THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Dreamcast

Dreamcast

ISSUE 06 APRIL 2000 £4.99

www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

INCLUDES EXCLUSIVE DREAMCAST DEMO DISC

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

TOMB RAIDER THE LAST REVELATION

THE FIRST REVIEW

REVIEWED

SOUL REAVER
A MONSTER ADVENTURE!

ZOMBIE REVENGE
IT'S UNDEAD GOOD!

RAYMAN 2
HE'S BOUNCED BACK!

IF YOUR COVERMOUNT IS MISSING PLEASE CONSULT YOUR NEWSAGENT

HOW TO...
WIN AT *VIRTUA STRIKER 2*
COMPLETE *RESIDENT EVIL 2*
FIND WHAT YOU WANT ON THE NET
GET A JOB IN THE GAMES INDUSTRY

ISSUE #6 £4.99 (OVERSEAS £5.99)

9 771467 626003 04

Dreamcast APRIL 2000

THE LARA CROFT ISSUE

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION - WORLD EXCLUSIVE • REVIEWS: *RAYMAN 2, ZOMBIE REVENGE, WILD METAL, SOUL REAVER* • PREVIEWS: *ECCO, V-RALLY 2*

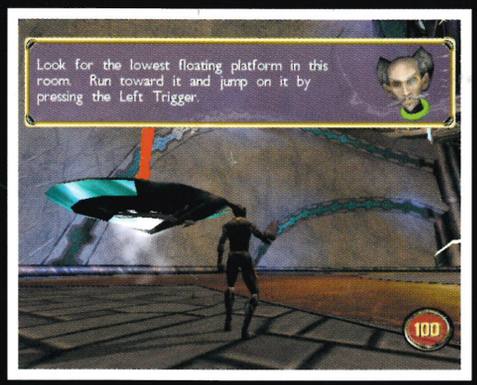
ON THIS MONTH'S COVER DISC

THREE AWESOME EXCLUSIVE DEMOS!

MDK 2

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

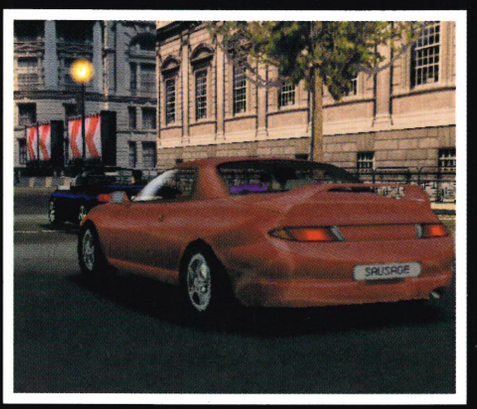
MDK was one of the strangest third-person action adventure games ever, but the sequel is shaping up to be a hot title when it's released later this year. In this demo you get to try three of *MDK 2*'s training levels. You're taught the unique controls for the game's three playable characters: Kurt, Max and Dr Hawkins.



SLAVE ZERO

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

If stomping around a futuristic city in the guise of an enormous robot is your thing, then you're probably looking forward to *Slave Zero*. This demo gives you the chance to play through one level of the game and get used to its control system. The full game is pretty difficult, so you'd better get in plenty of shooting practice.



METROPOLIS STREET RACER

EXCLUSIVE ROLLING DEMO

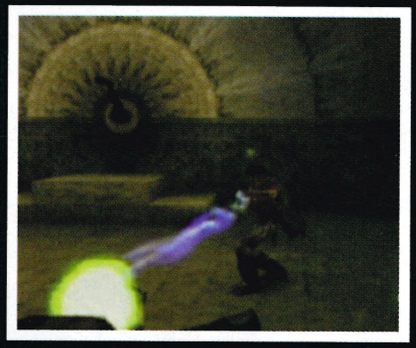
We've been going on about *MSR* for months, now here's your chance to see what all the fuss is about. This rolling demo takes you through one of the London tracks, so one or two landmarks should be familiar to many of you. This is actually a real-time demo, so it will be different each time you run it.

FAULTY COVERDISC?

If your demo disc is damaged or faulty and you're a subscriber, please return it to *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, CD Replacement, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ, UK. We will endeavour to replace it as soon as possible. If you're not a subscriber, please request a replacement from your point of purchase.

NESTLING ON THE COVER OF THIS COPY OF *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* IS THE LATEST INSTALMENT OF DREAM ON. WHAT DO YOU GET? READ ON...

△ *TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION*



△ *LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER*

SIX EXCLUSIVE DREAMCAST MOVIES

This issue, we've got six movies for your delectation, including a trailer for *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*. It doesn't give away much about the game, but happily you can turn to page 8 for our world exclusive review.

Then there's *Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver* (reviewed on page 80), Eidos's chilling 3D adventure that combines absorbing platform action with a creepily gothic atmosphere.

4 Wheel Thunder is the hotly anticipated racing game from French developers Kalisto which we previewed a couple of issues ago. Watch out for a review next month (May issue, *ODM* #7, on sale Thursday April 6).

Wild Metal (reviewed on page 84) is a 3D tank game that sends you on a mission to save humankind from evil machines that have taken over the world. Something like that, anyway.

Deep Fighter is Ubi Soft's upcoming aquatic sub game, which is shaping up to be an intriguing blend of strategy and trigger-happy shoot 'em up action. We'll be previewing the game next issue.

Finally there's another Ubi Soft title, *Heroes Of Might And Magic III*, a role-playing game with elements of war and resource management. The movie will whet your appetite if you're into swords and sorcery.

△ *4 WHEEL THUNDER*

△ *WILD METAL*

△ *HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III*

△ *DEEP FIGHTER*

09.03.2000

IT'S GETTING BETTER, MAN

MARCH ALREADY? I still can't even get used to the fact it's the year 2000. But, hey, spring is on its way and the Easter holidays aren't too far off. Oh yeah, and it's the end of the financial year. And you know what that means? Yes, people, it means games, games and more games!

If we're honest, there was a bit of a lull in first-rate releases after Christmas, but thankfully that little quiet patch is now well and truly behind us. *Crazy Taxi* (*ODM* #5, 9/10) and *NBA 2K* (*ODM* #5, 8/10) are now available in stores (er, except where they've sold out) and, as the reviews in this issue prove, there's plenty more quality where they came from.

For starters (and this probably won't have escaped your attention) we've got a review – indeed, a genuine *world exclusive* review – of *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* (see page 8). If you've never had the pleasure of fooling around with Ms Croft, there's never been a better time to get stuck in. She'll keep you up all night, as the adverts probably say.

For those of you who feel Lara's charms are a little over-familiar, there's a darker, moodier alternative for action-adventure fans with *Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver* (page 80). Even better though is the absolutely gorgeous *Rayman 2* (page 70) – the limbless Gaelic hero and his cartoon chums have won over even the most hard-nosed blokes in our office. Oh, and *Zombie Revenge* (page 76) ain't too ropy either!

You'll notice, however, that none of these fine games have been awarded more than eight out of ten. Given that we've already gained a reputation for being 'harsh' with our marks (we actually prefer the word 'fair'), it's probably a good time to draw your attention to our ratings system (which is explained on page 69), and in particular to the fact that only *essential* purchases get a nine or a ten.

Ultimately our aim is to keep things in perspective. While a truly special game will always receive a high score in *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, there's really no point in giving 'must-buy' status to, say, three or four games every month when the typical gamer buys six to ten games during a whole year.

Also, as much as we like many of the titles reviewed in this issue, we've been fortunate enough to see a handful of stunning games due just around the corner (some of which are covered in this month's preview pages) – games which prove what the Dreamcast is *really* capable of.

There are some great Dreamcast games in this issue but, trust me, the best are still to come.

Take it easy,

Warren Chrismas, Acting Editor

PS: DON'T MISS THE NEXT ISSUE OF *ODM*, ON SALE THURSDAY 6 APRIL

SOULFIGHTER
魂
TM
T.C.N.
piggyback
MINDSCAPE
ENTERTAINMENT
M.MOLYNEUX 1996
Multimedia Inc., and its affiliates and licensors. and ©TOKA S.a.r.l. 1999. Under license from Mindscape. Interactive Unified. All rights reserved. Mindscape is a trademark of T.L.C. Multimedia Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective

This image is composed from less than 1% of the gameplay in Soul Fighter.™ Heaven only knows what the other 99% is like.
Free-roaming, next generation Soul Fighter.™ Conceived for Dreamcast.™ Destined for greatness.

CONTENTS

ISSUE SIX • APRIL 2000

△ *Sega GT*: sexy motors. Page 58.

△ *Rayman 2*: we used to hate him, but now we love him. Why? See page 70.

PREVIEWS

50 V-RALLY 2: MILLENNIUM EDITION
Infogrames take on Sega at their own game with this low-down and dirty four-player rally racer

54 ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE
Everyone's second-favourite dolphin (after Flipper) makes his long-overdue return to a Sega console. And this time it's war!

△ *V-Rally 2: Millennium Edition*: Pics, info, and a chat with ex-rally champ Ari Vatanen. Page 50.

58 SEGA GT
The car enthusiast's dream has been released in Japan. See how it shapes up

60 RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA
The latest and greatest in the survival horror series is coming for you and your Dreamcast. Don't even bother trying to hide

61 TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING
The boarding legend could soon become a DC gaming legend if this turns out to be as good as we expect

62 THE NOMAD SOUL
Eternal life, with music by David Bowie?

63 DRAGONS BLOOD
Olde worlde fantasy action adventure coming to a Dreemcafte near thee soone. Swords and beards guaranteed

64 SWORD OF THE BERSERK: GUTS' RAGE
A man with an enormous sword and a big problem with anything and everything that moves leads to some excessive bloodletting

65 STREET FIGHTER III: DOUBLE IMPACT
Parts 11 and 12 (we think) of the *Street Fighter* series on one Dreamcast disc

△ *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*: Page 61.

REVIEWS

8 TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION
Her Royal Highness Queen Lara of Games has finally chosen to grace Dreamcast with her divine presence. Should you care?

70 RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE
Everyone around here used to hate Rayman. But now, thanks to this ace new game, we think he's a cool bloke

76 ZOMBIE REVENGE
The wandering corpse-mutilating arcade game has made it to Dreamcast, with a number of enticing goodies added especially for you

80 LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER
More undead action, only this time around it's you who's already done the dying

84 WILD METAL
Tactical tank warfare in a future where all interesting scenery has been destroyed in a nuclear holocaust

▷ *Resident Evil Code: Veronica:* a first proper look at the survival horror masterpiece. Page 60.

△ *Ecco The Dolphin: Defender Of The Future*: underwater love. Page 54.

FEATURES

44 TALENT
We talk to the boss of Europe's biggest game publishers, plus the winner of Sega Europe's first online challenge

88 DRINKING AND THINKING
Our reviewers spend their hard-earned cash down a boozer, and talk games, games, games! Doh!

92 JOBS IN THE INDUSTRY
Wondering how to break into the games biz? Well here's how! Part one in the series covers games testers

VIBE

98 VOX POPS
Ecco The Dolphin is coming soon, but how's it shaping up? We ask a bunch of people in our office reception!

100 PEOPLE
A psychiatrist who likes violent games; a peeved Aussie DC owner; and, um, a bloke who programmes calculators!

104 HOW TO... GET THE BEST OUT OF SEARCH ENGINES
Save time and money by learning how to find exactly what you want on the Net

108 VIRTUA STRIKER 2 PLAYER'S GUIDE
How to score – and more! – in Sega's controversial arcade conversion

112 RESIDENT EVIL 2 PLAYER'S GUIDE
Everything you need to get through Capcom's ace survival horror, including detailed maps

116 IN THE HOT SEAT
Kenji Kanno, of the legendary Sega division AM3, answers all your questions on *Crazy Taxi*

118 SEGA Q&A
Your chance to put questions directly to Sega Europe... and get answers!

119 CHATBACK
You've heard what we think of Dreamcast games, but what do *you* think? Answers here

120 TIPS Q&A
Stuck somewhere in a game? Write in and we'll do our best to help

121 CHEATS
Really stuck in a game? Then cheat!

122 GROUP THERAPY
This month's big debate: is games advertising – good or bad?

126 DIRECTORY
A complete round-up of every single Dreamcast game reviewed in *Official Dreamcast Magazine*

130 END GAME
The House of the Dead goes up for sale. But don't phone, it's just for fun

REGULARS

26 UPFRONT
All the latest Dreamcast happenings, including news on *Half-Life*, *Black & White* and *Star Wars Episode I: Racer*

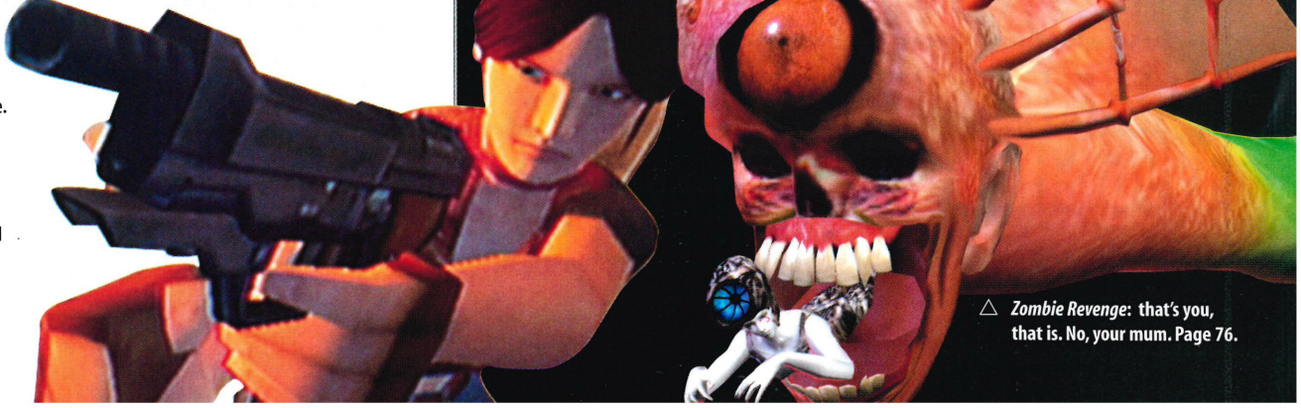
38 CHARTS
See what's hot in HMV and save £5 off any full-price Dreamcast game!

41 BACK ISSUES
Your chance to catch up with any issues of *ODM* that you've missed

42 GADGETS
The latest in gadgets and gizmos

48 MAILBOX
Your views on Dreamcast and your favourite magazine (meaning this one)

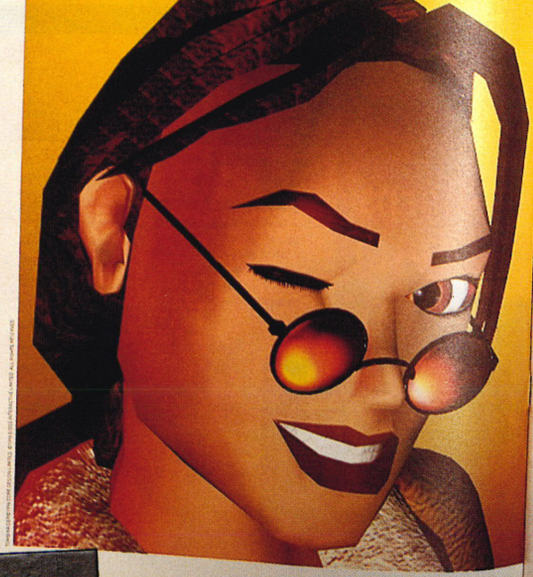
68 SUBSCRIBE
Guarantee delivery of *ODM* each month *and* save yourself some dosh



△ *Zombie Revenge*: that's you, that is. No, your mum. Page 76.

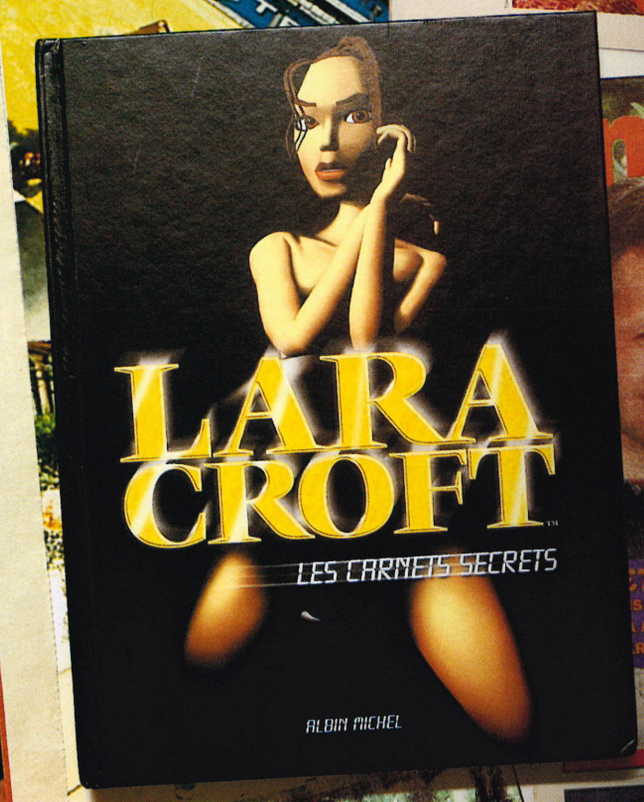
FREE MASSIVE POSTER
FEATURING ALL 100 COVERS
WIN ENTER OUR £10,000
CRAZY STICKER CHALLENGE
LARA CROFT
100
COVERS
AMAZE YOUR FRIENDS
1960
1970
Sex Pistols
INCLUDES EXCLUSIVE DREAMCAST DEMO DISC
A LIFE IN THE DAY OF LARA CROFT
REVIEWED
SOUL REAVER
A MONSTER ADVENTURE!
ZOMBIE REVENGE
IT'S UNDEAD GOOD!
RAYMAN 2
HE'S BOUNCED BACK!
HOW TO...
LARA CROFT
female icon
WIN A PLAYSTATION!
IT'S NOT VERY PC... BUT WE JUST HAD T
Page 3 battle of
-babes
this life
gillian anderson
melinda messenger
primal scream
LARA CROFT
BIGGER THAN
PAMMY, WISER
THAN YODA
Celebrity women. In their delicates
WORLD OF STUPID
True life exploits of the hopelessly dim
PLUS!
Tragedy on Everest, stacks of fashion, the air guitar championships, home cinema gear, sand surfing, and what to do if you fancy your sister
Weird sports!
Puzzles
Prizes!!
Cool stuff to buy
GIRL POWER!
MEET LARA CROFT
TOMB RAIDER'S
CYBER-BABE
DOCTOR JENNY
ona Mitra...
AWESOME!
mb Raider's game girl in the flesh
MICHAEL HUTCHENCE R.I.P.
Melody Maker
November 29 1997 90p
COME ON!
THE VERVE
BLUR
TOMB RAIDER
Lara
Lara Croft and the
SINCE LARA CROFT
MADE HER VERY FIRST APPEARANCE ON THE SEGA SATURN IN
1996 SHE'S BECOME A GLOBAL PHENOMENON
LARA CROFT
Magazin
Love at first byte!
LARA CROFT

1980
1990
Lara Croft by Jeremy Heath-Smith, 1996
Jeremy Heath-Smith's introduction of a seriously sexy babe into the world of computer games probably did more than anything to change their image and enhance their popularity. Screens which had hitherto been occupied by growling males were suddenly treated to the flash of Lara Croft's knickers and her unfeasibly buxom figure when Tomb Raider was launched in 1996. Heath-Smith, who had sold the game to Eidos that year for virtually nothing, was awarded £3.7m in June 99 by the games company after Tomb Raider racked up sales of around 15 million copies. Lara walked off with an advertising contract for the soft drink Lucozade.
DECEMBER/JANUARY 55 VOYAGER

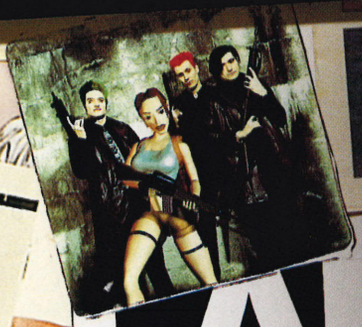


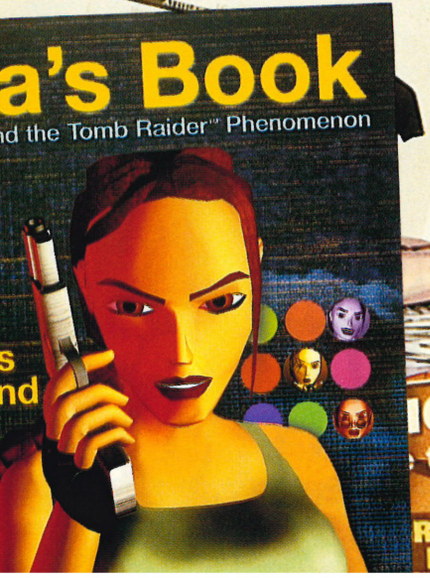
One of my thirtysometh (male) friend who also received a PlayStation for Christma said, 'Do you think there's a combinatio of controls th makes her ta her kit off?'

SUN, Thursday, February 11, 1999
AD TO DO IT!


LARA CROFT
LES CARNETS SECRETS
ALBIN MICHEL

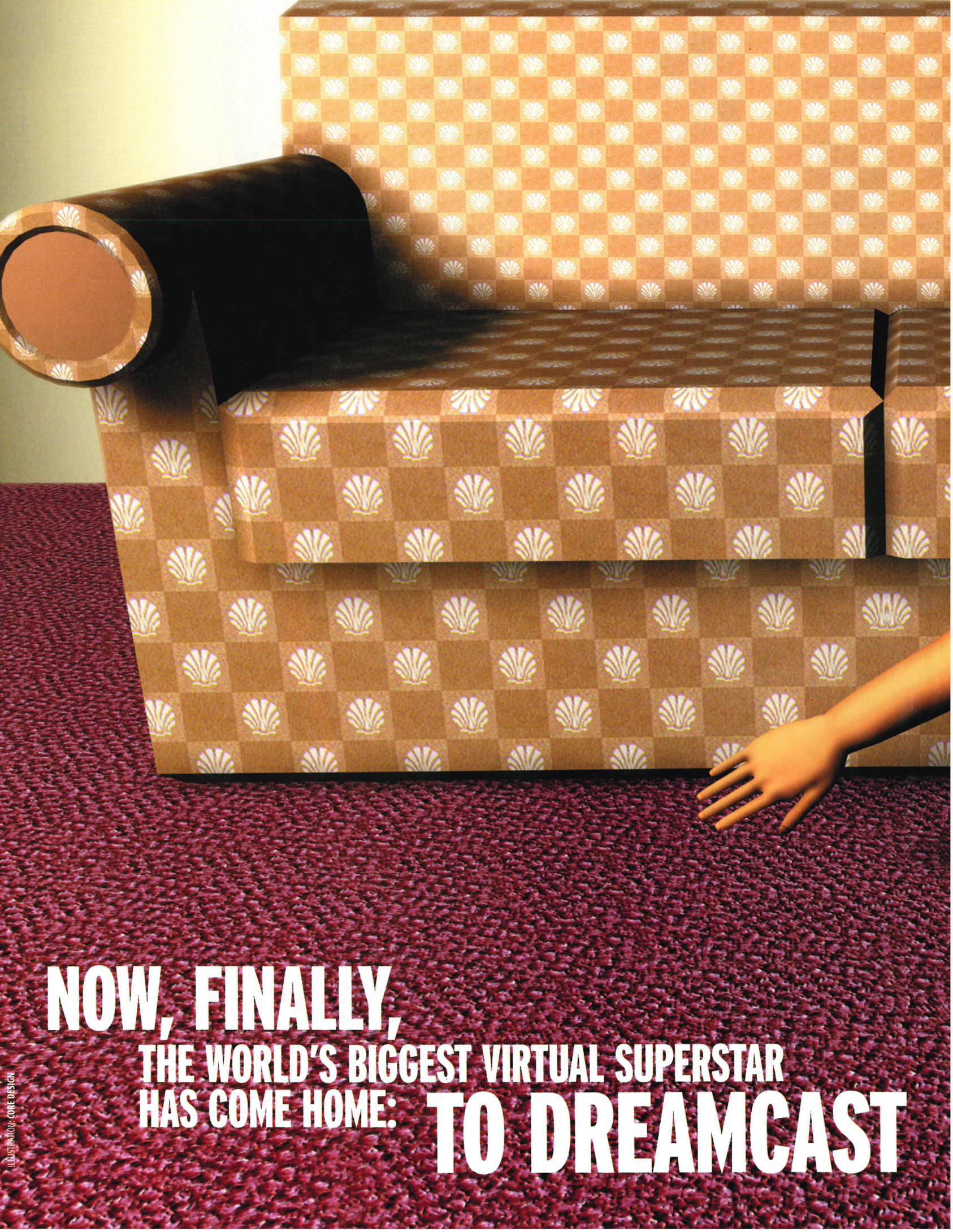
THE TIMES
The Times on the Net: http://www.the-times
£750
DIGITAL
AND FREE
RE OFFER

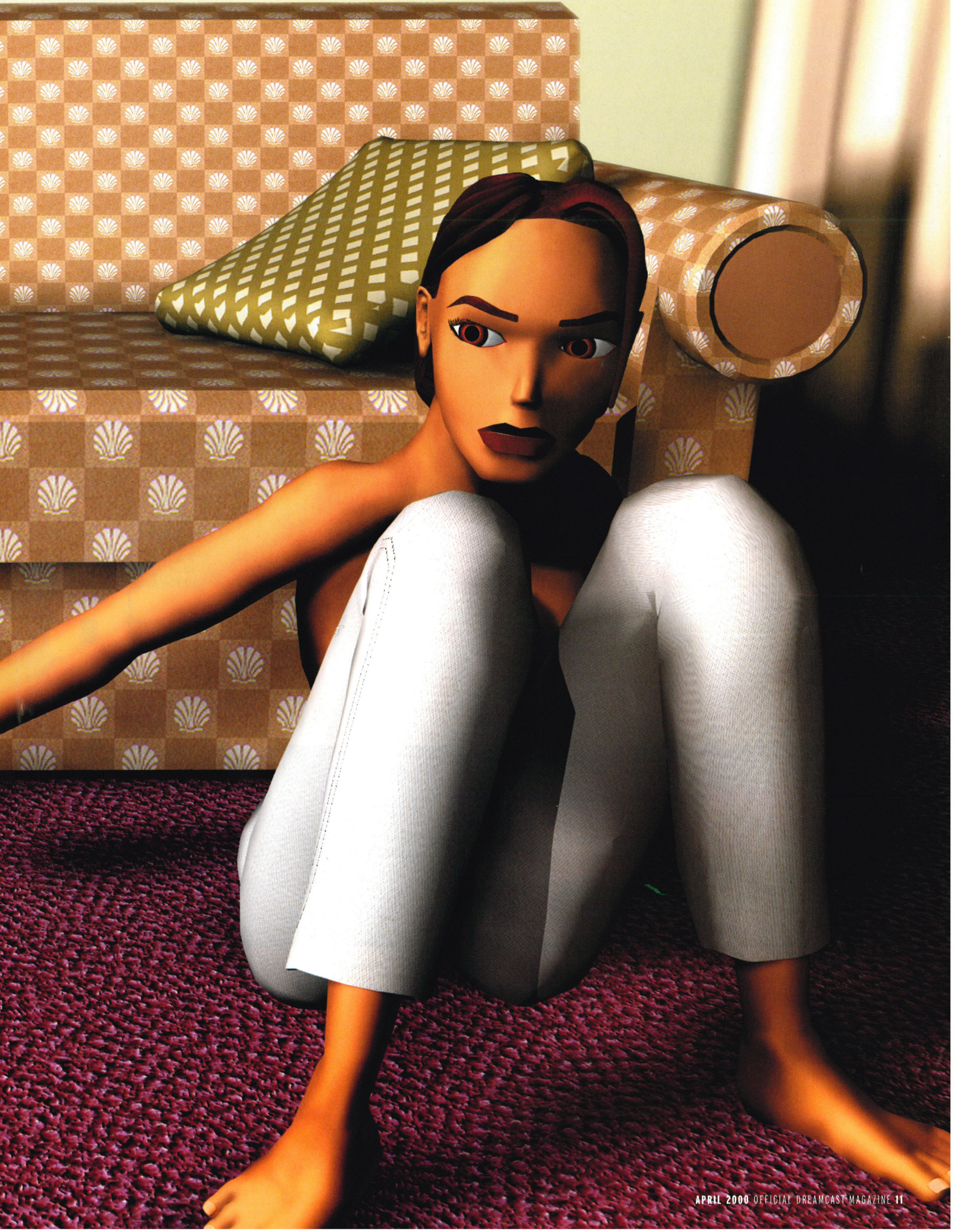



a's Book
nd the Tomb Raider™ Phenomenon

LARA
THE OFFICIAL LARA CROFT MAGAZINE
DESIGNED FOR LIFE
The inside story of Tomb Raider's sexy heroine!
TOMB RAIDER EXPOSED!

EIDOS
Oh not and Lara
Is the sta of Tomb going the


NOW, FINALLY,
THE WORLD'S BIGGEST VIRTUAL SUPERSTAR
HAS COME HOME: TO DREAMCAST
ILLUSTRATION: CORE DESIGN



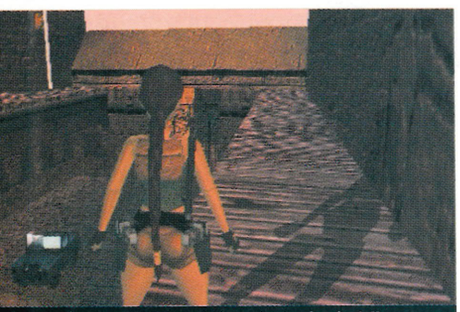
TOMB RAIDER

△ You can mow people down in the driving levels. But hey, they're bad so it's okay.

△ Most moves have a 'stylish' variation. Even climbing up ledges can be done gymnastically.

△ A good reason to continuously save your position. Those spikes do more than chafe.

THE LAST REVELATION



△ Dreamcast's real-time shadowing in full effect. It even follows the contours of walls.

PRICE: **£39.99**
DEVELOPER: **CORE DESIGN**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR THE VIDEOGAME MARRIAGE OF THE YEAR. **TOM GUISE** IS GIVING AWAY THE BRIDE

ON 20 JANUARY 2000, one of the biggest mergers in history took place. No, not the joining of entertainment giant Time Warner and Internet colossus America Online. Nor the signing of speed garage supremos The Dreem Teem to Radio One on Sunday mornings. Not even the naked union of Leonardo DeCaprio and All Saints' Nicole Appleton, on the floor of his hotel bathroom .

No, we're talking about something bigger. Altogether more megalithic. The most gargantuan combination of forces since… since that humongous asteroid smashed into Earth 65 million years ago, wiping out the dinosaurs and heralding the Ice Age. Maybe a tad bigger than that. We're talking about *The Last Revelation* on Dreamcast. *Tomb Raider* four.

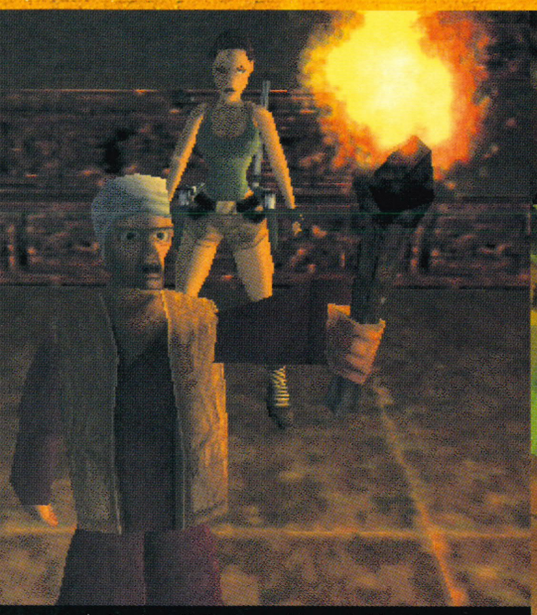
Another 3D action game, huh? Big deal. You thinking that? After all, we're talking Dreamcast here; '3D action' is its middle name. It already has some of the world's best '3D action' games coming out of its arse. Is this really such a monumental event?

Some people think so. Like J-F Cecillon, the chief executive of Sega Europe, who described it as "a world-class signing. The strongest software property ever created." Or perhaps Mike McGarvey, chief operating officer of Eidos, who calls it "one of the most successful brands in our industry's history". These are the men who signed the deal; the pimps behind the wheels that have, in Sega's and Eidos's own words, brought "gaming's biggest icon" to "the most powerful games console ever created". These are the men who have ushered in the new Ice Age.

MAMMOTH PORTIONS

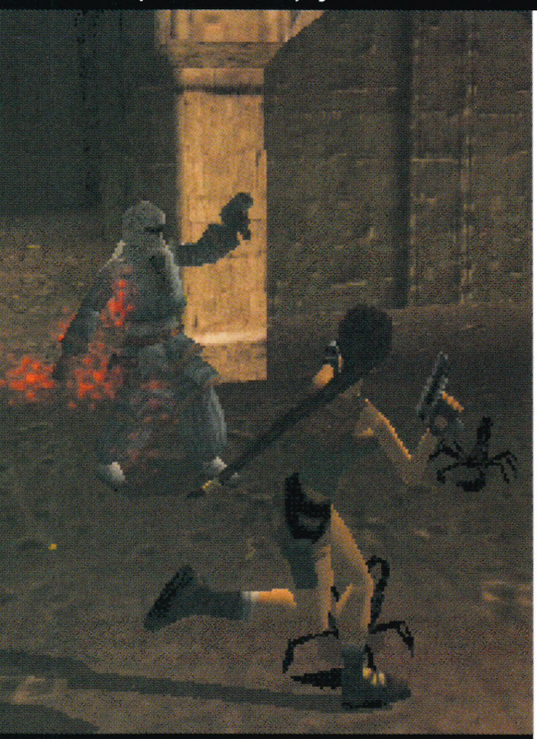
Of course, only a totally disgruntled Game Boy owner would fail to have any understanding why this is such a big event (they get their moment next month when 2D *Tomb Raider* comes to Game Boy Color). The *Tomb Raider* series is almost singularly attributed with the success of PlayStation. It's the sole reason first-time gamers flocked to the PC. It's the reason games are bigger than movies. At least it is if you ask the TV stations, the newspapers and the style press.

And if you ask them why, the answer sticks out



△ Classic stuff. The 'superstitious primitive hired help' sees a warning and refuses to go any further.

△ At last, the much awaited 'secret origin' of Lara's backpack. She… finds it lying about!



△ The Egyptian city of Alexandria, the population of which is predominately machine gun-wielding ninjas.

△ The Egyptian design seems very authentic. The developers obviously wangle free holidays there.

▷ like a 34DD cup. It's simple: Lara Croft. She's a girl-power icon for female gamers, a sex object for adolescent boys, and a celebrity superstar for the gaming generation. Nothing to do with it being a good game, then?

Forget *The Face* heralding her as some kind of virtual Demi Moore, or *The Sun* saying Lara's a pin-up for computer nerds. If the game stank nobody would have bought it.

So, for the uninitiated out there, what makes *Tomb Raider* such a tasty brew? Imagine a world without 3D games. Well, 1996 wasn't anything like that. We had impressive racing games, beat 'em ups, flight sims, but no real 3D adventures. When *Tomb Raider* came along, it offered just that. It was like being Indiana Jones. If he cross-dressed. The graphics were a tad wobbly and it wasn't the smoothest moving game around, but you could actually explore.

But the real factor that set it apart from PC exploration games like *Doom* was that it played from a third-person perspective. You could see your character running down tunnels, pulling out twin hand guns, activating levers. Impressively animated, too. That you could watch the star of the game in action was what really counted. The fact that she was a top-heavy girl in hotpants was just an added gimmick. Who knows, we'd probably have been just as happy controlling the Six Million Dollar Man. Maybe.

FIRST-TIMERS WELCOME!

But that was more than three years ago now. If you didn't jump on the bandwagon then, surely you've missed all the fun? Can a new gamer really join the carnival with episode four? Would you have a clue what's going on?

Well, it seems that *The Last Revelation* has been specifically designed for first-time Raiders. Developers Core Design reckon that if you've never played a *Tomb Raider* game before, then this is where to start.

"We wanted to go back to towards the original route of *Tomb Raider*," says operations director Adrian Smith. "We've made the game a lot easier; more linear, so people don't get lost in massive caverns and spaces." Two of the major criticisms of *Tomb Raiders II* and *III* were oversized levels and a high degree of difficulty. This time you have no excuse for being a crap player. "We're forcing people to play the training level, to pick up how to control Lara," says Adrian.

△ You just *know* that placing a strange hourglass of sand in a statue's hands is going to spell trouble.

The training level in question is an opening scene that reveals Lara as a young rookie on her first adventure with her mentor, Professor Von Croy. Entering an ancient tomb in Cambodia, he guides her through the ever-increasing hazards, showing her how to use her vast array of moves.

The evolution of Lara's controls is explained elsewhere in this feature. Needless to say that by this fourth instalment she can perform a lot of tricks, from running jumps and shimmies along walls, to rope-swinging and monkey dangling. The controls are structured so that you can learn the basics reasonably quickly, but for the more experienced Lara handler there are stylish alternatives. For example, any two-bit idiot can leap – or fall – into the water, but a real master will perform a run-up, hitting the right trigger with the jump button to execute a perfect dive.

Meanwhile, back in Cambodia, Professor Von Croy has got ahead of himself. Having challenged a now reasonably adept Lara to a race to the artefact they seek, he accidentally triggers a fatal trap that collapses the tomb around him, leaving Lara unable to rescue him.

Leaping forwards to the present day, we now see Lara performing an almost identical error as she takes a sacred artefact from an ancient tomb, awakening the evil god Set, who intends to destroy the world unless Lara can undo the damage in time.

Unlike the globetrotting nature of previous *Tomb Raiders*, *The Last Revelation* stays in the number one holiday spot for all archaeological adventurers, Egypt – a result of Core's intention to keep the game linear and strengthen the story element.

"It's a whole adventure in its own right, insofar as it's set in one location," says Adrian. Key moments in the game are marked by movie cut-scenes, adding new twists to the plot, and even making the simple training level impendingly relevant.

And instead of simply finishing a level and heading off to another continent, we're with Lara for the whole ride here. A jeep chase level, for example, takes her from one tomb to another. Another stage keeps us entertained atop a moving train as it heads to the next underground adventure. She's never out of our sight. And she doesn't go to the toilet once.

"The story's driven from the beginning to the end. People understand what they're trying ▷

△ Lara Croft: she gets about, you know.

READ HER LIFE STORY!

Where did she come from? How did she rise to international superstardom? The real Lara Croft – only in this month's *ODM*

Forget spin doctor lies that she's an aristocrat's daughter, Lara Croft is the child of artist Toby Gard. Conceived in the offices of Core Design in 1995. Fully-clothed, fully-breasted and 28 years old.

Making her public debut at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E³) in May '96, she released her first game, *Tomb Raider*, that November. It rocketed to number one and won Game Of The Year.

In 1997 everyone wanted to be seen with her. Liverpool goalkeeper David James put his poor performance down to late nights on *Tomb Raider*. The Prodigy blamed their album delay on the game. She supported U2 on their Popmart tour, appearing on their massive video screens. Number one US comic *Witchblade* featured a special Lara Croft cross-over. Her action figure was released.

Then in June she appeared on the cover of *The Face*, posing in designer outfits. Media coverage went ballistic. She was on the cover of *Melody Maker* and the *Telegraph's Sunday* magazine. US magazines like *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone* and *Time* featured her. MTV wanted her to be a VJ. She appeared in a pop video for German group Die Artze. Then her second game arrived in November and Paramount snapped up the rights to a *Tomb Raider* movie.

Lara made her first live virtual appearance in 1998 at the Atlanta E³, answering audience questions. A LARA© clothing range was launched, and US author Douglas Coupland released an image collection, *Lara's Book*. Car manufacturers SEAT featured her in their French TV ads. M&S brought out Lara merchandise. In October, *Tomb Raider III* was launched by Jonathan Ross at the Natural History Museum. In November, *Raiders I* and *II* were granted Millennium Product status by Tony Blair – an acknowledgement of British industry excellence.

In 1999 she became the face of Lucozade. Then, with talk suggesting she was past it, Lara revealed herself as a 16-year-old in *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*, joining the teen revival and quashing ageing Liz Hurley's chances of playing her in the movie.

DIGGING UP THE PAST

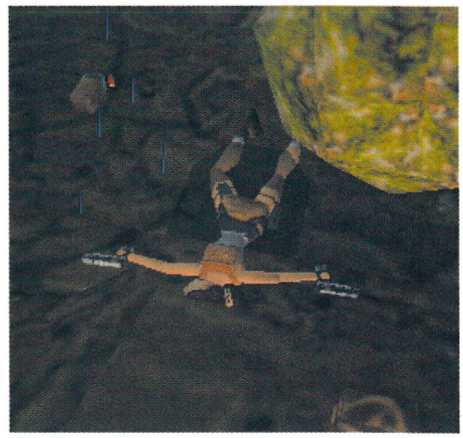
Roll up and witness the previous rousing exploits of the world-famous girl archaeologist

TOMB RAIDER

Surprisingly for a game that has always been associated with PlayStation, the original *Tomb Raider* was first released on Sega Saturn back in November '96. Lara was on the hunt for a mythical object called the Scion, on an invigorating jaunt that was to take her through the lost cities of the Incas, Romans, Egyptians and Altlanteans. Impressive at the time because it just beat *Super Mario 64* to being the first real third-person 3D action adventure, albeit with jittery camera angles and obvious pop-up. Oh, and it featured a posh bird with big norks.

TOMB RAIDER II

Released on PlayStation and PC in November '97. This time Lara sought the Dagger of Xian, whatever that is when it's at home. Home was the tomb of some emperor under the Great Wall of China. But before facing the sly Chinese and their deadly ninja arts, she first had to drive a motorboat around Venice looking for the evil magician Bartoli (fresh from an acclaimed season at the Hammersmith Coronet). More outdoor locations were the order of the day here, with bigger, tougher levels. Lara could climb walls, light flares and fire harpoons. Oh, and the stereo in her mansion living room worked as well.



TOMB RAIDER III

Dubbed *The Adventures of Lara Croft*, her previous outings were obviously holidays or something. Still, she'd clearly clocked up the air miles, because her 1998 tour took her to India, the South Pacific, London, the Nevada Desert and Antartica. The gimmick was that she could do it *in any order!* Due to popular demand, the levels were shorter. Her ever-burgeoning talents meant she could now sprint, rope-swing and crawl through tight spaces – giving you a cracking view of her arse. She also got to pilot a mini-sub, ATV and kayak. And she got a range of designer outfits including military fatigues and a leather catsuit. Eat your heart out, Barbie.

to do, and in the end there's a little bit of a cliff-hanger," explains Adrian. "We named it *The Last Revelation* for a number of reasons. We hoped it was going to be some form of revelation, and the 'Last' part… let people play to the end and see what they think themselves."

EXTRA SERVICES

So, *The Last Revelation* is a great, self-contained action epic for new players. But what about old *Tomb Raider* hacks – PlayStation and PC owners who've got into Dreamcast? What's in it for them? Well, the best version of the game around, it seems.

"Dreamcast is above a high-end PC," Adrian continues, "so what people see on a PC, they'll see that and a lot more on the Dreamcast version."

Like? "Putting the shadows in makes a big difference. It adds to the whole atmosphere," he says, pointing out the unique effect of the real-time lighting in Dreamcast, creating genuine shadows on the surfaces. "The bump mapping makes a big difference too," he continues, referring to the ability to create realistic 3D surfaces on the landscape. "Particularly in *Tomb Raider*, which is very much about the environments you're in – temples and rocks."

There are extra goodies too, including a gallery section where you can view different pictures of young and 'mature' Lara, playing on Dreamcast, draped around her house, lazing around in swimsuits… Even if you've read every publication Lara's been in, you won't have seen a lot of these pictures before. "That's accompanied by an audio track by one of the major DJs out there at the moment," says Adrian cryptically (he means Paul Oakenfold).

"PART FOUR IS THE BEST IN THE SERIES"

Clearly the best version of the lot, then. But is it getting the best from the Dreamcast? "It hasn't been developed alongside the others, it's the game produced on PlayStation and PC, converted across," explains Adrian.

This means they used the same Microsoft Windows base as the PC, rather than Sega programming tools used in arcade conversions like *Crazy Taxi* or Dreamcast-only games like *Sonic Adventure*. Could those have produced better results?

"Obviously there are advantages to doing that," he says. "A speed increase, but speed wasn't a major issue. We can only do the game at 30 frames per second. It would probably run at 60 frames [the maximum TV rate], but all the animations for Lara are produced at 30. You wouldn't see any difference at all. As it is, we maintain 30 frames all the time, no problem." In other words, no slow-down.

"There are certain areas that we could have capitalised on a little more if we'd done it through the Sega library and not through [Windows] CE," Adrian adds. "But it would have taken longer. We were keen to get it out there and on the shelves."

Which raises another question. *The Last Revelation* on Dreamcast is something of a… fast revelation. Announced one day, lined up for release the next. So how long has the game been in the works?

"It's been very quick, about three months," admits Adrian. Could this speedy release explain its souped-up PC origin, as opposed to it being a dedicated Dreamcast game? "There have been a couple of guys on it for a very intense period of time, and at the start they had the choice. Both had done native games for Sega, so they understood the Sega libraries, and obviously CE as well. For this they chose to go down the CE route. Looking at what the future holds, we'll certainly be doing a lot more games native to the Sega libraries though."

Suggestion, perhaps, of a Dreamcast-dedicated *Tomb Raider*? "We were keen to work with Sega on this and get *Tomb Raider* on there, which we've obviously done. Moving forward, we're only looking at doing specific games for the specific console. In future people can expect to see more *Tomb Raider* adventures on the next-generation platforms, and obviously that includes Sega."

So how does Adrian rate Dreamcast? "It's a great machine. Without question, of all the consoles currently available it's the most powerful by a significant amount. Look at some of the first games that have come out on it. There's some fantastic stuff, which only bodes well for the future. Normally if you look at first-generation software, you can see how things are going to be better on second and third generation, but Sega have come out with some great stuff first-generation."

GETTING SATISFACTION

Which brings us back to Dreamcast and its first-generation *Tomb Raider*. The big question has to be: is it a Dreamcast game worth buying?

Well, that all depends. If you're an old *Tomb Raider* player who's been following the series, you'll have a good idea of what to expect; you'll know that the series hasn't evolved a huge amount since the first episode. There are many of the same faults, the same quirks. You know whether you like the games or not. If you do, then there's no doubt that part IV is the best of the series. And the Dreamcast version is the best of the part IVs. If you've seen the PC version, the extra bump mapping and real-time shadows here bring an impressive sheen to the whole affair, especially when running through caverns filled with torches.

If you're used to *Tomb Raider* games on PlayStation, the whole polished look will blow your socks off. In terms of gameplay it may not be the great step forward you were hoping for (are they ever?), but if you want a new episode then this is the one to go for.

The real test is with Dreamcast owners – already used to slick, PC-superior graphics, pounding cool sounds and superb cinematics as standard – tucking into *Tomb Raider* for the very first time. What you need to understand is what does and doesn't make the *Tomb Raider* series tick, and then decide if it's for you. Here's your *Tomb Raider* compatibility chart. Tick off these categories and see how many fit your lifestyle…

Blistering arcade action? Not here. *Tomb Raider* is a much more cerebral adventure. If you fancy running around uncontrollably, offloading huge warheads into an enemy's mouth and washing it down with some knuckles when your ammo runs out, you're better off with something like *Zombie Revenge* (reviewed on page 76). In *The Last Revelation* you must be careful of the ammo you collect (the unlimited bullets of your puny twin pistols don't stump up the goods

LARA: LEGEND OR HAS BEEN?

So exactly how famous is Lara Croft? We hit the streets of the capital to find out

△ "Got a minute?" Our man Omid puts himself about on the streets of London.

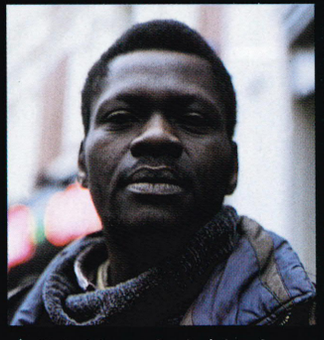
△ "Mo Mowlem – isn't she off that game *Tomb Raider*?" Dave seemed a little confused by the question.

△ "Er… dunno." Koji didn't recognise any of the five. We managed to direct him to Covent Garden though.

△ "Oh, don't ask me, I won't recognise anyone." Anne got three out of five, but didn't know Lara.

△ "Lara's very well, er, proportioned, but I'd have to say that Mo Mowlem is the sexiest woman here."

△ "Jennifer Aniston… Tara Palmer-Tomkinson… Lara Croft… Britney… Mo Mowlem."



△ "I don't know who she is but she looks a bit scary. Do you guys want to buy some incense for your ladies?"

△ "Oh, er… hang on, isn't she from a film? No, wait, a computer game? What's she called again?"

△ Lotte and Lisbeth were visiting from Denmark. They didn't know who Lara was, but there was no harm asking.

SEX SYMBOL FOR THE BOYS, girl power icon for the girls. Lara has it all, and her appearance in adverts for Lucozade and, more recently, Nike has seen her likeness appear on TV screens and hoardings across the country.

But is she really up there with the big girls? To find out we conducted a highly scientific and exhaustive survey of people on London's Oxford Street to see how famous Lara was compared to four other high-profile women.

For the test we chose a cross-section of women who, rightly or wrongly, receive large amounts of media coverage. Up against Lara were Friends star Jennifer Aniston, it-girl Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, Britney Spears and former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Mo Mowlem.

The results were shocking: Lara was recognised by only 55% of those asked, beating only Tara P-T. Winner by a mile was Jennifer Aniston, closely followed by Britney and then Mo. A surprising result, and one that suggests Ms Croft has a little way to go before she makes it big in the real world.

when they're aimed at sword-wielding ninjas). Swiftly dispatching enemies with minimal self-abuse requires strategic assaults – especially when facing below-eye-level irritants like scorpions and rampaging wild pigs. Likewise, racing around like a lunatic with a rocket up your arse soon concludes with Lara falling into a spike-filled pit or running into a load of deadly retractable scythes.

Puzzles? Simple ones? Are you the kind of person who likes pulling a switch and running through a newly opened door? Then this is your bag, baby. And that's about as hard as the puzzles get. Some require you to find an amulet or other arcane device to stick into an obviously matching hole (Fisher Price-level challenges), others require you to move a block on to a suspicious-coloured tile, but the overall effect is 'find device + activate switch = nearby door opens'.

However, even with the relatively small levels here you can still find yourself wandering around, frustratingly convinced that you've spooned it up beyond repair, not realising that the switch you need is on a shelf right above your head. And if you're looking for real brain-bamboozlers of *The Crystal Maze* variety, you're probably better off heading for *Resident Evil 2* (*ODM* #2, 7/10) or waiting patiently for *Code: Veronica* (previewed on page 60).

Intuitive controls? What idiot would say no to this one? A dedicated *Tomb Raider* fan, perhaps? While some people swear by the Lara Croft technique, most agree that it's a fiddly system. Rather than snaking her around *Sonic*-style with the analog stick, you guide her forward, left and right according to the way she's facing. Which means if she's facing right, up is still forward. Think of it like steering a remote-controlled car (with legs) – turning her around means wheeling her left and right. New gamers are guaranteed to keep turning around and running off cliff edges.

Compounding your uncontrollable jitters, the game uses a strange action-delay system. Unlike your average platformer, pressing jump when nearing the edge of a platform isn't enough– you'll just drop off. You must walk up to the edge slowly (using an extra walk button), and press forward and jump at the same time. For a running jump, take one step backwards, then hit forward and jump. Any variation and you get to see one of Lara's many and varied deaths.

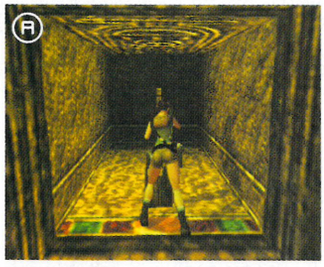
Add to that the annoying precision with which you must pick up objects or activate switches. If you're at a slight angle to them or a little to the left, Lara doesn't respond. If this all sounds too frustrating for you, then it probably is. Try *Rayman 2* instead (reviewed on page 70). If, however, you're a member of the old *Prince Of Persia* Society 1984, you'll know exactly what it's like and revel in the old-skool control system.

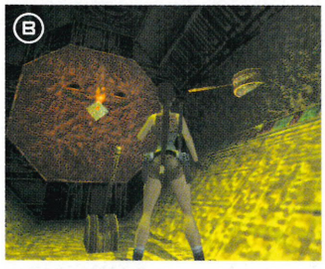
Peculiar graphics? What do we mean by that? Well, *Tomb Raider* is a very 'angular' game. Bump mapping and real-time shadows aside, everything looks strangely unrealistic. Where other Dreamcast games feature curved walls and undulating floors, *Tomb Raider*'s all look like wheelchair ramps. This feeling is further reinforced by Lara's inability to access certain areas because they're too steep. There's no real-time physics slowing her down until she slides back, instead she just stops like a stubborn mule. A tenner says you'll shout at her to "give it a go, you dumb bitch!" (Warning: don't shout this too loud if you still live with your parents.)

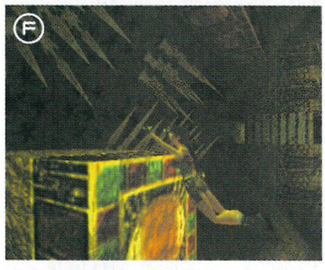
TUNNEL VISION A *Tomb Raider* teaser to tickle your taste buds. Marvel at the

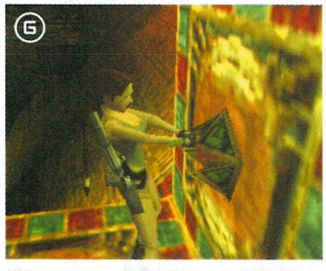
PHASE 1

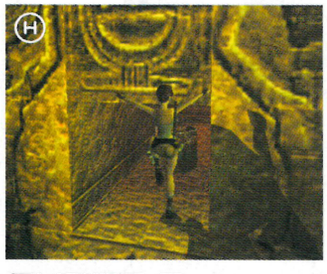
(A) Lara climbs into a room here and pulls a lever, opening hatch (B)
(B) In here there's switch that rotates the whole room. Twist the page to phase 2.





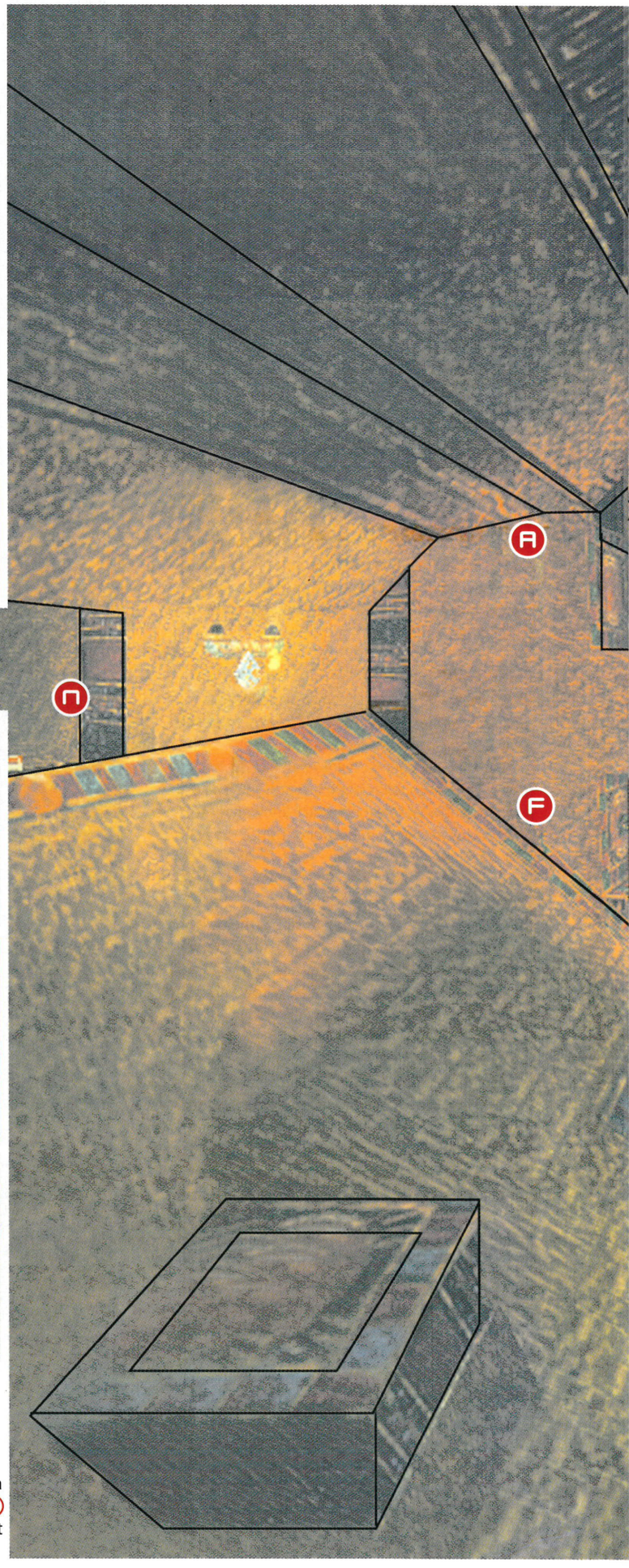




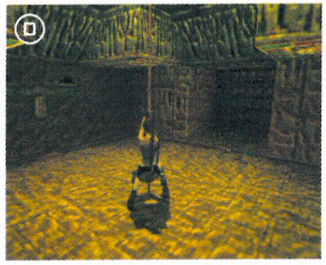


PHASE 3

(F) Heading here, she places the Hand of Sirius in a socket, lowering a rope near (G)
(G) Clambering up to this ledge, Lara must leap for a rope and swing to (H)
(H) Where she can safely land, collect her prize and exit the level. Easy!



perplexing puzzler that is The Remarkable Rotating Room!

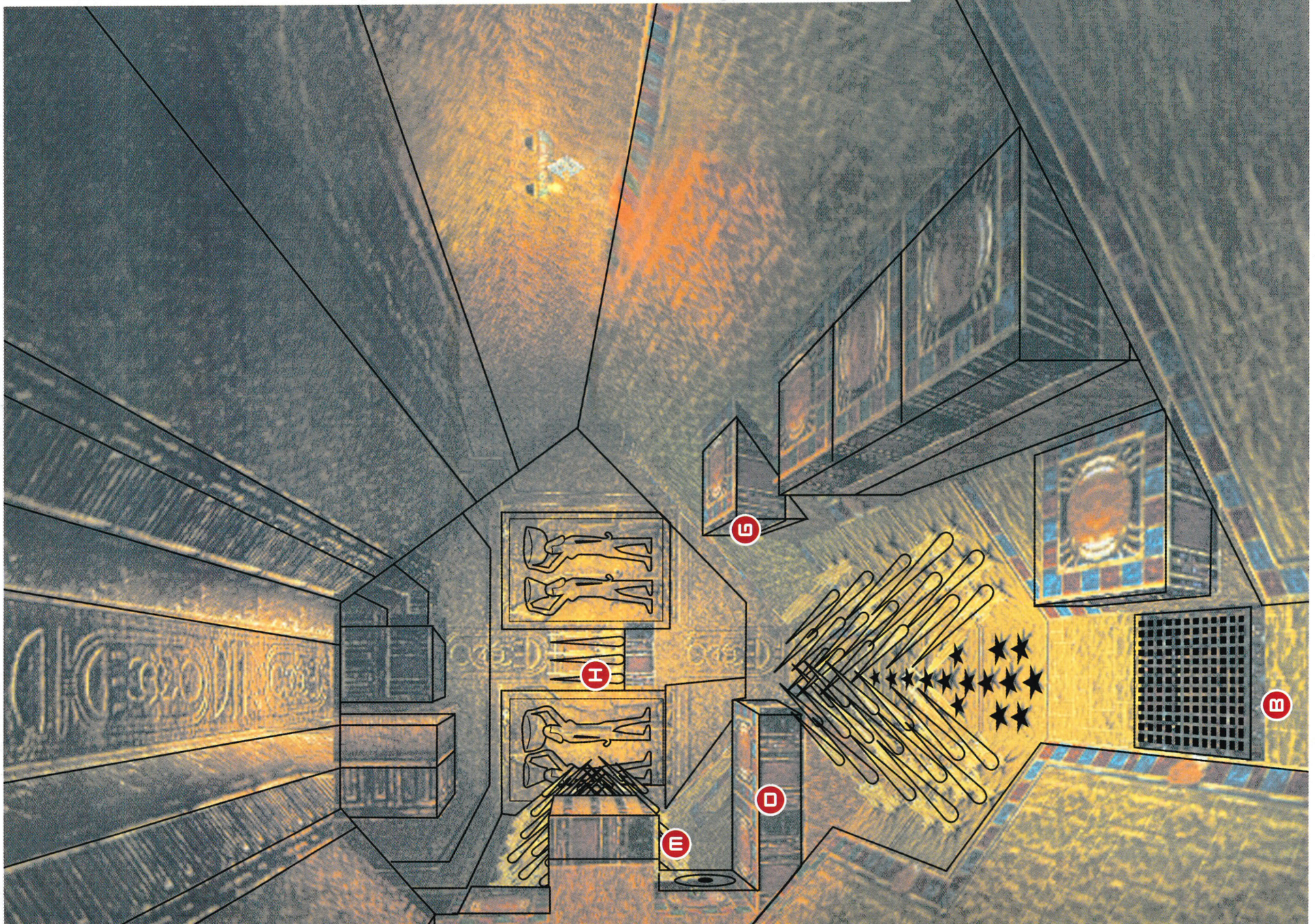


PHASE 2

(C) Now Lara can drop in here and get The Hand of Sirius. Climbing out at (A)

(D) Lara can now leap up to this high ledge and lower herself into chute (E)

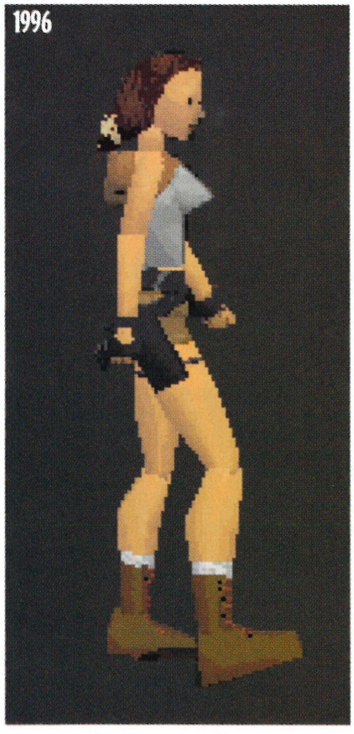
(E) Pulling a large chain here, she rotates the room back to phase 3.



▷ That girl, she squeezes herself into any tight spot. Here she's actually in a sphinx's mouth.

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY. WE CAN REBUILD HER

Seems that even virtual sex symbols aren't born perfect. In true Hollywood style, even Lara has undergone cosmetic 'enhancement' over the years



△ The very first Lara. The potential's definitely there, but she's no oil painting up close. And she's definitely lacking manoeuvrability.

△ Lara now sports a beautiful flowing pigtail, and has fuller, rounder… assets. And she can drive.
COST? Hair extensions: £150; breast augmentation: £3000; ten driving lessons: £130.

△ She can now crawl and sprint. And perform strenuous monkey bar-swings. Oh, and she's got ears.
COST? Hip replacement: £2,000; personal trainer (20 sessions): £800; ear reconstruction: £4,000.

△ Smooth, waxed, fully-skinned joints, meaning no more dodgy tearing at the knees. And she gets 12 years younger.
COST? Laser resurfacing: £3,500; knee replacement: £2,000; time-travelling De Lorean: £1,000,000,000.
TOTAL: £1,000,012,580.

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

Lara: the perfect role model?

"I THINK THERE ARE A LOT OF WOMEN OUT THERE WHO SEE LARA AS A POSITIVE CHARACTER. THIS IS BECAUSE THEY'VE TAKEN THE TIME TO PLAY THE GAME AND TO GET TO KNOW WHAT SHE'S ALL ABOUT"
- SUSIE HAMILTON, PR, CORE DESIGN

"MEN LIKE LARA'S BALLAST; WOMEN, HER MIND. SURPRISE"
- MIRANDA SAWYER IN *THE FACE*'S LARA COVER STORY

"HEY, THIS IS A REPRESENTATION OF ME, AS MYSELF, AS A WOMAN. IN A GAME. HOW LONG HAVE WE WAITED FOR THAT?"
- NIKKI DOUGLAS, 'TOMB RAIDER, LARA CROFT AND THE BREAST CONNECTION', ON GRRLGAMER.COM

"THE PROBLEM WITH LARA IS THAT SHE WAS DESIGNED BY MEN FOR MEN. HOW DO I KNOW THIS? BECAUSE LARA HAS THIN THIGHS, LONG LEGS, A WAIST YOU COULD ENCIRCLE WITH ONE HAND AND KNOCKERS LIKE MEDICINE BALLS"
- ANON, ONLINE ESSAY ON 'LARA - FEMALE ENEMY NO. 1?'

"NOW THAT BOYS CAN EXERT THEIR WILL THROUGH SEXY WOMEN, IT MAY BRING A NEW DIMENSION TO THE WAY THEY THINK ABOUT SEXUALITY. WE MIGHT SEE YOUNG MEN GROW INTO LOVERS WHO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW. OR WE MIGHT JUST SEE MORE CROSS-DRESSERS"
- DOUG RUSHKOFF, ON CYBERCULTURE

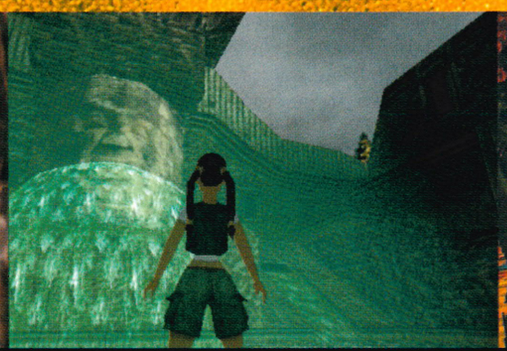
"A REAL WOMAN WOULD FALL OVER IF SHE WAS LARA SHAPED"
- MIRANDA SAWYER IN *THE FACE*

"DON'T LET LARA'S BREASTS OBSTRUCT YOU FROM A GREAT ADVENTURE GAME. TAKE YOUR FEMINIST IRE AND CHANNEL IT THROUGH LARA AS YOU CAREER DOWN MOUNTAIN CLIFFS AND RUN THROUGH CAVES SHOOTING WOLVES"
- NIKKI DOUGLAS, 'TOMB RAIDER, LARA CROFT AND THE BREAST CONNECTION', ON GRRLGAMER.COM

"I'VE BEEN FAMILIARISING MYSELF WITH LARA'S DOSSIER, AND FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT SHE IS THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE WE NEED FOR PRESIDENT IN THE YEAR 2000"
- LYNN BENSON, RIGHTGRRL.COM (RIGHT-WING FEMINIST WEBSITE)

"LARA, GET THOSE MELONS OUT OF YOUR VEST AND I'LL LIKE YOU A WHOLE LOT BETTER!"
- ANON, ONLINE ESSAY ON 'LARA - FEMALE ENEMY NO. 1?'

△ During the jeep chase, you can take short cuts up some convenient rocky outcrops.



△ The first level is the only non-Egyptian one. It features some cool oriental architecture.

△ You cannot kill what does not live. But a few shotgun blasts slow down these mummies.

The angular look also goes a little further than just the landscape. While Lara is admittedly curvy and impressive (she's had a fair bit spent on her – see opposite), her co-stars are less fortunate. Von Croy looks more like Kryten from *Red Dwarf*, and if you stare at Lara's faithful guide through the binoculars when he's close up he's suffering from a severe case of Blockhead Krakob's disease. Don't get us wrong, the game doesn't look rubbish, just kind of… square.

A cinematic feel? If you like full-motion cut-scenes, there are some impressively lengthy ones here, offering dramatic 'revelations' that further the story: flashbacks to the burial of Set in Ancient Egypt, and Lara escaping from an army of mercenaries James Bond-stylee, by boat, are particularly stunning. But when they feature real human characters, even Lara, the illusion can be shattered a bit. Aside from their lips not moving in sync (hey, we all like martial arts videos, so that's no great shakes), they all move around quite stiffly.

When Lara visits her old pal, Jean-Yves, his waddling movement and flapping arms are more reminiscent of *Cockleshell Bay* than of a scene from an Indiana Jones movie. But the worse crime by far is artistic licence. During a stunt-o-rama action scene with Lara in a jeep, an enemy fanatic draws a bead on her with his rocket launcher. Good grief, how is she gonna get out of this one?! Simple: she whips out her gun and releases some pressure in his skull. Cheers from the audience? Nope, just the player throwing down the pad and yelling: "How come I'm not allowed to shoot when I'm in the jeep?!"

Great level design? Hey, 'tomb' is in the name of the game, and raiding is what it's all about. The levels are some of the best things about *The Last Revelation*. They've got all the convincing flavour of a good adventure yarn. The opening *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*-esque training stage is very atmospheric, complete with blow darts firing from one wall, or a trigger activating a floor trap.

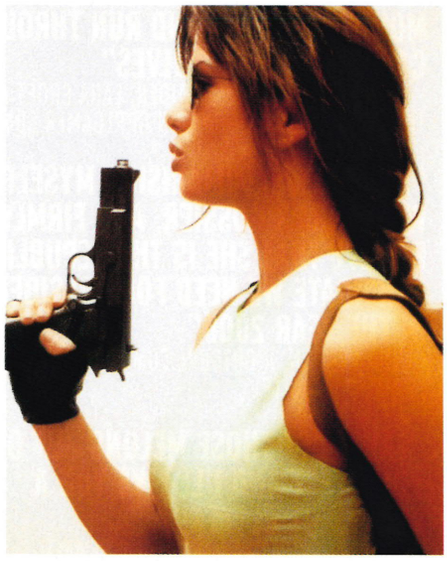
And some of the bigger Egyptian tombs are fantastically designed. You'll catch your breath when stumbling into a large cavern filled with a huge, half-buried sphinx; you'll tense when a switch opens a load of sarcophagi and you can see the sleeping mummies within – are they going to suddenly wake up?

And the rotating room (see page 18) is a brilliant concept. None of the stages are so huge that they become laborious, and there isn't any annoying backtracking to give you that 'been there, done that' feel. At the best of times you really feel the claustrophobia closing in around you too. Dropping a flare down a near-bottomless shaft then descending into the dank well really puts the jitters up you. Is Lara just heading further into the centre of the earth with no escape?

It has all the hallmarks of the classic scene in *The Lost Ark* when Indy is trapped in the tomb full of snakes. A hopeless situation, but you know that the only way out is further in. And there's a genuine sense of relief when you finally see daylight at the end of a tunnel. Definitely one of the best aspects of the game.

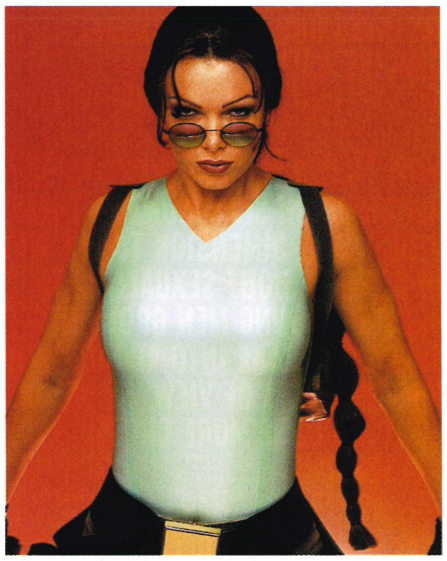
COMPUTER GENERATED CAREERS

Girls who've made their living pretending to be a pretend girl. No, we're not talking ladyboys



RHONA MITRA

The first model to make her name as Lara, Rhona also made her body as Lara – enlarging her breasts from 34A to 34D – and her voice, recording a never-released Lara Croft album with Eurythmic Dave Stewart. Her post-*Tomb Raider* career includes hosting the *Pepsi Chart Challenge*, a recent cameo in *Party Of Five* and a *Beowulf* movie with Christopher Lambert. Oh, and she's been in *The Bill*.



NELL McANDREW

Tomb Raider was the springboard that projected Nell on to the front of every magazine. Other peaks in her 32D career include pushing blokes into a swimming pool in Chris Tarrant's _Man O' Man_, TV ads with Bob Monkhouse, playing Neil Morrisey's body double (maybe we are talking ladyboys), and being the Babycham face of '97 – a job previously occupied by a reindeer.

LARA WELLER

The current face of Ms Croft, Leggy Lara, 34C-24-34, reckons she loves adventure just like her tomb-raiding namesake. Well, Lara, we're sure there are a few fellas out there who'd love to get some hands-on globe-trotting action with you before digging up some bones. You'd just better be careful they don't lose an eye to your double-barrelled charms.

SPEAK OUT

THE LAST REVELATION EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **ADRIAN SMITH** ANSWERS A FEW QUESTIONS

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
Probably the main character.

WHICH GAMES ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?
I'm actually playing games that aren't available, particularly one from Eidos – *DXS*, a PC game which is looking fantastic. We've just had a network game of *Tiberian Sun*. *Ready 2 Rumble* is a big lunchtime favourite among us all.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB IN THE GAMES INDUSTRY?
What I'm doing now – being the brother of Jeremy, who started Core Design. When I came there was an awful lot to get on with, so day-to-day helping with Core Design in the early stages, a little bit of product work in the years. When Core released *Corporation* I was here then, but took two days off on holiday to get a transit to deliver the stock. But it never actually came to that.

HOW MUCH DID YOU GET PAID FOR DOING IT?
Nothing, unfortunately. Call it brotherly love.

IF YOU MET LARA CROFT, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?
I'd probably be dumb-struck and have absolutely nothing to say to her.

That said, there's also something amazingly samey about the pace of the whole game. Exploring the tombs in a cautionary manner is fun. After all, you don't want to unwittingly step on a spring-loaded deathtrap. Nor do you want to overlook the multitude of secrets hidden around in dark crevices or inconspicuous recesses.

However, when it comes to an exciting jeep chase or train-top battle, you want it to be just that – exciting. The pace should shift straight into action movie first gear. Somehow though, it just ends being the same sedate affair. The train malarkey, for example – a staple of any action movie scene – should generate the tense feeling that Lara's got to keep moving through the carriages, hotly pursued by overwhelming odds.

But what's she going to do when she reaches the last carriage? There's nowhere to go! Well, don't worry about that, it doesn't happen. Here she just activates a lever, climbs on a roof, shoots a few guards, opens a door, breaks open a crate, opens another door etc. It's effectively just seven rooms in a row.

Same with the jeep chase. A thrilling race against time to stop a villain getting away? Nah, just chug along safely. "Ooh, park up there. I think I saw a little tunnel we could wander into and find some ammo." Don't worry about your quarry, he'll be strangely waiting around the next corner for you to catch up.

At one point during the jeep chase, I actually managed to take a short cut that put Lara in front of her escaping foe. "Cool," I thought, blocking off his path and getting out. "I'll just go up to the windscreen and offload the shotgun into his face." It didn't work. The enemy jeep just kept trying to drive forward, hand grenades routinely flying out the top of it to try and get me. What could have been a really great extra gameplay angle turned out to be just a bit of a mistake.

Screw him, then, I'll just run ahead? No chance. Lara soon hit an impassable wheelchair ramp; the enemy jeep, finally having freed itself, trundled on by. Everything just seems very planned out. Perhaps that's the *Tomb Raider* formula, but a few no-brainer roller coaster levels would really add to the mix.

CHARMS OF THE OLDER WOMAN

Truth is, *The Last Revelation* is a very entertaining game, but in a very old-fashioned way. It comes from the old school of platform games when there were strong limitations to prevent you doing anything that would screw it up.

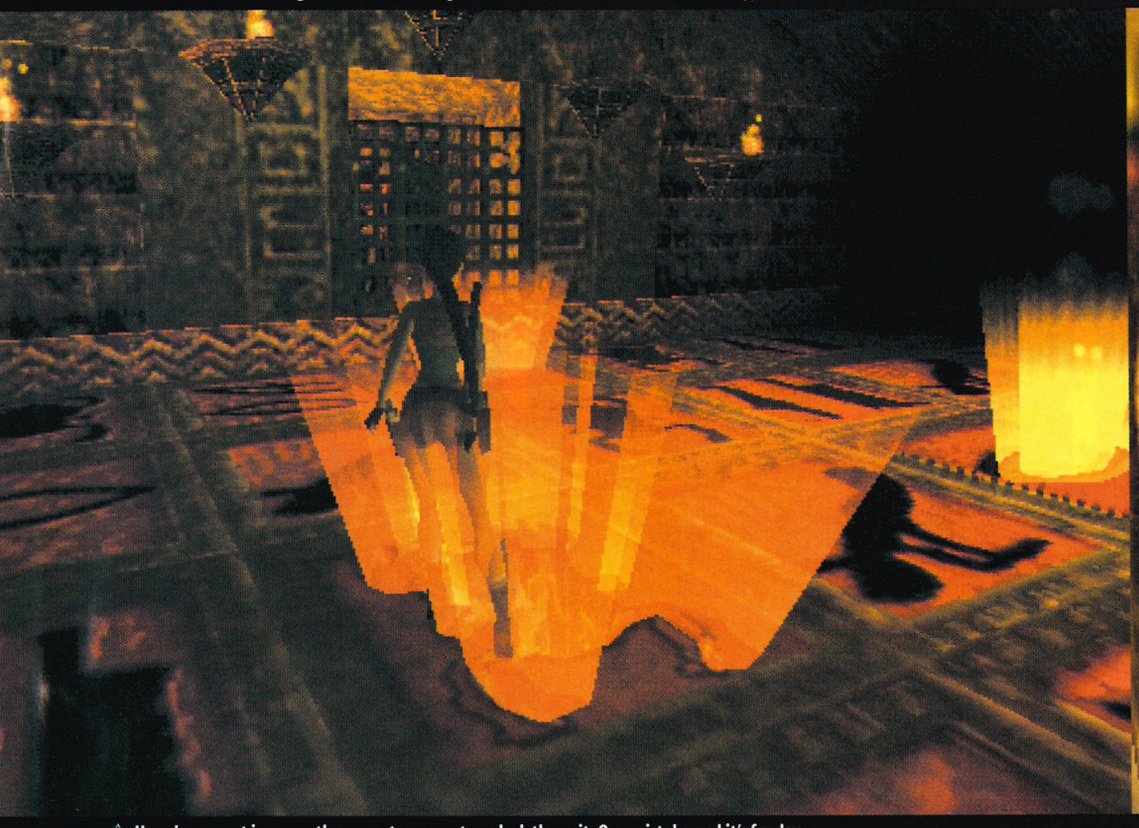
Dreamcast titles should – and have – offered something different: an illusion of complete freedom. *Crazy Taxi* makes you believe you really can race anywhere around a huge city; *Power Stone* is like being unleashed in a giant, fully destructible playpen. But in *The Last Revelation*, you know you can't head up that sand dune because you're going to reveal *the edge of the world!* And everything you're doing – every amulet you find, every puzzle you solve – has been carefully structured to lead you from A to B.

Even the controls demand strict discipline. If you

△ Lara can't get into all the carriages of the train, so there's some nail-biting outdoor clambering.

△ An ironic tip of the hat, as Lara finds a poor commercial re-creation of Egypt in Alexandria.

△ Auto-targetting makes it easy to weave about while Lara goes gun-happy.



△ Here Lara must jump on the correct squares to unlock the exit. One mistake and it's fry day.

△ A rare face-forward shot of Lara shooting.

don't execute the correct technique for a long-distance jump, you won't make it. You can't just throw caution to the wind and try something daring. In fact you must even learn to save the game regularly, because some areas are guaranteed die-first-time experiences, and you never know when it's going to happen.

The graphics too, have an old-fashioned feel to them. They're polished enough (not difficult with Dreamcast), but not particularly stylish. Sega's best titles offer fantastically animated characters, dynamic-looking scenery, and when the action kicks in you feel your teeth rattle. This month's *Zombie Revenge,* for example.

The Last Revelation just gives you good, solid presentation. Not ropy, but not spectacular either. Some people have noted that it looks jerky at 30 frames a second. Running at 50/60 would have improved the background movement, but it isn't a big deal.

Even the cinematic scenes have an antiquated stiffness about them. They appear at the right times and do the job, but never really gel with the action. New Dreamcast games are now blending action and cut-scenes seamlessly to create genuine movie-like experiences. Wait until you see the upcoming *Space Channel 5* – it's like a pop video. Hwere you feel like the cut-scenes are just rewards for completing a level.

Ultimately, *The Last Revelation* just seems outdated. It's good, solid fun, and for PlayStation it's great, but Dreamcast is a different standard, and we expect more. Core have said they're reassessing where to take Lara and what to do with *Tomb Raider* on next-generation consoles, so next time we may see what a Dreamcast *Tomb Raider* really is capable of. In the meantime though, if you're looking for a regular rewarding game, this does the job.

"VERY ENTERTAINING, BUT IN A VERY OLD-FASHIONED WAY"

VERDICT

THE BEST *TOMB RAIDER* AROUND... BUT DC IS CAPABLE OF BETTER

UPPERS
Great level design • Solid-looking • Hours of play • Lots of secrets

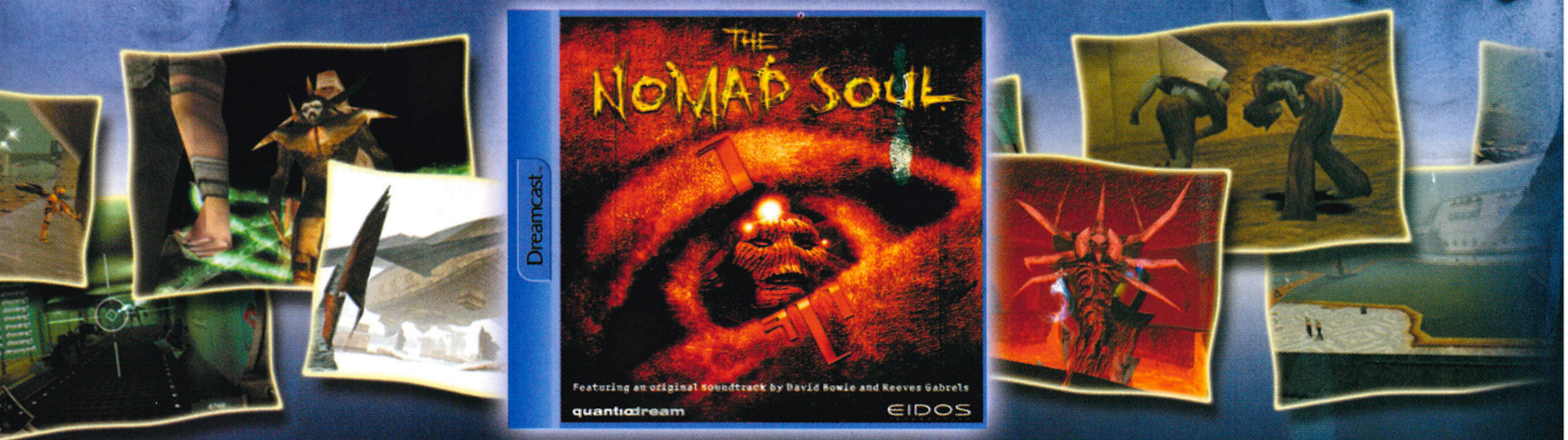
DOWNERS
Fiddly controls • Slow-paced • Looks old-fashioned • A few glitches

IN ONE HOUR Just completed the training mode. Started into the first real level – the Tomb of Seth
WEBSITE www.tombraider.com
CHECK OUT Our player's guide, starting next issue
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Full-screen PAL, 60Hz option, VGA-compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

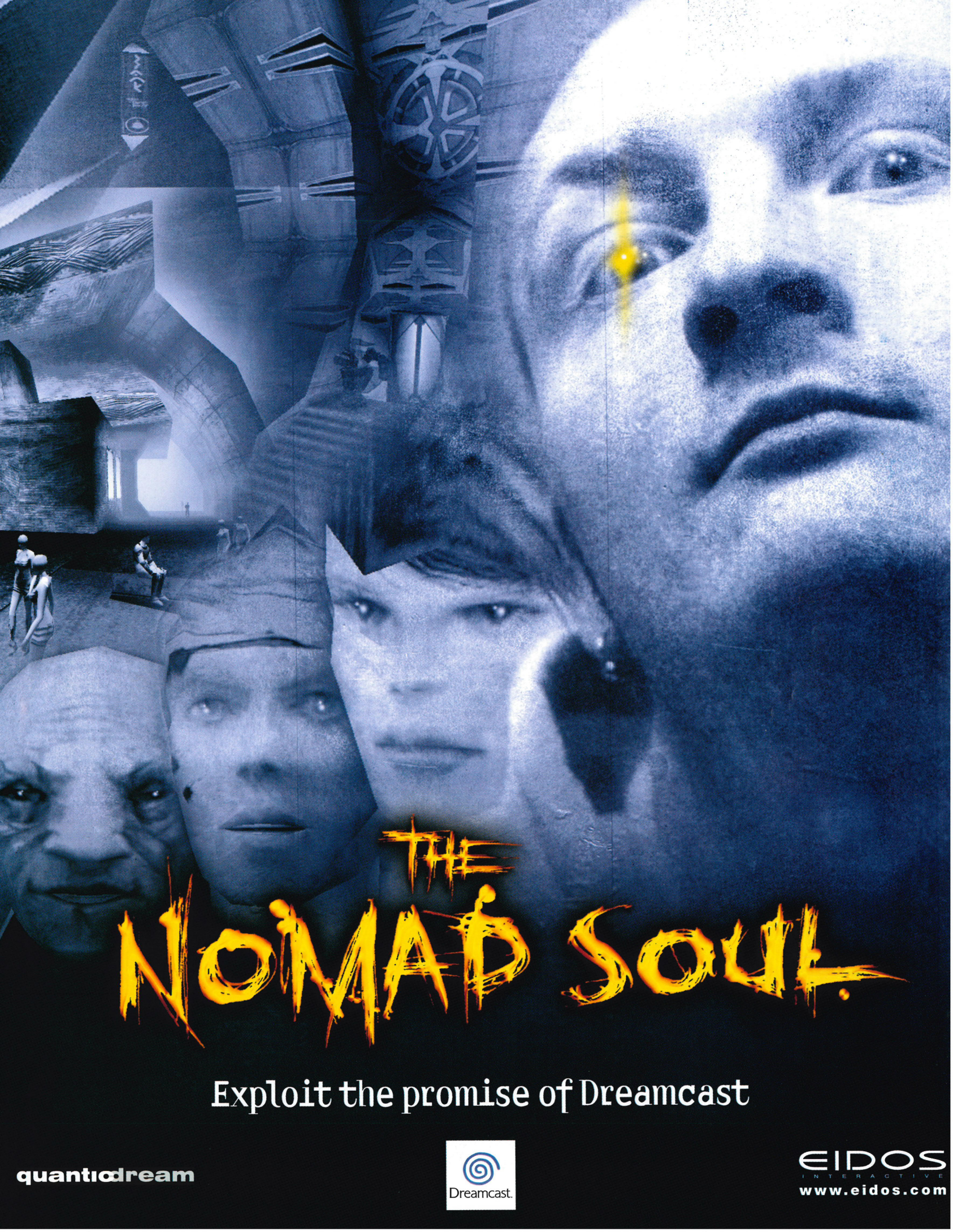
7

The ultimate out-of-body experience



An epic Action/Adventure game featuring
an original soundtrack by David Bowie and Reeves Gabrels

The Nomad Soul™. Developed by Quantic Dream. © and Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 2000. All Rights Reserved. Sega, and Dreamcast are either trademarks or registered trademarks of Sega Enterprises, Ltd.



Exploit the promise of Dreamcast

quantic dream

Dreamcast.

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
www.eidos.com

HALF-LIFE: IT'S OFFICIAL

△ *Half-Life*: it's bloody brilliant. (Sorry!)

△ Don't shoot these guys – they're your friends.

▷ Colin was shocked by the lack of online support.

Valve's classic definitely coming; *Quake III: Arena* expected to follow

VALVE SOFTWARE HAVE FINALLY confirmed what we've known for a while: that the classic first-person shooter *Half-Life* (considered by many to be the best game available on PC) is coming to Dreamcast this year. And what's more, id Software's *Quake III* looks set to follow.

Talk of *Half-Life* on Dreamcast originally came out of the Tokyo Game Show last September but, until the recent Milia exhibition in Cannes (see page 33), the game's developers had refused to comment.

Initial reports suggest that online play will not be supported on Dreamcast. The game will, however, feature an all-new solo mission created by Texan developers Gearbox Software, the people behind the highly rated *Opposing Force* expansion pack on PC. The mission will centre around Barney, a security guard at the game's Black Mesa research facility.

Overall responsibility for the conversion has fallen to Californian developers Captivation Digital Laboratories, known for creating *Quake* modifications and their work with Sega of America before Dreamcast's US launch.

An early version of *Half-Life* was shown at Milia, but Valve are promising that the finished article will have higher-resolution characters, better artificial intelligence and an even more polished look than the PC original.

"We want to create an incredible new version of *Half-Life* that takes full advantage of Dreamcast's architecture," said Valve head honcho Gabe Newell. *Half-Life* has won widespread acclaim for its deeply involving single-player mode. Nevertheless, it will still be something of a disappointment if the conversion lacks a deathmatch mode.

The good news is that id Software's *Quake III: Arena*, released on PC at the end of last year, also looks set to appear on Dreamcast *with* full online facilities.

Games-related websites have been buzzing with talk of a conversion since comments supposedly made by Sega of America's public relations agency in February. However, it seems they may have jumped the gun a little - Sega assure us that there has been no official statement on *Quake III: Arena*, either here or in the US. Id Software, the game's developers, have also keeping quiet on the matter.

While no official announcement had been made by the time *Official Dreamcast Magazine* went to press, we understand that news on the game *is* due very soon, with Sega likely to reveal full plans for online gaming in Europe within the next few weeks.

Expect more details in next month's edition of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, on sale Thursday 6 April.

WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT?

So why is *Half-Life* "the best PC game ever"?

Since its release in late 1998, *Half-Life* has sold more than 1.5 million copies and won stacks of awards. You play Gordon Freeman, an employee at the Black Mesa Research Facility in New Mexico. Your role is to fight off a mysterious alien invasion, and government troops sent on a cover-up, using just your natural reflexes, highly developed cunning and, of course, lots and lots of big guns.

On the surface *Half-Life* is a simple *Quake*-type shooter, but it's more than just a frag 'em up. It's held in high esteem by PC gamers for its detailed plot, clever character interaction, and the advanced artificial intelligence of the enemies.

Half-Life is considered by many to be one of the most emotionally involving games ever, up there with the likes of *Resident Evil*. It is, in short, very, very good.

△ If your cunning tricks don't kill the aliens, try using guns.

FEEL THE FORCE

First shots of *Star Wars Episode I: Racer* on DC

JUST AS THE PHANTOM MENACE is released on video (see page 30), LucasArts have confirmed that *Star Wars Episode I: Racer* is due on Dreamcast soon, with more *Star Wars* titles to come in the future.

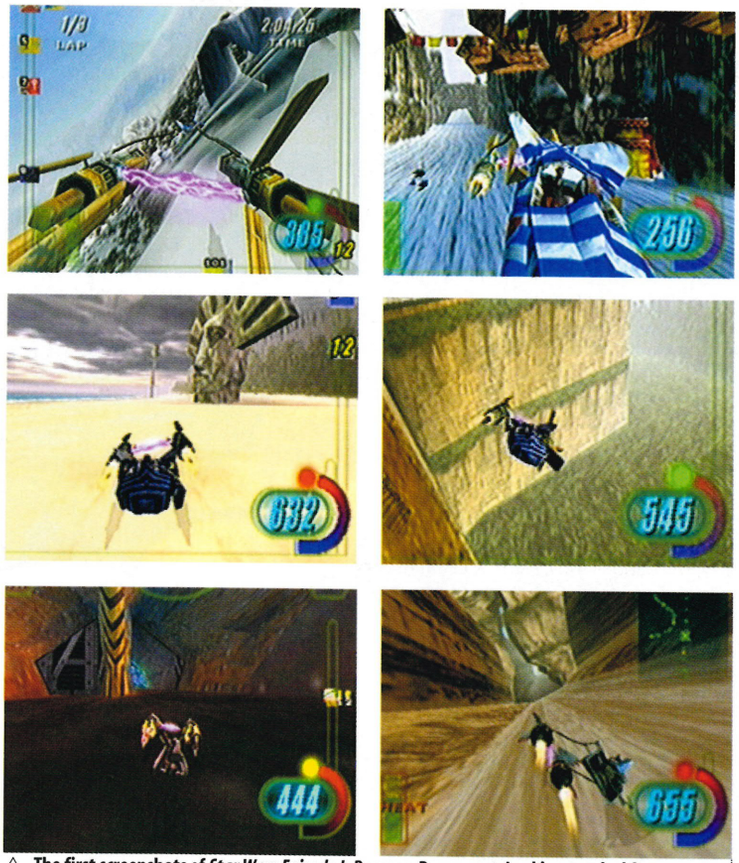
We actually reported that LucasArts were working on a Dreamcast version of the game in our November issue (*ODM* #1), but the screenshots here are the first to be shown to the public.

Racer is a *WipEout*-esque racing game that puts you in the shoes of Anakin Skywalker, based on the scene in *Phantom Menace* where he takes part in futuristic pod racing.

The game was released last year on other platforms, but the Dreamcast version will have enhanced graphics and extra cut-scenes.

Aside from a two-player, split-screen mode, *Racer* will also have an online rankings system similar to that of *Sega Rally 2*, so you can compare your fastest times with other gamers throughout Europe.

"With *Star Wars: Racer*'s graphic realism and speed, it's the ideal title with which to debut on Dreamcast," said a LucasArts spokesperson. "There are more exciting titles to come though, and we're looking forward to supporting Sega's continued success in the console market."



△ **The first screenshots of *Star Wars Episode I: Racer* on Dreamcast. Looking good, eh?**

There's no news on what these "exciting" titles will be, but we're hoping to see a conversion of Sega's *Star Wars Trilogy* arcade game. LucasArts are expected to release a couple of new games in 2001 to tie in with the next *Star Wars* movie.

Publishers Activision have yet to announce a precise release date for *Star Wars Episode I: Racer*, but reports suggest the game could well hit UK shelves in time for Easter.

FEELING SAUCY, BABY?

First Austin Powers game due out this summer

Take 2 Interactive, have announced their intention to release a Dreamcast game based on the *Austin Powers* movies later this year, but are keeping mum on exactly what sort of game it will be.

It's thought that the company – also responsible for the controversial *Grand Theft Auto* games and *Wild Metal* (reviewed on page 84) – have held the rights to the shagadelic film franchise for some time. The licence covers all the characters in the films, including Dr Evil, Mini-Me and Fat Bastard.

While specific details on the game are tightly under wraps, work is already well under way on the project. It's currently set for a US release in July, and is expected to hit UK stores soon after.

Naturally, we'll bring you more news on the game in Official Dreamcast Magazine just as soon as we have it. Yeah, baby!

△ **Austin: coming to DC, but in what form?**

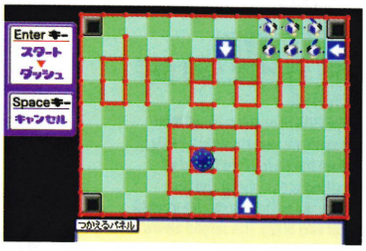
GAMES NEWS

BIG IN JAPAN

Dreamcast titles figure strongly in the nominations for the forthcoming Japanese Entertainment Software Awards. *Shenmue*, *Soul Calibur*, *Seaman* and *Space Channel 5* (above) received multiple nominations for various awards, including those for Best Game Design, Best Graphics and Best Characters. In the Best Programming category, Dreamcast games took four of the five nominations.

SPEEDING TO DC?

The Bitmap Brothers may be bringing *Speedball 2100* to Dreamcast. The update of the legendary futuristic ball game was expected to be a PlayStation-only release, but we understand that there could be an official announcement regarding a DC edition soon. It's not known who would publish it, but Empire is responsible for the PS version.



CHU ON THIS!

Sega Japan have put a Shockwave demo of *Chu Chu Rocket* on their website that enables you to play 25 single-player levels from the Dreamcast game. The downside is that you can't actually play it from your Dreamcast – you need to us a Mac or PC instead. Head to www.sega.co.jp/sega/puzzle/game.html

WIGGLE IT AGAIN?

Team 17 may be preparing a follow-up to *Worms Armageddon* (*ODM* #3, 8/10) and the new game could even be here by the end of the year. The project hasn't yet got the green light, but if it does, online play is virtually certain to figure, with rumours that Team 17 are investigating the possibility of enabling Dreamcast players to link up with PC opponents for deathmatch action.

MULTIPLE CLIMAX GAMES

British firm Climax (not to be confused with the Japanese developer) have announced details of three Dreamcast games under development. *Roswell Conspiracies* is a 3D action adventure, based on an upcoming TV series. Meanwhile, *Title Fight* is a boxing game, and *Stunt Driver* is a stunt-based racer. Publishers for the last two haven't been announced, but *Roswell* will be handled by Red Storm.

HEAR THIS!
DA BEST NEW MUSIC

VARIOUS ARTISTS
THE BEACH
LONDON

This soundtrack features new tracks from Leftfield, Underworld, Faithless, Orbital and New Order. A random selection of mellow, bongo-based tunes helps keep summer mood for 76 minutes, with a few others spicing/messing it up – the scrappy William Orbit mix of Blur's *On Your Own*, for one. A nice collection, but ultimately only interesting to fans after the exclusive stuff. *EL*

SIX BY SEVEN
THE CLOSER YOU GET
MANTRA

If you like your guitars *loud*, then chances are you'll love this. Six By Seven have perfected the art of starting songs quietly and then gradually piling on extra layers until your ears bleed. This second album is more focused than their debut, although the band have lost none of their intensity. You want a snappy comparison? Radiohead and Spiritualised covering The Velvet Underground, with amps on full. Ace stuff, basically. *SD*

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY MUSIC
LONDON

ADF return with their unique blend of (in no particular order) dub, politics, guitars, drum 'n' bass and, yes, Asian flavas. The single *Real Great Britain* is excellent, as are most of the instrumentals, but *Community Music* generally lacks the killer hooklines that made the group's debut album *Rafi's Revenge* so instantly compelling. Still, if you're a fan it's sure to grow on you. *WC*

DEAD CERT

FINALLY! UK RELEASE DETAILS CONFIRMED FOR TECMO'S BABE-FEST *DEAD OR ALIVE 2*

ACCLAIM HAVE SNAPPED UP the rights to publish the Dreamcast version of Tecmo's hot-looking arcade beat 'em up *Dead Or Alive 2* in the UK and are planning a May 26 release.

The game will include Arcade, Versus, Practice and Survival options, along with the much-vaunted four-player tag mode. All but two of the characters from the original *Dead Or Alive* coin-op (released on Saturn and PlayStation) have made it into the sequel to join several new fighters (12 in total).

It's perhaps inevitable that much attention will surround *Dead Or Alive 2*'s salacious aspects. Aside from featuring an array of busty female fighters, it's also rumoured that the game will feature a self-explanatory 'schoolgirl costume' mode (presumably aimed at Britney Spears fans).

We'll be sure to check it out when we get our grubby hands on the first UK version of the game in time for a full preview next month.

△ No, it's not Hulk Hogan. Really.

△ Beware mean women fighters.

◁ Young Kasumi, pictured shortly before bursting.

CREATURE COMFORTS

KALISTO FIGHT TOOTH AND CLAW

We've managed to blag some new info on *Nightmare Creatures II*, the forthcoming action-adventure from French developers Kalisto.

The game sees you play Wallace, a man bent on revenge against demonic scientist Adam Crowley, who has previously used you as a guinea pig in unspeakable experiments.

Nightmare Creatures II will play out over 30 levels, in nine locations that include London and Paris. There are 22 monsters to fight, each with their own unique combat abilities. You can either fight them at close quarters, or use one of the eight combat power-ups and spells in the game.

Metal fans will be rejoicing at the news that Rob Zombie is providing music for the game. And the rest of us? Well, that's what volume controls were made for! *Nightmare Creatures II* is due out in April.

△ Not the best-looking game character, it's fair to say.

RETURN OF THE DARK

Infogrames brings back infamous horror series

△ *AloneIn The Dark IV* is sure to feature plenty of moody visuals.

Infogrames have announced that the fourth instalment of their *Alone In The Dark* series will be coming to Dreamcast later this year. *Alone In The Dark IV*, which is being developed by French company Darkworks, will feature the lead character of the previous three titles, Edward Carnby.

Details on the storyline are scarce, but the game begins with the murder of Charles Fiske, Carnby's best friend, on an island off the coast of Maine, USA. You must go to the island and get to the bottom of the sinister goings on.

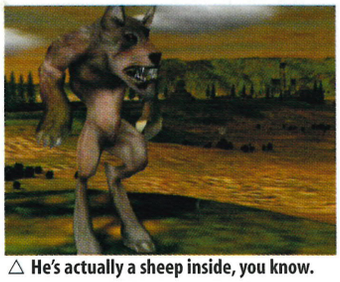
Infogrames are promising plenty of chills and suspense, as well as a pack of evil monsters. "We're pulling out all the stops for *Alone In The Dark*," promises Infogrames' David Riley. "It's known for its bone-chilling suspense and excitement. Adding the latest technology and ingenuity to it will bring the genre and the series to a whole new level in the new millennium."

BLACK & WHITE ANNOUNCED

Who needs a PC, eh? Peter Molyneux's hot new project is on its way to Dreamcast

ANOTHER BIG STORY at Milia in February was Sega's announcement that *Black & White* is coming to Dreamcast. The game, due out by the end of the year, will make full use of Dreamcast's online multiplayer facilities.

Black & White is a god game that sees you play a powerful wizard king, ruling over tribes in a good or evil style depending on your preference. You can teach your subjects new skills, reward them for good tasks and punish them for, well, any reason you like.



△ He's actually a sheep inside, you know.

△ Another big crowd at Leyton Orient.

PC mags have been getting very excited about *Black & White* for several reasons. Besides a whole host of technical jiggery pokery – bump mapping, light sourcing, through-the-eye vision etc – it also uses special 'gesture recognition' technology that enables you to cast spells simply by moving the controller in certain patterns.

Another innovation is your 'creature' that wanders around the world doing your bidding. Depending on how good or evil you are, it changes its appearance to fit. While the single-player game sees you dealing with the day-to-day business of keeping your kingdom in check, multiplayer mode enables you to pit your custom-evolved creature against other players.

Peter Molyneux was a co-founder of world famous developers Bullfrog, and has been reponsible for classic games like *Populous*, *Syndicate*, *Theme Park* and *Dungeon Keeper*. He left Bullfrog two years ago to set up development company Lionhead. *Black & White* is their first project.

△ Q: Where do you find a turtle with no legs? A: Right where you left him.

"Dreamcast will be able to make the very most of every aspect of the game, from its strong visuals to its wide-ranging multiplayer and network capabilities," said Molyneux. "I can't wait to play it on Dreamcast myself!"

He's not the only one, that's for sure. Expect us to follow this one closely in future issues of *ODM*.

RAILROAD II ON TRACK

Build your very own rail service and show Virgin Trains a thing or two

Tremor Entertainment are working on a Dreamcast version of the popular strategy title *Railroad Tycoon II*.

The game puts you in the shoes of a budding rail entrepreneur, running freight and passenger services.

Unlike the existing PC and PlayStation versions, the DC edition will be fully 3D.

"We really should call it *Railroad Tycoon III*, because we've enhanced it so dramatically," said Rod Barr, Tremor's creative director. "We've also improved the game's interface to take full advantage of the Dreamcast controller."

The game is likely to be released in late spring, probably through Take 2 Interactive.

△ Watch out for leaves on the line, eh?

GAMES NEWS

DREAMCAST CHAMPION

The first ever US Sega Dreamcast Championships were held in Las Vegas last month, and gamer Mark Adams walked away with a cool $15,000 (around £9,300) after beating off the challenges from three other finalists on *Sonic Adventure*. Mark managed to grab 237 rings on the game's SkyDeck stage to win the competition and take home the cash and plenty of prizes. Good work, fella.

KONAMI SIGN UP STARS

Konami are working on a batch of sports titles for Dreamcast, and have been busily signing up big names to promote them. Top sprinter Maurice Green will be spearheading a track and field game, while Konami's baseball and basketball sims will be promoted by a pair of ultra-famous US stars who, being British, we've never heard of.

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

Online rumours are buzzing at the prospect of a Muppets game coming to Dreamcast. The loveable Jim Henson creatures are already confirmed for a racing game on PlayStation called *Muppets Race Mania*, but developers Travellers Tales have hinted that a Dreamcast version is also on the cards.

SWATCH IT!

More details gave emerged on the partnership between Sega and Swiss watch manufacturers Swatch. The companies are jointly developing a service called Internet & Wearable which will enable Dreamcasts owners to download data from the Net and then transfer it to a special Swatch Access watch, or vice versa.

SEGA'S NET GAINS

Sega have revealed that 200,000 people have so far signed up to their European Internet service – nearly a third of all Dreamcast owners – making Sega one of the fastest growing Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Europe. Sega's latest survey shows users logging in regularly to the Dreamarena chat rooms and email services.

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON VHS

STAR WARS EPISODE ONE: THE PHANTOM MENACE
OUT APR 3 • CERT 12 • £16.99

Brace yourselves – it's that time again. If you're one of the few who doesn't know the plot, it concerns Jedi-meister Qui Gon Jin (Liam Neeson) and the young Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor), who are out to settle a dispute between the peaceful planet Naboo and the Trade Federation. The acting's wooden apart from Neeson, but the computer-generated graphics are great. Well, except for ridiculous alien rasta Jar Jar Binks. Whatever your opinion, no video collection would be complete without it. *CE*

FINAL CUT
OUT NOW • CERT 18 • £12.99

At the wake of their mate Jude (Jude Law), a group of friends find themselves being filmed by a camera crew. Jude's wife Sadie (Sadie Frost) explains that she's finishing a home movie her husband was making before his death. When they sit down to watch it, they're confronted by footage of themselves that's been secretly filmed. The results are predictably cringeworthy. Final Cut is a hilarious and brilliantly original fiasco by the best of the Brit-pack. *CE*

AMERICAN PERFEKT
OUT MAR 17 • CERT 18 • £12.99

Excellent off-the-wall road movie thriller in which ditzy secretary Amanda Plummer and her grungy drifter sister Fairuza Balk get on the wrong side of super-suave psychiatrist Robert Forster with horrific results. Acting as a catalyst for the creepy series of events, David Thewliss turns in a particularly scary performance as a barmy conman, and Mira Sorvino's dad Paul is great as the corpulent chain-smoking sheriff who must try to clear the whole thing up. *CE*

TONY HAWK SEQUEL ON THE WAY

Activision send skate fans an autumn bonus

IF YOU WERE EXCITED when we reported that *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* (previewed page 61) is coming to Dreamcast, then get ready to fall off your chair. Activision have announced that Tony *Hawk's Skateboarding 2* will be arriving this autumn, hot on the heels of its predecessor.

The new game will include a whole array of new skating moves, plus the option to create your own environments and toggle the look of your skater. There will also be several new multiplayer options, including a split-screen attack mode where you compete to perform as many tricks as possible. Additionally there'll be an option to play a skateboard version of H-O-R-S-E, which anyone who's ever played basketball at school will be well familiar with.

Although the conversion of the first Tony Hawk game is being published by Crave, the sequel is reverting to its original publishers, Activision. "*Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* was a huge success both in terms of sales and critical acclaim," said an Activision spokesperson. "With the sequel we will take the skateboarding category to new heights."

△ **The original *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* is due on DC soon.**

DISNEY DINOS FOR DC

Ubi Soft snap up a truly monstrous film licence

△ **The Disney movie's ultra-realistic dinosaurs will all feature in the game.**

UBI SOFT HAVE ANNOUNCED that they'll be bringing out Dreamcast games based on an upcoming Disney movie, *Dinosaur*.

The film, which is set for a Christmas release, features the most ambitious computer-generated dinosaurs ever. Ubi Soft claim that the games will faithfully reproduce the film's gobsmacking visuals.

It's likely that the first *Dinosaur* game will come out as close to the film as possible, with more titles following if it's a success.

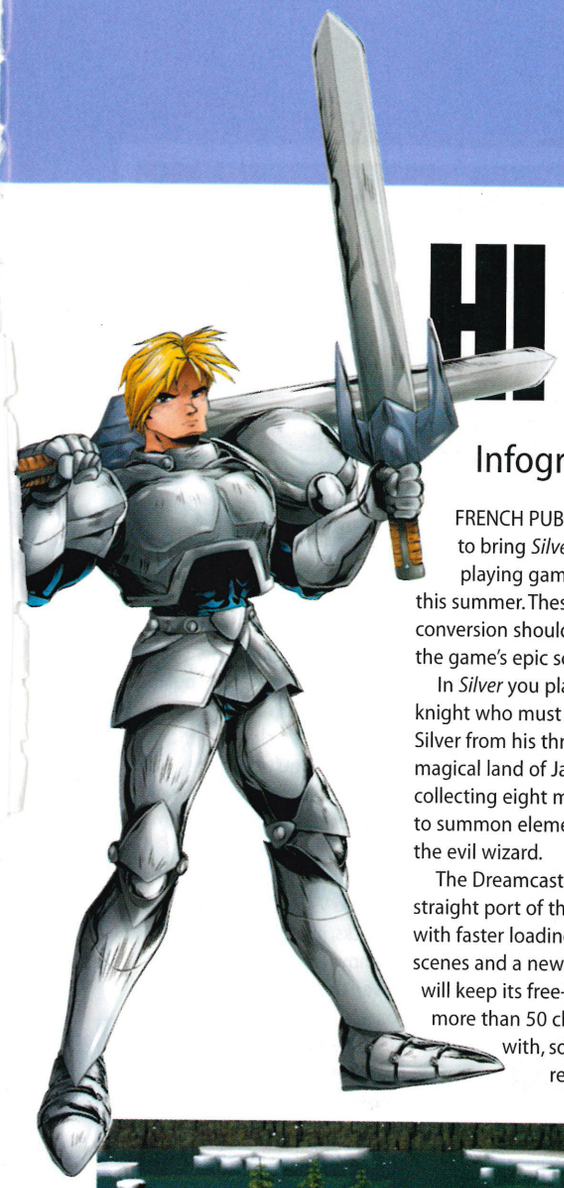
The game will star Aladar, an iguanadon with "a unique destiny". Ubi Soft aren't saying what form the game will take, but it's thought that it will be a 3D action adventure of some sort. We do know that the plot involves travelling back in time and meeting various dinosaurs, who will lead you "back to peace".

Ubi Soft claim that the game will feature "pterodactyls, lemurs and other types of dinosaurs", but it's highly likely that a tyrannosaurus rex will also make an appearance. Sadly, Ubi Soft's reputation for producing family-friendly titles makes it unlikely that you'll be able to take control of the big fella and rip smaller dinos to pieces.

We'll bring you first shots and more info as soon as it's available.

HI HO SILVER

Infogrames line-up role-playing game for DC



FRENCH PUBLISHERS Infogrames are to bring *Silver*, their popular PC role-playing game (RPG), to Dreamcast this summer. These first shots of the conversion should give you some idea of the game's epic scale.

In *Silver* you play David, a mystical knight who must unseat the evil sorcerer Silver from his throne as ruler of the magical land of Jarrah. You do this by collecting eight magical orbs enable you to summon elemental forces to battle the evil wizard.

The Dreamcast version will be a straight port of the PC edition, albeit with faster loading times between scenes and a new 'easy' mode. The game will keep its free-roaming style, with more than 50 characters to interact with, some of whom can be recruited to your cause.

As well as all the swords and sorcery of traditional RPGs, *Silver* also has an innovative combat system that has you battling enemies in real time rather than being turn-based. There are also 16 different weapons to choose from, and a unique battle method that uses Dreamcast's analog pad to give you maximum control.

Infogrames are promising that you'll never experience the same situation twice as you explore the land of Jarrah, and the game world is made up of several different areas, including the tranquil island of Haven, the icy plains of Winter and the underground rivers of blood at Metalon.

The Dreamcast version of *Silver* is due for release in June, so you can look forward to a full preview in *Official Dreamcast Magazine* real soon.

△ Cor, doesn't that snowfall look lovely?

△ Now that looks like a good place to relax on holiday.

WAR: WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

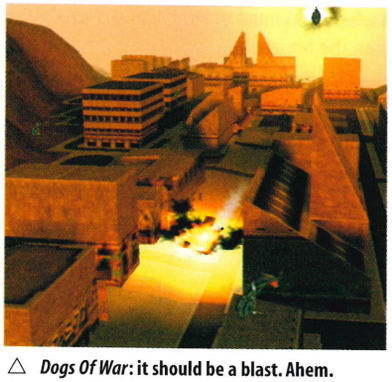
Dreamcast gaming, that's what

TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE are to release tactical wargame *Dogs Of War* on Dreamcast later this year after snapping up rights from developers Silicon Dreams.

Set over 25 gigantic levels, *Dogs Of War* will see you command one of three vast armies struggling for supremacy on an alien planet.

Gameplay is said to combine 3D arcade action with the strategic resource management found in heavyweight PC titles such as *Command & Conquer* and *Total Annihilation*. There will be more than 35 unit types to choose from, enabling you to evolve your own in-depth tactics: for example, you could muster a 100-unit army, or choose to go commando with a lone sniper.

The PC version enables eight-player battles on networks, but Silicon Dreams have yet to confirm whether the Dreamcast version will have an online mode. *Dogs Of War* is expected to hit stores around September.



△ *Dogs Of War*: it should be a blast. Ahem.

GAMES NEWS

ULTIMATE BRAWLING ACTION

Crave Entertainment have released the first screenshots of *Ultimate Fighting Championship* on Dreamcast. The company is aiming to present the no-holds-barred sport as realistically as possible, rather than use the larger-than-life approach seen in games like *Ready 2 Rumble*. *UFC* will feature more than 20 real-life fighters, as well as a career mode and an option to create your own fighter.

DREAMCAST ON THE BOX

No, we're not talking about *Watchdog*. In Japan, Fuji Television have created a wacky combination of a Dreamcast console and a television set. The catchily named Devers 2000 Series CX-1 is shaped like one of the main characters from dancing game *Space Channel 5*. The limited edition machine will be in Japanese stores from March 21 for a bargain price of ¥88,888 (around £530).

VIRTUA COP 2 OVER HERE?

We've known for a while that a Dreamcast conversion of Saturn classic *Virtua Cop 2* is coming out, but it wasn't expected to make it over here. Well, not until now, that is. It's still only a rumour, but the game looks likely to get a US release this summer, which would increase the likelihood of a UK release. More news as soon as we get it.

KOF INTO THE THIRD DIMENSION

Fans of the legendary *King Of Fighters* beat 'em up series have been looking forward to the day when a 3D version would come out, and now it seems their wishes may come true. It's understood that SNK are working on a *King Of Fighters* 3D arcade game that's likely to use Sega's Naomi board. A Dreamcast conversion would be quick and easy, and could therefore be out by the end of the year.

ARMADA RETURNS

Metro3D are already working on a follow-up to their strategic shoot 'em up *Armada* (*ODM* #4 4/10). *Armada 2* is due to be released towards the end of the year, and is highly likely to feature some form of online play. There's no news on what other new features the game will include, but with a September release date in the US, here's hoping it hops across the Atlantic quickly.

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON DVD

AMERICAN PIE
OUT NOW • CERT 15 • £19.99

If *There's Something About Mary* marked a new era in American teen-angst movies, then *American Pie* takes the gross-out comedy formula a step further.

It follows the exploits of five high-school buddies trying to get laid before Prom Night, and features gags about semen, fellatio and masturbation, outdoing even Mary's infamous hair gel scene. Extras here include commentary from the directors, first-hand accounts from the cast, and out-takes. Not for those of a prudish disposition. *CE*

SOUTH PARK: BIGGER, LONGER AND UNCUT
OUT MAR 27 • CERT 15 • £19.99

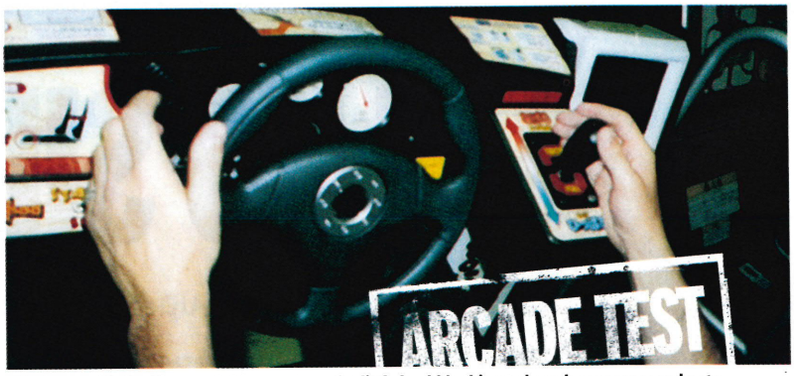
People didn't expect Matt Stone and Trey Parker's big-screen take on their caustic cartoon to work as a feature-length movie, but they were proved wrong. The plotline is barmy: the mothers of South Park start a war against Canada after a Terence and Philip movie causes an explosion in underage swearing. There's a string of brilliant songs, heaps of obscenity and some superb in-jokes – too many for you to catch in one sitting, in fact. Make sure you don't miss out. *CE*

PINK FLOYD THE WALL
OUT NOW • CERT 15 • £19.99

The visualisation of the epic yet severely twisted 70s rock album, following the decline of a burned-out rock star (Bob Geldof) into paranoia and madness, illustrated with both film and animations by Gerald Scarfe. It's a great-looking film with some ingenious scenes, but is unbearably hard going for anyone not into Roger Waters's extremely heavy concept. For those who are though, this DVD is a dream, coming with missing scenes, extra documentaries, running commentary, trailers, production photos and lots more. *EL*

PHOTOGRAPHY: **ED LOMAS**

△ Check out the zebra skin seat. Classy stuff.



△ Steer with the big round thing, and use the little knobbly thing to launch your ropes and nets.

SAFARI SO GOODIE

Catching fish? Boring. Catching lions from a speeding jeep? Now that's more like it! **ED LOMAS** reports from deepest Africa

IT'S A HARD LIFE being a park ranger these days. No more casually stopping hat-wearing bears from pilfering sandwiches out of picnic baskets. Nowadays it's all flat-out, rip-roaring action, thanks to *Jambo! Safari*, the latest game in Sega's 'Real Life Career' series.

Your objective sounds simple enough: find and capture a set number of wild animals from the African savannah as quickly as possible so that they can be examined and tagged back at base camp. But this being a Sega game, it's not quite as straightforward as that.

After choosing one of four rangers to control (the moustachioed old gent in the pith helmet's the coolest), you head out on to the plain where you must use your binoculars to scan the horizon for big game. Different animals are worth different numbers of points, with the faster, more intelligent creatures naturally being worth more than the dumb wildebeest. After choosing a target animal, you set off after it in an open-top jeep, homing in using a handy on-screen radar. The idea is to get behind the fleeing beast, then chuck a lasso around its neck and reel it close enough to be caught in your net. Kind of like a cross between *Crazy Taxi* and *Sega Bass Fishing*, really.

The control system is what makes *Jambo! Safari* such hectic fun. As well as brake and accelerate pedals plus a responsive steering wheel, the cabinet has a gear shift-style lever to the right which is used to throw the lasso: a simple shove forwards when the target animal is running directly in front of your jeep, and 'bingo!', you've got the bugger snared. A power bar appears at the top of the screen to show the amount of tension on the rope as you desperately throw your jeep around, trying to keep up. By pulling back on the lever you can shorten the rope and pull your catch closer to the speeding jeep. Once you've got the animal in range, another quick shove on the lever launches the net to catch him.

Action replays even show off particularly skilful catches as though they were Jean-Claude Van Damme roundhouse kicks, just to add to the drama. Every now and then, after completing various stages you get to take on a 'boss' character – a one-on-one straight hunt for a particularly tricky creature against a tight time limit.

It's a surprisingly difficult game to explain, but extremely easy to understand and play. Having to keep control of a high-speed jeep with one hand while waiting for the perfect moment to launch your net with the other is edge-of-your-seat stuff, and the way each animal moves differently keeps things interesting. The bigger, faster creatures can actually pull your jeep all over the place, tipping it onto two wheels and even making it roll.

There are six levels in all, each with their own prize 'boss' to be caught at the end, though it won't take too many credits to work your way through to the finish. Being set in wide open deserts, the scenery's pretty minimal, but the characters and animals all look great and everything moves nice and smoothly.

Jambo! Safari is stupid, over-the-top fun, and a fantastic way to spend a bit of quality arcade time. Don't hold your breath for a DC version though – it isn't likely to translate too well to the home unless Sega add masses of new features.

△ Yee-haw! I'm gonna bag mahself a gee-raff!"

△ The rangers enjoy a cuppa while they wait.

JAMBO! SAFARI
DEVELOPER: **SEGA AM1**
FORMAT: **NAOMI SIT-DOWN AND STAND-UP CABINETS**
COST: **£1**
AVAILABILITY: **SELECTED ARCADES**
DUE ON DC: **UNCONFIRMED**

△ DreamEye will function as a video phone...

△ ...or as a standalone digital camera!

△ *MSR*, *Ecco* and *Tomb Raider*: big-name Dreamcast releases on show at Milia.

SEGA GOES TO MILIA

New Dreamcast webcam – Sega's future plans

SEGA HAD A STRONG presence at this year's Milia interactive entertainment exhibition in Cannes. Besides announcing that *Half-Life* and *Black & White* are Dreamcast-bound (see pages 26 and 29 for more details), Sega also sprung a surprise by revealing details of their new Dreamcast Camera.

Sega president Shoichiro Irimajiri was one of the main speakers at the show, and during his presentation he unveiled the new camera, spoke about the company's plans for Dreamcast in the future, and revealed healthy sales of the console.

△ The Sega president addresses Milia.

The camera, DreamEye, is roughly the size of an average wallet, and can be used either to take normal pictures or as a webcam.

The camera will be on sale in Japan soon, and hopefully over here by the end of the year. It will come with free image editing software, provisionally titled DreamPhotoFun, which enables you to edit your photos and also convert them into greetings cards to send by email.

Also on show at Milia was a trio of big-name upcoming Dreamcast titles: *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*, *Metropolis Street Racer* and *Ecco The Dolphin*. What's more, Sega Europe president JF Cecillon countered reports of a lack of software for Dreamcast by promising that 150 titles are due to be released this year.

Sega also announced that more than 4.4 million Dreamcasts have now been sold worldwide, with 300,000 of those in the UK. More than a million people are now accessing the Internet through their consoles, but Sega's ambitious online plans go way beyond simple access via telephone lines.

According to Irimajiri, in the future you'll be able to download music and movies, and watch live events using your Dreamcast. It'll work using 'broadband' access via cable technology or special optical fibres to upload and download gigabytes of multimedia content.

"The Internet is not fast enough for the interactive content designed to take advantage of it," said the Sega president. Sega are already testing their cable modem service in Japan, and all being well it should make it to the UK late this year or early in 2001.

Finally, Sega confirmed that they are looking at bringing peripherals like the DVD drive, MP3 player and Zip drive to Europe in the future, but haven't yet decided exactly when. It's rumoured that the company are also working on a larger Visual Memory unit (VM) with enough memory to hold large multimedia files.

The only disappointment was the lack of news about online gaming in Europe. Japanese Dreamcast owners are already playing games like *Chu Chu Rocket* and *Sega Rally 2* online, while US gamers are gearing up for the launch of their online gaming network this month, again with *Chu Chu Rocket*.

Before Milia, there were rumours that Sega were going to announce when us Europeans can join the party, but they turned out to be false. As soon as we hear of a concrete date, we'll let you know the news.

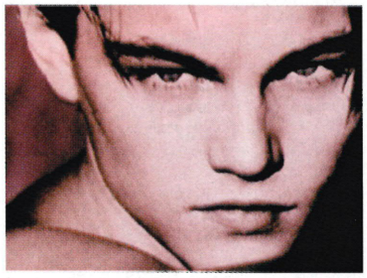
GAMES NEWS

CUNNING LINGUISTICS

Yes, we know that the first chapter of *Shenmue* isn't out for a while yet, but in Japan details are already surfacing about the second instalment. Game creator Yu Suzuki has apparently promised that it will feature less voice acting, meaning that translation will be a much quicker process. Okay, so it's still a long way off, but it's nice to know they care about us Westerners.

LET'S GET READY

Midway's *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* (*ODM* #1, 9/10) is getting a new lease of life – on a record. Samples from the game have been used in a track called *K.O.*, released on Middle Row Records. It's already been featured on DJ crew the Dreem Teem's radio show. You can check it out on your Dreamcast by heading to www.middlerow.co.uk/dc.html



LEO LOVES HIS

The Beach star Leonardo di Caprio has confessed his latest addiction. No, not the blondes, Dreamcast. Apparently, when the mood takes him Leo just can't keep his hands off his new console. "I'm a videogame freak," he said. "Once I get playing it becomes like a drug." No wonder he's been piling on the pounds recently.

SECOND DOWN

We weren't too keen on *Quarterback Club 2000* (*ODM* #3, 5/10), but the game has obviously done well in the States, as Acclaim have announced a sequel. The cunningly named *Quarterback Club 2001* will be out over there towards the end of the year, and will feature smoother animation, better controls and better player AI. No news on a UK release yet.

RETURN OF THE DRAC

According to online reports, one of Eidos's US representatives has confirmed that there will be a *Soul Reaver* sequel on Dreamcast. Although *Legacy Of Kain* has only just come out in the UK, it's been out for a while in the US and has sold well. No release date for the new game has been announced.

"If it's high speed and mayhem that you want then Roadsters has what it takes."

Dreamcast Magazine

"Roadsters offers the thrill of racing and lots more."

"Roadsters is all about the ultimate arcade experience."

Dreamcast Monthly

"Roadsters is a winner"

IGN.com

If the volcanoes, earthquakes, avalanches and tornadoes don't get you, the other drivers will.

Roadsters – a white-knuckle ride of a game. Pure arcade racing at unmatched levels of speed. Over 20 licensed convertibles, including a Corvette and a Lotus Elise, to throw around 8 different tracks that test your endurance as well as your driving skill. Completing a tournament can take days, even weeks of practice. Short cuts and secret routes help, as does customising your vehicle. But just one slip and you've blown it. Then there are the 'Acts of God' to contend with - avalanches, earthquakes, tornadoes and volcanic eruptions. You've been warned. This is no jaunt around town.

ROADSTERS Dreamcast TITUS PLAYER 1

www.titusgames.com

Also available on PLAYSTATION, N64 and GBC.

© 2000 Titus. Developed by Player 1. All rights reserved. All trademarks and logos are the property of their respective owners. Sega and Dreamcast are either trademarks or registered trademarks of Sega Enterprises Limited.

SARGE HEADS FOR DREAMCAST

Midway sign up 3DO's military game

MIDWAY ARE BRINGING *Army Men: Sarge's Heroes* to Dreamcast, having signed the rights from the game's original developers, 3DO. The game is part of 3DO's *Army Men* series which has already hit PlayStation, Nintendo 64 and PC in various guises.

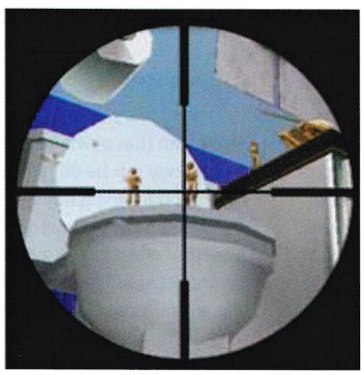
Sarge's Heroes is a 3D action/adventure where you take control of a green plastic toy soldier and must run, jump and crawl around giant house environments.

It's a bit like *Toy Commander*, but with little green men instead of vehicles.

There's a variety of World War II weapons, including shotguns, grenades, mines and even flame-throwers. There's no news on what enhancements there'll be on Dreamcast, but at the very least the graphics will get an overhaul.

The original game featured split-screen, four-player deathmatch modes, but Midway haven't confirmed whether the Dreamcast version will support online gaming. A release date hasn't been firmed up yet, but the game should be out this summer.

△ It's *Toy Commander* with little green men!



△ Flush 'em out then go in for the kill.

HAVE YOUR SAY

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

There are a zillion Dreamcast games in development around the world, but which ones are getting you most excited? Let us know and, courtesy of Sega, you could blag a Visual Memory unit (worth around £19.99) for absolutely nothing.

To vote, simply e-mail us at vote@dreamcastmag.co.uk using the subject heading 'Vote DC!'. Please include, in order, a list of the five games you're most looking forward to, with the most keenly anticipated at the top. You must also include your name, age and full postal address. Note: these details will not be passed on to anyone else.

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

There's no closing date, as this is an on-going competition with a winner drawn from the virtual hat each and every month. Only one entry from each reader will be accepted each calendar month. Anyone submitting more will be disqualified from the competition. For logistical reasons we can *only* accept votes by email.

This month's lucky winner is 18-year-old Ruari O'Connor from Balham, London, who went for *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*, *Shenmue*, *Half-Life*, *Metropolis Street Racer* and *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*. A VM unit is on its way, Ruari. Thanks to everyone else who voted. Keep 'em coming, folks.

YOUR MOST WANTED

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

1 (1) SHENMUE (SEGA)

FIRST 37% | TOP 5 80% | ETA TBC

God, you want this game badly, don't you? It's been top of the Most Wanted chart since we started it. As we wrote last month though, its UK release is a long, long way off. Forget it for a while – please!

2 (4) RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA (EIDOS)

FIRST 11% | TOP 5 66% | ETA JUN

We've seen quite a lot of *Code: Veronica* and, yes, it's going to be a corker. In fact there are a few people in this office who would buy it just for the stunning intro sequence! Check out the latest details on page 60.

3 (2) METROPOLIS STREET RACER (SEGA)

FIRST 8% | TOP 5 52% | ETA MAY

An inexplicable drop for Bizarre Creations' racer which we've been following closely over the last few issues. No fresh news this month, but we figured the awesome rolling demo on our cover disc would be enough!

4 (6) HALF-LIFE (HAVAS)

FIRST 7% | TOP 5 34% | ETA TBC

Weird one, this. Sega of Japan announced last September that this excellent PC first-person shooter would be coming to DC. Then everything went quiet… and now it's now been officially confirmed. Again. See page 26.

5 (5) SEGA GT (SEGA)

FIRST 2% | TOP 5 33% | ETA TBC

This has just hit stores in Japan as we write, and it's already picking up rave reviews. Bizarrely, Sega haven't officially confirmed that it will be released in the UK. But it's sure to make it here sometime. Details on page 58.

6 (10) ECCO THE DOLPHIN (SEGA)

FIRST 3% | TOP 5 24% | ETA APR

Ecco was one of the best-known games on the Sega Mega Drive, and it's looking gorgeous on DC. It's currently scheduled to hit stores (or should that be 'land on shores'?) on April 21. Check out the preview on page 54.

7 (-) TOMB RAIDER: TLR (EIDOS)

FIRST 4% | TOP 5 18% | ETA MAR

Interesting to see this jump straight into the chart after we revealed its impending release last issue. Will it sell as well as Eidos and Sega hope? We'll soon see. You may well have noticed our world exclusive review on page 8.

8 (9) D2 (TBC)

FIRST 1% | TOP 5 14% | ETA TBC

Warp's long-awaited action-adventure has been hitting the headlines for all the wrong reasons over the last couple of months due to its, um, 'suggestive' cut-scenes. We'll bring you more news on the game real soon.

9 (8) GTA2 (TAKE 2)

FIRST 1% | TOP 5 13% | ETA APR

We were hoping to bring you a full review of Grand Theft Auto 2 this issue, but it's slipped down the release schedule a bit. Sadly, it won't have the online play of the PC edition, but should still be a corker.

10 (-) POWER STONE 2 (TBC)

FIRST 1% | TOP 5 8% | ETA TBC

We love the original Power Stone (ODM #1, 8/10), and simply can't wait for the four-player sequel. Er, except that we're going to have to. It's due out in Japan on April 27, but there's no firm news yet on a UK release date.

TBC = to be confirmed

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

RELEASE DATES: SPECIAL REPORT

THE LATE SHOWS

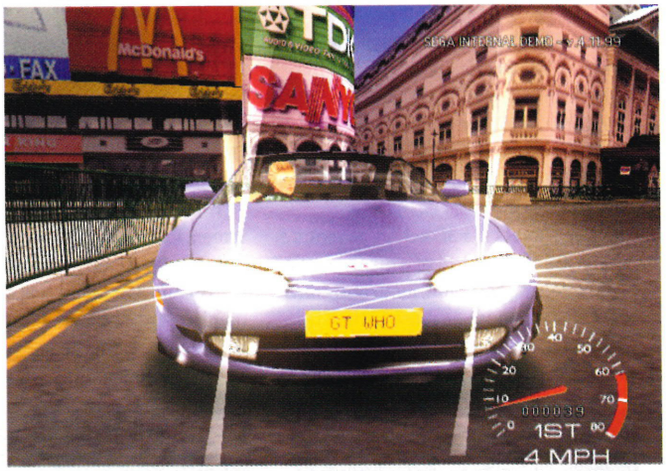
Frustrated at going to buy a hot new game, only to find that it's been delayed? Join the club! So why is it that release dates keep slipping? *ODM* investigates

WE KNOW FROM OUR BULGING mailbag here at *ODM* just how annoyed many of you have been getting with games being delayed. And we don't blame you.

Since Dreamcast was launched in October (itself three weeks late, of course), there's been a series of games that have come out later than expected – in some cases by months. So what's going on?

The first thing to say is that Dreamcast is by no means the only games machine to suffer from slippage – it happens on every gaming platform and, sadly, is fast becoming an accepted fact of life in the gaming industry.

One of the worst cases is Ion Storm's *Daikatana* for PC. Originally scheduled to appear in December '97 (not long after the first *Tomb Raider*), it's had release dates set in four different calendar years and, at the time of writing, *still* hasn't come out!



△ ***Metropolis Street Racer*: moving towards release at the speed of London traffic.**

WHY? WHY? WHY?

Generally speaking there are two different types of slippage. The first is when a game is given a loose release date well in advance, but is then put back as development progresses. Often this is to allow time to include new features, or even a minor rewrite.

Bizarre Creations' *Metropolis Street Racer*, originally expected to be available at the same time as Dreamcast in September, is a good example of this. Right now we can only take a guess at its likely release date (probably late April or early May), but the fact of the matter is that it'll be out when it's ready.

Although we all get frustrated with hold-ups, the delay should ensure an even better game. As one developer put it to us: "In such a fast-moving industry, a slip may also mean that new and exciting technology can be utilised, which is only good for the gamer."

Sometimes, however, games are all set for release, with a marketing campaign in full swing, and then slip at the very, very last minute. This is why you occasionally see magazines review games that then don't come out for a couple of months or even longer.

The policy here on *Official Dreamcast Magazine* is to review games that are due in shops in the month after we go on sale. This is to ensure that you know whether a game is worth buying when you see it on the shelves.

All games reviewed in this issue, for example, are due to come out in March or early April (other than Take Two's *Wild Metal* which, rather ominously, wasn't sent out to magazines for review until after it had been released).

Eleventh-hour delays to games which occur after we've gone to press are often related to either marketing or production problems. The latter is the case with *Sega Bass Fishing* (see panel, left), which *still* hasn't come out in the UK.

Publishers have also been known to hold back products to make improvements following negative reactions from reviewers, although the practice is quite rare.

Despite slippage being such a common phenomenon, many people in the games industry would like to see an improvement. "We should grow up and act a little more like the film and music industry," said one source who preferred not to be named. "How often do you see a film or album release date being changed? There may be production problems, but [in those industries] the product is only marketed when it is finished and ready."

For the near future, at least, slippage looks set to continue to frustrate gamers. That's why we're always careful to stress that release dates are often provisional. Rest assured that if a game is reviewed in *ODM*, then to the best of our knowledge it's due in the shops in the next month or so. If that turns out not to be the case, you know it's down to the dreaded 'S' word.

NAMED AND SHAMED

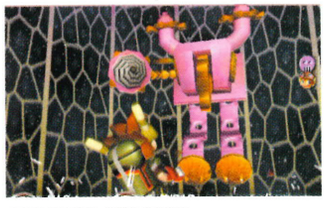
For reasons beyond our control, a few games have slipped after being reviewed in *ODM*. Here are the four worst cases...

SEGA BASS FISHING (SEGA)

REVIEWED: *ODM* #1, 7/10
WHEN WAS IT DUE OUT? October
WHAT HAPPENED? Sega had problems producing the rod controllers. They're now enlisting the help of a third-party manufacturer.
WHEN IS IT DUE NOW? April. Apparently.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 (VIRGIN)

REVIEWED: *ODM* #2, 8/10
WHEN WAS IT DUE OUT? December
WHAT HAPPENED? Virgin Interactive were late getting a licence from Sega to publish Dreamcast games. They've also been dallying over the inclusion of online features.
WHEN IS IT DUE NOW? April... or May.



EVOLUTION (UBI SOFT)

REVIEWED: *ODM* #3, 8/10
WHEN WAS IT DUE OUT? December
WHAT HAPPENED? Ubi Soft had last-minute problems with the Japanese-to-English translation, such as tidily fitting lots of text into small on-screen boxes. Doh!
WHEN IS IT DUE NOW? March 17. Hopefully.

RE-VOLT (ACCLAIM)

REVIEWED: *ODM* #3 7/10
WHEN WAS IT DUE OUT? December
WHAT HAPPENED? Sega's quality control dept found a couple of bugs that needed fixing.
WHEN IS IT DUE NOW? It came out in February... and shot straight to the top of the chart.

HMV

seriouslyaddictive...

Crazy Taxi

Spend a day in the life of a mad American cab driver. Try to deliver as many customers as possible to their destinations within the time limit in this smash hit, DC enhanced, arcade conversion. Shortcuts over pavements, through parks and around the backstreets are highly recommended. The quicker you get there and the more exciting the ride, the higher the tip.

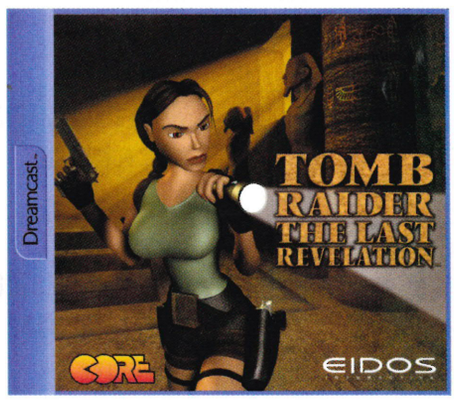
NBA 2K

The detail of the animation is amazing in this top basketball sim that includes 29 NBA teams with 400 individually modelled players, each with reactive expressions. As a licensed product, all the game and season statistics are here and the multiplayer mode supports up to four players. "Probably the best basketball sim in the world ever." DC UK

Crystal Dynamics, the Crystal Dynamics logo and Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver are Trademarks of Crystal Dynamics Inc. © Crystal Dynamics Inc. 2000 Published By Eidos Interactive Limited 2000. All Rights Reserved.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

A story of Betrayal, Intrigue and Revenge. As Raziel, stalk the shadows of Nosgoth preying upon your former vampire brethren in a quest to destroy your creator - Kain. After being betrayed and executed by Kain, return to Nosgoth on an epic mission of revenge. Gorgeous graphics and staggering atmosphere make this a milestone in 3D adventuring. "A genuine masterpiece." 90% Dreamcast Magazine



Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation & Lara Croft © & TM Core Design Limited 2000. © & Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 2000. All Rights Reserved.

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation

At last the ultimate adventure series comes to Dreamcast and Lara never looked so good. While exploring in Egypt, Lara Croft discovers a lost tomb and unwittingly unleashes its ancient evil, fulfilling a prophecy that threatens to plunge mankind into eternal darkness. In a race against time, Lara must use all her wit and skill to re-imprison Set and save the world from Armageddon.

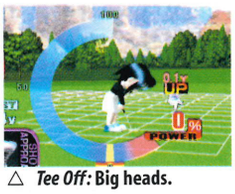
Sega and Dreamcast are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sega Enterprise Ltd.
All titles subject to availability at participating stores only.

topdogforgames

buy now from over 100 stores nationwide or www.hmv.co.uk 24 hours or 0990 33 45 78

RELEASE DATES
MARCH/APRIL 2000

Here's a list of Dreamcast titles due out in March and April, compiled with the help of HMV, Sega Europe and various game publishers. As we've explained in our 'slippage' article on page 36, release dates are extremely difficult to predict, so please, please treat this as a rough guide only.



△ *Tee Off:* **Big heads.**

MARCH 3

Tee Off (Acclaim)

MARCH 17

NBA 2K (Sega)
Rayman 2 (Ubi Soft)

MARCH 24

Slave Zero (Infogrames)
Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation (Eidos)
Zombie Revenge (Sega)

MARCH 31

Extreme Championship Wrestling (Acclaim)
MDK 2 (Virgin)
The Nomad Soul (Eidos)
Wetrix (Take 2)

△ *Dragons Blood:* **Big swords.**

APRIL

Dragons Blood (Virgin)
Ecco The Dolphin (Sega)
Evolution (Ubi Soft)
Grand Theft Auto 2 (Take 2)
Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure (Virgin)
Red Dog (Sega)
Resident Evil 2 (Virgin)
Roadsters (Virgin)
Sega Bass Fishing (Sega)
Star Wars Racer (Activision)
Street Fighter Alpha 3 (Virgin)
Tech Romancer (Virgin)
Toy Story 2 (Activision)

THE HMV TOP TEN

The ultimate guide to what's hot in the world of Dreamcast games on the streets of Great Britain

POS	LM	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RATING	REVIEWED ISSUE
1	(-)	RE-VOLT	ACCLAIM	7/10	3
2	(2)	VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1	SEGA	7/10	4
3	(1)	SHADOW MAN	ACCLAIM	6/10	3
4	(3)	SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	10/10	2
5	(-)	DEADLY SKIES	KONAMI	5/10	4
6	(4)	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	7/10	1
7	(-)	NFL BLITZ 2000	MIDWAY	7/10	1
8	(-)	NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC	MIDWAY	6/10	2
9	(-)	HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA	9/10	1
10	(-)	TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE	CRAVE	5/10	1

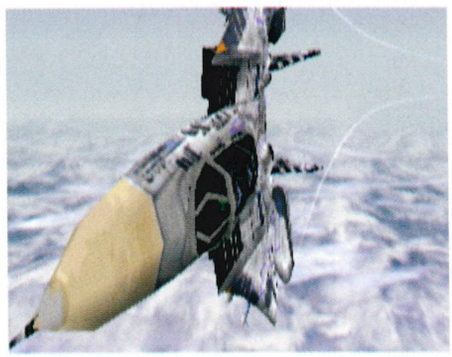
△ **Originally due out in December, *Re-Volt* finally hit shelves in February. And lots of you have bought it.**

THE ChartTrack TOP TWENTY

ELSPA

POS	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RATING	REVIEWED ISSUE
1	(-)	DEADLY SKIES	KONAMI	5/10	4
2	(1)	RE-VOLT	ACCLAIM	7/10	3
3	(2)	VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1	SEGA	7/10	4
4	(5)	SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	9/10	0
5	(4)	SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	10/10	2
6	(3)	SHADOW MAN	ACCLAIM	6/10	3
7	(6)	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	7/10	1
8	(7)	HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA	9/10	1
9	(8)	SEGA RALLY 2	SEGA	8/10	0
10	(9)	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	8/10	1
11	(10)	TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE	CRAVE	5/10	3
12	(12)	NBA SHOWTIME	MIDWAY	6/10	2
13	(11)	READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING	SEGA	9/10	1
14	(13)	NFL BLITZ 2000	MIDWAY	7/10	1
15	(18)	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	3/10	2
16	(14)	POWER STONE	EIDOS	8/10	1
17	(16)	WORMS ARMAGEDDON	HASBRO	8/10	3
18	(-)	MONACO GRAND PRIX RS2	UBI SOFT	6/10	1
19	(-)	AEROWINGS	CRAVE	6/10	1
20	(15)	SOUL FIGHTER	PIGGYBACK	6/10	2

UK sales for week ending 19 February 2000. Compiled by Chart Track © ELSPA 2000



△ *Deadly Skies*: **bizarrely, sales have been sky-high. Snigger.**

CHART ANALYSIS

BLIMEY. WHEN WE GAVE *DEADLY SKIES* five out of ten in issue #4 we certainly didn't expect it to shoot straight in at number one upon release. What are you like, eh? If you're among those who've bought it, please do write in to Chatback (see page 119) and let us know what you think of it.

Elsewhere in the Top 20 there's little movement, with few new releases in the last month to shake things up. *Re-Volt* and *Virtua Striker 2* continue their strong showing at numbers two and three respectively and, a little further down, *Sonic Adventure* and *Soul Calibur* are holding on well.

We're expecting next month's chart to look much different at the top, with *Crazy Taxi* (*ODM* #5, 9/10) sure to be among the front runners. If there's any justice in the world, the excellent *NBA 2K* (*ODM* #5, 8/10) shouldn't be too far behind. It's all up to you!

THE PLAYLIST

OUR FAVOURITE GAMES

YOU CAN SAVE £5 OFF A GAME AT HMV WITH *ODM*. BUT WHAT WOULD *WE* BUY? THIS MONTH ED LOMAS PICKS HIS FAVES FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE MAG

1 SOUL CALIBUR (SEGA)

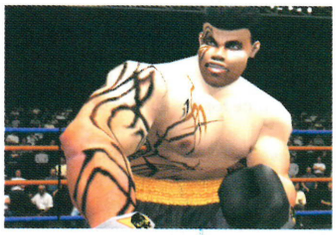
I never thought much of Namco's fighting games until this came along. *Soul Calibur* takes the easy-to-grasp gameplay of predecessor *Soul Blade*, mashes it up with *Tekken's* technical detail, then steals the best bits from *Virtua Fighter* and works them all together into one of the classiest games ever made. (*ODM* #2, 10/10)

2 CRAZY TAXI (SEGA)

This game is almost *too* cool. The cities are crammed with gorgeous little details that make you want to forget about picking up passengers, and instead just cruise around looking at everything. When you start to learn all the special crazy manoeuvres and the city layouts, that's when you realise just how much scope there is. It's mind-boggling stuff! (*ODM* #5, 9/10)

3 SONIC ADVENTURE (SEGA)

I played this all day, every day when I first got it, and loved every second of it. While I worked through everyone's adventures before too long, I still haven't collected the last couple of emblems; even for a big, big, big *Sonic* fan like myself, some of the challenges are extremely difficult to complete. I can spend hours at a time on the *NiGHTS* pinball table as well. (*ODM* #0, 9/10)



4 READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING (SEGA)

You've gotta have it, haven't you? Everyone in the world who's ever played this game has loved it to bits, so you can bring it out for any occasion and have a whole load of fun. The one-player bits are entertaining for a while, but it's the two-player scraps that'll keep you amused for the rest of your life. Most of it, at least. (*ODM* #1, 9/10)

5 VIRTUA STRIKER 2 VER. 2000.1 (SEGA)

I've got a bit of a soft spot for this one. I know it's not great, and it does drive me nuts when the computer-controlled players run off and do their own thing, but I always enjoy playing against someone else who understands how it should be played. And I love the way it rates the quality of your goals. (*ODM* #4, 7/10)

6 STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 (VIRGIN)

Okay, it may not push Dreamcast, but I don't care, it's just so good to play – as long as you use the arcade stick. Every last character is a classic, the graphics are some of the most stylish around, and all the tunes are top-notch. Another game I can't ever see myself stopping playing. Hopefully it'll finally make it into the shops soon. (*ODM* #2, 8/10)

WIN THE ULTIMATE ACCESSORY PACKAGE FROM HMV!!!

Everything you need to supercharge your Dreamcast!

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER 'MIKE' from last issue – the guy who became a part-time stripper to fund his Dreamcast habit. He'd spent a whopping £814.79 on his console, various peripherals and loads of games. But what about those of you who, for whatever reason, don't fancy moonlighting as a Chippendale?

Well, help is at hand. This month HMV are offering the chance for one lucky *ODM* reader to win the ultimate Dreamcast accessory pack.

What's included? Well, for starters there are three Sega joypads, so you can get the most out of four-player games such as *Re-Volt* and *NBA 2K* (note: games and friends not included).

But they're not the only controllers, oh no. The winner will also recieve an official arcade stick, a steering wheel and a light-gun. Sound good? Well there's even more! Namely four vibration packs, four Visual Memory units, a keyboard and a SCART lead!

So how do you set about winning this little lot? Easy, really: just answer the following multiple-choice question and send in the form below. Good luck!

THE BIG QUESTION: WHAT TYPE OF GAME IS ACCLAIM'S *RE-VOLT*?

A) A BEAT 'EM UP
B) A DRIVING GAME
C) A REVOLUTION SIMULATOR

Complete this coupon, then cut it out (sorry, photocopies can NOT be accepted), stick it in an envelope and post it to the address shown below.

ANSWER (circle one): A B C

NAME:

AGE:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Send your entry to: *ODM* Accessory Pack Competition, c/o Simon Moore, HMV Marketing Department, Film House, 142 Wardour Street, London W1V 4LN
Closing date: Thursday 6 April 2000

☐ Please tick if you do NOT wish to receive details of special offers or new products from HMV or other companies

Terms & Conditions: Strictly one entry per person. You must send in this entry form – photocopies will NOT be accepted. Additional entry forms can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to HMV Form Request, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ (please do not SEND entries to this address!). Only entry forms with the correct answer, received before the closing date, will be entered into the prize draw (no, really). The winner will be notified by post. No cash alternative. The acting editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. All the other usual *ODM* competition rules, conditions and restrictions (available on request) apply.

£5 OFF ANY DREAMCAST GAME*

CUT OUT THIS COUPON AND TAKE IT ALONG TO AN HMV STORE TO RECEIVE £5 OFF ANY FULL-PRICE DREAMCAST GAME

Terms and Conditions:
1. This voucher entitles you to a saving of £5 off any Dreamcast game priced £39.99 or more at participating HMV stores. 2. Valid until Thursday 6 April 2000. 3. Only one voucher per transaction. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other voucher or promotion. 4. Offer is not open to employees of HMV, Dennis Publishing, their agencies or anyone directly connected with the offer. 5. Photocopied, damaged or defaced vouchers will not be accepted. 6. Cash value 0.001p

** Applies to full-price software only*

HMV

THE RESIDENTS
WHO ARE THEY?

ALISTAIR REEVE
AGE: 22
STUDYING: politics
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
Brian Lara Cricket
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Ready 2 Rumble
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"No, I wouldn't at the moment."

LISA MORDEN
AGE: 22
STUDYING: anthropology and sociology
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
"Girlie stuff like *Croc* and *Crash Bandicoot*
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Soul Calibur"
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"I'm not sure that I've seen enough to convince me."

MATT TOOKE
AGE: 22
STUDYING: politics
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
Resident Evil Director's Cut
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Ready 2 Rumble
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"Yeah, I'd be up for it."

RICH BROWNE
AGE:19
STUDYING: computing
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
Tenchu: Stealth Assasins – "I love the sneaking around"
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Ready 2 Rumble
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"Yeah!"

△ **Dreamcast is a winner, reckon our panel of students, but it needs more games in order to swing the 2-2 vote in favour of making the swap.**

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

For this month's doorstep challenge *ODM* heads to South London to find out whether four students will swap their PlayStation for a new Dreamcast. **DAN TRENT** pops in for tea

WITH ALL THAT SPARE TIME on their hands, who better to issue the doorstep challenge to than a bunch of students? Putting this theory into practice, we headed down to South London and found this month's challengees relaxing in unexpectedly smart surroundings, and ready to answer the ultimate question: will they sacrifice their faithful PlayStation in return for a brand new Dreamcast? All the household this month study at London's prestigious Goldsmith's College and, despite varied tastes, are well into their gaming, so Dreamcast had quite a challenge.

First impressions were not good though, as Alistair explains: "My initial reaction would be that I wouldn't want to swap. It's not the machine itself, it's more the games. When you compare them to *Silent Hill* and the like, they just seem a little lacking in involvement and depth. The graphics on *Soul Calibur* and *Ready 2 Rumble* are amazing, but the sports games I've played have been really disappointing, and that's a big consideration."

Rich agrees that the current line-up of games is a bit lacking: "You only have to look in any shop to see the number of games PlayStation has, and that choice is one of the things that it has in its favour."

While everyone seemed to agree on that point, Matt was quick to stand up for Dreamcast: "It's not fair to compare the number of games at this stage, and the amount of choice [for DC] is way better than when the PlayStation was this old. I can't wait to see which games there'll be when Dreamcast has been around for five years!"

Opinion was also divided on the joypad. While Matt complained that all members of the household had been suffering from what he describes as "Dreamcast thumb", Rich reckoned that "the triggers are much better than the shoulder buttons on the PlayStation pad – far more positive."

If there's one thing that unites this household it's a love of fighting games, so it comes as no surprise to hear that *Soul Calibur* and *Ready 2 Rumble* were rarely off the screen and largely to blame for the aforementioned aching digits.

The four-player potential of Dreamcast is also a plus factor, according to Rich: "It definitely makes it more sociable, and a big improvement over PlayStation where you have to fork out extra cash for the multi-tap as well as the extra controllers."

Lisa agrees: "I'm much more into being able to play against other people, and the games are very quick to get into, you don't have to spend ages reading the instructions or anything like that."

Alistair admitted that this was a plus and went on to say: "There's no doubt that the power is there with Dreamcast, and if they can use that on some more in-depth games then I'd definitely have to reconsider. That new *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* game [see page 58] game looks very cool, so there's hope yet!"

The final word, though, should go to Lisa: "We've had a real laugh playing the console – can we keep it?"

Calling all contestants... Have you got a friend who deserves to have us turning up on their doorstep when they least expect it? Someone who slags off your Dreamcast because they 'adore' their PlayStation or N64 so much? Want to really test your friend's resolve? Then drop us a line at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk with 'Doorstep Challenge' in the subject line, or write to Doorstep Challenge, Official Dreamcast Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. To qualify, contestants must have a PlayStation in full working order (it's the first thing we'll be checking when we turn up) and a minimum of five games.

BACK ISSUES

MISSED AN ISSUE OF *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE*? OUR BACK ISSUES SERVICE CAN HELP

ISSUE #0

OCTOBER 1999

INSIDE: Beginner's guide to Dreamcast; spotlight on more than 55 upcoming games; the *Grange Hill* gang check out DC games

REVIEWS: *Sega Rally 2, Sonic Adventure, Speed Devils* and more

ON THE VIDEO: Exclusive footage of 35 future Dreamcast games

PRICE: £5.99

ISSUE #1

NOVEMBER 1999

INSIDE: Exclusive *Shenmue* report; special report on the Tokyo Games show; Japanese gaming debate

REVIEWS: *Ready 2 Rumble, Power Stone, UEFA Striker* and more

ON THE DISC: Playable demos of *Sonic* and *Millennium Soldier*

PRICE: £5.99

ISSUE #2

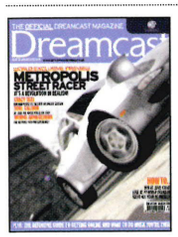
DECEMBER 1999

INSIDE: Extensive *Soul Calibur* review; the future for videogames; *HouseOf The Dead 2* player's guide

REVIEWS: *Soul Calibur, F1 World Grand Prix, Marvel Vs Capcom* and more

ON THE DISC: Playable demos of *Dynamite Cop* and *Buggy Heat*

PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #3

JANUARY 2000

INSIDE: World exclusive *Metropolis Street Racer* preview; real life imitating games; guide to getting online

REVIEWS: *Worms Armageddon, Evolution, Shadow Man* and more

ON THE DISC: Brand new *Toy Commander* level; playable demos of *Snow Surfers, Suzuki Alstare* and *F1 World Grand Prix*

PRICE: £5.99

ISSUE #4

FEBRUARY 2000

INSIDE: Exclusive *Code: Veronica* preview; violence in games; *UEFA Striker* and *Soul Calibur* tips guides

REVIEWS: *Virtua Striker 2 v2000.1, Resident Evil 2, Deadly Skies* & more

ON THE DISC: Playable demos of *Sega Worldwide Soccer* and *Re-Volt*

PRICE: £5.99

ISSUE #5

MARCH 2000

INSIDE:: Exclusive *Crazy Taxi* review; 2D vs 3D games; *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* preview

REVIEWS: *Crazy Taxi, NBA 2K, Red Dog* and more

ON THE DISC: *Rayman 2, Street Fighter Alpha 3 and Red Dog* playables

PRICE: £5.99

BACK ISSUES SERVICE

To order back issues, complete this coupon in block capitals and send it, with the correct payment, to: DENNIS DIRECT, PO BOX 2505, ALCESTER B50 4JU. If you have a credit card, you may order by calling +44 1789 490215.

These prices are for UK only. For overseas orders call 01789 490215 for a quote.

☐	D000	Issue #0	Special Issue 1999	☐	D003	Issue #3	January 2000
☐	D001	Issue #1	November 1999	☐	D004	Issue #4	February 2000
☐	D002	Issue #2	December 1999	☐	D005	Issue #5	March 2000

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Postcode: _____

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £_____

made payable to 'Dennis Direct'. Or please charge my credit card:

☐ Visa ☐ Access ☐ Amex ☐ Switch ISSUE NUMBER:_____

to the amount of £_____

Card no_____ Expiry date:_____

Cardholder's signature:

☐ Tick here if you don't want to go on a mailing list and receive details of further offers.

Buy on-line and save fff's on games

@jakarta

All the latest Games and PC software titles at low, low prices.

www.jakarta.co.uk

or phone 0800 092 0077

DCO3

Enjoy the Unfair Advantage

Telephone lines are open Monday – Friday 9am to 9pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm.

TO ADVERTISE IN DREAMCAST

CALL KATHARINE, EMMA OR EMILY

ON 0171 917 7772

OR 0171 917 7773

WATCH THIS! HOT WEBSITES

POP EXCHANGE

www.popex.com

Imagine being able to buy and sell shares in your favourite bands, singers or DJs. Well, Popex makes that possible, albeit in virtual form. After signing up, you get a pretend £5,000 to invest in the likes of Oasis, Travis, Steps and the oddly named Broccli Spears, and regular dividends enable you to invest in new shares. Best of all, the site is currently being optimised for Dreamcast browsers. *DT*

I WANT ONE OF THOSE

www.iwantoneofthose.com

For lovers of gadgets and gizmos comes the ultimate in Internet toy shopping. This new and sharp-looking site has all the usual bits and bobs at fairly reasonable prices, plus a few extra products that beat anything you've seen before. Most impressive of these is the Russian-built L39 jet fighter: yours for a trifling £150,000 – a saving of over £4.25 million over the British-built Hawk equivalent. Budding warlords will be disappointed to hear that all ordnance will be stripped before delivery, although air-con is standard and you can have it painted to the colour scheme of your choice. *DT*

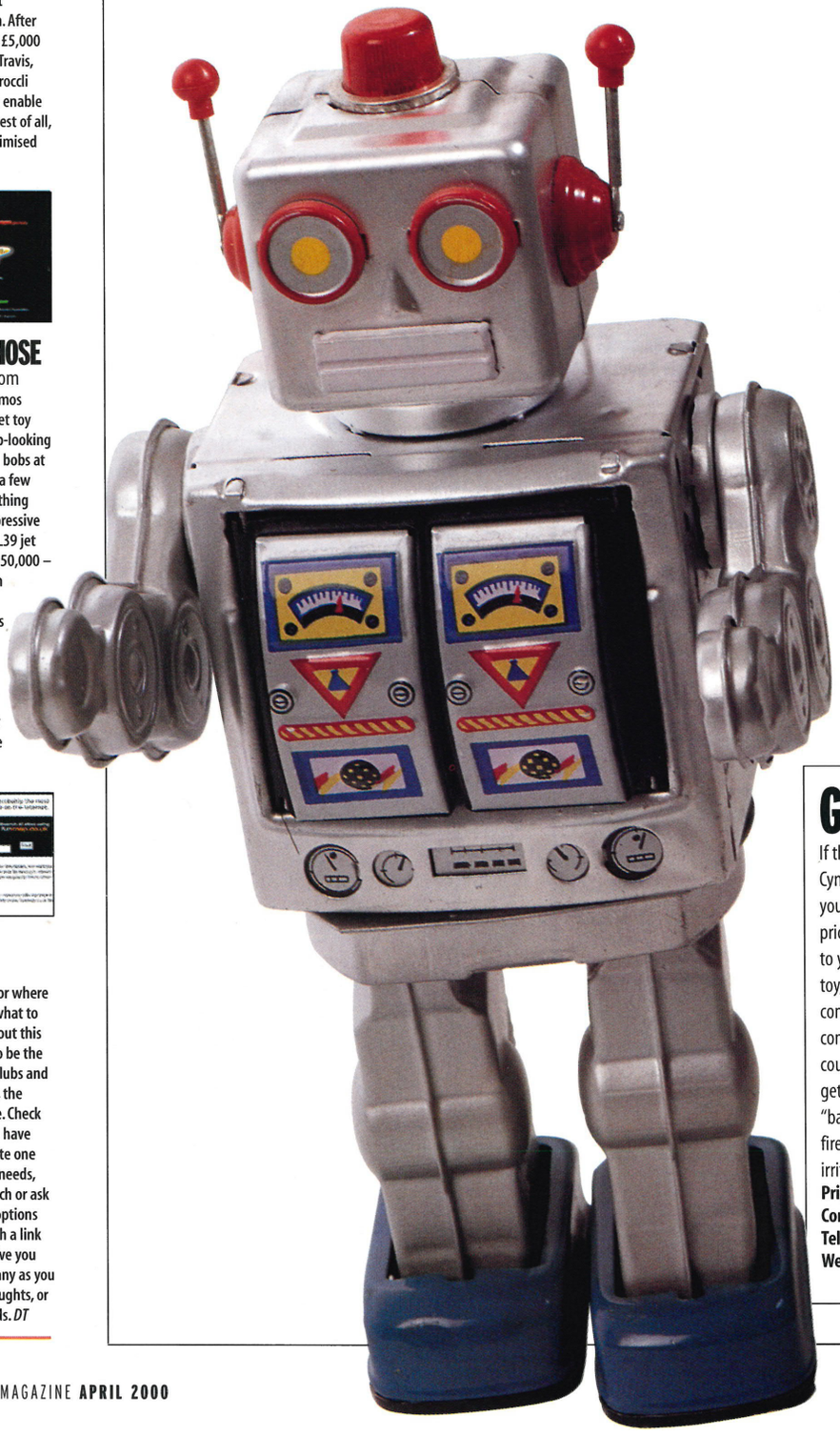
BARMAP

www.funmap.co.uk

Don't know where to go out or where to eat? If you're at a loss for what to do with yourself, then check out this fledgling site that's aiming to be the authoritative guide to bars, clubs and restaurants according to you, the people who actually go there. Check out the reviews other people have posted, or get online and write one yourself. Depending on your needs, you can put in a general search or ask the site to list more specific options before guiding you there with a link to a Streetmap. As an incentive you can earn shares in the company as you add reviews or your own thoughts, or recommend the site to friends. *DT*

TOYS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Listen. Communicate. Get on the move. Get on the floor and play with a big toy like a little boy. Do any or all of those things with this month's selection of gadgets and gizmos



SINCLAIR Z-1

From the man who brought the world the C-5 electric tricycle and funny little rubber-keyed home computers comes this little gadget that claims to be the world's smallest radio. Apparently great for joggers or anyone else who needs their hands free and favours the sci-look, the Z-1 uses a tiny watch battery to power the AM receiver, and enables you to keep up with all the latest footie results and news wherever you are. Exactly which ear you're supposed to be able to fit this into once you're also kitted up with your MD player, hands-free phone and Neo Geo is unclear, although perhaps Mr Sinclair is currently working on that. As long as it isn't made of white plastic he could be onto a winner.

Price: £13
Contact: Gadgets On The Web
Tel: 0116 270 5522
Website: www.gadgetsontheweb.com

GIANT POWER ROBOT

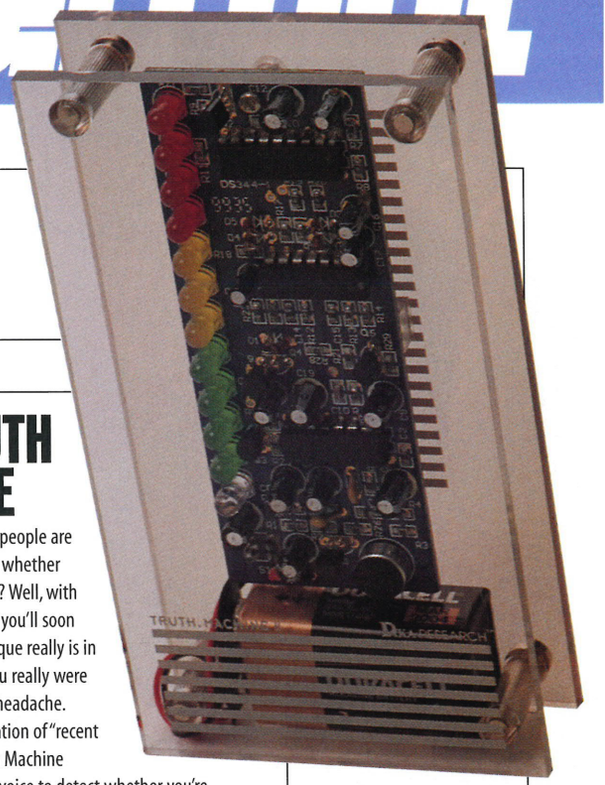
If the '50s B-movie charms of the robotic barmaid at Cynthia's Cyberbar (Drinking And Thinking, *ODM* #3) float your boat but you can't stretch to the £250,000 asking price, then this slice of retro toy action could be the answer to your prayers. In true old-skool fashion, this is one sturdy toy, doing away with flimsier competitors with its all-metal construction and no-nonsense approach. If your room is complete except for a kitsch slice of sci-fi cool, then you could do worse than check out gadgetsontheweb.com and get your order in. Do bear in mind that in this case "batteries not included" is a blessing in disguise: when fired up, this noisy android emits what is possibly the most irritating sound this side of Alanis Morrisette.

Price: £20
Contact: Gadgets On The Web
Tel: 0116 270 5522
Website: www.gadgetsontheweb.com

MICRO SKATE SCOOTER

While Ocean Colour Scene can hardly be judged as style gurus, their contribution to the cause of scootering should not be overlooked. Thanks to their video for *The Day We Caught The Train*, the Go-Peds they used are available all over the place and scooters are no longer just for kids. The Swiss-made Micro Skate Scooter takes an interesting twist on the concept and drops petrol or electric power in favour of – gasp! – leg power. While its size makes it look a bit like a skateboard with handlebars, the extra control and handy little brake-cum-mudguard affair makes it a far more viable form of transport that folds away in seconds to enable you take it with you wherever you go. Not for the self-conscious, but the fun factor has ensured its position as the transport of choice here at *ODM* for the regular morning toast and coffee run, and if that ain't a seal of approval then nothing is.

Price: £119
Contact: Boysstuff
Tel: 01902 861818
Website: www.boysstuff.co.uk



THE TRUTH MACHINE

Never quite sure when people are telling you the truth or whether they're spinning a yarn? Well, with this handy little device you'll soon know whether the cheque really is in the post or whether you really were stood up because of a headache. Using a vague combination of "recent technologies", the Truth Machine analyses stress in your voice to detect whether you're on the level or telling porkies to save your bacon, and displays the results on a scale of LEDs that light progressively up according to how much stress there is in your voice. Thanks to this system, the machine not only works face to face, but can also be used over the phone or with recordings on tape or video. Intriguing and worrying in equal measure.

Price: £30
Contact: Gadgets On The Web
Tel: 0116 270 5522
Website: www.gadgetsontheweb.com

ERICSSON CHATBOARD

If your text messaging habit is spiralling out of control and you're the owner of a recent Ericsson phone, then you'd better look away now. Oops, too late! For a mere 20 quid you can forget all that troublesome button pushing and funny abbreviations and write in proper english. Not only does the Chatboard enable faster messaging, but you can also send emails and attachments, via the Chatboard website, to your friends around the world. Reasonably priced, and a great way to expand the capabilities of your phone without making the costly upgrade to a full-on WAP handset.

Price: £20
Contact: Ericsson
Tel: 0990 237 237
Website: www.ericsson.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

LE GRAND FROMAGE

MEET BRUNO BONNELL, THE MAN BEHIND EUROPE'S BIGGEST VIDEOGAMES PUBLISHERS

THE FRENCH MAY not be keen to eat British beef, but they love swallowing up our software publishers. Little-known Titus recently acquired Virgin Interactive, for starters. But the biggest appetite belongs to Infogrames, who over the last few years have swallowed up two of Britain's biggest names – Manchester-based Ocean and, more recently, Sheffield-based Gremlin Interactive. Add to that acquisitions of American companies GT Interactive and Accolade, Philips Media, plus Ozisoft in Australia, and it's easy to see why Infogrames are now the largest European-based game publishers.

The financial world might pass off this growth simply as good business – okay, *very* good business – but veteran gamers must surely be wondering how a company which for years was pretty much known for just one solitary massive hit (the 1992 survival horror *Alone In The Dark*) has 'suddenly' become so huge. In reality, the apparent overnight success is simply a British perception; the company has in fact produced a steady stream of hits in continental Europe.

"We did *The Smurfs*, *Tintin* and all these big games which sold hundreds of thousands, if not millions of units," explains Bruno Bonnell, chairman and CEO of Infogrames, "but they never sold in the UK because those franchises were not considered good in that market. Communication-wise, we were in the shade in the UK but we were always growing".

The Infogrames name will be familiar to Dreamcast owners thanks to titles such as *UEFA Striker*, *Millennium Soldier*, *Slave Zero* and *Pen Pen*, but there are plenty of games to come, including *Wacky Racers*, *Silver* (see news, page 31) and the fantastic-looking *V-Rally 2* (see review on page 50), which looks set to steal *Sega Rally 2*'s crown.

"*Wacky Racers* should be a nice experience," says Bonnell, "because behind the pure gameplay you have this kind of funny twist that people will like. *V-Rally 2* is one of the big, big releases for us because it's a technical wonder. It's a wonderful game. And I think that *Outcast* is promising as well, because we're adapting it [specifically] to Dreamcast".

The 41-year-old, who used to dream of becoming a movie producer, founded Infogrames with business partner Christophe Sapet in 1983. The company, thought to be the first software developer in France, was funded using $10,000 that the pair had earned from writing a book on home computing. Previously both had been involved in marketing computers – Bonnell at Thompson, Sapet at Texas Instruments.

But what does the name 'Infogrames' mean, exactly? Well, nothing, actually. It came from a custom-written program which simply jumbled up a series of computer-related terms which the guys had fed it. "The program printed out, like, 15 pages of very confusing new words," explains Bonnell. "The printer blocked at one point, and this line was 'Infogrames'. It was like a message from the silicon gods!"

And the armadillo logo? According to Bonnell it was chosen because it's a symbol of endurance: "Armadillos used to be dinosaurs but they adapted – they're still alive. The good thing about the armadillo is that nobody can eat it. The only danger to them is man, and that's why we believe that our biggest danger is the disappointment of out customers".

Warren Chrismas

"OUR BIGGEST DANGER IS THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF OUR CUSTOMERS"

THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST SUBSCRIPTION

Dreamcast™

www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

HOW TO GET 3 TRIAL ISSUES AND SAVE 33% ON YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

SAVE 33%

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO THE ONLY OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE and your first 3 issues are 100% risk-free. That means you can write to cancel any time during the first 3 months and claim a FULL REFUND - no questions asked.

- **Get 3 trial issues,** if you're not completely hooked, you won't pay a penny.
- **Save a massive 33%,** that's £19.89 off the annual shop price when you subscribe.
- **A FREE Sega cover CD every month** - only with the Official Dreamcast Magazine.
- **Speedy home delivery** - get your magazine and FREE CD before your friends.

YOUR 3 TRIAL ISSUES OFFER - REPLY WITHIN 7 DAYS

☐ Please start my 3 trial issues subscription to the Official Dreamcast Magazine. I understand this is a risk-free offer because I can write to cancel within 2 weeks of receiving my 3rd trial issue and claim a full refund - no questions asked.

OR ☐ I am already a subscriber, please extend my subscription with this special offer.

YOUR DETAILS

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

DAYTIME PHONE Email

CHEQUE OR CREDIT/DEBIT CARD PAYMENT - 12 issues only £39.99 (UK only) **SAVE £19.89**

1 I enclose a cheque made payable to *Dennis Publishing Ltd.*

2 Please charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX ☐ Switch (Issue No. ☐)

CARD NO ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ EXPIRY DATE ☐☐☐☐

SIGNED DATE

3 I would like to pay just £19.99 every 6 issues by Direct Debit (UK only)

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit DIRECT Debit

Please fill in the form and send to: Dennis Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST WD7, Bristol BS32 0ZZ

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To the manager: Bank name

Address

Postcode

Originator's Identification Number: 7 2 4 6 8 0

Ref no. to be completed by Dennis Publishing

Instruction to your Bank or Building Soc.
Please pay Dennis Publishing Ltd. Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Dennis Publishing Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Account in the name of

Branch sort code ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Bank/Building Society account number ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account

☐ Please indicate here if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers from companies other than Dennis Publishing Ltd or if you are under 18 years of age.

RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO:

Dreamcast Subscriptions Department, FREEPOST WD7, Bristol, BS32 0ZZ (no stamp required)

SUBSCRIBE BY PHONE: INSTANT ORDER HOTLINE - 01454 620070

P004

SONIC BOOM BOY!

NEIL RIDDAWAY IS THE FASTEST *SONIC* PLAYER IN EUROPE, HAVING BEATEN ALL-COMERS FROM THE UK AND THE CONTINENT IN AN ONLINE CONTEST FOR THE CROWN OF *SONIC* CHAMPION

CHESHIRE SCHOOLBOY Neil Riddaway may claim to be rubbish at running in the real world, but on the special stage created for the Sonic/Reebok DMX Speed Challenge he's Linford Christie with a jet-pack. Speeding bullets would be left for dead; Concorde would be at the back of the pack. This boy moves, and all without leaving the comfort of his bedroom.

But how did he do it, and what on earth is he doing with a customised Dreamcast pod of his own and a pile of Reebok goodies that would shame any scouse scally?

The challenge came about when a special stage of *Sonic Adventure*'s Emerald Coast level was put on the Dreamarena site for DC owners to download via their VM units. Contestants from over Europe posted times on the *Sonic* website to see who was the fastest at recovering the five pairs of hidden Reebok trainers, and the fastest time posted by the deadline won the prize.

"I MUST HAVE PUT NEARLY 100 HOURS IN OVERALL"

"I've always been a huge Sega fan," says Neil. "I've had all the systems from the Master System onwards, and *Sonic* has always been one of my favourite games in whatever guise. There's something about the speed, the design and the music that make it for me, so when I heard about the Speed Challenge I knew I had to enter."

It wasn't all success and fame though: "The first attempt I posted put me at 137th, so I knew I had to improve. There's a gang of about a dozen of us called UKG on the Net, and we emailed each other through our Dreamcasts with tips on short cuts and the like. Pretty soon I was getting faster and faster and my times better and better."

More than a thousand practice runs contributed to the triumph, but all this took time and effort: "I was practicing an average of an hour and a bit a night, and I reckon I must have put nearly 100 hours in overall. I knew when I'd done it though; I didn't think anyone could go faster!"

Neil's winning time was 46.09 sec – just 0.05 sec faster than his closest rival. To be this good takes ages.

Dan Trent

LETTERS

Got some thoughts on Dreamcast or your magazine? Well don't keep them to yourself – share them with us and, if your letter is interesting, thousands of other readers. This month, new editor Warren Chrismas responds to your missives

DISILLUSIONED DAN

I was one of the eager beavers to pick up a Dreamcast on the day of release, and prior to that I was moist with anticipation for its arrival. I'd spent hours reading about it and scouring the Internet for just a glimpse of the amazing power it was to provide the humble games player.

Time passed, and eventually it surfaced – not with a bang, but with a fizz-pop. The marketing was decidedly dodgy, and the release games were disappointing to say the least. You see I, like many people, have been waiting for 'the next stage in gaming' for a long friggin' time now, and so far I've seen nothing that warrants the claims they spew out.

***Sonic Adventure*, *Sega Rally 2*, *Virtua Fighter 3tb*... all these should be killer games that push the boundaries of their wonder box. But they were all shoddy conversions that provided a quick 'wow' factor before you became aware of all the glitches and bugs that appear constantly.**

Now it's been several months since the new machine came out, and still there's been nothing to shout about. Sure, *Soul Calibur* and *Ready 2 Rumble* are a good laugh and provide a bit of longevity, but it's not enough. Somewhere out there are *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, *Shenmue*... real reasons to buy a Dreamcast.

I purchased my Dreamcast in the belief that it was to be the be all and end all of home consoles (at the moment) and would provide me with a range of top-quality games. It hasn't delivered. I'm left with a powerhouse console, but with poor conversions and PC ports of ancient games.

Daniel Chant, via email

We think many of your frustrations stem from the fact that, after *Soul Calibur* in late November, there was a lack of truly great games released for a couple of months.

But, after a quiet spell, things are picking up again quite nicely. The excellent *Crazy Taxi* (*ODM* #5, 9/10) is now on the streets, and there are loads of good titles scheduled for release within the next month or so (see this issue's reviews, for starters).

YOU LITTLE CHEAT!

Many thanks for your Blood issue (*ODM* #4). Not only was it a great read, it also helped me through a school report I had to compose about violence. I just read your article, gave a talk on it, and you got me an A+. Many thanks again.

Keithy Wallace, Staffordshire

Glad to be of help, Keith. And hey, watch out for next month's issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine* in which we'll be covering algebra, the Norman invasion and advanced home economics.

And there are plenty more great-looking games due soon – *Metropolis Street Racer*, *V-Rally 2 Millennium Edition* (see page 50), *Ecco The Dolphin* (page 54) and *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* (page 60) to name just four.

Due out further down the line are games such as *Dead Or Alive 2*, *Sega GT* (previewed on page 50), *D2* and *Shenmue*, plus loads of original games and arcade conversions that have yet to be announced. Plus, of course, we'll see the start of a whole new era when Sega introduce full online gaming for DC.

Ultimately, what you seem to be forgetting is that Dreamcast has been on sale in the UK for less than five months. The current games line-up compares very favourably with the offerings that were available on any other games console after such a short time. In other words, it's still very early days for Dreamcast. The best is most definitely yet to come.

THE BUNKER

I was lucky enough to get a Dreamcast and a couple of games at midnight on October 14. I was even allowed to have a day off school the next day. I started her up as soon as I got home and, man, was I impressed!

I just recently bought *Virtua Striker 2*, and the graphics are better than any game I've seen on my PC. The players move amazingly realistically. The game is just pure class.

I played *Crazy Taxi* in the arcades the other day and fell in love with it; I'm a great fan of The Offspring and loved hearing their music as I was zooming around. So at the moment I'm saving up for the Dreamcast version. I love my little white box.

Joseph Woodward, via email

Come on, Joseph, you must have *something* to moan about, surely? No, seriously, it's always nice to hear from people who are happy with their Dreamcast. We regret to inform you, however, that we've had to grass you up to your local education authority for bunking off school on October 14.

ARGGGHH!

I am only allowed one game for my birthday, so which of the following would you recommend: *Sega Rally 2* or *UEFA Striker*? Please Help!

Ben Baxter, via email

Well, of the two you've selected, we'd definitely recommend *Sega Rally 2* if you're after a driving title and, yes, *UEFA Striker* if you want a football game.

Sorry to be so sarcastic, but we get dozens of letters like this each month, and the answer is always the same: read the reviews section of this magazine! Our reviewers present as much information as they can on each title and, of course, offer a personal opinion (you'll find further opinions on selected games in our regular Drinking & Thinking feature), but ultimately only *you* can decide which games are right for you.

RAGE HARD

I have just got my Sega Mega Drive down from the loft and played *Streets Of Rage 1*, *2* and *3*. They're so sweet. I'm sorry, but I have to plea that Sega *have* to make a *Streets Of Rage* on Dreamcast. You will hear more from me about this, I assure you.

Mark Malekpour, via email

We don't have an official word on the subject, but it seems unlikely that Sega will ever revive the fab *Streets Of Rage* series. As we're sure you're aware, the nearest equivalent on Dreamcast is the scrolling beat 'em up *Dynamite Cop* (*ODM* #2, 5/10). You're probably also aware that it's not very good. Still, *Zombie Revenge* is worth a look (see the review on page 76).

BUILDING SITES

Why don't you have a section in your magazine that details the best websites to visit, especially the websites that enable Dreamcast owners to access music and sounds (I don't know of any that enable you to see moving pictures). There are too many websites that require a PC, so if you can suggest some it would be good. I've been on a couple of *X-Files*, *Star Wars* and movie websites where I did get to listen to some sounds and downloaded them but, like the impatient twat that I am, I never bookmarked them.

Michael Chappell, via email

There are two issues here. Firstly, the Dreamkey's multimedia capabilities aren't that great at the moment, although they will improve with the second version of the browser, which Sega are due to release this summer. So watch out for news of that.

Secondly, as you've probably seen, we have been running a few website reviews as part of our Upfront section (see page 42), but rest assured that we fully intend to extended our online coverage over the coming months.

SHARK BITES BACK

Here's a little idea for a new game I had – *Sega Shark Fishing*. I came up with the idea after playing *Sega Bass Fishing* in the arcade. Although I found it kind of funky and fun to play, there was no real feedback from the rod. And, come on – bass or sharks? I know what I'd rather fish for!

***Sega Shark Fishing* would have a seat with a harness, and in front of it the rod actually fixed into the machine, so when you're playing and you catch a shark, the rod pulls you forward and you must pull it back. So not only do you have to reel it in, you also have to fight against the strength of the shark as well.**

Andrew France, via email

Damn fine idea. It's not entirely dissimilar to the idea we printed on page 103 of our November issue (*ODM* #1) though, is it? Actually it's, er, exactly the same!

Still, the good news is that Sega of Japan are soon to release a Naomi-based arcade game called *Sega Marine Fishing*. Sadly, though, it doesn't contain sharks. At this stage we can't confirm whether it will be converted to Dreamcast, but we wouldn't bet against it. As for a Dreamcast seat/harness plug-in peripheral, well, don't hold your breath.

PLEASE RELEASE ME

Why don't you have a section where you give release dates every month, because they're always changing. And instead of using big black letters for preview and reviews titles, use the proper ones. And give more demos.

Kunal, Liverpool

The very fact that release dates are "always changing" is a pretty good reason why it's *not* a particularly good idea for a monthly magazine to list them. Fact is, release dates constantly change right up until the last minute (see page 36 for a news story on the subject).

However, to keep you – and all the other readers who've requested release dates – happy, we've asked HMV to supply a short-term release schedule each month. You can find the information on the chart pages in this (see page 38) and future issues of *ODM*. Don't go blaming us or HMV if games slip though, it's intended as a rough guide.

To answer your second question (er, statement!), we don't use the typography and logos of the games in *ODM* because our Art God would never allow it – the magazine would look a mess.

As for more demos, well, it's entirely in Sega's hands. But, trust us, we're working on it.

CONTACT INFO: We want to hear from you. Address your letters to: Mailbox, *ODM*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ, or email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk. Remember that you can also contribute to the chat forum on our website – simply point your Web browser at www.dreamcastmag.co.uk (or hit the *ODM* button from the Dreamcast portal site) and follow the links. PLEASE NOTE: *all* letters and emails sent to us are read by *all* the writers on *Official Dreamcast Magazine*. While we do respond when we can, we simply do not have the time to send personal replies to everyone. Sorry!

The SLAMMER .com plc

Games for you at the best possible price!

THE PRICE YOU SEE IS THE PRICE YOU PAY!

DREAMCAST

AEROWINGS	£28.99
BUGGY HEAT	£28.52
CRAZY TAXI	£28.52
DYNAMITE COP	£29.52
F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX	£29.52
HOUSE OF DEAD / GUN	£42.86
HOUSE OF DEAD 2	£28.99
HYDRA THUNDER	£28.99
INCOMING	£28.99
MILLENIUM SOLDIER - EXPENDIBLE	£28.99
MK GOLD	£28.99
MONACO GRAND PRIX	£28.99
NBA 2000	£28.99
PAN PEN	£28.99
PSYCHIC FORCE 2012	£28.99
RE - VOLT	£28.99
READY TO RUMBLE	£28.99
RED DOG	£28.99
ROAD CONTROL WHEEL	£34.55
SEGA BASS FISHING / ROD	£42.85
SEGA RALLY 2	£28.99
SNOW SURFERS	£28.99
SONIC ADVENTURE	£28.99
SOUL CALIBUR	£28.99
SOUTH PARK CHEFA LUV SHACK	£22.14
SPEED DEVILS	£28.99
SUZUKI ALLSTAR - EXTREME RACING	£28.99
TAKE THE BULLET	£28.99
TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE	£28.99
TOY COMMANDER	£28.99
TRICKSTYLE	£28.99
UEFA STRIKER	£27.99
VIRTUE FIGHTER 3TB	£28.99
VIRTUE STRIKER 2	£28.99
WORLDWIDE SOCCOR 2000	£28.99
WWF ATTITUDE	£28.99
ZOMBIE REVENGE	£28.99
EVOLUTION	£28.99
TEE OFF	£28.99
DEADLY SKIES	£28.99
BUST A MOVE 4	£28.99
SLAVE ZERO	£28.99
EXTREME CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING	£28.99
4 WHEEL THUNDER	£28.99
ECCO THE DOLPHIN	£28.99
FURBALLS	£28.99
M-SR	£28.99
MAKEN X	£28.99
SOUTH PARK RALLY	£28.99

WITH PRICES CONTINUALLY FALLING PLEASE CALL FOR the LATEST UPDATE or VISIT the WEBSITE – www.theslammer.com

Special Offer

Sega Dreamcast Console + Any Game only £199.99

Britain's biggest games warehouse. Order online at **www.theslammer.com** or call **0845 130 9989**

BUY 3 GAMES & GET 1 FREE!

ACCESSORIES

VIBRATION PACK	£12.86
SCART	£12.85
CONTROLLER	£16.46
VISUAL MEMORY	£16.46
ARCADE STICK	£28.32

GAMEBOY

ALL STAR TENNIS 99	£19.99
HEXCITE	£19.99
SUZUKI ALSTARE - EXTREME RACING	£18.99
TONIC TROUBLE	£19.99
TOTAL SOCCER	£16.99
KNOCK OUT KINGS	£19.99
WCW MAYHEM	£19.99
TONIC TROUBLE	TBA
DAVID O'LERARYS TOTAL SOCCER 2000	£16.99
PAPYRUS	£18.99
GAMEBOY COLLECTION 6	£18.55
KANANI WINTER GAMES	£19.55
ARMORINES	£19.55
BARBIE OCEAN DISCOVERY	£15.95
BASS MASTERS 2000	£15.55
BUGS BUNNY AND LOLA	£15.95
CHESSMASTER	£17.99
CRAZY BIKERS	£19.55
DROP ZONE	£19.55
DUKE NUKEM	£17.55
FIFA 2000	£17.95
KLAX	£16.99
MADDON NFL	£16.99
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	£16.99
MR NUTZ	£16.99
PAPERBOY	£16.99
RONALDO	£15.99
SPYHUNTER: MOON PATROL	£14.55
DAFFY DUCK FOWL PLAY	£19.99
360 COLOUR GAMEBOY	£19.99
GODZILLA: THE SERIES	£16.99
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2000	£19.99
INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD	£18.99
ODDWORLD Abe 2 ALCES EXODUS	£19.99
SUPREME SNOWBOARDING	£14.95
STRANDED:KIDS	£18.55
TUROK: RAGE WARS	£18.55
V-RALLY	£19.99
WWF WRESTLEMANIA	£19.99

PLAYSTATION

ALIEN RESSURECTION	£28.99
ALL STAR TENNIS '99	£13.61
AUTO DESTRUCT	£14.00
BIG AIR	£8.00
COMMAND & CONQUER	£14.00
COMMAND & CONQUER - RED ALERT	£12.00
COMMAND & CONQUER - RETALIATION	£16.00
CRICKET 2000	£24.00
CROC	£14.00
CROC 2	£26.00
CYBER TIGER	£26.00
DIE HARD TRILOGY	£14.00
DIE HARD TRILOGY 2	£26.00
DUNE 2000	£26.00
FA PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL MANAGER 2000	£26.00
FIFA - RTTWC 98	£14.00
FIFA 2000	£26.00
FIFA 99	£26.00
FORMULA 1	£24.00
GRANDIA	£26.17
HARD BOILED	£14.00
HOT WHEEL'S TURBO RACING	£26.00
JAMES BOND - TOMMORROW NEVER DIES	£26.00
KNOCK OUT KINGS	£14.00
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2000	£26.00
LIVEWIRE	£19.00
LOST WORLD - JURASSIC PARK	£14.00
MADDEN NFL 2000	£26.00
MADDEN NFL 99	£16.99
MEDAL OF HONOUR	£26.00
MOBIL 1 BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP	£24.00
MONACO GRAND PRIX RACING SIM	£10.86
MOTORACER	£14.00
MOTORACER 2	£20.00
NASCAR 2000	£26.00
NASCAR 99	£14.00
NBA LIVE 2000	£26.00
NBA LIVE 99	£14.00
NEED FOR SPEED 3 - HOT PURSUIT	£12.00
NEED FOR SPEED 4 - ROAD CHALLENGE	£26.00
NEED FOR SPEED 5	TBA
NHL 2000	£26.00
NHL 99	£14.00
POPULOUS - THE BEGINNING	£12.00
RAYMAN – PLATINUM	£10.93
ROAD RASH	£14.00
ROAD RASH 3D	£20.00
ROAD RASH: JAIL BREAK	£24.00
S.C.A.R.S	£13.91
SHADOW GUNNER	£13.91
SKULL MONKEYS	£14.00
SLED STORM	£26.00
SMALL SOLDIERS	£14.00
SOVIET STRIKE	£16.99
SPORTS CAR GT	£26.00
SPORTS RUGBY 2000- ENGLAND	£26.00
SPORTS RUGBY 2000- IRELAND	£24.00
SPORTS RUGBY 2000- SCOTLAND	£24.00
SPORTS RUGBY 2000- WALES	£24.00
STREET RACER	£13.91
STREET SKATER	£26.00
STREET SKATER 2	£24.00
SUPERBIKES 2000	£24.00
SUPERCROSS	£26.00
TELETUBBIES	£26.00
TENNIS ARENA	£10.93
TEST DRIVE 4X4	£14.00
THE FA PREMIER LEAGUE STARS	£26.00
THEME HOSPITAL	£12.99
THEME PARK	£14.00
THEME PARK WORLD	£24.00
TIGER WOODS 99	£14.00
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2000	£24.00
TOMMI MÄKINEN RALLY	£13.91
TRIPLE PLAY BASEBALL 2000	£14.00
TRIPLES VOL.1	£22.00
TRIPLES VOL.2	£22.00
TRIPLES VOL.3	£22.00
TRIPLES VOL.4	£22.00
WARPATH	£26.00
WCW MAYHEM	£26.00
WORLD CUP 98	£14.00
XENA - WARRIOR PRINCESS	£26.00
ASTERIX AND OBETIX	TBA
ISS PRO EVOLUTION	TBA
UBIX	TBA
SOUTH PARK RALLY	£28.55
INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD 2	£25.95
DISKWORLD NOIR	£25.55
DEAD BALL ZONE	£29.55
40 WINKS	£24.55
ABES EXODUS	£29.55
ACTION MAN	TBA
BATMAN AND ROBIN	£28.55
BRIAN LARA	£15.65
BUST A MOVE 4	£22.99
CARMAGGEDON	£26.55
CHESSMASTER 2	£23.55
DRIVER	£19.55
JADE COCOON	£23.75
KILLER LOOP	£23.75
LMA MANAGER	£26.55
MARY KINGS	£23.75
METAL GEAR:SPECIAL	£15.65
MUSIC 2000.....	£25.95
NO FEAR:DOWNHILL	£26.95
UEFA STRIKER	£25.55
WWF ATTITUDE	£25.95
X FILES	£25.95
POY POY 2	£14.55
RAT ATTACK	£15.95
RONIN BLADE	£25.95
SHADOWMAN	£29.95
SILENT HILL	£29.95
SLED STORM	£26.95
SOUL REAVER	£25.55
TOCA TOURING CAR 2	£24.55
TOMB RAIDER 3	£17.55
TOMB RAIDER 4	£27.55

PLATINUM

ACTUA SOCCER	£10.99
AIR COMBAT	£12.99
BARBIE RACE AND RIDE	£17.99
BUGS LIFE ACTIVITY CENTRE	£12.99
COLIN MCRAE	£14.95
COOL BORDERS 2	£13.99
CRASH BANDICOOT 2	£13.99
DOOM	£15.95
FINAL FANTASY 7	£14.55
FINAL FANTASY VII	£13.99
FORMULA 1 97	£13.99
G- POLICE	£12.99
GRAND THEFT AUTO	£24.55
GRAND TURISMO	£13.99
HERCULES ACTION GAME	£13.99
LOADED	£12.99
MEDIEVIL	£16.99
MICKYS WILD ADVENTURE	£13.99
MICRO MACHINES V.3	£15.95
PANDEMONIUM	£13.99
PORSCHE CHALLENGE	£13.99
RIDGE RACER	£13.99

...and there's so many more!

YOU CAN FAX US FREE ON 0800 019 7780

DVD · DREAMCAST · GAMEBOY · MAC NINTENDO · PC · and · PLAYSTATION

WE SUPPORT ALL PLATFORMS AND JUST HAVEN'T THE ROOM TO LIST EVERYTHING WE STOCK – SO PLEASE CALL, FAX, PHONE or ORDER ONLINE – www.theslammer.com

Customer Loyalty With A Difference.
We don't give you points we give you shares

Most companies give you points for your loyalty, but we have decided that points are just not enough to give our customers. Our customers will receive FREE shares for being loyal to us. Why are we rewarding loyalty with shares? The Slammer is one of the fastest growing computer companies in the UK and we understand that you (our customer) are responsible for our growth. This is something other companies have failed to understand. As a little thank you, we have decided to offer you FREE shares so every time you buy from us you are also investing in yourself. For more information please see our catalogue, to request a catalogue please call us on 0845 130 9989. The Slammer is owned by The Slammer.com plc

Free postage on all orders. Next working day delivery on most orders. – if in stock.
Pay by Credit Card, Cheque, or Postal Orders.
Guarantee* If you are not happy with your purchase, please send it back to us and we will exchange the product or send you a full refund. This does not affect your statutory rights.

The Slammer.com plc only supplies official products. All trademarks are copyright items guaranteed by The Slammer.com plc or their respective manufacturers.
All rights reserved. All trademarks recognised.

Do you want to earn money selling games? For further information on or dealer network, call us on 0845 130 9989 or e-mail: dealers@the slammer.com

To order phone: 0845 130 9989 or e-mail: thecrew@theslammer.com

Order online:- www.theslammer.com

All major Credit Cards Accepted

FREE DELIVERY · 1-2 DAYS

V-RALLY 2
MILLENNIUM EDITION

APlayStation cast-off? Hardly. Infogrames' high-revving racer is undergoing a thorough overhaul for its debut on Dreamcast. **DAN TRENT** takes a look under the bonnet

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**
DEVELOPER: **EDEN STUDIOS**

WHATS THE BIG DEAL?

- Arcade fun with realistic handling
- Significant improvements over the PlayStation version
- 2-4-player split-screen mode

IF YOU'RE INTO your driving games, then the *V-Rally* franchise should need little introduction. First seen on PlayStation, and then on PC and N64, the game's fast-moving action and straightforward arcade feel have won it many fans. Whereas other rally games have stuck to the racing against the clock format of real-life rallying, one of the best things about *V-Rally* is the high-octane racing against other cars. You can race against the clock if you want to, but the real fun lies in fighting for the same piece of track with three other cars.

Undeterred by the success of *Colin McRae Rally*'s realistic approach, the sequel to *V-Rally* stuck to what it was good at, and saw the introduction of an excellent track editor, more cars, and refinements to the multi-car racing that characterises the game's high thrill content. And now *V-Rally 2* on its way to Dreamcast.

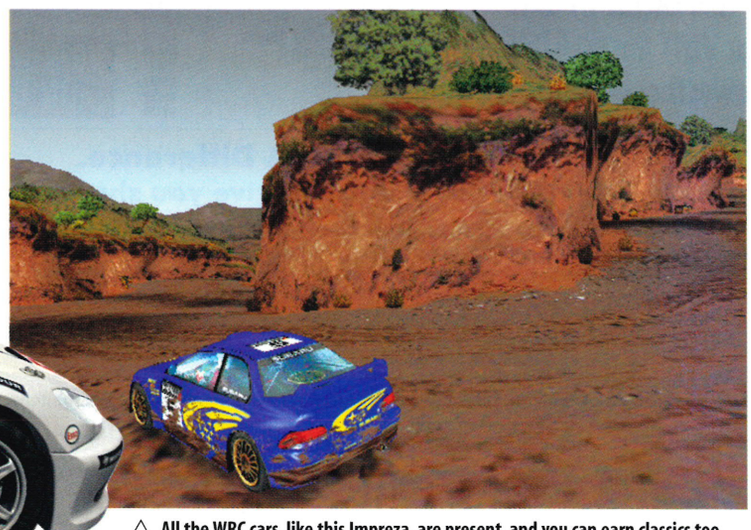
While the transfer of games from DC's dominant but less powerful arch rival has concerned many, there's no need to worry about this being a ropy attempt to cash in on *Sega Rally 2*'s lukewarm reception. Eden Studios, *V-Rally 2*'s developers, are going to great lengths to make sure the game makes the most of the power of Dreamcast, and invited us to their Lyon HQ to talk us through exactly what you can expect when *V-Rally 2* hits the shelves in May.

STYLE AND CONTENT

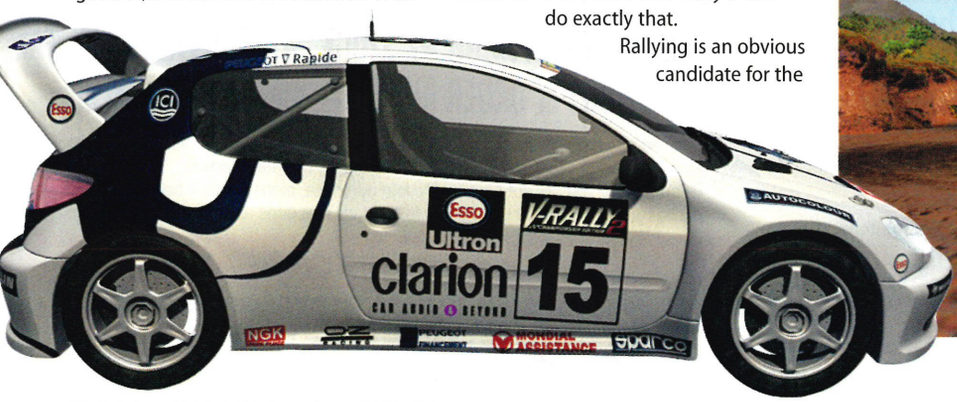
While the popularity of *Sega Rally 2* in the arcades remains strong, many Dreamcast owners were disappointed that the translation from coin-op to console somehow lost the magic. Subsequently, the door has been open for a game that could combine the looks and appeal of *Sega Rally 2* with more rewarding gameplay in terms of more testing tracks, opponents who actually put up a fight, and realistic handling. Eden are confident that *V-Rally 2* can do exactly that.

Rallying is an obvious candidate for the

△ **Stay on target! Tarmac affords more grip, but you're still gonna lose it if you push too hard.**



△ **All the WRC cars, like this Impreza, are present, and you can earn classics too.**



△ **Multiplayer action has always been a strong point of *V-Rally*. The split-screen option supports up to four players.**

console treatment, but by its very nature it poses some real problems for developers: the huge variety of environments, surfaces and conditions, and the individual effects they have on the cars, are a major cause of heartache; as players' expectations grow, so does the amount of work for the programmers and artists. As producer Olivier Raffard explains: "Many driving games have a dozen or so tracks, but rallying isn't like conventional racing, where you can learn a circuit and then use your experience to go faster. We want it to be more instinctive, and have the player rely on their skills."

To this end the tracks are constructed of blocks, which are linked together in different combinations to form the different stages. Each separate block can be manipulated within certain constraints to ensure you're never on exactly the same piece of road twice. Gradient, camber and surfaces can all be bent and skewed, although trees and backgrounds remain constant to avoid weird distortion.

"It's like a giant Lego system," offers Olivier. "Each block equates to 60 metres of track, and we just slot them together as we like. We have 60 to 80 different blocks for each country, and when you take into account different weather and light conditions, that's more than enough to create challenging stages."

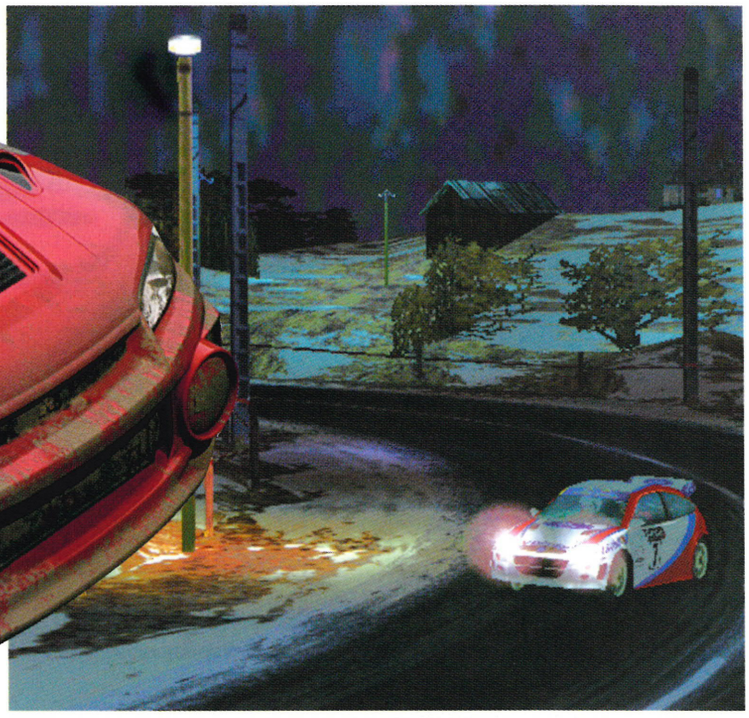
The beauty of constructing a game this way is that it enables the inclusion of a track editor that's almost identical to the system the programmers use to create the stages in the game. And unlike the PlayStation track editor, which included only half the number of blocks, all the blocks available to the game's designers are available to you to create your own weird and wonderful tracks. As Olivier says: "Because of the memory [limitations], we couldn't include them all before, but now you can make more varied and less repetitive tracks using the track editor. As well as having more choice, you can make much longer tracks. On PlayStation you could have perhaps 20 to 30, but now you're able to use around double that." The fact that you can change the weather conditions, and choose to race at any time of the day or night, demonstrates that this is no tagged-on gimmick, and should increase the game's lifespan considerably.

The extra power of Dreamcast not only enables Eden to include more blocks, but has also enabled the lighting effects and resolution of the backgrounds to have all been upgraded. It hasn't exactly been an overnight job either, as Olivier outlines: "We actually started the Dreamcast version of the game back in October '98, but it was only an exploratory thing so we could get an idea of how the development kit worked and what it was capable of. Once we got the PlayStation version out we really got stuck into getting it ready for Dreamcast, and it has been a lot of work. As an example, it took us about six months to design all the blocks for each country from scratch, and a further two months to get them to the standard we would want for Dreamcast. One of the biggest changes is the colours on the ▷

"*V-RALLY 2* IS GOING TO ROCK THE WORLD OF RALLYING AND DRIVING GAME FANS ALIKE"

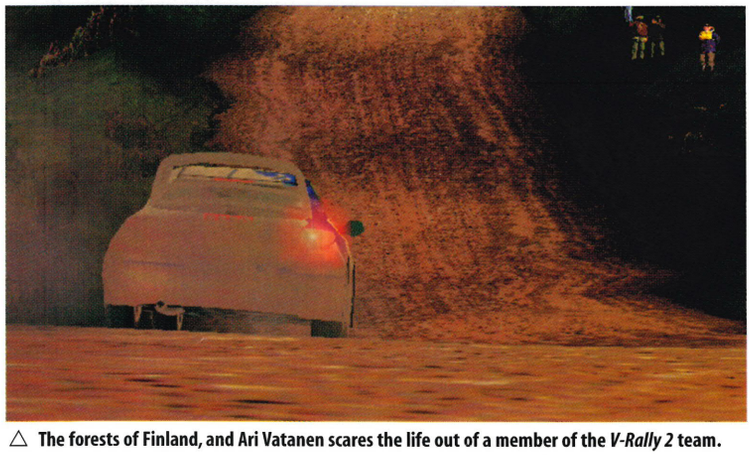
△ **As well as smartening the cars' exteriors, detail on the driver and co-driver has been improved.**

△ The choice of champions: the EVO VI helped Tommi Mäkinen to several world championships.



△ Real-time lighting effects have been put to good use in the night stages.

△ The Toyota Corolla picks up air miles in the Spanish Rally.



△ The forests of Finland, and Ari Vatanen scares the life out of a member of the *V-Rally 2* team.

"THE CARS HAVE A PROGRESSIVE AND INTELLIGENT DAMAGE SYSTEM"

▷ textured areas, where we've increased the detail and number of colours by a huge amount in the areas that matter, like the road and the immediate backgrounds."

Without descending too far into techno-babble, the result is much smoother textures and, combined with real-time lighting, backgrounds that are far more realistic and involving. A 30 per cent longer viewing area means you can also see more of it. And when all the details like the spectators running for cover as you pass are added, the whole look of the game should be streets ahead of its rivals.

POLYGONS?

The circuits and backgrounds may have had time and effort devoted to them, but it's nothing compared to the cars. "We started completely from scratch with them," says Olivier. "For a start we have many more polygons with which to construct the cars, and this is another area where the power we have with Dreamcast really shows itself." If you're after statistics, the count has gone up from 600 to 800 on PlayStation to around 1,800 on Dreamcast, but who's counting when the difference is obvious to the naked eye?

As well as looking smoother and having the real-time lighting effects applied to them, the cars have much more detailed wheels and interiors. Other detail improvements over the PlayStation version include the addition of the correct spotlights for each car, rather than a generic model, which is just one of many indications that suggest that this is no hasty conversion.

Visually the cars are on a par with *Sega Rally 2*, but this is where the comparisons end. Whereas in *SR2* you seemed to be hovering above the track, the cars in *V-Rally 2* are very much more realistic in their handling, due in no small part to expert input from champion rally driver Ari Vatanen (see the Ari Up! panel opposite for a more detailed look at his work on the game).

Words can only convey so much, so in order to give the game's designers first-

△ Ari Vatanen (right) explains some of the finer points of rallying to Infogrames' David Nadal.

△ The detail even extends to the fauna: the trees are specific to the country you're in.

ARI UP, WILL YA!

Champion rally driver Ari Vatanen has raced cars everywhere from the frozen lakes of Finland to the dunes of the Sahara. So what advice did he have?

ASKED WHY HE was invited to advise the *V-Rally* team, Ari Vatanen shrugs modestly and explains: "There are plenty of miles under my belt!"

Starting out driving rear-wheel drive Ford Escorts, he spent much of his career driving for Citroen and Peugeot, winning the RAC Rally in the outlawed Peugeot 205 T16 (as featured in the game) and then triumphing in the desert in the Paris Dakar Rally. Along the way he's also driven for Mitsubishi, then returned to Ford in an Infogrames-sponsored Escort Cosworth – which he also used to scare the living daylights out of members of the development team in the forests of Finland.

Ari's been involved in *V-Rally* from the first game, but clearly sees his role as much more than simply a name to slap on the box: "They didn't want a game based on just one driver, they wanted to have a broader outlook. And I think they wanted someone who has the experience and also the time to spend talking to the developers and the journalists, rather than someone who just puts their name to the game. I can act as a mediator between rally organisers and journalists, and get the developers more access to things than perhaps they would have otherwise.

"There are many things that I can help with," Ari continues, "but there's a team, and I'm not here as an experienced games player; I can only suggest things. One of my first impressions was that the car is far too nervous and doesn't have enough inertia, but of course it is very hard to make the car seem as heavy as it is in real life."

The rules do have to be bent sometimes though: "The centre of gravity of the cars in the game is much lower than in a real car. In real life the car rolls much more easily than in the game – I know, I've rolled many times. But if you made it totally real then it wouldn't be fun to play, so you artificially make the car more stable. You have to remember that we can't simulate it totally. I can say: 'In real life it would do this,' but it's up to the programmers to decide whether players would actually want that amount of realism or whether it's actually going to get in the way of making the game fun."

hand experience of rallying Ari took members of the *V-Rally* team out on a stage of the 1000 Lakes Rally in his native Finland. *V-Rally 2* team member David Nadal remembers it well: "I had no idea you could do things like that in a car. It was absolutely unbelievable. All the research in the world can't compare to spending five minutes in the car with Ari, and it certainly helped us a lot when it came to making the cars handle more realistically."

As a result, cars roll on their suspension, grip the tarmac like leeches, slip-slide away on snow, and if you over-cook it there's no comforting rebound off the scenery. If you've played any of the *V-Rally* games before, you'll know that spectacular crashes are a key part of the game, and that if you're not careful you spend as much time on your roof as you do on your wheels. To add realism, the cars have a progressive and intelligent damage system which affects your car according to the speed with which you hit the obstacle, and there's a graduated build-up of mud and dust on your car as you make your way along the stages – an improvement on other games where the transition from showroom condition to gunge-caked happens in the blink of an eye.

Of course, there would be little point in lavishing all this detail on the cars if you couldn't view them from any angle, and *V-Rally 2* has all the viewpoints you'd need plus a few you wouldn't. A very slick movable camera means you can drive with anything from a worm's eye view to looking directly downwards, and a new interior view is in the process of being added, as the PlayStation one was, according to Olivier, "just too ugly to include".

ENOUGH TALK

Once we'd had the tour of Eden Studios' facilities, we were given an exclusive chance to play an early, rough version of *V-Rally 2*. And while it would be unfair to judge a game that was apparently only 70 per cent complete, it didn't take much time to realise that the Dreamcast version of *V-Rally 2* is going to rock the world of rallying and driving game fans alike. The strength of the previous games has always been the balance between accurate handling and attention to detail, and arcade playability, and from the look of it this certainly hasn't been lost in the translation. The trademark four-car action has always been *V-Rally*'s biggest concession to realism, but on Dreamcast there's no question that this is the ideal arena for fast and furious four-player action. Even if you're playing on your own, the artificial intelligence of the opposition is more than challenging enough to give your reaction speed a thorough workout.

The foundations for a really great game are obviously firmly in place, and if Eden can flesh it out with a soundtrack and details to match then we're in for an exciting spring for driving game fans.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE

The long awaited return of Ecco is nearly upon us and he's looking good. **DAN TRENT** dons his snorkel and flippers to take an exclusive look

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **APPALOOSA**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Interesting blend of story, action and puzzles
- Innovative, but true to its roots
- Huge levels promise a long lifespan
- Super-smooth graphics

YOU CERTAINLY COULDN'T accuse Sega of lacking a sense of humour. A fishing game with a specially designed controller is one thing, but if you've been watching the *ODM* news pages you'll have caught sight of all manner of weirdness going on in Sega's world. Everything from the talking humanoid tadpoles of *Seaman*, to the educational zombie killer *The Typing Of The Dead* [*House Of The Dead 2*. With keyboards. Obviously]; you name it, and someone in Japan has made a game out of it. And that's before you even take a peek into a Japanese arcade.

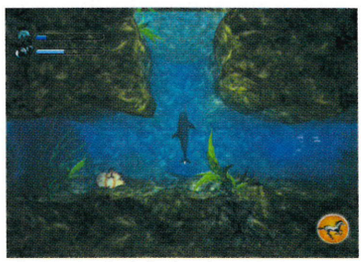
So, a game about dolphins just has to be another of Sega's 'funnies', a sharp-looking piece of fun that's all about showing off the new über console's talents. Not necessarily so. Anyone who remembers the original *Ecco The Dolphin* games on Mega Drive and Mega CD will know that this particular dolphin has more tricks up his sleeve, if in fact dolphins have sleeves. Well known not only for their originality but also the depth and complexity of their gameplay, the original *Ecco* games were a cunning mixture of skill, dexterity and brain-taxing puzzles all tied together with a strong storyline. These elements remain as the foundations of the new game, but the new *Ecco* is a totally different kettle of fish (so to speak) and is making the leap from 2D to 3D in spectacular fashion, as one look at our exclusive in-game shots reveals.

SENSE OF PORPOISE

The story has always been a key aspect of *Ecco The Dolphin*, and for the new game developers Appaloosa have drafted in the talents of author David Brin to flesh out the narrative. A sci-fi and fantasy author, Brin's best-known work to date is the story of *The Postman*, recently made into a film starring Kevin

"AN ASTOUNDING LEVEL OF GRAPHICAL DETAIL"

△ "Aak ak! Ak ak! Ak ak ak..."

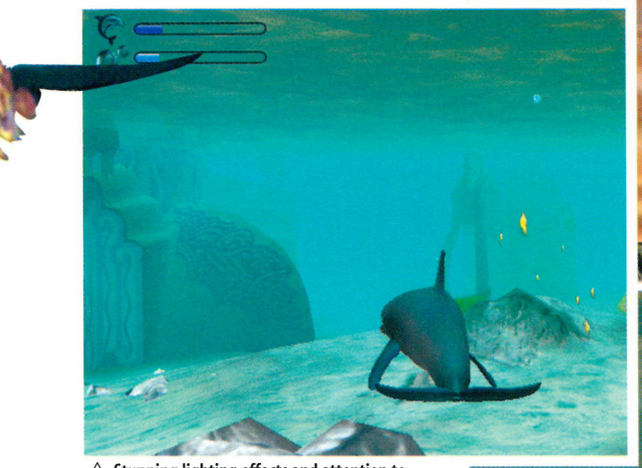


△ Side view harks back to the original.

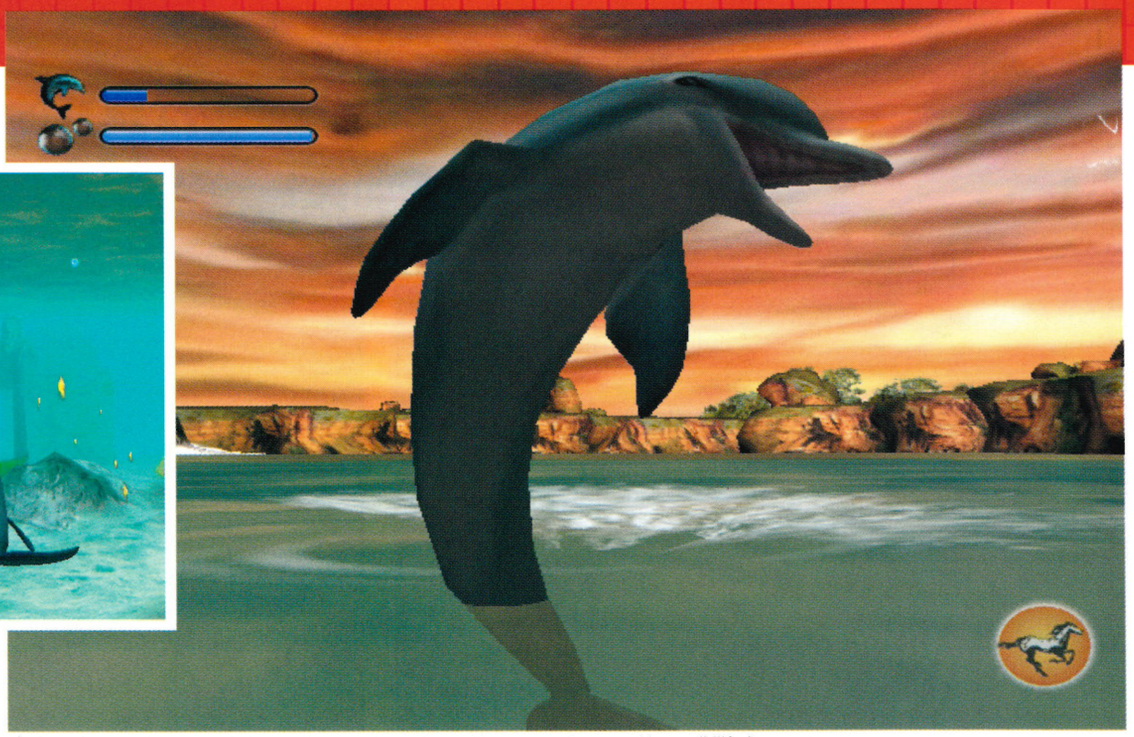
△ Ahh, isn't he cute?

△ Strange things happen as the game progresses.

△ Ecco is so much fun to pilot around that sometimes it's nice to just explore.



△ Stunning lighting effects and attention to detail help to make the environments in *Ecco* convincing.



△ Sometimes you have to remind yourself that you're playing a videogame, and not watching a wildlife documentary.

Costner. Of more interest to Appaloosa was his book *Startide Rising*, which features a future vision of a joint human and dolphin existence, and made him the ideal person to involve in the story side of the game. Gergely Csaszar, producer of *Ecco* at Appaloosa in Hungary, explains: "His expertise in myths and fiction, as well as nature and science, was very helpful in this respect, and the storyline he devised for this game blended seamlessly with the elements that make a good videogame."

While we wouldn't want to give away the intricacies of the story, the basic plot centres around the character of Ecco, a young dolphin with special marks on his forehead that single him out from his friends. His peaceful existence is shattered by a strange earthquake that triggers a chain of events that lead him on adventures back and forth across time to save his dolphin mates, and prevent an evil force from severing the alliance between the dolphins and the humans and creating a future of suffering rather than one of peace.

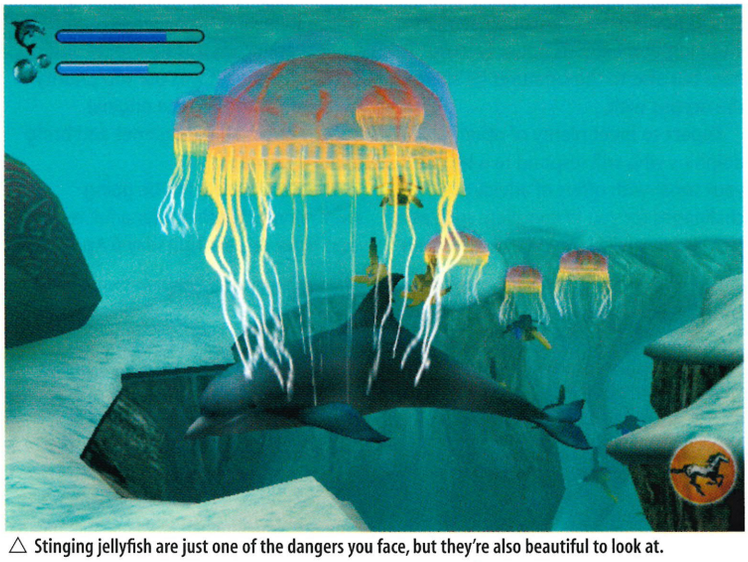
While the steady if limited trickle of teaser images here will no doubt have grabbed your attention, nothing prepares you for the the level of smoothness and the full magnificence of the way the game looks. Even the most cursory glance at the images on these pages should convince you that this is exactly the sort of game Dreamcast needs to convince any doubters of its abilities. And if the gameplay is even half of what the graphics are, we're in for a treat.

Fortunately it looks as though that won't be a worry, and *Ecco* will be as slick to play as it is to watch, encompassing more than 30 huge levels, the vast majority of which are completely 3D. There are even a couple that revert to the side-scrolling *Ecco* of old, albeit with a degree of detail that Mega Drive owners could only have dreamt of. Still, it's a nice touch that acknowledges the impact of the first game and the affection in which it is held by many. The open levels are completely free-roaming, and you have freedom of movement within them to complete your task.

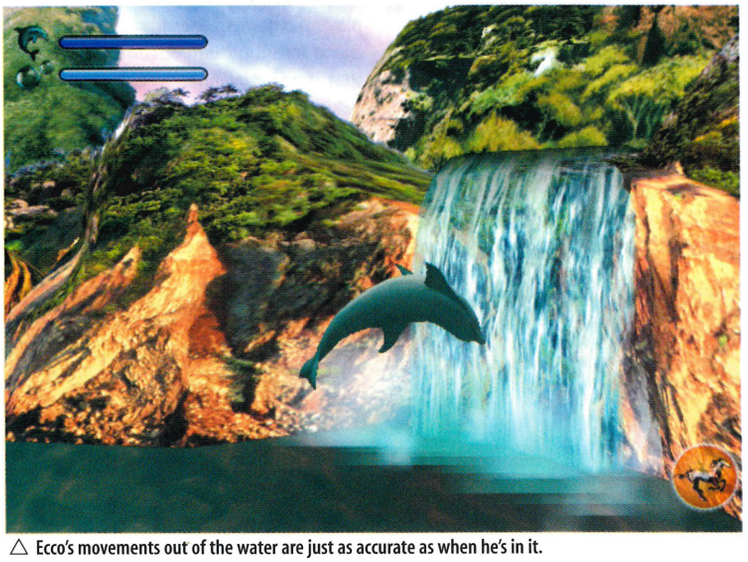
"STUNNING LIGHTING EFFECTS AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL"

Appaloosa developed their own programming tool, called Game World Builder, for the development of the game. We asked Gergely exactly how this shaped the development of *Ecco*.

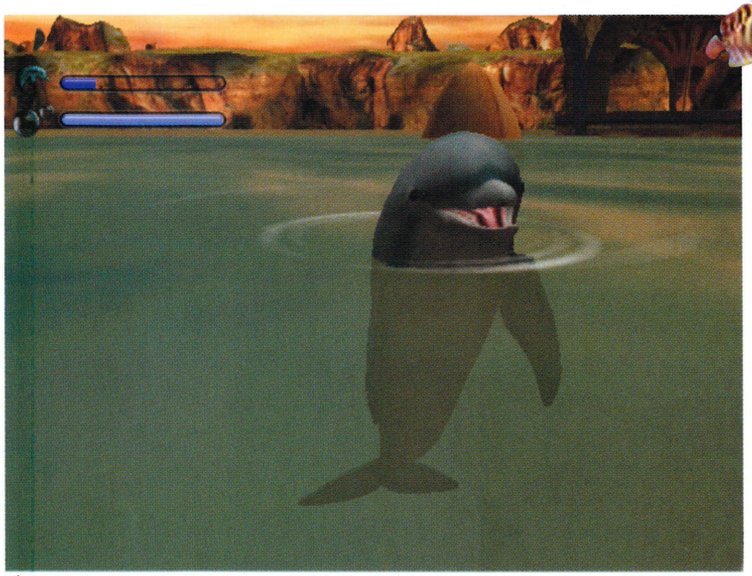
"The work starts with the usual 3D modelling tools to build the elements of the worlds," he explained, "but then Game World Builder takes over, integrating these elements into large, ▷



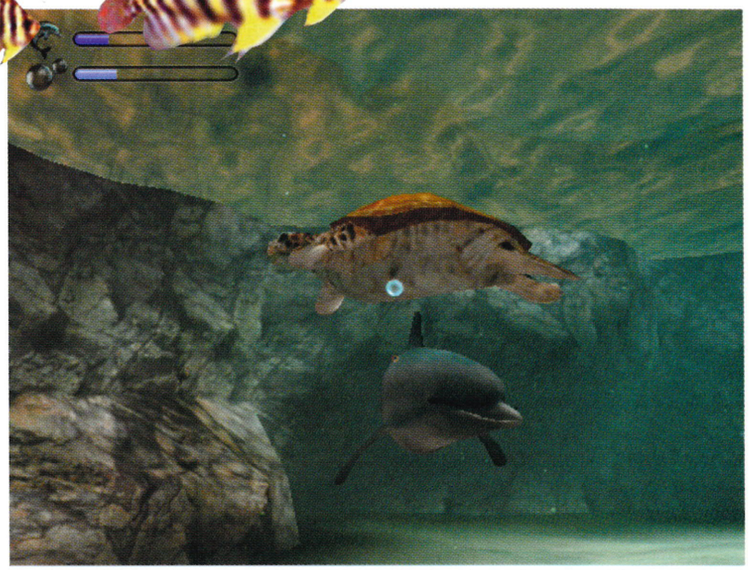
△ Stinging jellyfish are just one of the dangers you face, but they're also beautiful to look at.



△ Ecco's movements out of the water are just as accurate as when he's in it.



△ Everything about the game is smooth, right down to the ripples in the water.



△ The exquisite detail extends to all the creatures that Ecco shares the oceans with.

"SO FAR WE'RE VERY IMPRESSED"

▷ complex living environments. On top of this it also enables us to run the game immediately after making additions or changes, and see how the various characters and objects work together. These instantaneous results meant that every little idea could be tried out to see whether it worked or not, and then honed and incorporated as required."

FINS CAN ONLY GET BETTER

As the story takes Ecco back and forth across time and into a series of different realities, the level design has to be correspondingly varied. This is another area where Game World Builder proved its worth. The wildest ideas that Brin and the team could come up with could all be realised, and this has lead to scenarios and environments the like of which you'll never have seen before.

While many of the levels take in varieties of lakes and reefs, one of the more unusual stages sees you piloting Ecco along giant water 'pipes' that hang hundreds of metres above the ground. Spatial awareness is tested to the full, as the surface of the water is now 360 degrees around you, and one badly aimed leap could see you plummeting earthwards. While Ecco may well possess special powers, flying ain't among them.

However weird the levels may be in their structure, the common thread seems to be stunning lighting effects and attention to detail that combine to make the environments extremely lifelike. Plants waft in the current, schools of tropical fish flit this way and that, and light dapples on the rocks and creatures in a way that looks so convincing that you have to constantly remind yourself that you're actually playing a game rather than watching a David Attenborough documentary. Not that *The Living Planet* ever covered talking dolphins doing battle with intergalactic forces of evil, of course.

FISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS

The version we've been playing isn't complete, but even so we were able to get a good impression of how the game will play, and so far we're very impressed. A huge amount of work has gone into making everything look just so, as Gergely explains: "Hundreds of hours went into viewing underwater nature documentaries and studying the anatomy of sea creatures. The 3D animation models that we eventually built for Ecco and the other animals are more sophisticated than what an ordinary videogame might use. At the same time we paid much attention to creative streamlining of these models, so that Dreamcast can smoothly and intelligently handle many different characters on-screen simultaneously."

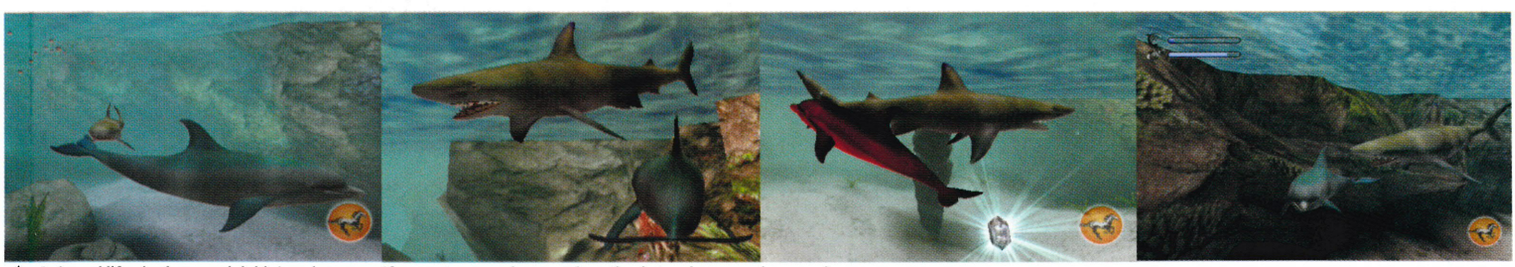
Even without major aspects of the game in place we've had hours of fun just piloting Ecco around in his home reef, chatting to his mates and attempting ever more impressive flips and jumps. The accuracy of movement is stunning, and extends not only to our hero but also to the creatures he shares the oceans with.

Expect to meet plenty of other dolphins who will respond to a blip of your sonar with offers of advice and challenges for you to complete such as fetching a particular type of fish or even racing them around a series of coral markers. Other creatures are less accommodating but no less detailed and smooth looking. While irate tuna fishermen are nowhere to be seen, sharks and stinging jellyfish are your immediate worry, but as the levels progress you find your enemies becoming steadily more other-worldly and decidedly more cranky. Even the whales and turtles that are apparently nothing more than window dressing have an astounding level of graphical detail lavished upon them.

The game is currently undergoing final tweaks to the gameplay and ironing out of loose ends such as some pop-up on the terrain above the surface of the water, and it promises to be one of the most interesting and genre-bending titles to hit Dreamcast.

"The original games have a very strong following," says Gergely, "and while working on this new incarnation of the *Ecco* saga it was our top priority to remain faithful to the original qualities of the earlier games and bring it into a new age."

The work appears to be going swimmingly. Watch out for a full review next issue, on sale Thursday 6 April.



△ As in real life, sharks are a dolphin's main enemy. If you get cornered, your only option is to select ramming speed.

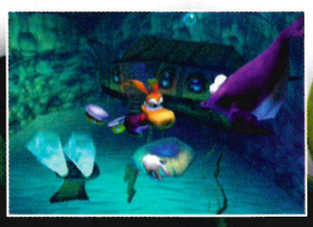
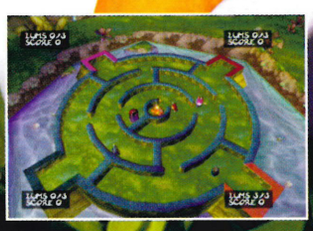
RAYMAN 2
THE GREAT ESCAPE™

NEW LEVELS TO DOWNLOAD
from the Rayman 2 website
www.rayman2dc.com

ULTRA FAST GAMEPLAY
with unbelievable graphics.

EXCLUSIVE MULTI-PLAYER MAP
for up to 4 players.

SO BEAUTIFUL YOU'LL WANT TO SHARE IT!

© 1999 Ubi Soft Entertainment. All rights reserved. The logo and character of Rayman are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment.
Sega and Dreamcast are registered trademarks of Sega Enterprises, Ltd

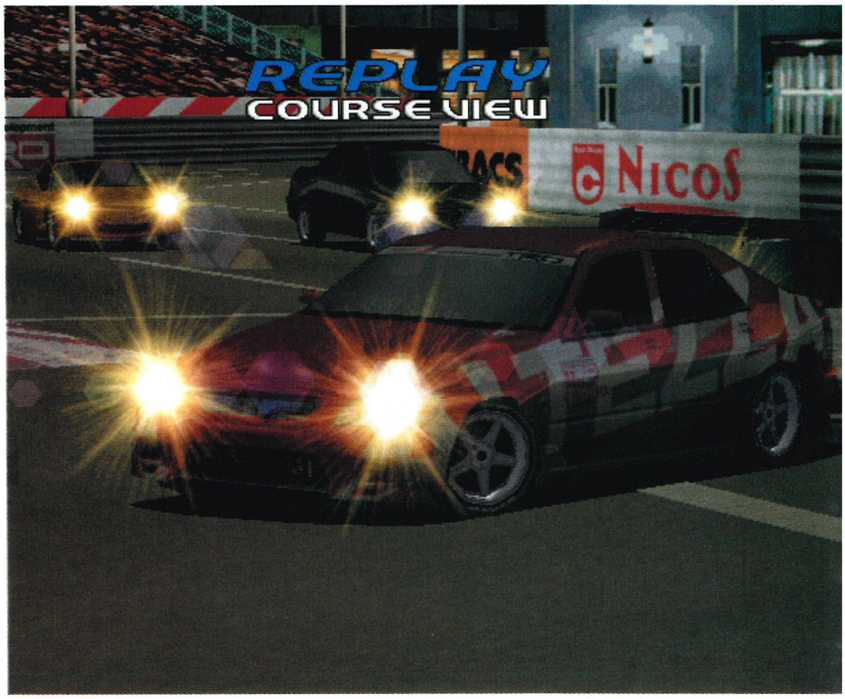
Dreamcast

Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT

www.rayman2dc.com

SEGA GT

Could this be in the most realistic driving game on Dreamcast? **STEVE FULLJAMES** looks almost two-dimensional by comparison



△ You can see how awesome the cars look in this shot. Light even reflects off their alloy wheels!

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **TBC**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Ultra-realistic handling
- More than 100 real cars
- Your own car factory
- Loads of VM games

JAPANESE DRIVING GAMES that feature real cars always contain the same three elements: loads of option screens crammed with super-anal car-tuning options you don't understand; awful soft rock music or, if you're lucky, lounge jazz; and the same 1985 Toyota Levin coupe. We don't know why this car always gets included, but for some mystic Oriental reason it just does.

Sega GT, the latest racing simulation to hit Dreamcast in Japan, matches all of these criteria. While there are plenty of racers on the console already, most have a fairly casual, arcade-style approach. Nothing wrong with that, of course, but *Sega GT: Homologation Special* (to give it its full, probably-to-be-shortened-when-it-comes-to-the-UK title) takes the whole thing a little more seriously. You must earn the right to race, and you need to have an understanding of how cars handle in real life if you're going to win anything.

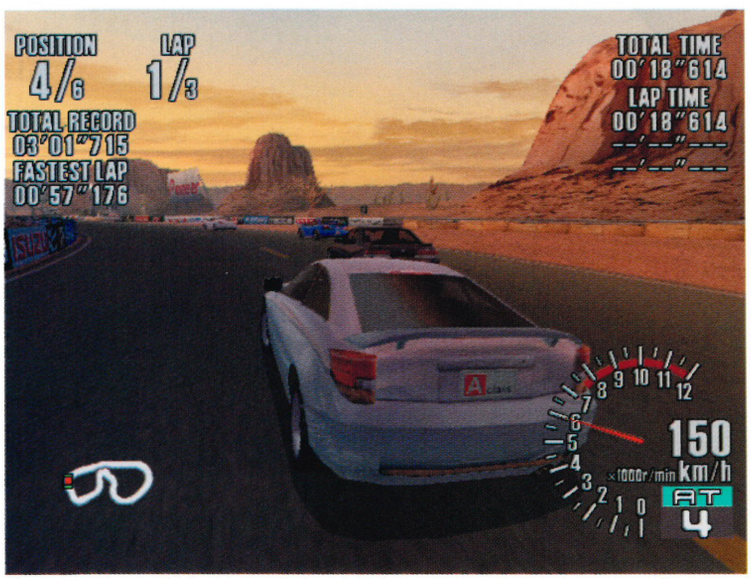
If you want to get straight into the driving seat, Single Race mode enables you to choose from a limited selection of cars and tracks. Cars are arranged in classes, starting with Entry level, which are your basic shopping trolleys on wheels, with the occasional tiny sports car thrown in for good measure. B- and A-class cars are a bit more sexy, but still bordering on 'affordable', while SA-class is where the exotic big boys like to hang out. Here you find souped-up Skylines and Imprezas, and some completely mad touring car specials.

For a more serious challenge, there's the Championship side of the game. You start with a million yen and an empty garage, and the idea is to complete various driving tests to earn the right to buy and race cars. There's basically no choice but to start off with a second-hand banger, but after a few free-to-enter races you can to tune it up and start saving for something a little more impressive.

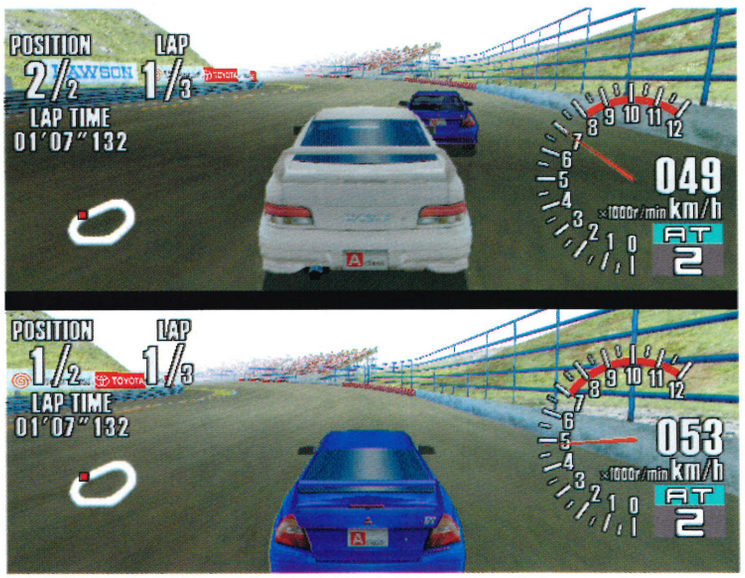
SOUNDS FAMILIAR

By now you might be thinking that this all sounds a lot like a popular racing game on a certain other console, and to be honest you wouldn't be wrong. This is no bad thing though, because it's hardly a shabby starting point, and *Sega GT* adds more in the form of super-smooth, rock-solid graphics and some very sharp gameplay. The Dreamcast pad, with its analog shoulder triggers, is ideally suited to racing games, and gives you very precise control over where your car is pointing and how much power is being fed to the wheels.

You need this precision too, because even in the more arcade-style Single



△ Here we're racing in the desert at dusk, so the lighting effects on the cars change to match.



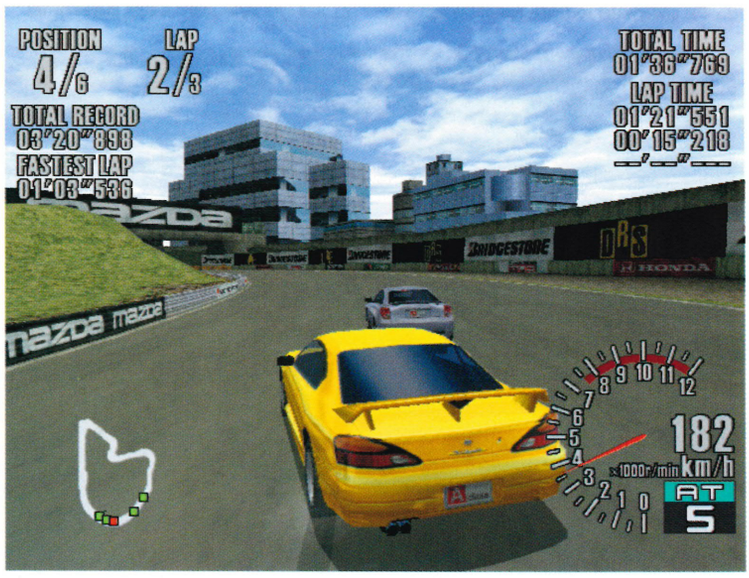
△ Split-screen two-player mode has a load of fogging, but the fast and furious gameplay remains.

△ This is what *Sega GT* is all about: racing tuned-up supercars at high speeds through bustling cities crammed with detail.

"EVERYTHING IS VERY CLEAN AND SHARP"

Race mode *Sega GT* is uncompromisingly realistic. If you slip a wheel off the tarmac or grind along a track-side barrier, you lose most of your speed instantly. This is one game you can't win at by bouncing round the corners. It pays to drive more conservatively, and actually slow down for corners and the nastier chicanes. It may go against all your gamer instincts, but the computer-controlled cars don't visibly 'cheat', and are subjected to the same gameplay rules as you are.

While you're struggling to work out braking distances and optimum apexes on the corners, you notice how good the game looks. Everything is very clean and sharp, with detailed textures that create attractive, if slightly uninspired, scenery. The cars themselves are fantastic though, with every bodywork crease and shut-line modelled. You can even make out the tiny decals on the boot lid when you're playing from the 'chase' view. The realistic handling means the cars move well too, rocking on their suspension and shifting forwards and backwards accurately as you accelerate and brake.



△ With 'drift' handling selected, it's easy to put your car into a long powerslide on the fast corners.

EVERYBODY IN SKYLINES

If it's extras you're looking for, *Sega GT* has them in spades. There's a two-player mode, which takes place in mysteriously foggy weather but at least has all the gameplay intact. Plus you can download mini-games to your VM – one for each featured manufacturer, in fact. Rack up a tasty high score in these and you're rewarded with cool secret bonuses in the main game.

While we're still waiting for Sega to confirm a UK release date, we think *Sega GT* is a game that car fans can get very excited about. It has it all: loads of fla shy motors, realistic gameplay, screens of impenetrable tuning options, and that inscrutable 1985 Toyota Levin.

Perhaps it's the Japanese equivalent of your mum's old Ford Fiesta, tuned up and with tinted windows and some boss alloys. Now there's an idea for the UK version.

ROLL YOUR OWN

A brilliant and unique feature of *Sega GT* is the Carrozzeria in Championship mode, where you can build your own car from the suspension upwards. At first you're limited to puny Entry-class cars, but if you stick the right bits together you quickly end up with a supercharged, four-wheel drive Mini clone. As you win more licences, you can build better cars. The price of your custom chariot is calculated as you stick more technology on. ('Carrozzeria' is Italian for a specialised car workshop-type thing, by the way.)

△ Choose an engine…

△ Choose a transmission…

△ Choose a body style…

△ Paint it bright pink…

△ And away you go!

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

One of the most amazing-looking and chilling games is creeping ever nearer. **STEVE KEY** steps once again into the world of survival horror

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY/JUNE**
PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**
DEVELOPER: **EIDOS**

WHATS THE BIG DEAL?

- Think grenade launcher, decapitations, dismembering and disembowelling
- Two discs, with days and days of game time
- The most creepy, *Evil Dead*-like atmosphere you'll find in any Dreamcast game
- More blood than a whole series of *ER*

FINALLY, AFTER MONTHS OF WAITING and speculating about the next instalment of Capcom's massive horror game series, *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* has been released in Japan. With the UK version in development and a release currently planned for May (possibly June), we're here to give you an quick peek at what to expect in a few months' time.

First off, just take a look at these graphics, would you? Everything is generated by Dreamcast in real time 3D – the characters, backgrounds, everything. Nearly all the story-enhancing cut-scenes are done with in-game graphics, rather than being pre-rendered as with most games, and as a consequence everything flows together seamlessly. It's a testament to the visual quality of *Code: Veronica*. The facial detail on the characters is something you notice too, as they genuinely do look scared when zombies come bursting out from under them.

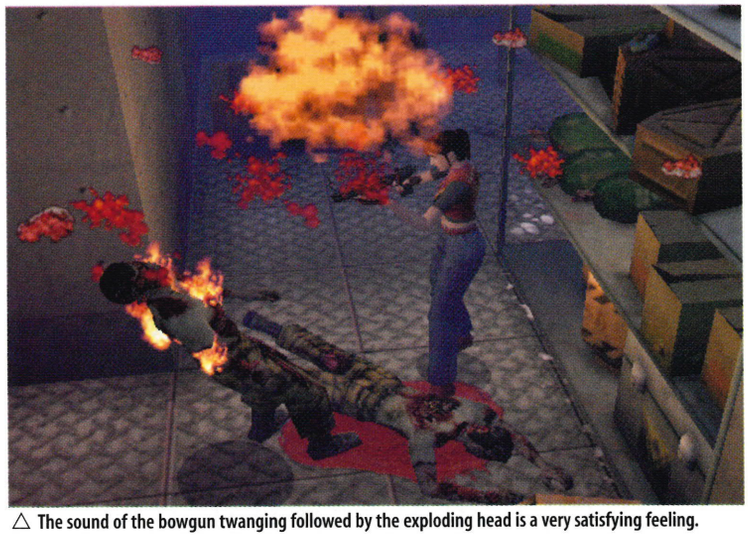
But it's the whole manner and feel of the game that grabs you. It actually feels like you're part of the adventure; like you're really in the game's environments, rather than just running around on flat painted backgrounds. The detailed 3D graphics also mean that Capcom have been able to use some fantastically dramatic camera angles to increase the tension. The view switches intelligently from place to place as you sprint through rooms, unloading into zombies. Some of the camera positions produce the distinctly chilling feeling of actually seeing through the eyes of something watching you. And that's when the game starts to play with your mind.

Code: Veronica also has the classic involving and addictive gameplay that made the other *Resident Evil* games so appealing (such as *Resident Evil 2*, *ODM* #4, 7/10). You're wandering around for ages looking for a specific item, and start to reach for Dreamcast's 'off' button, when suddenly you stumble upon something that triggers an entire train of thought in your head: "If I put this here… and that there, it'll open up that bit…", and the next thing you know it's three in the morning and you're wide-eyed with your heart pounding.

POWER TOOLS

It's not just the technically impressive graphics that drags you into *Code: Veronica*'s world of horror. Dreamcast's extra power means that Capcom's collective twisted mind can run free, adding more creepy details and more blood than ever before. It's certainly far more sinister than any of the other *Resident Evil* games. The musical score helps keep you on underpant alert as well: ambient, spooky tunes in some of

"CLASSIC INVOLVING AND ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY"



△ The sound of the bowgun twanging followed by the exploding head is a very satisfying feeling.

△ The underwater section is one of the best bits.

△ Red eyes make zombies even more sinister.

△ Ammo for the machine-guns is sparse, but unloading hundreds of bullets at a time is very addictive.

△ If you've seen *Tremors*, you'll like this bit.

the darker areas of the game can be quite unsettling, as can the eerie silences accompanied by just the squelching of distant zombies. If you could look over your shoulder in the game, you'd be doing it every couple of minutes.

One feature which was put into the original PlayStation *Resident Evil* to disguise the console's long loading times – a black screen showing each door being opened – is still in the Dreamcast *Code: Veronica*. Though the sequences aren't needed to cover up any loading, the developers chose to leave them in to maximise the game's tension and drama. In fact, they're becoming an even more important part of the atmosphere than ever. Rooms where you just *know* something will be waiting for you will be accompanied by a heartbeat sound effect, which varies in tempo depending on the situation! Also, the game takes longer to open some doors than others, as if you're really reaching down and turning the door knob very slowly so that it doesn't make a sound. And while all this is going on, you're bouncing up and down in your chair, screaming at the game to get a move on!

There's no doubt that *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* is a mammoth Dreamcast release, and we can't wait to get stuck in to a finished English version. We don't want to reveal too much about it just yet, but you can look forward to bumper coverage very soon, where we'll really lift the lid on the Umbrella Corporation's ongoing zombie nightmare.

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

ED LOMAS trades finger-flips with Dreamcast's first skating game

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **JUNE**
PUBLISHER: **CRAVE**
DEVELOPER: **NEVERSOFT ENTERTAINMENT**

WHAT DOES THE NAME TONY HAWK mean to you? If you are, or have been in the last 10 years, a skateboarder, it'll mean something close to 'god'; if you're a little bit stupid, chances are it'll mean 'that annoying comedian with a pointy nose who appears on late-night, low-budget gameshows with a permanent grin on his face' (that's Tony *Hawks*, by the way); and if you've got a PlayStation it'll probably mean 'one of the best games of 1999'.

Whatever it means to you right now, Mr Hawk's name will soon become synonymous with quality Dreamcast games, with development of *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* coming on very well already. These first actual in-game screenshots show how both the boarders (all real-life pros from Tony's own Birdhouse team) and the street layouts all look sharper and more detailed than they did in the already impressive PlayStation version.

We'll have a full-on preview feature closer to the game's release, but we can tell you now that we're fully expecting this to be the definitive version of the best boarding game ever made.

△ Take off like a bird...

△ ...but if you don't land properly it's hospital food time.

△ Boarding games don't come any better than this, and the Dreamcast version looks set to be the definitive one.

THE NOMAD SOUL

Huge 3D cities, roaming adventure, first-person shooting... and a soundtrack by David Bowie. **DAN TRENT** reckons it all adds up to something that has the makings of an impressive title

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**
DEVELOPER: **QUANTIC DREAMS**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- You can explore huge 3D living cities
- Motion-captured faces
- More than 30 playable characters
- Fighting and first-person shooting included

A GIANT, DOMED city, people wandering around in strange outfits under the control of a totalitarian regime... No, not Center Parcs, but the city of Omikron, the setting for the latest action-adventure title to hop over from PC to DC. At first glance this game could be mistaken for a fairly generic third-person adventure, but a little delving soon reveals that *The Nomad Soul* has a few more tricks up its sleeve.

At its heart is the huge 3D living, breathing city, but in the course of the adventure the play switches from the straightforward third-person view to first-person shooting, to 3D beat 'em up and back. The combination of this, plus an exclusive soundtrack by David Bowie and revolutionary motion-captured faces on the characters, makes for an intriguing mix.

TIME TO KILL

If the wait for games like *Shenmue* is getting too much and you crave an immersive and involving adventure *The Nomad Soul* could be the answer to all your prayers. The game world is said to be enormous, and a unique open structure means you can take a break from your mission and simply wander around or do whatever before getting back to the job in hand. In fact there's so much to do that you could almost spend all your time exploring and never actually *play* the game. But of course that would be a waste, as a great deal of effort has gone into the creation of a complex and involving storyline.

Without giving too much away, the story involves you, as a spirit, accepting an invitation to enter the body and life of a police investigator called Kay'l, who implores you to step into his world to save the city from a sinister evil force. As the story continues, the plot goes through more twists than an episode of *Columbo*, and you gain the ability to inhabit and play as any of a huge variety of different characters – hence the moniker *The Nomad Soul*. Death isn't the end, you simply inhabit another body.

Developers Quantic Dreams have not only gone to huge amounts of effort on the story, they've also created a very strong visual style for Omikron. Fans of films like *Total Recall* and *Robocop* will feel instantly at home, and there's the inevitable *Blade Runner* influence that shapes the environment you inhabit. The huge size of the areas involved means it would be incredibly time consuming to explore it all on foot, so there's the option of using your anti-gravity car, or slider, to whisk you around with the minimum of fuss. While the bulk of this isn't in real time, it does speed things up considerably and avoids too much trudging about – a common bugbear of the genre.

The straightforward nature of translating PC games to Dreamcast means that the development time for *The Nomad Soul* has been kept to a

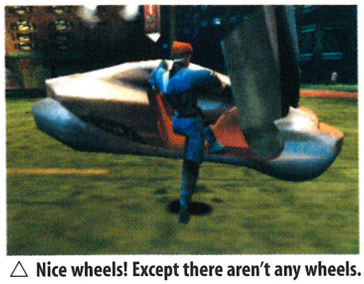
"A COMPLEX AND INVOLVING STORYLINE"

△ None of that 'earn your way' nonsense here; anything you need you buy.

△ The detail on the faces is very convincing.

△ *Soul Calibur*? Pah! VR training is the bomb.

△ Huge detail has been lavished on the scenery.



△ Nice wheels! Except there aren't any wheels.

△ Getting off with someone else's wife by borrowing their body. Neat!

minimum, as senior producer Herve Albertazzi explains: "We started work on the game in earnest back in November '99 with a team of five Dreamcast programmers, but we'd had a couple of people identifying all possible problems and laying the grounds for an easy conversion for a couple of months beforehand."

Herve goes on to explain the differences you can expect to see when the game hits Dreamcast: "We're using all the features of the PC version we can. We certainly haven't had to leave anything out, and the new version will hopefully be noticeably smoother and faster. Of course, one of the most exciting things is that for the first time you'll be able to see facial motion-capture on a Dreamcast game."

This is indeed an exciting feature, and brings to life the 70 or so people you encounter directly in conversation. And when you consider that there's more than four hours of dialogue, you can appreciate the scale of the task.

If you like your games intelligent, involving and well-thought out, then *The Nomad Soul* could well be just the ticket to adventure game heaven you've been looking for – there's certainly a great deal of promise.

Check next month's *ODM* (on sale Thursday 6 April) for the full lowdown.

▷ Here's one body we wouldn't mind inhabiting. Hur-hur.

△ Take your flaming sword and deal death to all and sundry. Well, apart from these elves, who you have to talk to.

DRAGONS BLOOD

Monsters, elves and lots of blood. Sounds like a good night out round these parts. **STUART DREDGE** takes a look to see what's going down

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **INTERPLAY**
DEVELOPER: **TREYARCH**

IT'S BEEN A LONG WAIT for the role-playing nuts among you, but there are happy times ahead. Not only are there a number of role-playing games (RPGs) on the way, there's also *Dragons Blood*. It's part action/ adventure and part RPG; you play a hero who hacks and slashes their way through a 3D landscape, yet there are also elements of spell-casting and character development.

You can choose to play as either a beefy warrior or a slinky sorceress, and your mission is to put paid to an enormous dragon that's joined forces with a stone giant and an insectoid queen. As you go through the game, you can upgrade your skills by completing missions given to you by your mentor, a wise old duffer called Stendahl.

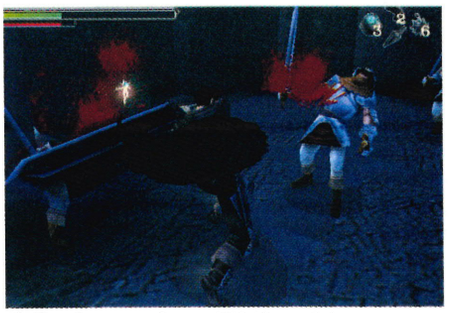
Dragons Blood features plenty of action, with regular fights with the dragon's monstrous minions – there are 30 different types, ranging from pesky cannon fodder to huge beasts. Fighting is handled with a simple system – one button slashes, another one blocks – but you can also cast spells and pick up new weapons along the way.

From what we've seen, *Dragons Blood* certainly looks intriguing – there's enough swords and sorcery to interest RPG fans, and also enough action and pretty graphics to perhaps pull in the rest of us. We're looking forward to seeing how the final game shapes up.

△ These wisps increase your health.

△ You often find yourself battling multiple foes.

△ Guts, the hero of *Sword of the Berserk*. With a face like that, no wonder he's a bit tetchy.



△ The advantages of a sword this big are obvious.

△ The fairy follows you around, although we're not sure why.

SWORD OF THE BERSERK: GUTS' RAGE

The name may have changed, but the blood's still pumping. **STUART DREDGE** tries to stay calm in the face of extreme violence

▷ Well-timed blows result in blood flying all over the shop.

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**
DEVELOPER: **YUKES**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Blood, lots of blood
- Involving storyline
- Interesting camera angles
- Er... more blood

WE'VE GOT A CONFESSION to make. It's come to our attention that our existing coverage of the Japanese game *Berserk* may have led you to believe that it's a violent hack 'em up with fountains of blood and gore gushing all over the place. We accept that including the title in, er, the Bloody Games preview feature in our Blood Issue (*ODM* #4), surrounded by some ultra-bloody screenshots, may have portrayed the game as bloody.

And it is, but there's more to it than that. Admittedly you do take the role of an extremely pissed-off warrior with an enormous sword, but if you think *Sword Of The Berserk* is purely about bloodletting, you'd be missing much of its appeal. There's a proper storyline, for a start, pushed along by some beautifully rendered cut-scenes that could almost give *Shenmue* a run for its money. And yes, there's lots and lots of blood, but you knew that already.

We reported last issue that Eidos had picked up the rights to *Berserk*, and that the game would probably undergo a name change. Well, *Sword Of The Berserk: Guts' Rage* it is, then, for unexplained copyright reasons. It was created by Japanese developer Yukes, well-known over there for their wrestling games, which haven't yet made it over here.

You play Guts, an enigmatic warrior with the most enormous weapon this side of Siegfried in *Soul Calibur*. The basic plot involves a mutant virus called Mandrake, which is turning normal people into slavering clones. Your task is to find where Mandrake is coming from and destroy it, while causing as much carnage as possible along the way.

The game itself plays a bit like *Soul Fighter* (ODM #2, 6/10), although obviously we're hoping it will avoid the flaws that made that title so unimpressive. Guts basically runs around the screen twatting people in half, with a variety of different camera angles available. You usually find yourself up against five or six enemies at once, requiring you to turn into a whirling dervish, swinging your sword around in a blur and sending blood spurting everywhere. Even from our preview version the game already looks like a great cure for office rage.

Another twist is hinted at in the game's title. Slay enough enemies, and Guts flies into a berserk 'rage' where his eyes glow red and he chops at all and sundry with even more venom than usual. He also acquires a few new moves, although the best tactic appears to be to hammer the buttons and send as much blood flying as possible.

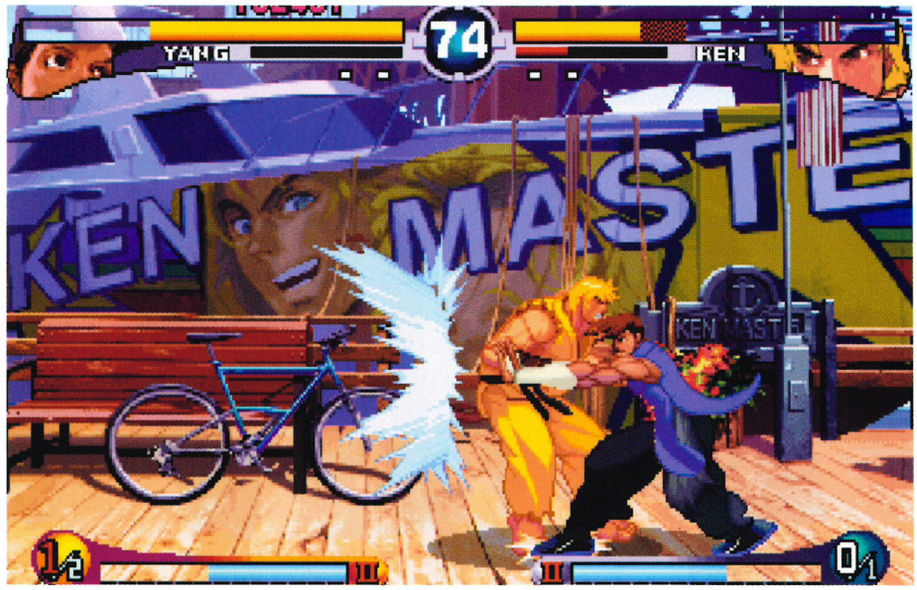
Between bouts of hacking, the game features detailed cut-scenes developing

the game's plot, and it's these that will add value when the game gets a PAL release. Some gamers who've already bought the Japanese version on import have complained that there's not much depth to it. That might be because if you don't speak Japanese you're unable to follow the story, which is an important part of the game. Then again, it could be because there's not much depth to it. Our final judgement will have to wait till we see a final review copy.

It is unfair to see *Sword Of The Berserk* as merely a blood-soaked anger management tool for *Mortal Kombat* fans, although the blood 'n' guts elements are bound to be used as one of its main selling points. That's marketing for you, but there's certainly more to it than that. There are even some extra characters accompanying you – a slinky girl and a strange little naked fairy – whose purpose we're still trying to work out.

Nevertheless, the game should appeal to anyone who likes the idea of *Soul Fighter* but not the – pardon the pun – execution. Actually, it's not entirely dissimilar from *Dragons Blood*, which we've previewed on page 63 of this issue. If you're looking for *Golden Axe* in 3D, it's likely that at least one of these two titles will be right up your street. We'll let you know how they shape up as soon as they're ready for release.

△ Definitely not just a flesh wound, then.



△ Old boy Ken and his best buddy Ryu are the only two characters to have made it into every single *Street Fighter* game.

STREET FIGHTER III DOUBLE IMPACT

ED LOMAS investigates the phenomenon of the game series that will never die

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**

No, not *Street Fighter Alpha 3* (ODM #2, 8/10), though that's now not likely to be out until May either. This is a conversion of two of the latest *Street Fighter* games, which come a whole six – and seven – places later in the chronology of the series (after all the *Alpha* games, the *Street Fighter II* games, and the *Super Street Fighter II* games).

Both the original version of *Street Fighter III* and its upgrade semi-sequel, *Street Fighter III: 2nd Impact Giant Attack*, are included on the *Double Impact* GD-ROM and, as any fan will tell you, they play very differently from *Street Fighter Alpha 3*. With a more gritty, detailed and smoothly - animated look, as well as a slightly more tactical, chunky playing style, this is a game that should appeal to those who haven't been into the series since back in the good old *Street Fighter II* days.

The graphics in the Dreamcast version are exactly the same as in the arcade game, which will again divide opinion: are they super-dramatic, brilliantly detailed, hand-drawn masterpieces, or are they scummy 2D cartoon rubbish? With a May release planned, we should have a full review within the next couple of issues, where we'll settle this once and for all. Shinkuu-hadooooken!

△ Urien's a newbie who fights in just a tiny pair of pants!

I left n

h

in San Fra

CRAZY TAXI™

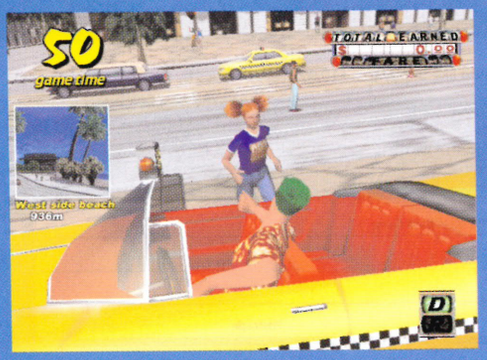
It may be a beautiful town, but the cabbies are lethal. And now you can join them. Choose from 4 different vehicles and you're away – cutting through

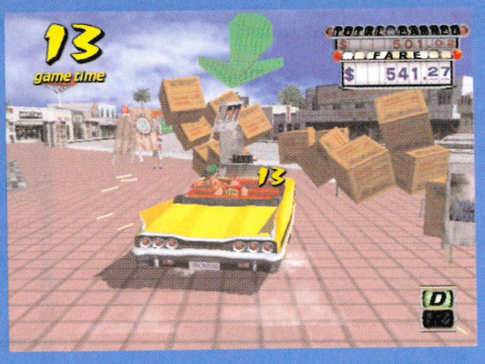
SEGA™

ny

eart

ncisco.





traffic and driving like a maniac, for money. Only one thing matters – getting passengers from A to B in record time. And remember, no-one said they had to arrive in one piece.

Crazy Taxi ©Sega Enterprises, Ltd., 2000. Sega & Dreamcast are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Enterprises, Ltd. R.R.P. £39.99

Dreamcast.

Up to 6 billion players

www.dreamcast-europe.com

Dreamarena

THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST SUBSCRIPTION

Dreamcast™

www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

HOW TO GET 3 TRIAL ISSUES AND SAVE 33% ON YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

SAVE 33%

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO THE ONLY OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE and your first 3 issues are 100% risk-free. That means you can write to cancel any time during the first 3 months and claim a FULL REFUND - no questions asked.

- **Get 3 trial issues,** if you're not completely hooked, you won't pay a penny.
- **Save a massive 33%,** that's £19.89 off the annual shop price when you subscribe.
- **A FREE Sega cover CD every month** - only with the Official Dreamcast Magazine.
- **Speedy home delivery** - get your magazine and FREE CD before your friends.

YOUR 3 TRIAL ISSUES OFFER - REPLY WITHIN 7 DAYS

☐ Please start my 3 trial issues subscription to the Official Dreamcast Magazine. I understand this is a risk-free offer because I can write to cancel within 2 weeks of receiving my 3rd trial issue and claim a full refund - no questions asked.

OR ☐ I am already a subscriber, please extend my subscription with this special offer.

YOUR DETAILS

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

DAYTIME PHONE Email

CHEQUE OR CREDIT/DEBIT CARD PAYMENT - 12 issues only £39.99 (UK only) **SAVE £19.89**

1 I enclose a cheque made payable to *Dennis Publishing Ltd.*

2 Please charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX ☐ Switch (Issue No. ☐)

CARD NO ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ EXPIRY DATE ☐☐☐☐

SIGNED DATE

3 I would like to pay just £19.99 every 6 issues by Direct Debit (UK only)

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit DIRECT Debit

Please fill in the form and send to: Dennis Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST WD7, Bristol BS32 0ZZ

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To the manager: Bank name

Address

Postcode

Originator's Identification Number: 7 2 4 6 8 0

Ref no. to be completed by Dennis Publishing

Instruction to your Bank or Building Soc. Please pay Dennis Publishing Ltd. Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Dennis Publishing Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Account in the name of

Branch sort code ☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐

Bank/Building Society account number ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account

☐ Please indicate here if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers from companies other than Dennis Publishing Ltd or if you are under 18 years of age.

RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO:

Dreamcast Subscriptions Department, FREEPOST WD7, Bristol, BS32 0ZZ (no stamp required)

SUBSCRIBE BY PHONE: INSTANT ORDER HOTLINE - 01454 620070

P004

re:views

RE-REVIEW. THE CROWD SAY BO SELECTA. RE-R-R-REVIEW. THE CROWD SAY BO SEL-L-L-EEECTA! THIS ONE GOES OUT TO ALL REEEDERS

WHO NEEDS PCs, EH? They're just overpriced Dreamcasts with loads of dull word processing and 'edutainment' programs on them. And who needs arcades? They're just dark, smoky rooms full of Dreamcasts in big boxes, with scabby kids spilling sticky drinks over the controls.

Well, okay, so maybe there *are* reasons to have PCs and arcades, but Dreamcast is certainly doing a very good job of emulating two of the most expensive areas of videogaming for its bargain price of just one nine nine. A number of top titles from both these areas have already made it to Dreamcast, and there are many more to come in the near future. This month's Dreamcast releases comprise almost entirely of conversions, the biggest of which is undoubtedly *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*.

Clearly translated from the PC game in a very short amount of time (we only printed the first confirmation of Lara's Dreamcast debut in the previous issue), *The Last Revelation* still manages to improve on the original in a few nice graphical ways. *Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver* and *Wild Metal* are also relatively straight PC ports, only this time they arrive more than six months after they were originally released.

What does this mean to you? Are you annoyed that you're getting lots of old PC games on your powerful new console, or do you think it's great that you're able to play on your £199 console games that normally need a £700 computer. Let us know what you think by writing to Mailbox (see page 48) and we'll print the most interesting of your comments.

The difference in graphical quality between the PC and arcade conversions is certainly noticeable when you look at *Zombie Revenge* in action though. Having been originally designed for the Dreamcast-based NAOMI arcade system, it has translated to the console with all its impressive detail intact, leaving the development team time to add a number of cool new features. Everyone loves a good bit of VM usage, and *Zombie Revenge* has some of the best hand-held bonuses yet. Not only are they fun for passing the time on dull car/bus/taxi/boat/plane/foot journeys, but you can also build up your character before plugging them back into the game. Nice.

What's your opinion of Dreamcast's arcade conversions? Do games designed to hook players with instantly accessible flashiness then hold them in a constant state of 'just one more go' work well in the home? And are developers adding enough extra features to make their games stand up to all-night gaming sessions over the months? Again, put your comments down and get them in to Mailbox. We want to know what you think.

But the game that's really surprised us this month is *Rayman 2*. Yes, it's already available on PC, but the Dreamcast version is definitely no straight conversion. Ubi Soft have clearly spent a large amount of time adding gorgeous graphical effects and exclusive new levels to the Dreamcast version, making it one of the best-looking and most enjoyable platform games we've played for a long time. Not bad considering the main character's one of the crappiest ever designed.

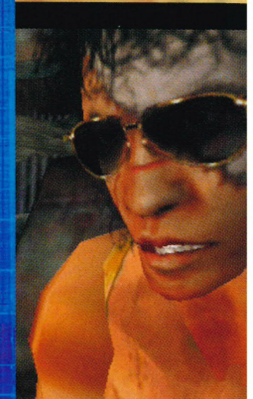
REVIEWED THIS ISSUE...

LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER (EIDOS)	80
RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE (UBI SOFT)	70
TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION (EIDOS)	8
WILD METAL (TAKE 2)	84
ZOMBIE REVENGE (SEGA)	76

ODM RATINGS

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

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



RAYMAN 2
THE GREAT ESCAPE

Who better to check out Rayman's latest platform adventure than **ED LOMAS,** Rayman's biggest non-fan in the world? Nobody, of course

PLATFORM GAMES NEED STRONG CHARACTERS if they're going to succeed. You've got to care about whoever it is you're making hop from ledge to ledge, otherwise you might as well just let them drop into the poisonous water below or get eaten by the piranhas inevitably jumping around in it.

Sonic's a strong character: a big, cheeky, blue hedgehog who can run at the speed of light. Rayman is *not* a strong character: a big-nosed head, a purple body, two gloves and two trainers, and he can fire sparkles at people. His good-looking but bland 2D platform adventure released on Saturn and PlayStation back in 1995 certainly made him a fair number of enemies – people who couldn't handle the fact ▶

△ Razorbeard the evil pirate duck cyborg and his robotic troops stand no chance against our limbless Gallic hero. Vite, Rayman! Vite!

▷ that he had no discernable personality, no friends and no real enemies, no background story, no… charm. And, of course, no darned limbs.

The original game still managed to sell well across Europe, partly because it was one of the first games to be released for the 32-bit systems, and partly because it was a perfectly functional platform game – lots of levels, lots of platforms, lots of jumping and lots of collecting. And people will *always* want platform games.

As a consequence, Rayman doesn't have much of a following. Not in a positive way, at least. Many of us feel sick because of his rampant mediocrity; we wince whenever his name's mentioned – we even cringed at the news that he had a game coming to Dreamcast. He's the character we all love to hate. Unfortunately, thanks to *Rayman 2: The Great Escape*, we're just going to have to hate to love him instead.

'ARMLESS FUN

Right from the very start of the game, it's obvious that this isn't the same Rayman that was around five years ago. We find him locked in a cell on board a flying galleon manned by evil robotic pirates. He's upset because these pirates are going around being horrible to all his fluffy friends below, and he can't do anything about it because he's lost his magic powers. Then his friend Globox – a big, wobbly blue toad thing – is thrown in the cell with him and we get to see Rayman cheer up. That's two emotions in the first minute of the game – already more than in the previous five years.

Globox tells Rayman that he's been to see the wise fairy Ly, and that she knows how to stop the evil pirates. After handing Rayman a glowing ball containing his magic powers, the two blast their way out of the bottom of the galleon and fall to the island below, getting separated along the way. And this is where you take over: find out where Globox has landed, meet up with Ly, work out what's going on, then stop the pesky robo-pirates and restore peace to the land. It's a simple but brilliantly illustrated story that starts off the game with masses of scope for sub-plots, mini-quests and every kind of level you could hope to find in a platform game.

The first area enables you to get used to moving Rayman around his world and introduces you to the basic objectives of the game. By standing near engraved stones on the floor, a flying green gremlin with a massive grin appears and cheerfully gives Rayman handy bits of info, starting with the basic controls: the analog stick makes him walk or run in any direction, the A button makes him jump, and the B button makes him fire deadly sparkles from his fist. Holding the L button enables him to sidestep left and right while facing his

△ While playing the bonus game, yeah, a Globox dude pops his head up right in your way and cleans the screen! Haw haw!

SWEATY GLOBOX

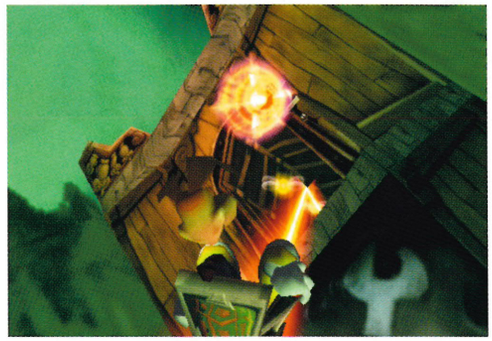
The excellent – and Dreamcast-exclusive – Globox Disc four-player bonus game is one of *Rayman 2*'s best features

In this bonus game for 2-4 players, everyone picks one of the Globox characters to control, then starts in their own alcove around the edge of a big, rotating maze. The idea is to run to the middle of the maze, collect up to three yellow lums at a time (unless you've got a special backpack that enables you to hold more), then rush back and drop them off in your base. The first player to reach a set number of points wins. Easy.

But, of course, it's not all that easy. Little enemies wander about getting right in the way, and power-ups appear occasionally, enabling you to walk through walls, plant bombs in opponents' bases, and even create temporary walls of your own. It really is a whole load of fun and, best of all, can be selected from the main menu at any time once you've collected it in the main game.

△ The view from inside a chasing monster's mouth – genius!

△ If *Rayman 2* doesn't make you happy, you're probably dead.



△ The world spins around as you steer this hi-speed armchair.

enemy, while the X and Y buttons rotate the view. And if you hold both the shoulder buttons you can take a look around from Rayman's point of view. Simple stuff.

Early on you also get introduced to 'lums', the glowing pieces of energy that once made up the magical energy heart of the island. They come in a number of different colours: red lums give Rayman more health, green lums act as restart points should you happen to die, and blue lums provide air to breathe when swimming underwater. But the most common – and important – are the yellow lums. There are a thousand of these spread throughout the game, with a set number being required to open up each new area on the island. Most are easy to find, just lying around in the open, but each section has a number of them hidden away in secret rooms, on hard-to-reach ledges, or locked in hanging cages. Lums imprisoned like this cry out for help when you get close, begging to be freed. Make sure you take the time to find them, as they not only count towards your yellow lum total, but also your health bar is extended every time you smash ten cages open.

Most people will be happy enough to just make their way through the game collecting only the essential yellow lums, but the scope is certainly there for the slightly more obsessive of us to get stuck right in: those of us who don't claim to have completed a game until ▷

SPEAK OUT

WE SPOKE TO MAD FRENCHMAN **FRANCOIS QUEINNEC**, AN ARTIST ON *RAYMAN 2*

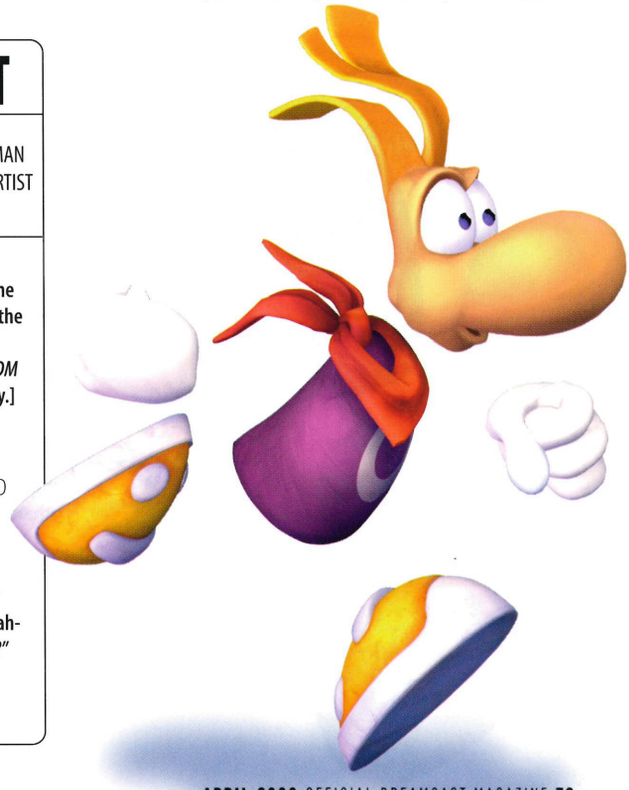
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
It's beautiful, fast and fun. And the multiplayer game really kicks! But the most amazing thing is that it's the first game ever that has code exclusively made of alexandrians (to add some poetry to the game). [*ODM* note: We've no idea what he's on about either. Sorry.]

WHICH GAMES ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?
***Puzzle Bobble*, *Soul Calibur*, *FFVIII*, *Tic-Tac-Toe*.**

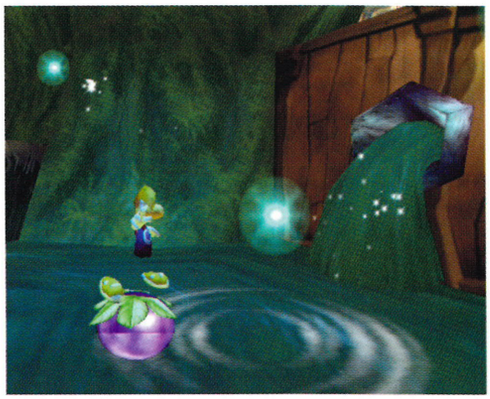
WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB IN THE GAMES INDUSTRY, AND HOW MUCH DID YOU GET PAID FOR DOING IT?
My first job was *Rayman 2* on Nintendo 64, but I'm still waiting for my Lamborgini.

IF YOU MET LARA CROFT, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO HER?
"Hi! I'm lookin' for my girlfriends Sharon, Neve, Sarah-Michelle, Jennifer and Naomi. Have you seen them?"

WHY IS HE CALLED RAYMAN?
Because if you call him Globox he doesn't answer!

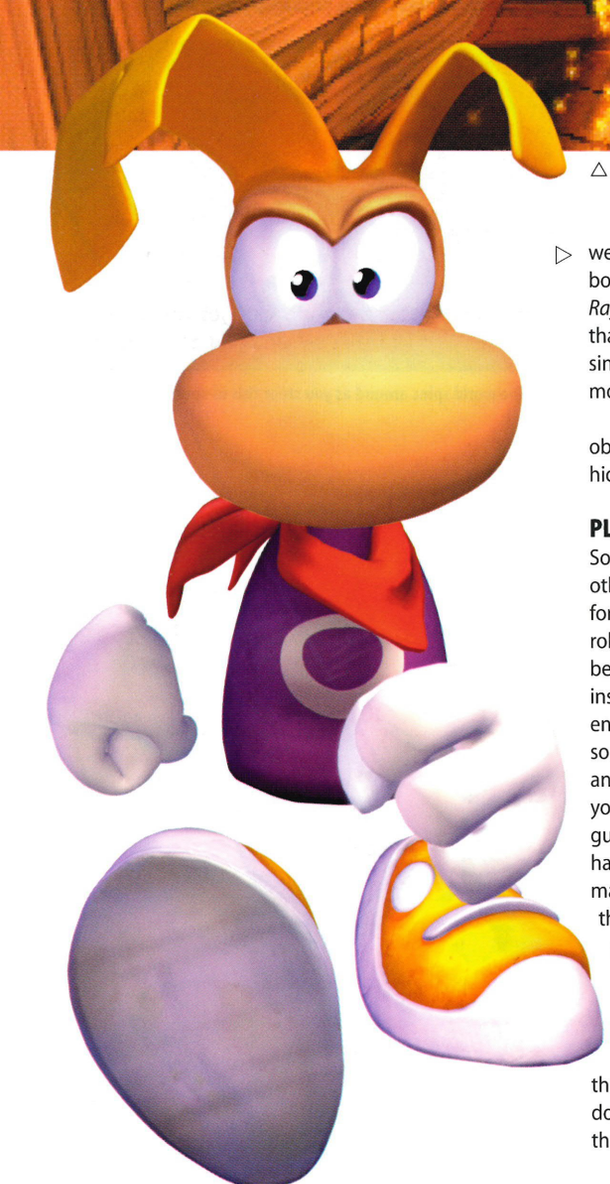


△ Rayman feels the power of a rocket between his... uh... feet.



△ The bizarre bouncing purple berry 'vehicle' in action.

△ One of the new Dreamcast-exclusive time trial bonus stages.



▷ we've *really* completed it, having collected every last bonus and found every last secret. Hunting for all of *Rayman 2*'s 1,000 yellow lums is the kind of epic quest that platform and adventure fans have been aching for since *Sonic Adventure* turned out to be ever so slightly more basic than we'd hoped.

And just to make things even more intriguing for the obsessives among us, there are even stories of a super-hidden 1,001st lum to investigate.

PLATFORM SOUL

So, *Rayman 2*'s got jumping and it's got collecting. What other ingredients does a platform game need? Enemies, for one. And yes, Rayman has his enemies, mostly of the robotic pirate variety. They're surprisingly few and far between for this kind of game, with most of the danger instead coming from the scenery itself. When you do encounter an enemy, they're normally placed carefully so that they work as part of a puzzle – maybe defending an essential item or doorway; or launching bombs in your direction while you're lugging a barrel of gunpowder around on your back. This emphasis on hazard-based puzzles rather than dodging enemies may make *Rayman 2* sound more like a trundling adventure than a platform game, but really it's about as pure a platformer as you could hope for.

It's certainly got platforms aplenty, as well as platform clichés – every classic platform game idea you've ever come across has been 'borrowed' and worked into *Rayman 2* in some way. In most cases they've been taken to extremes, too. For example, you don't just have to worry about quickly hopping across three or four collapsing ledges in a row here; oh no, you must deal with entire levels which fall apart as soon as you touch them. And all the time there's red-hot lava getting higher and higher beneath you. And a big baddie chasing you, shooting rocks on to you from above. And on top of all that the game still puts valuable goodies tantalisingly just out of reach, giving you a horrible 'do I/don't I?' dilemma to add to of all the jump-jump-jump panic already driving you nuts. It's a very clever and extremely well-executed combination.

All of *Rayman 2* works on this principle, mixing the best bits from just about every previous platform game with some ingenious new ideas, but doing it in such a way that it all works together almost perfectly. In places it can't fail to bring a smile of respectful recognition from even the most hardened gamer.

One such original item that crops up a number of times throughout the game is a purple berry found growing on certain trees. When knocked loose, Rayman can stand on top and bounce safely on any surface, water and lava included. Then, by shooting his fist sparkles (sounds rude!) in one direction, he can make the berry move in the opposite direction. It sounds fiddly and, to be honest, it is. There are some truly *evil* level designs using this bizarre bouncing berry, and at times they really test your platform patience to the max.

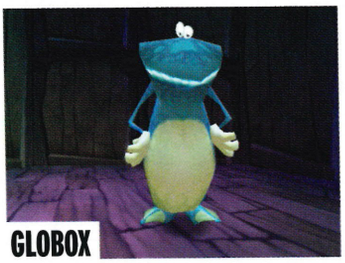
There are plenty more set-pieces we'd love to tell you about, but we don't want to ruin the surprises. Check out the screenshots for some clues as to what you're going to be getting up to.

HOORAY, MAN!

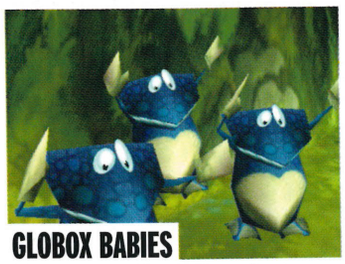
Rayman 2 may be available on the PC and Nintendo 64 already, but the Dreamcast version is certainly the best

SHYA'LL ME BESHT MATES

While Rayman's last game was notorious for being full of dull-as-shite nobodies, *Rayman 2* actually has a load of funny, cute-as-cheese characters for you to fall in love with. We want fluffy toys of all of these guys...

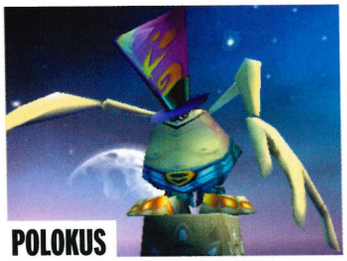


GLOBOX
Rayman's best buddy. He helps free Rayman at the start of the game, but ends up getting into all sorts of scrapes. Makes a great 'glub-glub-glub' noise as he talks.

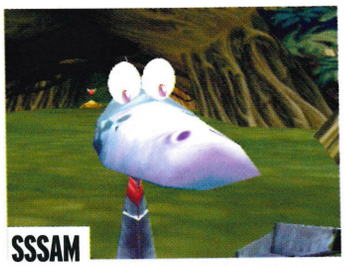


GLOBOX BABIES
We *guarantee* you'll make "Aaaaw!" noises and grin every time you see these guys. Globox's little kiddies are super-cute, but get very upset when their daddy goes missing.

LY
The friendly fairy who's been imprisoned in a magical cell by those nasty robo-pirates. Figure out how to blow up the machine powering the cell, and Ly gives Rayman extra powers.



POLOKUS
Lives in a constant trance, but knows everything there is to know about everything. Rayman needs to find four magical masks in order to wake him up.



SSSAM
Once freed from his cage, this friendly sea serpent gladly lets Rayman water-ski behind him. He moves at quite a speed though, so you must make sure you don't get left behind.

WALKING SHELL
This little rocket on legs gallops around like a horse, exploding when it comes into contact with anything. Once you've worked out how to tame him, you can ride on his back.

of the lot. Ubi Soft always planned to include exclusive features for Sega's new console, as well as upgrading the graphics to 128-bit standards. A number of bonus levels have been created especially for us, but they're not just sitting there for you to try out as soon as you turn the game on, you must make the effort to earn them.

A whole new level set in the home village of the friendly Globox has magical portals to three of these bonus stages which each involve collecting red lums as quickly as possible. By collecting every item in a regular game level, you can also try your luck in a button-bashing race similar to the old *Track & Field* games.

Another bonus stage is unlockable via the internet. At first glance it may just seem like Rayman running round in circles, shooting at enemies and bonuses slowly crawling out of a hole in the middle, but any gamer worth his/her salt will soon notice that it plays exactly like Jeff Minter's arcade classic *Tempest*!

The Globox Disc bonus stage we've mentioned before is probably the coolest of the lot though, enabling four people to play a cracking, fast-paced puzzle action game at any time. Brilliant stuff! Check out the Sweaty Globox panel on page 73 for more information.

Having these extra bonus stages just goes to add to the already massive amount of variety in *Rayman 2:* one minute you might be swinging through the treetops on neon vines, the next swimming behind a giant whale, then sitting on the back of a rocket on legs as it races up the wall and on to the ceiling, before flying around in a giant spaceship with complete free 3D movement. Even the regular platform stages vary considerably in their objectives.

"YOU'VE JUST *GOT* TO CHECK OUT *RAYMAN 2*"

But even with all this variety, *Rayman 2* does feel very 'forced' in many ways: you arrive in a new room, look for the doorway to the next one, then figure out how to get there. Then you do it all again. There's very rarely more than one route through a level, with definite 'right' and 'wrong' ways of doing each one, and this removes much of the feeling of freedom you might have got in *Super Mario 64* and, to a lesser extent, *Sonic Adventure*. But the puzzles and levels are so carefully designed and built that they test just about every area of your gaming skill. And thankfully the control of Rayman himself is so sharp that you're far more likely to get frustrated with your own stupidity than with the game itself.

Another great thing about the game is that it works on a number of levels: beautiful, cartoon-like 3D graphics, excellent cute characters (yes, you may even end up falling for Rayman himself) and simple controls mean that anyone of any age can play through the early parts of the game; while some of the later sections, and the quest for all 1,000 yellow lums, will test even the best of gamers. Fun for all the family, then.

No matter what you may think of Rayman, of platform games or of games with cute graphics, you've just *got* to check out *Rayman 2*. And if you've got any sense you'll challenge yourself to make it all the way to the end just to take on one of the coolest final bosses we've seen for years.

PRICE: **£39.99**
DEVELOPER: **UBI SOFT**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

VERDICT

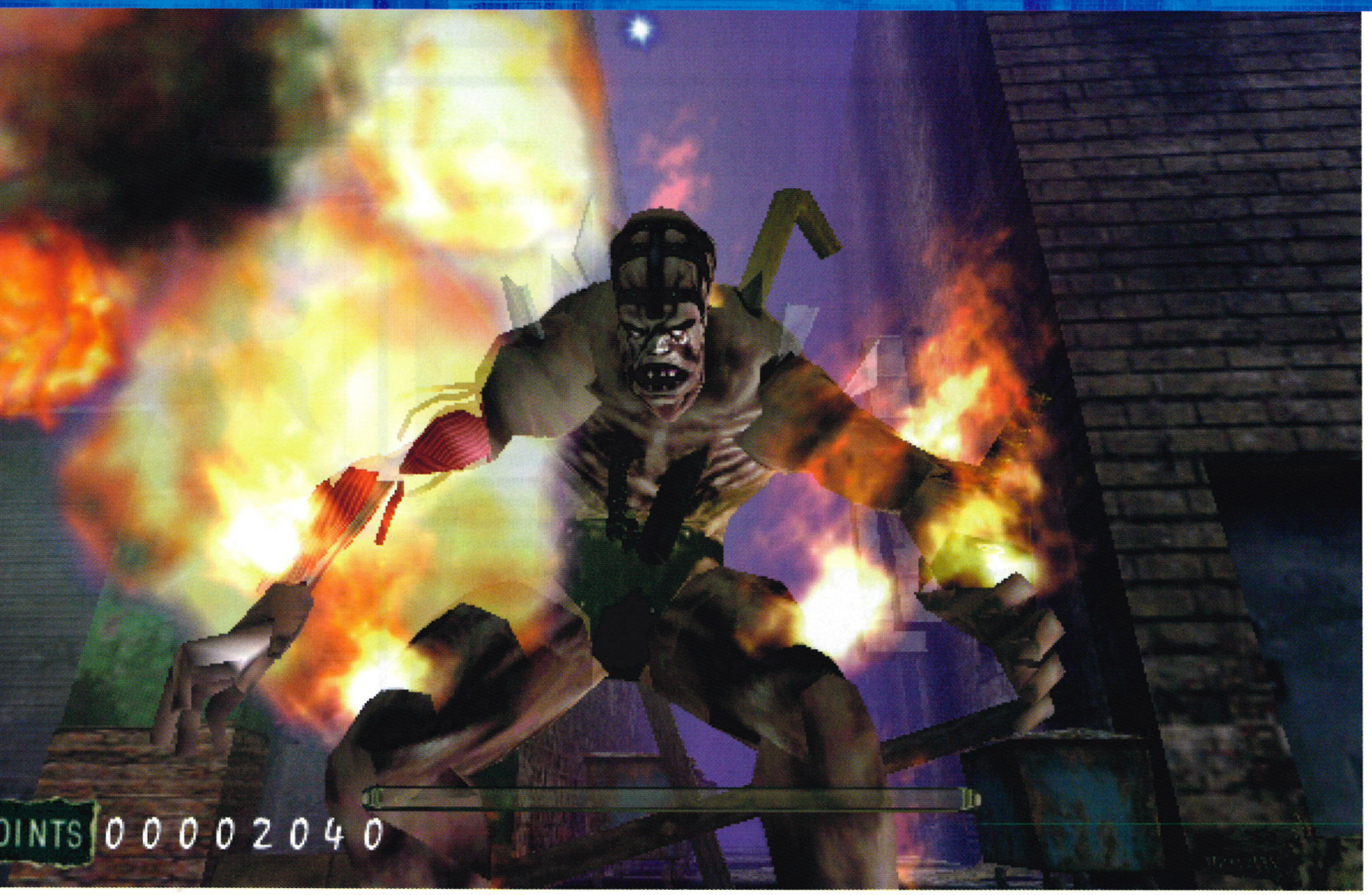
UNDENIABLY CLASSY FUN. WE LOVE YOU, RAYMAN!

UPPERS
Looks beautiful • Masses of variety • Easy to pick up • Some truly ingenious levels

DOWNERS
Feels very... clinical • Rayman is in it • Very linear • Hugely derivative

IN ONE HOUR Aim to be freeing Ly the fairy
WEBSITE
www.rayman2dc.com
MAX PLAYERS 1 (4 in bonus)
VIDEO MODES Full-screen PAL, 60Hz option, VGA-compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
8



△ "Warren, honey! I'm home!" Zoinks! Looks like you'd better start warming up your trusty shotgun for this freak. And that big metal pipe sticking out if its torso looks like it could come in handy...

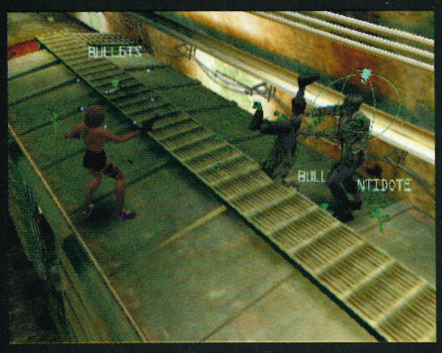
ZOMBIE REVENGE

The dead – it's about time they did something useful. Join **RADION AUTOMATIC** on his quest to cleanse the earth of the cursed cadavers

DEATH: IT COMES TO US ALL. Apart from those with the foresight to have made deals with Satan. Deals which all too frequently contain a fatal snag which leaves us permanently incarcerated/totally crippled/neutered and smelling of stale milk. Bummer.

But take heart! The military, fresh out of ideas for ways to make new corpses, have come up with something to do with the old ones – turn them into squaddies! This means dead people, like you will be one day, can look forward to a whole fantastic afterlife of cameraderie and bonhomie in the army. Don't like eating salty biscuits? Don't worry! Being dead, the only activity you'll really be interested in is mutilating the sweet pink flesh of the living, sapping the life from their veins until they join you in the cold, cacophonous world of undeath which is your eternal damnation. Don't like the sound of that? Well the only other way to achieve immortality is to kiss Anne Robinson full on the mouth, so tough titty.

Anyway, this being the army there are a couple of fatal flaws in their plan. Firstly, giving the army an excuse to kill their own people as well as everyone else is just a really bad idea. Secondly, the zombification process takes the form of a wildfire-spreading virus, most likely smuggled out of Raccoon City by STARS agents. Thirdly,



△ Blast away, or take time to carefully aim – your choice.

SHOOT THEM IN THE EYES

As previously mentioned, each character in the game is packing heat. Yeah, steel on a mission, beeyatch! Anyway, just like in 'real life', ammo supplies are limited, but it's usually pretty easy to pick up a new clip from the body of a dead zombie.

And now here comes the science part. Your gun is automatically aimed at the zombie nearest to your face, indicated by a *Virtua Cop*-'style' target indicator. And just like in *V Cop*, this indicator changes colour. Not because it's some kind of crazy mood ring, but to show the amount of damage your gun will inflict. This is affected by range and the length of time you aim at one particular target. So you can either rattle off a few shots at a lighter damage rating, or risk having your neck chewed out by the shambling reanimated while you steady your aim.

△ That's going to sting when he wakes up tomorrow morning. Just keep shooting till the whole of his top half's turned to mush.

military scientist Professor Breitling rather stupidly tested his secret formula on a couple who were very much alive as opposed to, say, already dead. Worse, his guinea pigs had a son, a yellow-eyed super-maniac by the name of Zed, and now he has sworn revenge! *Revenge!* What are the chances of that, eh?

NIGHT OF THE CONFUSING DEAD

The rest of the *Zombie Revenge* story, revealed through a series of five-second snippets between levels, makes even less sense. For maximum enjoyment, just pretend you're playing a *Resident Evil* game instead. Technically, *Zombie Revenge* is a spin-off from Sega's excellent first-person gun game *House Of The Dead 2* (*ODM* #1, 9/10), but the all-kicking (and shooting) action has more in common with old 2D scrolling beat 'em ups like *Streets Of Rage* and *Golden Axe*.

Now you might be thinking: "I didn't buy a Dreamcast to play a horror version of *Streets Of Rage*. Why, I had *Splatterhouse* for my PC Engine ten years ago!" And I bet that makes you really happy, you weaselly games snob. It's true that *Zombie Revenge* isn't even remotely original. It's not even as original as *Dynamite Cop* (*ODM* #2, 5/10), which was made by the developers' friends. But it is violent. And gory. And that is good.

Actually, there is something vaguely original – or at least more creatively cannibalised – about *Zombie Revenge*. Along with their fists and feet of fury, your character is also equipped with a shooter, enabling them to drill caps into the sorry hides of the supernatural from quite a distance. Apart from being the only thing other than zombies which ties the game in with *House Of The Dead*, the gun also adds a whole new level of tactics to the argy bargy. Plus you can shoot your enemies in the head while they lay on the floor, which is great fun.

The pistol you start with does decent damage but has little stopping power, meaning it's difficult to actually deck, say, shotgun-wielding zombies before they light up the boo-yaa. If you really like living dangerously (in games, at least, where you can't get hurt), you can also keep the fire button held down to build up a super-shot which should put anyone on the floor. This works with unarmed attacks as well, but you could make a cup of tea in the time it takes to charge, and you'd probably do more damage with angry words. To make some real hits, you must learn some combos.

YOU CAN KILL WHAT DOES NOT LIVE

Ah yes, the combo. To the KFC worker it means a value meal deal. To the farmer it means a harvesting machine. To gamers since *Street Fighter II* it means a devastating chain of moves strung together to foe-humiliating effect; except for certain *Soul Calibur* players, to whom it means 'thrashing the buttons like Michael J Fox at a cashpoint'. Combos are a mainstay of fighting games, and *Zombie Revenge* is no exception. The combos available to you, the player, depend on your choice of character.

As usual there are three to choose from: the normal bloke, the fast but weak girl with the biggest tits you ever saw, and the strong but slow man. The only minor deviation from the norm is that the girl has improved gun power. Each of the characters has their own fighting style, and while the damage caused by their regular attacks isn't massively different, their combo efficiency certainly is. In fact, working out all the different 'combination attacks' and learning to use them properly is where a lot of the fun comes into *Zombie Revenge*.

Normal bloke (the preposterously named Stick Breitling) is the best character to start with, but once you start playing as Richard Ashcroft clone Rikiya Busujima, normal bloke starts to seem a bit boring. Rikiya is capable of all manner of devastation with his hands, including one combo which smashes zombies in half, and another which ends in a devastating display of patented Busujima fireworks. Rikiya is also undisputed master of holds and throws, and is so hard that he's even able to rip a pipe right out of the body of the first-level trash-zombie boss and use it to beat him up. Of course, there's a hitch. While Stick's combos are less impressive, they're quick, whereas Rikiya tends to spends hours fannying around and also frequently over-reaches, which ▷

"IT WILL NEVER LOSE ITS APPEAL, ESPECIALLY IN TWO-PLAYER MODE"

△ That's shocking! Ha ha. How en-lightning. Ha ha haargh! It's re-volt-ing, isn't it? Ooh hoo-hoo!

△ Master each character's selection of combos to really stick it to them goddamn zombies.

△ How to get the most out of your guitars, *Desperado*-style! They don't like it up 'em, you know.

△ If an area's a bit too dark, just light some zombies with a nearby flame-thrower.

▷ means that if you don't apply a combo properly the zombies have plenty of free time to feast on your guts while you're preoccupied doing snaky moves.

If you're more of a total destruction fan, the good news is that *Zombie Revenge* also has tons of weapons; the bad news is that they're often found in the clammy hands of the dead. The usual range of shotguns and machine-guns are supplemented by such thrilling hardware as the giant drill, hand grenades, the best flame-thrower of any beat 'em up, and even a big old laser. Many of the items can be used to strafe groups of enemies as well as blast directly at individuals. This combines very well with the location-sensitive damage system. Seeing a group of bullet-ridden corpses shuffling towards you as you blaze them with the flame-thrower is one of the highlights of the game.

Play-wise, it's these kinds of details that make this game so enjoyable. Little things, like the fact that the walking dead can't use guns after you blow one of their arms off; or the way you can loose off a last-ditch volley of shots as you fly through the air after getting decked; or how you can pour petrol all over the floor and ignite it with a machine-gun hidden in a guitar case; or the bit where you must stop a train by using the handbrake while a cabin full of zombie engineers attack you (sorry for spoiling that). But it's not the biggest game in the world, and once you get the hang of prioritising your attacks and fighting larger groups it won't take you that long to clock all eight levels.

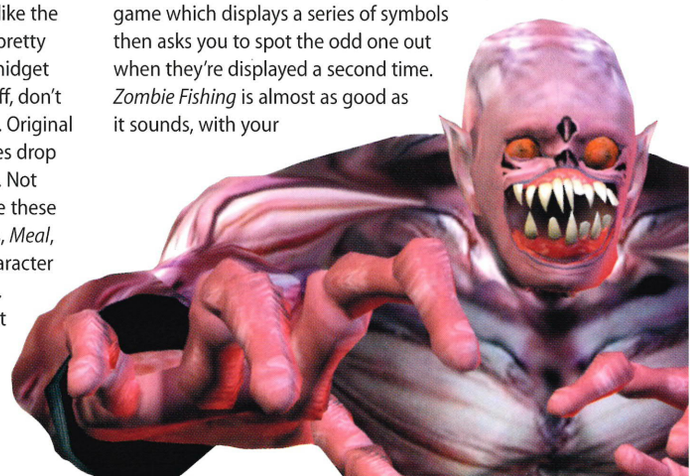
"GAME OPTIONS GIVE *ZOMBIE REVENGE* LONGEVITY"

What gives *Zombie Revenge* its longevity, apart from a special voodoo virus, is the game options. The most prevalent of these is Fighting mode, which pits two player-controlled characters against each other in a room full of weapons. To start with, the battles are over very quickly and the whole thing is a bit "So what?" but that's where the VM unit comes in.

ZOMBIGOTCHI!

Isn't it great how Sega's arcade conversions are like the DVD versions of movies, with extra bits? This is pretty much totally down to the VM, and fans of this midget gem do very well out of *Zombie Revenge*. First off, don't bother playing *Zombie Revenge* in arcade mode. Original mode is exactly the same, but defeated creatures drop more items, including spinach and cans of tuna. Not because they're undead shoplifters, but because these items can then be used in one of the VM games, *Meal*, which enables you to feed up your favourite character to make them more powerful in Fighting mode. That might not seem like a big deal, but without the benefit of a few hearty repasts Fighting mode games tend to last a matter of seconds. Each food has positive and negative effects on different characteristics like attack and defence, so you must learn some clever dietician skills if you're to stand a chance against good players. Or just download an FAQ with all the ratings on. Whatever.

Anyway, exciting though it is, spoon-feeding your sprite pales in comparison to the awesome magnitude of the other VM games, *Zombie Doubt* and *Zombie Fishing*. *Zombie Doubt* is a defence-enhancing memory game which displays a series of symbols then asks you to spot the odd one out when they're displayed a second time. *Zombie Fishing* is almost as good as it sounds, with your



△ The drill's gotta be the funkiest weapon of the lot – stuff it through a squishy zombie, turn it on, and... splat!

character scouring a lake for zombies and hooking them via a Simon-esque series of parrot-fashion prompted button presses. Admittedly not the height of sophistication, but both games (especially *Zombie Fishing*) are good for playing on the bus, and the fact that they add to your fighter's abilities gives you extra reason to play them. As if this isn't exhausting enough, there are also a couple of alternative play modes (Bare Knuckle, where guns mean nothing, and Gun mode, where guns mean everything), and numerous secret rooms and short cuts to uncover.

The only real trouble with *Zombie Revenge* is the emphasis on Fighting mode as the afterlife of the main game. After all, there are already shedloads of dedicated man-to-man fighting titles available for Dreamcast; *Zombie Revenge*'s real advantage is its sense of adventure. The plot might be gibberish, but the atmosphere is excellent, bolstered by some creative creature design and an impassioned attention to detail.

The one- and two-player modes are like *Alien* and *Aliens*: two-player is more fun and with more action, while single players have a more eerie, "I'm going to die" time of it. Once completed, the replay value obviously decreases massively, but even if you can't be fagged with the Fighting mode *Zombie Revenge* will never lose its appeal, especially in two-player mode. It's going to sit there in your collection, waiting for you to notice it, take it down, and wonder why it's been so long since you last played it.

PRICE: **£39.99**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA AM1**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

VERDICT

EXCELLENT PUZZLE-FREE ALL-ACTION ARCADE CAPER

UPPERS
Imaginitive, intricate game design • Great atmosphere • Violence is good • Zombies are so cool

DOWNERS
Fighting mode could have more depth • Only two players • Plot would vex Truffaut

IN ONE HOUR We'd got to the second boss, level 3
WEBSITE www.dreamcast-europe.com
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Full-screen PAL, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
7

△ This skinless motherfreaker must die!

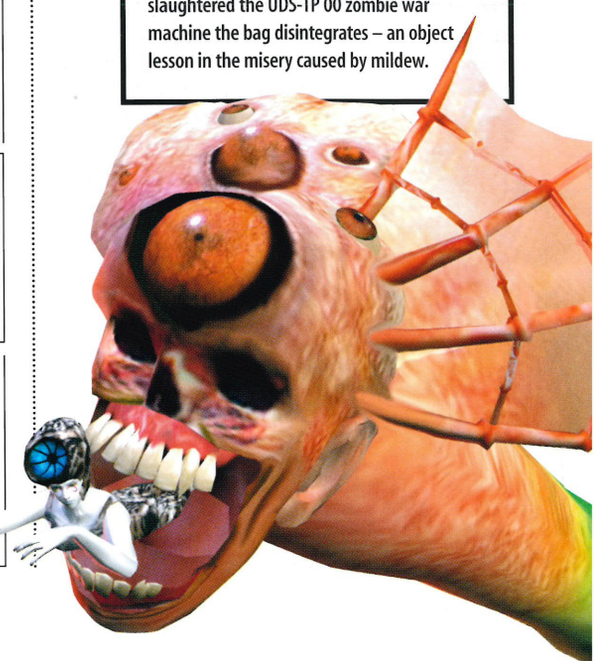
△ Bust your way in here for many goodies.

EXPLORE SECRET PLACES

Every game has its secrets. *Sega Bass Fishing*, for example, secretly wears women's underwear. *Zombie Revenge* doesn't have anything quite that dramatic to offer (*or has it*?), but it is packed with secret rooms full of secret stuff. Well, 'secret' isn't quite the word – you mostly just kick any doors you see open, but in the heat of battle and with strict time limits it's easy to forget to search around.

There are two concealed alcoves of particular interest in *Zombie Revenge*. The first is the hardest to find, as it requires you to swing down from the roof of a speeding train into the carriage below. For a single life-up. Cheers. The second is a small bunker located just before the level five boss, which contains a large arms cache, and the weapons bag which enables you to temporarily carry three weapons at a time instead of just one.

You're then given a titchy (meaning *really short*) time limit to browse the arsenal and select your favourites. Sadly, once you've slaughtered the UDS-TP 00 zombie war machine the bag disintegrates – an object lesson in the misery caused by mildew.



△ Raziel poses for the cover of his new album with special guest Marilyn Manson.

LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

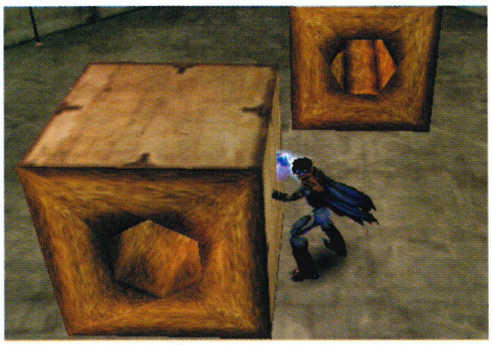
He laughed at *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, and writes jokes while listening to the Sisters Of Mercy. But this latest gothic horror depresses the usually delirious STEVE OWEN

ON THE CD

LIFE CAN BE A BITCH, don't you think? I don't know about you (perhaps I'm over-sensitive), but I hate it when, as one of six lieutenants of the master Vampire Kain, I have the audacity to evolve my own set of wings before my master, the punishment for which is to be thrown into the Lake of the Dead. Of course, water burns my vampire hide, leaving me physically destroyed, racked with pain and aching for revenge…

Based on a true story, *Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver* aims – like arcade classic *Paperboy* and management sim *Theme Hospital* – to recreate the life (perhaps that should be death) of your average ostracised vampire, known in this case as Raziel. With a waistline that would send Posh Spice running to the toilet with her fingers in her throat, Raziel's

△ "My cut has improved your voice." More *Highlander* references than you can shake a 2,000-year-old sword at.



△ When the Kain family sat down to play Monopoly, Raziel's midget brother was given the job of rolling the dice.

△ Zephon is rather queen alien-like, complete with sharp teeth, eggs and a nasty hiss. He's even built into the cavern.

life post-damning promises little. Nevertheless, with the help of a friendly Elder (mighty pissed off with Kain for nicking all his food, or something), Raziel is given the ability to create for himself a physical form to accompany his spiritual being.

Utter hokum, of course, but *Soul Reaver* contains sufficient bumf to ensure that it's just about the most original *Tomb Raider* variation on the planet.

So yes, just as Lara debuts on Dreamcast, Ms Croft's adopted parents Eidos sneakily place this much darker vision on the shelves (and no, we're not expecting Raziel to grace the front cover of lads' mags any time soon.) The idea is similar – running, jumping, exploring, puzzle solving, beastie destroying – but *Soul Reaver*'s world is so dark and twisted, it's ideas so stunningly original, that the link has been carefully hidden. It's Lara's evil alter ego, if you like.

PINK AND FLUFFY

For starters, the entire world has two appearances. In the real world everything is as you'd expect (given that it's a dark, gothic world that looks like it's been designed by the love child of HR Giger and Mary Shelley). But one of Soul Reaver's great twists is that as Raziel you can at any time opt to discard your physical body and revert to a spiritual form. As you do so, time in the real world freezes – anything you were holding hovers in the air – and locations darken and sometimes twist to create (surprisingly) even more depressing caverns and rooms, possibly providing access to new locations. In one level, for example, you find yourself on one side of a river, within jumping distance of a boat (remember that water kills – doh!). But the boat appears to hold no secrets or help to get you to a cave on the other side. By slipping into the spiritual realm however, the boat twists and stretches, providing that lift you need to the high exit.

"A BRAVE ATTEMPT TO CREATE SOMETHING PARTICULARLY ORIGINAL AND COMPELLING"

Indeed, reaching inaccessible areas is the key to *Soul Reaver*. Get to know the first few locations well, because you'll be going back to them plenty of times. The central hub leads to all the other levels, which are theoretically approachable if only Raziel had the ability. As it happens, the destruction of your siblings (still touchingly loyal to Kain) and the absorption of their souls awards you extra powers. The first enables you to pass through light textures such as fences when you're in the spiritual world, another grants you the 'skill' of climbing walls, while a third enables the generation of fireballs which can be used to nudge distant blocks out of the way.

While encouraging you to fully explore locations, what appear to be dead ends dutifully committed to memory, this method also means that each time you complete a little section you can be fruitlessly wandering around annoyingly similar locations trying to find either where you haven't been to before, or areas that you may well have been to before. But you can't remember if there was a good reason to go back to them or not. Take it from us, it's very easy to get lost, or just to forget exactly where it is you were planning to go to in the first place.

CREDO ALERT

But the whole 'going to the spiritual world' thing needs some more explanation, because it's *Soul Reaver*'s ideas that are so exciting. Right, as you're already dead, it's impossible for you to get any deader. Nevertheless, you're not indestructible; you have a limited energy system that drains when you're in the real world and replenishes in the spiritual realm. If your energy is lost in the real world, you're automatically transferred into your spirit form. Your energy is gradually restored, but you can only return to the real world when you have full energy and access to a transformation portal, of which there are many scattered strategically throughout the world. Lose all your energy in the spiritual realm and you're deposited back into Elder's chamber, usually some distance from where you are, and a suitable punishment if you really are that bad at this game.

Energy is lost with enemy attacks, but is more rapidly restored by a damn good sucking on their souls as they die. Unfortunately it's still not that straightforward. As most of your antagonists are vampires, they can't be killed by such a simple ploy as rapping them around the head with a big stick. Nevertheless, when a beastie is hit enough times he becomes sufficiently stunned for you to perform what wrestling fans like to call a 'finishing' move.

Dig up that pseudo-tie-in '*X Factor*' book your auntie bought you for Christmas and you'll notice that sunlight, water, fire and impaling are all sufficiently gruesome endings for the fanged undead. While they reel on the verge of unconsciousness, use conveniently placed ▷

△ Jump to set locations by using the Gateway system. The new Jubilee Gateway isn't open yet because of an engineers' strike.

△ Despite his hippy shawl (bought from a dope-head at Glastonbury),

▷ spikes, bonfires, lakes and spears to finish off the swine for good. Suck the soul though, otherwise they can return to their battered bodies for another go at you.

Of course, the downside of such combat is that you must always have something to hand to finish the blighters off, otherwise you'll spend the rest of your death slapping them about. There's usually something handy lying around, but you should look forward to the bit where you finally get your hands on the titular Soul Reaver. A sword of some mystical nonsense or other (told in aching detail during a cut-scene), the Soul Reaver is available only in the Material Plane when you have a full Health Coil (as it's known, bearing an uncanny resemblance to the Dreamcast logo, but in fetching lime green). Fortunately the pay-off is that you no longer lose energy like a leaking tap, so as long as you keep 'an eye on your six', you're always equipped with not only a formidable weapon, but also one that can always dispatch vampires – usually in several pieces as they're exploded across the screen.

"BEAUTIFUL SPECIAL EFFECTS AND TOUCHES"

HANGING AROUND IN GRAVEYARDS

This is the bleak picture painted by developers Crystal Dynamics, who've used this unusual premise to create an action adventure chronicling your revenge on Kain via the destruction of his remaining lieutenants – impressive and varied end-of-level bosses.

A gothic mix of fighting and puzzle solving, *Soul Reaver* is a brave attempt to create something particularly original and compelling, and most of the time it works a treat. Graphically it's excellent. The frame rate is superb, albeit at the cost of a rather thick black fog somewhere in the middle distance (this is particularly noticeable when a long corridor opens into a large cavern and its back wall turns out to be colourful rather than the shades of black you first imagined them to be).

The game benefits from some particularly impressive special effects and touches. Raziel's animation is beautiful, his magic accompanied by a delicate dance move and a subtle parade of swirling lights. The transition between planes is astonishing, particularly in some important locations where areas morph into their

SPEAK OUT

CORY STOCKTON, *SOUL REAVER*'S LEAD LAYOUT ARTIST, ANSWERS A FEW QUICK QUESTIONS

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR GAME?
Too many to list! No, really, the best thing about our game has to be the fact that there are no load times. Once you start the game that's it – the whole world is there for you to explore.

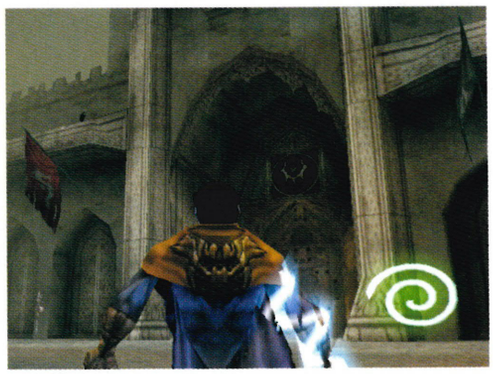
WHICH GAMES (NOT YOUR OWN) ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?
Well, I'm a big importer of Japanese games. Right now I'm really into *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* for Dreamcast – an amazing game. Also, I really like *Gran Turismo 2* for PlayStation.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB IN THE GAMES INDUSTRY?
My first job was actually here at Crystal Dynamics. I started out as a layout artist on *Soul Reaver*.

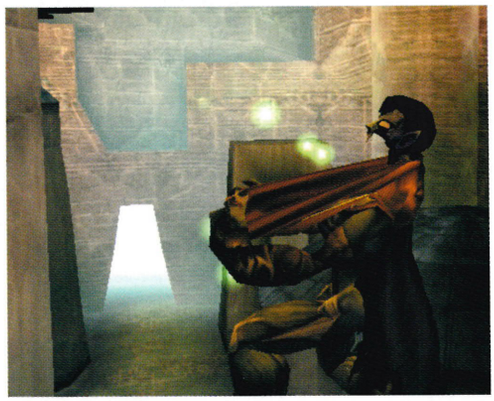
IF YOU MET LARA CROFT, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO HER?
"Can I buy you a drink?"

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE SOUL TUNE?
James Brown: *Papa Don't Take No Mess*.

Raziel wasn't a creature to mess with.



△ Thinking that Raziel's world wasn't quite gothic enough, Crystal Dynamics decided to throw in a castle or two.



△ Missing a jaw, Raziel must ingest liquid food.

twisted and darker alternatives. The sound effects are generally outstanding, particularly the spot effects that succeed as they should: barely noticeable, but adding to the atmosphere. There's no denying that *Soul Reaver* is an exceptionally well-crafted and well-loved creation.

Beautiful (in a depressing way), slick, stylish, intriguing, compelling and original, it barely seems possible that *Soul Reaver* has ended up with only a slightly above average mark. Yet marks have been sucked from the neck of an almost perfect nine as a result of some extremely sloppy play-testing, balancing and self-indulgence.

Games should, of course, be fun, but for about 20 per cent of the time *Soul Reaver* is asking for a fatwa. Some of the puzzles are not only long-winded and tedious, they're also rendered all the more dreary by the endless attacks of regenerating vampires. In particular there's a series of block-shifting puzzles that have Raziel moving large stone cubes into holes, just as long as the pictures match up. It's a nice enough *idea* for a puzzle, but once you've figured out what to do it takes 30 minutes of monotony to get everything into place (because Raziel can only spin the blocks particular ways since they're so huge). This wouldn't be so bad if new monsters didn't arrive every couple of minutes to annoy you and make you forget which way everything was going. To top it all off there are about three or four of these puzzles in a row. Once you've spent some time with those, you'll never go near a Rubik's Cube again.

That's the worst example, but there are other annoying aspects, including a slightly over-sensitive control system, a camera that never seems to want to go quite where you want it to, and transformation sequences that can't be interrupted. As lovely as switching planes is, it gets a bit much watching it for the hundredth or so time.

Nevertheless, if you have the patience of a patient saint there's much to be had from *Soul Reaver*, and plenty to see and do. If only Crystal Dynamics had been slightly more eager with their own in-house cleaver, we'd be looking at a better game.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**
DEVELOPER: **CRYSTAL DYNAMICS**

VERDICT

GREAT VISION, BUT THE LEVEL DESIGN BORDERS ON SADISM

UPPERS
Involving and original story • Excellent sound and special effects • Plenty of action and head scratching

DOWNERS
Some infuriatingly tedious sections • Occasional regenerating monsters – unforgivable • Easy to get lost

IN ONE HOUR Safely through the tutorial levels, Melchia cowered at his imminent defeat.
WEBSITE www.eidos.com
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Full-screen PAL, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

7

WALKTHROUGH
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A 'THING'

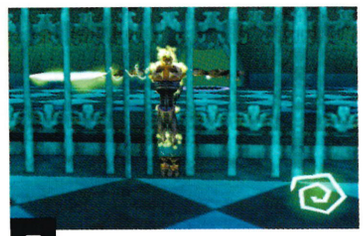
Juggling the twin worlds of the physical and spiritual is the key to many puzzles. Here's an example of what we mean

1 ▽ Okay, so we're stuck in a room. With a bloke in a cage and a window that we can't reach. Fab.

2 ▽ A quick shimmy to get ourselves of this spiritual body and into the real world.

3 ▽ We'd better just take care of these guys first. We lost the Soul Reaver because one of the vampires got a hit in...

4 ▽ ...so we'll just have to make do with these handy wall spikes instead.



5 ▷ A force projectile pushes a block nearer the window, and one of our new-found skills takes us through the cage.

△ Deal death to your opponents at close range. Well that's the idea, anyway.

WILD METAL

You wait ages for a tank 'em up to come along, then two turn up at once. **STUART DREDGE** checks out Take 2's rival to *Red Dog*

ON THE CD

TANK GAMES HAVE GOT IT MADE. Until recently, generations of boys grew up on a diet of *Victor* annuals, Airfix models and cheapo plastic soldiers. Even the ones who've since become wussy New Man pacifists still harbour a secret fondness for the weapons of war. That's why any game with tanks and guns and stuff is likely to have widespread appeal, at least among male gamers. It certainly explains the baffling success of all those hex-based wargames on PC, although most of the people who buy them have beards and still live with their mums. For the rest of us, however, action is where it's at.

Wild Metal is the latest game looking to tap into this desire. It's already been out on other formats under the name *Wild Metal Country*, but despite the name change *Wild Metal* is essentially a pretty straight port.

TURRETS SYNDROME

The obvious comparison is with *Red Dog* (*ODM* #5, 4/10), except that *Wild Metal* places less emphasis on button-shredding action and more on strategic sniping and exploration. It's also reminiscent of *Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense* in the way it plays. Keen readers will have noticed that neither of those titles impressed us, scoring four and five out of ten respectively. And, sadly, *Wild Metal* isn't much of an improvement on either.

Thankfully there's no plot to speak of, save for the vague idea of a future where ultra-intelligent machines have turned evil and taken over the world. The game's initial presentation is equally sparse: you load up, choose a tank, and get dumped straight into the first level without even an intro sequence to set the scene – either a good thing or a bad thing, depending on your point of view. Either way, your first few minutes are likely to be spent wondering who you are, why you're there and what the bloody hell you're supposed to be doing.

However, one of *Wild Metal*'s good points is that the gameplay is easy to grasp. You control a tank which can move around, fire shells and drop mines. Scattered around each level are eight power cores, a few floating 'stores', and various enemy vehicles. All you have to do is scoot around collecting the power cores, return them to the stores, and blow up any enemies that get in your way. Simple, really.

There are five tanks to choose from in the game, each named after a different animal – which is generally a

SPEAK OUT

WE TALKED TO **GARY FOREMAN**, HEAD PRODUCER ON *WILD METAL*

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT *WILD METAL*?
The 'feel'. So many of today's games are lacking in this area. I believe that the *Wild Metal* team have captured something which so many other developers fail to. The fun when playing this game comes from the way in which you drive anywhere, and using your skill can get into places which others consider impossible to get to, because you drive in a different way.

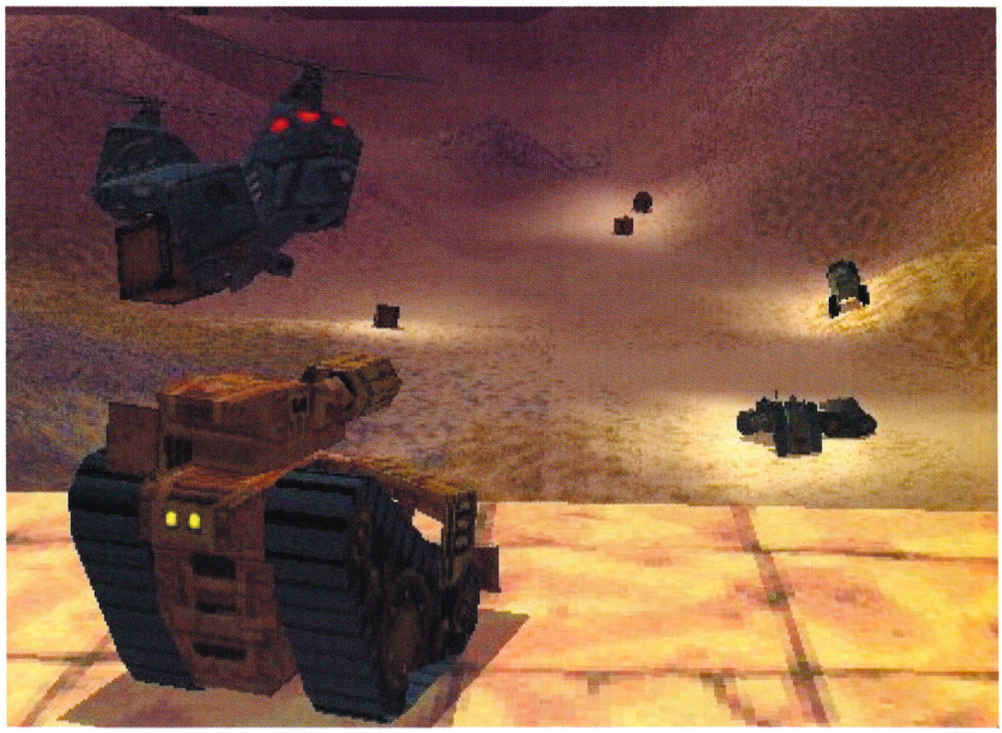
HAVE YOU EVER DRIVEN A REAL TANK?
Yes, but I can't talk about it.

WHICH ARE YOUR FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAMES SO FAR FROM OTHER DEVELOPERS?
***Soul Calibur*, *Crazy Taxi* and *Power Stone*.**

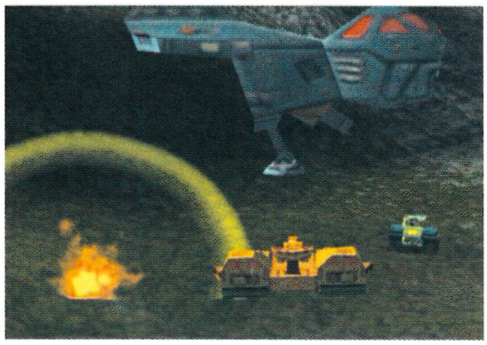
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO LARA CROFT IF YOU MET HER?
She's not real! This is a myth, the guys at Core are having a laugh at our expense. Thanks, guys.

△ Sniping from a distance is vital.

"REALISTIC PHYSICS ISN'T ENOUGH TO MAKE UP FOR THE OVERALL FEELING OF DULLNESS"

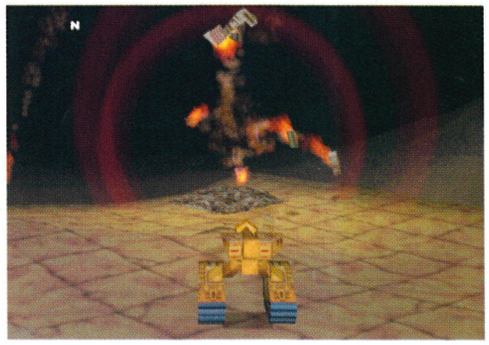


△ *Wild Metal* sees you battling a variety of enemy vehicles.



△ The helicopter lends a hand.

△ It's a case of kill or be killed.



△ The atmospheric night-time level.

guide to its strengths and weaknesses. For example, the Cheetah is pretty fast but not very strong, the Rhino is tough but slow, and the Bulldog dribbles constantly and pisses up lampposts. Actually, that last one's made up.

You start with just one type of shell and mine, but can get others from the pick-ups that are sprinkled around the levels. When your energy is running low, you can either pick up one of the drive units left behind by destroyed enemies, or call for help from a friendly helicopter. And that's pretty much the sum total of it.

As you can see from the screenshots, *Wild Metal* is pretty average to look at. The graphics are there to do a job rather than send you all saucer-eyed at the beautiful scenery. Although the three different level styles – desert, tundra and red planet – are fairly different, the levels themselves are very samey. So, the desert levels contain lots of sand and a few mountains, the tundra levels are made up of lots of tundra and a few mountains, and the red planet levels… well, you can make make an informed guess.

NO SHELL OUT

If *Wild Metal* was a fantastically playable game, of course, then this wouldn't matter – function over form and all that. Unfortunately it's not. Even on the tougher levels there aren't exactly hundreds of enemies stacking up to attack you, so you spend much of your time pootling around dull scenery until you find a power core. Then you kill the few enemies that are guarding it, take it back to the nearest store, and then start again.

What's more, all this happens at a tank's pace, and even the faster ones aren't exactly the nippiest of vehicles. When you do happen upon an enemy, manoeuvring to get a shot in can be a bit of a pain – it's like watching two arthritic sumo wrestlers creaking into battle. Okay, so it's a bit harsh to criticise a tank game for lacking pace, but the overall effect is a game where long periods of boredom are broken up by skirmishes that are often frustrating.

Despite those criticisms, *Wild Metal* does have several good points. There are 23 different types of enemies in the game, including tanks, static gun installations and flying things, and each has its own tactics and behaviour, fuelled by the game's impressive artificial intelligence. For example, the Bull tank charges at you while firing heavy shells; the Owl hangs back and transmits your location to its colleagues; the Lemming nips up to you and explodes in a kamikaze style; while the weaponless Hippo just lolls about until you kill it, often revealing a power core that it's been carrying.

This carefully implemented AI means that you're forced to learn to recognise your enemies and adapt your tactics accordingly. On early levels you encounter just the easy vehicles, and the others are introduced as you progress through the game.

There are some nice individual touches too. For example: when you've pummelled an enemy to within an inch of their life, their turrets spin round, smoke comes out of the engine, and they stagger around for a bit before exploding. It's like what the daleks used to do in *Dr Who*, and is generally worth a cheap laugh. There's also a welcome statistics screen that can be called up to show you how well you've done.

BACK ON TRACKS

Another good thing about the game is your tank's firing system: you can't just go hammering buttons to destroy enemies, it takes a bit of thought instead. Holding down the fire button increases the angle of your gun turret and the power of your shot, so the more you hold it down before releasing, the higher and further your shot goes. It's like the system used in *Worms Armageddon* to throw grenades.

What this means is that you don't always have to get close up to destroy targets. Instead you can lurk at a ▷

△ Two-player deathmatches aren't action-packed.

MULTIPLAYER MAYHEM

Wild Metal includes a two-player split-screen mode

PC owners have been playing Wild Metal (Country) against each other online since its release, but as the Dreamcast network isn't quite ready yet we've got to make do with the two-player split-screen mode. There are three ways to play: Frags, Power Cores and Capture. Frags is a straight battle to kill your opponent more times than they can kill you; Power Cores sees you trying to steal each other's cores and run off with them; while Capture dictates that only the player carrying the level's one power core is allowed to frag the other. All this takes place in four custom-built arenas: Azteca, Storm, Cascade and Spiral.

So what's it like? Well, it suffers the same flaws as the main game: the action just isn't pacy enough (a major drawback in Deathmatch); the vertical split-screen view doesn't help much either, as you can't see enough of the surrounding area to play properly. You can imagine *Wild Metal* deathmatch being great if you could play it online against eight other players, but as it is it won't keep your attention for long.

▷ distance and blow them up with a carefully aimed volley of shells. It gives a strategic slant to the game, rewarding players canny enough to find high ground and pick off enemies from a distance.

Still, realistic physics isn't enough to make up for the overall feeling of dullness, and there's just not enough action to keep you satisfied. There's also a chronic slowdown on the rare occasions when the screen is full of enemies, which hampers your aiming and movement. The result is usually a swift death; or at least a slow-motion swift death, which is even more frustrating.

What's more, the sound is poor. There's no in-game music, and the atmospheric effects are limited to gusts of wind. It's true that the lack of music has made it possible for your tank to have an enemy detector that bleeps when something approaches, but it doesn't make much of a difference, especially with the on-screen radar giving you plenty of warning.

Wild Metal does have its moments, but as a whole it's a strictly average title. If you want a tank game but didn't fancy Red Dog it might be worth a look, but otherwise it's not a contender. Like we said, you start the game wondering who you are, why you're there and what you're doing. After a few hours of play, you're likely to be wondering why you're bothering.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **TAKE 2**
DEVELOPER: **DMA DESIGN**

VERDICT

STRICTLY AVERAGE, AND WON'T KEEP YOU HOOKED

UPPERS
Varied enemies • Good AI • Realistic physics • Nice system of pickups

DOWNERS
Repetitive gameplay • Samey levels • Slow pace • Occasional slowdown • Dull deathmatch

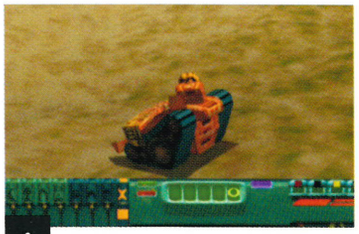
IN ONE HOUR We were midway through the second level
WEBSITE www.take2games.com
MAX PLAYERS Two
VIDEO MODES Bordered PAL

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

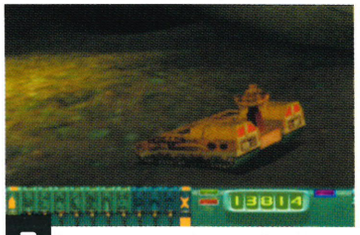
5

DETAILS
TANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Wild Metal gives you a choice of five tanks to control, most of which are named after fearsome animals. Here's a brief introduction



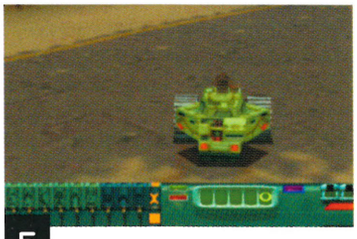
1 ▽ Rhino: this tank is a powerful packet of firepower. It's not that fast, but with this sort of strength who cares?



2 ▽ Manta: very nippy, but despite its low centre of gravity it tends to turn over when it hits a bump. Nasty.

3 ▽ Cheetah: very fast indeed, and dancing round your enemies is no problem at all.

4 ▽ Roadrunner: very slow, but good turning and has excellent grip.



5 ▷ Bulldog: full of fighting spirit, but it won't be winning any sprint medals.

WANTED

CONSOLES
COMPUTERS
GAMES

RETRO & MODERN

BUY • SELL • TRADE

COMPUTER & GAMES EXCHANGE

65 Notting Hill Gate, London W11 3JS ☎ 0171 221 1123

Please bring official ID with address & signature when selling or exchanging

POSTAL SERVICE AVAILABLE

OPEN 7 DAYS VAST SELECTION ON SALE

CYBER NET

Video Games Experts

SEGA Dreamcast

The Best Mail Order Games on the Internet

Tel : 0181-789 7196 MAIL ORDER !

287 PUTNEY BRIDGE ROAD

LONDON SW15 2PT Open Mon-Sun 11am - 11pm

Visit our web site at : www.cybernet-filmstudio.com

Special Offer!

Buy Any Game and Get 2nd for Half Price

UK'S BIGGEST & BEST VALUE SERVICE

CHEATS & TIPS FOR OVER 2000 GAMES

PSX, DC, N64, PC & GBC

CHEATS UNLIMITED

DREAMCAST CHEATS & TIPS

CHEATS, TIPS, WALKTHROUGH & ESSENTIAL PLAYING ADVICE

THE LIST BELOW IS JUST A SAMPLE OF WHAT'S ON OFFER

A Life
Aero Dancing featuring
Blue Impulse
Air Force Delta
Blue Stinger
Buggy Heat
Chao Adventure
Climax Landers
Cool Boarders Burrn
Daytona USA 2
Dynamite Deka
Elemental Gimmick Gear
Evolution
Flag to Flag
Generator
Get Bass
Giamt Gram All Japan Wrestling
Godzilla Generations
House of Dead 2
Hydro Thunder
Incoming
In Nippon Budokan
Giant Gram
King of the Fighters Dream Match '99
Marvel vs Capcom
Metropolitan Highway Battle
Mortal Kombat Gold
NBA Showtime
NFL 2K
NFL Blitz 2000
Pen Pen Tri Icelon
Pop n' Music
Powerstone
Psychic Force 2012
Puyo Puyo
Redline Racer
Ready to Rumble Boxing
Rippin Riders
Sega Bass Fishing
Sega Rally 2
Seventh Cross
Shotuko Highway Battle
Sonic Adventure
Soul Calibur
Street Fighter Alpha
Street Fighter 3
Super Speed Racing
TNN Motorsports
Hardcore Heat
Trickstyle
Virtua Fightr 3tb

A SIMPLE CALL AND YOU'VE GOT THE CHEAT!

PERSONS AGED UNDER 16 CALL THIS NUMBER ONLY

09066 098076

PERSONS AGED 16 OR OVER MAY CALL THIS NUMBER

09066 098185

Calls to the above numbers cost 60p a minute

This service should only be used with the agreement of the person responsible for paying the bill. Calls to the number for persons aged under 16 years have a maximum cost of £3.00, the call will be terminated by forced release after 5 minutes. Calls to the number for persons aged 16 years and over have no maximum cost and call time restrictions. Ensure you are calling from a touch tone phone. Accuracy of the information is not guaranteed. Please put comments or queries in writing to: *Interactive Telcom Ltd., 8 Grants Walk, PL25 5AA*

or call CUSTOMER SERVICE: 0800 1982784

---

dial A game

DELIVERY IN THREE DAYS

The Fantastic New Way To Get Dreamcast Stuff!!

It really could not be easier. Basically, the Dial-a-Game service is the fantastic new way to get hold of Dreamcast games and accessories. As opposed to having to send cheques, postal orders or use a credit card, the cost of the call pays for them instead! And, as the cost is added to your telephone bill in some cases you won't have to pay for your goods for as long as four months! Just call the number corresponding to the item you want, listen to the Dial-a-Game service, leave your details and then just sit back and let the Postman do the rest!

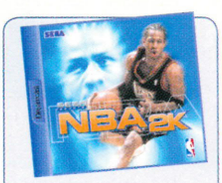
16

Unfortunately, the Dial-a-Game™ service is not available to persons under the age of 16. No goods will be dispatched to any persons suspected of being under this age without written permission from the person paying the bill.

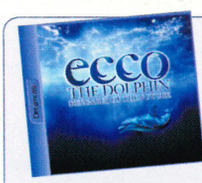
CRAZY TAXI
0906 2250000

SOUL CALIBUR
0906 2250001

ZOMBIE REVENGE
0906 2250002



NBA 2K
0906 2250003



ECCO THE DOLPHIN
0906 2250004

METROPOLIS STREET RACER
0906 2250005

DEADLY SKIES	0906 2250006	BUGGY HEAT	0906 2250011	PEN PEN	0906 2250016	TEE OFF	0906 2250021
RE-VOLT	0906 2250007	INCOMING	0906 2250012	UEFA STRIKER	0906 2250017	SHADOWMAN	0906 2250022
VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB	0906 2250008	DYNAMITE COP 2	0906 2250013	AEROWINGS	0906 2250018	JIMMY WHITE'S CUEBALL	0906 2250023
SEGA RALLY 2	0906 2250009	TRICKSTYLE	0906 2250014	NFL BLITZ	0906 2250019	RESIDENT EVIL 2	0906 2250024
TOY COMMANDER	0906 2250010	HYDRO THUNDER	0906 2250015	BUST A MOVE 4	0906 2250020	MARVEL Vs CAPCOM	0906 2250025

DREAM PAD
0906 2250026

dial A cheat™

The nation's fastest and most comprehensive cheat service. Dial-a-Cheat™ - an absolute must for all self-respecting Dreamcastoid heads.

Bang on the tip

0906 3334433

Calls cost 60p per minute. The maximum cost of call £3. Ask permission of the person paying the bill.

VMU	0906 2250027
SCART LEAD	0906 2250030

S-AV CABLE
0906 2250029

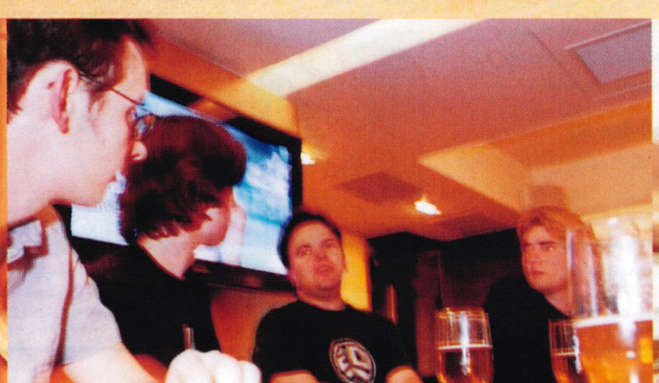
FORCE PACK
0906 2250028

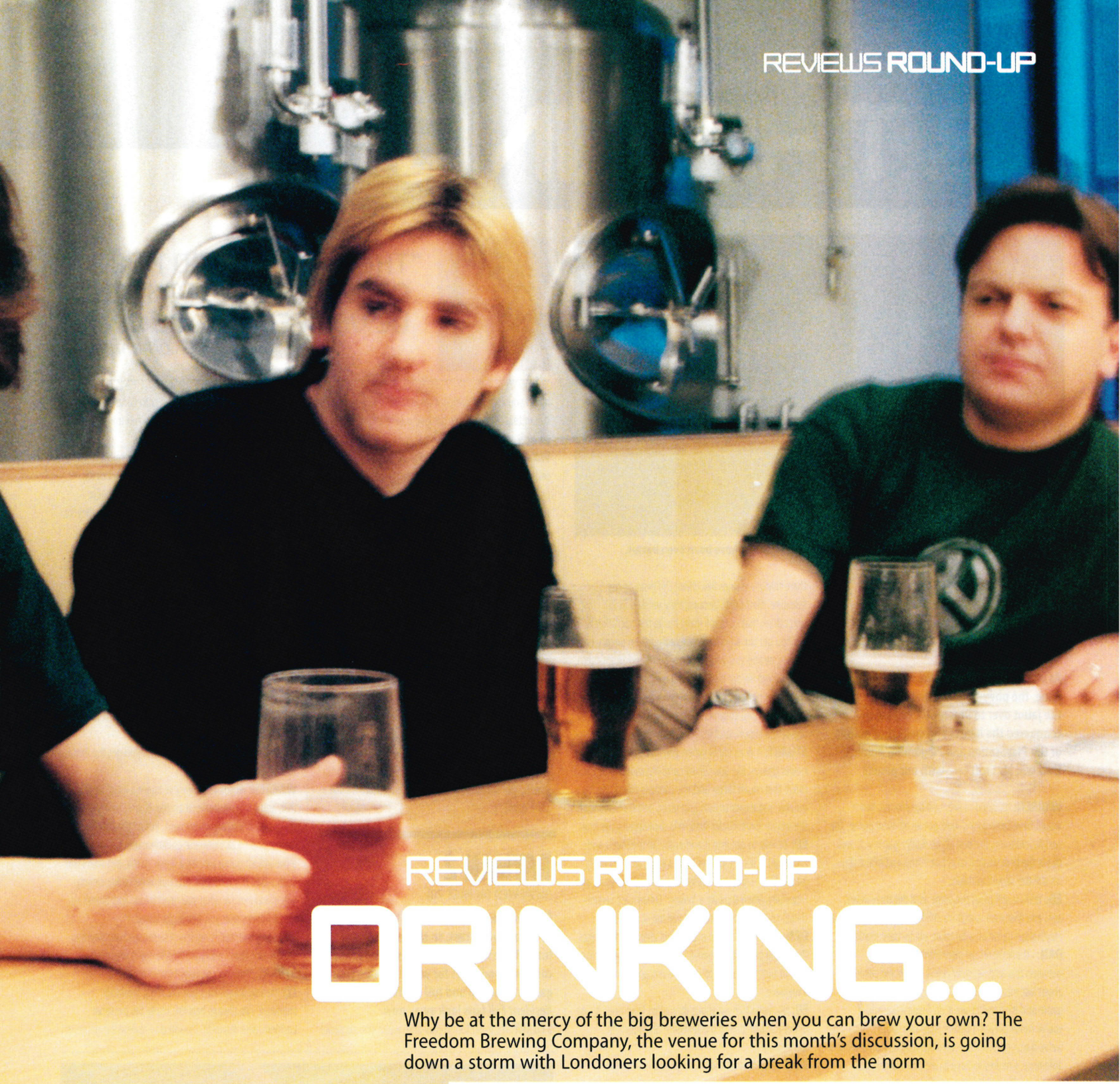
STEERING WHEEL
0906 2250031

Calls cost £1.00 per minute. The maximum cost of call for products is as follows: All software £39. Joypad, VMU Unit and Force Pack £22. S-AV Cable, Scart Lead and Dream Cable £15. Wheel & Pedals £42. Make sure you have the permission of the person paying the bill. Delivery within three days subject to stock. For technical & delivery enquiries call 0113 3830420. Game 24/7 PO Box 293, Leeds LS2 7AG.

Dreamcast.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SIMON CLEMENGER





REVIEWS ROUND-UP

DRINKING...

Why be at the mercy of the big breweries when you can brew your own? The Freedom Brewing Company, the venue for this month's discussion, is going down a storm with Londoners looking for a break from the norm

CARNABY STREET: the heart of Swinging Sixties London, and Austin Powers's spiritual home. These days it's still a centre for fashionable boutiques and sharp-dressed types to strut their stuff, so what they thought when the scruffy oiks that make up the *ODM* reviewing team sauntered down there God only knows.

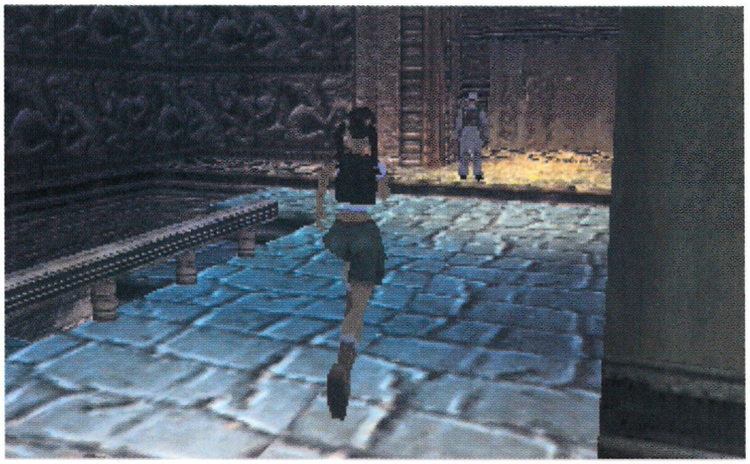
Heading downstairs into FBC's main bar, you're presented with a view akin to something out of a Bond villain's lair. Rows of large stainless steel vats dominate the back wall of the sleek-looking bar and hum quietly to themselves.

Under the guidance of a German-trained master brewer, the Freedom Brewing Company stocks a basic collection of their own interpretations of classic beers from all over Europe, along with an ever changing rota of specialist brews according to the season and consumer preference. Ever adventurous, most of the ODM gang opted for the regular German pilsner. Stuart, however, went for the locally flavoured Soho Red, pronouncing it: "Different. Quite sweet, with a slightly nutty palette." His tongue was, of course, placed firmly in cheek (we think).

If you ever find yourself in Soho, then do consider giving the Freedom Brewing Company a visit. As well as the beers, there's a seated dining area and, if you time it right, early on in the evening the staff come round with complimentary bowls of chips. A small bonus, perhaps, considering the exorbitant bar prices, but then this is Soho, baby, yeah! ▷

• There are currently two branches of the Freedom Brewing Company in central London. They can be found in Earlham St in Covent Garden (020 7240 0606) and Ganton Street in Soho (020 7287 5267). Both bars are open 11am-11pm Monday to Friday, and 11am-10:30pm on Sunday (Earlham St only). See www.freedombrew.com for further details.

...& THINKING



△ *Tomb Raider*: **the best version yet, but an all-new game would have been even better.**

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 8)

As you may well have gathered from this issue, the pneumatic one herself has made the jaunt over to Dreamcast, having conquered the hearts and wallets of hordes of the PlayStation and PC gaming public. How will Ms Croft fare with our panel?

WARREN: It's good to see it on Dreamcast, but it would have been nice if we'd got an all-new game. *The Last Revelation* is the best *Tomb Raider* game yet, and this is the best version of it, but at the end of the day it's still the same old thing.

ED: Yeah, it still plays the same as it did three years ago, and that means that it's still basically a Saturn and PlayStation game on a far more up-to-date machine.

DAN: I think there's an interesting comparison between this and *Resident Evil 2*, which we talked about last month. We were saying that it's a classic game and it's good to see it on Dreamcast, and if you've never played it before then you should. But now we've had a peek at *Code:Veronica* it rams home what a difference it makes to have a dedicated Dreamcast version. In *Tomb Raider*'s case this isn't the stop-gap that *Resident Evil 2* was, this is the only version of Lara we're going to see, at least in the foreseeable future.

ED: I've never got into any of the *Tomb Raider* games, and that's not because I don't like that type of adventure game or that type of very precise and skill-based control system. In fact I always loved games that relied on that careful step here, work out that jump there thing – games like *Prince Of Persia* or, my favourite, *Flashback*, because they worked in 2D. I just don't think that concept really made the transition to 3D. You get the situations where there's an enemy on your right and you want to flick round and shoot them, but in *Tomb Raider* it's step, step, step, and then you're facing the right way. It just makes it a really frustrating thing to try and control. She moves too slowly and she jumps too slowly, and it's just a bind.

STUART: It does show when you compare it to the newer games, like *Soul Reaver* and *Rayman 2*. They just move that much faster and the controls are easier. It's quicker and easier to turn and react, and it shows that the whole *Tomb Raider* system is showing its age now.

ED: I'd love to get into it and enjoy all the levels and the detail – it's set in Egypt, for a start, and I'm really into all that – but it still plays like it did three years ago. Hopefully when they do a 'proper' Dreamcast version they'll speed it all up and change the controls.

DAN: I know what you mean. The speed thing affects the whole pace of the game. I mean, unless you've got a lot of time to devote to it you're not going to get anywhere.

ED: Oh, I don't know about that. How long does it take to get through one of the levels? A few hours or something?

WARREN: At least they've changed it since the original. It could take you half a day just to get through one level and it was painful. Millions have bought the games, but I'd be interested to find out what proportion have actually completed them. I bet it's absolutely tiny.

ED: But the levels are smaller on this one, and you can get a couple done each day and get on with it. You sit down with a cup of tea and six chocolate digestives and that'll see you through nicely. And when you get bored you can just switch it off and go and get another cup of tea. Oops, people are going to think that's all I do all weekend.

WARREN: Yeah, we know that's all you do. You can certainly get through a lot of cigarettes when you're playing this game, and the fact that you can sit and smoke while you're playing shows that it ain't exactly fast-moving.

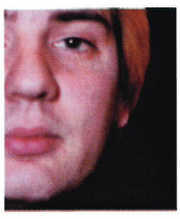
ED: What, you mean that in the time it takes her to turn on the spot you can smoke a whole fag?

WARREN: It's not that bad, but you know what I mean.

ED: It's not the pace of the *game* that's wrong, I have no problem with that at all, it's the movement of Lara herself that just drags the thing down.

DAN: Do you think people are going to be satisfied when they plug this in and think that this game is 'worthy' of Dreamcast?

ED: I think that if you're expecting a Dreamcast game, then yes, you will be disappointed. It's not like *Crazy Taxi* or something like that, which really leaps out and is really exciting and fun. As a solid adventure it's still a good game.



"THE WHOLE *TOMB RAIDER* SYSTEM IS SHOWING ITS AGE NOW"

– STUART ON *TOMB RAIDER*

"THE RICHEST AND MOST COMPLETE ENVIRONMENT WE'VE SEEN IN A DC GAME"

– WARREN ON *RAYMAN 2*

RAYMAN 2

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 70)

Platform fans have had little to choose from so far on Dreamcast, so the return of the funny little fella with no arms or legs should come as good news for you if you like your games colourful and full of little noises. *Resident Evil* fans look away now.

STUART: It's great fun to play and, when you compare it to *Tomb Raider*, really easy to control and quick to get into. There's no faffing about, it's just fun from the first level onwards.

WARREN: It is hugely derivative. If you've been playing platform games for the last ten years or so, then you'll notice all the little bits that have been ripped straight out of other games. But the bits they've taken are all the best bits, so that's not necessarily a bad thing. It's a huge game, and the presentation is really fantastic. Actually, everything about the game is great.

DAN: I know what you mean about it being derivative, but to me that's the disappointing thing – it just looks and feels like all the other cutie-pie platform games and it all begins to get a bit samey. I guess you could say the same for any genre, but for me I'm . . .

ED: It's only because you're rubbish at it!

DAN: Oh, you rumbled me! Yup, I can't play it for toffee, and it makes me bitter!

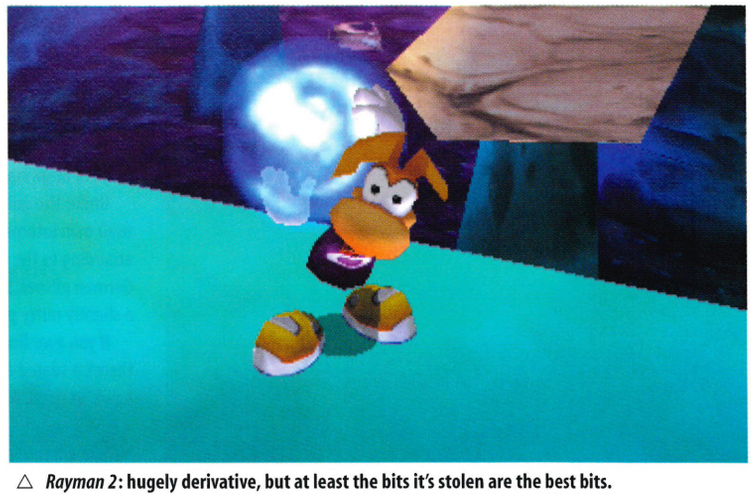
STUART: It might be derivative, but you get the extras for Dreamcast.

WARREN: Absolutely! They've spent a lot of time on this, and it's loads better than the PC and N64 versions. It's got such a rich environment. In fact they're the richest and most complete environments we've seen in a Dreamcast game yet. It's a linear game, but that's not such a bad thing here. It cuts out aimless wandering; you always know what you need to do. And there's so much variety that you never get bored.

ED: I only wanted to review it because I hate Rayman sooo much that I really wanted to say it was crap.

STUART: Why do you hate him so much?

ED: He's so bland! He's just the most 'nothing' character. I've always had this really big personal problem with *Rayman*. I wanted to review the game in



△ *Rayman 2*: **hugely derivative, but at least the bits it's stolen are the best bits.**

△ ***Wild Metal*: some good bits and some bad bits, but ultimately somewhat empty.**

△ ***Zombie Revenge*: hardly cerebral, but a lot of fun and easy to get into. "A true Dreamcast game."**

"NOTHING TO IT. JUST A FEW QUIRKY IDEAS, BUT WITH NO SENSE OF STORY"
– DAN ON *WILD METAL*

case someone really liked it and didn't realise how rubbish he is. Now though, I've played the game and the ending just made me grin. In fact I want to go back through it and play the best bits again. When I'd finished I actually thought: "*Rayman* is really cool."
WARREN: Yep, we like.

WILD METAL

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 80)

Our second tank-in-a-wilderness game in as many months puts you in control of a selection of weird and wonderful vehicles in a desolate alien landscape. There are no aliens, a la *Red Dog*, but that doesn't mean there's nothing to blast.

STUART: I'll stick up for it because I know everyone's going to say it's dull.
ED: I think it's a rubbish game.
STUART: No, there are some good bits...
WARREN: And a lot of dull bits. I've played this quite a lot, and at first you think: "God this is boring," and then it grabs you for a bit and there are some interesting things thrown at you. But as soon as you realise that that's it, the game just goes on and on. Driving tanks that move at a snail's pace around huge landscapes and over mountains – or more usually *around* mountains, because the tanks are so useless – is tedious. I'd be happy to never play it again. There are a few nice touches but it's not enough.
DAN: Warren's right, the landscapes are just so empty. If you're going to have a futuristic game there should be a really interesting environment. *Wild Metal* looks half-finished. They forgot to put any buildings or trees in. It's just endless, bland rolling hills.
WARREN: Exactly.
STUART: You'd think in the future the tanks would be faster, too.
ED: It'd be nice to have clouds! Or for that matter hills that weren't just covered with the same texture for miles and miles.
WARREN: The artificial intelligence is really good, it's got to be said. And some of the tank designs are quite interesting in the way they're supposed to act like animals, but the game doesn't throw enough surprises at you. The landscapes are bollocks too. You'd expect to come across a city or something, but instead there are just these endless hills covered in about one of four colours.
ED: I do like the shooting system though. The way you have to lob stuff and get the trajectory right is a bit different, and it's rewarding when you master it. It's a bit like...
STUART: *Worms*!
ED: Yeah, *Worms*. But I was thinking of *Death Tank*, which was this secret little game hidden in the Saturn version of *Duke Nukem 3D*.
DAN: *Wild Metal* was a good network game on PC, wasn't it?
WARREN: It had potential, but nobody actually bought it.
ED: I can see how it could be an excellent networked game, because you have to track the other people down and use tactics.
STUART: But when Dan and I played against each other we just ended up not moving, and punting things across at each other until someone blows up.
DAN: Ultimately there's just nothing to it – a few quirky ideas, but with no sense of story or identity. Just slow little tanks in a huge, bland environment. Yawn!

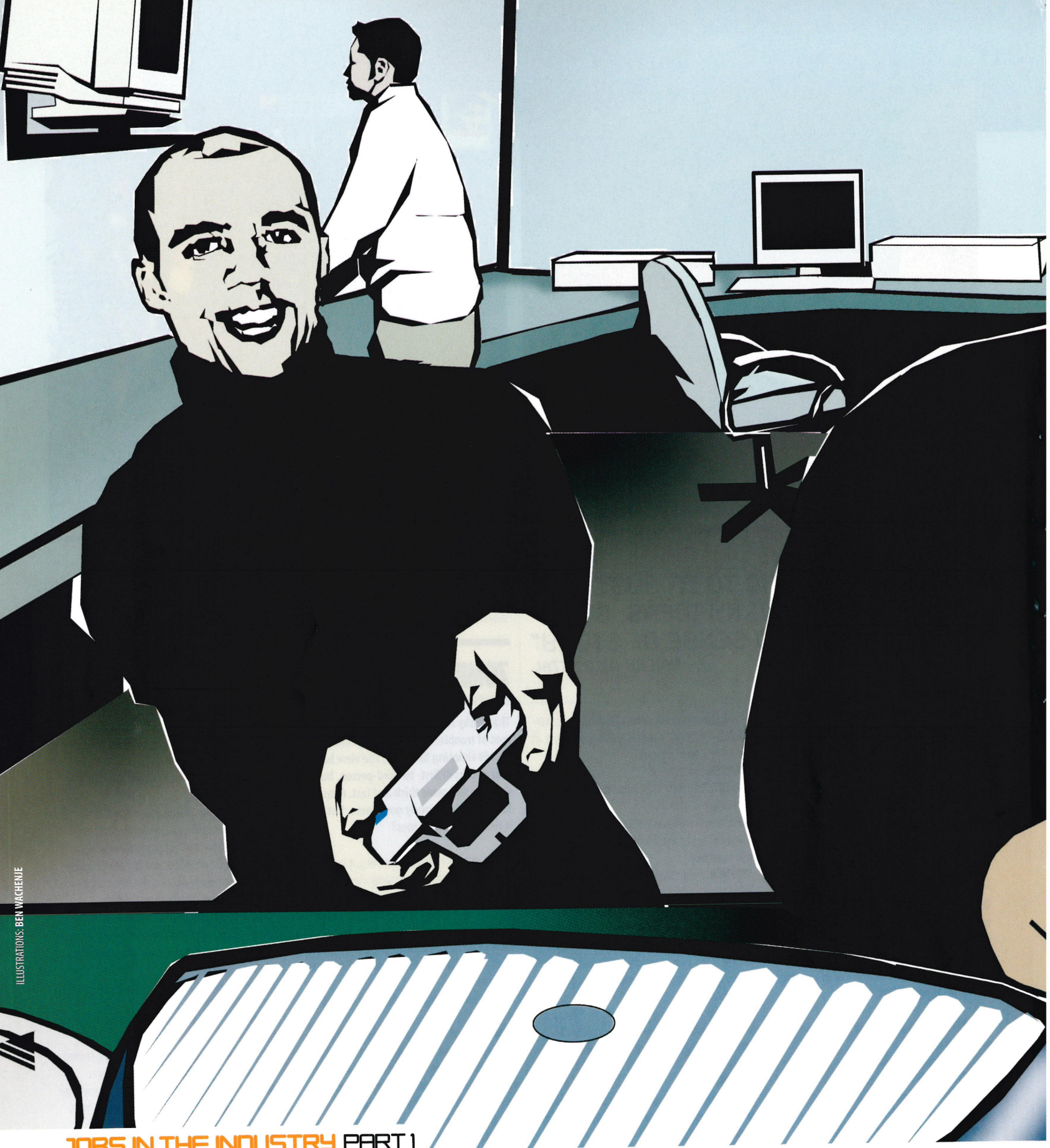
ZOMBIE REVENGE

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 76)

That pesky *House Of The Dead* – always the root of trouble. In this spin-off from the arcade shooting favourite, the view has changed from first- to third-person, but the zombies still come thick and fast. A fast, furious and gloriously gory game, but will it tickle out panel's toes?

DAN: Great fun! It's really fast-moving, it looks great and you can get into it really quickly. Hardly cerebral, but sometimes that can get in the way of just having fun. I don't know how much longevity it's got, but my early impression is of a really well put together game that's great to just – excuse the cliché – pick up and play. I also like the way it has references to the *House Of The Dead*.
ED: And you actually go into the *House Of The Dead* at the end.
DAN: Yeah, and it's really good that there's that link with another game. Everybody knows the *House Of The Dead* games from the arcades and they're hugely popular. I think people who've enjoyed those games will be happy that the story is continuous.
ED: It is the hokiest, weakest storyline ever.
STUART: Like most zombie films, then.
ED: Fair enough, but that's not the point.
STUART: It looks good, but some of the characters are a bit ropy.
WARREN: The weapons are hardcore though. Machine-guns – cool!
ED: Yeah, and that big drill thing like off *Dusk 'Til Dawn* – very satisfying. It's very smart though. I particularly like the bit with the train – it just looks so solid. Having said that, I'm not totally convinced that the whole walking beat 'em up thing works. I always loved *Streets Of Rage*, but I've never really felt the desire to complete any other games like this.
WARREN: Yeah, but there's lots of VM stuff to keep you interested here.
DAN: This is a true Dreamcast game, and it's particularly noticeable considering the number of conversions from other platforms that we've seen recently. It's just what Dreamcast is made for: good-looking, fast-moving and all of that, and not the sort of game you'd necessarily see anywhere else.
STUART: Gameplay-wise there isn't that much for me. When I play it I just think of those old side-scrolling games where you fight, run along, fight, run along... and it just doesn't grab me.
ED: I know what you mean. It's just like *Dynamite Cop* but with zombies.
WARREN: That's a bit unfair, it's way better than *Dynamite Cop*.
ED: But that was a bit more ridiculous, and it seemed a bit more daring, although... Yeah, okay, it was rubbish. I don't know, *Zombie Revenge* looks way better and it's well thought out. Can't say that I really, really like it though.
DAN: The jury's out, then.

"JUST WHAT DREAMCAST IS MADE FOR: GOOD-LOOKING, FAST-MOVING"
– ED ON *ZOMBIE REVENGE*



ILLUSTRATIONS: **BEN WACHENJE**

JOBS IN THE INDUSTRY PART 1

GAMES TESTERS

GAMES TESTER? PRODUCER? CREATIVE DIRECTOR? WHAT THEY DO EXACTLY? IN A SIX-PART SERIES STARTING THIS ISSUE, *ODM* EXPLAINS ALL

IT SOUNDS LIKE A CUSHY little number, doesn't it – sitting around and playing games all day? And getting paid for doing it? "What a laugh," thinks the average punter. But if you think that, you're dead wrong. The role of the games tester is a fiendishly demanding one. It's their responsibility to check every aspect of the game they're testing: are the graphics glitching? Are the sound effects in the right place? Is the learning curve too difficult or too easy? Is the physics engine working properly? Add another 100 or so burning questions to the above formula and you begin to realise what games testers have to do on a day-to-day basis.

Add to the above the fact you'll probably be working on the same game from the very first stages right through to the finished product over, say, 12 months, and you realise how repetitive and painstaking a job it really is. To say the average games tester needs patience is an understatement. Having good communication skills is also mandatory; games testers need to be able to state clearly and concisely in their bug reports to programmers exactly where a bug occurs and what happens to the ensuing gameplay. Most of all though, a games tester must love playing games – when it's 10pm on a weekday evening and the release deadline is looming, you need to be able to remember just why you're doing the damn job in the first place.

Because testing is such a vital part of game production, nearly all developers have their own testing department. In smaller companies it might be just two people hunting bugs all day; at the likes of Sega there are something in the region of 40 people pouring over the internal machinations of a variety of titles in the build-up to Christmas.

Despite the draining demands of the job, the competition to land a games testing gig is strong. Test department managers receive dozens of CVs a week from people who want to get into the industry, and play the latest and greatest games to boot. Some applications are from punters looking to move straight into the industry when they leave college or university, others are from 12-years-olds asking if they can come and work for that particular developer in five years' time or, better still, if they can have copies of the software and hardware sent to them so they can test games at home after school hours.

Needless to say, whoever ends up with that sought-after games testing gig, it ain't a 'cushy little number'.

THE GAMES TESTER

RESPONSIBILITIES: Making sure that a game has been vigorously and obsessively checked for bugs, so that you, dear player, don't end up throwing your Dreamcast at the television when the game you're playing crashes for no apparent reason.

PROSPECTS: Seen by many as the way to get your foot in the door of the games industry.

SALARY: £10k-£15k per year for testers, £15k-£20k for lead testers.

QUALIFICATIONS: There are no official qualifications that are essential for games testing. A basic understanding of PCs helps, along with clear communications skills and a shedload of patience. Oh, and a passion for playing games is mandatory.

I DO IT FOR A LIVING

We profile some games testers, taking a brief looking at what helped them land the gig, and which games they've had the most fun working on

GAMES TESTER 1

NAME: Roy Gay
AGE: 26
BACKGROUND: Worked as a console technician, then as a software tester at SCi (the people behind *Carmageddon*). Now works as a quality assurance tester at Virgin Interactive.

GAMES TESTING HIGHLIGHTS: *Carmageddon* (PS), *Kingpin* (PC), *Jimmy White's 2: Cueball* (DC) and *Resident Evil 2* (N64/DC)

GAMES TESTER 2

NAME: Jason Cumberbatch
AGE: 25
BACKGROUND: Got a work placement at Sega back in '93 through his computer college. Sega then offered him a full-time testing job. Has worked his way up the career ladder and is now head of Sega Europe's testing department.

GAMES TESTING HIGHLIGHTS: Pretty much every Sega-branded title since the Mega Drive – and then some.

GAMES TESTER 3

NAME: Dave Burke
AGE: 31
BACKGROUND: Landed a testing job at Ocean Software, then worked at Sony quality assurance as a senior lead tester. Now works at Criterion Software, the developers responsible for *TrickStyle*.

GAMES TESTING HIGHLIGHTS: *Final Fantasy VII* (PS), *Gran Turismo* (PS), *Crash Bandicoot 3* (PS), *TrickStyle* (DC/PC), *Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing* (DC) and *Deep Fighter* (DC and PC – ongoing).

Q&A

What it's like to be a games tester, straight from the horses' mouths

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO GO FOR THE JOB?

JASON: I lived near where Sega used to be, and I was one of those game enthusiasts who had all the consoles and used to go out every weekend to the arcade. The usual reason,really.

ROY: Because I like playing games, you get paid for it, and Virgin are such a wonderful company!

DAVE: About four and a half years ago I decided to change careers and go into IT, and I landed a place on an IT training course in Manchester. Ocean were recruiting testers at the time, and I got an interview through the IT course. I just went to see what it was like there, and was impressed enough to take the job.

WHAT DID YOU THINK IT WOULD BE LIKE?

ROY: Play games; report bugs; play more games; report more bugs etc.

JASON: I think I saw it like everyone else does at first: you just sit there and play games! After a while though, you realise that there are certain things you need to be checking for, like sound or graphics problems. After the first day you really do change your view of the way you think a tester actually works.

DAVE: Before joining Ocean I was looking forward to working on computer games and hopefully getting a chance to make a positive creative input. Everyone who plays games for fun thinks they can design and make a good game.

WHAT'S THE JOB LIKE IN REALITY?

ROY: Test games; write big, thick reports; input bugs into a database; test some more…

DAVE: Pretty much as I expected. My boss was very honest in the interview, so at least I was expecting the long hours and repetitive nature of the job.

WHAT ARE UPSIDES OF BEING A GAMES TESTER?

ROY: You get to play the latest games on the latest machines.

JASON: The good side is that you get to see a lot of the lead software before it's released; you get to test it and give your opinion. You also get to see everything that's happening within the industry.

DAVE: Getting pleasure and job satisfaction from making a good suggestion which gets included; working on a good game which you know people will enjoy playing; or just getting a game ready for release on time and usually against the odds. It's also not a bad job – you get the chance to 'play' games for a living. Still, it's not quite the same as being a 'taste tester' at a Stella Artois brewery.

WHAT ABOUT THE DOWNSIDES?

DAVE: Large amounts of repetition; having to put up with the occasional complete and utter lemon of a game (none since joining Criterion, of course!); and the frustration of games being released with serious known bugs in them because the development schedule doesn't allow time to fix them. Especially when you read letters in gaming magazines which say:

"Why don't they test these games properly?" and you know that, in all likelihood, the problem was found but just not fixed. It's also not the best-paid job, and whenever you're nearing the end of a product's development it's guaranteed that you'll have half the time you need to test it properly, and have to work very long hours to get the job done.

ROY: That there are there are no beds in the office.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BE A GAMES TESTER?

JASON: Keep playing games, basically. Put together some storyboards if you can, and try sending them in to companies. If they're really good game ideas, people are going to notice them.

DAVE: Knowledge and enjoyment of computer games is the first requirement. Some background understanding of computers and programming is useful as well. An investigative personality and mind is also what makes a good tester – thinking up things to try to create problems. For example: "What happens if I do this, that, or the other", instead of what the game designer actually expects the player to do, then being able to work out how to fully investigate the problem and provide the development team with all the relevant information they need to fix the bug.

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE IN 10 YEARS' TIME?

JASON: I have no idea. I've been here seven years. It's like a home. It's taken me seven years to get where I am now. Maybe I'll go into marketing or something like that.

DAVE: I would prefer to stay in quality assurance and move into management. Games producer is also an option with the experience I've got now, and that does tend to be the normal route out of QA for people who see it as a stepping stone into the industry.

ROY: On a beach in Hawaii, sipping fruit juice, rubbing oil on a hot babe, and looking after my sports cars, because everyone in the industry has a nice car by this time, don't they? No, seriously, still in the games industry. If the computers haven't taken over by then, that is.

"IT'S NOT QUITE THE SAME AS BEING A 'TASTE TESTER' IN A STELLA ARTOIS BREWERY"

– DAVE BURKE

CASE STUDY

From storyboard to shop shelves with *Toy Commander*

GAME: **TOY COMMANDER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **NO CLICHÉ**

SEGA SEE A LOT of games pass through their testing department. All third-party titles must go through their testing procedure to make sure that the games meet Sega's strict standards, and the turnaround can be quite quick. On the other hand, with their own games Sega's testing process lasts a lot longer. *Toy Commander*, created by one of Sega's '1.5-party' developers, No Cliché in France, was tested right from the beginning of the process by Jason Cumberbatch and his team.

"They actually had the idea already and had pretty much structured the whole storyboard before we even had any versions to test," explains Jason. "The storyboard is the start of the whole idea of the game, basically. The person designing the storyboard draws some of the characters, explains how the game will work, and tells the story behind the game. It's basically a list of everything that will be included in the game and how it will all gel together."

When Jason and the producer flew to France, there was already a rough outline of the game in place: "No Cliché had already put a lot of it together – they had most of the graphics done for a lot of the enemies – and they showed us the way it was going to be structured. We just started testing from there, really."

Because of *Toy Commander*'s size and complexity, the game was a tough one to test. "The developer always helps you as much as possible to turn their game round quickly during testing," explains Jason. "For example, No Cliché sent us coloured maps of the actual level design, which helped us, especially when testing for mapping and collision problems. Because *TC*'s set in a house, we had to make sure that the corners of all the furniture were correct, so you couldn't drive into the side of a chair and then suddenly drive all the way through it and appear up at the other end!"

Such a process takes a long time, especially when you're checking every single object in the game: "One of the hardest parts of testing that game was the physics for a lot of the objects. For example, where you have to put the eggs into the pot, testing for that was a bit of nightmare, because you had to slightly hit the egg and watch to see the way it rolled, just to see whether the physics moved it correctly."

Bug-wise, Jason says *TC* was the usual mix of system crashes and gameplay issues: "For example, you'd do something and the game would hang, or if you picked up a certain weapon it wouldn't fire with it or wouldn't let you shoot with it. Also, if you got to a certain stage, all the sound effects or music would disappear."

In the end, *Toy Commander* ate up a fair amount of resources, with upwards of 20 people testing the game three days a week, ten hours a day over a period of eight months. According to Jason, they "turned that game round quite quickly".

Quite quickly? Quite quickly?! Jesus!

IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU

From games tester to head of one of the world's biggest developers

△ **Simon Jeffery: from gaming zero to industry hero.**

"GAMES TESTING can get you a foot in the door of the software industry, sure, but how far can you really get?" ponders a cynic reading this article while sitting on the bog.

Well, around 13 years ago a young lad by the name of Simon Jeffery started his software career as a games tester. Over the years he worked his way up the corporate ladder, holding a variety of sales and marketing roles at the likes of Virgin and Electronic Arts. One move to America later, and Jeffery ended up as vice president of Virgin Interactive's US marketing. He then moved to LucasArts and headed up their international operations. At the beginning of this year, George Lucas – known simply as God to *Star Wars* fans – announced that Jeffery was being promoted to president of Lucas Arts. Not bad for somebody who started out his career as a humble games tester, eh?

Now *there's* food for thought. And if you should happen to embark on a highly lucrative career in the software business, be sure to send us a complimentary Ferrari when you end up running ID Software, okay?

VERDICT

It's a tough job, but it's a good place to start. If you're tempted, start putting together some ideas and CVs to publishers, recruitment agencies and developers. And drop us a line to let us know how you get on.

UPPERS

• Play the latest games and have your say about their gameplay before they hit the shelves • Games testing is an ideal way of getting your foot in the door of the gaming industry and can lead to great things • Get to hear all the industry news and gossip before punters do

DOWNERS

• Salaries start low • You'll be working long, long hours with tough deadlines • It's a very repetitive job, so you need bags of patience • You'll be playing games on a professional basis; playing for fun may just become a thing of the past

www.gameplay.com

get more info on all our products on the web...

gameplay.com

EXTENDED SALE!

All Dreamcast games £29.99 or less while stocks last! Hurry!!

PRICE THE PRICE YOU SEE IS THE PRICE YOU PAY

You should find Gameplay to be the CHEAPEST supplier of computer games in the country. However, if you do find a better price, please ring us and we will do our best to beat or at least match it. On top of this, we offer a FREE 1st Class delivery service and we don't charge for membership if you are buying by mail order so there are no "Hidden Charges".

CHOICE 100's OF PRODUCTS TO CHOOSE FROM

We try to stock every game available and if it's not in stock when you ring we should be able to get it for you fast. Also, with plenty of 2nd hand games available as well as new there should always be something that you're looking for.

QUALITY THE BEST OF EVERYTHING – GUARANTEED!

We only sell official UK products and all items are fully guaranteed whether new or 2nd hand. Every product line that we sell has been carefully tested by our enthusiastic sales tem to ensure that it allows us to live up to our repuatation for only providing the best of everything. Any product that becomes faulty within its warranty period will be replaced hassle free, quickly and efficiently, including return postage.

SERVICE IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT...DON'T KEEP IT

Everything is sent by first class post so delivery time is normally within 2 working days, or we offer optional next day delivery if you can't wait! Our tough cardboard packaging has been designed to ensure that your products arrive in perfect condition and our salesmen are all enthusiasts who do not make commission, so they can give you completely impartial advice. Remember, if you don't like it you don't have to keep it so we make sure we tell you the truth! Add to this our superbly efficient technical support and customer service departments and we are convinced you will find us to be NUMBER ONE!

We've just launched our own gameplay.com TV channel!

Watch us now on Open....

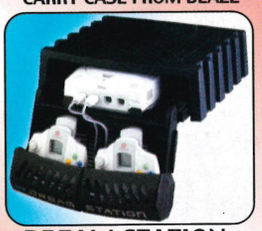
(Available only on Sky Digital)

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 & OFFICIAL SEGA LIGHT GUN £52.99

SEGA BASS FISHING & FISHING ROD £52.99

CARRYCASE only £16.99

TRANSPORT YOUR DREAMCAST EASILY AND SAFELY WITH THIS MADE TO MEASURE CARRY CASE FROM BLAZE



DREAM STATION only £16.99

PROTECT YOUR DREAMCAST WITH THIS CUSTOMED DESIGNED STORAGE UNIT. WILL SUPPORT PORTABLE TV ON TOP!

INNOVATION! The first console to boast a keyboard to allow you to surf the internet. A recommended buy.

£19.99 official keyboard

plug it into your Dreamcast controller port.

- internet compatible

**you will need a keyboard to gain full benefit from internet connection.*

THE ULTIMATE GAMING CONSOLE, CAPABLE OF AMAZING 3D GRAPHICS.

only £189.99

DREAMCAST HARDWARE BUNDLES

Dreamcast + any game of your choice + UEFA Striker + SCART cable

only £249.99

FREE 48hr DELIVERY TO MOST AREAS IN THE UK SUBJECT TO STOCK and SECURITY CHECKS

visual memory unit (VMU) £19.99

much more than simply a memory card.

- hi-res LCD screen
- 200 blocks of memory space
- built in D-pad and contol buttons, allows for standalone gameplay .

official dreamcast controller

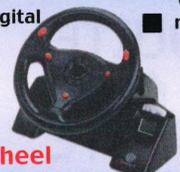
ergonomic perfection, easy to use and suberbly fast response. £19.99

- analog thumbpad & 2 analog triggers
- digital thumb pad & 5 digital buttons
- 2 built in expansion slots

official arcade controller £33.99

to complete your 'arcade' at home.

- arcade stick and 6 digital buttons
- durable design
- VMU port built in.



official steering wheel

the perfect add-on for driving fans.

- gives full analogue steering.
- durable design
- VMU port built in. £42.99

jump pack £14.99

feel every hit, crash and shot in a sensory overload.

- plugs directly into controller
- no batteries required!!

VGA box £8.99

plug a pc monitor and a TV into your Dreamcast.

Scart Cable £4.99

better quality picture and sound

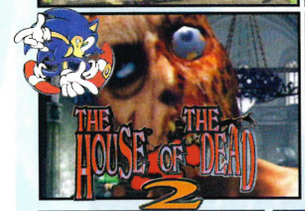
BRITAIN'S LARGEST MAIL ORDER MONEY BACK

SALES LINES 0113 234 0444

SALES FAX 0113 234 0770

Sales lines open: Mon-Fri 9am-10pm
Sat & Sun 10am-10pm

We are Britain's biggest mail order supplier of computer games! Call for your FREE 64 page catalogue packed with Dreamcast, PSX, N64, DVD and PC CD ROM!



only £29.99

UK DREAMCAST GAMES

Aero Wings	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Armada	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Blue Stinger	RRP £39.99	£27.99
Buggy Heat	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Caesar's Palace 2000	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Cool Boarders	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Crazy Taxi	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Deadly Skies	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Dragon's Blood	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Dynamite Cop 2	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Evolution	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Fighting Force 2	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Formula 1 Racing	RRP £39.99	£29.99
House of the Dead 2	RRP £39.99	£29.99
House of Dead 2 & Gun	RRP £59.99	£52.99
Hydro Thunder	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Incoming	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Jimmy White's Cueball	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Marvel vs Capcom	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Millennium Soldier	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Monaco GP Sim 2	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Mortal Kombat Gold	RRP £39.99	£29.99
NBA 2000	RRP £39.99	£29.99
NBA Showtime on NBC	RRP £39.99	£29.99
NFL Blitz 2000	RRP £39.99	£29.99
NFL Quarterback Club 2000	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Nomad Soul	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Pen Pen	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Plasma Sword	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Powerstone	RRP £39.99	£27.99
Psychic Force 2012	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Ready to Rumble	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Red Dog	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Re – Volt	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Resident Evil 2	RRP £34.99	£27.99
Sega Bass Fishing & Rod	RRP £59.99	£52.99
Sega Rally 2	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Shadowman	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Slave Zero	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Snow Surfers	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Sonic Adventure	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Soul Calibur	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Soul Reaver Legacy of Kain	RRP £39.99	£29.99
South Park Luv Shack	RRP £39.99	£25.99
South Park Rally	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Speed Devils	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Streetfighter Alpha 3	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Supreme Snowboarding	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Suzuki Alstare Racing	RRP £39.99	£27.99
Take the Bullet	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Tee Off	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Tokyo Highway Chall'	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Toy Commander	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Toy Story 2	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Trickstyle	RRP £39.99	£29.99
UEFA Striker	RRP £39.99	£27.99
Vigilante 8 2nd Offence	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Virtua Striker 2	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Virtua Fighter 3tb	RRP £39.99	£28.99
Wild Metal	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Worldwide Soccer	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Worms Armageddon	RRP £39.99	£29.99
WWF Attitude	RRP £39.99	£29.99
Zombie's Revenge	RRP £39.99	£29.99

NEO GEO POCKET COLOUR £51.99

The Neo Geo Pocket Colour is a 16-bit handheld machine capable of showing 146 colours (colour Gameboy is only 8-bit and has 56 colours). It offers real time gaming, a unique control stick for arcade style gaming and is ***COMPATIBLE WITH DREAMCAST!****

Handheld console . . £51.99
Available in Anthracite, Aqua Blue, Blue, Clear, Platinum Silver and Stone Blue.

Sonic £23.99

All the following Neo Geo Colour games are £19.99:

Bio Motor Unitron, Crush Roller, Fatal Fury, King of Fighters, Metal Slug, Neo Cherry Master, Neo Dragons Wild, Neo Geo Cup, Neo Mystery Bonus, Neo 21, Neo Turfmaster, Pacman, Pocket Tennis, Puzzle Bobble Mini, Samurai Showdown, SNK vs Capcom Card Fighters and US Pro Wrestlers.*

Link Lead £9.99
Mains Adaptor £18.99

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE*

If you are not absolutely delighted with your purchase for any reason you may return it to us and we will gladly exchange it for you or send a refund. Simply ring for an authorisation number and return it to us by recorded delivery.
(We will make a small restocking charge of £4 or 10% of the purchase price and we would ask that you return the item in perfect condition.)
*your statutory rights are not affected

- ***ORDER WITH CONFIDENCE*** from one of the largest games suppliers in the country. Over 350,000 customers so far!
- ***1st class delivery free of charge*** to UK mainland. We provide the ***FASTEST*** delivery service around: 1-3 working days max on stock items. Next working day delivery from £4. Orders placed before 3pm are sent the same day (subject to stock). *Payment via cheque please allow 8 working days for cheque clearance.*
- ***1000's OF TITLES.*** We also stock games and accessories for PSX, N64 & other consoles , PC CD ROM and DVD.
- Other companies may take your ***MONEY*** immediately but with Gameplay you will be safe knowing that ***your credit card will not be debited until your order is despatched!***
- Order by credit card, cheque, Postal Orders or cash (please send cash in a registered envelope for your own protection). Sorry, no COD.

PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM PRICES AND AVAILABILITY BEFORE ORDERING AS SOME ITEMS MAY BE LIMITED STOCK AND PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO FLUCTUATION

gameplay.com

Cut out this order form and post to:
GAMEPLAY, ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE, CROSS CHANCELLOR STREET, LEEDS, LS6 2TG

NAME:.....HAVE YOU ORDERED BEFORE? YES / NO

ADDRESS:.....

.....

POSTCODE:.....SIGNATURE: .....

TEL:.....FAX: .....

ITEM DESCRIPTION	PRICE
	£
	£
	£
	£
	£
OPTIONAL EXPRESS CHEQUE CLEARANCE. IF YOU ARE PAYING BY CHEQUE BUT DO NOT WANT TO WAIT FOR IT TO CLEAR PLEASE ADD **£1.00** HERE FOR EXPRESS CLEARANCE*	£
Postage is **FREE** for all games shipped within the U.K. Optional NEXT DAY DELIVERY available: £4.00 for 1st item plus £1.00 for each subsequent item. Overseas postage - £2.50 per software item. P&P	£
TOTAL	£

Thank you for your order!

CASH ☐ CHEQUE ☐ POSTAL ORDER ☐ CARD ☐ MasterCard VISA DELTA SWITCH

Cheques payable to 'Gameplay'.
Prices correct at time of going to press. E & OE.

CARD NO. ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ EXPIRY DATE ☐☐/☐☐ ISSUE NO. ☐☐ (SWITCH ONLY)

ODM(4)

*UNFORTUNATELY, EXPRESS CHEQUE CLEARANCE CANNOT BE USED FOR BUILDING SOCIETY CHEQUES

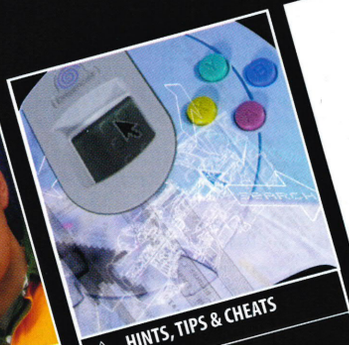
SENT TO PRESS 20/2/2000

SUPPLIER OF COMPUTER GAMES!

GUARANTEE

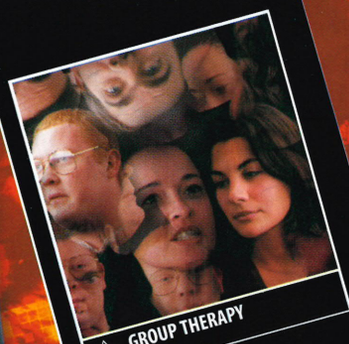
Also available: DVD VIDEO · NINTENDO 64 · PC CD ROM · PlayStation

△ PEOPLE
P101



△ HINTS, TIPS & CHEATS
P104

△ PEOPLE
P103



△ GROUP THERAPY
P122

VIBE©

© COPYRIGHT OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

WELCOME TO THE SECTION WHERE YOU DO ALL THE TALKING WHILE WE SIT BACK AND PUT OUR FEET UP. UNLEASH THOSE SORDID STORIES AND CONFOUNDING QUESTIONS

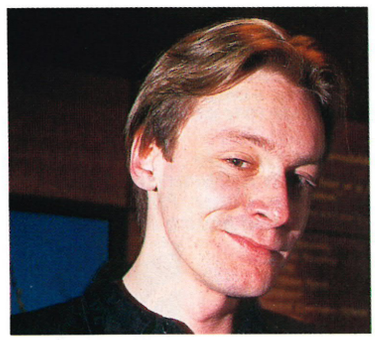
PAGES 96 TO 123

△ MOUNIR, 22, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Swimming about all day!
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
It's great. I love the freedom of it.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
A tiger, going around eating people up!
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
Getting along with people and protecting your neighbours.

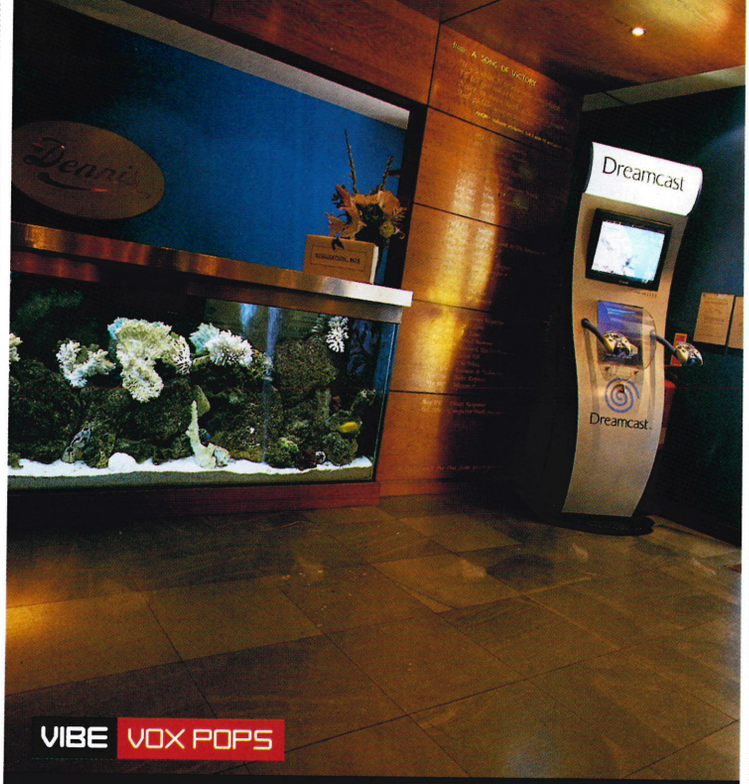
△ GRAHAM, 43, COURIER

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Having lots of fun, splashing in the water.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
It looks fantastic, and the controls are really responsive.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
Squirrels and rabbits – for the kids!
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
Self-discipline, and sticking together as a family.



△ SIMON, 25, DESIGNER ON *MACUSER*

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Swimming in the peaceful sea.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
Hard to control but that might be because I'm rubbish.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
A tiger, then you could eat humans!
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
How to live in harmony.



VIBE VOX POPS

HITTING THE BOTTLENOSE!

ECCO THE DOLPHIN GETS HIS FIRST PUBLIC OUTING IN HIS NEW 3D FORM, AND OUR COLLEAGUES AT DENNIS PUBLISHING DIP THEIR TOES INTO THE WATER

With the trusty Dreamcast pod safely ensconced in our reception area, and an exclusive preview of *Ecco The Dolphin: Defender Of The Future* running, it was obvious that removing the pod for our usual Vox Pops was going to ruffle a few feathers. Not wanting to trigger a general mutiny of Dennis staff or the couriers and delivery drivers who are constantly using the pod, we decided to carry out this month's survey on our own doorstep. Lazy, us? How dare you!

• *You can read a full preview of* Ecco The Dolphin: Defender Of The Future *on page 54*

△ MANDY, 28 ADVERTISING MANAGER

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Just being able to swim really fast.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
The graphics look good, and it seems really involving.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
A tiger. Dolphins aren't violent enough.
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
They always seem to have a good time, so maybe we could learn from that.

△ GARETH, 28 SUB-EDITOR

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
I'm happy with legs, so I don't know.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
Pretty, but a bit slow for me.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
There aren't not enough sloth-based games.
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
Fish recipes.

△ LAURA, 26 EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Not going to work!
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
Difficult, but it's nice and calming.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
A horse, with cowboys and indians.
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
Environmental awareness.

△ LATIF, 31 LIFT ENGINEER [JUST RESCUED SOMEBODY!]

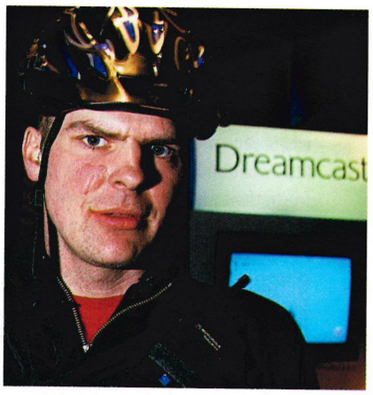
THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
The freedom.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
Tricky, but it looks amazing.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
Monkeys would be cool, swinging about and all that.
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
Caring.

△ MARTIN, 31, MARKETING DIRECTOR

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Getting to eat tuna for free.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
Excellent, but it takes a while to get into.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
Jack Russell terriers. You could race them instead of greyhounds.
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
Mathematics.

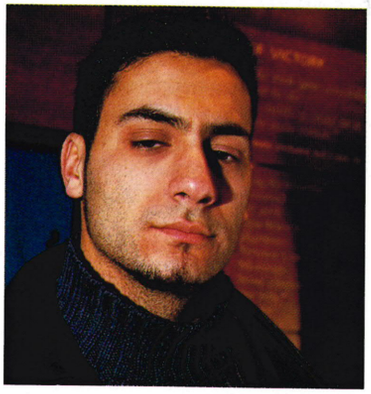
△ TERESA, 35 AD SALES ADMIN

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Swimming around all day.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
Its disorientating.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
A cat – to catch things and sleep a lot.
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
They're cool, aren't they? Peace and harmony.



△ ALEX, 27 CYCLE COURIER

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Swimming about.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
Pretty neat. Something different.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
Dolphins are pretty good as far as I'm concerned!
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
How to take it easy.



△ RASHID, 23 GRAPHIC DESIGNER

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A DOLPHIN?
Nobody would be able to understand what you were saying.
WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF *ECCO*?
It's deep.
WHICH OTHER ANIMAL WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN A GAME?
A Siberian tiger.
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM DOLPHINS?
How to swim faster.

YOU KNOW YOU'VE HIT THE BIG TIME WHEN...

...YOU PROVE THAT GAMES ARE GOOD FOR YOU

Instead of a coffee break, why not take a gaming break? Stress-buster psychologist Dr David Lewis thinks it's good for you. And he should know – he's proved it

"I OBVIOUSLY READ all the academic literature on stress techniques for managing anger in the office. I came across some of these techniques in a magazine and I wondered if they actually worked. That triggered off the study.

"We recruited 12 men through advertising or personal contacts, and I developed an anger scale with which, by using a series of questions, we could judge what level of anger they had. We hired a hall for the day and brought in a drama coach to get the 12 participants angry.

"We then split them into groups and gave them various options to see how well they could vent their anger. There were three physical options. For one we had a dummy which they could beat up, which is something that some Japanese companies use – they have a dummy of the boss in the cellar, and if you really feel like you want to hit the boss you can go there and hit the dummy with a bamboo pole. We also had an electronic boxing competitor, which is essentially a dummy which responds to the ferocity of your punches and gives you feedback about how hard you're hitting it.

"For another test we got the participants hitting each other with 'stunt bottles' made of sugar glass, which are safe to break over someone's head. We then allowed the participants to smash the bottles over each other heads and, without doing any harm, it had the same effect as actually assaulting somebody. We also had two PCs on which to play *Quake III* deathmatches, so two people could compete against each other in sessions of 20-30 minutes.

"We measured the blood pressure and heart rates before and after each of the events, and the *Quake III* exercise won hands down. It's not entirely surprising though. If you're leaping around and smashing a dummy, your blood pressure and heart rate are bound to go up – you're being very physically vigorous; when you play *Quake III* you're sitting down and being more relaxed. The interesting thing was that when we took their blood pressure half an hour later, those who'd been physically 'fighting' were still elevated, they were subjectively reporting that they still felt quite angry, whereas the people who'd been playing *Quake III* people were not.

"I would interpret that in three ways. I think that just sitting down and relaxing is going to be beneficial. The second element is the distraction – when you're angry, you're obsessed with the trigger for your anger, and so you ruminate on it. With a game like *Quake III*, you're actually having to intellectually engage with the game; you're having to make decisions about whether you're playing well or not. I think the third element is the catharsis of actually blowing something away without doing anybody any harm. I'm not an advocate of people who say that these games are responsible for serial killers or the incidents in high schools in America. That's just bollocks, basically. By the way, that's a technical expression we psychologists use!

"Somebody once said that for every complicated problem, there's an answer which is straightforward and easy to understand – and completely wrong. That applies here. There's been no academic study of any credibility which has shown a direct relationship between playing a violent game or watching a violent video, and using violence in a real-life situation.

"Our study shows that playing violent games has the opposite effect. In fact, we're even suggesting that some companies should have a '*Quake* break' where you can go and play an aggressive game for a little while and get rid of some of the inevitable frustrations which build up in working life. I think that would be quite beneficial in many cases."

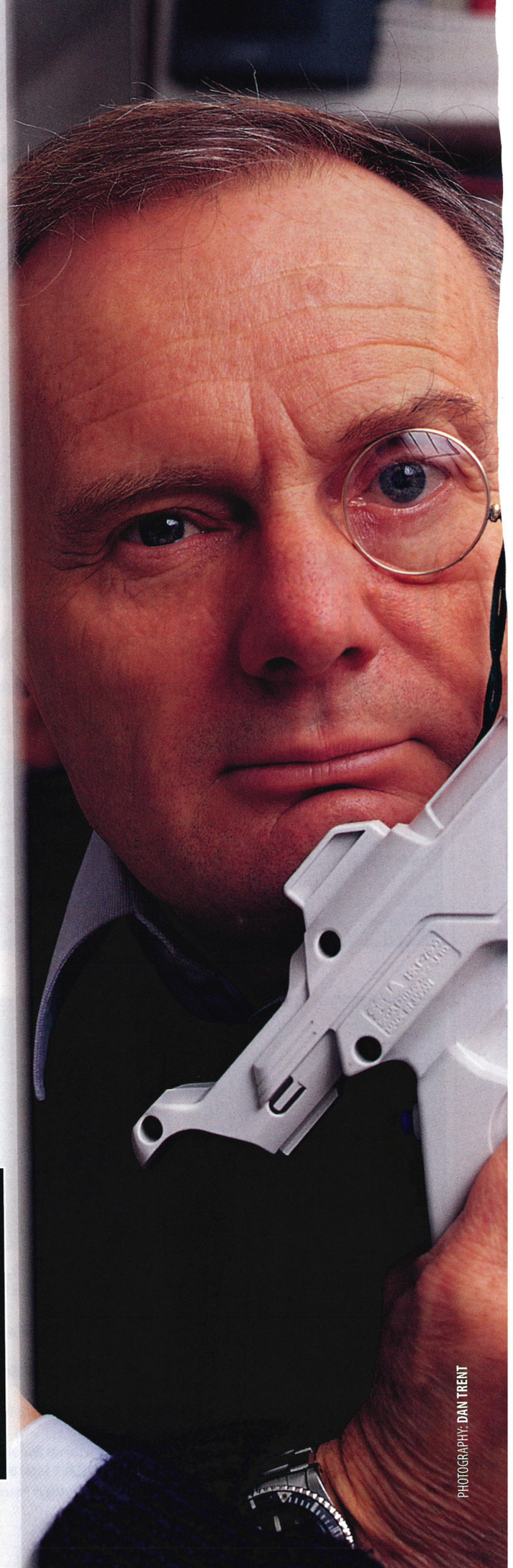
WHO HE?

SO WHY SHOULD YOU LISTEN TO DR LEWIS?

For any hysterical types who think the good doctor should be burnt at the stake for encouraging people to play violent games, here are his credentials.

Previously a medic and then a Beeb journalist, Dr Lewis turned his hand to qualified psychology and has spent a fair number of years casting an eye over human behaviour. He's also written more than 30 books on the subject, has been featured in documentaries, and has his own radio series on Radio 5 Live.

So for those of us who enjoy virtually mowing down bad guys, get playing in office hours. And be sure to blame it on Dr Lewis if your boss gives you a bollocking.



PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN TRENT

YOU KNOW LIFE'S TOUGH WHEN...

...YOU'RE AN AUSSIE DREAMCAST OWNER

Long delays. Lack of software and peripherals. No Net connectivity. Australian Dreamcast owner 'Arcturaziel' has had it rough

"I FIRST HEARD ABOUT Dreamcast shortly after reading about its launch in Japan in local games magazines and seeing a few articles about it on the Net. At that stage I wasn't very interested in Dreamcast – it looked nice, but Sega had earned themselves a bad reputation in Australia.

"When I finally got to sit down and play on a Japanese import, it was one of those love-at-first-sight things, and I pre-ordered it. The console was supposed to launch at the end of September, but this was later changed to the October 25. Then it hung in limbo for a while, and was finally released on November 30.

"I was pretty annoyed with the delay. I'd pre-paid, so it was a lot of money invested and I was now forced to wait even longer for the console. It really was a kick in the teeth for a lot of loyal customers who'd been waiting months for a Dreamcast, only to be told to wait longer. Australia's magazines and newsgroups were quite vocal, and I'm sure Ozisoft received more than a little hate mail at that point in time.

"Come launch time, about two stores in my city did have a midnight launch. but it was *very* low-key and disappointing. The store I bought my Dreamcast from opened at 8am, and I collected it on the first day it became available, November 30, from the EB that I'd pre-ordered it from.

"When I picked up my DC I was shocked and annoyed. After the launch being delayed for months, on day one there were only five or so of the advertised 25 games available to buy. Available on launch day were *Blue Stinger*, *TrickStyle*, *WWF Attitude*, *Ready 2 Rumble* and *Tokyo Highway Battle*; none of the big-name Sega titles such as *Sonic Adventure*, *Soul Calibur* and *Sega Rally 2* were available. I'd bought my Dreamcast so I could play *Sonic Adventure* and *Soul Calibur*, and neither of the games were anywhere in sight.

"Just when I thought the launch couldn't get any worse, there were even fewer peripherals available than there were games: no extra controllers and, most importantly, no memory cards of *any* kind anywhere. The only things available were the racing wheel, the arcade stick and the rumble pack. I think the most commonly heard phrase around that time was: 'I've just bought the most expensive CD player ever made.'

"There was no demo disc included in the box, and no explanation inside or from the retail outlet where the disc was. Around two or three days later, the demo discs arrived in an extra shipment.

"Ozisoft had also said that the Dreamcast would come with three months of free Internet access. Unfortunately Ozisoft couldn't even get that right: there was no Internet disc included in the box, just a voucher to fill out and send in which gave you Net access 'some time in early 2000'. Also, the three months works out at 50 hours during the first month, then 100 hours over two months; not three months unlimited.

"Fortunately, the big-name games have started to trickle into stores, and now *Sonic Adventure*, *Soul Calibur*, *Sega Rally 2*, *VF3tb* etc are all available in the stores, although most games didn't arrive until a full week after the launch of the console. Extra controllers also took over a week to arrive, and VM units are *still* not available.

"I still believe that Dreamcast is the superior next-generation console and is a very worthy purchase. If only the problems with distribution had been sorted out before its release, things would have been looking a lot brighter for Dreamcast owners in Australia."

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

HIGH CONTRAST

NOT ALL DREAMCAST LAUNCHES WERE AS DEPRESSING AS THE ONE DOWN UNDER

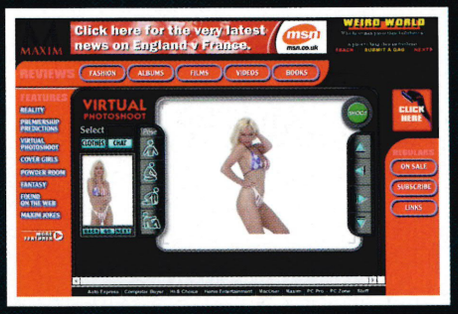
It sounds like our Aussie cousins had it tough. Which is perhaps surprising considering the successful launches in Japan, the US and here in Blighty. In the UK, hundreds of stores opened at midnight, and there was a substantial number of games and peripherals, including VM units, available at launch.

In the United States, Dreamcast has sold well over one million units since its launch on 9 September 1999. Indeed our Aussie friend Arcturaziel has a theory on this: "The US launch was pretty amazing. The console came on time (mostly), everything was there to buy from day one, and the price was very reasonable. Over in Australia we were forced to wait months extra, pay quite a high price, and also suffer from a lack of games and accessories. It does seem like a really rough deal. I guess Australia still isn't considered as a large market by game companies due to the population [20 million or so, versus hundreds of millions in the US]."

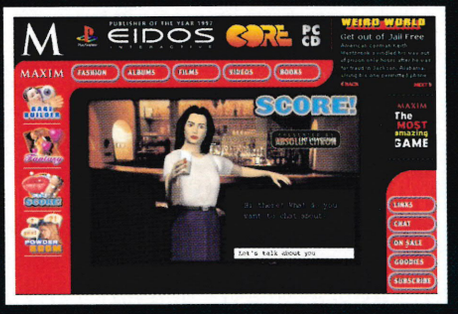
www.maxim-magazine.co.uk

MAXIM

Fantasy: Beautifully photographed shots of some of the most gorgeous women in the world. Order prints of your favourite pictures on-line.



Virtual Photoshoot: Enter our virtual studio and take control of a Maxim cover shoot before designing your own Maxim cover.



Score with Lovely Courtney: Can you get to first base with lovely Courtney. Put your chatting up technique to the test in our virtual bar.

the web magazine for men

FEATURING

- News & Sport
- Albums
- Movies
- Competitions
- Interactive Features
- Chat

MORE GREAT STUFF!

- On-line Dating
- Events Guide
- News & Sport
- Shops On The Net

AND MUCH, MUCH MORE...

Maxim Quiz

Think you know all about pop culture? Take the Maxim Culture Quiz and win a year's subscription to the magazine

YOU KNOW YOU'RE OBSESSED WHEN...

...YOU PROGRAMME GAMES ON YOUR CALCULATOR

Playing with Lara Croft's 3D bits on a scientific calculator? Yes, that's right, Chris Edwards, a US student, has gone and brought the 3D classic to the teeny, tiny screen

"I PLAY COMPUTER GAMES a lot, and one of my all-time favourites is obviously *Tomb Raider*. I've had a Texas Instruments 82 calculator for the last five years – since high school, in fact. I was just starting to learn programming in general at the time, and the calculator seemed easier to programme than a computer, so I started to teach myself coding as soon as I got it.

"I decided to programme games because they're much more fun to code than, say, a database. Before I started on *Tomb Raider* I did ten small games. They were mainly 2D titles, but I did do one called *Dungeon Raider* before *Tomb Raider* had even come out. It wasn't similar though. While creating those, I played the PlayStation version of *TR* and really liked it. I thought it would be really cool to try to programme it myself on a different platform.

"It really wasn't too hard to code. The end result has got jerky movement and stuff, so it's nothing like the real *TR*, but I guess it was still something of a challenge. Other games had been made which were similar but were just flat levels with walls; I added jumping and climbing to my version. Because the TI-82 calculator doesn't use a sophisticated graphics engine or anything, it was tough to get the walls to show up in the right places. That was the majority of the work.

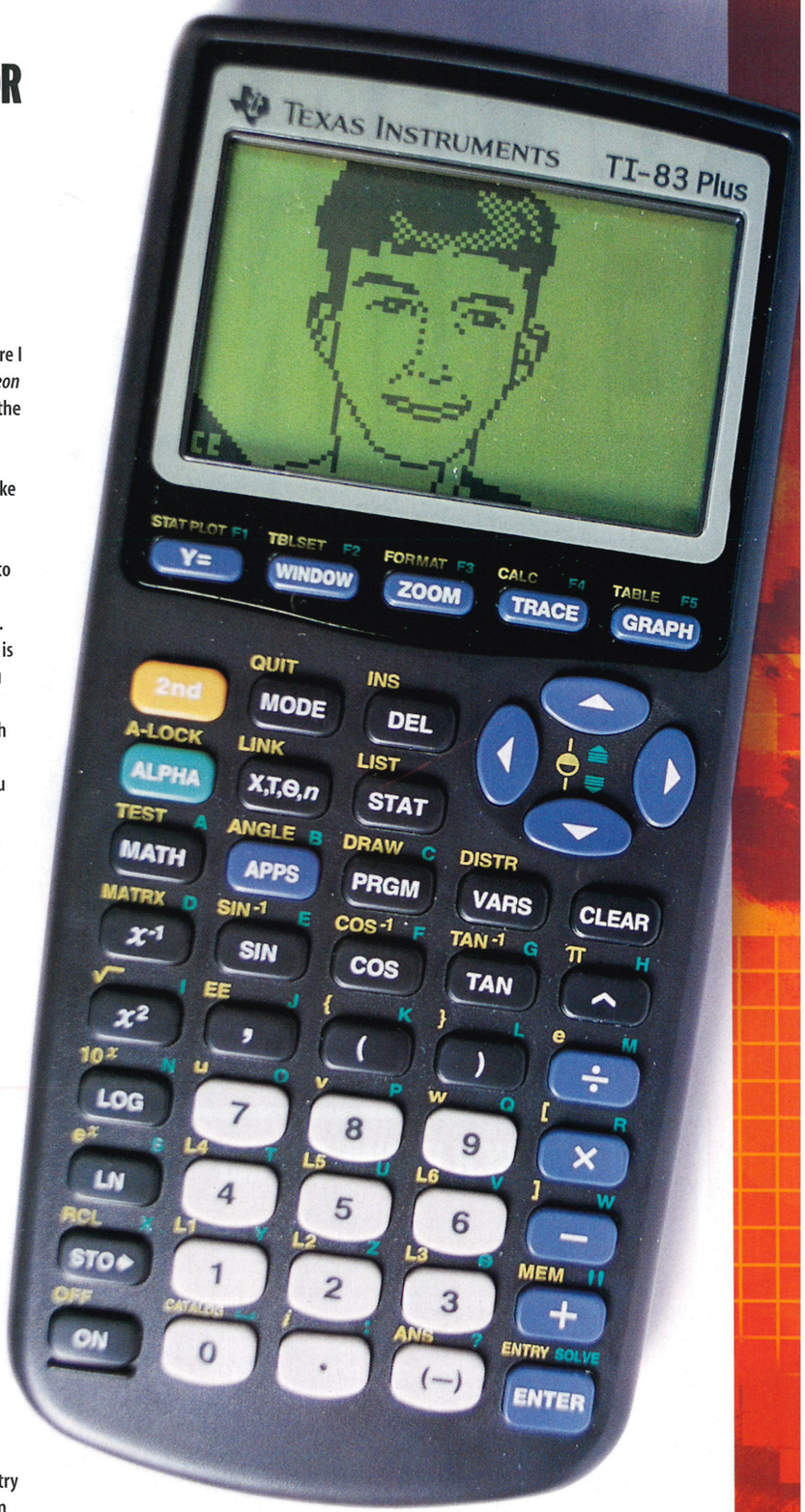
"The levels are my own creation, because the game is too simple to use anything like the real levels. It does though have five levels based on five of the different areas featured in the real game. Each one is designed be shaped like a real level, so there's a pyramid for Egypt and a bunch of pillars for Rome. You can also climb up on to the pyramid, and there's other stuff like that.

"I've also put one type of enemy on each level. The fighting's pretty simple – the enemy just appears in front of you, and you hit the shoot button a bunch of times and he dies, or you die first. Unlike the original though, you can't move around while you're fighting.

"When I finished creating the game, I just showed the end result to high school friends who thought it was pretty cool. Since then I've got into the calculator scene on the Internet and have got a lot of feedback about the game from people who really like it.

"Someone at Core Design [the creators of *Tomb Raider*] emailed me a few months ago, and he's working on the Gameboy version of *TR* right now. He was pretty excited, because the Gameboy has the same processor as my calculator. He thought it was pretty cool that I was writing programmes with that processor, and he said that people at Core had been talking about me.

"Could I end up with a job there? Possibly. I didn't really discuss that with him. He didn't ask for my help, but he suggested that I try programming for the Gameboy – I'd probably get into the industry that way if I did. And I do want to end up in the games industry."

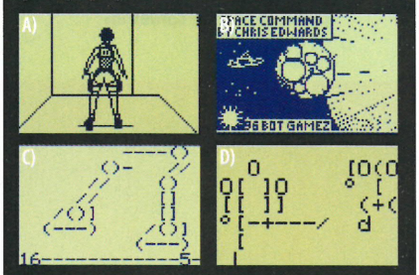


TI-TANIC GAMES

CHRIS IS A ONE-MAN GAMING INDUSTRY FOR CALCULATOR GEEKS EVERYWHERE

Not only has Chris created *Tomb Raider* for his calculator, he's also pumped out a mass of his own titles over the years: *Little Dude 1* and *2*, *Assassin's Adventure*, *Fatal Fight*, *'Roids*, *Reign Of The Robots 1*, *2* and *3*, *Space Command* and more.

Indeed, if you use a calculator at school or university, what better way to indulge in some covert gaming during classes or lectures than by buying a TI-82 and downloading Chris's games to it? Here are some of his gaming highlights...

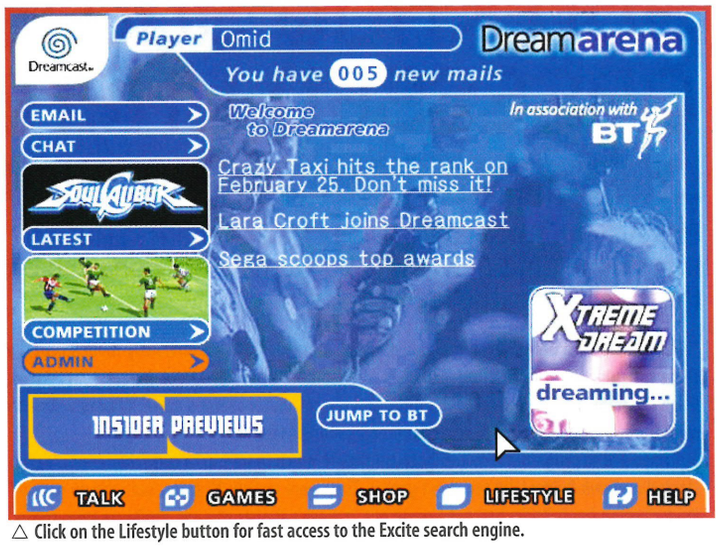


A) Anyone for *Tomb Raider: The Last Equation*? Seriously, folks, could this be done on a VM unit? We'd love to see it.
B) Witness "the incredible graphics" in *Space Command*.
C) Quash evil robots in *Reign Of The Robots 1*, *2* and *3*.
D) Er... try to work out what the hell you're doing in *Fatal Fight*, the beat 'em up which features normal moves, combos, special moves and finishing moves!

• *For more details, visit Chris's homepage at www.personal.psu.edu/users/c/x/cxe162/ti.htm*

HOW TO... GET MORE OUT OF SEARCH ENGINES

FIND WHAT YOU WANT ON THE WEB. PHILIP WAND SHOWS HOW TO GET MAXIMUM THRUST OUT OF THE MAJOR SEARCH ENGINES



△ Click on the Lifestyle button for fast access to the Excite search engine.

SINCE AS LONG AGO AS 1987, the Internet Software Consortium (ISC) at www.isc.org has attempted to gauge the growth of the Internet by calculating the total number of domain names. Familiar haunts such as lastminute.com, amazon.com and sega.com make up the numbers, as do less familiar ones such as dennisbadger.com, adhesivecream.com and goodscrotum.com.

If we look at the ISC's analysis from the summer of 1993, the answer was just under two million names – or one for every person living in Botswana at the time. Look at the results from last year though, and the total is closer to 60 million – an increase of more than 300 per cent. Combine those figures with the 300 million pages now indexed by at least one search engine, and you begin to get the picture: that the Web is a serious porker.

But why are we telling you this? Well, because there's a recurring complaint about its gargantuan size. While many of us wow at the statistics and dream of the future online, the massively daunting number of pages out on the Web can make it very difficult for the average surfer to find anything of worth.

MEET THE SEARCH ENGINE

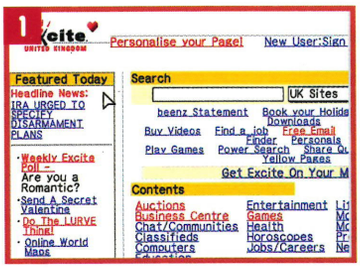
Put simply, the Web wouldn't work without search engines. Sure, it would still function, but it wouldn't be of any use – nobody would know where anything was. So to give people a way of finding stuff, with a quick and easy route to the pages that contain the information they want, the search engine was born.In essence, you visit an engine's front page and type in a keyword or a phrase that describes what you're looking for: 'Subaru' or 'polyvinyl OR chloride' or 'animal AND rights', for example (the 'OR' shows that you want either word in results; the 'AND' that you want both). You then press the button and wait. The long list of results that appears are 'hyperlinks' to pages that contain those words. In many cases simple searches like the above examples are adequate. But what if 'adequate' isn't enough? That's where 'power search' facility at Excite comes in.

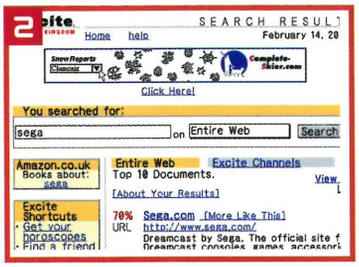
HOW A SEARCH ENGINE WORKS

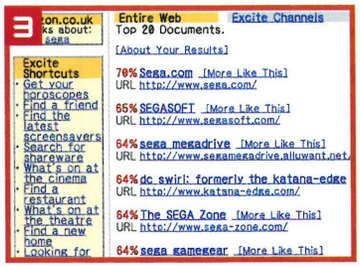
Search engines work by creating a massive repository of information, also known as the index, collected from millions of pages around the Web.

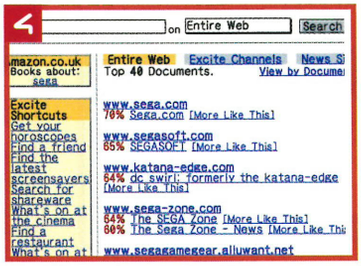
To create the index, a spider or robot program – a sort of automated Web browser – is sent to visit Web pages to record their contents and make a note of all the links. This enables them to cover an entire site by following the links one after the other, a process known as 'crawling' or 'spidering'. The robot then returns at regular intervals to ensure that the information it has is fresh. Many websites are constantly updated, meaning the index often refers to information that no longer exists; links that go nowhere are known as 'dead' or 'expired' links, and will result in an error.

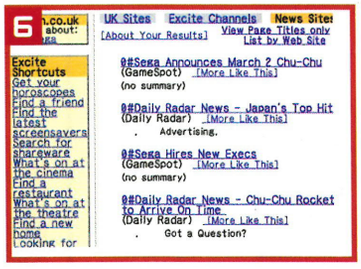
The most important element of any search engine for you is the interface. This determines how the information from the engine's index is retrieved, ranked and displayed. Ranking is perhaps the most important element, as it makes the most relevant pages appear towards the top of the search results, making it easier for you to get straight to what you want and ignore the stuff you don't. Each search engine has a different way of ordering its pages, and the best advice is to perform test searches and see which one works best for your needs.











GET MORE OUT OF EXCITE

Before you get started here, make sure you've connected your Dreamcast to a phone socket using the cable supplied. Then simply insert the DreamKey GD-ROM and power up. If you're not sure how to do it, read through the section of the DreamKey user guide, 'Connecting The Dreamcast To A Telephone Line'.

1 For as long as we can remember, Excite has been a search engine-cum-directory, presenting users with information from new Yahoo-style website categories as well as from its main index. Excite also touts itself as the only engine offering results by concept. This means that your search query is broken down into abstracts instead of just words and phrases. In simpler terms, if you were looking for 'car dealers', Excite would also return pages that referred to 'vehicle sales', 'motor traders' and so on.

So let's type a word or phrase into the input box at the top of the page, select Entire Web from the drop-down box, and press the Search button. We'll use the word 'sega' as our example.

2 Excite displays results ten at a time, with the most relevant documents towards the top of the list. You can see a percentage score next to each link, denoting how closely the page meets your original search query – 100% means Excite is pretty sure that it's found a document that exactly fits your needs. Unless you use a very specific word or phrase, this score will most likely be between 60% and 80%.

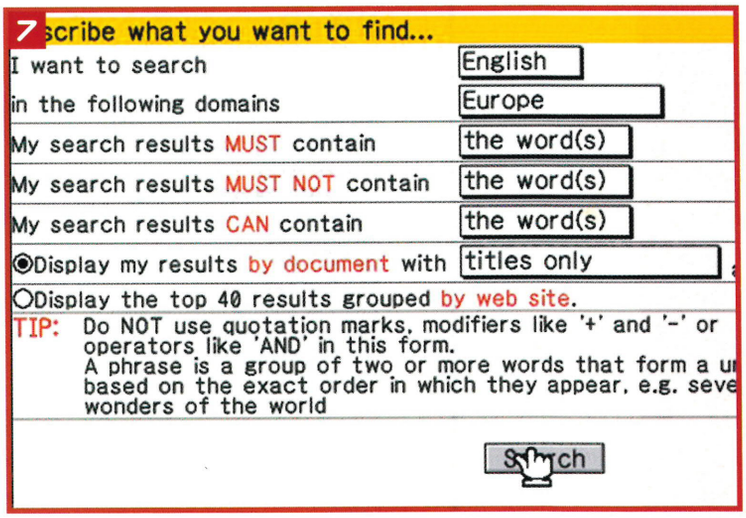
You can also see a small link saying More Like This. This enables you to redefine your search based upon a certain page. For example, if you visit one of the results and decide that it encompasses everything you need, you can then go back to Excite and click the More Like This link to see more pages with similar content. Cool, huh?

3 Click the View Page Titles Only link over in the right margin, and the page reloads to show only the links and no summaries of page content. This also means that you're able to to fit twice as many search results on one page.

4 Click the List By Web Site link in the right margin and you'll see 40 results grouped by the websites on which they reside. In our example, there are three different links all pointing to the Cyberdrive website at www.cyberdrive.net. Rather than clicking through the results set one by one, we can now approach them site by site and, more often than not, get to the information we need much more quickly.

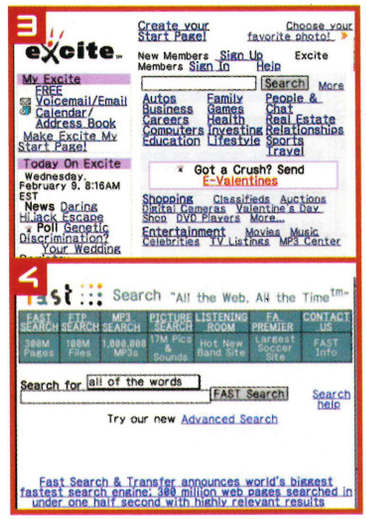
5 Just above the results, there are three links pointing to Entire Web, Excite Channels and to News Sites. These enable you to resubmit your search to different areas and features of Excite. The first link, to Entire Web, is highlighted as this is where we are right now. Click Excite Channels and you can see all the online shops and categories that are relevant to Sega. The shopping link takes you to where you can buy hardware and software online; the categories link take you to directory folders similar to ones you'll find at Yahoo.

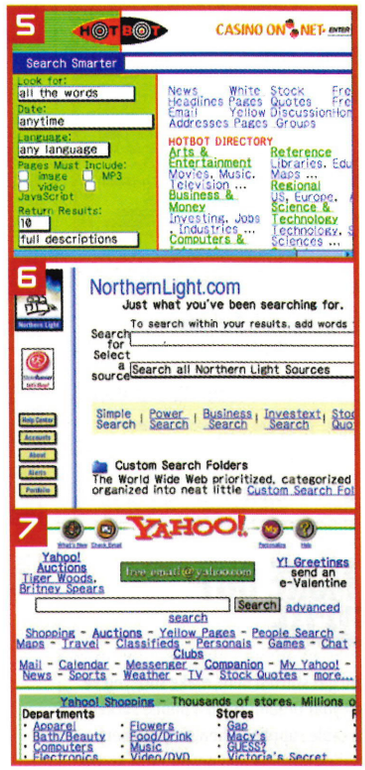
6 Click on the News Sites link, and Excite searches across a number of different news sites from around the world, and returns links to every story or article that contains a reference to your query. This is a very useful way of staying abreast of latest developments. Rather than visiting a number of different new sites one after the other, you can now look at them all from within the familiar interface of Excite.



7 Go back to the Excite home page and find the Power Search link underneath the main search box at the top of the screen. You're now presented with a page that enables you to narrow down your search and be very specific about what you're looking for.

I WANT TO SEARCH – Denotes the language of result pages, eg English.
IN THE FOLLOWING DOMAINS – Restrict your search to a particular country, eg UK Sites.
MY SEARCH RESULTS MUST CONTAIN – Words that must feature in the results, eg Sega.
MY SEARCH RESULTS MUST NOT CONTAIN – Words that must *not* feature in the results, eg Nintendo 64.
MY SEARCH RESULTS CAN CONTAIN – Words that are permitted in the results, eg Nintendo.
DISPLAY MY RESULTS BY DOCUMENT WITH – Select whether you want to see results listed with titles and summaries, or just titles. You can also select how many results you want shown per page.
DISPLAY THE TOP 40 RESULTS GROUPED BY WEBSITE – Select if you want results shown forty at a time and grouped by location. ▷





A QUICK COMPARISON OF MAJOR ENGINES

1 ALTAVISTA

Located at: www.av.com
Considered the number one choice of power searchers, AltaVista has recently undergone a facelift and changed its submission process. We don't like it any more.
Search for 'dreamcast': 211,190 pages
Relevance: ●●
Speed: ●●●●
Interface: ●●●
A massive number of results from the second largest index on the Internet, spoiled by a number of spurious links on the first page. Sixth-ranking page was a link to Gay Universe; ninth rank was a British TV memorabilia page.

2 LYCOS

Located at: www.lycos.com or www.lycos.co.uk
The default search engine for Dreamcast users, Lycos performs well but has a mightily confusing front page with almost 80 separate links
Search for 'dreamcast': 292,310 pages
Relevance: ●●●●
Speed: ●●●●
Interface: ●●●
Top marks for both quantity and quality. The only downside is that by default the results are categorised and confusing; you need to go to the Advanced Search screen to do things properly.

3 EXCITE

Located at: www.excite.com
Launched back in 1996, Excite continues to draw in a large number of visitors by categorising its search results.
Search for 'dreamcast': Not shown
Relevance: ●●●
Speed: ●●●●
Interface: ●●
It's impossible to tell how many pages Excite is returning because it hides the information from you. Like Lycos, it categorises the results by default.

4 FAST

Located at: www.alltheweb.com
Based in Trondheim, Norway, the fattest search engine keeps on gobbling up pages into its index. Known controversially for its searchable database of MP3 music files
Search for 'dreamcast': 292,310 pages
Relevance: ●●●
Speed: ●●●●●
Interface: ●●●●
A wonderfully uncluttered interface, with links to files, music, picture searches and more. Highly recommended.

5 HOTBOT

Located at: www.hotbot.com
Using technology from the Direct Hit (www.directhit.com) and Inktomi engines (www.inktomi.com), HotBot offers a number of features popular with power searchers.
Search for 'dreamcast': More than 50,000 pages
Relevance: ●●●●●
Speed: ●●●●
Interface: ●●●●
The Direct Hit search technology behind HotBot provides search results ranked by the number of times other people have clicked on them. It works, too.

6 NORTHERN LIGHT

Located at: www.northernlight.com
Northern Light has a growing number of fans thanks to the way it combines Web searches with information from respected sources such as PR Newswire.
Search for 'dreamcast': 131,227 pages
Relevance: ●●●●
Speed: ●●●
Interface: ●●●●●
By including a database of 'special sources', including documents from PR and news feeds, Northern Light is a favourite among researchers.

7 YAHOO

Located at: www.yahoo.com
Yahoo is the oldest Web directory, having been around since 1994. By default, searches are made within the directory rather than across the Web
Search for 'dreamcast': 53,129 pages
Relevance: ●●●
Speed: ●●●●
Interface: ●●●●●
There's no way anyone can criticise Yahoo's interface. It's worked this way since 1994, and like most people we pray they don't go changing it.

STEP BY STEP: THE SEARCH CHECKLIST

1 THINK
Let's go searching for computer games. Typing 'games' at AltaVista reveals 11 million search pages! Allowing 20 seconds to load and glance at each page, it would take something like 200 years to look at them all. Unless you're a Californian Redwood with a preservation order, that's just not practical.

2 NARROW THINGS DOWN
Which games *do* you want? What games *don't* you want? Let's say you're a fan of *Sonic Adventure*. Let's also say want to see a picture of your spiny hero, preferably in the form of a screenshot. That helps to reduce the number of results.

3 THINK BEFORE YOU SEARCH
There's a chance we'll bump into pages about the old Mega Drive console, but we don't want to be bothered with that, so we should remember to exclude from our search any pages containing references to it.

4 START YOUR ENGINE
We're ready to roll. Pay a visit to the Excite front page, and enter the following information:
+"Sonic Adventure" +Dreamcast -"Mega Drive" +*shots l:english
Change the "UK Sites" option to "Entire Web" and hit Search.

5 KEY TO SWITCHES
+"Sonic Adventure" – Results must contain the phrase 'Sonic Adventure'. Surrounding the phrase in quotes means the two words must appear next to each other; the plus sign means the word must appear on the page.
+Dreamcast – Results must contain the word 'Dreamcast'. Using a capital letter at the start means you only want to see results containing an upper-case 'D'.
-Mega Drive – Results mustn't contain the words 'Mega Drive'. Again, note capitalisation. The minus sign means the word must not appear on the page.
+*shots – We're after words ending in the word 'shots', ie screenshots. The asterisk is the wild card character, meaning any combination of letters is acceptable.
l:english – no speako españoles; we want our pages in English.

With a little thought, you've narrowed down your search from 11 million pages to a few hundred, all of which contain the information you're after. With a little practice, tackling a broad subject like computer games is suddenly very easy. You'll also find that these switches are supported by a wide range of engines, including AltaVista, Lycos, Yahoo, HotBot, Northern Light and FAST.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BOOLEAN
A system devised by George Boole that combines words with the logical operators AND and OR. For example, Dream AND Arena returns pages listing both words; Dream OR Arena returns pages listing either. See also **switch.**

CRAWLER
See **robot.**

DEAD LINK
A hyperlink that doesn't work. It may just time out, meaning the server no longer exists or has crashed, or more likely it will end in a '404 Page Not Found' error, meaning the document has been deleted or moved. Also referred to as an **expired link.**

DIRECTORY
A catalogue of **websites** listed by humans into topic and sub-topics, as opposed an **index** of **Web pages** collected by **robots** at a **search engine.**

DOMAIN NAMES
Used to locate a server on the Internet and World Wide Web. For example, bt.com or dreamcastmag.co.uk

EXPIRED LINK
See **Dead Link.**

INDEX
The core database or catalogue of any **search engine**, containing all the words and phrases from countless **Web pages.**

KEYWORD
A single word used to describe or sum up a particular concept.

QUERY
The word or phrase entered at a **search engine.**

RESULTS SET
A group of links to **Web pages** displayed at a search engine after you've submitted a search query.

ROBOT
Also known as a bot, a robot is an automated software program that visits **websites** and collects information from the **Web pages.** The data is stored in a **large index.**

SEARCH ENGINE
Any major search engine consists of a **robot** program, an **index**, and an interface that enables you to find stuff in it. See also **directory**.

SPIDER
See **robot.**

SWITCH
Popularised by AltaVista, most **search engines** enable you to narrow your search with special operators. Common switches include '+word' (must contain word), '-word' (must not contain word), 'title:word' (page title must include word) and 'host:word' (domain name must contain word). Together they enable very specific searching.

WEB PAGE
The individual documents that collectively make up a **website.**

WEBSITE
A site refers to a collection of **Web pages** hosted under one domain name.

GET TO GRIPS WITH VIRTUA STRIKER 2

LOVE IT OR HATE IT, THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT GAMES AROUND. FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO PLAY LIKE BRAZIL. AND NOT LIKE LEYTON ORIENT

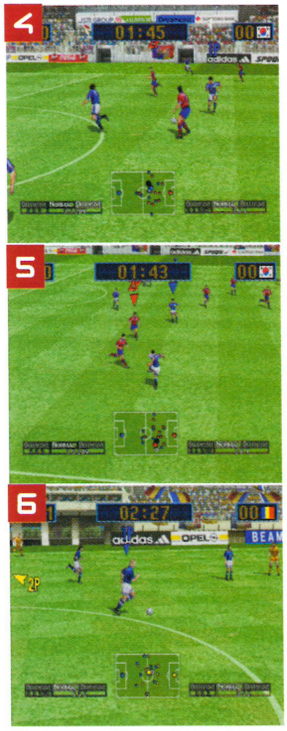
1

2

CHOOSE YOUR TEAM

1 Obviously you need to pick a team. However, unlike with most football games, here the teams change. Using the internal clock, your Dreamcast changes the world ranking every Monday, affecting how good your teams are.

2 As a beginner, you should check this table and use it to pick a team at the top to give yourself that little edge. Also picking a side with good defence and strong wingers will help you survive.



PASSING

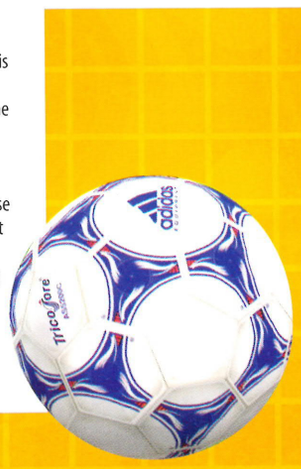
Unlike with most football games, running the length of the pitch only results in you losing the ball. If you want to win, you're going to have to become a team player.

1. Hitting the A button causes your player to execute a short pass. Use the directional controller to aim the pass towards a particular player; just hitting a pass only results in giving the ball away.
2. The long pass is useful for clearing the ball when under pressure, and for getting the ball to an unmarked player quickly for an attempt on goal. This move is executed with the X button.
3. Both these passes have a lag time before they're executed, which often results in the computer getting the ball. It's sometimes wise to pass to a player behind you when the opposition is closing in.
4. If you press A and back, your player taps the ball behind him to another player, confusing your opponents and giving space for the other player to use the long pass.
5. Pressing A or X while the ball is airborne executes a direct pass. This is best used to quickly move the ball on to another player before the opposition players close the gap.
6. Don't pass the ball as soon as you get it, as you could give it away. Use the radar to find a player who isn't marked. This way you keep possession and have more scoring opportunities.

DEFENDING

The computer AI in *Virtua Striker 2* is fierce, and even on the easiest setting you must be good at defending in order to survive.

1. Most of the time the ball can be retrieved by simply running into your opponent. This is useful, as you don't risk fouling him, and also leave him dazed, giving yourself a few more seconds.
2. If you're chasing an opponent or running beside him, use the sliding tackle (A). Try to do it just in front of him so that you hit the ball and not his legs.



SHOOTING

If you want to win you're going to have to learn to score. The B button is used to shoot. However, it's not quite as simple as that in this game.

1. Hold down the B button to build up power. But be careful – if you build up too much you'll miss. If you're heading straight for the keeper, hold up or down to put swerve on your shot, otherwise just shoot straight.
2. When shooting from a distance, if you use too much power your shot will be inaccurate. It's better to aim at the lower corners of the net and use half power.
3. The shoot button is not the only way to score. You can use a short pass when close to the goal to score quickly – just make sure you're not facing the keeper. You don't get great points for this, but a goal is a goal, right?

CENTERING OR CROSSING

Centering or crossing plays a major part in most football games, and *Virtua Striker 2* is no exception. If you learn how to do this properly, you'll score in every match.

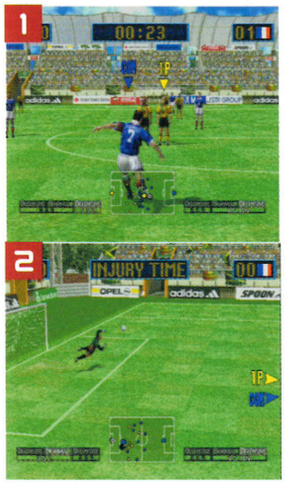
1. Get the ball upfield to a player on the wing, then perform a long pass close to the goal. The ideal place is in line with the edge of the six-yard box. Don't cross it too close to the goal or the keeper will catch it.
2. Tap B and your player performs a direct shot which normally results in a goal. Just make sure you cross close enough to the goal so that the striker's shot still has sufficient power to outdo the keeper's efforts.

GET SOME PRACTICE IN

There's no practice mode in *Virtua Striker 2*, which can make things very difficult for beginners. Here are some hints to help you get your skills up to scratch.

1. To practice your skills, go to VS, set time to 15 min, and set player 2 to player-controlled. Now you can practice passing and shooting with only the keeper to beat. This should soon have you more prepared for playing against a real opponent.

2. Use PK Match to practice your penalty kicks. This helps you to win the main game itself and all the other modes. If you're looking to get high-scoring goals though, this is not the way to go.



FREE KICKS

Free kicks are extremely useful, especially in a two-player game. You can either pass to another player, or try to score directly if you're close enough to the goal. Which move you should employ depends on where the free kick is taken from.

1. It is possible to score straight from a free kick. The easiest ones are long-range ones, as it's easier to avoid the opposition's wall. Hold down-left. Build up your power depending on the distance from goal, and change the direction to up-right before releasing for a 400-plus-point goal.

2. To save a free kick you should take control of your keeper, and get ready to dive if the wall doesn't stop it. If the wall is towards the left of the goal, it's worth moving the keeper slightly to the right.

TAKING CORNERS

Corners are fairly similar to centering in *Virtua Striker 2*. If taken correctly, most times they result in a goal. The only downer is that the computer very rarely gives away corners.

1. When taking a corner, you can aim the shot using the D-pad. Try to get the ball to a player in the area who can then shoot. Pass too close to the goal and the keeper will leap up and catch the ball, ending your hopes of a spectacular goal.

2. The best way to score is to do a short pass and then immediately hold away from the goal. The nearest player should run clear of the opposing defender, at which point you should put a long pass into the penalty area.

3. Leave this move too late and the defender will block your shot; execute it too early and the keeper will have it. However, when performed correctly you should score from more than half of your corners.

PENALTY KICKS

Until you perfect the tricky art of scoring during the game itself in *Virtua Striker 2*, most of your matches will be decided by that Germany favourite the penalty shoot-out. Master these and you can complete any mode without knowing how to shoot!

1. Aim the shot using the D-pad, and hold B to power-up. This also affects the height of the ball, so too much power will result in you hitting the crossbar or worse. Use just over three-quarters power to hit it into the top of the net.

2. To fake a shot, face one direction, then as your player is running up to the ball press in the real direction you want to shoot. This causes the keeper to leap in the wrong direction.

3. To save penalties, you must press in one of eight directions, depending on where you think the ball will go. If you believe your opponent will shoot at the centre of the net, don't press anything and your keeper will get it whatever height it comes at.

   To make things easier for yourself, look at the power gauge. Weak shots go low, strong ones go high. This narrows things down a little, and in some cases you only need to guess whether to go left or right.

PLAYING TIPS

Here are some playing tips that will soon have you hammering home goal after goal into your opponent's net.

1. The key to success in this game is the one-touch strategy. Play the ball from midfielder to a striker, then to the winger, who can cross to a striker who will shoot and hopefully score.

2. A team like France is ideal for centering, as they have very strong wingers; other teams like Sweden and Argentina share these assets.

3. You can change the formation before a match by using the Y button. This gives you better offensive positioning, which increases your scoring opportunities.

4. The players sometimes do daft things like missing the ball, or your keeper fumbles an easy shot. However, this works both ways, so be ready to punish any mistakes your opponent's team make.

TIPS AGAINST THE COMPUTER

The computer in *Virtua Striker 2* is very good, and often a daunting opponent for a new player. Here are some tips to easily win in Arcade and Ranking modes.

1. Set the match time to custom one minute, and penalty kicks to real PK. Now pass the ball around until the time runs out. Try to score, but more importantly prevent the computer form scoring.

2. The match should now go to penalty kicks. Always use the fake, and don't shoot at the same corner or the cpu will learn. Instead try to keep your shots going into the top corners, as the computer has problems saving them.

   When taking penalties, the computer follows patterns and uses lots of low-powered shots which you should have a 50/50 chance of saving. After a while you'll find it easy to win.

3. The most common way that the computer scores is by putting over a cross. To intercept it, try to change your pattern to defensive when a winger makes a break for it. If he does manage to get a cross in, press X to make your nearest player leap and head it upfield and out of the danger area.

SPECIAL MOVES

There are a couple of tricks in *Virtua Striker 2* which are not listed in the manual. Mastering these could give you the edge you need to become a true pro.

1. Chipping the ball over the keeper's head is a great way to score an easy goal. To execute this move, hold back as you release shoot. You should get in the region of 350 points for a good chip.

2. The shimmy move enables you to dribble the ball past other players without being tackled. Run in the direction you want to go, and release the D-pad when your opponents are close. Now press up-right to fake a move in that direction, then down and right to take the ball round your opponent and move it on to another player before they recover.

3. To perform a long shot, charge your power to full as you pass the semi-circle, let go and press up and right (or left). The keeper normally misses this shot, giving you an easy goal. The only problem is that the midfielders may intercept you before you're fully charged up.

SECRET TEAMS

To get the secret teams FC Sega, Yukichan and MVP Royal Genki use the codes in Cheat Zone this month (page 121). However, these teams are available in different modes, along with a special FC Sega without the Panda man.

1. To play as the bonus teams in Ranking or Vs mode, complete arcade with them, and another area of the map called SP then opens up, enabling you to select those teams. To play as FC Sega without the Panda guy who falls over easily, select the team by holding start and pressing A.

GET TO GRIPS WITH RESIDENT EVIL 2 GUIDE PT1

THERE'S NO POINT IN YOU BUYING A GAME AND US TELLING YOU HOW TO COMPLETE IT IN ALL OF AN HOUR. THAT'S WHY IN THIS *ODM* GUIDE YOU CAN FIND MAPS AND TIPS ON LEON'S FIRST SCENARIO, FOLLOWED NEXT MONTH BY TIPS ON THE SECOND SCENARIOS AND ALL THE SECRET MODES

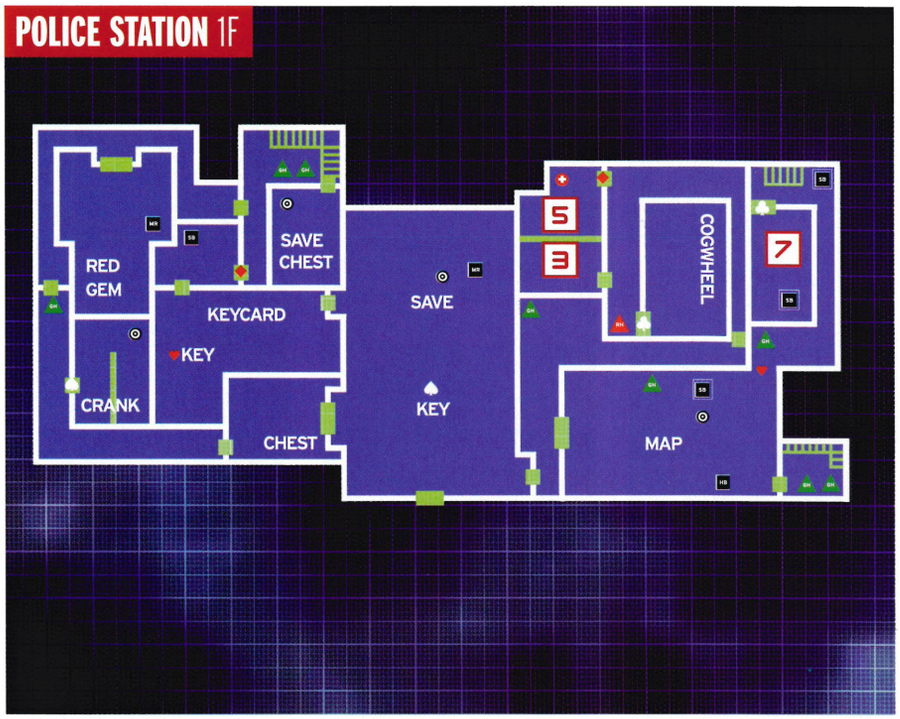
KEY TO KEYS

On the maps, you can see symbols over some of the doorways. When you pick up the Precinct Keys, they're each shaped like a suit of a pack of cards; each symbol represents the suit.

- SPADE KEY
- DIAMOND KEY
- HEART KEY
- CLUB KEY

KEY

- GH GREEN HERB
- RH RED HERB
- BH BLUE HERB
- F-AID SPRAY
- HB HANDGUN BULLETS
- SB SHOTGUN SHELLS
- MR MAGNUM ROUNDS
- INK RIBBON
- **SAVE** TYPEWRITER
- **CHEST** STORAGE BOX



POLICE STATION

1 The bookshelves are the first trickyish puzzle you encounter. Go up the stairs and walk all the way around the top floor of the room. Once you've fallen, look at the panel, push the switch and then move the far-left bookcase right, and the next bookcase right to open the hatch.

2 To put out the burning helicopter, head outside, and down the stairs that you find. Walk to the end of this room, pick up the valve handle and save if you need; head back upstairs and use it on the pressure cylinder near the chopper to put out the fire and open the new room. Be warned: the two-way mirror is nothing more than an elaborate bluff.

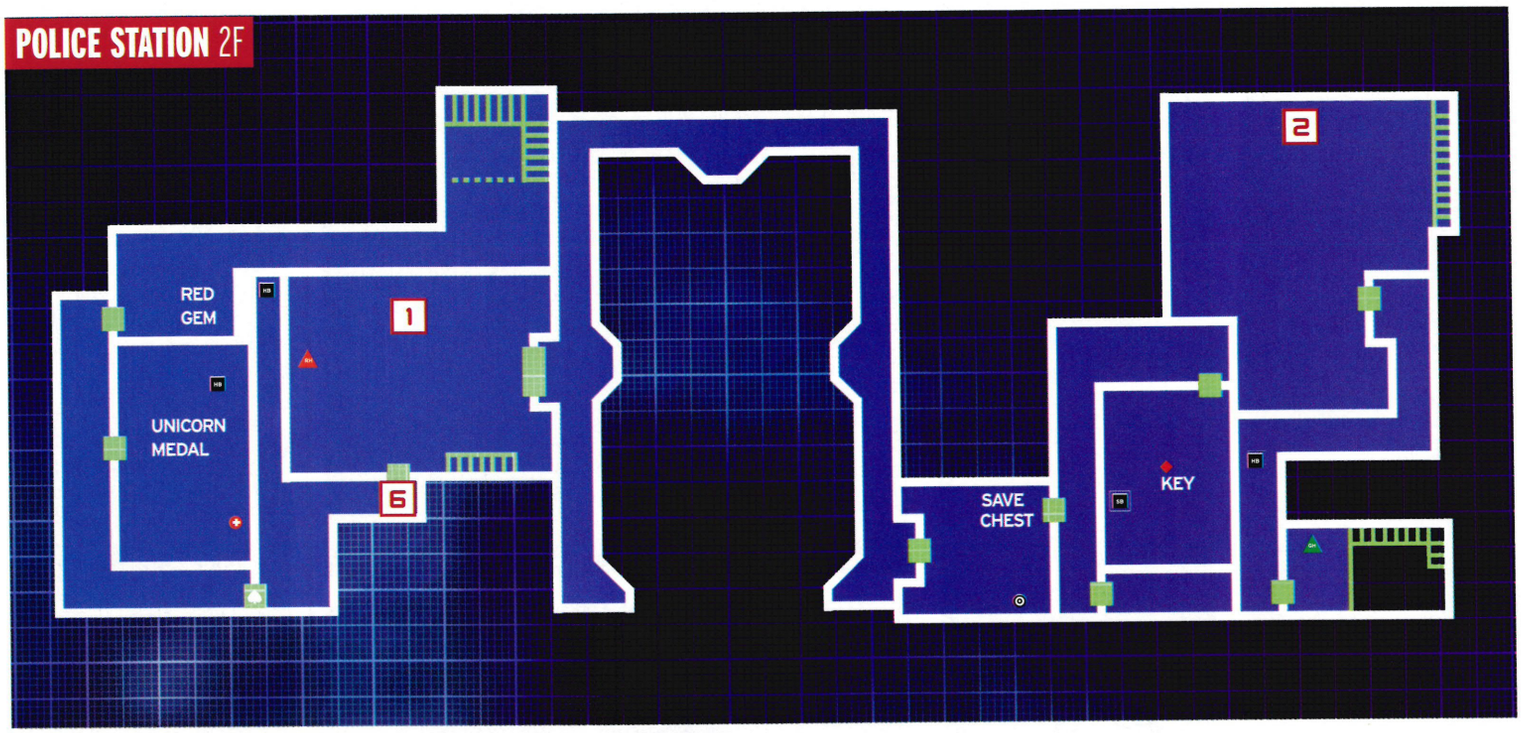
3 Once you've picked up the plug from the shelf at the back (that should be the first item you pick up), a Licker comes bursting through the glass to attack you – a couple of close-range shotgun blasts should see it off.

4 Once you reach the basement of the police station, you must re-route the power to all the key rooms in the lower complex. The first room in the lower floor is home to a simple puzzle – move the five switches in the order Up, Up, Down, Down, Up to turn on the power.

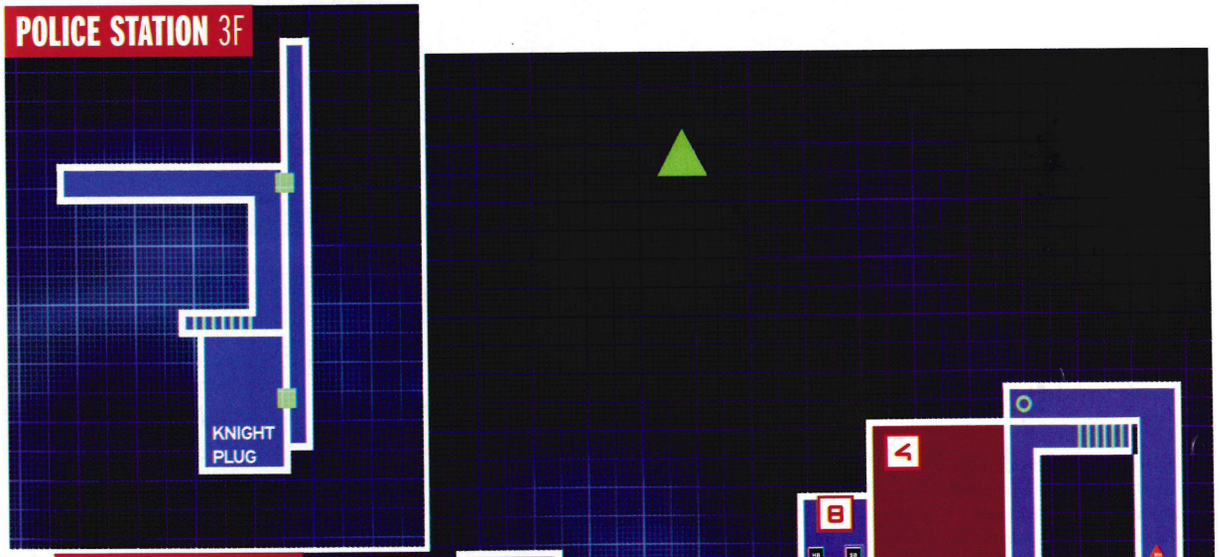
5 The cord you pick up in this room has no real effect on the game, except being able to stop a hoard of zombies crawling into one of the corridors you'll be walking through. Use it on the power supply next to one of the two sets of shutters and you'll seal them off.

6 To get to the handgun attachments, you must get into the small desk drawer that they're hidden in. The small key is the way to do this, but there are only two of them throughout the police station. The other desk drawer holds an F-Aid spray, so try to save it for the handgun parts if you can

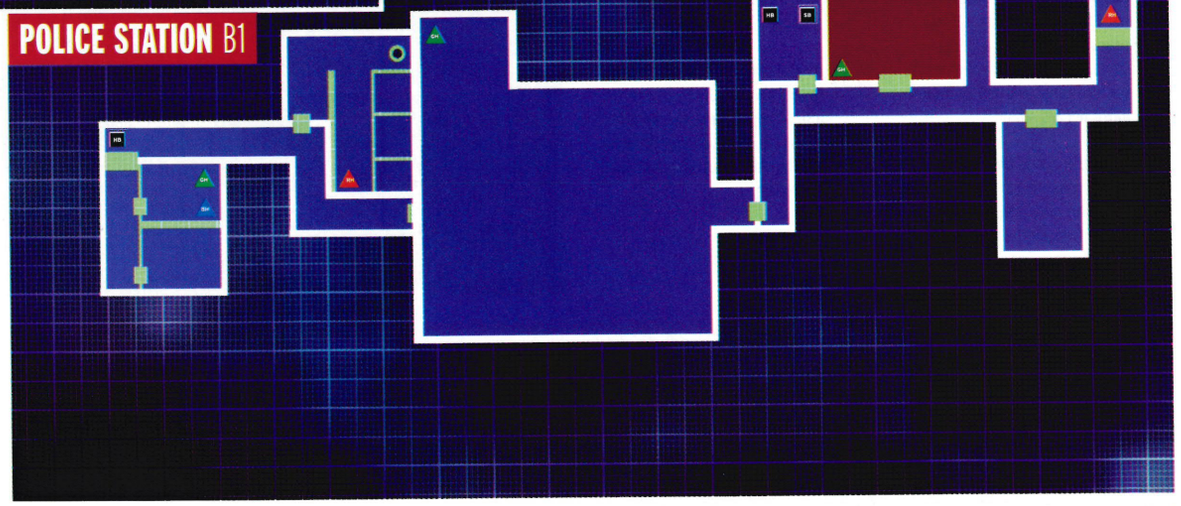
POLICE STATION 2F



POLICE STATION 3F



POLICE STATION B1



7 Once you've picked up the crank, you won't be needing it until you've picked up the final key in the cop shop – the club key. Once you've been in this room and picked up the giant cogwheel, head to the third floor of the station and use the crank to wind down a set of stairs.

8 Once you've unlocked the weapons storage room on the bottom floor of the police station, you're faced with a choice: a locker at the back of the room containing a sub-machine gun, and a backpack which gives you two extra inventory slots. If you leave one of them, it'll be there when you play the second scenario.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL

9 When you reach the sewers, you're given the chance to play as Ada. Once you've got control, you must retrieve the club key from this room. The puzzle is simple: just push the three boxes up against the far wall and fill the room with water to make a makeshift path.

10 The four plugs you get must be put into a slot here to open this door. Be warned, however: there's a hideous mutation waiting for you when you get there. Don't bother trying to kill the little monsters until afterwards; just wiggle left to right really quickly to make them fall off so you can shoot.

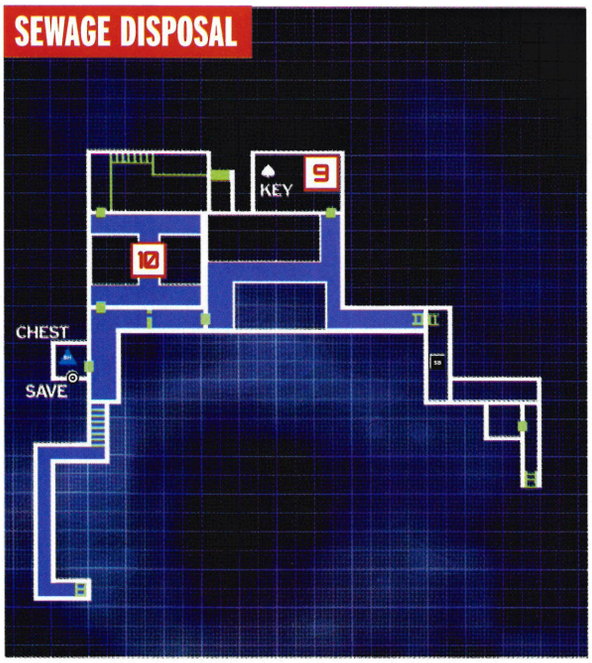
11 This control room holds plenty of booty for you to stock up on. Once you've sorted yourself out with the storage box and saving (if you need to), push the filing cabinet near the lift to reveal a ladder down. Go down, use the lighter on the wall lamps and pick up more much-needed ammo.

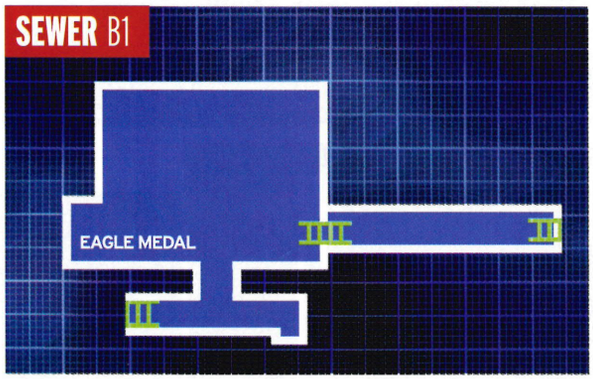
12 This is the second time the valve handle comes in handy. When you get to the water pool, use the handle to lower the bridge so you can get across. Once on the other side, save some time by sending the bridge back up again, because you must cross it later on.

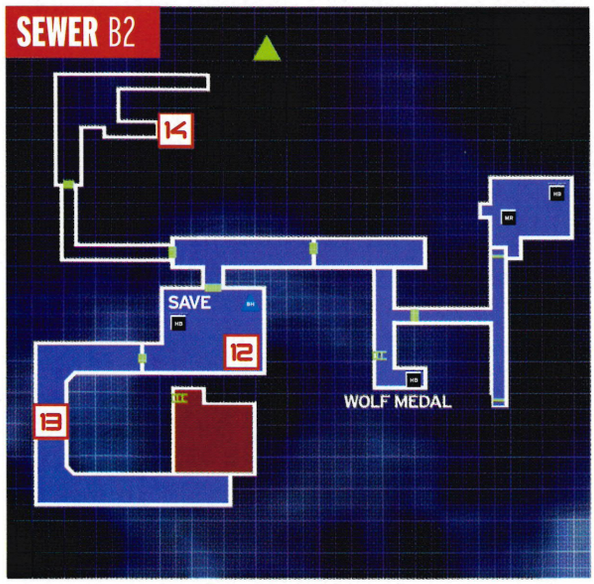
13 The alligator! There's an easy way and a hard way to do this. Here's the easy way: once you have control of Leon, run back along the corridor until you get to the flashing light on the wall. Press it and wait for the gator to scoop up the cylinder that's fallen from the wall before shooting it and watching it explode

14 Don't forget that once the alligator is finished and you want to escape in the cable car, you must run around to the other side of it and switch on the power at the terminal.

15 As you travel towards the factory in the cable car, the Tyrant makes a small appearance. You can tell where his claws will appear by the small trickle of dust that falls from the ceiling.







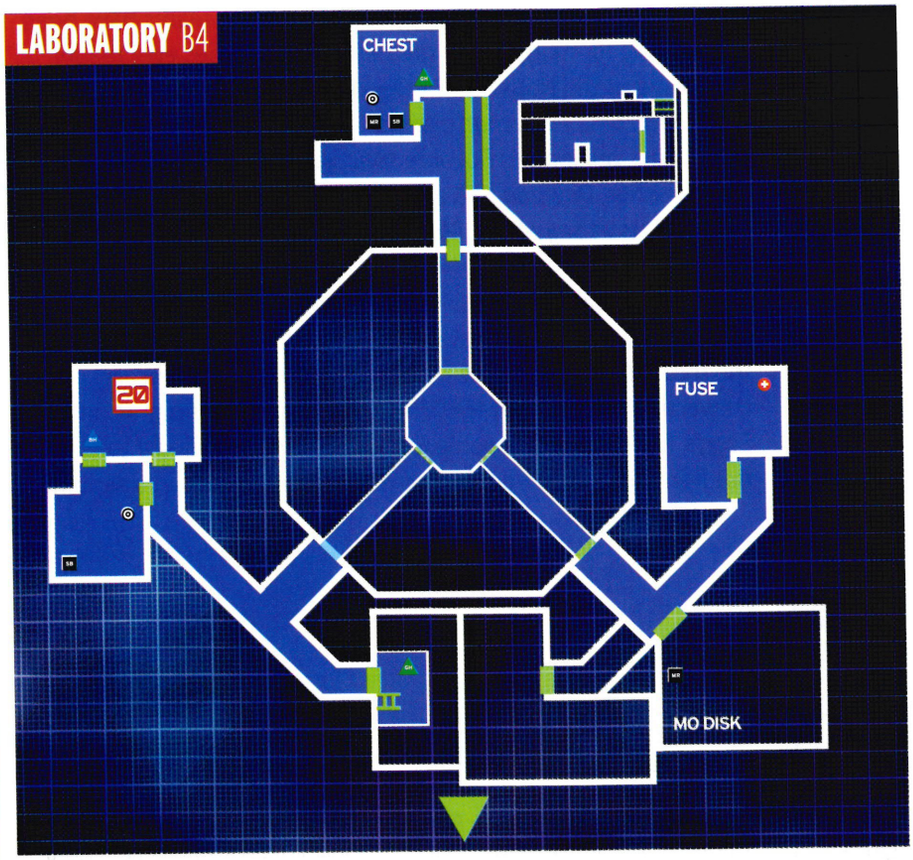
VACANT FACTORY

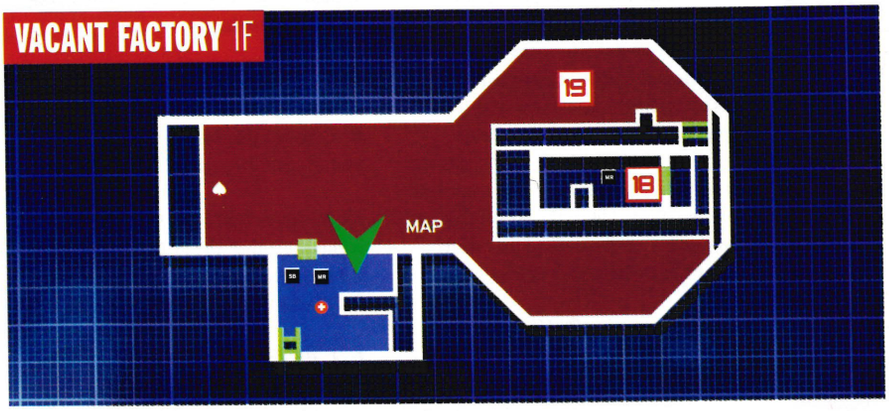
16 As you step from the cable car, look behind you at the small flare cannon that's situated against the wall. Look closely on the floor near that and you should see a small object. This is the weapon box key, and is used on the Laboratory B5 level to open the door with the Magnum parts in it.

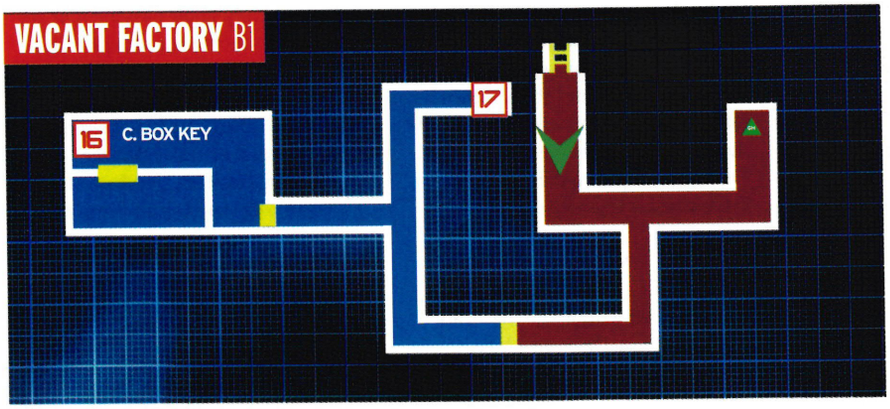
17 Another vital item is hidden here. It's essential that you take this dead-end route first, because the dead guy at the end of the corridor is hiding the shotgun parts. Kill all the zombies, connect the parts to the gun, and watch as zombies lose heads, arms and shoulders in one shot!

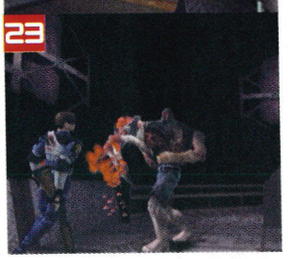
18 You must go inside the small carriage to obtain the control panel key needed to start the lift and take you down to the labs. Stick the key in the panel outside the carriage, turn it on, and the game automatically takes you inside.

19 This is the first time you really get to see the Tyrant. It's easy to beat as it walks quite slowly around the car. All you have to do is fire a couple of shotgun rounds into it, then run back to give yourself some space. You must run past it, but its attacks can be avoided if you're quick.









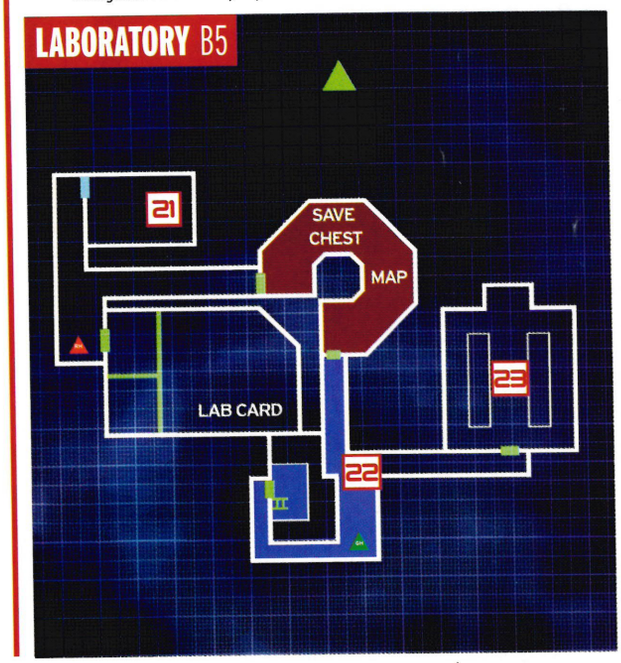
LABORATORY

20 Get into this room, and take the flame-thrower from the cabinet if you really want to; though it's not worth it, to be honest, as it's a tame weapon. Approach the plant in the corner, and use your lighter to burn the spilled oil and kill the tentacles. Now you can crawl through the chute and into the adjoining room.

21 There's no real need to enter this room, as the fingerprinting doesn't come into play until the second scenario. However, if you want to see the giant moth and some maggots crawling all over a computer, then come here. The moth takes only three customised handgun shots to kill anyway

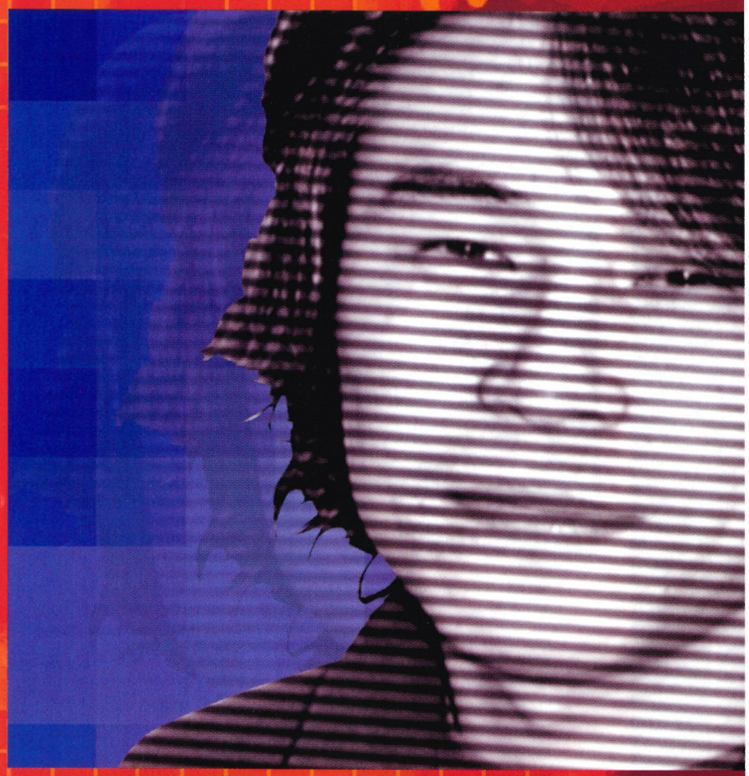
22 Once you've put the MO disc into the terminal here, it's a good idea to run back through some of the rooms on this level and pick up any of the F-Aid sprays or herbs that you've left behind. You need to have as much ammo on you as you can carry, as well as two or three sprays, just in case.

23 The final boss! Don't read on if you don't want to know how to kill it. Firstly, fire four quick shotgun blasts at it, and it then mutates into a new creature. Wait until it's jumped from the crates back down on to the floor, and just stand there and start unloading. You need to use one of the F-Aid sprays and about six to eight Magnum shots (if you have them) to finish it off.



NEXT MONTH...

Now you've cracked the first scenario, the rest of the game should come to you very easily. But just in case, we'll have the second scenarios explained and the secret games exposed, plus a few other titbits you might be interested in.



IN THE HOT SEAT

WITH KENJI KANNO OF AM3

HERE'S WHERE *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* READERS GET TO PUT THEIR QUESTIONS STRAIGHT TO THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BIGGEST DREAMCAST GAMES IN THE WORLD. THIS MONTH IT'S KENJI KANNO, PRODUCER OF *CRAZY TAXI* AT SEGA'S AM3 DEPARTMENT IN JAPAN

COMING UP: START SENDING YOUR QUESTIONS FOR SHINJI MIKAMI, THE MAN BEHIND CAPCOM'S CLASSIC *RESIDENT EVIL* SERIES

Sega Japan's own Research & Development 'AM' teams have been responsible for many of the greatest arcade games ever made. AM1 gave us the *House Of The Dead* games, among others, including *Zombie Revenge* (see page 76 for a review of the Dreamcast version); Yu Suzuki's AM2 gave us *Outrun*, the *Virtua Fighter* series, *Daytona USA* and many more; and AM3 have given us such hits as *Sega Rally*, *Manx TT Superbike* and puzzle classic *Baku Baku*.

Kenji Kanno is a producer at AM3, having previously worked on Sega's hilarious arcade skateboarding title *Top Skater*, as well as the more recent *Crazy Taxi*. He also oversaw the Dreamcast conversion of *Crazy Taxi* (*ODM* #5, 9/10), getting his hands on Sega's 128-bit home console for the first time. He kindly took time out from his busy schedule to answer the questions you sent in.

CRAZY IDEA

What inspired you to come up with the idea for *Crazy Taxi*?

Simon Voce, Preston

KENJI KANNO: We started this project with a concept of making people have the same exciting feeling as when they watch car action movies. I thought it wouldn't be that much fun if we just pursued this concept, so I discussed with my team members what kind of system this game would be enjoyable with. Then one of our team commented jokingly that it might be cool if the player is a taxi driver and drives around the town crazily. I liked the idea of the word 'crazy', so I re-conceptualised the project with the keyword 'taxi' in my head.

REAL LIVES

Did you base the people who live in the cities on anyone you know?

Adam, via email

KK: No, they're not my acquaintances, they're all original. I suggested the sex, age, nationality and fashion keywords to the designer, and he created them. There were some celebrities we loosely based some of them on, but they were just used as motif. You know, to express my ideas just by using fashion keywords is quite difficult.

GETTING A TAXI HOME

Was it difficult to translate the arcade version of *Crazy Taxi* from NAOMI to Dreamcast?

Philip Sawyers, via email

KK: If I were to answer with either yes or no, the answer would have to be yes. The main difficulty is the difference in the capacity of ROM memory. To explain it easily and exaggeratedly, it's like pouring two litres of water into a one-litre bottle. So the biggest problem was finding how to express the data – the course data, mainly – that was used in NAOMI by Dreamcast.

Our main programmer made this possible by reading the data from the GD-ROM in a different way from usual. So we succeeded in pouring two litres of water continuously into a one-litre bottle.

BOXING CRAZY

What are your best scores for the Crazy Box challenges? I want to try to beat you at your own game!

Michael Small, via email

KK: My scores aren't that high. I can't get a higher score than the first-place record that is set as default. If the high-score screen is full of your names, I will admit I lose.

COMPLETELY CRAZY?

Is it possible to ever 'complete' a city by collecting every single passenger, or are there always more people to pick up?

Dan Thornton, Hull

KK: This is what I want to figure out too. Recently, in Japan, *Crazy Taxi* players have become much more skilled than the development team! Our team haven't managed to pick up everyone in a city so far.

CITY PLANNING

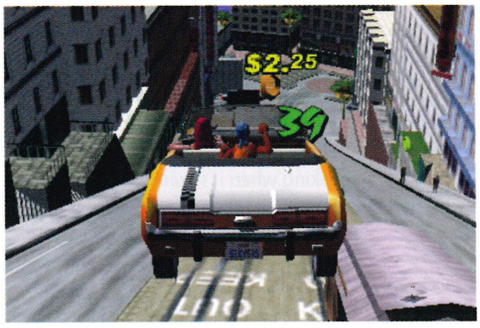
How long did it take to design Dreamcast's original mode city? Was it more difficult to design than the arcade mode city?

Jason French, via email

KK: I think it took almost the same time to design each city, though how we spent the time is different.

For the arcade city, it took long time to decide the basic foundations such as scale, length, width, degrees of the corners etc. Of

△ Kenji Kanno claims never to have met this young lady.



△ Would you give a tip to someone who drove like this?

△ Check out our *Crazy Taxi* review and feature in issue #5 of *Official Dreamcast Magazine* to find out everything you need to know.

course, there were many course designs that were turned down, as we based different ideas around these foundations. We also revised the final course many times.

As for Dreamcast's original course, the concept behind it was 'making the player get lost, and 3D geography', so we came up with lots of designs on paper to make this possible. Even if a design seemed to be good on paper, there were many times when the plan didn't work when we actually started modelling it, because the level of the land didn't match. So we tried many times.

Each course had different difficulties, so I can't compare them easily. The effort we put in to make them fun is the same for both courses.

TOP TIPS

If a taxi driver drove between two juggernauts, would you really give him a 50-cent tip? I know I wouldn't!

'Ian The Bear', via email

KK: Definitely not. I don't want to take those kinds of taxis. I wish I could drive though.

SHE SELLS SEQUELS

Which games have you worked on before *Crazy Taxi*, and are you planning sequels to any of them?

Jody Figgis, via email

KK: I previously produced *Top Skater* [Sega's arcade skateboarding title]. That's a fantastic game too.

As for sequels, I can only say that I might work on them if players want to see them. I, along with my boss, always work with the philosophy to go after something fun and new. Of course, our main concept is to make everybody enjoy themselves, so I would really like to create games that everybody is waiting for.

DREAM MACHINE?

What do you find most impressive about Dreamcast? Is there anything you would change about it if you could?

Rachel Ratzker, via email

KK: I think the most remarkable feature is the network ability. Unfortunately the current game line-up has few full-dressed titles that can present the excitement of online gaming. Though from now on I think more titles featuring online capabilities will be released, and these titles will receive more attention.

I'm also studying how to handle this network ability. I want to create many new projects in this area too.

CULTURE SHOCK

What are the differences you find between Japanese and Western games players? Is it hard to cater for everyone?

Rob Wood, London

KK: Rather than concentrate on overseas markets, I think more of 'universal' games. Of course I care about the taste of graphics and subjects, since people recognise those visually at first glance. I think it's important to be 'wild' to be accepted by overseas gamers. Generally the Japanese care about small things. On the other hand, foreign people are generous, aren't they? "We want to enjoy games without paying attention to details!" Don't you think so? How to enjoy the game is up to the people who play it.

But that wouldn't be accepted by Japanese gamers by itself – we have to include a scoring system to let people improve their gaming skill by trying to get the highest scores. I think overseas gamers enjoy doing this as well, but in fact the level of their skill is completely different. Japanese people are really good at games.

To tell the truth, making a game that everybody enjoys is very, very difficult. But I would like to continue trying to overcome this challenge from now on.

> "HOW TO ENJOY THE GAME IS UP TO THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY IT"

MOST WANTED

Which games are you most looking forward to this year?

Sam Newton, via email

KK: It's been already released in Japan, but I think *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* is fantastic [see page 60 for more info]. Dreamcast has enabled the developers to create a believable universe within the game. I'm also interested in *Tomb Raider* [see page 8] on Dreamcast. I think it will be hot!

ARE ARCADES DEAD?

With the high quality of arcade conversions today, do you worry that it could mean the end of arcade centres?

Daniel Anderson, via email

KK: The answeris definitely no. I don't think that people are playing games on the quality of graphics. I think the shrinking of the arcade market is the result of game companies starting to create games that can be on home consoles too. The best feature of arcade games is that you can face other players. Games like *Crazy Taxi* and *Top Skater* were based on the concept of showing your cool playing ability to other players. I hope that some kind of communication will happen spontaneously among the audience around the game. Conversation like: "Did you see that?" "Well, I can play much better though!" for example.

I think a game is just a tool for playing. The important thing is how you can spend an enjoyable time through games. So if playing arcade games is a good opportunity to make friends with other players, I'm very happy about that too. That should increase the arcade market.

TALK TO MR RESIDENT EVIL

If you've got any burning questions you want us to put straight to Shinji Mikami, producer of Capcom's *Resident Evil 2* and up-and-coming *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, get them in to us as quickly as possible and we'll pass them on. Just think: you get to ask the creator of one of gaming's most famous series just one question. What have you always wanted to know? Have a serious think about it, rather than just asking "When is *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* coming out, and how much will it cost?" Only the most interesting questions will be answered by the man himself.

And don't forget, next month we'll be printing the responses to the questions you put to the producer of Infogrames' *V-Rally 2: Millennium Edition*.

Email your questions to questions@dreamcastmag.co.uk, or send them to Capcom in the Hot Seat, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

IN THE HOT SEAT WITH SEGA

EVERY MONTH WE GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK DIRECTLY TO SEGA. SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS AND WE'LL PUT THEM TO THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE WORLD'S GREATEST CONSOLE

CALL SEGA

Sega have set up three phone line services to cover all your Dreamcast queries:

CONSUMER SERVICE LINE
08456 090090
Call this number if you have a technical problem with your console, or questions about when and where you can buy products.
Cost: local call rates.

INTERNET SUPPORT LINE
09066 544544
For questions about DC's online facilities, including the Dreamkey software and connection problems.
Cost: 60p per minute.

HINTS & TIPS LINE
09067 532222
Hints, tips and solutions for any of Sega's Dreamcast titles.
Cost: 75p per minute.

If you're under 18, ask permission from whoever pays the phone bill before calling, or you'll be for it.

ITCHY AND SCRATCHY

Is it me, or are the Dreamcast GD-ROMs seriously sensitive? Out of my seven games, two have had tiny scratches on them which caused the game not to work. Why is this?

Al Gangster, via email

Dreamcast GD-ROMs need to be handled with care. They can be more sensitive to scratches than music CDs, for example, as they're high-density discs. This means that a scratch on a GD-ROM could affect more data than the same scratch on a CD. Keep your discs in their box and follow the handling instructions in the manual and you shouldn't have any problems.

STOP THE SHOP?

I originally bought a Dreamcast as I thought it would be possible to do supermarket shopping on it. But when I try sites like Iceland and Tesco they don't work. They mention that they work using Java – is this the problem?

Gary Millett, via email

Dreamkey 1.0 supports Javascript, but not Java. Java can be used for things like opening new windows, which Dreamcast doesn't do. This may cause problems on some sites, but the majority of them will work fine.

BUTTON BLUES

My control pad seems to be suffering from Manky Button Syndrome. My B button is extremely loose, and it's hard to tell whether I've pressed it. With the others, you can feel a definite click when pressed. I can't be bothered buying a new one, so what can I do?

Dom, via email

The official Dreamcast controller comes with a 90-day warranty. If a fault develops within that time you can take it back to the shop you got it from, along with your proof of purchase, and get a replacement. Alternatively, call our Customer Services Centre on 08456 090 090 (local rates).

WHERE'S THE SWIRL?

What are the chances of seeing some Sony-style merchandise featuring the blue swirl and Dreamcast imagery?

Rob Smyth, via email

We're developing a range of official Dreamcast merchandise right now. Keep an eye on Dreamarena, where you'll be able to buy this exclusive merchandise from our online shop.

BEEP BEEP

Every time I turn off my Dreamcast with my VM inserted I get a bleep sound. The time and date reset on the VM, but the saved data is okay. Is there a fault with my DC or VM?

Jeffrey Astbury, via email

The date and time on the VM should not reset when you switch off your Dreamcast. Try checking the battery. If that doesn't work then you may have a fault.

FILTER PROBLEMS

Last issue you recommended that we check the Dreamarena help section for advice on turning off the filter. I followed the instructions, but when I came to look for the filter it wasn't there. I tried three times to find it but couldn't. Where is the little check box?

Ian Roberts, via email

You must have entered your age as under 18 in the user details; you must be over 18 to access this feature. If you are under 18, then shame on you for trying to switch off the filter. You're a very naughty boy!

FUZZY LOGIC

I've had my dreamcast for a month, and find that on some sites I go to the smaller writing is a bit fuzzy and blurred. Is this because I'm using a TV? If so, is there any way I can use a monitor, and would this help?

Fast Eddy, via email

TVs run at a lower resolution that most PC monitors, so you may find it difficult to read websites which use very small text. Using your right trigger, you can select the zoom option to double the size of the picture on your TV screen. You can also improve the picture quality dramatically by using a Dreamcast SCART Cable. If your TV has got a SCART, plug into the back of it. I strongly recommend spending the £14.99 – the results are impressive.

WRITE TO SEGA

Want to get something off your chest or get the official response to a query that's been bothering you for ages? What are you waiting for, then? Get writing. Address your letters to:

Sega Q&A, ODM, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, email us at sega@dreamcastmag.co.uk. We're waiting to hear from you.

?DC BOUND? MAKEN X

Since we featured *Maken X* in our Blood issue, plenty of you have been asking when it's going to get a European release date. Well, we've got some good news for you.

WHAT IS IT?

Created by Japanese developer Atlus, *Maken X* is a first-person shooter set in a stunning-looking futuristic world. You play Kei Kanazawa, a young schoolgirl who must rescue her scientist father from the ugly demon that's kidnapped him. A mysterious sword called the Maken also features heavily.

Maybe it would be more accurate to call the game a first-person slasher, as much of the fighting is at close quarters with the Maken. The game features an innovative battle system where you lock on to single enemies and then whizz around them lashing out with attacks. There are also a few puzzles, and some beautiful cut-scenes.

The game also reportedly makes use of the new gaming trend for 'bodyjacking', where you can take possession of other characters' bodies and fight as them (*The Nomad Soul* and *Messiah* are other examples of where this is been used). The game moves at a smooth 50/60 frames per second throughout, and is said to really tingle with gamers' emotions.

Admittedly it has some Japanese nuances that may go over the heads of many European gamers, but then again it's original games like *Maken X* that many of you have been crying out for.

COMING TO DC?

Well, *Maken X* is already out in Japan, and a Western release is pretty certain. In the US it's pencilled in for late March, but here in Europe we'll have to wait a bit longer. "There isn't a definite release date," says Sega's Mark Hartley, "but we're probably looking at this summer."

We know there are a lot of first-person shooter fans out there, so it's a fair bet that Sega will be eager to get *Maken X* on to the shelves as soon as possible.

CHATBACK

DON'T AGREE WITH SOME OF OUR REVIEWS? THEN THIS IS THE PLACE TO HANG OUT. SEND US YOUR VIEWS - WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. REALLY WE WOULD

△ ***Virtua Striker 2*: some love it, some hate it. Which side are *you* on?**

VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1

REVIEWED: *ODM* #4, 7/10

WHAT WE SAID: "It's flawed, it's weird, it's rubbish on your own, but give it time and you'll start to understand what it's about."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

"*Virtua Striker 2* is not worthy of the machine it graces. How could you give this game seven out of ten? It's definitely a case of try before you buy. Don't lose your senses and get sucked in by the fab graphics. Every time I play it I come away with a sense of disbelief. Was it actually play-tested? Computer teams possess Pele-like skills and score with almost every cross into the box; you can't run with the ball for more than two seconds… The list goes on!"

Mark Holroyd, via email

"I recently bought *Virtua Striker 2*, and the graphics are much better than any other footie game I've seen. The players' movements are totally realistic. This game is just pure class."

Joseph Woodward, via email

COMMENT: Okay, I think we've well and truly established, both in the review and in the subsequent reader comments, that *Virtua Striker 2* is a game you either love or hate. The one sentence in the above that we'd *all* agree on, I think, is: "It's definitely a case of try before you buy."

FIGHTING FORCE 2

REVIEWED: *ODM* #4, 3/10

WHAT WE SAID: "A real disappointment, particularly given Core's high-quality track record in this genre."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

"I read your review of *Fighting Force 2*, and thought it was a bit harsh considering you'd hyped it up so much in your preview article. One thing I would like to say is that it's a good game – maybe not brill, but easy to pick up and relatively hard to put down. Plus the graphics are brill!"

Mat Hope, via email

COMMENT: Sorry, we're really not into *Fighting Force 2* at all. Apologies to readers if our preview sounded over-enthusiastic in retrospect. Fact is, we expected better from Core Design.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

REVIEWED: *ODM* #2, 8/10

WHAT WE SAID: "Doesn't have the 128-bit flashiness we're used to, but it's got some of the most finely tuned gameplay ever."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

"I just bought your March issue (*ODM* #5) to play the demo of *Street Fighter Alpha 3*. I played it and was nearly sick! What the hell were Capcom thinking? They make a 128-bit machine look worse than the *Street Fighter* games on SNES! They really didn't make use of Dreamcast's power. Look at *Soul Calibur* – which one do you prefer? Capcom should know by now that 2D beat 'em ups are a thing of the past. *Street Fighter Alpha 3* has dented Dreamcast's reputation and I am really disappointed".

Mark Hill, via email

COMMENT: "Worse" than the SNES *Street Fighter* games? Er, we don't think so, somehow! As we clearly stated in the review, *SFA3* isn't a true next-generation game in terms of presentation, but it packs a mean punch in terms of gameplay.

CRAZY TAXI

REVIEWED: *ODM* #5, 9/10

WHAT WE SAID: "A game that will impress anyone who sees its incredible visuals. And one that anyone can get into."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

"On Sunday 6 February I was in my local arcade and they'd just got *Crazy Taxi* in. 'Great,' I thought. About 30 – maybe 45 – minutes later I'd spent more than £5 on it. It was bloody worth it though! I can't wait for it to hit DC. I'm about to go down and reserve it at EB now. Excellent job, Sega!"

Mark Malekpour, via email

COMMENT: We guess that you – and several thousand others – have got the Dreamcast edition by now. If you can put it down for five minutes, please do let us know what you think of the conversion. We'll print the best of the comments next issue.

△ ***Crazy Taxi*: it's on the streets and, yes, you'd be crazy to miss it.**

△ ***WWF Attitude*: need a wrestling fix? Try Channel 4 on Sunday afternoons instead.**

WWF ATTITUDE

REVIEWED: *ODM* #2, 3/10

WHAT WE SAID: "Hampered by unresponsive controls and general sluggishness."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

"I need to say that the guy who wrote in complaining about your *WWF Attitude* review was not 'a lone voice of support'. It is not a 'terrible game'. Tell me why the PlayStation and N64 reviews got higher scores than the Dreamcast version, when it was the best of the formats?

It was just before Christmas when I saw your ridiculous review. I ignored it and went out and bought the game anyway. With a four-player mode, this game beats *Ready 2 Rumble* (which I took back) in every sense. Why was your review so wrong?"

Paul Wilson, Lockerbie

COMMENT: Our review wasn't 'wrong'. Your opinion doesn't match ours, but that's something entirely different. There are several WWF fans on *ODM*, but no fans of *WWF Attitude*. It's a sloppy, rushed conversion. But that's just our opinion.

We want to hear from you. Send your comments to: **Chatback, Official Dreamcast Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.** Alternatively, email them to: letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk with 'Chatback' in the subject line.

ARE YOU UP TO IT?

Prove your worth by coming top of one of our challenges and you could win a fantastic Dreamcast prize.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

To enter any of the following challenges, just play the given game and have a camera at the ready. When you get your score, quickly take a shot of the screen. then post the photograph, along with your name, address and score to: High Scores, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

SEGA RALLY 2

ARCADE MODE, BEST TIME, ANY CAR

Race through Arcade mode and take a photo of your best time. If you're quick enough you'll soon be playing a free copy of *Crazy Taxi*.

VIRTUA STRIKER 2

HIGHEST SCORING GOAL

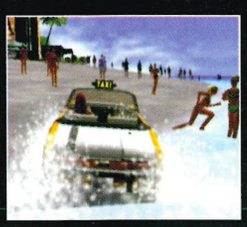
Get your boots on for this challenge. What you need to do is score the best goal possible and take a photo of the score to prove your worth.

RE-VOLT

FASTEST TIME, TOYS IN THE HOOD COURSE

Rack up the best time possible on this course any way you can. Use any car you like – the codes are printed in vibe tips over there on the opposite page.

THE PRIZE



• Come out on top in any of this month's challenges and you'll win a copy of Sega's fantastic *Crazy Taxi*.

SALVATION IS AT HAND WITH TIPS Q&A

STUCK ON A GAME? NEED SOME HELP? FRET NOT, WE'RE HERE TO ANSWER ALL YOUR GAMING QUERIES

MARVEL VS CAPCOM

I heard that there are six hidden characters in *Marvel vs Capcom*. How do I unlock them ?

Mark Reed, via email

To save one of these characters to your VM unit you must get to battle seven without losing a character, and using as many supers, crossovers etc to win the round. Who you get depends on what finishes you do. Or you could use one of the codes over there in Your Tips, sent in by John Burgess.

△ ***Ready 2 Rumble*: Damien Black is a playable character if you use these tricks.**

READY 2 RUMBLE

How do I get the hidden players in *Ready 2 Rumble*? I've tried everything. Please help me before I smash it up and throw it out the frigging window.

Danny Forrest, via email

Woah! Calm down, sport. Breaking things won't help. Simply name a gym Mosma! or Pod 5! to enable you to pick any boxer.

SONIC ADVENTURE

I'm having trouble getting all the emblems in *Sonic Adventure* – the time limits on Sonic's levels are too tight. Are there any short cuts or tips to speed up my times? Also, is it true that you can play as a metallic Sonic?

James Waldron, via email

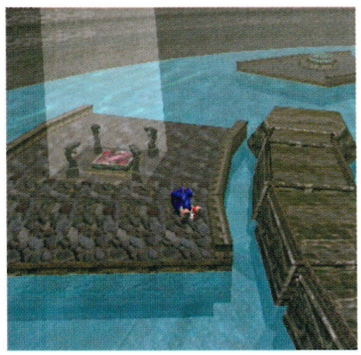
To get better times on some *Sonic* levels, use the checkpoints. Get the best possible time up to the first checkpoint, die, then charge up and use your spin as you start to get a faster time over the next section of the course.

The metallic sonic you refer to is Super Sonic. You unlock him when you finish the game with all the other characters.

On the Lost World level of *Sonic*, I can't seem to find the switches in the room with the stone snake. Can you give me some pointers?

IDX, via email

Ride the snake round to the first platform, jump over the spikes and up the moving platforms to a switch. Leap to the next platform and press the switch. Then ride the snake to the next switch, up the moving platforms to the next one. Ride the snake past the exit to the switch, then back to the door.



△ ***Sonic Adventure*: finish the Lost World stage with ease by riding the snake.**

Could you tell me where to find the ice stone in *Sonic Adventure*? I've looked all over the place but without much luck.

Daniel Meacoe, via email

Down an alley in Station Square near the casino. Now take the train to Mystic ruin, where you need the crystal.

△ ***Soul Calibur*: getting hold of Inferno takes a bit of effort.**

SOUL CALIBUR

I'm having trouble attaining Edge Master and Inferno. Could you point me in the right direction?

John Hempson, via email

Edge Master is unlocked when you complete the game with all the characters. Inferno is slightly harder to get: you must complete the game in Xiangua's third costume.

UEFA STRIKER

In certificate mode, I can't get the UEFA coach award. Can you help me?

Ann Heggie, via email

It's just a matter of practice, really. However, if it drives you mad, calm down and instead press Up, Up, Right, Right, Y,Y,Y at the competition select screen.

PHONE FOR HELP

Having trouble with a game and can't wait to see a reply in these pages? Then you need to check out...

THE OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE TIPS HELPLINE ON 09064 664477

OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, 8AM-11PM

On the rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team who guarantee to find you an answer within 24 hours. Sorted.

• Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In the case of problems, please call Customer Services on 01753 755937.

CONTACT INFO

We want to help you with your gaming problems. Write to us at: Tips, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Or email us at tips@dreamcastmag.co.uk

CHEAT ZONE

WHO SAYS CHEATS NEVER PROSPER? NOT US, BECAUSE WITH THIS LOT YOU CAN WIN ON THE TOUGHEST GAME

DYNAMITE COP

Play as the Monkey

Successfully complete missions 4, 5 and 6 to unlock the monkey.

VIRTUA STRIKER 2

Hidden teams

Play as Yukichan: in Arcade mode, highlight Yugoslavia, USA, Korea and Italy, pressing start on each to make the Yukichan logo appear.

Play as MVP Royal Genki: highlight Yukichan hold start and press A.

Play as FC SEGA: highlight France, Columbia, Spain, England, Germany and Argentina, pressing start on each.

△ *Shadow Man*: **find the hidden areas to open up a bunch of cheats.**

SHADOW MAN

All cheats

To unlock the cheats in *Shadow Man* you must locate hidden areas where you're awarded them.

0. Disco – SCHISM CHAMBERS

Sector 11. From the control room, drop down the big shaft containing spinning blades – you'll get it as you fall.

1. Flame On – PRISON

In a small room near the fat serial killer (Video Nasty).

2. Pea Soup – GAD TEMPLE #1

All the way through the flambeau maze, just before you drop back into the big chamber containing the ziggurat switch.

3. Invisible Man – LONDON UNDERGROUND

Follow the path to find this cheat inside the women's toilets.

4. Play as Nettie – TENEMENT

On the top floor, after using the lift across the two-block wide collapsing floor at the corner of the corridor

5. Play as Duppie – FOGOMETERS

In the first area of the level, jump from the nearby platform on to the curved pipe you see there.

6. Play as Deadwing – PRISON

Search the padded maximum security cells – you'll come across it in one on the lower floor.

7. Play as Dog – ASYLUM GATEWAY

Follow the pipe to the left, and climb on the roof beams at the far end of one of the rooms containing a Govi.

8. Big Head Mode – PLAYROOMS

Jump on the snooker table in one of the locked playrooms you come across on the way to free the Trueform.

9. Comedy Shoes- DEADSIDE MARROW GATES

Find this cheat in front of the Shadow Level 10 Coffin Gate that you get the Violator from.

10. Shotgun Head Mode- GAD TEMPLE #2

Find this in the dark maze with flambeau doors – smack bang in the centre of the maze on the lower floor.

11. Deadside Shotguns – TEMPLE OF LIFE

The fourth-from-left altar in the room where you find the Baton holds this cheat.

△ *Re-Volt*: **access tracks and cars, including a few weird ones.**

RE-VOLT

Unlock all the hidden vehicles and tracks in *Re-Volt* by using these cheat codes:

All cars

Enter your name as CARTOON to unlock all the cars, including some wacky hidden ones.

All tracks

Enter your name as TRACTION for access to all levels.

EXPENDABLE

Cheat codes, additional lives

Press A, B, X, Y, L, R, Up, Down, Left, Right during game.

First-person perspective

Press L, Left, R, Right, X (x2), Down (x2), R, L during game.

God mode

Press Up, Down, Left, Right, L, R, Left, Right, Start during game.

EVOLUTION

+72 attack booster

If you pay off your debt with Nina, she gives you a +72 attack booster. The easiest way to do this is to sell the healing gold you come across near the end of the game.

Hidden items

As Mag, check the scrub outside his house to find the Red Viper item. To find a hidden fireball, wait until you get a lecture from Gre – don't recruit him, just go upstairs and check the dresser.

CLASSIC CORNER

SOME ALL-TIME GREAT CHEATS FOR THOSE OLDER TITLES

BLUE STINGER

Easy ID and bait key

At Rats bar, push the wine rack towards Rat to get the ID and The Drivers Licence without the bait shop key.

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

Free play

To Access the free play in the options menu, beat the Boss mode with all stars. Free play will be available in the continue settings.

All items in Original mode

For all items, successfully complete the training mode on all difficulty settings.

SEGA RALLY 2

All cars and years

To unlock all cars, enter the following cheat using the D-pad on the title screen: Up, Up, Down, A, A, Right trigger, B, B, Down.

To unlock all Years in the 10-year mode, enter the following cheat on the D-pad on the title screen: Down, Down, Up, B, B, Left trigger A, A, B.

TRICKSTYLE

All cheats

Enter the following codes at the enter password screen

TRAVOLTA – unlimited special moves

CITYBEACONS – unlock everything

INFLATEDEGO – big head mode

IWISH – unlimited time

TEAROUND - always win, even if you are last

YOUR TIPS

KNOW ANY GOOD TIPS OR SECRETS NO-ONE ELSE DOES? THEN SEND THEM TO US. IF WE PRINT THEM YOU COULD WIN A PRIZE, WHICH THIS MONTH IS A COPY OF ACCLAIM'S *TEE OFF*

SONIC ADVENTURE

WINNER

Here's a cheat to help with the chao adventure. Start up the adventure on the VM unit. When your chao reaches the first signpost, select the direction you want to go in. As soon as he begins to nod, press the mode button twice to reach the next signpost. Repeat to finish the adventure easily.

Ryan Jones, Cardiff

SEGA RALLY 2

WINNER

On the Arcade Riviera stage, look out for two red cones on the left just before the last turn. Knock them down, turn around and watch for a new opening on the right containing the cone challenge.

Alex Constance, via email

MARVEL VS CAPCOM

Enter these codes on your D-pad.

Gold WarMachine: highlight Zangief, then press L (2), D (2), R (2), D(2), L (2), U (4), R (2), L (2), D (4), R (2), U (2), L (2), D (2), R (2), U (5).

Hyper Venom: highlight Chun-Li and press R, D (4), L,U (4), R (2), D (2), L (2), D (2), R (2), U (4), L (2), U. Lilith: highlight Zangief, then press L (2), D (2), R (2), U (2), D (4), L (2), U (4), R, L, D (4), R (2), U (4), L (2), D (4), R, D. Orange Hulk:

△ **Play the hidden cone challenge in *Sega Rally 2*.**

highlight Chun-Li then press R (2), D (2), L (2), R (2), D (2), L (2), U (4) , D (2), R (2), U (2), D (4), U(4), L, U. Roll: highlight Zangief, then press L(2), D(2), R(2), D(2), L(2), U, R, U(2), R(2). Shadow Lady: highlight Morrigan, then press U, R (2) , D(4), L(2), U(4), R(2), L(2), D(2), R(2), D(2), L(2), U(2), R(2), U(2), L(2), D(5).

John Burgess, via email

△ ED MORRIS, 32, SENIOR CREATIVE AT ADVERTISING AGENCY BBH
Has been in the advertising industry for the past eight years. With James (see far right), he's worked on ad campaigns such as One 2 One, Levi's and more.

△ STEPHEN OBENEY, 21, BAKER/GATECRASHER
A regular *ODM* reader, Steve's been hooked on Sega since '91, and, gawd bless 'im, he was so eager to be involved in this discussion that he turned up without an invite. Don't get any ideas though, readers!

△ ALISON TURNER, 30, EUROPEAN PRODUCT MANAGER - ADVERTISING AT SEGA EUROPE
With eight years of experience in the games industry under her belt, she's played a key role in the successful launch of Dreamcast.

YOU'VE BEEN AD

GAMES AND CONSOLE ADVERTISING IS BIG BUSINESS, BUT IS IT ANY GOOD? WE BROUGHT TOGETHER A HANDFUL OF EXPERTS TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF ADS IN MAGAZINES AND ON TV

ODM: Which are some of the earliest game and console ads you can remember?

MAT: I remember the press ad for the Atari VCS. It was on the back page of a magazine and featured 99 game screenshots. It was different because all the other games systems at the time just had variants on the original *Pong* game in black and white, whereas the VCS advert showed that the console offered 99 games and colour graphics!

STEVE: I remember things like *Sonic The Hedgehog* and the *Super Mario Brothers*.

ALISON: My earliest recollection is the Sega Pirate TV campaign. I remember watching it and thinking it was really cool.

DAN: Yeah, Sega's Pirate TV is the

△ HELEN ARNOLD, 24, EUROPEAN ADVERTISING MANAGER AT SEGA EUROPE

Started out in account management at the big ad agency M&C Saatchi before landing her plum role at Sega.

△ JAMES SINCLAIR, 35, SENIOR WRITER AT ADVERTISING AGENCY BBH

Has been writing ads for the last ten years. He and Ed (see left) came up with the superb PlayStation ad 'Double Life', which featured a variety of gamers talking to camera about destroying huge armies etc in their spare time.

one that I remember. It was a big brand campaign which was trying to say something more than just what the product was capable of. It was different for the time.

ODM: How have ads changed over the last five to ten years?

STEVE: They're more surreal; they're not about the product. They make you sit up and go: "What's that all about?"

HELEN: Over the last six years we've gone from making heroes of the characters in the games to making heroes of the people who play them.

DAN: It's moving towards creating something more than just a product. You've got proper brands now, where there weren't before. We've got a simple formula for what a brand is: product plus personality. Prior to Sega Pirate TV it was all just about the product. Now games manufacturers have realised that to create something that's bigger than the product is hugely valuable, because it will last way beyond the lifespan of a particular product.

ODM: How much do you think the games industry's image has changed – if at all – in the eyes of the mainstream consumer because of advertising?

ED: When we were working on the PlayStation campaign, we weren't aiming to compete with other videogame systems, we wanted to compete with TVs, stereos and videos. We wanted to make a product. That's the perception we want for the PlayStation in five years' time. It's like when you were a kid and went round to a mate's house and the family didn't have a TV – you thought they were weird. That's what we want for the PlayStation in ten years time – that you'll be seen as being a bit odd if you don't have one.

ALISON: Gaming is also changing from being an insular, sad thing which you do by yourself, to becoming more and more a part of fashion, music and things likes that.

MAT: Yeah, but it's still sad! If your mate says he isn't going to the pub tonight because he's playing *Soul Calibur*, then he's sad!

[*Room erupts with laughter.*]

ALISON: I don't believe doing that is sad any more!

[*Howls of disagreement. And agreement.*]

THE NEXT LEVEL

ODM: Order! So how difficult is it to advertise to both the 'hardcore' gamer and the casual, 'mainstream' gamer?

DAN: In this industry you're surrounded by core gamers, and you've got to be able to break away from that; you've got to appeal to a broader market. Because advertising has such a broad reach, you inevitably use that to attract the mainstream. For the core gamer there are other things, like your own magazine, to keep them enthused. After all, there's not much that an ad can tell a core gamer which they don't already know. They're very much more 'rational product focused', therefore you have to look at the bigger picture, and advertising has to go mainstream to ▷

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN TRENT

△ MAT TOOR, "BETWEEN 25 & 34", ONLINE EDITOR OF *O* MAGAZINE
Has worked in publishing for years now, including a stint at Marketing Weekly and a position at Sony helping promote PlayStation.

△ DAN IZBICKI, 29, SENIOR PLANNER AT ADVERTISING AGENCY WRCS
Has beein in the business for five years. Works on the Dreamcast account, and has also worked on campaigns for Orange, First Direct, Carling and Habitat.

▷ take the market to the next level.

ALISON: And it's not just a core gamer's product any more – there's the Internet and email access as well. We're not just talking about selling to gamers any more.

ED: The perception of the whole industry has changed – not so much in broadening the market in terms of age, but in terms of the multiplaying aspect. Dreamcast is not just a box that sits in your room which you play on with your mates when you're stoned and pissed. It really is something else. It's become part of this whole Internet communications thing – welcoming people to another world.

ODM: How successful has the Dreamcast campaign been so far in getting this and other messages across?

JAMES: The concept is brilliant, but I don't think the ads are right, myself. You're selling an incredible fantasy about being able to communicate and play with people around the world, and that doesn't come across from what I've seen. You just don't get that size or breadth.

ED: The thinking and strategy behind it is absolutely right; we're probably talking about specific execution, which is easy to be critical of.

MAT: I think the ads are designed to be used in loads of different countries, they're not particularly UK-specific culturally. It looks like the ad could be shown in Italy just as well as being shown down the road. The danger is that when you stretch yourself thin like that you'll only reach the lowest common denominator.

JAMES: When you see three guys in a hairdresser's competing, that really isn't anything to do with one guy on one side of the world playing against another guy on the opposite side of the planet. Or even a guy down the road.

HELEN: You say that the strategy is bang-on, but you want something more about the 'whole of the world' concept. Well, indeed the strategy is bang-on, because we're talking about people playing together, and the message is that simple at this stage.

What we decided when we did our strategy plan was that there was no point in trying to over-complicate the issue, because we're going from a games console to a box which looks just like your old console, but offers Net access, email and [eventually] online gaming as well. What the campaign does do is say that we can play together – that's the very simple message. You can't throw a million and one messages at a consumer who thinks that games consoles do only one thing. We're saying that it now does another thing – it has a social aspect to it. You then build on that. The 'Up To Six Billion Players' ties in to: 'We all play games, why don't we play them together?' That's the playing side to it. Then you go beyond that and say: 'Now we're going to talk about interactive entertainment,' and that's where the picture gets bigger. But you have to start with a really simple message about playing together. That's what we have achieved.

ALISON: If we're talking about success in terms of sales though, we reached a certain level of sales in four weeks that took PlayStation something like 52 weeks to achieve. We're doing *something* right!

ODM: What about from the punter's point of view, Steve?

STEVE: I liked the Robbie Williams soundtrack on that initial hairdresser ad. I noticed, though, that in the build-up to Christmas I didn't see that many adverts. I only saw the *Soul Calibur* one, which focused on the chat room aspect of DC with someone typing stuff in. You've got *Soul Calibur*, which to date is the best DC game that's been released, but the ad didn't make me want to go out and buy the game or the console. It was the chat room screen, and that was it. A shot from the game would have been good. Recently it's just been down to magazines and shop displays to say: "Look, this is Dreamcast and this is what it does!" But you need something bigger, like TV, cinema and billboard advertising.

ALISON: I take your point on

"THE CHALLENGE FOR THIS INDUSTRY ISN'T THE ADVERTISING, IT'S CREATING GAMES THAT TAKE THE INDUSTRY TO A NEW LEVEL"
– DAN IZBICKI

board, and with the *Virtua Striker* TV ad which has just gone out we managed to include 25 seconds of footage.

SELLING THE DREAM

ODM: What do people want to see happen next with Dreamcast's advertising?

STEVE: It needs to be a lot more in-your-face and a lot more surreal, like Sony used to be. And again, more games footage! I remember in the run-up to launch you had things like newspaper spreads and media coverage, and now there's nothing. A major game comes out and you've just got a Dixons advert saying: "Out Today!" Before, you were saying: "This is our game, we want you to buy it." We need more of that.

DAN: I think there's lots we can do within the concept of our strategy when it comes to the sociability aspects of Dreamcast. I think there's an opportunity to start giving the ads a bit more attitude and bite, maybe. As Mat said, he felt that the ads were a bit pan-European.

HELEN: We do have ideas about exactly what we want to do. We have got strong messages out there already, such as the email and Internet aspects, and we've got to reinforce them more. So we've got to keep the message really simple and just keep saying it. And pump out the most glorious software TV advertising and, to take up your point, Steve, stick massive amounts of footage in the telly ads, because DC's graphics are so good.

ODM: Which are some of the best games ads you've seen?

HELEN: I thought the *Silent Hill* TV ad was absolutely terrifying. It featured the soundtrack of the game, and there was this kind of screaming all the time. It really scared me, because it was like a horror film. But I'm not very good with horror films anyway!

MAT: I like the PlayStation stuff. It's interesting. When I worked for Sony, we came up with an idea for an ad that was based on the old "Heroin screws you up" warning ad campaigns. We wanted to compare that to a gamer's adrenalin rush when playing on the console. We wanted to use the whole drug analogy to try and push these games. At the time, we nearly got sacked on the spot for even suggesting such an approach. Two years later we saw very similar types of advertising with the likes of *WipEout* – you know, the come-down couple sitting there with blood coming out of their noses. I remember thinking: "F**king hell, things have changed!" and it impressed me. It got Sony credibility among clubbers.

ED: The press ads for *Command & Conquer* were excellent. They were good because they didn't boast about the game. It was just about telling the truth – ie: "F**k joining the army, I'll just have a cup of tea and play it on the telly!" Also, the ads looked clean and were easy to take in. Most ads in computer mags are made up tons of little shots, big logos and other crap – it's all too much for a reader to take in. You want a nice, simple, conceptual idea that gives the ad a bit of attitude. It does the old thing of backing up the brand statement and has a tone of voice to it that gives you a *feel* for the game.

HELEN: There are ads which are really exceptional because they're promoting a really good piece of software. They sell the unique thing about that game whatever that might be – it may have brilliant graphics, or it may have a James Bond licence. It comes down to the packaging around the actual software. If you look at media spends from last year, if a game wasn't very good it didn't matter how much money you threw at it…

ODM: Apart from *Tomorrow Never Dies* on PlayStation, which did incredibly well despite being dire.

HELEN: Licensing is the exception to the rule.

ED: Ultimately, advertising is about finding a tone of voice to talk to the audience. For example, when you see a Volkswagen brand ad, it has a very distinctive voice. It takes time to get that. It takes a lot of writing and thinking, and a lot of evolution between client, agency and product. But games advertising needs that in order to become rounder, fuller and more refined.

DAN: I think the challenge for the industry isn't really a change of advertising. If you look at the games advertising on TV at the moment, it's not surprising that the best ads are invariably for the best games. The challenge for this industry isn't the advertising, it's creating games that take the industry to a new level and attract new people to it. I think that radical and different advertising will come out of those games. Good advertising is product-led – the product is at the heart of it.

"WE'RE NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT SELLING TO GAMERS ANY MORE"

– ALISON TURNER

DIRECTORY

THE LOT. A SUMMARY OF EVERY DREAMCAST GAME REVIEWED IN *ODM*

FIGHTING

SOUL CALIBUR

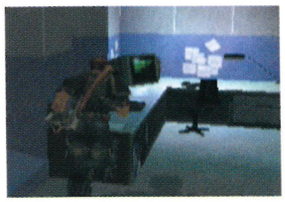
REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 10/10

The best-looking game ever made. It's got some of the best characters ever put in a videogame, hundreds of perfectly balanced moves and 100 per cent accurate control. It will take years to master, but anyone can pick it up and love. You *must* own this game.

SOUL FIGHTER

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 6/10

A fantasy fighting game which pretends to have some kind of adventure running through it. There are some nice ideas (such as using combinations of attacks to earn magic power), but overall it just involves wandering from room to room, tapping buttons as you go. Yawn.



FIGHTING FORCE 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #4; SCORE 3/10

Fighting Force 2 borrows elements from old Mega Drive fighting game *Streets Of Rage* and *Tomb Raider*. Unfortunately it feels like it's been knocked up in a couple of weeks, and doesn't look any better either. Stupid enemies, dull levels, and walking-pace 'action' make it a duffer.

READY 2 RUMBLE

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 9/10

Loads of freakily-realistic loudmouths go fist to face in this all-out boxing party game. The career mode means it's fun for one player – for a while – but you'll never tire of 'winner stays on' matches with a group of friends. *Ready 2 Rumble* is in a class of its own – a fantastic and a wonderful way of getting hooked on Dreamcast.

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3: SAIKYO DOJO

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 8/10

The best game in the classic *Street Fighter* series with a bunch of Dreamcast-exclusive features. Masses of fantastic characters battle it out in a 2D game with far more depth than most 3D fighters could even dream of. It's dead fiddly to play with the standard Dreamcast pad though.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

When it came out in the arcades, nothing could touch it. Unfortunately, the Dreamcast version lost a lot of its impact on the way home, with slightly disappointing graphics, home extras and sound. It's still a quality game if you can live with its shortcomings, but with classy rivals like *Soul Calibur* around, *Virtua Fighter 3tb* feels a little . . . old.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE: 5/10

Heaps of classic game and comic book characters go handbags for the ultimate tag team fight. Things get crazy – perhaps a little too crazy. It's hard to tell what's going on a lot of the time, so button-bashing becomes the order of the day. It's fun at times, but if you want a quality 2D fighting game check out *Street Fighter Alpha 3*.

POWER STONE

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 8/10

A fighting game with a difference. Collect three power stones and you transform into a super-powered version of yourself. Scraps for these gems involve rocket launchers, massive combos, thrown furniture and ridiculous explosions. It's amazingly fast, looks great and is jam-packed with goodies. Very, very cool.

PSYCHIC FORCE 2012

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 7/10

In true Japanese Animé style, stylish big-haired heroes fly around chucking enormous fireballs at each other in mid-air. While it's not going to appeal to most people, *Psychic Force 2012* has a certain charm that means fighting fans looking for a change of scenery may well find something special here.

DYNAMITE COP

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE: 5/10

You are, first: a cop; second: a martial arts expert. Using weapons you can pick up along the way – as well as your feet and fists – it's your job to scrap whole gangs of enemies at once on a variety of levels. Not great, to be honest. It's very slow, and though smashing things should always be fun, it gets dull pretty quickly.

MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 5/10

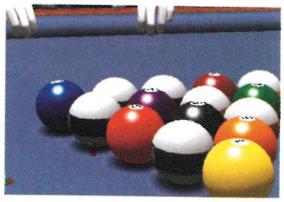
Once upon a time, *Mortal Kombat* was the most exciting fighting game in the world. Then it lost its sense of humour and everyone realised that it was actually a bit crap. This 'Gold' edition has more characters and moves than ever, but is most likely going to keep you playing for just a few hours.

SPORTS

NBA 2K

REVIEW: ISSUE #5, SCORE 8/10

The best Dreamcast sports sim yet. Squeezes in a wealth of detail but still plays like a dream. Matches ebb and flow like the real thing, and the player creation system is excellent. Saved seasons take up a whole VM unit, but for sports fans the extra outlay is worth it.



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

You get to play against an assortment of characters, including Jimmy himself. The jerky graphics make it a bit fiddly to play, but it shouldn't take long before you get the hang of it. There's also a range of extra games including the retro classic *Dropzone*, draughts, chess and darts.

VIRTUA STRIKER 2 (VER. 2000.1)

REVIEW: ISSUE #4; SCORE 7/10

An arcade-perfect conversion with shiny new knobs on. Cup modes, rankings and tournaments all beef up an already good game. However, it doesn't play much like real football – more a basic arcade interpretation of it. Definitely one that you should try before you buy.

NFL BLITZ 2000

REVIEW: ISSUE #1, SCORE 7/10

Blitz is an all-out arcade version of American football – simple rules, fewer players, smaller pitches and flaming balls. And, seeing as the rules are cut-down, you can stomp on other players as much as you want and not get told off. It's a right laugh in four-player mode.

SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 6/10

A footie game which sadly shares little with the original – and excellent – Saturn version. *Worldwide Soccer 2000* is a tad on the slow side, for a start, and there's a sad lack of atmosphere. It's an okay football game, but we can all do better than okay, can't we?

SEGA BASS FISHING

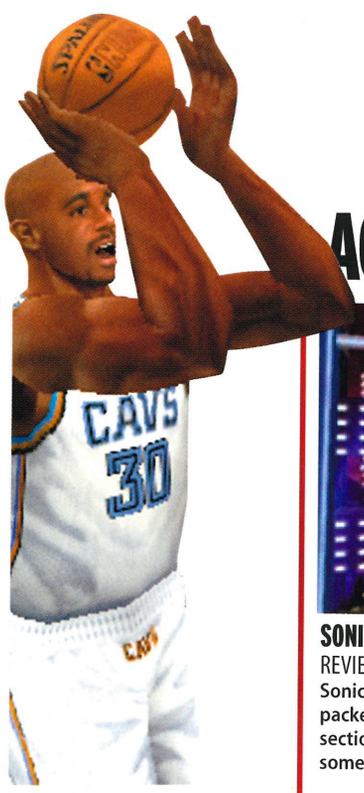
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

The ultimate novelty game? Possibly. But *Sega Bass Fishing* is ace – for a while, at least. The fishing rod controller is the standout feature, enabling you to haul away just like the real thing. That said, it won't hold your attention long-term, especially once you've completed the original mode. Top party game, mind.

NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC

REVIEW: ISSUE #2, SCORE 6/10

Like *NFL Blitz*, this is a fast, over-the-top translation of an American sport relatively few Brits care about. As such, it's a laugh when played with a bunch of like-minded friends, but won't give you anything much to sink your gamesplaying brain into. Fun every now and then, but not worth a full £40.



UEFA STRIKER

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 8/10

While it may look a bit ropy at times, *UEFA Striker* plays better than any other football game on Dreamcast at the moment. It's fast, it's got plenty of top teams, and it's easy enough to pick up. With two (or more) players who know what they're doing, this is great fun.

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2000

REVIEW: ISSUE #2, SCORE 5/10

Average football games don't go down particularly well in the UK, so an average American football game has no chance. Weak graphics and very slow controls mean *NFL Quarterback Club 2000* is certainly not going to get anyone into the sport.

SNOW SURFERS

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 6/10

If you're familiar with *Cool Boarders* on PlayStation, then you'll feel at home with this snowboarding simulation. The courses are nice-looking, but the visuals are really nothing to write home about, and ultimately *Snow Surfers* is lacking that much-needed edge. And speed.

ACTION -ADVENTURE

SONIC ADVENTURE

REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 9/10

Sonic and chums return for a massive 3D action adventure packed with variety and amazing set-pieces. The high-speed sections are occasionally a little *too* fast, with the camera view sometimes getting left behind, but otherwise this is a blinder!

EVOLUTION

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 8/10

Role-playing games can be a little intimidating, but *Evolution*'s simple interface and entertaining story make it the perfect entry point to genre. Things get a little repetitive towards the end, but overall it's a fun adventure.

SHADOW MAN

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 6/10

A grown-up platform adventure with plenty of gore, swearing and voodoo magic. While there are people who'll love it for the storyline, the dull level design will soon drive most to boredom. Cool sound effects and freaky music though.

WWF ATTITUDE

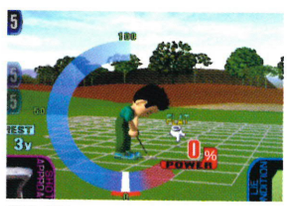
REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 3/10

More of a freak show than a wrestling game. Featuring a bunch of badly animated and unresponsive wrestlers, you'll swiftly conclude the only fun part is the option to create your own wrestler. This game has made one of the most entertaining things in the world boring.

RESIDENT EVIL 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #4; SCORE 7/10

The classic horror game series makes it to Dreamcast with a fairly standard conversion of the PlayStation and PC original. It's spooky, funny, and shocking at times, and the combination of puzzles and bloody action will see most people playing to the end. It's dated though.



TEE OFF

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 7/10

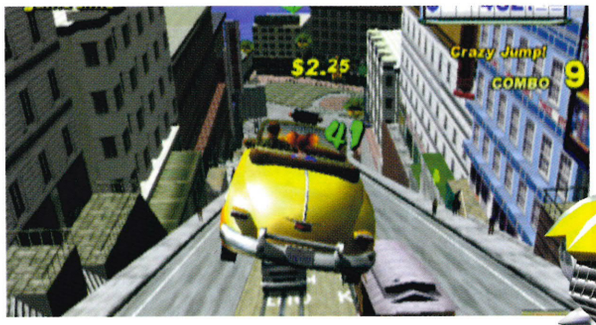
If the idea of a round of golf is about as appealing as eating an ashtray, then chances are you'll want to skip this. Don't. *Tee Off* is golf for people who don't like golf (it's entertaining, basically). It looks cute, it's dead easy to get into and it has an ace four-player mode.

BLUE STINGER

REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 7/10

Like *Resident Evil 2*, *Blue Stinger* sees you wandering around, killing freaky monsters and solving occasional puzzles. A long, drawn-out story and dodgy controls slow the action down, and there's only so much bad acting one person can take. If you've got the patience, you may make it to the end.

DRIVING



CRAZY TAXI

REVIEW: ISSUE #5, SCORE 9/10

All-out arcade madness may not be something you'd expect to have much depth, but *Crazy Taxi* has almost unlimited scope for skilful play. Amazing graphics, masses of style and plenty of quality DC-exclusive features mean it's one of the best games money can buy.

SEGA RALLY 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 8/10

Everyone got excited when one of the finest arcade racers made its way home. Loads of edge-of-your-seat racing, to-die-for looks and loads of superbly-designed tracks meet in one top-speed, super-cool package. If it's arcade action you want, *Sega Rally 2* has it to spare.

SPEED DEVILS

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

A crazy racer with hurricanes, police chases, gambling and UFOs was always going to float our boat, and with the addition of two-player and arcade modes you get slick stuff backed with some funky tunes. The only problem is that it might be a little too easy at times.

TRICKSTYLE

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 7/10

Futuristic hoverboard racing where flashy tricks are needed if you want to make it to the end. It's a great idea, and it certainly looks lovely, but a lack of speed makes it a little hard to get into. The mental techno soundtrack gives it a style you'll find hard to resist though.

MONACO GRAND PRIX RACING SIMULATION 2

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10

The lack of an official licence makes this less appealing than *F1 World Grand Prix For Dreamcast* straight away, and the tacky graphics don't help things. There are some nice ideas, such as the classic races, but you only need one F1 game.

TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 5/10

Challenge the other drivers on the road to a race. If you win you get the money. It really is that simple. Trouble is, there's only a certain amount of fun you can get out of one track, even if extra bits do get added occasionally. Graphics are nice though, especially the car headlights.

RE-VOLT

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 7/10

Racing remote-controlled cars means this is at least different from the majority of driving games, and its cause is helped further by crisp graphics, speedy action and a cool multiplayer mode. Even so, it's fairly simple stuff and will only keep you entertained for so long.

SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 7/10

Set on 12 tracks with six different bikes to ride, *Alstare* is strangely addictive. The game does have its faults though, especially regular pop-up and barmy collision detection which can ruin things. Fast fun, but that's as far as it goes – don't expect it to last.

HYDRO THUNDER

REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10

Pick a super-fast speedboat, then a track, then race it. Collect turbo boosts along the way and seek out hidden short cuts. Easy, yes? This is a novel racing title with many clever moments but it doesn't quite hit the spot – a shame really as it could have been a lot better.

F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX FOR DREAMCAST

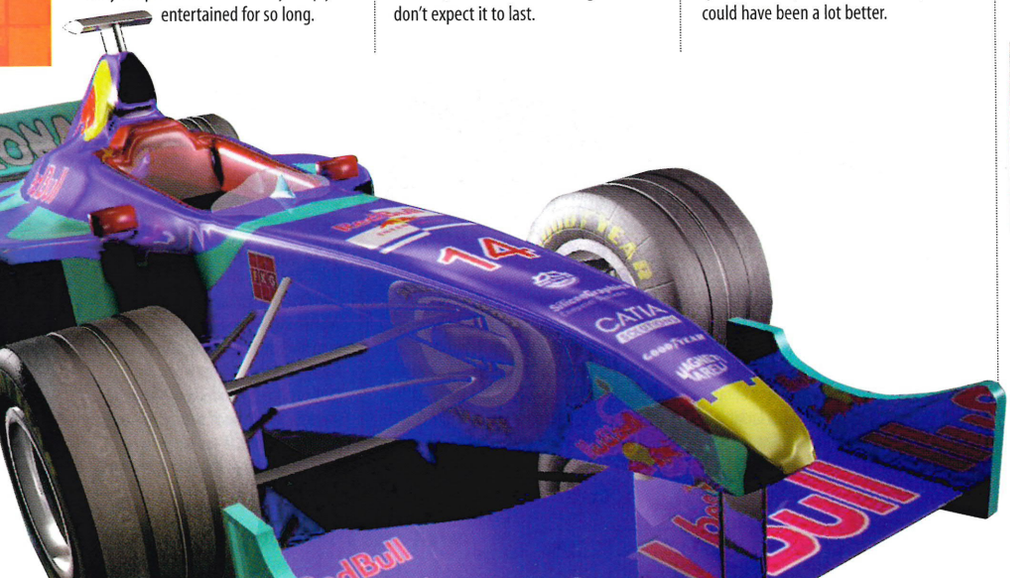
REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 8/10

Being officially endorsed, *F1 World Grand Prix For Dreamcast* (to give it its full title) is a must-have for F1 fans. It looks gorgeous and is packed with features, but disappointingly it contains a few sloppy glitches.

BUGGY HEAT

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; 4/10

Racing buggies and monster trucks 'off-road' smells like all-out fun to us. Sadly, the only smell coming from this game is a rather unpleasant one of poo. The online features are great, but really that's as far as it goes. Avoid *Buggy Heat* like something very bad.



VIGILANTE 8: 2ND OFFENSE

REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 5/10

Cars with guns driving around shooting one another. It was an okay PlayStation game a year ago, and even though it's been upgraded for Dreamcast it's still nothing special. If you get the chance to rent games, this is a perfect one for an evening's cheap entertainment.

PEN PEN

REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 6/10

Race cute, cuddly characters by walking, sliding on your belly, and swimming. The game is pretty easy, so you'll probably have it licked within a few hours, but there is a four-player mode which is always fun. *Pen Pen* is cute and innovative, but way too shallow.

SHOOTING

SLAVE ZERO
REVIEW: ISSUE #5, SCORE 6/10
While it's not a fantastic first-person shooter by any stretch, *Slave Zero* is still a pretty decent game. Yomping around the futuristic city as a giant robot is a lot of fun, and the split-screen deathmatch mode is worth a bash. The slow-down can be a pain though.

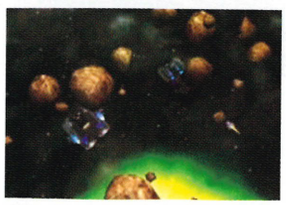
MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE
REVIEW: ISSUE #0; SCORE 7/10
Forget tactics, strategies and maps, this one's aimed straight at the trigger finger – shoot anything that moves, if you can see it moving in the mass of multicoloured explosions flying around. It's short-lived confusing fun.

TOY COMMANDER
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 8/10
Not the kids' game you might expect at first glance. In fact, most kids wouldn't have a chance of getting off the first level, it's so tough. A hardcore war game with varied missions and masses of vehicles, *Toy Commander* is like an evil robot wolf in a fluffy bunny's clothing.

INCOMING
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10
Brainless shoot 'em up where your aim is to shoot the bad guys and avoid the good guys. You get to master an aeroplane, tank and a Harrier jet (among loads of others), and while there's some adrenaline to be squeezed out if it, it soon gets too tricky and too dull.

DEADLY SKIES
REVIEW: ISSUE #4; 5/10
Completely average and rather drab-looking blaster that fails to improve upon *Aerowings'* flight sim aspirations and doesn't really make it as shoot 'em up in its own right. A little more imagination and some more nimble planes could have made this game a lot better.

AEROWINGS
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 6/10
Aerowings is a take on the world of formation aerobics. which boasts bags of style but not much content. While you must respect the fact that the game rewards flying skills rather than fighting skills, it's not a lot more than a pleasant way to spend an afternoon.



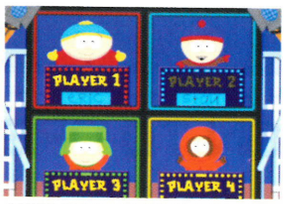
ARMADA
REVIEW: ISSUE #2; SCORE 4/10
Armada puts you in charge of a small gunship to stop aliens threatening the peace of the universe. Simple shooting sections are supposed to be livened up with a bit of an RPG-style storyline, but it's all so basic and samey it feels like a complete waste of time.

RED DOG
REVIEW: ISSUE #5, SCORE 4/10
Drive a buggy around alien landscapes and bases and blow everything to pieces. It looks and sounds good enough, but the action soon gets pretty repetitive, as do the level layouts. The four-player battle mode is occasionally fun, but overall *Red Dog* isn't worth the asking price.

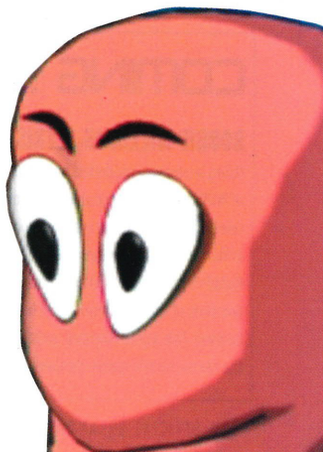
HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2
REVIEW: ISSUE #1; SCORE 9/10
They don't come much more simple to play than this: Pick up a gun. Shoot zombies. Watch entrails litter the screen. Repeat till everything's dead and you're faster on the draw than even Quick-Draw McGraw. It sounds a good idea, and it is. It's dead good. Ha ha.

MISCELLANEOUS

WORMS ARMAGEDDON
REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 8/10
Worms Armageddon is one of the most enjoyable multiplayer games around – it's hardly worth playing on your own. The graphics are simple and well animated, but really aren't all that important. With a near infinite number of stages, you'll be playing forever.

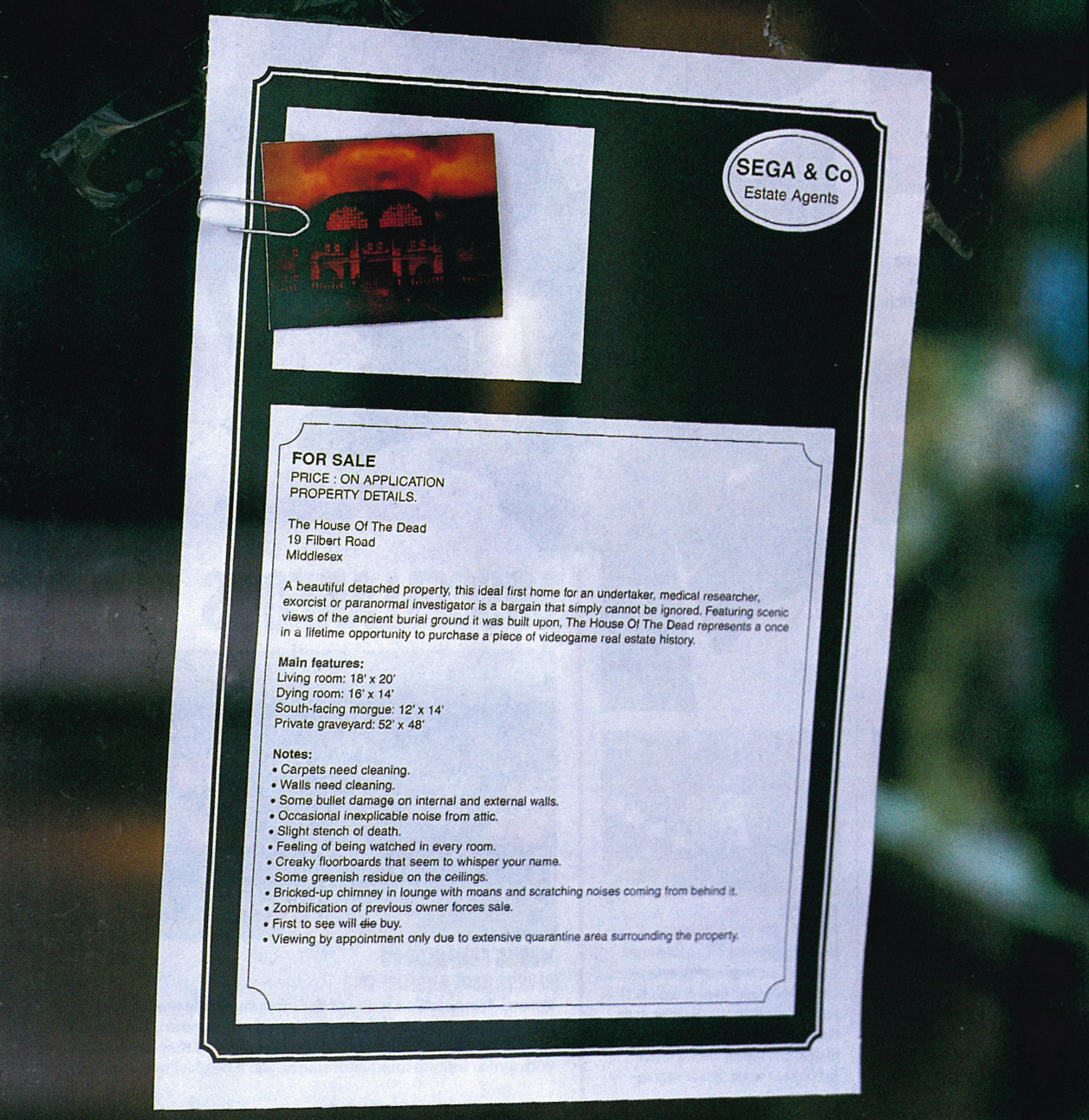


SOUTH PARK: CHEF'S LUV SHACK
REVIEW: ISSUE #3; SCORE 3/10
A multiplayer game where you and three chums play mini-games and answer questions. Unfortunately you need a lot of useless general knowledge to succeed, and apart from the characters, the game is nothing like the show. Kenny doesn't even die! Avoid.



WHO'D LIVE IN A HOUSE LIKE THIS?

The House Of The Dead goes on the market



COMING SOON TO DREAMCAST?

ROBBIE WILLIAMS TETRIS

Using accurately modelled body parts of Williams and the hundreds of female celebrities he has slept with, *Robbie Williams Tetris* challenges you to fit Robbie's private parts into the front bottoms of the glamorous stars he's bedded. This adult-oriented update of the classic puzzle game contains the realistic toilet bits of more than 20 curvaceous MTV presenters, at least ten feisty girl band members, along with the entire female cast of *Hollyoaks* – all ready and willing to be slotted into Robbie's L-shaped pit of love. Sequel to the million-selling *Mick Hucknall's Ginger Sausage Hideaway*. Coming soon in a Chris Evans version.

4D KOMBAT

Tired of traditional fighting games? *4D Kombat* takes players into the fourth dimension, enabling gamers to mess with the minds of their opponents as well as their bodies. Tell karate expert Shidoshi Taka that you know where his girlfriend lives; threaten to frame kick boxer Lin Dente for the murder of a prostitute; warn sumo wrestler Jimmy Max that you often follow his kids to school; and make street fight champion Johnny Black think you're carrying a concealed gun. Thanks to the Awesome Power of Dreamcast™, a wide range of nervous glances, facial twitches and evil looks are included, making *4D Kombat* the most intimidating fighting game ever!

Dreamcast.
OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE
19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ
Tel: 020 7631 1433; Fax: 020 7917 3973
Email: letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk
Website: www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

ACTING EDITOR
Warren Chrismas 020 7917 5672
GROUP ART DIRECTOR
Paul Kurzeja 020 7917 5680
PRODUCTION EDITOR
Paul Henderson 020 7917 5691
REVIEWS EDITOR
Ed Lomas 020 7917 5633
STAFF WRITER
Dan Trent 020 7917 5632
STAFF WRITER
Stuart Dredge 020 7917 5634
ACTING ART EDITOR
Adam Hayes 020 7917 5635
DESIGNER
Aston Villain 020 7917 5695
CONTRIBUTORS
Radion Automatic, Eddy Bowen, Tanya Chalkin, Simon Clemenger, Gary Cutlack, Caroline Elliott, Stephen Fulljames, Tom Guise, Mounir Houmou, Identikal, Steve Key, Steve Owen, Adam Phillips, Omid Scobie, Phil Wand, Simon Watts

THANKS THIS ISSUE
Matt @ CEX, Rugby Scene Carnaby Street, Azzido Da Bass, Evisu, Lee @ Distinct'ive, Mark Higgum

GROUP PUBLISHER
Tim Ponting 020 7917 7666
PUBLISHER – MARKETING & PROMOTIONS
Helen Cribb 020 7917 5644
ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER
Mandy Hewitt 020 7917 3873
SENIOR SALES EXECUTIVE
Richard Downey 020 7917 7708
GROUP CLASSIFIED CCONTROLLER
Emma Regester 020 7917 3867
GROUP SALES DIRECTOR
Ian Westwood 020 7917 7618
DEPUTY SALES DIRECTOR
Duncan Tickell 020 7917 7651
MARKETING MANAGER
Paul Smyth 020 7917 3946
LIST RENTAL MANAGER
Nerys Church 020 7917 5663
DIRECT MARKETING DIRECTOR
Julian Thorne 020 7917 7812
NEWSTRADE DIRECTOR
James Burnay 020 7917 7810
RESEARCH DIRECTOR
Lesley Downey 020 7917 7702
EPU MANAGER
Sarah Gilliver 020 7917 7715
SEGA LIASON OFFICER
Mark Hartley

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR
Christine Martin
CIRCULATION AND MARKETING DIRECTOR
Sean Farmer
FINANCE DIRECTOR
Ian Leggett
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Alistair Ramsay
CHAIRMAN
Felix Dennis

Origination by Elements
Printed in England by Watmoughs, Bradford

SUBSCRIPTIONS HOTLINE: 01454 620070 / dhotline@aol.com

NEXT ISSUE: *ODM* #7, May, goes on sale on Thursday 6 April

Dennis
Company registered in England, number 1138891. Entire contents © 2000 Felden Productions. *ODM* is pleased to recognise all copyrights. Where possible we've acknowledged the copyright holder. All letters assumed for publication unless marked otherwise.

OVERSEAS LICENSING ENQUIRIES:
The editorial content of this magazine is available for licensing overseas. For details contact Bruce Sawford, International Licensing Director, on (0044) 207 917 7658.

SYNDICATION ENQUIRIES:
Contact Rob Willis on (0044) 020 7917 7685; email licenseop@dennis.co.uk

Dreamcast, DreamKey, DreamArena, DreamOn, DreamStyle and Sega are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sega Enterprises Ltd.

01279 321 321
ORDER ONLINE AT UKGAMES.COM

How to Order

By telephone on **01279 321 321**

By fax on **01279 322 322**

By post at **Special Reserve, P.O. Box 847, Harlow, CM21 9PH**
Free immediate cheque clearance

By e-mail to **Orders@reserve.co.uk**

Online at **http://ukgames.com** or at any of the other Special Reserve addresses

Or visit a **Special Reserve Club Shop**

Prices include VAT and delivery
Fast, efficient, accurate despatch
0% finance option - see below
Market leader - established 12 years
Official Sony, Nintendo & Sega supplier
All genuine UK new boxed product
Open until 8 pm (5 pm Sun)

We only supply members but trial membership is just 60p

Why have 500,000 people joined Special Reserve?

Just £6.99 gets you into the club
There is no obligation to buy anything
Claim a FREE GIFT if you buy any one item as you join or renew*

Full members (£6.99 UK) receive:

- One Year Family Membership
- 9 issues of the Club Magazine with Incredible Special Offers
- Free entry to Club Competitions
- Any one of 30 FREE GIFTS*
- Bonus Book of 3500 Cheats
- Bonus Best Internet Guide
- Save just 5 Reddies - and choose another FREE gift

FREE GIFT LIST
01279 321 321 or UKGAMES.COM

Choose any gift when you buy any one item at the same time as joining Special Reserve for one year (£6.99)

- FREE SCART LEAD FOR DREAMCAST
- FREE PAIR OF CONTROLLERS FOR PSX
- FREE PAIR OF 1 MB MEMORY CARDS FOR PSX
- FREE SUPER AV SCART LEAD & LINK CABLE FOR PSX
- FREE CASIO DC2000 PERSONAL ORGANISER
- FREE INFLATABLE ARMCHAIR - BLUE, PINK, OR ORANGE (add £3 carriage for this item)
- FREE MARIO BINOCULAR & CAMERA SET
- FREE 52 CAPACITY CD WALLET (SOFT BLACK)
- FREE REMOTE CONTROL CAR & SPORTS WATCH
- FREE 3D ANALOGUE CONTROLLER FOR N64
- FREE PAIR OF 1 MB MEMORY CARDS FOR N64
- FREE PAIR OF RUMBLE PACKS FOR N64
- FREE PAIR OF MAD CATZ CONTROLLERS FOR PC
- FREE VOICE COMMANDER STEREO HEADSET AND MICROPHONE
- FREE AMIGA EMULATOR FOR PC

BONUS **3500 CHEATS BOOK** and **INTERNET GUIDE** with EVERY GIFT

0% Pay in 9 Months!

10% deposit, no more to pay for 9 months and no interest, subject to status.
Your total purchase must be over £200 including one hardware item.
0% APR if the balance is paid in full after nine months or 29.8% APR extended loan.
Written details in the Club Magazine.
Just ask for 0% finance when you order.

Nobody gives value like Special Reserve – check these prices

BEST BUY	*BEST BUY*	*BEST BUY*	*BEST BUY*	*BEST BUY*
SOUL CALIBUR	CRAZY TAXI	VIRTUA STRIKER 2	SHADOWMAN	H.O.T.D.2+GUN
32.99	32.99	32.99	32.99	58.99

Special Reserve Discount Network

1 FREE

Only one per address
For a free magazine go to www.1FREE.co.uk or phone 01279 321 321 or ask in a club shop

FREE

FREE Extra Controller and FREE Memory Card with every NINTENDO 64 or PLAYSTATION

£74.98 **£79.99**

FREE SCART LEAD

When you buy a Nintendo 64, Playstation or Dreamcast at the same time as a televison. TVs from only £89.99

0% FINANCE – PAY IN 9 MONTHS
10% deposit – subject to status

DREAMCAST ...199.99 LESS £10*

Official UK Console with Official Controller, BT approved Modem, RF Lead & FREE Internet access

Deduct £10 off our price of any one product bought at the same time as a Dreamcast. Compare this deal for example:

Dreamcast with Sega Rally 2 ...£222.98 SAVE £17

WIN £10,000 WORTH OF PRIZES

18 PlayStation2's

PLUS a MAXX PC and F1 goodies at:

F1fantasy.com

PlayStation 2
Reserve yours now!
£20 DEPOSIT
Be among the first for the UK launch. Deposit is refundable if you change your mind or even win a PS2 at F1fantasy.com

DREAMCAST GAMES

All prices include delivery. Membership from 60p
A small selection of our range
We only sell official UK products

4 WHEEL THUNDER	32.99
AEROWINGS	31.99
ARMADA	32.99
BLUE STINGER	27.99
BUST A MOVE 4	32.99
CAESERS PALACE 2000	32.99
CRAZY TAXI	32.99
DEADLY SKIES	32.99
DRAGONS BLOOD	32.99
DYNAMITE COP	32.99
ECCO THE DOLPHIN	32.99
EVOLUTION	32.99
EXTREME CHAMP. WRESTLING	32.99
FELONY PURSUIT	32.99
FIGHTING FORCE 2	32.99
FORMULA 1	32.99
FUR FIGHTERS	32.99
HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 8/10	32.99
HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 + GUN	58.99
HYDRO THUNDER	32.99
INCOMING	32.99
JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	32.99
JO JO'S BIZZARRE ADVENTURE	32.99
LEGACY OF KAIN 2: SOUL REAVER	32.99
MAKEN X	32.99
MARVEL VS CAPCOM	32.99
MDK 2 (MURDER DEATH KILL)	32.99
METROPOLIS STREET RACER	32.99
MILLENNIUM SOLD. EXPENDABLE	32.99
NBA 2000	32.99
NBA SHOWTIME	32.99
NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2000	19.99
NOMAD SOUL	32.99
PEN PEN	29.99
PLASMA SWORD	32.99
POWERSTONE 9/10	32.99
PSYCHIC FORCE 2012	32.99
RAYMAN 2	32.99
RE-VOLT	32.99
READY 2 RUMBLE 8/10	32.99
RED DOG	32.99
RESIDENT EVIL 2 (15)	29.99
ROADSTERS	32.99
SEGA BASS FISHING + ROD	52.99
SEGA RALLY 2 8/10	32.99
SHADOWMAN 9/10	32.99
SLAVE ZERO	32.99
SNOW SURFERS	29.99
SONIC ADVENTURE 9/10	32.99
SOUL CALIBUR 10/10	32.99
SOUL FIGHTER	31.99
S. PARK: CHEFS LUV SHACK	25.99
SOUTH PARK RALLY	32.99
SPEED DEVILS	32.99
STAR WARS 1: RACER	32.99
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 8/10	32.99
TAKE THE BULLET	32.99
TECH ROMANCER	32.99
TEE OFF	32.99
TOMB RAIDER	32.99
TONY HAWKS SKATEBOARDING	32.99
TOY COMMANDER	32.99
TOY STORY 2	31.99
TRICKSTYLE 9/10	28.99
UEFA STRIKER 8/10	32.99
VIGILANTE 8 2ND OFFENCE	31.99
VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb	32.99
VIRTUA STRIKER 2	32.99
WILD METAL	31.99
WORLDWIDE SOCCER	32.99
WORMS ARMAGEDDON	32.99
WWF ATTITUDE	28.99
ZOMBIE REVENGE	32.99

DREAMCAST BOOKS

Official Strategy Guides:

BLUE STINGER	11.50
MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD	9.99
POWER STONE	9.99
READY 2 RUMBLE	9.99
SOUL CALIBUR	9.99

DREAMCAST LEADS

SCART LEAD FOR DREAMCAST	8.99
TELEPHONE EXTENSION LEADS:	
-5 METRES	7.99
-10 METRES	8.99
TELEPHONE SOCKET SPLITTERS:	
-TWO-WAY	6.99
-FOUR-WAY	9.99

NEOGEO POCKET COLOUR 54.99

DREAMCAST PERIPHERALS

OFFICIAL GREY CONTROLLER ... 19.99
4 front facing buttons and 2 analogue triggers. 8 way digital control plus analogue control stick for optimum accuracy

MAD CATZ CONTROLLER ...17.99

MAD CATZ VIBRATION PACK ... 13.99

OFFICIAL VIBRATION PACK ... 16.99

DREAM STATION STORAGE UNIT ... 16.99

JOYTECH VIBRATION PACK ... 18.99
Avalible in charcoal or clear black

PRO CARRY CASE ... 19.99

OFFICIAL VISUAL MEMORY SYSTEM (VMS) ... 19.99
Enables you to take the memory card anywhere and use your stored characters, including some Sega Arcade machines

OFFICIAL ARCADE STICK ... 33.99

MAD CATZ BLASTER LIGHT GUN ... 34.99

JOYTECH 4MB MEMORY CARD ... 16.99
(Avalible in blue, orange or black)

JOYTECH 9MM ENFORCER LIGHTGUN ... 32.99

OFFICIAL KEYBOARD ... 19.99

JOYTECH CONTROLLER ... 17.99
Avalible in charcoal or clear black

JORDAN GRAND PRIX RACING WHEEL ... 42.99

Special Reserve Big Club Shops

EASY PARKING
PC UPGRADES (£12 to fit any item)
PC REPAIRS (£30 plus parts)
OPEN 'TIL 8PM (10am to 5pm Sun)

BASILDON, ESSEX ... 01268 287776
Festival Leisure Park. 1 mile off A127

BRISTOL ... 0117 924 5000
351 Gloucester Road (A38). Nth of City

CHELMSFORD, ESSEX 01245 348777
43 Broomfield Road. Near bus station

EGHAM, SURREY ... 01784 473444
168 High Street. 1 mile J13 off M25

NOTTINGHAM ... 0115 949 1000
164 Derby Road, Stapleford.
2 miles J25 off M1. Nr Pizza Hut

SAWBRIDGEWORTH 01279 322399
The Maltings, Station Road
Not far from M11 junctions 7 or 8

UPMINSTER, ESSEX 01708 225544
209 St Mary's Lane. 2 miles J29 off M25

WINACAR.CO.UK – £3 Million prizes

Special Reserve Discount Network

UKGAMES.COM ... Cheapest games, thousands of reviews, news, video clips, release dates, charts and special offers.

UKCHEATS.COM	UKN64.COM
UKDREAMCAST.COM	UKPLAYSTATION.COM
UKHANDHELDS.COM	UKPLAYSTATION2.COM
UKPOKEMON.COM	1FREE.CO.UK

UKCOMPUTING.COM ... From leads to Pentium CPUs - we stock a massive range of PC Upgrades, all at incredible discount prices.

UKCDROM.COM	UKRAM.COM
UKDVD.COM	UKSOFTWARE.COM
UKPRINTERS.COM	MAXXPC.COM

FREEOLA.COM ... The UK's best FREE internet service ever - by far. No CD needed, FREE Technical Support, choice of 800 e-mail addresses e.g. Englandfans.com. Lots more - just log on

GETDOTTED.COM ... Get your Domain Name before it's too late

F1FANTASY.COM ... 18 Playstation 2s to be won. £10k of prizes

WINACAR.CO.UK ... Lots of free competitions and cars to win

Some items carry a £1 surcharge in the shops. Inevitably some products listed may not yet be available and prices may change - please phone. SAVE = Saving off full recommended price. Sent to press 17/02/00. E. & O. E. Inter-Mediates Ltd, T/A Special Reserve, The Maltings, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 9PG.

THEY SAY THE DEAD KNOW NO PAIN...

"A 3D explore'em up of quite staggering atmoshpere"
DC-UK

"Soul Reaver is on target to be something very special indeed"
dreamcast MONTHLY

Dreamcast Screenshots shown

THINGS ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE

Dreamcast.

LEGACY of KAIN
SOUL REAVER

ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PC AND PLAYSTATION

PC CD

PlayStation

Download the playable demo at eidos.com

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

Crystal Dynamics, the Crystal Dynamics logo, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver and related characters are trademarks of Crystal Dynamics. © & Published by Eidos Interactive 2000. All Rights Reserved. Sega, and Dreamcast are