fighting game after they have played *Streetfighter 2* or *Mortal Kombat*? Next month's mag should see the full review to give you the low down on what's really happening in the fight arena. ■ GLEN

RELEASE: JAN/FEB PRICE: TBA



▲ Rejoice! Looks like the home favourites have stolen the show with some clever formation tactics and of course a lot of brute force.

▲ You can get inside information on any of the teams that you may encounter in a league situation.

BRETT HULL HOCKEY

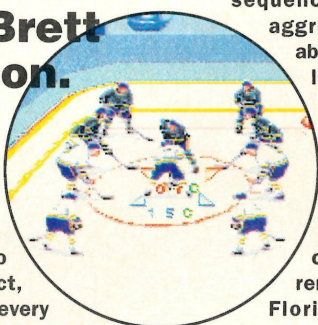
■ It's Monday night and I don't know about you, but I'm in the mood for a slippery session with Selane, Oates, big Brett and the amazing Mr Faloon. Come join the fun.

Woo woo! What a scorcher! Brett Hull Hockey is nearing completion and it's looking mighty fine. One of the fastest growing spectator and recreational sports in the country has been lovingly crafted, courtesy of Accolade, just for your Mega Drive.

Radical Entertainment are not only the designers behind BHH but they are also die hard fans of the sport. As they wanted a realistic ice hockey sim, they thought it would be a most excellent idea to film actual hockey players going about their business. These video tapes were digitised specially for the game.

BHH is full of realistic hockey action. Brett Hull himself had a lot to do with the project, making sure that every aspect of the game was as true to life as the real thing. Authentic organ music blasts from the speakers as Emmy winning sportscaster, Al Michaels, gives you a blow by blow account of every single move made in the rink.

Having a running commentary whilst playing is just one of the many stunning features in BHH. You're given a "behind the player" perspective of the field of play along with an



instant replay facility, a fighting sequence set for players with aggressive tendencies, the ability to select and change line settings, and all the roaring sound effects you could ever ask for.

All the complete 1993 rosters have been used to give the game an up to the minute choice of today's current teams. Winnipeg, Florida, Pittsburgh, Vancouver – you got it. You have the added option to get down and do some dirty stick clashing with an impressive 600 of the greatest hockey players in the game today, as well as having access to all of their vital game stats including matches

played, assists, goals and their points figures.

There's a hell of a lot of scope in this game. In fact it's the only video game where you can choose between a one off exhibition match, an 11 game short season, a 42 game half season or a staggering 84 game full season. Normally, if you wanted to play an 84 game season, you would have to play the game non stop for a week, but that's where BHH is different.

It has a password facility, so you won't have to cancel all of those dinner arrangements with Sharon Stone, you can just jot down the password and you'll be free to dance the night away with the lady of your dreams. Brett Hull Hockey is due to be released just before Christmas, so if you're gonna be on the look out for a top Crimbo cart, have a dabble on BHH and see what you think.

▼ It's fast and furious with little excuse for fingers that are not ready to drop off!



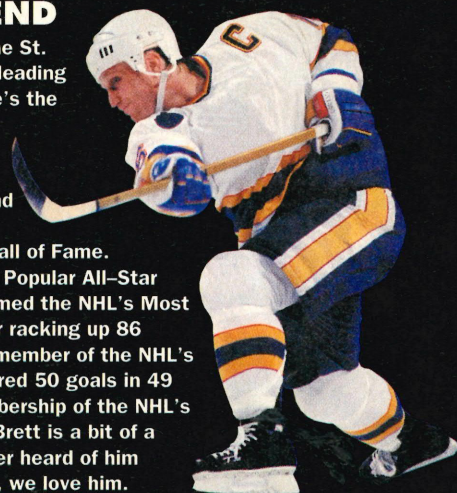
▲ As with all sports channels there has to be the expert. Here he laughs at your team.



▲ Players are highlighted on the puck so stars can be quickly recognised.

BRETT: THE LEGEND

Brett Hull is right winger for the St. Louis Blues and is one of the leading goal scorers in NHL history. He's the son of top hockey star, Bobby Hull, whose reign in the 60s and 70s earned him a reputation as one of the best all round hockey players in history and gave him a place in the U.S. Hall of Fame. The fans voted Brett the Most Popular All-Star Player – twice, and he was named the NHL's Most Valuable Player in 1990-91 for racking up 86 goals in 78 games. Brett is a member of the NHL's "50/49 Club" because he scored 50 goals in 49 games and he also holds membership of the NHL's "80 Goal Club". All in all, our Brett is a bit of a hero and although we had never heard of him before the arrival of this game, we love him.

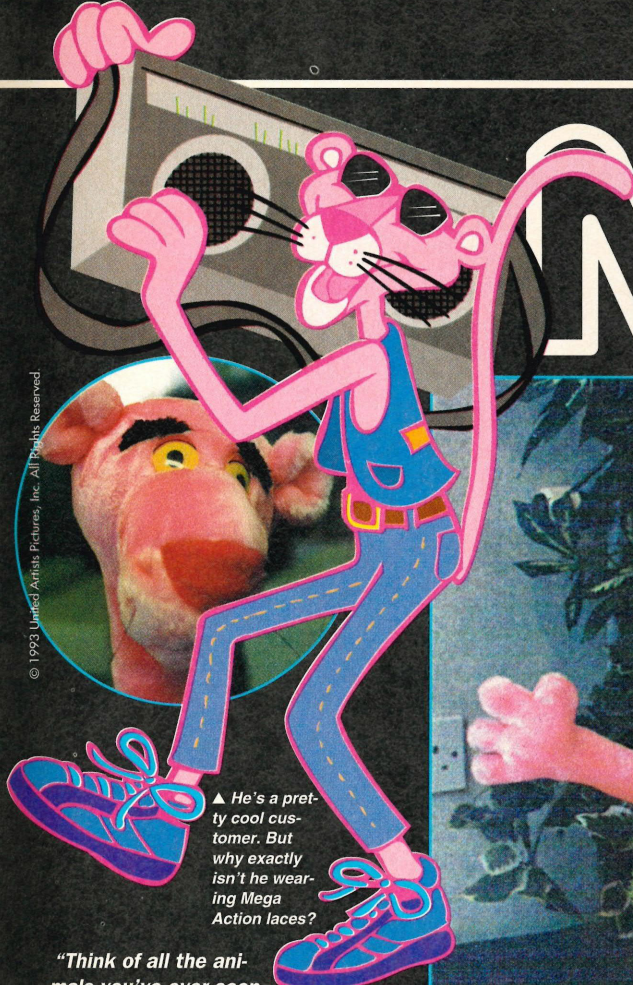


MEGAVIEW

It looks good, it sounds good, but what does it play like? That's the issue here, isn't it? Well at this stage, I forbid myself to pass judgement, but from what I've seen it seems to be pretty cool. You'll be spoilt for choice when it comes to a decent squad, but we all like a little variation don't we? The smug Yankee Dickie Davis reject does get annoying, but as is often the case with hockey sims, you lose track of the puck and it's nice having someone there to tell you where it is. ■ JASON

RELEASE: APRIL PRICE: TBA

MEGA



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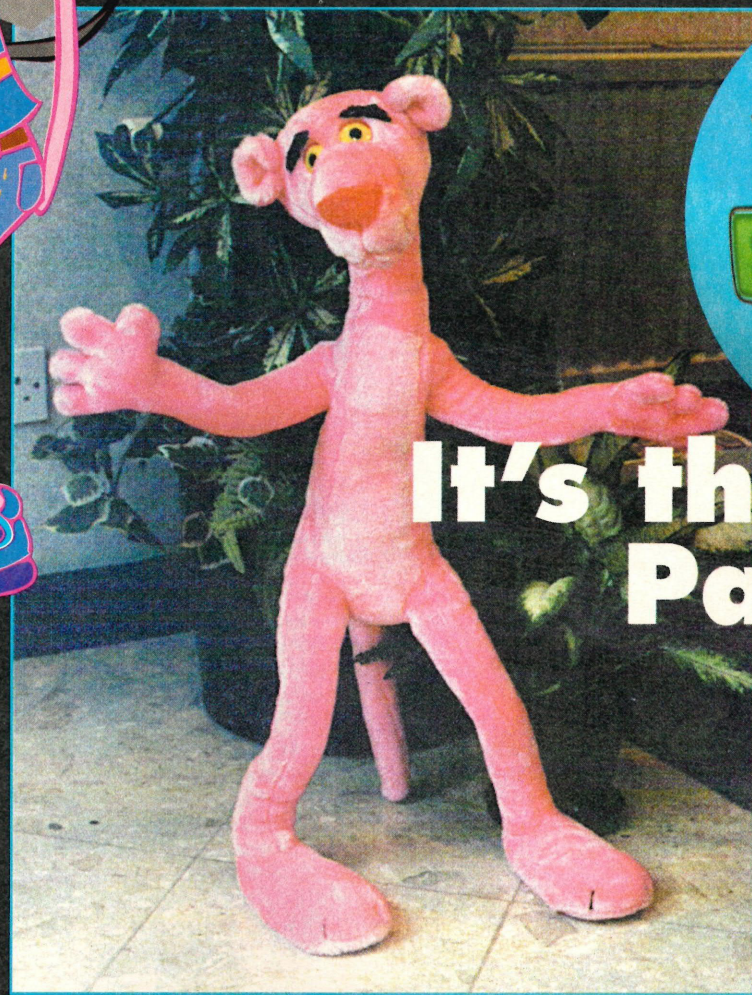
▲ He's a pretty cool customer. But why exactly isn't he wearing Mega Action laces?

"Think of all the animals you've ever seen before, like rhinoceroses, tigers cats and mink, there are lots of funny animals in all of the world, but have you ever seen a panther that is pink? Think – a panther that is positively pink

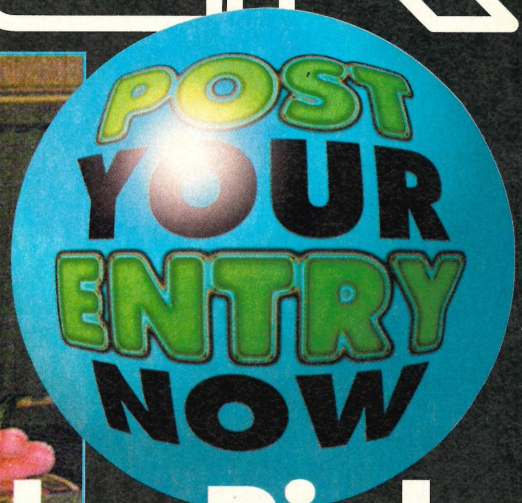
You know that he's a groovy cat and he's a scholar and an artist and an acrobat

So now you've seen the Pink Panther and have you ever seen a Panther so Pink?

So now you've seen the pink panther, the rinky dink panther and it's as plain as your nose that he's the one and only truly original Panther Pink from head to toe."



It's the Pink Panther!



◀ We've all grown pretty attached to this three foot, ball of fur in the office and everyone coos in admiration as they walk by our desk.

The questions

- 1). The Pink Panther is now the official mascot of:
 - a. Macdonalds
 - b. Nintendo
 - c. IBM
- 2). In the Pink Panther Films Inspector Clouseau was always played by:
 - a. Peter Sellers
 - b. Tom Baker
 - c. John Nettles
- 3). In the game how many movie sets are there to explore?:
 - a. 2
 - b. 3
 - c. 12

You've sung the song, now you can join in on the Pink Panther mayhem that has engulfed us by entering our exclusive TekMagic competition!

We have some fantastic Pink Panther-related prizes to give away including a unique 36" bendy, cuddly version of the Pink hero and an equally collectable 12" version.

There are also some very limited edition T-Shirts and extremely rare baseball caps to give away to the lucky winners!

All you have to do is answer this simple set of questions. Fill in the answers legibly on the coupon provided. Simply answer A, B or C on the appropriate line.

Rules:

The winners will be the first to be pulled out of a big cardboard box that the local tramp has been surviving the winter in. The first correct entry will receive a large Pink Panther toy, the second will receive the smaller version and anything after that will receive T-Shirts and baseball caps. The Editors decision is final and no amount of hard cash, travellers cheques or rare bootleg 12" records will swing his favour. Employees of TekMagic and Europress themselves are forbidden to start or finish reading this competition let alone actually enter it. All answers must be received by post before January 31.

Pink Panther compo

My answers are :

1.....
2.....
3.....

Name:

Address:

Post code:

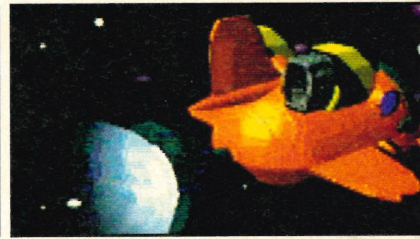
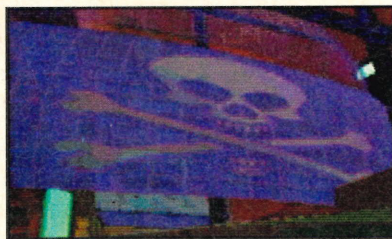
Age: Tel:

Send your entries to:



**Pink Panther Compo,
Mega Action, Europa
House,
Adlington Park,
Macclesfield,
SK10 4NP.**

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▲ The intro sequence has been created to include synchronised sound effects to the action. Puggsy is being shot down onto an unfriendly planet by an evil pirate galleon. It is three minutes long and uses a special colour technique allowing more than the usual 16 colours on the screen.

PUGGSY CD

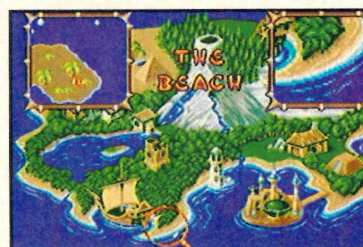
■ Once again the cute but perhaps not so cuddly Puggsy has crash landed and needs your family's help.

You probably read about the amazing intro sequence this CD game has been blessed with last month. It involves some full colour film-like sequences that see both stereo soundtracks and special effects combined to produce some really quite stunning results.

The little alien Puggsy has been attacked by a rather large space galleon, forcing him (it?) to crash land on a strange planet. Now, things being what they are, Puggsy has lost his ship and must travel through various levels of puzzle and co-ordination challenges to gather objects and recover his misplaced ship. But that is not all. No, the ship has been damaged and must be repaired by the little alien before a successful launch back home can be effected.

Now those of you in the know will be aware that Psygnosis are the programming power behind Lemmings and this game isn't such a distant cousin. The levels must be completed alive and you must plan the use of each object well in advance to get out of the door to the next level. For example, Puggsy must light the lighthouse lamp by obtaining a candle. This must of course be lit which... ah well that would be giving the whole thing away. Don't panic if puzzle solving isn't your strong point as the game builds up your skills and there is always more than one way to achieve the required solution.

One nice inclusion is that, when you manage to get through all the levels - and there are dozens of them - and you are struggling for a new challenge, Psygnosis have included a time section which allows access to any of the previously completed parts of the game and then puts you up against the clock to solve that level problem as fast as you can.



▲ The map shows progress and also just how much is left to be done.

Of course no game of this genre is complete without the sub-game and Puggsy CD has plenty of them with

▼ Figure out your next move very carefully indeed!



The little guy can jump some quite impressive distances.

Interaction is the name of the game here but mind how you use certain objects.



▲ Use barrels to climb up and onto the higher platforms. Access is then a lot easier!

Space Invaders and other family favourites liberally splashed throughout the quest. Now the word family did not creep into the text without reason, as Puggsy CD is definitely for all ages. The main game will appeal to most active gamers but the younger players will find it a tad difficult, I mean the average three year old shouldn't know what a match is for, let alone wanting to light a canon with it. Therefore 'Junior island' has been included, providing a cut down quest with training levels and easy-to-do puzzles. It

◀ The planet you have crash landed on is not the best of places to be stranded.

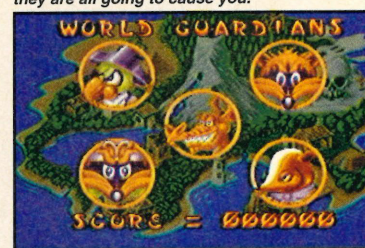


is here that you will learn the basics of carrying objects, their respective

weights and how Puggsy can climb walls, jump over objects and fight his opponents. There is quite a trick here as regards the carrying of objects. If our little hero wants to carry a barrel to jump on at a later stage then don't expect him to be able to float on water or even be able to jump all that high.

It would appear that Psygnosis have also taken the force of gravity into account in the gameplay, because Puggsy can easily balance objects on flat ground but try to balance too many objects on rough ground and things come crashing down around you. Nice of them to think of that now wasn't it?

▼ You can view each world guardian in advance and study just how much trouble they are all going to cause you.



MEGA VIEW

Puggsy on the cartridge was great fun and a breath of fresh air. Puzzles are right up my street and I love 'em to death. I love this game all the more as there is more than one way to solve each challenge. Add that to the stunning animation scenes and you have a winner. Still, there isn't much difference between this version and the cartridge and the levels remain basically the same. The music however is brilliant with some fantastic stereo renditions of the original tunes. ■ **STEVE**

RELEASE: JANUARY PRICE: TBA

**POST
YOUR
ENTRY
NOW**

MEGA

▼ The incredible inflatable puggsy. Not to be used as a life saver.

Win Puggsy CD and CD drive

Goodbye cartridge. Hello CD. The future of gaming lies in the digitised sequences and amazing soundtracks of the shiny disc. You end up missing out on half the experience these days when games come out on both formats and you don't have the hardware. So not wanting our readers to lag behind the times, we are giving away a Sega CD Drive so you can check all the best and latest Mega Drive CDs you read about in the mag.

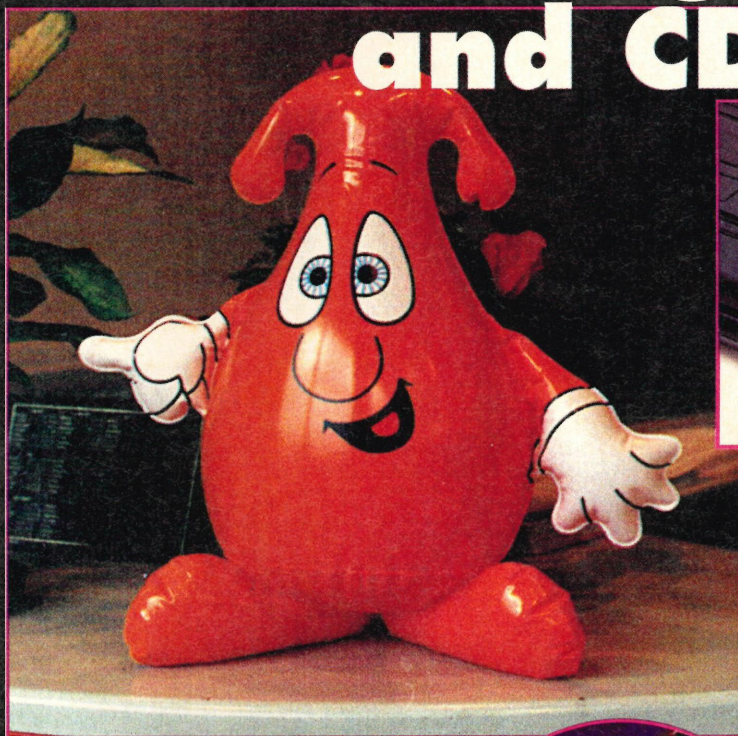
Also up for grabs is a framed copy of the Puggsy CD, signed by the programmers. Puggsy CD is a prime example of the way games are developing, with a stunning, space movie-like intro sequence crash landing you into what is basically an upgraded version of the cartridge game.

Runners up will receive inflatable Puggsys, the ideal bed buddy and useful for hitting people with when they are annoying you. But don't under any circumstances use him as an inflatable though. See our review of the game on page 66 to find out why. Puggsy is a strange chap indeed. Small, squat, orange, little more than a blob from outer space really. And his body is a bit of an embarrassment, so Puggsy has to get his mind round various puzzles, sub-games and carrying and lifting problems in order to find his way back to his own universe.

Prove you are worthy of owning the key to the little guy's world by answering the questions opposite.

Rules:

The winners will be those who demonstrate their intelligence and wit by answering the three questions correctly and somehow managing to persuade the editor that they most need the CD Drive or CD to establish their value as human beings. The Editor's decision is fairly final - nothing in life is so certain as the fact that he will change his mind several times every day. In this case though there will be no arguing with him. It goes without saying that we can't enter. So our lucky readers, put pen to paper now and you never no, Puggsy could come crashlanding through your letterbox pretty soon.



▲ Puggsy plus gun. Frightening little fella, almost as scary as ET.



▲ Palm trees and the deep blue sky - doesn't look like my word he's on.



▲ Mmmmm. This beautiful games console could be yours. Just answer the simple questions below.

The questions

- 1) A pug is:
 - a) a cute little dog with a flattened nose.
 - b) the rubber disc used in ice hockey
 - c) a shallow boat propelled by thrusting a long pole against the river bed, usually piloted by toffs.
- 2) Psygnosis have also made a game similar in style to Puggsy, but about:
 - a) pigs
 - b) lemmings
 - c) a duck-billed platypus
- 3) The longest word in the English language meaning to put someone down is:
 - a) sack-ass
 - b) floccinaucinihilipilificatio
 - c) anti-disestablishmentarianism

Puggsy compo

My answers are :

1

2

3

Name:

Address:

Post code:

Age:

Tel:

Send your entries to:

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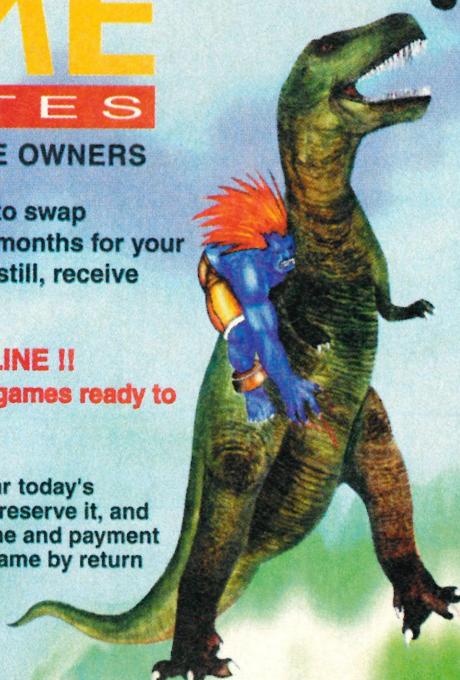
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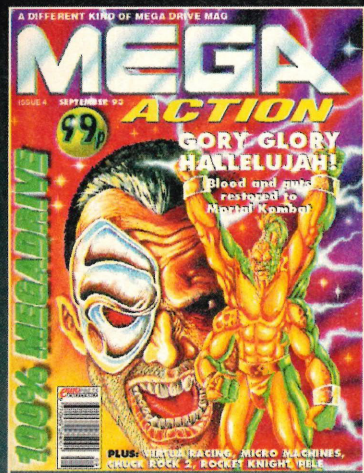
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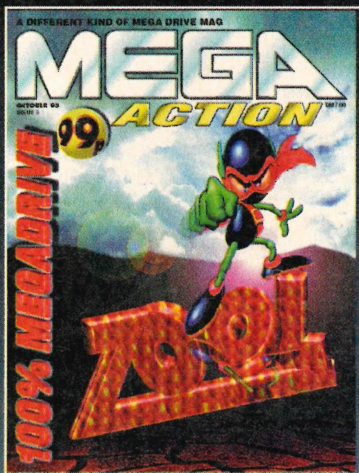
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My name:

My address:

.....
.....

* Delete as appropriate

MEGA JIVE



■ Another wad of letters landed on Mega Action's doormat this month. Major thanks to you all for your kind comments.

Dear Santa,

I am the proud owner of a Sega Mega Drive with *Kid Chameleon*, *Streets of Rage II*, *Decap Attack* and the *Menacer*. There is one thing that is bugging me. Sega have now almost completely dropped the Master System and seem to be now concentrating on the new console called Saturn. Does this mean they will dump the Mega Drive? I used to have a Spectrum Plus 2 but now that is dogfood. Can you help me?

Matt Chalkley, Stamford.

Yes you are right, it does seem that the Master System is dropping from favour these days but maybe that isn't as devastating as it first sounds. It's had a good run for it's money and I'm sure all the owners will agree that they have enjoyed their time with it. Things move on and certainly the climate that we live in demands the very latest from our manufacturers or they will not be allowed to survive. Sega are merely moving on and the new 32 bit machine that they are developing looks to be very exciting stuff. The Mega Drive is a very popular machine and I'm sure all the software manufacturers will be supporting it for a while yet. It would be mad to suddenly stop all commitment to it. Sega will start to phase it out only when the market demands. After all, it is YOU that buys their stuff and YOU are in control of what will happen, whether you are aware of it or not. As for your Spectrum, well I agree but don't try feeding it your dog, it could put an eye out.

Dear Santa,

I think your magazine is really worth the money at £1.75. I also have to thank you for the Micro machines players guide. It really helped me. Anyway I have a point to make about a BIG mistake in issue 6 on the WWF review. In Royal Rumble you said that Hulk Hogan owns the WWF but he does not, Vince McMahon does. Keep up the good work.

Hardip Sembli, Maidenhead.

Oh right thanks. Nice to see people actually watch wrestling on TV and don't use it as a means of merely lighting the room up in the corner.

Dear Santa,

Is it true what you said last month in the News about Nintendo launching a 64 bit machine next year. Won't this make the new Sega unit old fashioned and out of date? I also heard that the Nintendo unit will be cheaper than the proposed Sega unit. I'm worried because I want to stick to Sega products.

Colin Moon, Wilmslow.

Well Colin, you do sound worried but there really isn't any need. Sega are a multi-million pound company with some quite smart marketing people working for them so I'm sure they have some master plan in hand. The Nintendo unit, as was mentioned last month, might well be a prize red herring created to simply rush everyone else into launching their unit without proper testing. Being 64 bit doesn't mean that it will be any better, it really is a matter of what the programmers are capable of with the machine and how much time they are given to develop it. As for the price, well, big deal. Nintendo seem to have a policy of selling the hardware cheap and making all the money back on the software. On paper that sounds a good idea but in practice it seems to be annoying a whole load of SNES users. To keep up to date on the latest developments just keep buying Mega Action!

Dear Santa,

I saw an item on the BBC's *Tomorrows World* last week that said Sega had developed a Virtual Headset for the Mega Drive. Is this true and is it also true that these units can harm you in any way? How much does one cost and is it a massive uncomfortable thing like those in the arcades?

Lee Whitney, Stoke.

Nobody here saw the episode on TV because we were all staying late at the office working for the good of the magazine and company. However we can tell you that Sega have quite a trendy little affair for a headset and if it performs as well as it looks, it should be a real winner. No price has been fixed on it yet and software is very much in the development stage. As for being harmful, well we cannot

comment on that but research has shown that some people just cannot handle a VR world due to the fact that the eye keeps working overtime to cope with depth of field. In a real situation the eye gains depth information from the distances of each object that it looks at. In a VR world the depth is merely represented on a flat screen shown right in front of the eyes so it can cause feelings of nausea to some people. Of course we will keep you all constantly updated on the situation.

Dear Santa,

Sometimes you and other magazines review games from Japan and abroad and say that they are definitely worth buying. Should we then wait until it is officially released here in Britain or should we buy it as soon as we see it?

Tony Possater, Bedford.

It's up to you really. The main difference between Japanese games and official games is firstly their shape and secondly the fact that the text is normally in Japanese. This isn't usually a problem and can be quite fun working it all out sometimes. A converter is all you need to play them and they cost about £10.00 these days. Some games never see the light of day in this country so when we go mad over a game it might be worth considering!

STAR LETTER

Dear Santa,

I don't understand the difference between MEGABYTES and MEGABITS. How come some games say they are 16 Meg. when they are clearly no better than many PC games which are much less? Also, is it true that Virtua racing will be on a 32 MEG board and cost over £100.00?

Jed Goryl, Camden Town.

Hmmm. I've been waiting for such a letter as this to arrive and the answer is a bit embarrassing. You see it would appear that console manufacturers were once a bit cheesed off with the amount of memory available to home computer users and in order to appeal to that mass market created the MEGABIT, which when abbreviated to MEG, sounds a very impressive size of game compared to the PC for instance. It is in fact merely a quarter of a MEGABYTE making a 16 MEG console game, at the moment the largest you can buy, a mere four

MEGABYTES of chip power. Virtual Racing as far as we know isn't 32 MEGABITS but a mere 16 which isn't that exciting but what is is the fact that it uses a DSP which is a special processor specially installed INTO the cartridge to handle high speed graphics, in this case polygons. We've seen it and it is fast and it is smooth.

Dear Santa,

I would firstly like to congratulate you and your team on an excellent magazine. Can it get any better I ask myself? Since the early days it has grown into a force to be reckoned with and I must point out that the guides are something else. Never have I seen such graphically well presented diagrams and explanations on how to succeed in your favourite games - keep it up! But I have one question, who is Barry and what does he do all day besides just write guides and comment on how rubbish other Sega users are?

Derek Shefton, Leicester.

Well thank you very much and I'm sure you now think with such a nice letter to such nice people as us you will easily have won the star letter! Well you're wrong. It takes much, much more to get a game out of us, like individual compliments to each and every member of the team coupled with the odd McDonalds voucher for free milkshakes. As for Barry, well the chap is a mystery to all of us, his copy just appears on the Editor's desk desperately close to deadline with a small note attached on how we are not worthy. Admittedly though, his guides are the best magazines have to offer.

Dear Santa,

Can I have a free game off you guys for writing a letter so clearly with a fountain pen and using joined-up letters? It has taken me two years to learn this at school and I would like to think it has all been of some use in the end.

Tom Gurantere, Coopertown.

Well let me see. No.

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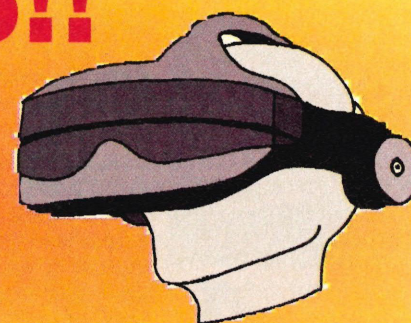
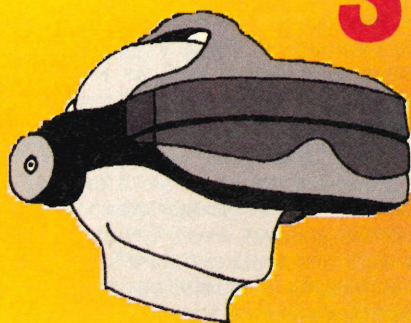
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TIPS

MIXED AND CRACKED

MEGA

■ Welcome once again to my cheats emporium. How I have longed for this time again. I crave your innocent souls, your untouched, perfect spirits which I must possess for my own pleasure. Come take my ethereal hand as I lead you through the twisting maze of cheats. Take care not to let go or your soul will be lost forever in video hell.

BATMAN RETURNS CD

Pssst. Wanna cheat that allows you to make your way to any level? If the answer is yes then enter the following joypad combinations: press and hold left on the pad, push B. Move the cursor down to the difficulty settings and push left and B together. Repeat this until you reach the seventh option, then move the cursor to the top of the list again. Repeat this procedure all over again until a recognisable pinging sound is heard. Configure whatever controls you need and start the game. To choose a level, pause the game and press C.

JAGUAR XJ220

Despite its nice presentation and slightly slick graphics, I don't think much of this game. But anyway, as we're doing tips here it is. Enter the main options screen and go to the change name option by highlighting the '1' box. Change the current name to MAR. Then start and play the game as normal. If at any time you wish to qualify on the current track, pause the game and press A, B and C together. This should allow you to win all future races with the greatest of ease.

SEWER SHARK CD

Wondering how this game ends? I bet you are and I may have something that could help you. No it's not a customized replay cart or similar, instead it's a good old fashioned game cheat operated via your pad. Wait until you see the closing credits after you've snuffed it and press Start, A and C. This should and will give you an extra continue. Groovy eh?

ECCO CD

If you haven't guessed by now, we're concentrating on CD owners this month, the reason being that they get the rough deal normally as all of the cart owners get all the best gaming cheats. Although this isn't quite a cheat it's a dead useful code to help you see some extra special screens. Enter: ANWXCHBQ. Relax and enjoy the show boys and girls.

ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURE

Continuing with these extraordinary cheats I offer this crazy one enabling you to set the level for the ultimate challenge. Wait until the Konami title screen appears and enter (very quickly): Left four times, Right four

WE NEED YOUR TIPS AND CHEATS!

MEGA ACTION is on the lookout for decent tips and cheats! We're always looking out for more letters for this section shortly, so if you need help with a game or have advice for your fellow readers, put pen to paper! Who knows, there may even be a freebie of some sort in it for you if the tip is good enough! Send your cheats, hints and tips to:

Mega Action Tips and Cheats,
Europress Interactive Ltd,
Europa House,
Adlington Park,
Macclesfield,
Cheshire SK10 4NP.

times, Left seven times, Right and Left. You should hear noise that indicates the cheat has worked.

SILPHEED

Once again we strike whilst the iron is red hot by giving you invaluable cheats on *Silpheed*. On the opening demo screen tap in: Right, Left, A, Right, Up, C, B, Down, Left, B, A and Up on pad one. Then play the game as usual but every time you wish to recover your shields press button A on pad two. If you wish to have extra continues, enter: Right, Up, A, B, C, Left, Left, Down, C, A and Start. This will boost your extra continues to a total of 10. If any of you are feeling mighty brave then you can increase the difficulty by pushing B, B, A, C, Up and A on pad two. This should be done just after the first intro screen.

SUNSET RIDERS

Here's a nice way to earn yourself 99 credits on this great arcade conversion. Enter the sound options screen and listen to sounds 0 to E. As you begin playing the game you'll be blessed with the extra continues. Fantastic or what?

MICRO MACHINES

Before I rabbit on about this cheat I'd just like to introduce one of Britain's finest cheat finders - second to me of course - and his name is Ed 'Pinky' Lomas. He's managed to build quite a reputation in the magazine world with his bizarre cheats, so here we give you his latest batch, starting with this racing game. Play and pause the game and enter: Up, Down, A, B, Left, Right and C. Then unpause the game to make your vehicle reach a higher velocity.

And of course you can achieve better traction with: A, Up, B, Down, C, Start and Right.

It goes on to help making the crashes prolonged: C, Up, Left, Right, A, B, A and C

You can also increase the drone's ability by pushing: Left, Right, Left, Right, Up, Down, Start and Down.

And to make them nearly unbeatable enter: Left, Down, Up, Down, Right, Down, A and Down.

For infinite tries: B, Down, C, Down, Up, Down, Left and Down.

KING OF THE MONSTERS

Not a lot people know this. There are many extra continues to be had by pressing A, B, C and start on the main title screen. Press A and a secret continue screen will materialise and you'll be able to choose up to an extra 12 continues. Freak show!

TIME GAL CD

Here's a full comprehensive list of all of the game codes for the official version.

70,000,000 BC:	BMC FXWRL
65,000,000 BC:	GJRPQUKS
30,000 BC:	THMZCYFB
1,600 BC:	RYFGSXDK
44 BC:	FTGBDQPW
500 AD:	VSLCZKTJ
999 AD:	CYVZPBMG
1588 AD:	DRXHTLQJ
1941 AD:	WBM RJZVH
1991 AD:	SHKXGJWF
2001 AD:	XPTMCSHD
2010 AD:	ZVYFLGQJ
3001 AD:	QWCCHRKT
3999 AD:	PLQTVMXY
4000 AD:	LKD WBSYF



DR. BARRY DIABLO

■ This month the blue faced Diablo turns orange to match all those Autumnal colours. And once again we ask him to delve into other people's gaming problems and sort them out.

So if you have a problem of any kind, be it sexual or seismic, please write in to the copper topped Doctor and he'll do his best not to laugh. And remember many a mickle makes a muckle.

Dear Barry,
I'm experiencing some difficulty with Sega's shoot'em-up, *Ex-Ranza*. It's a mint game, but I just can't seem to cope with some of the later bosses. I don't have enough money for any extra peripherals like a Replay cart or Game Genie, so if there's any advice or tips you could pass on to me it would be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,
Mont DeGoblindehonk, Denmark.

BARRY: Normally I would not assist anybody in such a predicament. If you're stuck on such an easy shoot 'em-up, I feel you should not bring shame on yourself by writing to me. But seeing as you're from overseas and obviously a dedicated reader I shall. Play and pause the game and then press: Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down, C, B, A, Right then Left. Unpause the game and press B to be taken to the end of level boss. Press B again during the major scrap to skip to the next level.

Dear Barry,
Although I'm a reasonably seasoned games player, I desperately require your aid in *The Humans*. I can get quite far into the game, about level 43, and then I just start to run out of extra tribesmen. This is infuriating to say the least, so please help me!
Yours Faithfully,
Simon Fennwick, Oxford University, Neanderthal period fossils alive department.

BARRY: Ah! A professor from the stone age requiring help. Anybody stuck on the *Humans* is obviously no match for my mighty intellect. Play the game as normal until you end up on a level where you must rescue another tribesman. Rescue him and then restart the level via the pause options. Repeat until you feel you have enough tribesman.

Dear Barry,
Flicking through the last issue of Mega Action, I noticed this new page of letters and I think it's absolutely fabulous. But I'm not just writing to complement you on this achievement, I'm also asking for a helping hand on *Mega-Lo-Mania*. My main problem is not having extra men for the later levels. Is there any way I can increase my starting population without decreasing my future resources?
Yours Faithfully,
Drew Baker, Horndean, Hampshire

BARRY: Hang on. That name rings a bell, so does the address. I wonder if that's my old school friend? If it is, then yes, I will help an old friend. Place the whole population onto any part of the island you desire, then press button C to take them off again (remember to hold down the button). This should fill up your stock pile without affecting what you've already put on the island.

Dear Barry,
I wasn't content racing around the desolate streets of Yorkshire trying to get kicks for my sad,

desperate life on my Honda Melody. Instead I made a sound investment in a Mega Drive and a copy of that fine game, *Road Rash 2*. Since then I've had endless amounts of high speed thrills and violence. But I yearn for something more. I've heard of late that there's a secret bike. Is it true?
Yours in anticipation,
Mary Sellest, Lostensea

BARRY: Ah ha. Another road rasher, this takes me back many years to when bikes were dangerous and roads only half full of Volvo drivers, those callous Swedish cars that hack and tear their way through innocent bike riders. But I digress. Simply press and hold Up, A and C together, then start the game as normal and enter race select and you'll start with the wild secret bike thing!

Dear Barry,
The other day whilst playing *Streets of Rage 2*, I somehow managed to choose two character exactly the same as each other. I don't know how I managed to do such a thing, but I sure would like to know how to do it again. Could you find out for me?
Yours Faithfully,
Dave Stewart, Kandiwasear, Canada

BARRY: Yes it's possible to play two characters the same, but I'm not quite sure how you managed to do it by accident. You obviously must have been playing with a friend. To repeat this fluke, press and hold Right and button B on joypad one. Then get someone else to press Left and button A on joypad two. Still using the secondary joypad, press C to highlight the select screen and away you go.

Dear Barry,
I'm haunted and teased by that imaginative game from Virgin, *Chuck Rock*. I can't sleep at night, my job is severely affected by this and my entire existence is ruined. Alright I admit it, I'm not bright. In fact, if was standing next to a blackboard in a coal mine, I'd be the last to be spotted. But I beg of you, please rescue my tormented soul before I start screaming Unga Bunga!
Yours Unga Bungally,
Jay 'monkey man' Sharples, Stockport

BARRY: Hello cro-magnon being, what's the weather like in Jurassic park? But one must be kind to small furry animals, so here goes. On the main title screen type in ABRACADABRA. Before any of you say "but how do you type in the D's and R's?", I'll say this: for the D's use Down, for the R's use Right on the D-pad. Then, if done correctly, the guitarist will turn and smile. Play the game as usual and if you wish to skip the level press A and up together. And buy some razor blades, you're covered with matted hair from head to toe.

Dear Barry,
I'll level with you, I'm crap at *Alien 3*. I rue the day I bought it. I just can't get past level 8, you know

the one where you've got to rescue all of the trapped inmates in the main cell blocks. To make it worse, there was a special level warp cheat featured on Game's World, the satellite show. But alas, I was too slow with the video machine and a notepad. I call upon your amazing abilities to show the way for me. Could YOU tell me the cheat?

Yours pleadingly,
Arnold McBain, Springfield

BARRY: Aaaaah that's terrible. Just imagine not being quick enough to press that record button. Oh god! Just imagine the distress involved. Still, rest assured that Diablo is here to console you. Enter the options screen thus, then gently picking up pad two, stroke the following buttons. Oh god - buttons! Enter: C, Up, Right, Down, Left, A, Right and Down. With any luck you should hear a little ping, and this indicates that the cheat has worked. Play the game and pause. Spell the word CAB on pad one and the screen will turn green. Unpause and enjoy.

Dear Barry,
I'm having a real aquatic nightmare with Sega's brilliant Ecco. I've managed to reach Origin Beach but that is as far as I can go. If you have the list of the remaining level codes they would be very much appreciated.
Yours Faithfully,
Dolph Coce, Glasgow

BARRY: Stuck in the ocean eh? It took me some time, but I think I might be able to help you with the following codes;
Trilobite Circle: UCJDBPEC
Dark Water: ZDCHBPEF
Deep Water: YDBIBPEG
City of Forever: YUPIGPLV
The Tube: MIBFKMLH
Welcome to the Machine: YUFBKMLC
The Last Fight: KTPMLMLM
On the last fight use your sonar to destroy the alien's eyes. Then ram the side of its head but watch for when it opens its mouth to suck you in. Good luck.

Dear Barry,
Can you tell me if there's a cheat for level selections on *Castle Illusion*. Thank you.
Daniel Ellul, East Ham, London

BARRY: Well that was short and to the point, Daniel and I will certainly help you out as I'm a kind old fellow behind this rough exterior. Unfortunately, I don't have a level select, but this cheat should help you get to the ones you can't quite make it to. When you've finished a level, press Start while your score's being added for extra lives.

That's it from me for another month. Time to go back to my gaming hideaway, far from the cares of the waking world, where I can spend all day plugged in to that little black box.

COMPLETE SOLUTION

STREET FIGHTER II

Last month we brought you the full review of the best beat'em-up ever. Now we have the best guide to the best beat'em-up ever. Our own gaming champion Dave Goodyear clears up all the mysteries surrounding the hit game.

CHARACTERS' SPECIAL MOVES.

E. HONDA

Mistaken too many times for an overweight wrestler, Honda has shown many people the grim reaper at an early age. Achieving the title of 'Yokozuna', Honda believed no one was a match for him. But nobody took him or his respectable sport seriously. Disgusted with their attitude, Honda began pledged to show the world that his sumo wrestling skills cannot be matched.



◀ Honda is a prime example of someone who's denied the laws of physics. He's learnt over the last two gruelling decades to propel himself vertically in a torpedo position, flattening anyone on the receiving end.



◀ Honda has become very adept at delivering a fast volley of hard slaps, highly effective against smaller foes. Try to trap the opposition in a corner with your sumo headbutts then follow up with this to maximise the damage factor.

Using his huge bulk, Edmond can leap high into the air ▶ and come crashing down in bomb-like position. There's not much skill involved in this trick, but it is incredibly beneficial against characters who don't have a decent uppercut.



BLANKA

One hell of a beast from the darkest depths of the Brazilian rain forests. Blanka lives in a placid manner until provoked. Then an unspeakable rage takes control, turning him into a slaving beast able to rip people apart with his razor teeth and powerful limbs.



◀ By some freak of nature, Blanka can electrocute his victims like an electric eel. This isn't an effective way to attack someone as Blanka is immobilised during the operation, but it is one of the best defence mechanisms seen in the art of fighting.

If Zangief is close enough to his opponent he'll try to use ▶ his favourite move, the spinning pile driver. Realising that greater damage can be inflicted by giving a sharp twist during a normal pile driver. Zangief will catch hold of his victim in a vice-like grip and leap into the air before slamming them into the ground. Very hard to use so practice it against a friend first.



◀ By curling himself into a ball, Blanka is able to roll across the screen horizontally or vertically. With this unique move he steams into his foe and bowls them over before leaping on top of them and inflicting multiple bites and kicks.

KEN

Despite their different backgrounds, Ken is nearly exactly the same as Ryu. Though he has been slack in his ways of late, Ken's pure skill and aggression have built his reputation as one of the greatest fighters of all time. The only difference when the computer is controlling him is that he uses dragon punches almost constantly making him fast and deadly.



The dragon punch has also been ▶ mastered by the American.

◀ Ken can summon up a mini tornado of his own as he deploys the hurricane kick with equal grace and speed.

◀ It took some time but he got there. The cyclone punch can also be used by Ryu's alter ego, Ken.



RYU

The ultimate master from the Sheng Long school of Shotokan karate. Years of isolation and determination have built an inhuman killing machine. Ryu has fought nearly every fighter with resounding success, but now he's faced with Bison, the most powerful fighter yet.



Ryu's most outstanding manoeuvre is his dragon punch. By uttering ancient words from the Koga Scrolls, a huge surge of energy rushes around inside him which he can channel into his fist. Ryu then leaps into the air performing a spinning upper cut, and anyone or anything caught within doesn't stand a chance. Only use it when the other character is leaping in to attack.

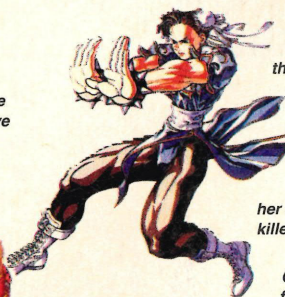
Not content with the usual spin kick, Ryu ▶ set about learning an improved version. The end result was a hurricane kick, a series of spinning kicks performed without touching the ground once. This can only be done by reciting old magic chants and summoning a small whirlwind. Very effective when trapped in the corner by Balrog!



◀ The final and perhaps most devastating trick is the cyclone punch. By expelling unused chi through the palms of his hands, Ryu can create a ball of energy that explodes and robs people of their life force upon contact. Neither Zangief nor Balrog is any match for Ryu when he's continuously hurling fast and slow fireballs.

CHUN LI

Brute strength is replaced by beauty when the only female contestant enters the struggling tournament. She claims to be the strongest woman in the world, but many male competitors have mocked her, saying she could never be a match for them. Chun uses her blinding speed to obliterate any obstacle standing between her and her ultimate mission, to slay the man who killed her father many moons ago, Bison himself.



Chun has a burning desire ▶ for justice and is the quickest in the field of fighters. She has perfected her kicks to a stage where they can't be seen clearly due to their immense speed. Use against any trapped character.



◀ Although not as effective as Ryu's projectile missile, Chun's cyclone is very quick. But Ryu will not take as long to recover from this move so you should only use it when you're some distance away from your enemy.

Ken and Ryu are not the only ones who have mastered ▶ the spinning kicks. Chun too can turn herself upside down and spin like a helicopter across the screen, with each stroke as damaging as any kick or punch of the strongest origin. Like Ryu, Chun should try to use this to escape imprisonment rather than as an offensive move.

ZANGIEF

Because of his fierce passion for his country, the Russian accepts Bison's challenge for a fight. Due to his pastime activity of wrestling with bears, Zangief has developed incredible strength and wrestling techniques. Just think how many people you know who can lift and throw a six hundred pound grizzly bear? That's nearly four whole men!



To help compensate for his lethargic manoeuvres, Zangief will whirl across the floor like a spinning clothes-line unleashing a circle of punches. Zangief has two modes for this, one fairly slow but long lasting and hard to stop, the other nearly impossible to block but only lasting half the time.



GUILE

Trained in an elite marine special forces unit in the USA, Guile is by far the most instinctive killer. Captured during a daring raid in Thailand with his friend Charlie, Guile has learnt many new techniques to dispose of enemies with his bare hands. It was six years before Guile had a chance to return home, but Charlie died during his escape bid. Fuelled by this tragedy, Guile has sworn he will be revenged against his captor, the man they call Bison.

◀ Guile has managed to construct an incredible projectile missile of his own. By simply whipping his hands in an arc he can create a wave of sonic energy. This disorientating missile

leaves many victims helpless for a few moments, allowing Guile to move in for a large variety of maiming combinations. Dead useful against those characters with dangerous projectiles of their own.

Squatting on the ground, Guile will wait for someone to attack ▶ from the air. Then he will somersault into the air with his leg extended and form a vacuum. Anybody caught within this awesome defence system is susceptible to a rather large serving of pain.

◀ Guile is not only a danger on the ground, he's also a master of combat in the air. If a character is near enough to him in mid-air, he'll grab them and bring them straight back down over his knee. A very damaging move sending a jarring sensation travelling through their spine which leaves them as helpless as a new born baby. Remember, it must be performed when two characters jump at the same time from a short distance apart. Superb against the relaxed Dhalsim.

BALROG

Banned from all the conventional boxing rings, Balrog has taken to the streets to pursue his brutal activities.

There's never been a boxer like him. He's unbelievably quick and agile, and as for his mighty strength, it is said that one punch could send the sturdiest into a deep coma. He's merciless to all who oppose him, and has won Bison's evil heart. Often hired as a bit muscle for Bison's organization, Balrog is one man to be taken very seriously during a fight.

Once battle commences, Balrog will charge ▶ forward and throw his hardest straight punch. This punch has been known to demolish small houses and stop juggernauts. So just imagine what it could do to a frail human

◀ If Balrog believes that an enemy will try to attack from above, he'll start running towards them as if he's about to use his super punch. But instead he'll throw his mighty fist into the air and attempt to bring them back down with earth shattering force.

Balrog's favourite finishing move is the head ▶ butt. Moving in close to a character, he'll try to grab them by the scruff of the neck and lift them aloft to his own height. From here he'll repeatedly smash his forehead into their face causing much distress to the chosen victim. Not to be used against people like Bison though.

SAGAT

After his embarrassing defeat from the hands of Ryu, Sagat has become hellbent on revenge.

Spending the following years training constantly and intensely, Sagat has improved his immense skills and honed them to perfection. Perfectly capable of killing any man if he so wished. It is rumoured he's working with Bison to become the world's best again. But can Sagat really trust such a man?

Although a little slower, ▶ Sagat's version of the dragon punch, the tiger fire, is just as devastatingly unstoppable. Like Ryu, Sagat will only use this to stop any aerial attacks.

◀ Kneeling on the ground and focusing his mind, Sagat can dish out a large hemisphere of pure heat. This wide arc of fire will fly towards the designated victim and unless they have some form of defence, it will char them to death.

Exactly the same as the other tiger fire but this time higher in ▶ the air. Very useful when fighting against taller characters.

DHALSIM

A strange combatant trained in the mystic art of yoga, Dhalsim holds a vast knowledge of illusions and fantastic skills. He can alter his body weight and size at will and in a split second, so is quite deadly to the unwary. Although his strength is almost non-existent compared to others, his specialist skills are enough to make him more than a match for anyone. Nobody's clear on why Dhalsim has entered the tournament. Many speculate that he's just trying to spread the word of yoga. Cool and passive, Dhalsim will not hurt anyone more than he has to.

◀ Building a huge energy resource inside his lungs, Dhalsim can breathe great balls of fire that will travel towards his enemy with an incredible searing heat. This can be performed as quickly as Ryu's fireballs, so it's a useful way of making other characters rush into rash decisions. Try to remember that if a character does try to jump over your fireball, bring them back down with a hard kick.

Similar technique to the fireball. Dhalsim can spew forth a wall of ▶ flame as intense as hell's fire itself. This is a supreme way of keeping enemies and other projectile missiles at bay. It takes some practice to master this defence system but it's definitely worth persevering.

◀ Not content with his many skills, Dhalsim explores the impossible - teleporting. It took some time but somehow he's learnt how to transport his entire body and mind into the future or past. This often catches many fighters off guard allowing Dhalsim to use his yoga nudge punches. They are difficult to perform, if not the hardest move of all the characters, but are certainly the most rewarding. The only drawback is that he's momentarily caught off guard as he reappears.

VEGA

Trained in ninjitsu, the art of invisibility, Vega has become one hell of a fighter. He's amazingly quick and accurate with blows that dazzle his victims. Leaving this deadly martial art, he began to pursue his career in cafe dancing and became a fully fledged matador. Until recently, he had been keeping his talent a secret. But he was approached by Bison offering to pay him for his services in assassinating certain people he wanted removing and being of a callous nature, Vega instantly agreed. Through his successful dancing career Vega has become incredibly supple and dexterous. His speed is unsurpassed only to be challenged by the swift Chun Li.

Vega will climb up anything he can, including the scenery. Once ▶ high enough, he'll launch himself into a diving position with his fist and claw extended. This process is over and done with in a couple of seconds, leaving his enemy stunned. You can improve on this move if you're quick with the controls. By pushing down on the pad and pressing the hard punch button, Vega is able to grasp hold of his enemy and move them into an easy back breaker position.

◀ Another of his startling manoeuvres is the famous claw roll. Rolling across the arena, Vega will deliver multiple attacks before a final thrust with his claw-like weapon. A good way of shredding people fast if they're close enough, this damaging attack combination is best used straight after a sliding kick when they're just beginning to recover.

Using a similar technique to Guile, Vega can nimbly lift ▶ his enemy into the air, over his back and grind them into the ground. This is aptly named the back breaker. Before the unfortunate victim can recover, Vega will often follow up with a thrust of his mighty weapon. Read into that remark what you will. My meaning is strictly technical.

BISON

The ultimate fighter, and certainly the most ruthless.

Little is known about his origin and his fighting style is an even bigger mystery. His perception levels are perhaps the most intriguing - he seems to know exactly what you're about to do next. This in itself makes him nearly impossible to defeat and even if you can deal with this you'll still face his overwhelming fighting technique.

If a character gets too near Bison, he'll flip forwards with ▶ his legs outstretched and the double blow from his steel plated boots will send the receiver into a daze.

◀ Using his highly developed mind powers, Bison will fly horizontally across the screen covered in a psychic aura. Anyone unfortunate enough to touch these strange flames will instantly be turned to fire when the raging inferno engulfs them.

With his cat-like reflexes, Bison can jump into the air and across ▶ the arena in a split second. And he can land on the opposition's head and deliver a very solid head stomp followed by a quick aerial flip and end with a flying punch.

◀ Right, that just about covers everything for each character in question. Turn to the next couple of pages to see all of the character endings and their ultimate tactics throughout the entire course of the game. Do exactly what our friend Bison is saying here and that's "Get outta here!". Or be prepared to meet thy maker.

STREET FIGHTER II

RYU

Ryu's best at a distance from his opponent. From there you should concentrate on launching multiple cyclone punches. This will wear down the enemy somewhat, even if they manage to block them. If they jump in too close, try to use the dragon punch to send them reeling back across the screen. Keep repeating for all characters.



▲ Ryu wins the fight against the mighty Bison, but this glorious victory means nothing to him.



▲ Leaving the celebrations, Ryu heads off to find a new challenge. He'll never rest since the fight means everything to him and now he must go and find the next.



▲ Taking time out, Ryu poses on the podium to prove that he's number one. Well that's the general consensus around our offices. What do you mean you disagree? Who wrote this guide, me or you? I know best, so stick that in your pipe and smoke it.



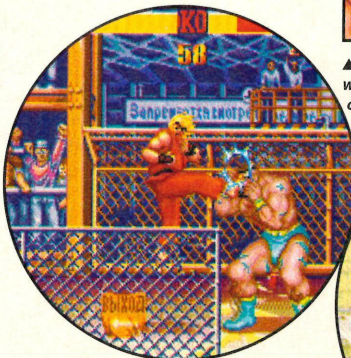
Ryu gives Blanka a jolly good ► hammering around the ring. But hold on, isn't that a press photographer in the scenery. Get him out of here!

KEN

Not a lot to say really as he's exactly the same as Ryu except for when the computer is controlling him.



▲ Well, unlike Ryu, Ken decides to marry the babe he's been seeing down on the sea front for the last couple of years.



CHUN LI

Try not to rely on the fireball unless you're bloody good at it. Make good use of her exceptional speed by leaping towards any character but landing short in case they use an uppercut. If they're fooled into an uppercut, rush forward and use the hard punch to throw them. If they ever try to go in for an all out attack, try to use your kicks and leaps to avoid any of their blows. Never use the lightning kick unless you're trapped in the corner.



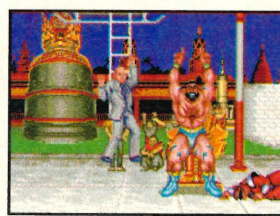
▲ Chun visits her father's grave. She's finally managed to avenge her father's killer, so now can he finally rest in eternal peace.



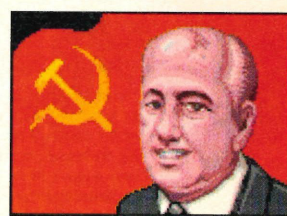
▲ Having paid her respects, Chun returns to her normal lifestyle and becomes the most attractive sprite in computer history.

ZANGIEF

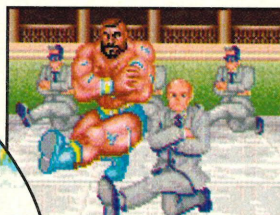
If you can get Zangief close to any character for a long time, you'll win on grappling technique alone. But that's not always easy in this game and if anybody tries to pin you down with a barrage of fireballs, use the spinning clothes line and they will pass right through you. Just stick to the hard punches and kicks and you'll do fine.



▲ As the crowds fall silent a distant chopper can be heard. And as the aircraft hovers over the arena, a recognisable ex-president can be seen leaving.



▲ The distinguished gentlemen speaks: "Zangief, you've made your country proud. Only Vodka and silly voices can conquer all".



▲ The celebrations come to an end as the two Russians perform the Cossack dance to the bemused crowds. Such fun.



HONDA

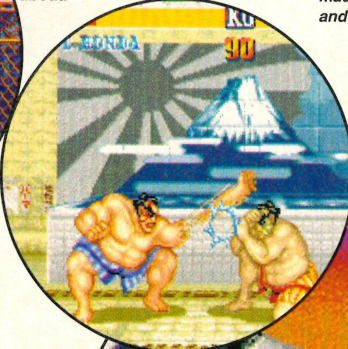
Make use of the torpedo when fighting characters with no projectiles of their own. Once you've got them pinned then in enough, jump in with the sumo smash followed by the hundred hand slap. If you're up against someone who does projectiles, let them come to you instead. Once they're close enough, let them have it with the hands.



▲ Honda proves to the eyes of the world that sumo wrestling is a serious sport by slapping his students about.



▲ Above all, Eddie enjoys a filling bowl of rice. He insists that only his level of achievement can only be made possible by non-stop training and eating!

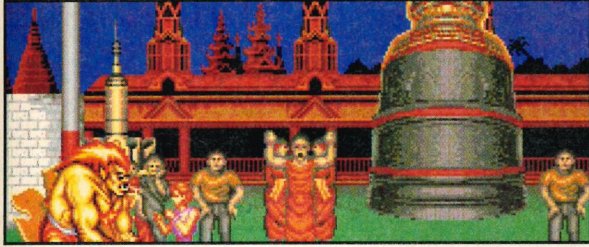


▼ Chun Li demonstrates the impossible by flying across the American airfield upside down whilst spinning with her legs apart in a perfect splits!

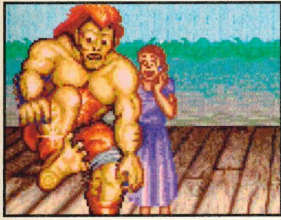


BLANKA

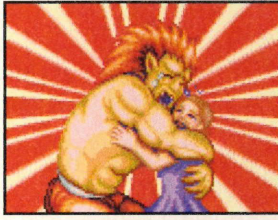
Only use the rolling attack if the opponent cannot use fireballs or likewise. If they get too near on the ground, use your lunging punch to stop them in their tracks. If at any time somebody attacks from the air, use your electricity to give them a real shock ('scuse the pun). If you've managed to pin them in a corner try to use your bite manoeuvre.



▲ As the final fight ends a woman is spotted running towards the green-skinned giant. Blanka just stands there and grunts.



▲ The woman points to the bracelets on his ankles and says her son had a pair just like them, but was lost in a plane crash above Brazil.



▲ A touching reunion as they both begin to realize that they are mother and son. But who the hell was its father?



BISON

If the flaming torpedoes have been timed correctly from the start, then you should be able to beat every character, every time. If you're in difficulty, use the flying jump and head stop to escape. Also try to remember that no one can match you on throwing when two characters are close together. The scissor kick shouldn't really be used as it takes too long to charge up.



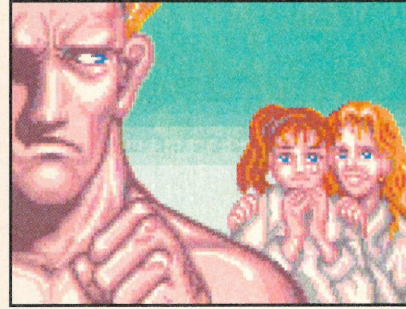
Bison thanks you and laughs as his armies move on to conquer the rest of the world. Nobody can stop his ruthless organization, not unless Ryu and the others gang up. Now that would be good for a sequel! Hold on, there is sequel isn't there? Yeah that's right, it's already over here. Super Street Fighter II Turbo Edition 'The new challengers'. It's got new characters, more moves and infinitely better graphics, so get down to any major arcade and check it.

GUILE

Plenty of flash kicks and sonic booms should be used with this character. Either move can be charged up the same way by holding down and away on the joystick. Keep using those sonic booms until they get in close, then immediately use the flash kick to send them back. If they ever get dazed, after that torrent of sonics and flashes, use the back breaker move to double the damage. Make sure you're in close enough for this move, though.



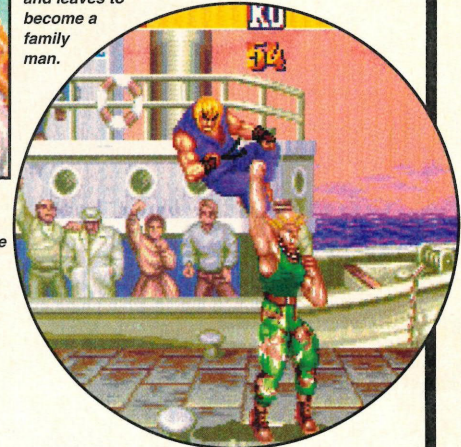
◀ Bison has been defeated. The spectators hush each other as Guile moves in for the kill. As he lifts the mangled body of Bison, he says: "Bison, remember me and Charlie?" A startled look can be seen on Bison's face as he replies: "I had not expected to see you again. Go on then, kill me!". As Guile raises his fist he's stopped by the sound of a familiar voice.



◀ Recognising the voice, Guile is most surprised to see his wife and child. Eventually he's talked out of killing Bison and leaves to become a family man.



◀ Leaving his troubles behind, Guile starts to recreate his normal life.



DHALSIM

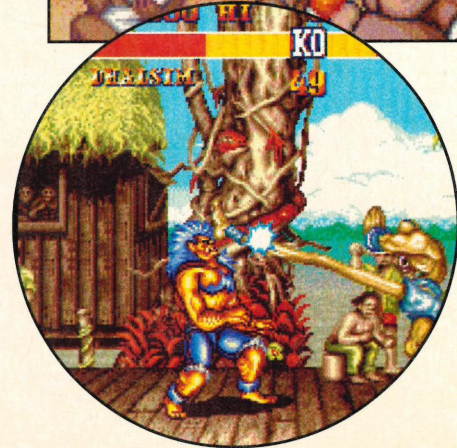
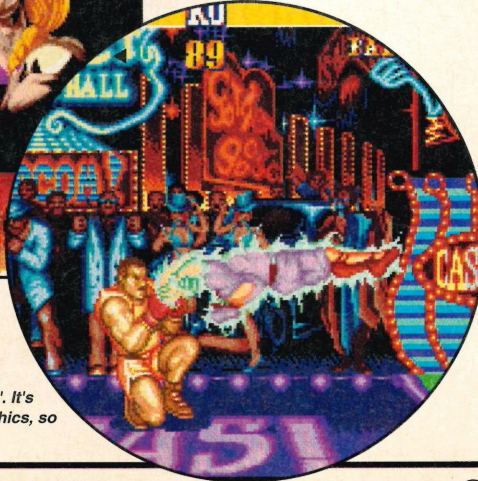
Use the Yoga fireballs to keep all enemies away and if they jump in close, use a hard kick to stop them advancing. In this unlikely event, start tapping your medium punch button to use the yoga rugie. Don't use the teleport unless you're of god-like capabilities.



◀ Pondering on his victory, Dhalsim takes an elephant ride home. As his thoughts come and go, he realizes that he hasn't been home for over three years! He only went out for a packet of rice.



As he relaxes in the wooden hut with a bowl of rice, his son quizzes him: "Who's that in the picture dad?" Dhalsim explains that was him in a former life! What a liar.





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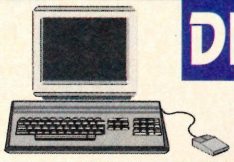
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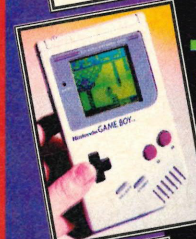
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Mega Workshop

Beat 'em -ups

■ Slap your way into this month's head-to-head as we once again bring forth another fine compilation of games. With *Streetfighter II* on everyone's list for Christmas, we thought it might be useful to have a look at the most popular game format in console history. The Disney games workshop will be carried over for another month. We really test the cream of fighting games here also delve to the bottom of the barrel. So who will win the contest and be crowned ultimate fighting cart. Will it be that digitised frenzy, *Mortal Kombat*? Or will it be that glorious techni-colour dream, *Street Fighter II CE Turbo*?

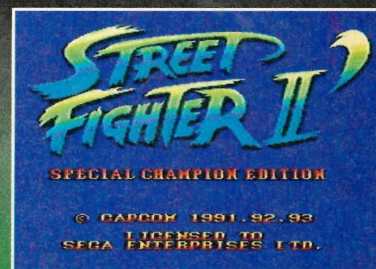
Streetfighter II Turbo

Capcom £64.99

94 %

Capcom's super smash hit. With over 144 fight combinations and special moves by the bucket load this game has it all. 12 characters to master and bonus stages to conquer. Six button joystick needed but well worth the investment.

Quick to play, a life time to master. *SF II* has captured everybody's imagination with its unique gameplay. Brilliant stuff.



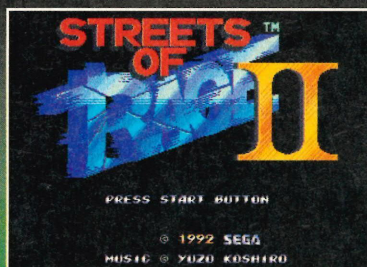
Streets of Rage 2

Sega £39.99

84 %

Scrolling beat 'em-up that's in the same class as *Final Fight*. Run continuously right and smash up objects as you go. Defeat hordes of evil villains as you try to rescue your friends. Nice presentation, but clichéd storyline.

Slick game that was once the Mega Drive's finest. Later toppled by the technical *SF II* and gorgeous *Mortal Kombat*.



Fighting Masters

Treco £19.99

66 %

Aliens congregate around various arenas to battle it out for kicks. But that's about it - there doesn't seem to be much of an ultimate goal, so the fighting is everything in this particular beat 'em-up. Things have improved a lot since this.

Shbrbrbrpp (raspberry sound, that). Don't bother. It's old, it's geekish and I wouldn't touch it with yours. Avoid alert.



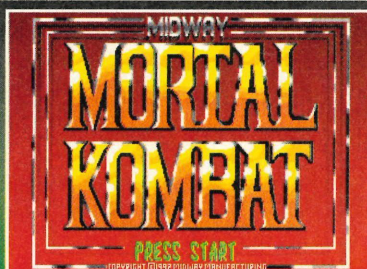
Mortal Kombat

Acclaim £49.99

90 %

Take part in Shang Tsung's notorious tournament and risk life and limb as you battle it out with eight other characters to be crowned the world's best fighter. Tough and intense, with controversial violent sections, you'll be playing for ages.

Plenty of chilled fun to be had here though having the main character and every other friend to be freed called Spot does cloud the issue somewhat.



Pit Fighter

Tengen £19.99

49 %

Arcade conversion that had shown promise. Participate in an illegal underground fighting extravaganza using a wrestler, kung fu expert or another martial art master. And if you're clever, you may defeat the legendary masked warrior.

Like *Mortal Kombat* it uses digitised graphics of real people as the main sprites. Despite this, the graphics are as convincing as the Maastricht treaty.



MINI LEAGUE MINI LEAGUE MINI LEAGUE

	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RRP
1	Streetfighter II	Capcom	£ 64.99
2	Mortal Kombat	Acclaim	£ 49.99
3	Streets of Rage 2	Sega	£ 39.99
4	Pit Fighter	Tengen	£ 19.99
5	Fatal Fury	Sega	£ 39.99
6	Double Dragon	Accolade	£ 29.99
7	Street of Rage	Sega	N/A
8	Fighting Masters	Treco	£ 19.99

Mega shootout

Versus:

Pit

SF II

Rage 2

Mortal

Masters

Masters

Pit runs more smoothly and the graphics are more pleasing to watch. The fighting seems more realistic with more moves available. But if you want to be a strange alien and use even stranger powers then take a glimpse at *Fighting Masters*.

Not much of a contest here. Although both games have some pretty strange characters, *Streetfighter's* players seem to be more realistic. And *SF II* stands head and shoulders above *Fighting Masters* when it comes to gameplay.

Fighting Masters is more your typical one-on-one fighting game, but *Streets of Rage 2* is a lot easier to get into in fact, maybe too easy to play. But you will be kept busy trying to complete *Rage 2*, whereas *Fighting Masters* will wear off soon.

The fighting arenas are visually more impressive on *Mortal Kombat*. The backdrops on *Fighting Masters* don't change too much, but at least it's a colourful game. *Mortal* plays much faster with great moves to blow your mind. Get gory guys.

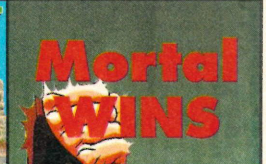


Mortal

This is the battle of the digitised fighters. The sprites are larger on *Mortal Kombat* and are capable of a wider selection of moves, at greater speeds. *Pit Fighter* looked good when first released, but it fades away when compared to the *Mortal* guys.

This one is a toughy. Both have had recent releases, so the latest technology has been used to create these two fine beat 'em-ups. Both should go down in the history books of gaming, but *Street Fighter II* would probably take top marks.

Mortal Kombat plays alot faster than *Streets of Rage 2*, and it's twice as hard. This makes *Mortal* pretty addictive and you'll keep coming back to this one until you take on Goro. M.K. runs much smoother so the fighting moves seem more realistic.



Rage 2

Unlike every other fighting game included here, *Streets of Rage 2* is the only game that scrolls during the play. It does add to the action if you want a little extra included in the gameplay and it suits *Streets of Rage 2*, making this the likely winner.

The first *Streets of Rage* game made quite a name for itself in its time, and the sequel caused a bit of a stir too. But now as *Streetfighter* is just about to flood the market, quality games of the past will be locked away in the games cupboard for ever.

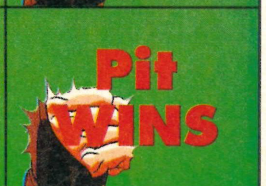
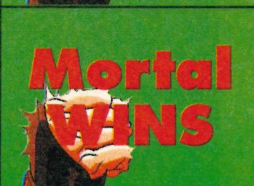
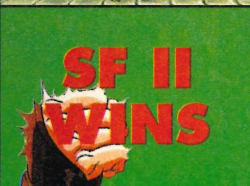


SF II

The *Streetfighter* characters are much larger on screen than the sprites on *Pitfighter*. *SF II* offers a greater variety of moves which all look more impressive and have more devastating effects. Both looked great in the arcades, but *SF II* takes it here.



Pit



Under the table

Pit

SF II

Rage 2

Mortal

Masters

Control

The joystick gives you reasonable control over the digitised figures who all respond fairly well to the run of the mill combat moves as well as the combination moves. They can also jump, duck and pick up objects.

Great control over all the characters, but to experience the full effect of the moves available, you'll require a six button joystick. It's worth learning all the movement controls first, so you can put up a better fight.

Move left, right, up and down throughout the screen. Kill the bad guys and move along the level as it automatically scrolls onwards. The whole thing could have done with being speeded up, for better playability.

Watch in amazement as the characters leap around as if they were real. Looks good, especially as the players react quickly to the controls. Jump and spin around the whole screen. The action is really fast paced.

Up, down, jump around. All the usual controls here with nothing special added. The characters are relatively slow to respond to the controls and sometimes it's as though you're not even controlling them. Strange.

Specials

Each of the characters can perform three different Super Moves, all of which depend on the varying abilities they possess. To aid the fighters in their challenge there are several types of weapon to pick up.

Loads of moves to be used here, real stunners that will have you picking your jaw up off the floor, and will leave your opponent dazed. All the spesh moves are executed at the speed of light. Nothing slow about this game.

Use your super strong muscles to fight off the baddies. No secret powers here, just brute force and the will to win. Collect knives and long metal piping to inflict more damage when taking on all the gangsters.

Engage the password for the gore mode and you'll be shocked. As well as each player having separate special moves they also have an individual death move for finishing off an opponent. Great fun.

Some powerful moves can be executed in this game, but what the combinations are for them I'm not sure. The players seemed to do some of the special moves on their own, as if it was watching a demo.

Scenery

There are seven different fighting areas, all set in the illegal underworld of pit fighting. Watch your back as the circle of onlookers can sometimes get hostile and attack a fighter for no apparent reason.

Travel around the world and kill people. That's the general idea behind this one. Visit seven locations to compete in the fights. The detailed backgrounds are really colourful and bright, so you won't get bored of this one.

Start off taking on the hordes of henchmen in the downtown streets somewhere in America. Progress through bars, amusement parks and even jungles to locate Adam. How you get from bars to jungles is beyond me.

The backdrops suit the game. Your fights can take place on courtyards or in front of the mystical wizard, Shang Tsung. The combat continues down in the pit where you impale your opponent on spikes. How nice!

All the backgrounds on *Fighting Masters* look colourful, maybe a bit too colourful. They seem to lack any kind of detail and there isn't much variety, so you'll get bored of seeing the same old scenes again and again.

Players

Choose between three mean looking guys who all fight using alternative tactics. Each player has varying abilities in speed, power and pure, brute strength. But to be honest, they don't really vary that much.

With more players than the SNES version, this offers 12 well hard characters to choose between. You'll be spoilt for choice as all are well animated and use completely different fighting styles.

You have the option of playing any one of Adams friends. Some of them are pretty big guys and rely on their super strength, while others are small but fast, like Skates who nips about on his roller skates.

Good selection of tough characters, who all fight in similar styles unless they are using their special moves. The graphics on the fighters look very realistic, as the actions have been copied from real fight moves.

12 really wacky looking aliens to select your player from. They all have varying capabilities when it comes to power, so common sense tells you to choose the strongest alien, then you will have this game sussed.

Object

Fight your way through the rounds to win cash prizes and gain bonuses for being excessively brutal. It's a cruel world, isn't it? Take on each opponent several times before coming up against the Masked Warrior!

Use your fighting skills to defeat all of the other competitors, including Sagat and the other bosses working for Bison. Don't expect to complete this on your first go, as it is a toughy. It's expensive, but worth it!

Set out on your mission to rescue your chum Adam. He's being held captive by the evil Mr. X. Search through the levels killing all the gangs of henchmen that can be found lurking in the shadows ready to take you down.

Challenge the contenders and hopefully win all the matches on your way up to the top of the tournament. That's when you will face the 500 year champion, the mighty Goro, and finally Shang Tsung himself.

Wipe out all the other aliens in a series of one on one matches. Apart from this, there doesn't seem to be any kind of plot to it. It's just a poor excuse for a different kind of beat 'em-up that doesn't really hit the mark.

NEXT MONTH

1994

That was the year that was. When you open the pages of our next issue then it will be 1994. The year of the Winter Olympics and the year of the World Cup in America. As for the real world, what will the software developers have in mind for us? Games already on the Mega Drive are receiving a status and revenue only dreamed of by the pioneering developers those many moons ago. Mega Action as always, will be there for you in every gaming respect and who knows, maybe this time next year we will all be a lot wiser about the world of the home virtual reality user and what exactly Sega have been developing in this field. And will 32 Bit wonder machines ever truly replace our beloved Mega Drives and Mega CDs? Only time will tell and, as ever, only Mega Action will reveal all there is to know.

Next month we look at *Eternal Champions*, has it the *Streetfighter* in it? And *Pink Panther*, the star of this issue, is reviewed along with *Aero the Acrobat* and a few other surprises.



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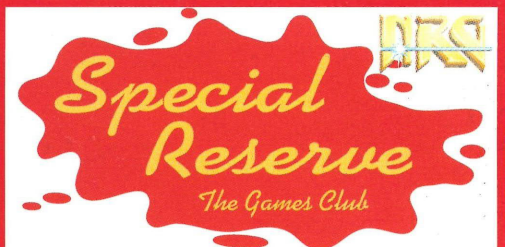
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