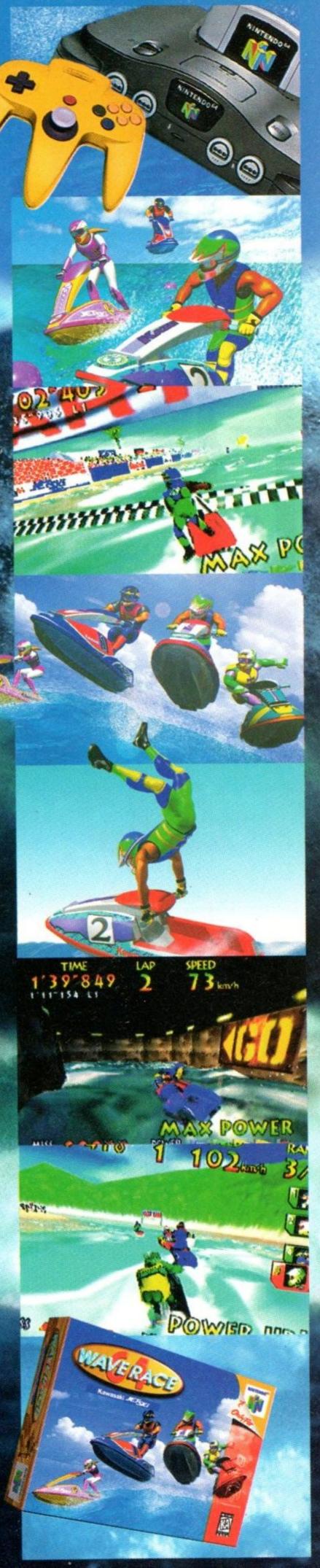


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SLIPPERY.

enough to surf and enough ocean to make a sailor lose his lunch, don't forget your life vest. You'll need it.





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EPIC...

CORE'S TOMB RAIDER FOR THE PLAYSTATION IS SOLID GOLD!

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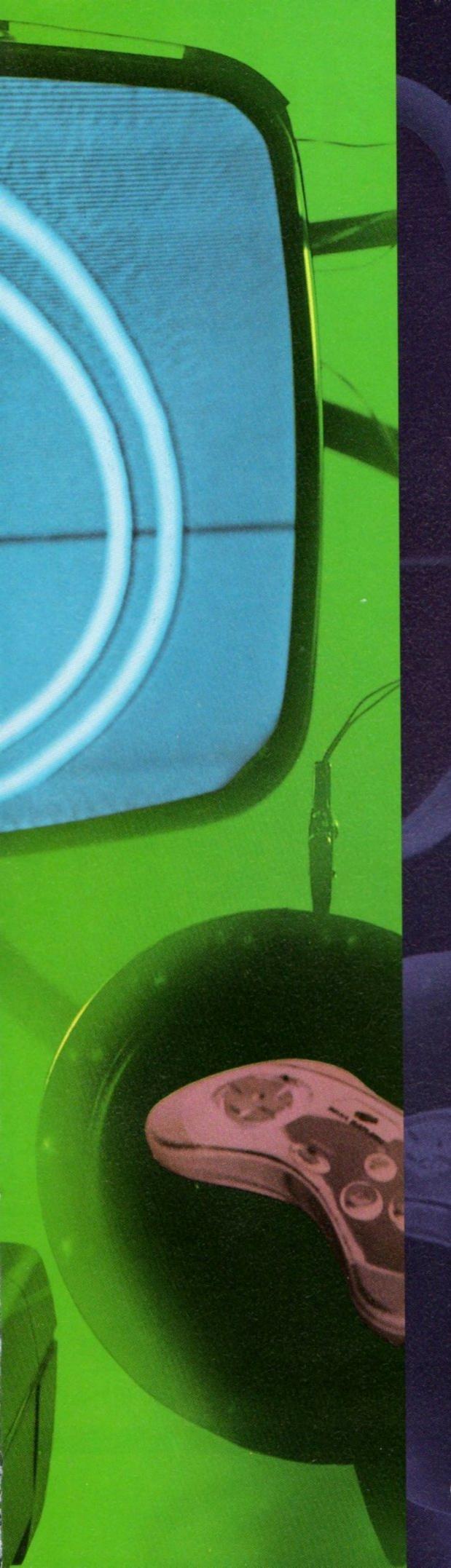
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Aaron M. Heier

Johnathan Elkins

Audrey Vineys

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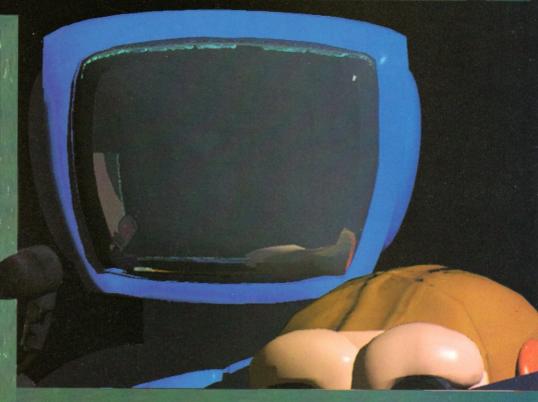
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ISSN# 1070-3020



Made in U.S.A.



I'm thinking about a recent innovation that may turn out to be beneficial in more ways than one. I'm talking about Sega's Net Link for the Saturn. So often I'm confronted with individuals who, for one reason or another, have no access to the growing universe of on-line entertainment and information (and therefore GF online if I may grossly plug our wares). For many, a PC is simply not in the budget, and there are those, I'm sure, who find it difficult to justify such a costly item for internet use alone. At any rate, with Sega's new device, connection to online services is now not only affordable but can be implemented perched on the sofa in front of the family TV. Not to mention the fact that you can play a plethora of hot titles on your new Saturn as well. The other benefit of this new product is that it may bolster the Saturn user base and thus attract more and better 3rd party support. Sega will need all the help they can get in the months to come going up against the likes of Sony and Nintendo.

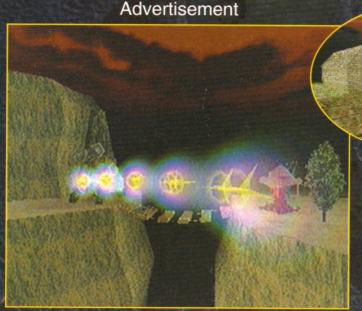
My apologies if I sound like a Sega commercial, "SEGA!" I just think it's exciting that alternative means for internet access are being introduced, and made more affordable. I'd say "Merry Christmas" but it's the middle of November. **Enjoy the issue!**







As you progress through the game to go out and save the world, you will have to talk to all walks of life in the kingdom. Eccentric Monks, irate mothers, indifferent soldiers, even an occasional enraged monster will have a few words for you. Your challenge, of course, is to win the favor of the people so that they will give you the help you need as you try to learn new spells



"It's so addictive, they'll have to cut the power to my house to get me to stop playing!" Game Tester

of magic, pass over rivers of lava, and collect threads of power that can sew your kingdom back together.

Don't get me wrong, this is no "rocking at home with your crochet needles" game we're talking about! You'll come up against some of the most frightening and powerful enemies since Clash of the Titans!

In addition to the game's storyline, ASCII has also put forth a valiant effort to come up with humorous and stimulating dialog and characters to bring your quest to life. Such characters as Jack, a 100+ year old resident of Verdite with a more than stereotypical attitude and a funny senility about

him, will bring sparks of humor that you'll enjoy throughout the game! Even a bit of romance enters the quest as the scantily clad elf merchant, Lyn — who has held a flame for the prince since childhood - drops hints about her feelings that even a Golem could comprehend.

Not to forget about the CD quality sound, of course! King's Field II has a wide selection of accompanying music to entreat your ears as you progress along your journey. Original scores are long enough to not sound repetitive and yet are not so intruding as to distract from the ambiance which they so artfully bring to the game. Other sound effects include terri-

Remember me? Shore va do...it's Leon Shore. Come visit my house whenever you need a friend or a guide.

Swordplay...

The fighting technique in King's Field II is slightly different from the original. The enemies have been enhanced to recognize your pattern of attack so that they can turn, block, even parry and thrust to put you quickly into the realm of the dead! What you will have to learn is to circle and then double back while the enemy is distracted. In this way, you will reduce your hits and live longer. As in the first quest, you can always go in for a quick hit, but in King's Field II, you will be less likely to achieve success - the Skeletons, for example, now have the ability to block with a shield, duck under a slash, and stab

you while you try to retreat! In addition, use your magic as



a distraction while you go in for a hit. Once spells, stun the enemy

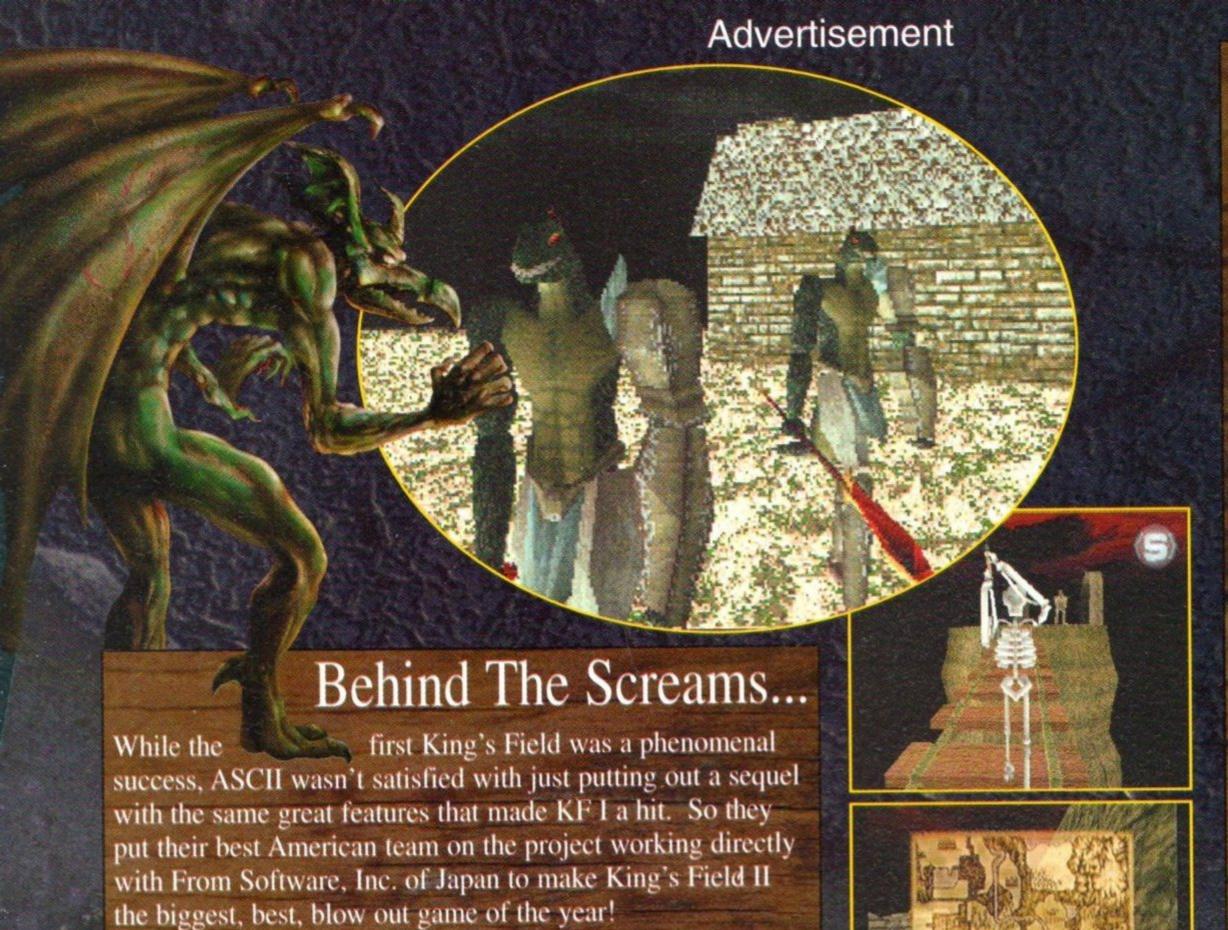
first, then go in for the kill! Enemies can use the same tactics though, so be careful. They also attack in groups, so make sure that you don't get surrounded! Good luck!

fying wails, screams, and roars from the afflicted and from the enemy; thunderous explosions, the glorious sound of steel on steel during sword fights; and, of course, the exceptional Stereo effects that were such a notable achievement in the first King's Field! You can actually tell how close you are to a monster by how loud the eerie screeches and roars are — with some practice, you can even distinguish what you're going to come up against



around the next bend! With all of the improvements over the original King's Field, you may be worried that ASCII made changes in the intuitive control & easy-to-use pop-up menus. Well,





mind at ease. ASCII did leave in vast improvements. Just on the gives you just that much more year! control over how your game acts. I would wish good luck to you, and reacts.

incredibly well even without the one!

some of the already refined ele- promise of the same quality in the ments that made the first King's beautiful 3D polygon graphics Field a roaring success. The intu- and intensity of gameplay, King's itive control and pop-up menus Field II would have been a sell outremain unchanged for the most game! But with improved sound, part. ASCII did, however, add a graphics, and storyline; along feature to the "System" menu with a humongous world to which allows you to change the explore, King's Field II is destined default button configuration to to be one of the top sellers this anything you want. This feature holiday season and well into next

Prince Austin Lyle Forester...but This much anticipated sequel to you're gonna' need a lot more King's Field would have done than luck to make it through this



Inside Edge

King's Field II is immense. Your only hope of exploring the whole thing is to acquire the Pixy Map early on in your quest. (It's an automap which maps everywhere you go in the game.) Each village, castle, dungeon, and underground has its own map, so figuring out where you've been is as easy as pulling up your

SELECT SRETURN

To find the Pixy Map, you must make your way through Varde's Forest (a maze just beyond the eastle in the first town). Once you've made it through the maze, you'll receive this map along with another important item.

To receive the Pixy Map, you will have to talk to Varde, the character that holds it. It is important to speak with every character you come across every time you see them. Characters change what they say after you've visited other villages and villagers, so talk to them often! For reference, your character keeps a log of all conversations automatically.

Behind The **SCREAMS**

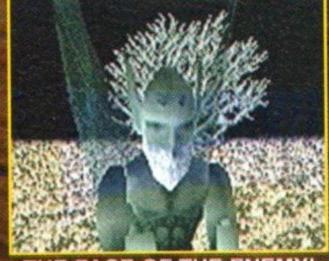
It all started with a wish list. Design and Layout coordinator David "Commander" Silviera and Production overseer, Mark "The Monk" Johnson (doubling ASCII's video game consultants and game masters) were given the opportunity to make a wish list for everything they wished had been in KF I and everything that could have been better that was already in the game. Combining feedback information from the consumers via the On-line News Groups, registration card information, and their own ideas, they put together a list of upgrades that would make the ultimate game. After presenting the list to From Software, Inc. of Japan, ASCII also added Austin (as in "Prince") Leininger to the ranks of the KF II team to help implement the upgrades and make KF II a smashing success.

"Rewriting the Japanese script was a blast," quoth Austin. "It was the opportunity to actually create an entire script for a video game only limited by the original story line from Japan."

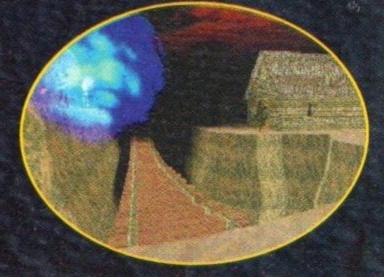
The improvements over King's Field I include...

- Larger world to explore.
- Outside areas of exploration.
- CD Quality music and sounds.
- Improved character definition and dialog.
- Enhanced storyline and plot.
- · More fearsome enemies.
- Enhanced weapons and magics.

And Much, Much MORE!



THE FACE OF THE ENEMY





this time, you have the entirety of the kingdom to explore!

larger-than-life enemies lay before you on the monster infested island of Melanat.

Shipwrecked on this island, you were to battle your way through levels upon levels of dungeons and monsters in search of the Moonlight Sword which was stolen from the King's Throne in Verdite (the kingdom on the mainland).

Your character, Alexander, learned magic spells, grew more skilled with his sword, and was able to pick up and equip any weapons,

of the new quest is that the storyline has been greatly improved upon! I know that a lot of us thought that the first King's Field was plenty deep, but ASCII has gone above and beyond to make this sequel an experience that will draw you deep into the involved plot — disabling you from putting down your controller until every last Red Eye, DragoNewt, and Stool are driven from the king-

You start out the game with an introduction which allows you the chance to find out what has been happening since Alexander brought back the Moonlight Sword to the kingdom of Verdite five years ago. A cool intro

dom!

bring you into the world as the King's son, Prince Austin Lyle Forester, a title that should have everyone in the kingdom bowing to kiss your feet. Unfortunately, your father - King John Alfred Forester I — has fallen to the will of the evil forces which are attacking your kingdom.

PUBLISHED	BY	RE	LEASE DATE	
ASCII Entertainment		Halloween '96		
SYSTEM		THEME		
PlayStation		Acti	on/Adventure RPG	
# OF PLAYERS	SI	ZE	% COMPLETE	
1	CD-	ROM	95%	

READERS' TOP TEN

- 1. Tekken 2 PS
- 2. Resident Evil PS
- 3. Mario⁶⁴ Nintendo⁶⁴
- 4. Crash Bandicoot PS
- 5. Mario RPG SNES
- 6. NiGHTS Saturn
- 7. Killer Instinct 2 Arcade
- 8. Pilotwings Nintendo⁶⁴
- 9. Donkey Kong Country 2 SNES
- 10. Street Fighter Alpha Saturn/PS
- 1. Tomb Raider PS
- 2. Crash Bandicoot PS
- 3. Amok Saturn
- 4. WaveRace64 Nintendo64
- 5. Suikoden PS
- 1. NiGHTS Saturn
- 2. Street Fighter Zero 2 Saturn
- 3. Wave Race64 Nintendo64
- 4. Incredible Toons PS
- 5. Powerslave Saturn



- 6. Bug Too! Saturn
- 7. Pandemonium PS
- 8. Jet Moto PS
- 9. Sonic Blast 3D Saturn
- 10. Overkill PS
- - 6. Mr. Bones Saturn 7. Pandemonium - PS
 - 8. Virtua Cop 2 Saturn
 - 9. Ghouls 'N Ghosts Genesis
 - 10. Super Mario Kart SNES

READERS' MOST WANTED

- 1. Mario⁶⁴ Nintendo⁶⁴
- 2. Final Fantasy VII PS
- 3. MK Trilogy Nintendo⁶⁴
- 4. Virtua Fighter 3 Arcade
- 5. KI Gold Nintendo⁶⁴
- 6. Zelda64 Nintendo64
- 7. Tomb Raider PS/Saturn
- 8. Mario Kart R Nintendo 64
- 9. Pilotwings 64 Nintendo⁶⁴
- 10. Legacy of Kain Nintendo 64
 - 1. Tomb Raider PS
 - 2. Suikoden PS
 - 3. Resident Evil PS
 - 4. Super Mario⁶⁴ Nintendo⁶⁴
 - 5. Lunar: Eternal Blue Sega CD
 - 1. Tomb Raider PS
 - 2. Sakura Taisen Saturn
 - 3. Suikoden PS
 - 4. Policenauts Saturn
 - 5. Persona PS

- 6. Policenauts PS
- 7. Final Fantasy 5 SNES
- 8. Wipeout XL PS
- 9. Crash Bandicoot PS
- 10. Front Mission SNES
- 6. Resident Evil PS
- 7. Torico Saturn
 - 8. Psychic Force PS 9. Contra - PS

 - 10. Tenchi Sozo SF

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

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to last month's winners: **First Prize:**

Stephen Gooch, Reidsville, NC **Second Prize:**

John Allen, Capitol Heights, MD Third Prize:

Gabriel Laverdiere, Ste.Foy, QC





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References:

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Chuck Brown: Deceased

Barry Polipooey: Deceased

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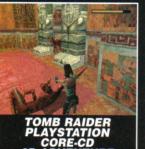








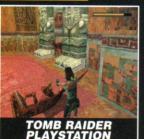










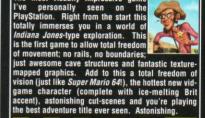






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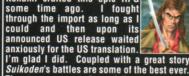


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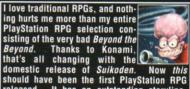
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Suikoden is one of the few fantasy RPGs that truly takes the genre in a whole new direction. There are some potholes along that road, like the equipping, unequipping problem and such but the journey is well worth it. The storyline

(8)



P

(9)

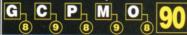
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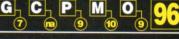
Suikoden's battles are some of the best ever. The menus scream by and the music is not only fitting but superb. The overhead map leaves much to be desired, but otherwise one of the best RPGs in years.

is great, the battle system is very well done, the characters are vivid and memorable, and the soundtrack is just stunning. Overhead graphics kind of bite, but otherwise, this is a truly spectacular experience.

released. It has an outstanding storyline, great battles, and amazing music, making Suikoden the best 32-bit RPG I've ever played. I can't thank you enough, Konami...









RPG

Appaloosa have created a fine

Yes this looks and sounds amaz-ing, but to me *Contra* has always been about precision play

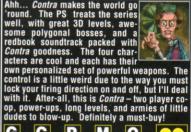
Ahh... Contra makes the world go



Appaloosa have created a fine (hard, really hard, but fine) 3D actioner in the Contra spirit.

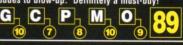
Contra: Hard Corps (my favorite in the series) it's not, but it comes as close as I think anyone could expect from a 3D game. The action is non-stop, the bosses, big and bad, and the music, very impressive. Having to beat the game on normal to see all six levels I do not agree with in this case. It's way too hard for the masses. Only the most die-hard Contra buffs will win this war. But it's a war worth winning will win this war. But it's a war worth winning.

been about precision play mechanics as much as impressive bosses. The problem is the control method. Legacy of War is a top/down scrolling shooter with a control system like Smash TV on the Genesis: namely a lock-direction fire button. That just doesn't work for me. It's still a good game, but with an Overkill-style control system this could have been awesome. Make the next one 2D. huh ouvs? next one 2D, huh guys?



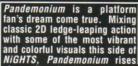


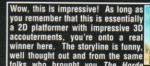






Platform addicts, prepare to be amazed. Pandemonium, with its live action camera, brings a new sense of 'being there' to action platform genre which Sony is now in complete control of. The graphics will astound you the bosses will scare you and the music will entice you. This game is quite the work of art. The CG intro is possibly the best ever. It's a little on the easy side but brilliant! Everyone will love *Pandemonium*.







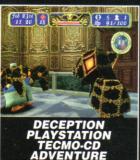
above its simplistic play mechanics to become a truly joyous experience! The game may be set on a 2D plane but thanks to the amazing interactive camera system it immerses you in a 3D environment. 2D control in a 3D world? Works for me!





C, P, M, 7 8 8

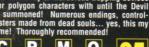
C P M 8 8 9



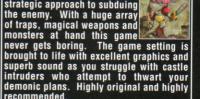
A beautifully texture mapped game, Deception mixes tried and true corridor gaming, demonic overtones and strategy as you set and spring traps throughout a There are plenty of scares in *Deception*.

Although everything is executed extremely well right down to the creation mode, I can't

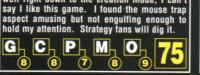
An original PlayStation release!! Yes indeed, I was as surprised as you are! This medieval adventure with dark overtones and a fantastic brooding atmosphere is genuinely inspired; and I thank Tecmo profusely for releasing it here. This is 30 polygon adventuring with a dollop of strategy and an all new attack for your hero; magical traps! As the story unfolds, you're treated to a vast array of murderous trapping devices to kill your polygon characters with until the Devil himself is summoned! Numerous endings, controllable monsters made from dead souls... yes, this my kind of game! Thoroughly recommended!



A novel twist on the Doom genre that features a more strategic approach to subduing



recommended. C P M O (8) (9)



C P M 0 (8) (8)



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The FMV that opens Disruptor is an exercise in pain. It honestly destroyed my mood. Why on earth would I want to be this hyperlame? HIT THE BUTTON! A look at the game itself unveils a meaty corridor shooter with smooth graphics diverse environments and high quality visuals. A corri-dor game alert should be sounded! After Powerslave, I'll be hard pressed to find as good a corridor experience but (minus the FMV) Disruptor will do just fine ...

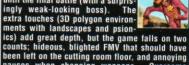


Another quality first person per spective shooter courtesy Universal. Smooth graphics (though with limited visibility), great sounds, chunky weapons and even psionic powers to mess

around with. Each level teaches you a new technique and sending enemies flying with the plas-ma shotgun can be VERY satisfying. Even though there's nothing new here, I can appreciate a good corridor game when I see one. One question though: where's the link-up mode?



sure plays a mean game of Doom, and was suitably exciting and tough to hold my attention right until the final battle (with a surpris-



been left on the cutting room floor, and annoying pauses when changing weapons. Overcome these two embarrassments, and you're playing a mean corridor stompathon.

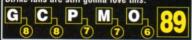




SOVIET STRIKE PLAYSTATION EA-CD SHOOTING

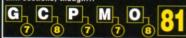
Soviet Strike is the 32-bit sequel I've been waiting for. The tried and trusted mixture of strategy and action that typified the 16-bit

Strike games returns, this time accompanied by professional FMV, 3D polygon objects and ultra-realistic CD sourced terrain. It's not perfect: The frame rate is way too choppy, and the difficulty level is a bit uneven (most enemies have a range bigger than the screen and rarely miss), but Strike fans are still gonna love this.



I was somewhat disappointed with this transformation from 16 to 32 bit as I found the actual missions far too difficult to complete (plus you have to begin your expedition from the very beginning should you

die). This is probably just me being inept, but many gamers should be aware of the difficulty level before becoming transfixed by the stunning FMV sequences and involving plot. Still don't like the way those buildings explode into waferthin sections, though...



I'm a big fan of the 16-bit Strike series. The 32-bit update uses the same formula, but throws in realtime 3D battlefields and a cool FMV plot that gets deeper as you progress. The frame rate's a little

low, the playfield looks a tad bland at times, but between the taxing demands of huge missions and the barrage of enemies, everything becomes a blur of blow-ups and bullets (fine by me!). A lot of quality play at your disposal here, and I recommend it to fans, purists, and newcomers alike.





What a surprise from ASC! The first pre-rendered adventure (since Resident Evil) worth your time has arrived. PW features a slick lead character modeled and animated

character modeled and animated with extreme care and locales you won't soon forget. The fighting is complex, yet easy to execute, and the accompanying soundtrack and effects complement the action on screen. What's even better, though, is the maceine circuit of this advanture. Said to be the massive size of this adventure. Said to be over 100 hours long, PW will satisfy even the most demanding adventure gamer.



Take the pre-rendered backdrops and polygon characters of Resident Evil, add a Tekken 2-style combat system and hey presto: Perfect Weapon! The trou-

ble is, these two game styles do not go well together, especially when the main character is as horribly unresponsive as Blake Hunter. The awkward cam era angles sometimes make it hard to see the action when fighting, and even though you do kinda get used to it, the whole thing is just way too frustrating for me. Nice graphics, though.



Perfect Weapon is the best prerendered polygonal adventure I've ever played. I still love Resident Evil, but PW takes you to so many more places with so much more to see and do. The

key here is that nothing ever loads, so every wicked piece of pre-rendered art hits you instantly. Throw in a heavily fighting-based gameplay engine with excellent control and truly massive levels and I'm lovin' this game. Check out my review for full details.



C, P, M, 9 9 9 9





PUZZLE FIGHTER PLAYSTATION CAPCOM-CD PUZZLE

If you're ever gonna play a puzzle game this should be the one. Puzzle Fighter, besides its ultra-hip, squished Capcom fighting crew adds a unique twist to this otherwise over-

Tempest for the new age! A mix-ture of hot techno and twisting,

turning ropes of enemy and

Nanotek Warrior is as much a

ride as it is a game. The difficul-

will thoroughly dig Nanotek

obstacle-laden

used concept. The addition of combos that can turn what looks like certain death into a furious victory makes every game a fight to the end and the music, re-mixed for your listening pleasure, is great. I like the shatter effect, too, when jewels explode.



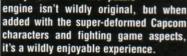
ty is way high and some may hurl at first, vic-

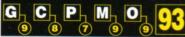
tim of Nano's many twists and turns, but overall this game is a rush to play. I especially like the inner tube scenarios using reverse G's

to dart through huge fan blades. Tempest fans

polygons,

I can admit that Puzzle Fighter isn't one of the best puzzle games that I've played; but let others say what they will, I really liked it. The puzzle





It's nice that this game exudes Street Fighter/Night Warriors cuteness, but as a game, it's suspiciously similar to Puyo Puyo Baku Baku Animal, and a count-less ton of others. None of that's

bad, as those are fun games I truly do enjoy, but if you've played any one of them, you've played this, too. I did like the Street Puzzle Fighter mode, but otherwise, this offers nothing to the genre except for cute voices and reminiscent Street Fighter tunes.



C P M O **(6) (6) (7) (7)**





C P M O SHOOTING 8 9 7 9 I know this sounds crazy, but I liked original Wipeout better than this

enhanced-in-the-wrongplaces sequel. The hills and val-leys found in the original have been sacrificed for vastness' sake



A 3D scrolling shooter set on a tube may not sound like the greatest game concept, but in practice it actually works pretty well. Nanotek Warrior is fast, furious, good looking (even if the

objects are a little simple) and super tough – maybe even a bit too tough. *Tempest 2000* this ain't, but hardcore blasting fans looking for a shooter that'll last more than a day could do a lot worse.



The fastest graphics ever seen, a supremely polished racing engine,

glorious texture-mapped scenery

Unlike Starwinder, this first person shooter has plenty goin' for it. Ten long levels of non-stop blasting, fantastic high-speed texturemapped polygonal tube ridin', and hey, it plays like a dream. There's always a new swarm of enemies.

insane moving obstacles to dodge, and freaky mid and end bosses that you fight in wicked 3D battle zones. Everyone says it's too tough... yeah, yeah, quit your whining, you girlie men! It's good 'n tough, that's all. Finally, the fantastic techno

score keeps me grinnin' P C M O





and the music doesn't live up to the blazing original. What's worse is that the female char-acters are gone. XL does have new sleds, bet-ter effects, more tracks and better graphics, but it just doesn't capture the spirit of the original on the SS. I'm surely alone on this one.

too soon. I would have given this 100%, except for the longevity; I want more than two days of play from my PlayStation software... C P M 0

no glitching or pop-up... what could possibly go wrong? Well nothing if you didn't play the first Wipeout, but those with a modicum of racing should battle through this game in two days. The whole experience is undentable awayes me ustil the end which is over way.

ably awesome until the end, which is over way

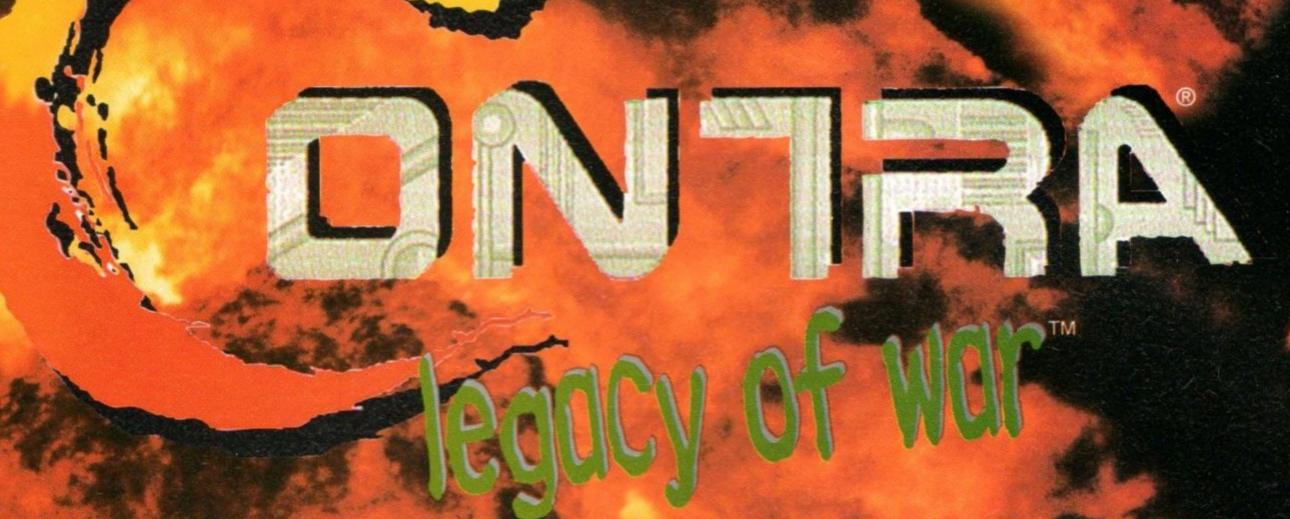
The game that sold a hundred thousand PlayStations is back, and how! New tracks, new weapons, improved CPU AI, the ability to completely destroy other craft (or

completely destroy other craft (or you own), and an even more kickin' soundtrack (the Prodigy is close to my heart). It may be the same graphics engine but Wipeout XL looks faster, smoother, and fuller than its predecessor. The lightning paced gameplay and balanced craft handling is much the same, but hey, if it ain't broke, don't fix it! Another notch in Sony's belt.









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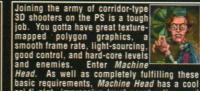
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(7)

. (8)





shooters are a dime a dozen, but how about one set on a hover bike! Control of the Vorpal Blade takes a bit of getting used to, but

with practice becomes very intu-itive. Plus EVERYTHING is made of light sourced polygons. The enemies look cool, the weapons are satisfying and the levels are varied. The only downside is the limited visibility distance which makes the game seem very dark, but even that rain can't stop the parade.

9







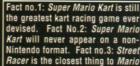


STREET RACER PLAYSTATION UBI SOFT-CD RACING/BATTLE

Street Racer is the best attempt at mimicking Mario Kart yet. The high-res graphics complete with oodles of hot cameras are a real show-stopper and the character

design is unique and original. My E. Honda dude will wreak havoc on all comers! Although the tracks are pretty short they are extremely well laid and laced with peril. The music's very cool and the cartoon tracks awarded for completing the gold cup... crazy!





C₁ P₁

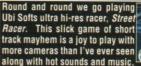
Kart that PlayStation owners are ever going to get. Street Racer has crisp graphics, a truckload of extra features, up to 8-player split-screen action (or 4 in boxes), and so-so control. It's a good game, it's just not Mario Kart.

M

(8)

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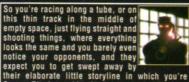




and enough depth for the most demanding kart racer. The accompanying cartoon that plays between each round is beyond Saturday morning quality and the whole affair seems slick and well produced. Plus, up to 8 can play!







Conner Rhodes, pride of your species, with a racing strategy so unique and astonishing that it's just the talk of the galaxy? Right... My strategy is to fly straight and shoot, and it hasn't failed me yet. This game is just pointless, cheap, and sad



Starwinder looks like it could be a bonus level in some other really cool shooter. Unfortunately, it's not. Fly down a tunnel, shoot stuff, beat your opponent to the other end and er, that's it. Sure, a simple concept

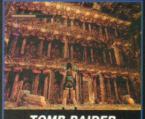
er, that's it. Sure, a simple concept doesn't necessarily make for a bad game, but it does here. Starwinder gets real dull real quick. The action is supremely repetitive and there's not nearly enough variety in the tracks. The graphics are smooth, and I did kind of dig the cheesy FMV cut scenes, but that's not really enough to recommend a nurchase. enough to recommend a purchase.



The numerous high-quality FMV sequences set up for an epic story; once I got to the game itself, however, I was sorely let down. What tries to be a racing

game ends up more like a shooter, and it's enough trouble keeping yourself close to the track. What graphics are present are nice, but there's never that much to look at beyond the track itself. More time should have been spent on the game itself, and less on the cinemas.





TOMB RAIDER CORE.CD 3D ADVENTURE

This is such a hard review for me. After playing the PS version of Tomb Raider I can't even look at the Saturn game. There, I said it. While I love it immensely, I can-not score it anywhere near the PS

game. It may be one of the best Saturn games this year and is definitely the console's best adventure but the texture, frame rate and light sourcing loss weighs heavy on Lara's shoulders. .Buy a PS or buy the Saturn game. Either way you can't go wrong. Core has struck gold!



Ugh, what happened here? This version seems to be running at half the resolution of its PlayStation cousin, and has this awful straight-from-Genesis color

awful Straight-from-Genesis color palette. I mean, it's still a great game, and if you only have Saturn and have no plans to buy a PlayStation, you'll be more than happy with it. Really, though, I'm probably the biggest Saturn fan there is here at GameFan, and I've got to admit that the difference between this and the PS one is like gibt and day. Very disappointing night and day. Very disappointing.



It's a pity that the system for which Tomb Raider was originally intended has ended up with an inferior version of the game. It's still a solid title, but the glitchy visuals detract from the overall atmosphere. Still, the brilliant level design, cunning puzzles, ferocious monsters and awe-inspiring scenery are all as amazing as ever. My only other criticism would be that the control is just a little too much like Prince of Persia in 3D for my liking, but you do get used to it.



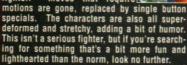


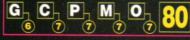
Again, my review says it all yet here I am forced to say even more. Ni Toshinden, a combination of Toshinden and characters from Takara's hot toy line is a super-deformed fan's dream

fighter. With its simplistic yet effective controls, hot music and blazing graphics, soaked with color and light, *Ni Toshinden* is a cut above *VF Kids*. Will it ever come out here, though? I doubt it. If there ever was a niche game, this is it.



Besides a few characters and moves, *Ni Toshinden* is nothing like the previous Toshindens. In other words, it's good. Ni Toshinden is also not your typical fighter. Moves that require





On the one hand, I'm very impressed with this game. Unlike the cheap route Sega take with VF Kids, this is a totally original game with new characters, new moves, plenty of

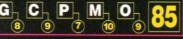
new systems, and cool new backgrounds. It's a lot of fun to screw around with, and looks surprisingly great in motion. On the other hand, it's *Toshinden*, so who cares? This is a good idea that should have been saved for a more worthy series.



SYCHIC FORCE LAYSTATION TAITO-CD FIGHTING

And now for something com-pletely different... Psychic Force opens with animation beyond 90% of the anime out there and from there pours out a fighter with Ziplock fresh-

ness, hot character design, and excellent control. A lack of any real depth makes it a fleeting experience but overall this is a worthy fighter, especially versus a friend. Honestly, I'd buy it for the music alone. Zuntata is in rare form here.



In a world full of traditional 2D and 3D fighters, it's nice to see something different come along. Psychic Force is still a 2D fighter in essence, but there's such a feeling of freedom and the gameplay's so unique, it gave me much enjoyment. The graphics are hot and the music's great; my only complaint is with the lack of depth (you can beat the game with the same basic strategy). I just hope it makes it out here...



Hey, this is pretty cool. The back-grounds are great, the intro is spec-tacular, and the music's good too... As for the game itself, I'm kind of ambivalent. On the plus side, it's totally original, and there's an

incredible amount of strategy involved. The characters are vastly different and a lot of fun to experiment with. On the down side, it just gets kind of tiresome chucking fireballs all day. Maybe if the play mechanics were a bit more intuitive... Still well worth a purchase, and Acclaim would be wise to buy this one.



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ZAK AFIFI, CLEMMONS, NORTH CAROLINA

Just cause he's a joker doesn't mean he plays with a full deck.



Ante up to Crystal Dynamics' fastest, endorphin-based 3D action game.

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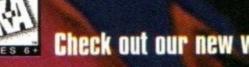
a slightly twisted jester and his maniacal puppet-on-a-stick. Blur through unbelievably spacious levels of their deranged 3D kingdom while shape-changing into a fire-blasting dragon or raging rhino. Just sit down and get taken for a ride, it's pure rocket fuel.



















Access the "?" in the OPTION SCREEN. HOLD UP, L1, L2, R1, R2 until the screen shakes and you hear a sound. This code will allow you to have a number of options, one of them being one button **FATALITIES!** Here are the Buttons:

To choose the KOMBAT ZONE, highlight SONYA or HUMAN SMOKE and Push UP & START. You should then hear a sound. After choosing your fighter, it will then ask you what stage you wish to do Kombat on...



To play as CHAMELEON, select any ninja (Scorpion, Reptile, Rain, etc.), and hold LEFT, HP. HK. BLOCK and RUN until the match starts and you change. For the 2nd player, hold RIGHT. HP, HK, BLOCK, and RUN.

Darrin Griffin nny@mail.wwinternet.net

HP: Brutality

HK: Fatality #1

LK: Fatality #2

BLOCK: Friendship **RUN:** Animality

To play as a CLASSIC CHARACTER, highlight RAYDEN, KANO, KUNG LAO or JAX and press the SELECT Button. The square will rotate to reveal the classic character!

TIME COMMANDO

SONY PLAYSTATION

PASSWORDS

Here are some passwords for Activision's Time Commando. Each will put you in the first level of a different time-period / stage. The maximum # of men is 3 & energy is 4. (Note: These passwords are for NORMAL LEVEL!)

Roman - XCBVVEFM					
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS
2-1	2	1	1	0	4

		lapanese	- CMUBLE	GO	
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS
3-1	3	3	2.57	0	1

Medieval - OWDIBBGQ						
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS	
4-1	3	3	1.25	0	1	

	Conquistador - KWIYFDFM						
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS		
5-1	2	4	4	0	7		

Wild West - UXRJEVNQ						
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS	
6-1	3	4	4	0	7	

	Mo	dern War	s - UZXNO	OMYC	
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS
7-1	3	4	1.75	0	0

Future - QPKZJFLA					
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS
8-1	3	4	2	0	10

	Viru	s - Final S	tage - SE	RDLPIL	
LEVEL	MEN	ENERGY BLOCKS	ENERGY FULL	VIRUS	EXTRA CHIPS
9-1	3	4	3.25	0	1

John Allen Capitol Heights, Maryland





Hey, they do look quite familiar... Just PAUSE the game and enter any one of the following to really gun 'em down!! Happy huntin'!

MAP ENEMY POSITIONS:

TRI. TRI. L2. R2. L2. R2. R1. CIR

MAP ENTIRE LEVEL:

TRI, TRI, L2, R2, L2, R2, R1, SQU

DOWN, L2, SQU, R1, RIGHT, L1, LEFT, CIR RIGHT, LEFT, R2, R1, TRI, L1, CIR, X

DON LEWIS FORTUNA, CALIFORNIA

FREE AMMO AND KEYS:

X, TRI, L1, UP, DOWN, R2, LEFT, LEFT

X-RAY VISION:

L1, R2, L2, R1, RIGHT, TRI, X, RIGHT

WARP LEVELS:

CRASH-BANDICOOT

SONY PLAYSTATION

100% CODE, BRIDGE TRICK



Thanks go to the hardcore David Rodriguez for the 100% all levels and all keys code. Another trick to note is for any 'bridge' level (such as Road to Nowhere): Instead of jumping to your doom, try jumping onto the ropes holding the bridge up (to the left or the right) and you've found an awesome short-cut. Just walk on these ropes and you'll complete the level in no time (just watch your step, you could still fall).



GUARDIAN-HEROES

SEGA SATURN

DEBUG CODE!



Want to squeeze the last ounce of gameplay from this awesome side-scrolling Treasure classic? Then enter the OPTION MODE from the title screen. Highlight EXIT and hold the X+B+Z buttons. Then press and hold DOWN on the D-pad (you'll get a 'roulette shuffle' effect) before quickly tapping A when the DIP-SWITCH option is highlighted (fast reactions are needed here!). Once you've succeeded, another option (DEBUG OFF/ON) should appear at the bottom of the screen. Switch the DEBUG to ON and execute the following:

- HAN Level 200 0 0 0 Bonus points STR. VIT. 32 INT. 32 MEN. 32 AGL. 32 LUC.
- 1.) Pick your character and a STAGE SELECT prompt appears.
- 2.) You'll also have 200 points to max out your character!
- 3.) Pause and press L SHIFT to activate collision detection (works in versus mode).
- 4.) In VERSUS mode. you have 45 different characters to choose from!
- 5.) In OPTIONS screen. access TEST MODE to see the seven different endings!



PETER STAACK HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS

When playing the game, enter one of the following: HOLD X+Y+Z+UP TO REFILL HEALTH

HOLD X+Y+Z+DOWN TO DIE (!)

HOLD R SHIFT+START TO SKIP AHEAD ONE STAGE

HOLD R SHIFT+A+START TO SKIP TWO STAGES

HOLD R SHIFT+B+START TO SKIP THREE STAGES

HOLD L SHIFT+R SHIFT+START TO SKIP BACK ONE STAGE

HOLD L+R+A+START TO SKIP BACK TWO STAGES

HOLD L+R+B TO SKIP BACK THREE STAGES

HOLD L+R+C TO SKIP BACK FOUR STAGES



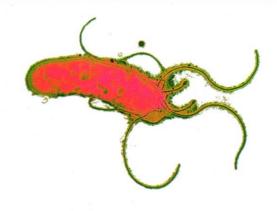
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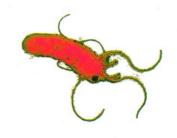


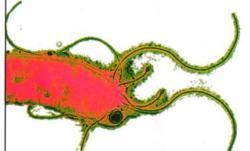
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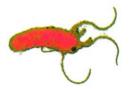


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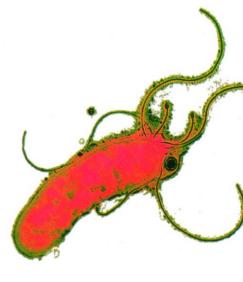
SAVE THE PLANET FROM A DEADLY VIRUS WITH





















OUT LEAVING THE COMFORT OF YOUR BOMB.

Hold on tight, this ain't no joyride. It's up to you to wipe the life-mutating Machine Head virus off the face of this zombie-infested planet. Equipped with a bombful of futuristic weapons, you have exactly fifteen missions to annihilate each and every one of the putrefied mutants. And then face the viral villain himself in the mother of all show-downs. So don't just sit there. Your bomb is waiting.





At the screen where you choose your fighters, select TEAM EDIT, and select "YES." Then while holding START. input the following to play as the bosses Omega Rugal and Saishu Kusanagi!

UP & CIRCLE, RIGHT & SQUARE, LEFT & X. DOWN & TRIANGLE. (Press the direction pad and the coinciding button at the same time.) ZAK AFIFI



CLEMMONS, NORTH CAROLINA

KING OF FIGHTERS '95

SONY PLAYSTATION (IMPORT)

SAME CHARACTER FOR TEAM EDIT MODE, EXTRA OPTIONS



When selecting your character. highlight "YES" in the TEAM EDIT option. Then while holding down the START button. input the following code:

UP & CIRCLE, DOWN & TRIANGLE, LEFT & X, RIGHT & SQUARE, UP & CIRCLE, (Done similar to the BOSS CODE.)

CONFIGURATION LEVEL SELECT 12345678 WON DEMO UN OFF KEY SET LR CONTROL EXIT

For an extra set of options, simply hold down all of the shoulder buttons (L1, L2, R1, R2) down at the same time and select **CONFIGURATION** with any button.

TOBAL NO. SONY PLAYSTATION (IMPORT) SECOND OUTFIT, HOM'S SHUT-OFF BOSS CHARACTERS!



We really don't know what significance this move has, but if you want Hom to commit suicide, simply press L1, R1, and DOWN at the same time.



To acquire the three bosses in Tobal No.1. you must complete all three levels in QUEST MODE. To do this takes extreme fighting skill, and patience. And if you do accomplish this. you truly are No. 1!



ADAM HAZARD PASO ROBLES, CALIFORNIA

To play as the second player outfits, simply hold UP on the directional pad when selecting your character.



To pick the bosses, move the icon to the left of CHUJI, and you will see the boss names appear. Yep, MUFU, UDAN, and a slightly smaller NORK (which has changed to SNORK), will be playable!

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"It's unique, challenging, and packed with addictive gameplay..."

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ONE OF THE MOST IMMERSIVE, MYSTICAL GAMING EXPERIENCES EVER, NIGHTS ESTABLISHES AN ENTIRELY NEW GAMEPLAY PARADIGM. THINK OF IT AS PSYCHODRAMA, AN EXPRESS ESCALATOR INTO THE SCHIZOPHRENIC, MIND-BENDING VIRTUAL WORLD OF YOUR DREAMS.

THE WORLD

CREATED BY THE RENOWNED SONIC TEAM, NIGHTS IS A FULL-ON 3D MASTERPIECE. A WORLD WITH LUSH DREAMSCAPE REALITIES, ITS OWN MICRO-CLIMATES, EVEN ITS OWN NATURAL ORDER. IMAGINE. SMOKE, FOG, CLOUDS, RAIN, AND WATER THAT APPEAR IN MULTIPLE LEVELS OF TRANSPARENCY. WATERFALLS, CURRENTS, WIND, AND, YES, A TORNADO THAT FOLLOW THE LAWS OF FLUID PHYSICS. ALL BACKED BY A RAGING SOUNDTRACK THAT BLENDS JAZZ, ROCK, ORCHESTRA, WORLD MUSIC, AND EFFECTS.

THE GAMEPLAY NIGHTS SCREAMS ALONG AT BANSHEE ITS ADAPTIVE SPEED MANAGEMENT GAMEPLAY AND BREAKTHROUGH TO REPLICATE THE TRUE SENSATIONS MORPH SEQUENCES. ITS OVER TWENTY IN REAL TIME. AND ITS OMNIPRESENT

SPEED. DESPITE MASSIVE 3D DEMANDS, SYSTEM SUPPORTS BOTH BREAKNECK ENVIRONMENTS. WITNESS ITS ABILITY OF FLIGHT. ITS LIGHTNING MULTIPLE TRACKING CAMERA ANGLES THAT SCROLL-SHIFT SYMPHONY OF 3D POSITIONAL SOUND.

THE NEW 3D CONTROL PAD

ENGINEERED SPECIFICALLY TO INTENSIFY THE NIGHTS EXPERIENCE, SEGA SATURN'S 3D CONTROL PAD ESTABLISHES A NEW BENCHMARK IN SMOOTH AND DYNAMIC OPERATION. IN ANALOG MODE, ITS PULSE-SENSITIVE THUMBPAD ENABLES UNPRECEDENTED MANEUVERABILITY AT BREATHTAKING SPEEDS. AND A DIGITAL MODE ALLOWS COMPATIBILITY WITH ALMOST ALL OTHER SEGA SATURN GAMES. {PLEASE CALL 1-800-USA-SEGA FOR ANY COMPATIBILITY QUESTIONS.}

The Benediction

There's more, of course. But the rest is up to you. Rick off your walking shoes. Say your prayers. And fly. No way you'll sleep. But you'll have wicked good dreams.





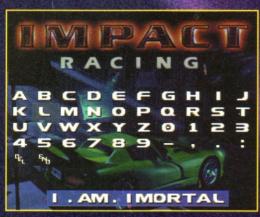












John Reynolds has completed Impact Racing, and has come up with some awesome codes for all of you to use! Simply input the codes in the PASSWORD option screen.

JOHN A. REYNOLDS DOYLESTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

I.AM.IMORTAL - INVINCIBILITY

LOADSOFSTUFF - INFINITE WEAPONS

ALL.TOOLEDUP - ACCESS TO ALL WEAPONS

BONUS.LEVELS - PLAY ALL 6 BONUS TRACKS

ENDGAMELEVEL - PLAY FINAL TRACK OF GAME

RABBITBADGER - LEVEL SKIP

JOURNEYS.END - TRIPPY MUSIC MODE



CRASH-RANDICOOT

SONY PLAYSTATION

FRUIT MADNESS



In the stages "Lost City" or "Sunset Vista," there is an infinite fruit trick that allows you to rack up on the extra lives! Just hit the first ceiling bat and proceed to the next. When the string of bats come flying down, jump up and kill the second ceiling bat. The whole row of bats should turn into the lovely fruit that our favorite bandicoot loves to eat! Is that good enough for you, George?



BLACK-DAWN

SONY PLAYSTATION

CHEAT CODES!



PAUSE the game and enter the prefix: SELECT, L2, SELECT, R2. NOTE: ALWAYS ENTER THE PREFIX BEFORE ENTERING THE REST OF THE CODE!

"MAX FUEL & AMMO" - TRI, TRI, TRI, CIR

"GET MAX WEAPONS" - L1, L2, R1, R2
"CYCLE GUN MODES" - SELECT, SELECT, SELECT

"SUMMON WINGMAN" - SQU, SQU, SQU, CIR

"SCREEN MODE TOGGLE (BYPASS PAUSE MENU)" - DOWN R1, R2

<u>"MISSION COMPLETE"</u> - TRI, TRI, TRI, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN

"UPGRADE CURRENT WEAPON" - L1, L1, R1, R1







See you next month!

- WAKA & CHIEF HAMBLETON



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New Sonic games now available on Genesis, Game Gear and PC.





OR MAKE WASTE.



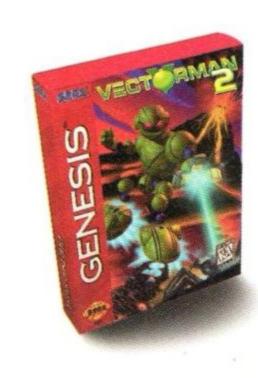
SENESIS







For more info, visit Sega's web site at http://www.sega.com or on Compuserve at GO SEGA.





adventure game, who'd have thought It would would end up one of the best games ever made? After playing the perfect platformer, Crash Bandicoot, and then the best adventure, Super Mario 64, I felt lucky to have experienced what I feel were 2 perfect games for '96. At present however, I am utterly shocked because now, there's not only a third, but of the three, in my opinion, Tomb Raider is the best. As they did before, my critics will come at me again. After scoring CB a perfect 100, friends commented they felt the game was great, but not perfect. Of course my follow up question was, did you complete the game with every gem? In every case, the answer was no. As it was in Super Mario World, and always shall be, the challenge beyond simply completing a game when applicable, is there for a reason. Completing SM64 with 120 stars vs. the far

less you actually need, cuts out a lot of the game. The same rings true for Crash. In Tomb Raider, it's the secrets. There are many in each area and finding them only adds to the perfection that is this awesome game.

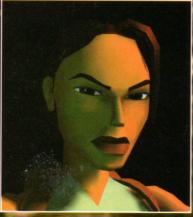
Newly-named Lara Croft is on a quest parallel to just about every Indiana Jones adventure in the book. We've got ancient artifacts, sleeping gods,



TOMB







greedy financiers, and rival fortune hunters. The difference? Lara's an astounding babe, and this is an astounding story that unfolds as you play a game, not watch a movie. Seein' it's one thing, but doin' it... hard to describe.

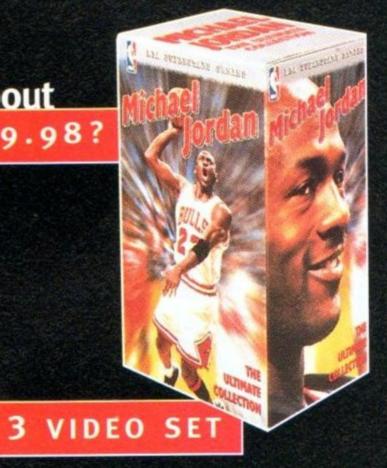
So, let's get to it shall we. We begin with Lara herself, the most graceful and fun to control video game character of all time. Lara does many things - so many, in fact, that you'll often feel you are controlling a living, breathing woman. The list of commands is as follows: Jump up, run, jump forward, jump back, lunge, grab onto & pull up, side jump, back flip, reverse spin, handstand into cartwheel, walk, strafe, backflip, push, pull, pick up, view angles, and shoot. Now, you want to hear something really interesting...

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...they all become second nature in a matter of minutes! Complex, yes; confusing, no. Lara has perfect control. But it goes beyond that. Position her in front of a pushable item, hold x and push forward and watch as Lara gives three realistic pushes so real it's scary, complete with straining grunts and groans. Lara's voice by the way is soft and British. She is the consummate cool chick, and she's all yours.

PlayStation

Of course, what purpose would all this trickery serve without the proper locales? That's where three years of development comes into play. The areas in Tomb Raider, spanning the globe from caves to exotic temples and treacherous fortresses are not only the most vast over any previous game (yes, even Mario), but they are so brilliantly designed and bursting with exploratory gameplay that it overloads the spirit with awe and joy. A single area can take well over an hour to beat early in the game. Later levels, depending on how good

FORMAT - CD

DEVELOPER - CORE

PUBLISHER - EIDOS

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER





you are, will take much longer. Saint Francis' Folly, for





E. Storm I'm speechless.



instance, the first area in the second quest holds four doors harnessing four gods. Inside a towering fortress 100s of feet high and laced with platforms, you must first find each door's switch, and then locate the chambers themselves.

Once inside you must secure a key, and then escape. To activate this portion of the Folly, you must first

open a room filled

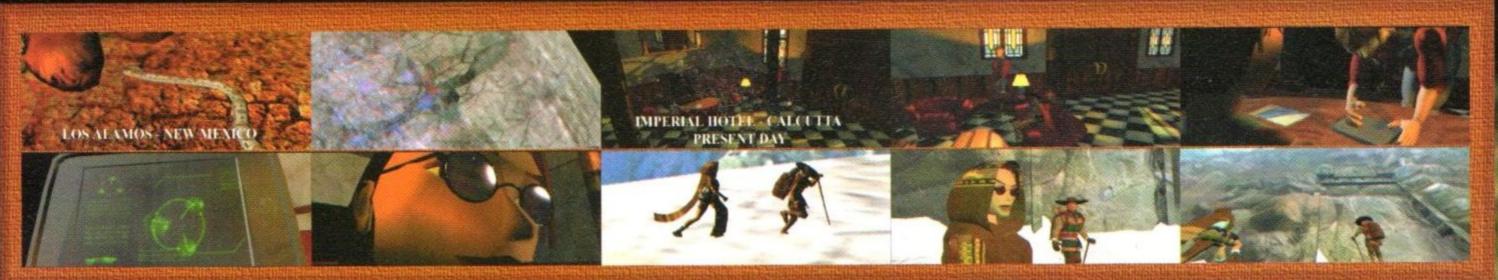
























ENTER THE

-LARA









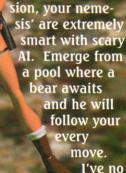


fortress floor, and from there... well, you get the point. All the while situations are brought to life through ambient music that begins and plays through certain events. You hear only your footsteps and the sounds of nature around you until something is about to happen, when music from the heavens chimes in, sending chills down your spine. Enemies attack in a similar









fashion, often coming out of nowhere. From wolves and apes to raptors and a t-rex from a parallel dimen-



























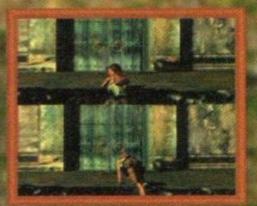


space to speak of
the CG and
attached story
but I assure you
it is as spectacular. Sadly, the
Saturn version of
TR is but a shell of
the godly PS version, which is so
good, I would urge
you to rent or buy a

PS just to enjoy this version.
FFVII's coming so you may as well. One thing is for sure, Tomb Raider for the PlayStation gets my vote for game of the year – and perhaps of all time.

ES



















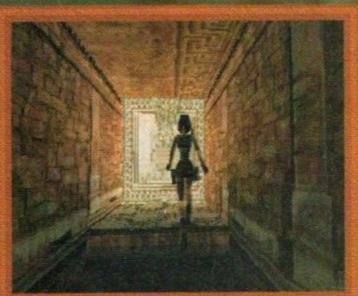












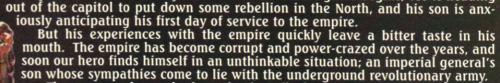


Next month is Megawards month, and I can't tell you how much I was looking forward to the heated fight in the RPG category: Lucienne's Quest for 3DO or Lufia 2 for SNES! I can't believe it's really come to this... A full year and that's all the RPG selection we get? Okay, to be fair, Riglord Saga/Mystaria/Blazing Whatever-it-Ended-Up-Being-Called was released for the Saturn, but that's more of a strategy title. And Beyond the Beyond has to be disqualified due to a small technicality (that it sucks).

But, thanks to Konami, a game that actually deserves to win has emerged at the last minute: Genso Suikoden is here! I was a huge fan of the Japanese version (covered in Vol. 4 Iss. 2 and Vol. 4 Iss. 4), and the American transla-

tion has recreated it all perfectly (except for the "Genso" part).

Suikoden is the story of a young boy born into a prestigious house of the Red Moon Empire. His father, Teo, is one of the empire's five legendary generals, and a close friend of the emperor. His father's wealth has insured him a child-hood of comfort, and he shares his luxurious home with many friends, guardians, and one freakishly obsessed male nanny named Gremio. As the game begins, Teo is heading



There are no demon lords to slay in Suikoden: Your quest is to assemble a trustworthy army, build an impenetrable fort, and overthrow the empire, your beloved father included. There are 107 characters who will join you on your quest (as well as countless peons who join for the large scale battles), aiding you in everything from direct combat to laundry duty. An

abandoned island fortress becomes your headquarters, and a valuable symbol of your progress as it grows from a single dirty room to an 8-floor tower housing shops, storerooms, living quarters, libraries, prisons, laboratories, baths, gardens, fields, and more.

In my opinion, this is a storyline capable of making any game interesting. But Suikoden offers a lot more than just that: The game's fast-paced battle system is equally innov-











ative, the magic system is ingenious, and the occasional war scenes are exciting, if a bit simplistic. Of course, any game with this much innovation is going to have a few unexpected hassles, and Suikoden is no exception: You can't really get the most of it unless you constantly rotate your party members, and the constant unequipping and equipping this requires quickly becomes tedious. Even worse, you'll have to be good at remembering names, for you get only the characters' names, not pictures, when picking your roster.

My only other complaint with Suikoden is in the bland, motionless overhead graphics. Luckily, the quality is much higher in the beautiful (and beautifully animated) battle scenes. Finally, it would be a grave injustice not to mention Suikoden's brilliant, luscious soundtrack. You've just

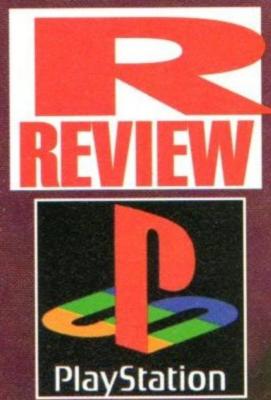
got to hear it to believe it ..

So, finally, we have our first 32-bit RPG epic. Suikoden isn't just a great game relative to the small, unimpressive crop of RPGs that trickle out here every year, it truly is a great game by any objective standard. T









DEVELOPER - KONAMI

PUBLISHER - KONAMI

FARMAT - CI

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

WAILARLE - DECEMBER



TAKUHI



Lomax & Evil Ed take Good vs Evil to a whole new level.

44 of them to be precise.

If you want to fight evil, then you'd better be ready to go the distance. The mischievous Lomax is in way over his head. But only he has the power to conquer Evil Ed and break the diabolical hex that has been placed on his friends.

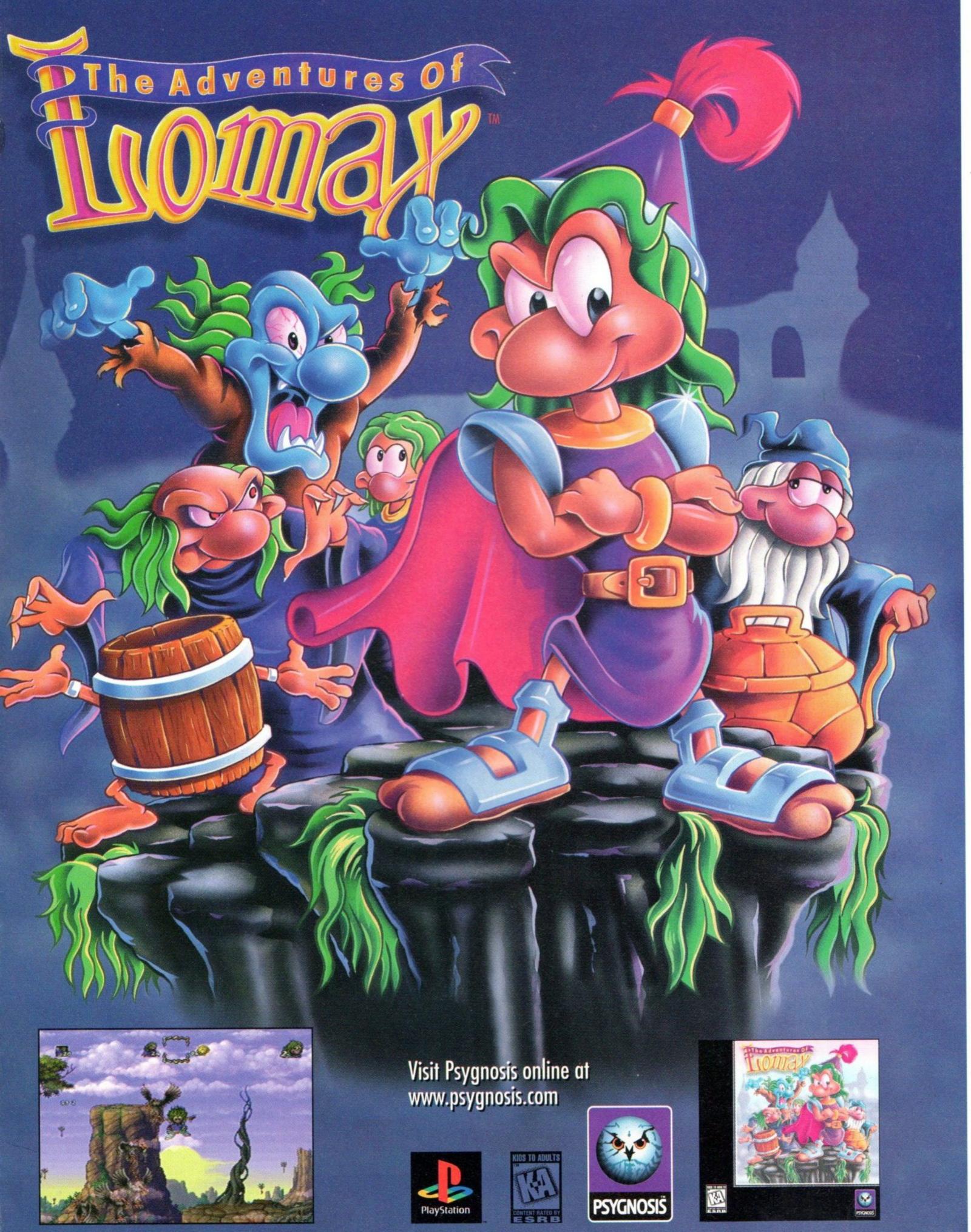
Zoom in & out of detailed landscapes up to 10 layers deep. Use amazing flame-thrower helmets, helicopter helmets and many more, to vanquish evil.

But look out. The Adventures of Lomax can be habit forming, and that's something even you may not be strong enough to fight.









PREVIEW



Speed 235 see Lap Time 00 09 07

DEVELOPER - REFLECTIONS

PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS

FORMAT - CO

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



Still Running





00 36 71 Fastest Lap

03/10 Lap No



CHIEF HAMBLETON SIT BACK AND WATCH MORE CAR CARNAGE!

hat deluge of Brit-based software just keeps on a-comin'! The follow-up to the fun but flawed Destruction Derby has finally been granted a release, and this time the Newcastle-based Reflections is hard at work improving all aspects of the game. From the 90 percent complete version of the game that I played, I can tell you this is a simple revamp of the original. DD fans are likely to be fairly twitching with delight, but although I'm a real racing fan, I and many others were never taken with the original; any problems that Reflections have kept for the sequel shall be dealt with in the review. For now, let's look at the extra features which makes DD2 stand out from the increasingly congested crowd of 32-bit racers.

DD2's main advantage is that it's the only racer where bits come off your stock car (flying off in heaps of triangular polygon shards) and wrecking is the name of the game, but this time, there's banked courses (a real bonus which allows huge jumps and spins to be attempted!), lens flare (both in the midday sun and from night-time street lamps), four bowl arenas (where you essentially press accelerate and watch your car get demolished), more extensive crashing; and most

exciting of all; real pit-stops!!

Yep, now you can race away, side-swipe a couple of drone cars and get your wing repaired all in the same lap. This is a really cool-sounding idea except for one nag-

ging flaw; the moment you pit in, all your opponents streak by (and they never have to pit themselves), meaning that the pit serves no real purpose whatsoever. I'm hoping for some major rethinking in time for the release (but I ain't holding my breath). What I can say is that unlike Wipeout XL, this game is hard; mind-numbingly hard. One slight oversteer sends you spinning into 19 other bloodthirsty competitors. Those with previous DD experience (there should be a few, it sold phenomenally) should know what to expect. Review next issue... CH



















Appaloosa were given quite a task. Take Contra, a 2D legend dating back some ten years, create a 3D ver-

sion, and stay as true as possible to the original. Fail, and you're responsible for breaking a chain of legendary hits. Succeed, and your name goes up in lights. Appaloosa have toiled hard over Contra and for a 3D actioner, I'd say they've definitely succeeded. Of course I'd have preferred my first 32-bit Contra in 2D, but I'll live. As I stated last month

egacy of War Contist in that

most of what made Contra, well, Contra, is in here. Bullseyes that when hit explode

walls, big spiny and/or fleshy bosses, airborne power-ups you shoot out of the sky, and of course, insane difficulty. Intermediate gamers will survive the easy mode with its 4 levels, but to see all six you must step up to normal. Normal in this case being a baby step from super human. Beyond normal additional rewards await



DEVELOPER - APPALOOSA

PUBLISHER - KONAMI

FORMAT - CI

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFIGULIY - ADVANGED

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER















ENEMY SOLDIERS DON'T TAKE KINDLY TO YOU TRASHING THEIR ARCADE... SO KILL EM ALL AND WRECK THE PLACE



























BY LAND, RAFT, AND THEN BOAT, THIS IS ONE WILD RIVER! DEADLY TOO!









HIT THE DECK! THE JUNK MONSTER WILL HAVE A HARD TIME HITTING YOU LAYIN' LOW. PICTURED IN THE TOP LEFT SCREEN, SHOOT THE WALLS, THERE'S AMMO AND LIVES HIDDEN EVERYWHERE.



THIS FRIGHTENING PILE OF
BILE AWAITS YOU
AT THE RIVERS END.
GOT BOMBS?
AFTER YOU KILL IT,
ENTER THE GAPING HOLE
WHERE ITS HEART USED
TO BE... FLESHY!



the master gamer who beats *Legacy* on hard. This, however, will take an iron will.

Appaloosa's 3D engine, which scrolls along in every direction as you attack the game, has amazing depth and is one of the cleanest looking 3D polygonals I've ever seen. The textures are highly detailed. It crowds you once in awhile but for the most part is a work of genius.

In the control dept. I found the jumping a tad floaty and uncontrollable while airborne, but precision jumping rarely comes into play. When it does, pray you've

got full health. Each character (Bubba's the fastest, Ray the strongest) can strafe at the touch of a button, shoot and crawl laying flat, and toggle between 4 standard issue (provided you grab the flying icon) Contra weapons. They're each animated pretty well, except for jumping and swivelling while laying flat, where few frames are used.

The bosses in Contra, (especially the descending one below) really steal the show. They are fluid, big, and as nasty as ever. Appaloosa has succeeded in creating pattern worthy bosses (reminiscent of those 8-bit foes) in a 3D environment.

Most importantly, Contra LOW is intense fun, the kind Contra fans crave, and a worthy sequel. The 3D goggles, by the way, as a novelty, are a cool little bonus as well. I buy anything with red/blue goggles, as a rule.

Rumor has it the next Contra will be 2D... Whether it is or not, I'm happy to see Konami going back to their roots, honoring both their sports and action traditions. I only need see the logo to know... power's comin'.











A MASSIVE GLOBE OF POLTERGEISTS!

THE MOUNTAIN RETREAT - HIGH AND WIDE!















DEVELOPER -MINDSCAPE

PUBLISHER -MINDSCAPE

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY -ADVANCED

AVAILABLE -NOVEMBER



NICK ROX
NICE MICROPHONE!



very once in a while an obscure, no-hype game will rise above the sea of PlayStation mediocrity. Starwinder is one such game. At first glance (and indeed for the first few minutes of play) Starwinder appears to be intensely boring: You're basically on tracks inside tunnels, viewing the same scenery over and over. After you clear the first planet, however, the game completely changes: No longer are you confined to tunnels, and the racing takes on a hectic, breakneck pace that can be compared, in terms of speed and excitement, to Wipeout XI.

According to Mindscape, they've tried to place a heavy emphasis on storyline, and indeed the prologue reads like something out of a Frederick Pohl novel: As Earthmen and other interstellar races expand into space, they have discovered gigantic, twisting rails hanging in the cosmos. Whether they were left by some long-forgotten alien race is unknown, but what the citizens of the galaxy do know is that spaceships travel faster when they come in contact with the glowing rails in the center of these tracks. With their true use unclear, people begin to use them as racetracks. As Earth's first competitor in these races, Connor Rhodes, your ambition is to prove the power of Earth and make it to the final track... at Epsilon Indi.

Once out of the initial tunnelage, the tracks (an incredible amount; over 35) become much more detailed, from craggy half-circles to winding, looping tubes flanked by observation towers and polygonal asteroids. Because of the amount of tracks, the game is not as detailed as, say, *Ridge Racer Revolution*, but it moves at 60 fps and you NEVER see pixels. Also impressive are the beautiful explosions and the superdetailed, imaginative enemy craft.

The gameplay is simple, but innovative: You're on tracks that have a pulsating red light running down the middle of them. Stay near it, and you'll go faster, stray from it and you slow down. The interesting thing about this system is that eventually you're going to <a href="https://www.newer.n

feature to guide you back to the track. An exciting racing system indeed, but that's not all there is to *Starwinder*. You also have an extensive arsenal of weaponry. There are four different armaments (including the basic shot), as well as mines and warp icons. Your guns are necessary, too: You're constantly beset by drone racers whose only directive is to hinder you.

As I said before, the graphics are not high-detail but they're very smooth and, well, cleaner than most of the recent PlayStation fare. Pixellization is a non-issue, even when the gorgeous explosions are full-screen, and break-up is hardly ever seen. This is to be expected with tracks as basic as

is to be expected with tracks as basic as these, but it's a welcome sight nonetheless. No failings in the sound category, either – it's full of booming classical tunes and trademark deep-space sound effects, effectively fleshing out the "space opera" feel of SW.

I wholeheartedly recommend Starwinder to any and all PlayStation fans who want more of that Wipeout action/shooting feel.

Though basic at times (especially near the beginning), its excellent play control and amusing bounty of FMV sequences will keep you riveted.

Don't let this one pass you by without giving it a chance!





CHOOSE FROM FIVE HIGH POWERED SPACECRAFT!

B%





SPACE AWAITS!

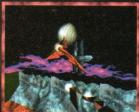












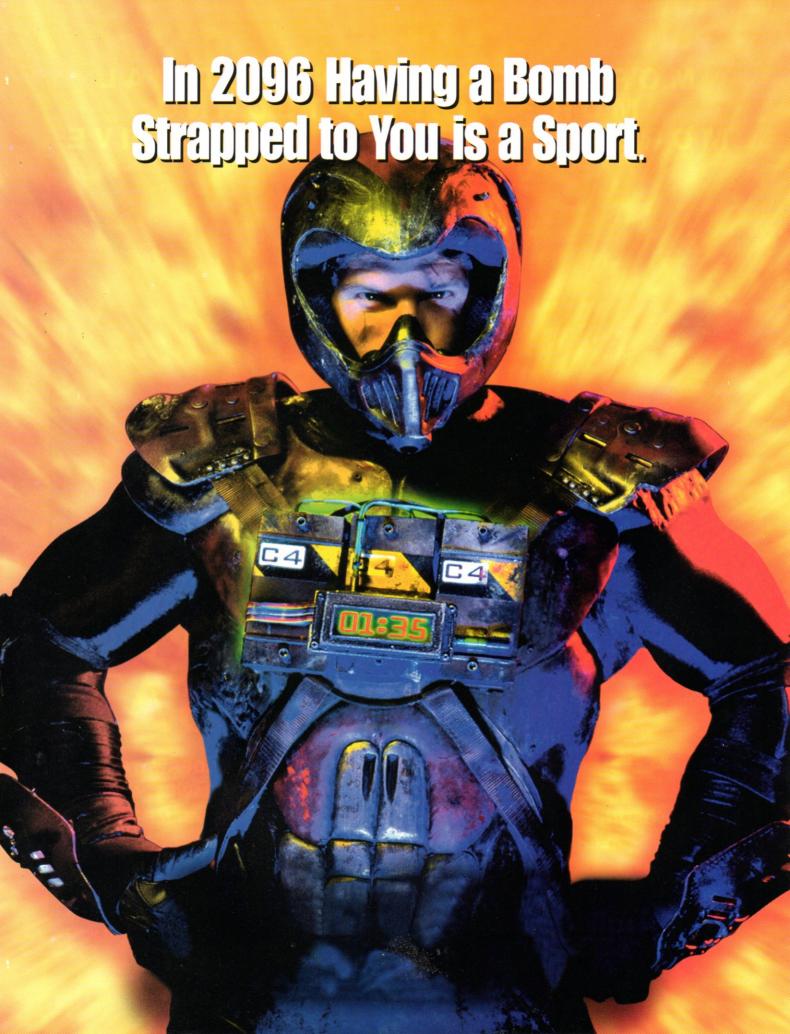


MORTAL KOMBAT: MORE KOMBAT

SEPULTURA • SISTER MACHINE GUN • GOD LIVES UNDERWATER BABYLON ZOO • KILLING JOKE • JUNO REACTOR • CRAWLSPACE PSYKOSONIK • GUDRUN GUT • CHEMLAB • THE CRYSTAL METHOD ALIEN FACTORY • CUBANATE • LOADED • G//Z/R



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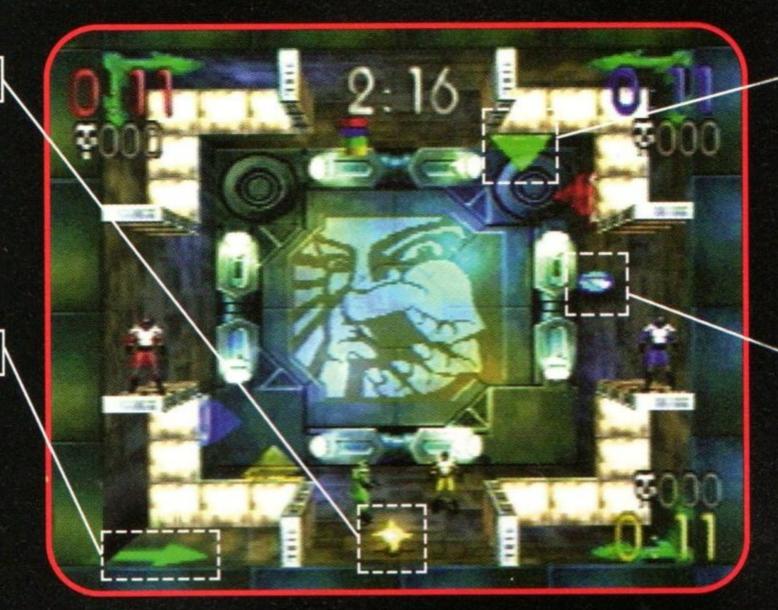
[Want to Play?]

The Crystal

Drop it in your reactor to increase your time.

The Kickers

Kicking these rotates the chamber 90 degrees.



The Reactors

Drop the crystal in an opponent's reactor to drain his Kill-Clock.

The Power-Ups

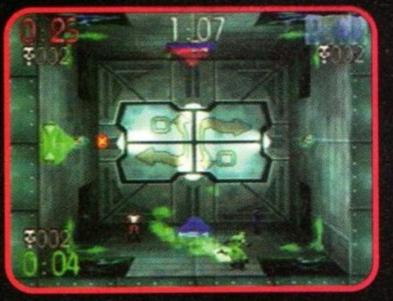
Hi-Jumps 1 Crystal Bombs Mercuries, Mag Boots & more.



Your arena is a rotating chamber... Turn it left. Turn it right. Turn the wall into a floor.



Your goal is survival... In this multiplayer deathmatch, it's every man for himself.



Your opponent is time... Because when your clock hits zero: you're cooked.



The 3-D Rotatable Deathmatch















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









Better than the Renaissance Fair! Cheaper too!



RED AURA: DISINTEGRATE THE ENEMY!



BLUE AURA:



FREEZE AND THEN SHATTER YOUR PREY!

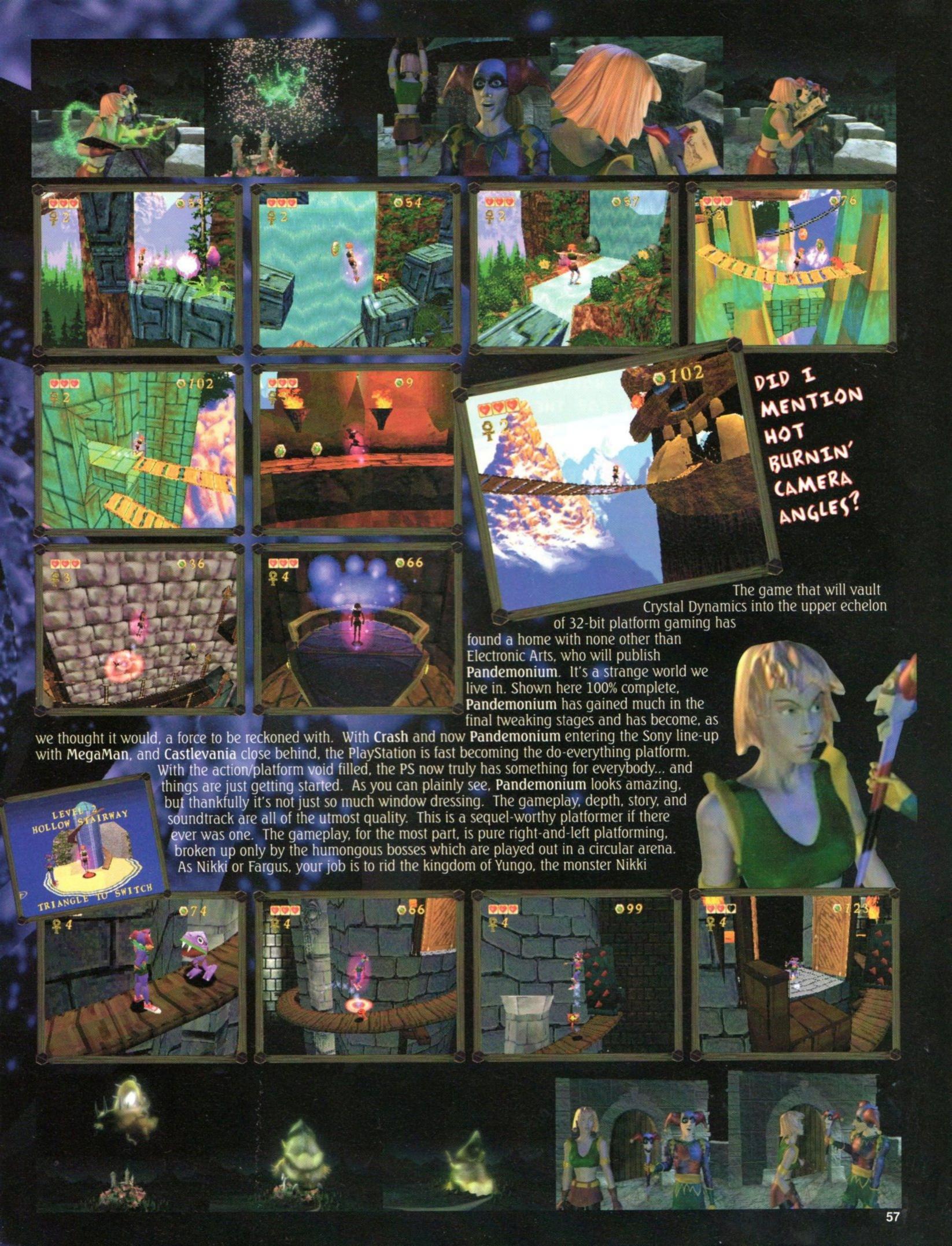


YELLOW AURA: SHRINK THE ENEMY AND RENDER THEM HELPLESS!

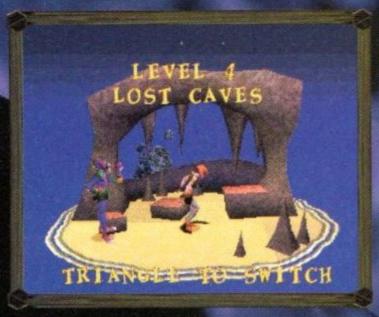








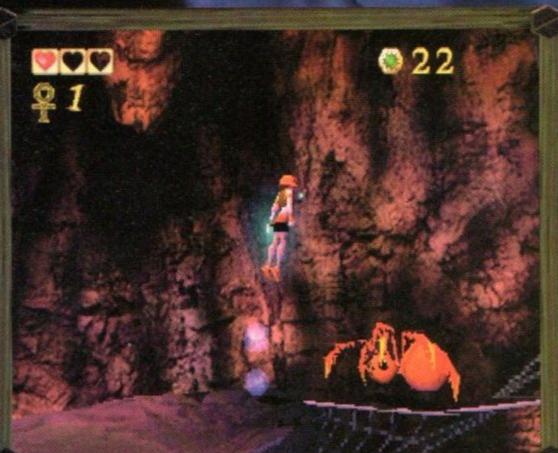
















TWO ZONES DIVIDED BY A DRAMATIC TRAN-SITION, THE LOST CAVES ARE A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES. NEARLY EVERY LEVEL IN PANDEMONIUM CHANGES DRASTICALLY WITHIN ITSELF, PROVIDING DEPTH AND WARDING OFF BOREDOM WITH A FLAMING TORCH.







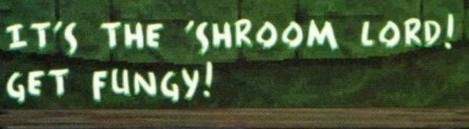




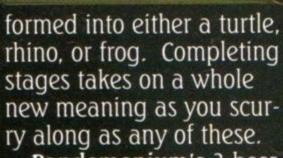






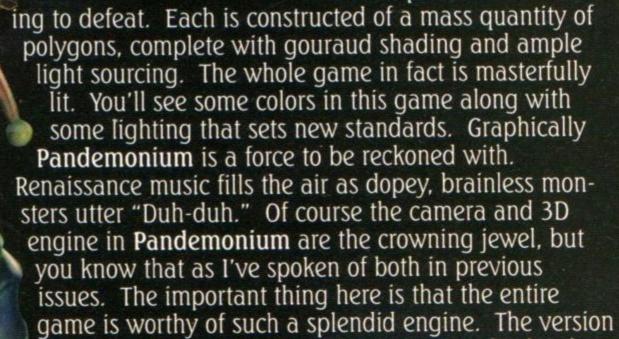






Pandemonium's 3 bosses may seem slight in number, but they make up for it in size. They are BIG and require a bit of think-





sent to me for review allowed access to twelve levels













HATE MUSHROOMS? HOW BOUT STINKY GREEN ACID? WELCOME TO THE ACID POOLS, WHERE FUNGUS RULES THE DAY AND FIERCE LITTLE MUSHROOMS WING THEIR HEADS YOUR WAY. PUT A FORK IN IT, MUSHROOM BOY, I ALREADY ATE.



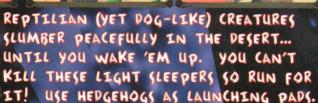
























and the first two bosses. I suppose EA didn't want us to show the end, as it should be. I began, rocketing through the first half dozen, thinking the game was too easy, but it does get progressively more difficult. By the 8th stage things begin to get pleasingly difficult, especially if you attempt to reach the game's many secret areas rather than racing through on the easiest path. Overall, intermediate gamers should find **Pandemonium** a handful, pros will race through and then go back for more, and beginners will be heavily challenged, a good balance overall. The bottom line is that everyone will love it.







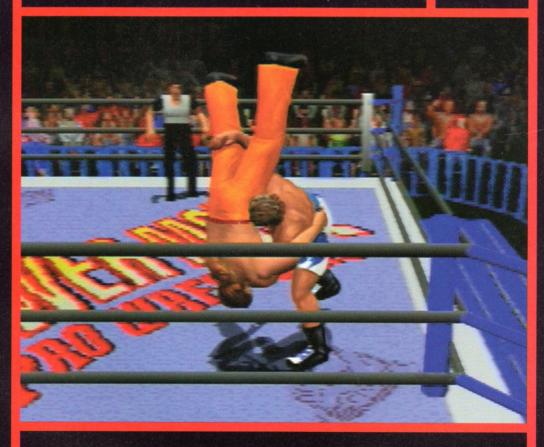




POWER MOVE

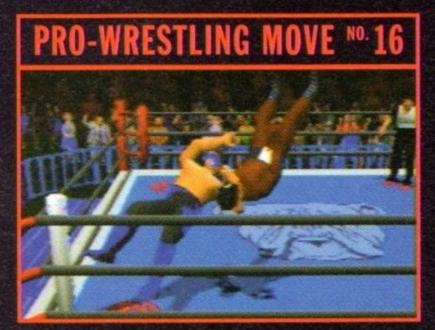
PRO-WRESTLING MOVE

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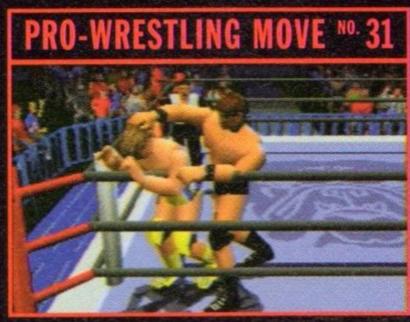


THE CRANIAL CRUNCH

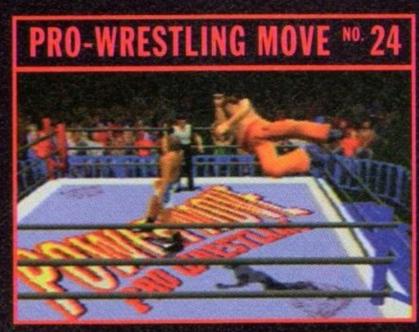
OVER 50 AUTHENTIC PRO-WRESTLING MOVES. 12 WRESTLERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD. REAL-MOTION 3-D ACTION FROM MULTIPLE ANGLES.



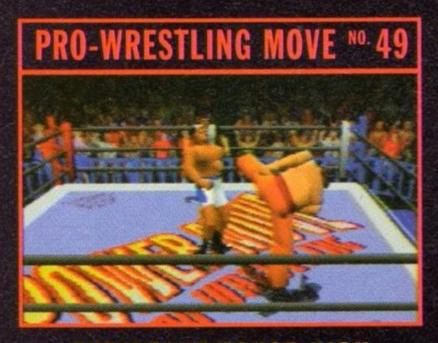
THE DRAGON SUPLEX



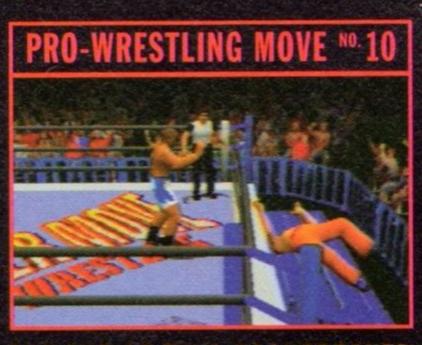
THE TURN-BUCKLE FACE PLANT



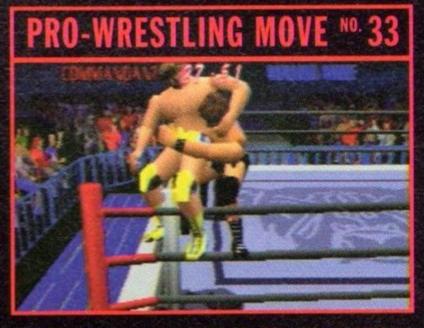
THE FLYING ELBOW DROP



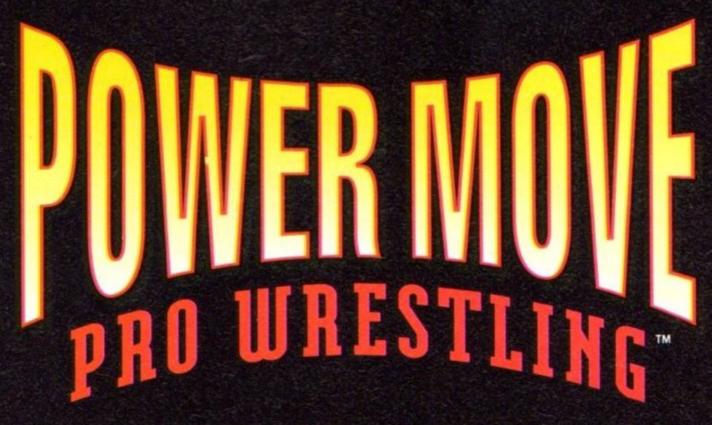
THE ROUNDHOUSE KICK



THE OUT-OF-RING BACKBREAKER



THE TURN-BUCKLE TAKE DOWN



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BUSINESS!

LAYOUT - E. STI



ANY RACE FAN'LL TELL YA. IT'S ALL ABOUT CAMERAS! 3 ARE AVAILABLE IN JET MOTO: CHASE, BEHIND, AND THE POPULAR RIDGE RACER "I'M SITTIN" ON THE HOOD" CAM.



ingletrac, the talented developers responsible for *Warhawk* and *Twisted Metal*, first displayed their new racer, *Jet Moto*, at the E3 in Los Angeles this past May. At that time, much like Nintendo's E3 WaveRace demo, all one could fathom by playing it was that the games physics were going to be the main attraction. What we did not know about either game was what the designers would surround all this brilliant gameplay with. How does one make an H₂O racer live up to the high standards set by games like Wipeout and Ridge Racer? After all, water is a whole different animal, and in Jet Moto's case. water is only half the story. These craft work on dry land too, making JetMoto Jet somewhat of a cross between WaveRace and Wipeout. That said.

both aforementioned games thoroughly rock. Well, my fellow racers, so will this one. Jet does both environments complete justice. From the high seas in Da' Kine Run to the smooth reflective glass in *Blackwater Falls* your liquid refreshment is a real thirst quencher, with realistic physics and wide-open course design. The gameplay's equally delightful when you hit the dirt,

I'm sure I've piqued your interest - Singletrac are hot developers and









DARE YOU ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO DARKNESS?!!

A TERRIFYING TALE OF REVENGE, REDEMPTION AND RESURRECTION!!



nce in a while, a new type of video game appears to carve a respectable niche for itself in unfamiliar territory; Artdink is perhaps the finest purveyor of these pioneering titles (with Aquanaut's Holiday and Tail of the Sun rating as some of the most innovative), but now Tecmo have wisely decided to release Deception, a wholly unique and totally absorbing new type of dungeon adventure. While other software companies try their hand at those inevitable Doom clones, or furnish us with a barrage of second-rate 3D polygon fighters, Tecmo has been hard at work creating an all-new masterpiece. The result is an enthralling and fiendishly addictive new slant on the 'dungeon hack.' Enter the world of Deception, where the creation of traps wins the day, evil demons are summoned and your foes' destruction is all that you crave.

The plot synopsis is suitably enchanting: In the past, a great nation known as Vangeria was host to a great multitude of prosperous magicians, while the rest of the population lived in squalor. These non-magic users rebelled against the powerful wizards, and a 500-year war began, splitting the country down the middle into Zemekia (a magical nation) and the Angelio

SET TRAPS TO KILL YOUR ENEMIES!!







Empire. An uneasy peace was finally established until, you, the player (and the heir to the throne of Zemekia) managed to get yourself falsely accused of your father's own murder! This situation worsened immeasurably when you were hunted down, caught and lead to the chopping block. You uttered a plea for vengeance as the executioner raised his rusty battle-ax, and a strange noise was heard throughout the heavens. The entire area was scorched with

CREATE MONSTERS FROM THE FLESH OF YOUR FOE





magical fire and your body was winked out of existence in a brilliant flash. You appear in the Castle of the Damned with but one conviction; to exact a

terrible revenge on your brother and all those who thought you guilty. The Devil must be summoned and resurrected, all the inhabitants of the castle must have their souls sucked, and the Six Legendary Treasures must be obtained! "Rise Demon, rise from the ether!"

This atmosphere of brooding menace is admirably translated into the game itself. Your hero must progress through 27 different 3D polygon-packed levels (each taking place inside a sprawling multi-level castle attacking various complex), assailants who wish your destruction. However, there's no sword-swinging or hand-to-hand combat here; the main innovation is that your character must lay huge and deadly traps to kill all those who stand in your way. After a superbly straightforward explanation of how to lure your foe (and then dispatch them).

the adventure begins in earnest; time to stalk fortress through your Doom-style, but this time with a vast array of cages, giant balls and pits at your fingertips!

You may think that Deception is of the Hexen ilk, but although the action takes place in a convincing 3D environment, this is actually an awesome action/strategy that just oozes fun and playability. First, view your multi-level castle on your map, pinpoint your victim









CASTLE INTRUDERS MUST DIE!



(these range from knights, mercenaries, merchants and pilgrims through to cloth dolls, magicians and even aliens - no one is to be spared!) and set your trap. could be a pit with spikes beneath, a giant metal foot than squashes the enemy (a

la Monty Python) or any number of other gruesome (and fiendishly designed) traps. You have no weapons; only your creations and nimble feet.

Once the traps are laid, you dash madly about the castle, coaxing your victims forward and hoping they blunder into a snare and fall at your scheming hands. After run-

ning into a number of traps, your enemy's life-force becomes spent, and providing you've lured them onto a correct trap, your victim's soul can be removed and used for a number of diabolic deeds; to increase your gold, magic points or used for monster construction!!

Yes, only in this game can you take parts from different enemies and summon a werewolf, golem or red dragon to aid you in future battles (these fearsome beasts stay with you and even gain experience!). The levels increase in difficulty, the plot twists and turns and familiar characters return to haunt you (your actions also effect the endings; there are six different ones to find!). This is certainly an enthralling journey which just gets even more entertaining the further you progress.

Tecmo has succeeded in creating a new genre, a refreshing combat/strategy game in one fell swoop. I cannot praise this game enough; you play a deviously nasty

POWERFUL FORCES SEEK TO DESTROY YOU!!





character who kills without remorse in an attempt to summon the Devil! Yeah, that's for me (although I'll not be chalking out pentagrams and sacrificing chickens just yet); but this is much more; good use of textured polygons, a formidable quest, different endings and loads of killing different devices. Refreshingly addictive. CH



Yurias

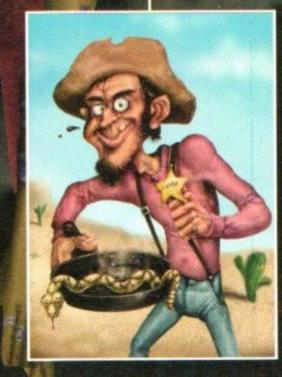
Hp 7/100



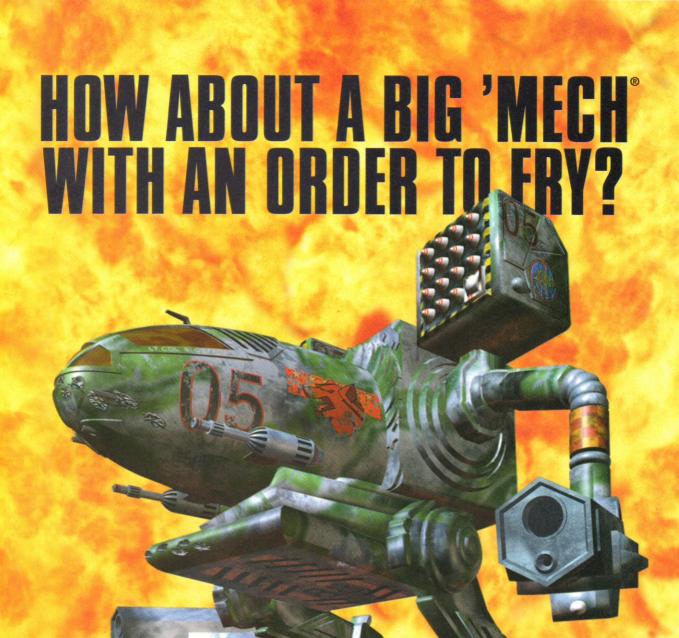
DEVELOPER - TECMO

PUBLISHER - TECMO

FORMAT - CD



CHIEF HAMBLETON



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GRAND PRIX





DEVELOPER - MINDSCAPE

PUBLISHER - MINDSCAPE

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER





ifferent is the only way to describe *Dare Devil Derby 3D*. On a system all but plagued with racing games, they have to be either fantastically good, or original enough to succeed. Luckily, *Dare Devil Derby's* looking to be both of these.

The first thing you'll notice about the game is its cartoon-based feel and characters. With the previous games in the series based on toys (Micro Machines), it's easy to see why. If not handled correctly, the whole cartoon thing can be really lame, but developers Supersonic are old hands at taking inane concepts and crafting awesome racers with them. The gameplay is simple... come in first, or in the knock-down competition, be the last one still on the road. What isn't simple is the perspective of the action, an isometric 3/4 view rarely seen on 32-bit. This unique viewpoint does not come without problems, however: Since you can't see very far in front of you, you must make your way through the charming locales carefully. As much as you want to go veering about, you just can't, or you'll fall off the road. Also a problem is multi-player mode, in which any car that falls off the screen loses the lap entirely. These are small complaints when weighed against the sheer fun of the game, which stems mostly from the environments: In what other game can you race in a haunted house or be swallowed by a giant whale and blown out of its breathing hole?

The graphics are positively stunning, built entirely of polygons, though this may not be totally evident by looking at still screens, and meticulously detailed. Whether you're flying above farmland in a zeppelin, skimming across the surface of the water in a boat or just racing, the feeling of really being in a cartoon world (er, if there is such a thing) has been represented perfectly here. The graphic engine is so amazing that it will zoom WAAY out if you enter a tunnel or to rise above a particularly high piece of scenery, such as a tower. In the incomplete version we used for this preview, however, the music just didn't fit a driving game, even one as happy as this. It was too airy and instrumental to race to, but this may change.





WORLD SERIES



2-PLAYER

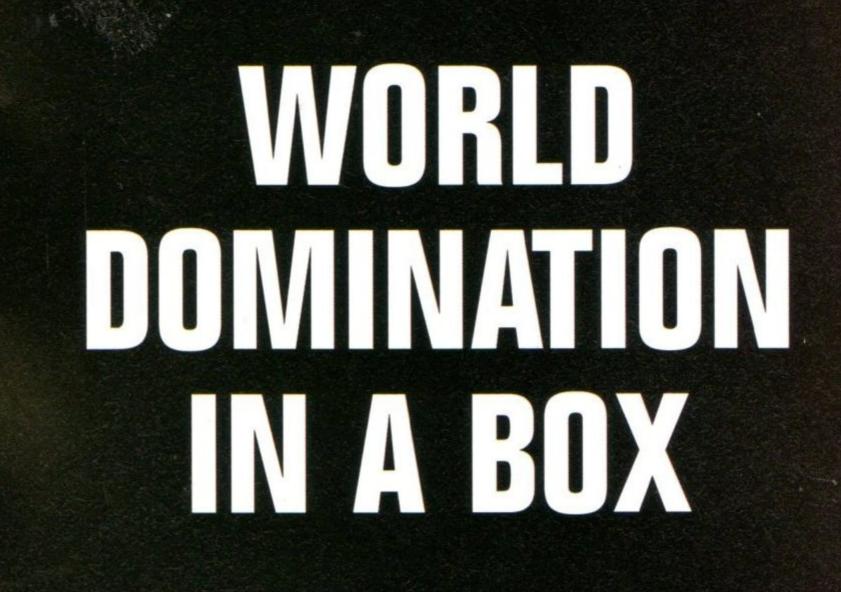






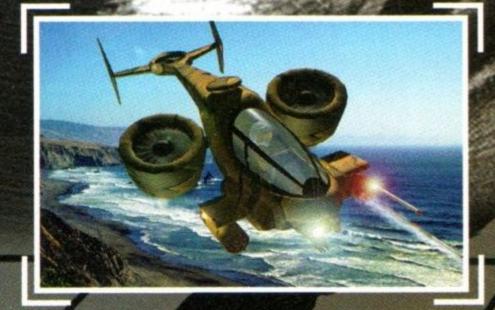






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150Z

DEVELOPER - UNIVERSAL INT.

PUBLISHER - UNIVERSAL INT.

FORMAT - C

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - MODERATE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON STEP INTO THE ACITVATOR!

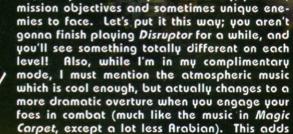
s you may be able to tell, I've been plowing through those 3D corridor shoot-fests over the last couple of months (yeah, the Hambleton Doom Deathmatch prowess is unrivaled!), and with the arrival of Disruptor I had another chance to enjoy spectacular slaughter in the comfort of my own hovel. Hey, any game that can tear me away from Turok has to be pretty special, and Disruptor has a number of really cool features that make it

stand out as a great title. I'll resist the temptation to wade in and compare this to every other 3D shooting game, because the developing folk over at Universal Interactive Studios have spent a load of time incorporating some unique features to add to the whole experience. Some of these additions work, and one fails miserably. Let's have a look at them, shall we?

There's 13 action-packed levels crammed into Disruptor. Thirteen may not sound like that many, but believe me, they're huge and full of ingenious puzzles and crammed with a load of alien beasts, mutant experimentation and power-armored soldiers with the latest in galactic weaponry. Sound like fun? You betcha, plus these enemies are intelligent, attack diligently and sometimes swamp your character

(I've counted at least 20 attacking simultaneously!). If it's a full-on gunning extravaganza you're after, you're in for a treat here! These enemies also have the added bonus of being super-detailed, and although still two-dimensional, they don't pixellate that badly when up close and personal.

Those levels I mentioned earlier are also totally different; from the ice and snow of the Antarctica Lab to the downright odd Dream Sequence, every zone has separate scenery, puzzles,



PERUPICA



Surrounded by evil? Protect yourself effectively with this glowing green shield. Watch out, it lasts but a moment!



Your foes have brains... for now. Launch this ball of energy and watch their heads fry!



Low on health? Ferocious alien scum to gun down? Activate this and you'll receive some ethereal energy!



Perhaps most useful power; build your psi-points by launching these bolts at the enemy and collect their power!



That Star
Trooper getting too close
for comfort?
Then zap him
back with this
psychic prod!

PSIONIC ARSENAL

Excerpts from the Hambleton Files











E ISOZ

that little extra feeling of fear when you're stalking some inhuman creature down a corridor and an alien SWAT team steps in to ambush you! Finally, Disruptor also tries something new regarding weapons. Sure, you've got all your run-of-the-mill phasers, chainguns and BFG look-alikes, but your character also has psychic abilities which not only look spectacular but add to the strategy ("Do I wipe this inhuman deviant out with my plasma cannon, or do I fry his brains from the inside? Hmmm...")

"So Disruptor's a cool game with a decent challenge and I should run out and buy it immediately?" Well, perhaps, if you reckon you can cope with the couple of problems this game has. The most hideous of these has to be those cut scenes. Your game introduction and connecting narrative between levels is not so much poor as brain-numbingly bad. Yep, this FMV full of second-rate acting from third-rate 'thespians' fails to gel the storyline together and completely destroys the atmosphere created by the actual game itself. I was biting my knuckles down to the bone with frustrated embarrassment as I watched my all-

American hero 'buddy talk' his way through my game, walking through cardboard sets before being captured by a Dick Jones look-alike who attempted torture with

a robotic egg whisk. No I'm sorry, FMV with actors is bad enough already without this Mickey Mouse attempt. If you can't do it well, then don't do it at all. Okay, I'm calm now.

The second problem isn't quite as pronounced, but still warrants attention and can badly detract from the gameplay. Say you're jogging down a passageway, swerve around a corner and face up to six alien scum, ripe for the culling. In theory, you'd unload all your mini-gun shots and then change weapons, wouldn't you? Well, in practice you use your mini-gun ammunition





ZZ

up and then wait in paralyzed panic as your character fumbles about in a confused frenzy. Yes, this game loads in every weapon (the load time varying from one to five seconds depending on the situation). Note that you're weaponless the entire time; the perfect opportunity for those monsters to mince you. I've been tearing my hair out, shouting "All I need is to change weapons!! That's not so hard is it? I need my Plasma Cannon NOW!! Oops, I've been gnamed to pieces." This isn't so much unfair as damn annoying, and something the programmers should def-

initely have picked up on.

These two problems (along with a lack of a two player mode, not enough gore and a few unremarkable monsters) are the hindrances to an otherwise absorbing tromp into a future world of terror. I may have concentrated on the negative points, but believe me, once you skip those cut-scenes, this becomes an absorbing 3D corridor game to rival even the great Doom itself. Cope with the FMV and you're onto a winner here. CH







The semi and automatic are the basic weapons for your character. Watch out; you'll run out of ammo in no time!



Seen in all the finest sci-fi movies, this lightly burns your enemies, but takes a couple of shots to fry them...



A powerful laser, this rips through foes with three shots per firing. Watch for the green and fire variations!



Instead of balls of plasma, ready yourself for bolts of blue death. This cuts swathes through any enemy!



Want even more galactic carnage? Then try one of these out; a rapid firing plasma-bolt cannon!



This extremely deadly weapon has a huge area of effect (watch yourself), and those metal balls just keep on homing in!



One word: BFG. This clears out hordes of aliens in seconds!



This piece of ordinance has one shot, turning you into a walking flame-thrower. Stride forward and burn everyone!





Forever — a black and dreadful place...

Where the undead feast on the living to survive.

ETERNAL PANNATION REVENUE EN CHE

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Load





DEVELOPER - EA

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



KNIGHTMARE STRIKE A BLOW FOR FREEDOM

A's Strike series (Desert, Jungle and Urban) are now looked back upon as classics of the 16-bit gaming era. On top of their amazing isometric visuals, the Strikes were among a handful of shoot-'em-ups to successfully incorporate an element of strategy into the blasting. Even though they were all essentially shoot-'em-ups, just flying around mindlessly blowing the hell out of stuff wouldn't get you very far.

You actually had

to stop and think about the best way to approach your various mission objectives. Of course, this wasn't to everyone's liking, but depending on where you stood, the Strike trilogy's strategy was either its best or worst aspect. Fast forward to 1996 and EA has just released

the latest in the Strike series: Soviet Strike. We've got FMV, we've got polygon graphics. we've got CD sound and a free-roving camera angle, but the name of the game is still the same... Strike! If you've ever played a Strike game you'll know what to expect: fly your Apache chopper around a height-mapped top-down landscape, fulfilling mission objectives and abusing the enemy with the kind of hi-tech weaponry that really shouldn't be legal. Sound familiar? Well, it is. In fact, with a few excep

tions, the basic gameplay is almost identical to previous Strike games.

Hey, if it ain't broke, don't fix it!

The story is familiar: you play an elite chopper pilot who works for a covert operations squad posted in Eastern Europe. You're an 'invisible' weapon, part of a lethal strike team called in to 'stop wars before they happen' and make sure the cold war stays in the fridge. The Strike games have always contained a strong story element, but this time EA has really gone to town, with high quality FMV sequences straight out of Mission Impossible. While these may not make the game play any better, they certainly contribute towards creating a legitimate sense of immersion, like being in your own action/espionage film. What's more, this



POLISH YOUR MACHINE-GUN TURRELS

sense of theatricality has been carried over into the actual game environment. For example, on the first level you receive a tele-message from your co-pilot that he's caught in a P.O.W. camp and is about to be shot. Get there in time and you'll actually see him being marched to the firing squad by two enemy troops! Save him, and later on you can drop him off next to a Snow Plow which he uses to bulldoze through an enemy encampment. This adds a lot of replay value to the game, as you can complete levels without even seeing half of the specially planned events that go on around you.

The enemy AI has also been improved. Tanks and soldiers act much more intelligently than in previous Strike games, not to mention realistically. I was amazed the first time I shot at a building only to see its occupant come running out, get in a truck and drive

off down the road before swerving and crashing!

ENEMY AT FIRST PASSES

The graphics are first-rate. EA has made a big noise about their CD-sourced, texture-mapped terrain, and with good reason - it looks amazing! Also, all of the objects (vehicles, buildings, etc.) have been fully modeled as 3D polygon objects, and to show this off there is a new 'chase' camera mode that actually moves the landscape around your chopper (the 'classic' isometric camera mode is optional). The light sourced debris-ridden explosions are also very impressive.

Unfortunately, there is a downside to this graphical overload: the frame-rate. The basic frame-rate is quite jerky, and when there's a lot going on, the frame rate drops right down to a crawl. You do kinda get used to it, but it effects the gameplay nonetheless. The sound is also a mixed bag, with nice interactive music but muffled effects. The explosions and gunfire just aren't sharp enough for my liking. I do love the humorous speech of the enemy soldiers, though: "Ha ha ha, not close...urgh!" or "First aid! Second aid!" The gameplay is classic Strike - a perfect balance of strategy and action. Everything you learned from the 16-bit Strike games will help you









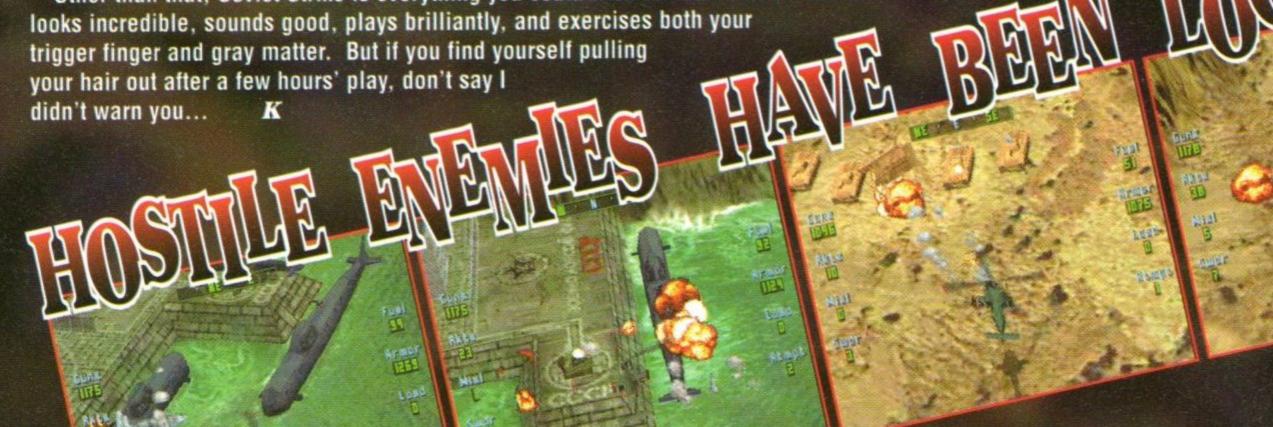
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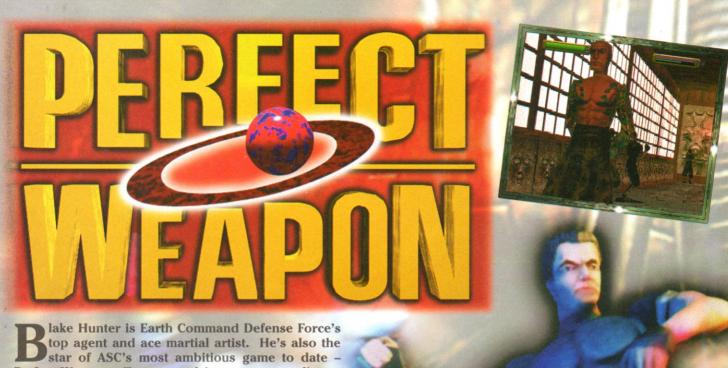
here: avoid alert zones, destroy buildings for bonuses, stay clear of the more powerful enemy, rescue POWs and MIAs to replenish your armor, and blow the living crap out of everything from cattle to castles. Even though there are only five levels (Crimea, Black Sea, Caspian, Dracula and Kremlin) their size and complexity guarantees that this is one game you won't be finishing in a hurry.

Unfortunately, the same flaws that applied to all the other Strike games apply here. It can take you over an hour to finish a level, and if you die it's back to the beginning, meaning you have to replay the same missions all over again. This would be fine if you didn't die that often, but Soviet Strike is the most difficult Strike game yet. Enemy fire can rip you to shreds in a second, and because most enemies have an attack range bigger than the screen (and there's no on-screen radar) it's hard to see it coming. What's more, the only way you can replenish your armor is to rescue MIAs (rare) or find an armor refill crate (even rarer). The game gets too difficult too quick-

ly, and while veteran Strikers may appreciate the challenge, newcomers may find it a bit frustrating.

Other than that, Soviet Strike is everything you could wish for from a 32bit Strike. It looks incredible, sounds good, plays brilliantly, and exercises both your trigger finger and gray matter. But if you find yourself pulling your hair out after a few hours' play, don't say I didn't warn you...





Perfect Weapon. Transported into a strange dimension for unknown reasons, Hunter must fight through five unique lands, mixing adventure and fighting elements together, to find his destiny.

Perfect Weapon is a polygonal, pre-rendered adventure game. Most games like this (Resident Evil, Alone in the Dark, etc.) show you one pre-rendered background, then load in another one once you've reached the limits of the first, and so on. Perfect Weapon, however, has another background ready for you instantly. You'll even get up to four views of the same spot, right away, just by walking into a different part of the background (see box, top of facing page). Gamers rejoice! PW has over 1300 of these gorgeous rendered backgrounds, and the levels only ever need to load once!

How do all these views and backgrounds mix with the gameplay? Well, let's say you're moving your character across a dangerous ice bridge in the first level (or "Moon" as they're called in PW). The current background, as far as you can see, ends at a point where you've gotta jump across a pit to another platform. On your way, the view will change to beside you, behind you, and finally to an ideal view that lets you judge where and when to jump. Similarly, across the

> next four Moons (Garden, Forest, Desert, and Proteus), ideal views have been set-up throughout the different backgrounds to help the player see as much as possible. The incredible number of views and backgrounds compliment the huge environments of each Moon. The Forest Moon, for example, starts you off on the ground, and finally reaches its climax high atop the branches within a giant network of treehouses.

The gameplay consists of two modes: Exploration and Combat. Exploration is just the mode you're using to walk around, so you can only jump and run using R1 and double tapping up, respectively. When you're

attacked, Combat mode kicks in, and Left and Right punches and kicks are possible with the controller buttons. At any time you 's top martial ar can check out your map and use items, but AND SPECIAL AGENT OF combat will continue (so watch yourself!). The COMMAND DEFENSE FORCE



















VIEWS IN AS MANY (TWELVE STEPS, ACTUALLY, BUT YOU GET THE POINT!)







fighting has been modeled after Tekken 2, with

similar button sequences for combos (by combining your punches, kicks etc.), throws and counters, and various crouching and jumping attacks (almost 100 moves total). Practice your fighting, 'cause every Moon has restless natives, each with their own fighting style, and they're more than willing to gang up on For example, the you. Monks of the oriental Garden Moon will attack with Shaolin Kung Fu (quick techniques reflexive punches, kicks, even tele-

of the Forest Moon attack using primal, lightning fast Capoeira. Fighting takes center stage in most levels, but with Transmitters (to disable barriers), Health increases, Keys, Armor, and half a dozen more health and combat-related items, you'll still find time to search the vast levels for secrets and power-ups.

ports!), while the

war-prone Panthera

Every character is motion-captured, beautifully animated, and light sourced. And thanks to ASC's Behavioral Artificial Intelligence system, the enemies have hauntingly realistic movement and reac-Through imaginative tions. design, glorious artwork, and ambient music, the Moons exude an almost palpable atmosphere and character - keeping you

enthralled and anxious as you play. I guess it's the combination of so much cool artwork, all comin' at you at once, that makes each and every level so deep and satisfying.

> I'm the type of person who plays any PUBLISHER - ASC that comes game along if it's good. playing And I'm

Perfect Weapon and liking it a lot. Sure, I can appreciate it for boldly mixing a dedicated fighting engine into an adventure game, and having great graphics, and not loading (deep breath), but I'm playing it 'cause it's fun. There's a lot of really good gameplay, rock solid play-mechanics, and it's long (the longest pre-rendered adventure game of this type). Just get your hands on a copy and enjoy.





DEVELOPER - ASC

FORMAT - CD

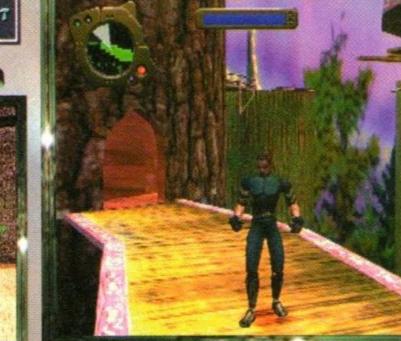
OF PLAYERS - 1

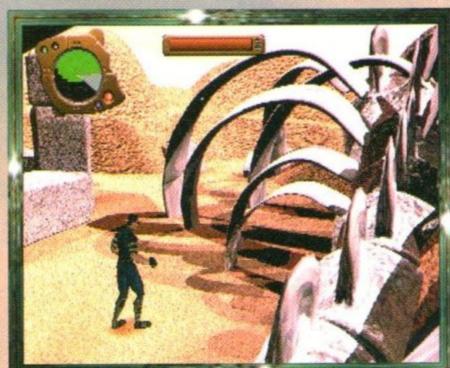
DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

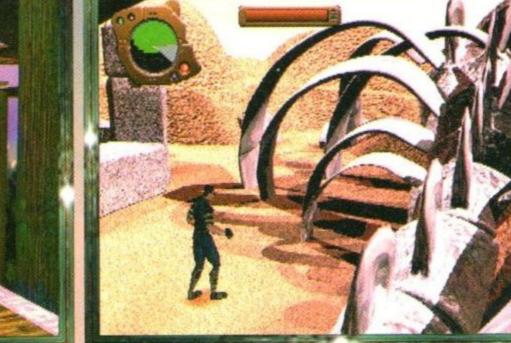
AVAILABLE - NOW



GLITCH













stereo Surround sound and built-in Sub woofer

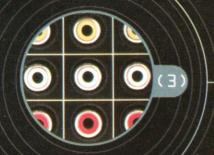
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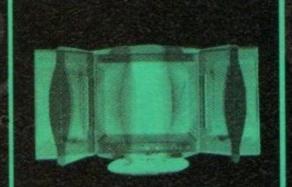
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SAMSUNG

available at best buy; electronics boutique and ebx funcoland (select locations) incredible universe



for more infordial 800 so simple

n case you hadn't gathered from the screen shots, Nanotek Warrior is a 3D 'into-the-screen' scrolling shoot-'em-up with a twist. Literally. The play field is a scrolling 360-degree rotational cylinder along which your craft travels: moving left and right actually twists the cylinder



DEVELOPER -TETRAGON

PUBLISHER - VIRGIN

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS -1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

ABLE - NOVEMBER



KNIGHTMARE NANO-NANO

which your craft travels; moving left and right actuany twists the cylinder around you. I suppose the best way to describe it is as a cross between around you. I suppose the pest way to describe it is as a cross perween Tempest 2000 and Zaxxon. Your craft can shoot (doh!), angle across the screen, jump, and even twist sideways (for narrow getaways). You can screen, Jump, and even twist sideways (for narrow geraways). Tou can also pick up some cool extra primary and secondary weapon power-ups, also pick up some coor extra primary and secondary weapon power-ups, as well as extra lives and energy. And believe me when I say you're as well as extra lives and energy. And believe me gonna need them, cuz Nanotek Warrior is a real bitch!

The Tempest 2000 aspect comes from the rotational play field. While for the most part you stay outside the cylinder, at times you actually travel inside the 'Nano-tunnel,' and it's here where the game most resembles Atari's clastic (etill one of the boot shooters around). The Zawon influence is appearance. sic (still one of the best shooters around). The Zaxxon influence is apparant in the pature of the obstacles that must be avoided. While initially them ent in the nature of the obstacles that must be avoided. While initially these take the form of basic towers and low level blocks that must be jumped, later on they get more complex and lot tougher. It's not just a case of high or low. on they get more complex and lot tougher. It's not just a case of high or low.
You have to time your jumps to pass through mid-height obstacles, or gauge Nanotek Warrior looks great. Developers Tetragon have given the game a your speed to dodge between giant spinning propeller blades.

very distinctive look; like a texture-mapped Tempest 2000. Because most of the obstacles and enemies are simple shape formations, they've been able to keep the frame rate up (60 fps), and really go to town on the effects. Expect plenty of gourand shading, translucent force fields, light-sourced weapons and explosions. There's also minimal pop-up, with only the occasional noticeable clipping when the cylinder starts bending. The music is also pretty cool: a thumping Dolby Surround techno soundtrack that's not as good as Tempest 2000, but still boasts some cool tunes of its own.

If there's some rain on this parade it's the difficulty level. Go to the options screen and you get the choice of normal or hard; no easy! And even on the normal setting it starts tough and then goes through the roof. By about level five things are getting pretty silly. The trouble is that on the later levels the only way to survive is to memorize large portions of the cylinder. If you can deal with that, and you like fast-paced 3D shooters, then you're going to love Nanotek Warrior. Personally, while I can enjoy it in short doses, it's not really my cup of tea. But shooting fans who crave a chal-









Proof That Demons Do Exist

In the near future, mankind has conquered dimensional travel but the door we have opened swings both ways. The peaceful city you have grown up in has become a haven for dark creatures from another world— Demons! Now it's up to you and your friends to harness the hidden power within you by entering the fantasy game known as Persona.

You awaken with incredible abilities that you will need to defeat the scores of Demon invaders and cleanse the land of their forces. Converse with them before doing battle to determine your best course of action. Fight them or enlist their aid in your mission. Either way, you are set for the fantasy adventure of a lifetime!

Special Features

- Based on the ultra-popular, mega-hit, Megami
 Tensei series: first time to hit US shores
- 100+ hours of pulse pounding gameplay
- Over 300 different monsters to do battle with
- Morph any member of your party into a more powerful source known as "Persona"
- Fight your way to one of many endings









REVELATIONS





PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - SINGLETRAC

PUBLISHER – SONY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON You're twistin' my melons, man!







you've oiled your throbbing motor, loaded up your hood-mounted dual machine guns and you're maniacally swerving through the broken ruins of downtown Los Angeles on a mission to kill. Yes, certain areas of present day LA certainly aren't a picnic in the woods, but in the future the situation is even more grim... this is the world of Twisted Metal 2, where only the most insane and bloodthirsty drivers survive. You've gotta tool up with your motor of choice, take to a number of arenas and gun down up to six other opponents, just like in the first game. Are you ready

for more car carnage in some seriously dangerous texture-mapped polygon zones?

Twisted Metal 2 is almost here; we secured a 70% complete copy for our perusal, and after some serious car combat, I can tell you that same adrenaline rush of hammering away at a fleeing vehicle is still there... except this time there's so much more of everything. This is Twisted Metal 2, baby, and the combat zones are much more extensive; you've got the whole planet to choose from! Yep, they've gone one better and incorporated a load of new venues throughout the world; so now your ramming and destruction can take place in a concrete bowl just outside

Moscow, a field in Holland (complete with collapsing windmills!) and even along the rooftops of New York at night (watch your acceler-









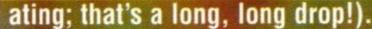












The venues have changed, and there's certainly more extensive courseways to powerslide your way through (eight huge zones for starters), all of which incorporate freeways, underpasses, bumps, hills and other obstacles to make your action as fraught as possible. This time, these killing fields are a lot more expansive, meaning a load more cars to burn, more scope for tactical and

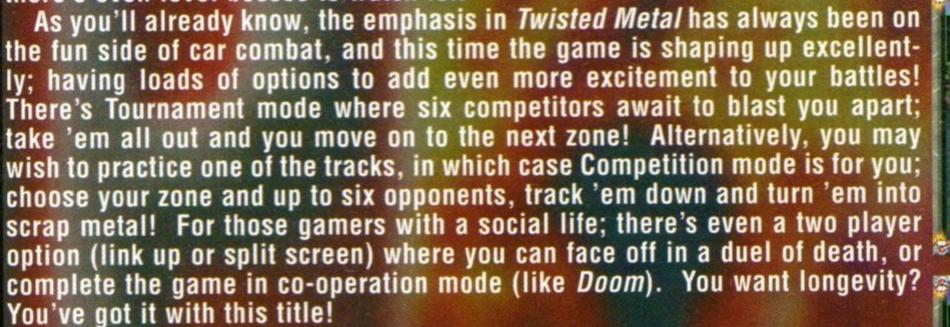
exploratory gameplay, but the zones are never too large to hinder your progress; this never turns from a hunt and destroy mission into a needless wander fest. Plus, you're sure to have a load of fun hunting down your opponent through the

streets of Hong Kong or even up the Eiffel Tower!

The playfields are huge, with more detailed polygon walls, floors and scenic details (much of which you can destroy); but what about those allimportant characters? Well, TM2 doesn't disappoint here either, with a dozen crazed psychos clambering into their favorite killing machine; ready to run down their opponents and back over their corpses! There's some old faces and newcomers to view, and each competitor has their own set of strengths and weaknesses (Mr. Grimm for example, may ride a Harley from Hell and have a turn circle tighter than a Fiat, but a couple of napalm blasts

and he'll be burning up the road (in more ways than one) just like anyone else!); so a slightly more tactical approach to foe disposal is in order this time around, and

there's even level bosses to watch for.



Twisted Metal 2 is sure to be popular when it finally gets a release, and providing those developers tidy up the problems of warping and glitching polygons (horribly evident in many of the levels), then I'll have no hesitation in

recommending this release to all those who crave more vehicular butchering after the fun of the first Twisted Metal. Stay on course, we'll be back with a review as soon as I've taken down that blasted Sweet Tooth!



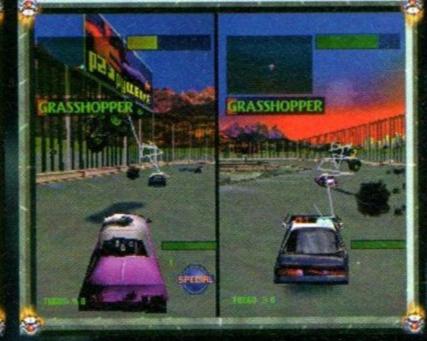


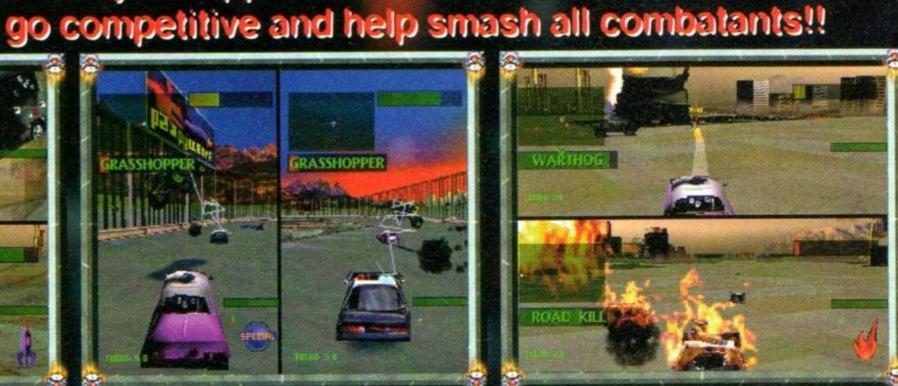


Mortimer

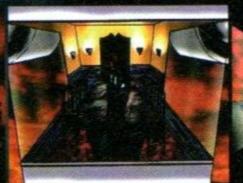


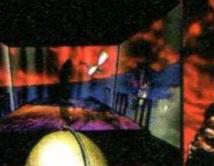












Smash your opponent in a no-holds-barred war, or





The Psygnosis gaming gods are back!! PlayStation owners craving futuristic sled carnage (that would be most of us, wouldn't it?) have no need to fear, for some of the UK's finest developers are back with the sequel to the biggest sleeper hit of last year. But how do you improve on a game with already sleek looks, great gameplay and an incredible sensation of speed? You make it bigger, faster, brighter and even more fun to play; that's what you do! A fine premise, but has it worked?

CHECK ... Bosha ... 20c4

For the vast majority of the gameplay, the answer is a resounding

R



DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS

PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS

FORMAT - CO

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - EASY

AVAILABLE – NOVEMBER



CHIEF HAMBLETON THE JUMPING FLASH OF RACING GAMES; AWESOME TO PLAY, BUT OVER IN TWO DAYS...









concerned with this title should already have checked out our expansive preview last issue, and with further playing, I can safety state that Wipeout XL is the fastest racer on any console plat-A pretty sweeping but when you've statement, clambered down from your prototype Chinese sled. mopped the sweat from your palms brow and and engaged Piranha mode. you'll soon understand why this statement rings true. This may start off as a slower

yes! Anyone even remotely

but prettier version of the original, but once you've mastered the arts of the different difficulty levels (each revealing more hidden tracks), you'll soon be violently twisting your spasming craft around the fiendish courses in a frenzy of joypad wrestling. Then of course, when

THIS NEWLY DEVELOPED **RACINIF** TECHNOLOGY IS **FASTER** THAN ANYTHING SEEN BEFORE...

the secret Chinese craft is revealed (think; Devil Car without wheels and on steroids), you'll actually <u>fear</u> the speed of the game...

Gameplay is exactly the same as the original (i.e. zip around the course three times, trouncing your foes with a barrage of hi-tech weaponry), but a couple of refinements make this much easier and a lot more playable this

time around. The most important gameplay tweak is the way



The additions don't end there either; there's a huge array of weapons to aim at your enemy (all of which were detailed last issue), some of them new















and some old favorites; but there's also an autopilot option; where your craft becomes a perfectly steered air machine courtesy of the CPU. This starts off as an annoying feature until you realize the whole race can depend on the implementa-

tion of this device. You could be approaching that final impossible bend at warp speed, and simply pressing the autopilot allows your craft to turn impossible turns to speed to victory. Use this wisely and you've grasped a large part of the gameplay. Forget this feature and you'll be floundering for weeks.

The speed and weapons are excellent, the texture maps fantastic (the most impressive so far seen on the Sony machine) and the fluidity second-to-none. Add the cream of UK dance bands to this cocktail and you've got an almost

perfect racer. All the way through this game I was in ecstatic pleasure, grinding my pelvis to the 'ardcore techno anthems, weaving through tunnels in a mechanical futuristic environment and having the time of my life... until the whole experience









PIRANNIHAN TECHNOLOGY SACRIFICES WEAPONS FOR SUPERIORS SYSTEMS









ended... after two days of play. We then phoned Psygnosis, who were shocked that we beat the game so quickly, assured us they'd bump up the difficulty level, and then did nothing about it...

While you're playing, you'll be in heaven, gasping at the jumps and gaping at the scenery, but the whole experience was over far too soon. Remember how you took months to complete the first game? Well, those who consider themselves racing experts should have this licked in two days, and after the Piranha class and the Chinese super craft there's nothing left to do except go head-to-head with another player. A real pity really, because with more tracks (and the ability to race them backwards; a glaring oversight), this would have been perfect (and I mean 100% perfect). As it

stands, Wipeout XL will be remembered as the Jumping Flash! of racing games (looks stunning, but a walkover). Perhaps Psygnosis should have a word with their playtesters in the future...

CH













can no longer see out of my left eye. Ah, whatever. Back to Persona.

Actually, Suikoden and Persona are very different games. Persona is the latest chapter of Atlus' cash cow Megami Tensei series (to be called the Revelations series in the US), a series Namco began on the Famicom, that's spawned (at my estimate) some 300,000 different games. At first, they were Wizardry clones in a demonic sci-fi setting, but the series has been evolving rapidly. This, as well as Saturn Devil Summoner, are the latest in this vary intricate, very mature series.

Vastly different from Suikoden's fantasy setting, your

heroes are nothing more glamorous than a restless pack of 2nd year students at a modern day Japanese private school. game's massive setting is their realistically rendered town, and the "dungeons" include the school, police station, local corporations, and the town's shopping mall. Although "devil-summoning" is still a key element of the plot, this element is no where near as strongly realized as it was in Devil Summoner, defusing that contro-

versy is probably one of the reasons that Atlus is releasing Persona first.

MegaTen- sorry, Revelations games are incredibly complex. There are so many elements, options and

locations in Persona that my few hours of play time have barely scratched the surface. Still, I definitely like what I see. The 3D graphics are slick as always, the polygon town (complete with polygon cars obeying polygon driving laws) is especially slick, and the new battle system is very well done. The soundtrack is of good quality, and incredibly varied, and the vocal effects in the battles (especially those from the monsters) are nothing if not memorable.

More importantly, the storyline is great. I really liked Devil Summoner's storyline, but with only 3 major characters, there wasn't too much going on in the character building department. Persona sports a much larger cast, and the characters all have well-defined and

enjoyable personalities.

We'll be back with much more on Persona in the near future, but even at this early stage I can firmly say that RPG fans have a second reason to cherish their PlayStations.

Persona bears little resemblance to the RPGs we're used to seeing in the States. The game has three distinct perspectives: A free-floating, overhead polygon town, isometric hand-drawn rooms and battles, and hand-drawn first-person dungeons, a la Phantasy Star.

Although Persona's storyline is exceptionally well-developed, the game's main emphasis is firmly rooted in its battle system. The battles might be a bit too frequent for some players' tastes, but the amount of options present in the battle system is

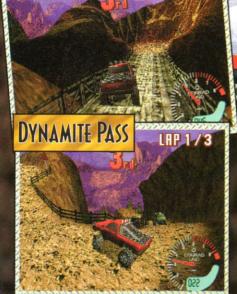
Each character can equip both a normal weapon, and a gun for long range attacks. In addition to standard block and attack options (and a convenient macro that does such things for you), you have a couple of other interesting options. One is to use the "Persona" magics, a command in which you summon a god-like manifestation of your own true inner nature, and use his or her powers to attack the enemies or help your party.

Another new twist is the "Contact" menu. Although you can no longer coerce enemies into joining your party (which was a major part of *Devil Summoner*), negotiations with them remain an

important part of the game. Each character in your party has four different contact commands, everything from taunting, scolding or mocking your foes to seducing them, dancing for them, or singing to them. A wise negotiator can use his skills to scare off potential enemies, get information from them, and even extort items and money from them. A poor negotiator runs the risk of making them even more violent.

In addition to all that, there's an entire shopping mall filled with stores selling the game's hundreds of weapons and items, casinos offering eight cool bonus games, and a mysterious mage who can help you learn the game's vast array of *Persona* spells, as well





LAP 1/3









TOTAL TIME 01 41 40



DEVELOPER - ASC

PUBLISHER - ASC

FORMAT - C

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



KNIGHTMARE

Stock up on gas, strap in tight and make sure you've brought the spare, 'cuz ASC is set to bring you the roughest, toughest, downright dirtiest racing experience ever! Some driving games, like F1, are made as simulators – attempts to accurately recreate the sensation and physics of driving in an electronic medium. Others, like Destruction Derby, are made just for fun. Hardcore 4X4 definitely falls into the latter category.

Hardcore 4X4 isn't like an ordinary driving game. Sure, you still race a number of other vehicles around a track in the hope of coming first, but that's not what separates it from the crowd. I guess the best way to describe it would be a cross between Sega Rally and Destruction Derby, but that's not entirely accurate. You see, Hardcore 4X4 does

things a little differently...

The vehicle handling is such that the moment you pick up the pad you can play the game. There's no mastering of high speed power slides or cornering here. All of the trucks are incredibly responsive, and getting used to their control is a relatively easy task. What's more, the course layout is remarkably easy to follow, with no really tight corners or tricky chicanes. Its all pretty straightforward from the word go. But that's

where the fun begins. You see, Hardcore 4X4's motto seems to be: roads are for wimps. You may be racing four other trucks, but they're not the real enemy. The track (or rather the lack of it) is.

The courses in *Hardcore 4X4* are the most inhospitable hell-holes on this planet, with names like Dynamite Pass and Devil's Kitchen. Most people wouldn't even think about taking a walk around these places, never mind drive a truck! A mountain pass with sheer cliffs at every turn, a forest track with rocks in your path and the top

of a volcano with reddust and lava pools are just three of the six tracks on offer.
And on each one the terrain is about as flat as Pamela Lee. It's a

constant battle to keep your truck upright and on the track, and as you pick up speed and hit hills you really start flying all over the place. Play from the 'inside the truck' view and I guarantee you'll be screaming in no time!

The version we have is a beta and there's still some stuff that needs works. The CPU AI is inconsistent, the track layouts are all a bit too similar and there's no link-up mode. Hopefully these will be fixed in time for the review next issue. Get ready to get dirty! CH



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UTP 1/18

























exen is the fantasy themed sequel to Doom that was a monster hit on the PC a year ago, and is now PlayStation bound. Set in the magically enhanced kingdom of Hexen. you play one of three different characters on a quest to defeat the evil Serpent Rider Korax. The game uses an enhanced version of the Doom graphics engine that allows you to look up and down, jump, backtrack on previously conquered levels or even

fly. Each character has different weapons and physical attributes (making for varied Deathmatch battles) and the levels have been designed to actually look like real environments.







roken Helix is a first person shooter with a difference: this one's actually got an interactive plot. You are bomb disposal expert Jake Burton sent into a secret



bunker in Area 51 to find and defuse two bombs. But that's just the start of your problems. The basic gameplay is similar to Doom but here you can actually see your character on screen. You can also interact with other characters to obtain information and forward the story. There's a lot of speech in the game, including a brilliant Schwarzenegger parody, but best of all, the main character is voiced by none other than

BRUCE CAMPBELL of Evil Dead fame! Groovy!









Bubsy 3D arrived nearly Purrfected just before the close of the issue. The game has come a long way since we last previewed it, and after just a few minutes of play we decided unanimously to give it ample space in the January issue as well as coverage in MegaFan where we'll be able to show you all of this huge exploration 3D platform craziness. *B3D* still takes some getting used to in terms of control but the hi-res graphics

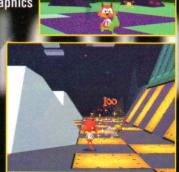
and huge environments demand further investigation.













Every few years, a video game comes along that completely redefines the genre...

And completely puts all others in its category to shame. This year, that game is...



USE YOUR MIND AND WIN A PRIZE! DISRUPTOR DOMINATION IS HERE!

This PlayStation shooter is so real, it even comes with its own National Competition, complete with huge prizes. Just fill out the DISRUPTOR DOMINATION OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM and pass it to any Electronics Boutique sales representative. Four First Prize winners from the U.S. and Canada will be brought to Universal City, California (home of the spectacular Universal Studios Hollywood) for the ULTIMATE SHOWDOWN, where ONE GRAND PRIZE winner will emerge victorious. No small event, the DISRUPTOR DOMINATION COMPETITION will take place where all the action is, with hundreds of fans, free stuff, media coverage, video game industry VIPs and much more. You want to do more than win...

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Four First Prizes will be awarded. All expense-paid trip for two to Universal City, California to participate in the DISRUPTOR DOMINATION COMPETITION to be held at a location to be announced. Trip includes airfare, hotel accommodations and meals for two (if promotion winner is a minor, companion must be an adult legal guardian; proof of guardianship will be required). Each first prize winner will also receive one (1) PlayStation game console, one (1) DISRUPTOR game pak and a one (1) year subscription to GameFan Magazine. First Prize approximate retail value: \$1520.00

Ten Second Prizes: DISRUPTOR DOMINATION PACK with DISRUPTOR all-metal industrial-grade lunch box, T-shirt, poster and a one (1) year subscription to GameFan Magazine. Second Prize approximate retail value: \$82.00

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To Enter: Visit your local Electronics Boutique, WaldenSoftware or EBX store or fill out the entry form in the December issue of GameFan Magazine or in the DISRUPTOR game package. Entrants MUST use an official entry form, photocopies will be disqualified. All entry forms must be completely filled out to be valid. All entries become property of Universal Interactive Studios and will not be acknowledged or returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners, or in the name of the parent or guardian if the winner is a minor. Winners may not substitute or transfer prizes and no cash equivalent will be offered. All entries must be received by Universal Interactive Studios by January 31, 1997. A random drawing will be conducted on or about February 15, 1997 by Universal Interactive Studios or its designee from completed entries which are at the location on the drawing date. The decisions of the entity conducting the random drawing shall be final. All entrants, by filling out entry form, grant sponsors permission to use their name and likeness for advertising and promotional purposes, with no additional compensation or acknowledgment, unless prohibited by law. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law.

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"Loads of character, interesting enemies and a completely distinctive graphic style." **NEXT GENERATION ONLINE** PLAYERS "Looks gorgeous and plays extremely well... even the loading screen is cool." GAME FAN "Entirely worthwhile, challenging and constantly entertaining."

GAME INFORMER Mice Diffy



SATURING







Not so many years ago, Sonic the Hedgehog, originally created by renowned designer Yuji Naka, put Sega on top. He started a roll that lasted for some two years and was the first mascot to give Mario a run for his money. He's the proud benefactor of four 16-bit sequels (some better than others), the best-ever Sega CD game, a 2nd-rate US cartoon, a phenomenal Japanese anime, a cool coin-op, countless merchandise, and a forgettable pinball game. Save it to say Sonic has become a part of Americana. The US Sonic has undergone several cosmetic changes (straying from the Japanese original), and two mascots have been designed especially for him in Sega's quest for Sonic gold. He's made plenty of people plenty of money, but I was beginning to wonder... at what price? The US-made Sonic Extreme looked less than impressive at the last Gamer's Day, and would soon be delayed for improvement, a wise choice on Sega's part. That's when SOA let this cat

Genesis-only Sonic Blast 3D.

Now personally, if I were a Sega power, I would have launched the system with Sonic rather then Pepperouchau, the forgotten early Sega mascot. The engine used for Clockwork Knight, had it been made for

HERE I

COME.

out of the bag. Travellers Tale, some of Britain's

as Mickey Mania, were simultaneously working

on a Saturn version of the thought-to-be-

most brilliant developers, makers of such phenomena

Sonic, would have sold a lot more Saturns and launched the hardware as new hardware should

be, mascot in tow, as the N64 has. SM64 sold one to one. That's all I have to say about that. So the question is, against stiff competition, can Sonic repeat the magic of '87 and bring the Saturn back into limelight as he did the Genesis, or has Sega waited too long? Will Sonic Extreme, a US-developed 3D polygonal game (the Saturn's Achilles heel) be the true 32-bit Sonic, or will the masters at Travellers Tales, working closely with Yuji Naka, deliver the supreme Hedgehog romp?

PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER-TRAVELLERS TALE

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



E. Storm
SEGA FINALLY
WELCOMES SONIC
HOME. BUT IS THE
HOUSE CLEAN?







PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE -



KNIGHTMARE I'm not obsessed with Candy... really, I'm not (heh, heh)...



Seeing as we already reviewed the Japanese version of Fighting Vipers last

month (everything Takuhi wrote still stands), I'll cut straight to the chase: What's been changed for the American release? Well AM2 fans, you can

breathe a sigh of relief. American Fighting Vipers is nearly identical to the Japanese version. The armor breaking is the same, the extra options are all in there, and Candy and Grace both look as alluring as ever. The only major difference is the lack of Pepsi sponsorship. Without Pepsi, the Pepsi truck in Picky's background has become a Sega truck, the Pepsi logo on Picky's board has been returned to the Fighting Vipers logo (true to the arcade) and worst of all, Pepsiman has been removed.

Now, arcade purists probably couldn't care less about the loss of such a novelty character, but I kinda liked him. I mean, the more characters the better right? And surely they could have found some way around the legal problems. Maybe change the brand name. Lose the red stripe and make him Generic Colaman or something. Also, we couldn't seem to find Candy's two alternative costumes (we found all the other hidden characters straight away). Perhaps they were a bit to risque for good of SOA.

Right, now that that's out of the way I can offer you my two dollars worth on Fighting Vipers. Basically, I think it's awesome – as a conversion and as a game. The graphics may not be as sharp as the Model 2 arcade, and the fighters may not be as detailed, but the game still runs at 60 frames per second and Sega more than compensates for any visual deficiency with all the added extras exclusive to the Saturn conversion.

But most importantly, Fighting Vipers plays just like the arcade (or even better in the arranged mode!). It's fast, stylish, accessible and best of all, ultra-violent. The basic PPK derivative combos make it a much easier game than VF2 to just pick up and play, while the huge range of moves and techniques give it nearly the same amount of depth. Plus the sharp, staccato nature of most of the characters' moves gives the action a really viscous feeling that no other 3D game has managed to capture so far.

I love this game. In my opinion it's up there with VF2 and Tekken 2 in the 3D beat-'em-up hall of fame. If you're a fan of the coin-op, a fan of VF2, or even just a fan of fighting games in general, you'd be a fool to miss this.







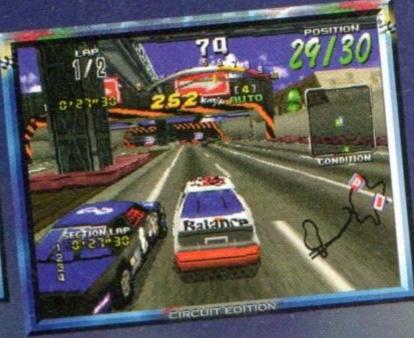




PREVIEW









SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - AM2

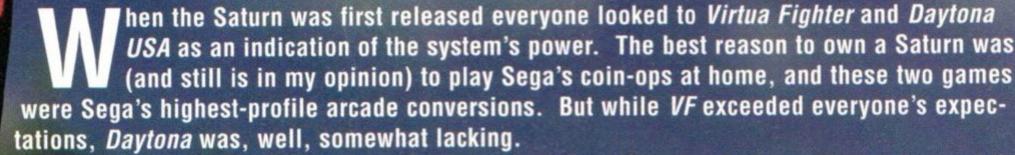
PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



Basically the graphics sucked. The frame rate was low, the game had massive borders and the pop-up was so bad it was laughable. Comparisons were made with *Ridge Racer* on PlayStation and in aesthetic terms at least, *Daytona* lost pitifully.

But Daytona had a lot of fans. As Sega developed the Saturn's graphics libraries thousands of requests flooded into Sega HQ demanding a *Daytona Remix* in the same style as *VF Remix*. And who are Sega to argue with their fans? After AM2 finished *Sega Rally*, Sega put them to work on a 'top secret driving game' that was a secret to absolutely nobody. *Daytona USA CCE* was born.

Daytona USA CCE is a Daytona lover's dream come true. Two new intermediate tracks (National Park Speedway and Desert City), seven new cars (with varying attributes), new gameplay modes (endurance, time trial and grand prix), new secrets (that'd be telling), analog control with the new NiGHTS pad (trust me, it's brilliant), a new soundtrack (good and bad) and most importantly – much better graphics.

Yes, even in the early version we received it's clear that Daytona CCE

















is a lot better looking than its predecessor. The game now runs at thirty frames per second, full screen (so no more borders) and in a higher resolution than even Sega Rally. Unfortunately, it's not all good news. In the 65% complete version that we received the game still suffers from SEVERE pop-up, even worse than the original Daytona conversion! Sega has assured us that reducing this pop-up is their number one priority, but I really don't see how it's going to be possible. There's so much trackside

detail, and at times you get up to 10 cars on screen at once. I suppose after all this time I should just have a little faith.

Regardless of how bad the clipping is, Daytona CCE still plays like the Daytona I know and love, and with the new analog controller it's even better. Even in this 65% version there's no doubt that Daytona CCE is the most realistic, exhilarating racing experience out there, and there's still 35% left to come. I'll be back with a full review soon. K







Just as I'm firing up my import version of Toshinden URA, wondering if SOA will bring it out, it gets dropped on our doorstep. Talk about

service! URA is the first game in the series designed specifically for the Sega Saturn. The game features new

characters Ripper, who dawns Freddy Kreuger-like mitts, and Ronron, a *Blue Seed*-like high school bad girl (a wolf in sheep's clothing, I assure you). The whole affair is brought to you in gleaming hi-res. and although the backgrounds are not as spectacular as *T2*'s, the

fighters themselves look excellent, with more detail and less break up. We'll have a full report on *Toshinden URA* in the January issue.



TOSHINDEN URA

ONE OR TWO PLAYERS, POLYGON FIGHTER, DEVELOPED BY TAKARA, PUBLISHED BY SEGA, AND AVAILABLE DEC. '96



MR. BONES

one player, action/platform(?), developed by zono, published by sega, and available nov. '96

This is, without a doubt, one of the weirdest, most innovative games I have ever experienced. Just when you think it's an action/platformer,

you come across a stage where you have to play an electric guitar, rescue Lilliputian dwarves from spiders, swim through a CD-streamed

Tempest 2000-style vortex. Segasoft has put a lot of effort into Mr. Bones and it shows. It makes the best use of pre-rendered graphics yet seen on any system, and features some of the best FMV cut scenes I've ever seen on the Saturn. It's so big it comes on two discs! Look for a full review next month.







HEXEN

ONE PLAYER, CORRIDOR SHOOTER,
DEVELOPED BY PROBE, PUBLISHED BY GT
INTERACTIVE, AND AVAILABLE DEC. '96

The pseudo-sequel to *Doom* is on its way to the Saturn courtesy of Probe, and it's looking mighty tasty. *Hexen* is a first-person perspective shooter in the style of

Doom, but with some notable differences. First, you get the choice of three different characters: a warrior, a cleric or magic user, each with their own

weapons and physical attributes. Second, the level structure is based around a non-linear Hub system, where each episode has a central hub level which leads off to a number of sub levels. Third, you can do all kinds of neat stuff you couldn't do in *Doom* like jump, store items, and best of all, look up and down. The game will be compatible with the Saturn link-up cable, and is currently running at a higher frame rate than the PlayStation version. Now that's a switch!









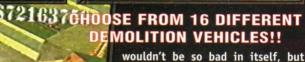




he N64 seems to be blazing a bright trail through the videogame industry now, and regardless of whether or not that trail is entirely justified, it cannot be ignored. Qualitative judgments aside (I turned up too late to voice my opinion), there's no denying that both Mario 64 and Pilotwings are unlike anything available on any other console at the moment (though clones are sure to follow). And that's a tra-

dition that looks set to continue with Rare's second foray into 64-bit development: the original Blast Corps.

In the not-too-distant future the military uses hi-tech, computer-automated carrier trucks to safely transport nuclear weapons from one location to another. After a freak accident, the computer guidance system of one of these missile carriers malfunctions and the vehicle heads off its predetermined course into a populated area. That



there's one other unpleasant side effect to this malfunction: the impact-sensitive nuclear warhead has been activated! Even the slightest jolt will set it off, and if that happens, you can say goodbye to everything and everyone in a ten

mile radius. Uh oh.

The only way the military can salvage this situation is to make sure that the missile carrier gets a clear path, no matter where it travels. That's where you come in. You play the part of a crack demolition agent working within the Blast Corps, an expert trained to drive every known form of demolition

57 DESTRUCTION-PACKED STAGES!!







\$72168161









TIME IS RUNNING OUT!! STEER A PATH THROUGH BUILDINGS OR PEOPLE WILL DIE!!!

\$0

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vehicle. It's your job to clear away any buildings or obstacles that get in the truck's path, using whatever means necessary!

Those 'means' take the form of 16 different demolition vehicles ranging from bulldozers to giant mechs. This variety of trans-

port available is one of the coolest aspects of the game, as every level features between two and six different types of vehicles hidden away in the landscape. When you find another vehicle, you can swap between them simply by climbing out of your present vehicle and hopping in the driver's seat of the new one. Each vehicle uses a different technique for destroying obstacles, from the obvious to the not-so-obvious. For instance, while the bulldozer will simply plow right through buildings, the truck has to slide into them, and the mech has to curl up into a ball and roll through them. Other vehicles we've seen include tugboats,





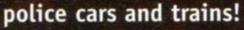
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the first stage you have to find and rescue six scientists located at various points around the levels.

Clearing a path for the missile carrier isn't always as easy as just destroying buildings. Later on in the game you're forced to find ways to bridge rivers and ravines, or to transport a crate of TNT across the level to demolish a particularly tough obstacle. And no matter how powerful the Blast Corps vehicles may be, trees are always indestructible! To please the environmental lobbyists no doubt.

Manage to protect the missile carrier through an entire level and you are awarded with a medal for completing the task. However, you're free to re-enter the levels whenever you want to rack up bonus points by destroying non-essential buildings (represented by the dollar value of damage done!) or by activating the 100 Radiation Dispersal Units dotted around the landscape. As you earn medals and points, your ranking in the Blast Corps increases.

Blast Corps looks HOT! You won't believe the quality of the graphics, and if the gameplay is of a similar caliber we could well be looking at another essential N64 purchase. WaveRace may not have been all I had hoped it would (i.e.; not a Super Mario Kart-beater) but this next wave of N64 software looks set to wash away any doubts I ever had about the power of the big N. Bring it on, Rare. K



Blast Corps offers over 57 fully 3D levels set in a myriad of different locations, all with their own natural hazards and problems. As you travel around the landscape the buildings lying in the missile carrier's immediate path are highlighted by pulsating arrows, and if the carrier gets too close you'll be alerted by

a high-pitched siren. When this happens it's best to switch to the top-down satellite view of the action to get a bet-

ter sense of the area, allowing you to plot a direct course to the trouble spot.

The 57 levels are split into three stages, and within each stage you have total freedom to travel between any of the levels. On top of the building destruction each stage also has its own set of specific objectives that have to be completed before you can move on. For instance, on



DEVELOPER - RARE

PUBLISHER - NINTENDO

FORMAT - CARTRIDGE

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - UNKNOWN

AVAILABLE - MARCH 1997



Knightmare

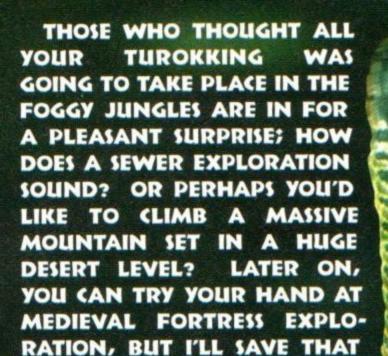












EXCITEMENT FOR A FUTURE ISSUE. WHAT CAN DETAIL ARE THE GOBSMACKINGLY **AWESOME** NEW AND MONSTERS IMPROVEMENTS OVER PREVIOUS VERSIONS. YOU'VE ALL SEEN THAT MECHANI-

CAL ROBOT WITH A MINI-GUN AND GRENADE LAUNCHER? NOW HIS CHROME BODYWORK IS SO SHINY THAT YOU CAN ACTUALLY SEE A REFLECTION OF YOURSELF WHEN UP CLOSE (YES, REALLY)!

ACTUAL COMBAT BETWEEN TUROK

AND THIS ROBOT AND AMAZING, EVEN IGUANA HAS ADDED REALLY COOL NEW FEATURES LIKE PALM TREES SMALL THAT CREAK AND COL-LAPSE WHEN YOU MIS-TAKENLY SHOOT THEM! **EVERYTHING FROM THE** TEXTURE-MAPPED RAPTORS TO THE WEAPONS YOU COLLECT IS SO DETAILED AND HI-

RES THAT YOU'D SWEAR YOU WERE PLAYING A REAL-TIME FMV VIDEO...

LATER INTO YOUR WADE THROUGH THE LANDS OF TUROK, YOU ENCOUNTER A GROUP OF TRICERATOPS COMPLETE WITH RIDERS, HUGE WORMS THAT ARCH OUT OF THE GROUND WITH

(00)

A THUNDEROUS ROAR (DUNE, ANYONE?), PTERODACTYLS WITH HUMAN RIDERS THAT SWOOP OUT OF THE SKY AND A WHOLE NEW SET OF NATIVE GUARDS (ARMED WITH SPEARS, AXES AND THROUGH WADING TRANSLU-AWESOME CENT WATER). MOST SPECTACULAR IS THE

JOURNEY THROUGH THE CLOUDS TO A SKY-HUT WHERE YOU MEET A BRACHIOSAURUS. YEAH, ONE OF THEM 100-FEET LONG PLANT-EATERS LIKE IN JURASSIC PARK. EXCEPT THIS ONE'S LIABLE TO BITE YOUR HEAD OFF. 'IMPRESSIVE' ISN'T THE WORD. 'GODLY' PROBABLY COMES CLOSE.

EXPLORE STRANGE NEW ENVIRONMENTS!

THIS VAST ARRAY OF CREA-TURES DOESN'T STOP HERE. HOW ABOUT A MUTATED CRAB CREA-TURE DURING YOUR SEWER **EXPLORATION?** OR PERHAPS YOU'D RATHER CHALLENGE A OF KOMODO DRAGONS (SPINY AND NON-SPINY VER-SIONS) TO A BRAWL? ONCE INSIDE ONE OF THE MANY CAVE SYSTEMS, TRIBE THERE'S EVEN BARBARIANS THAT TAKE DISLIKE YOUR ACTIVE OF WEAPONRY. SHOW 'EM THE TRUE MEANING OF THE WORD THERE'S EVEN A HUGE PAIN'! (AND FRANKLY GROSS) MANTIS SPIDER THAT NOT ONLY SHOOTS GREEN GOO AT YOU, BUT THEN CUNNINGLY SCUTTLES UP THE WALLS ONCE YOU LAY INTO HIM!

ADD TO THIS SOME BREATHTAKING LIGHTNING EFFECTS (IN THE SKY), FANTASTIC INCA STATUES, STONE COLUMNS AND ROPE BRIDGES OVER HUGE GAPING CHASMS, AND YOU'RE JUST STARTING TO GRASP THE EPIC NATURE OF THIS GAME...

BE SURE TO TUNE IN NEXT TIME WHERE WE'LL COMPLETELY OVER-BOARD AND SHOW YOU GORIEST CLOSE-UPS MONSTERS THRASH-THE GROUND, COOL LIGHTING



EATURES FROM SPACE

ALIENS FROM ANOTHER WORLD THREATEN!!



DEVELOPER - IGUANA

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - 64 MB CART

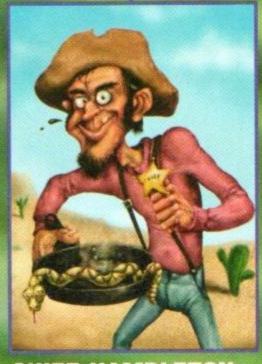
OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - N/A

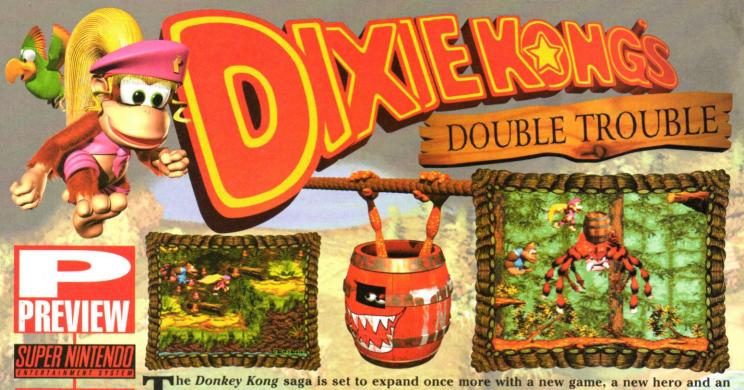
AVAILABLE - MARCH

EFFECTS AND YET MORE FOES (WHO KNOWS, WE MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO SHOW YOU THE LEGENDARY MECHANICAL T-REX)! MAKE NO MISTAKE; TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER IS

GOING TO BE THE NEW STAN-DARD AGAINST WHICH ALL FUTURE 3D QUAKE GAMES SHALL BE MEASURED; THIS IS GOING TO BE HUGE! NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'VE GOT AN ITCHY TRIGGER FINGER AND A FOREST FULL OF RAPTORS TO CULL..! CH



CHIEF HAMBLETON **HOW DO YOU SCRATCH AN** ITCHY TRIGGER FINGER?



The Donkey Kong saga is set to expand once more with a new game, a new hero and an all new addition to the Kong family. Donkey Kong Country 3: Dixie's Double Trouble is the third installment (doh!) in the ongoing Kong saga, and it's shaping up to be the best yet. In a time when hot 16 bit titles are supposed to be dying breed, Rare come out of their corner fighting with this 32-Megabit (and battery-back up) monster cart that could well blur the gap between 16 and 32 bit even further.

In the original DKC, Donkey and Diddy Kong were out to reclaim their stolen banana horde from evil Kremling ruler Krool. In DKC2, Diddy and Dixie Kong sought to rescue a kidnapped Donkey Kong. And now in DKC2. Divisional provider Kong and power of the Congression of the Congress

Donkey Kong. And now in DKC3, Dixie and newcomer Kiddy Kong are



PIIRI ISHFR -

OF PLAYERS

NINTENDO

- 1-2

MAT - 32 MEG CART.

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

KNIGHTMARE
IT'S TIME TO
KONGO ONCE
MORE!





out to rescue a kidnapped Donkey AND Diddy Kong. I think I see a pattern developing here...

The basic platform structure from *DKC* remains the same, but with a host of new additional features. Where do I start? I know: the characters. Kiddy Kong is the newest member of the Kong family, so new in fact that he's still got his pacifier. But don't let his age fool you, Kiddy is as powerful as Donkey, and eager to prove it. He can attack with his arms, with a bounce, or a well placed roll to knock out multiple enemies. To encourage the teamwork element of the game, he can also hurl Dixie to high places, while Dixie can throw Kiddy as an offensive weapon. If Kiddy bounces off a wall, Dixie can jump on him and roll him along like a barrel! Cool!

The helpful Kong family make a welcome return, this time aided by some new jungle inhabitants. Funky's got a summer job repairing water craft, and if you can find the parts he needs, he'll reward you with a new means of trans-









portation - a hover craft or boat perhaps? Swanky's Tent is also back in town with all new games to win yourself bananas or bear coins. Bear

bananas or bear coins. Bear coins? That'd be for the bear clan. The bears run a series of shops all over Kong Country, and by listening to their stories or solving their problems you'll gain essential advice or items to help complete the game. Locate Wrinkly Kong for an opportunity to save your game (Candy Kong was much easier on the eye), and watch out for one of five new animal

With this many new allies, it's only fitting that there should be an equal number of new adversaries for the Kongs to face on their travels. And Rare hasn't let us down. Under the rule of the new Kremling leader KAOS



3777

you'll meet such foes as Klap, a killer barrel; Kopter, a flying Kremling with a rotor blade; and Koin, a Kremling wearing tough armor who is only vulnerable to attacks from behind. The boss encounters have also changed

in format from previous *DKC* games. Whereas before the attack method was always the same (bounce or barrel) now you'll have to work out a special way of hitting each boss. One boss even involves an into the screen snowball fight!

Rare claims that there are over 100 hours of gameplay packed into DKC3's 32 megs, along with even more of the remarkable ACM rendered animation that you've come to expect from DKC. We'll have more on this

hot title next month, but until then, keep your SNES warm. 16-bit is a long way from dead yet! NK



























It's a new tradition in gaming ... especially in Japan. Take a popular series, be it anime or game, squish the characters, and presto!, you've got a new sensation! If it was only that easy. It's always worked with Super Deformers (smashed little Gundams) because they've always been that way and it sort of (well, not really) worked with VF Kids, Sega's stand alone super deformed fighter. And don't forget, Namco added SD cars to Ridge Racer; Takara, big head mode to Toshinden; and there's a way to squash the players in Fighting Vipers

as well. So you see



the trend. One similarity however, runs through all of those titles: besides being pint-sized, they're all the same game otherwise... not so exciting. When I first spotted Ni Toshinden in an import PS mag, I figured it would follow

along those same lines so even as GF's lone
Toshinden fan I didn't get all that excited. Once I
popped it in though and found all new controls,
hot-hot visuals and yummy music I began to enjoy
this puny but packed fighter. Although I do not comprehend Japanese (I'm workin' on it) the on-board tutorial struck me as extremely well produced and makes me
wonder why more fighters don't have live actors spewing
forth combos and the like. From

here it's on to vs., tournament, or vs. CPU gameplay, just like the















big boys. The first thing that strikes you when viewing the game's spectacular visuals is that everything is super rubbery. Tracy especially bends and stretches with the utmost exaggeration. Think Motor Toon fighters. Of course the vivid texture mapping, smooth 30fps frame rate and light sourcing from the wizards at Takara ain't too shabby either. In fact Ni

Toshinden has better visuals than









all previous games in the series except for Toshinden 2-PS, the king of the series. The control scheme in Ni is simple yet highly effective and combo friendly. Remember the cheap L&R moves from 1&2? Well, in Ni, every move is performed this way. That's right... one button. It works though. By combining button presses using the correct timing, the game has ample strategy and is just as competitive as any other fighter. This cruise control doesn't make the game any easier but I got a certain satisfaction from not having to spin the directionals for a change.

Now let's talk a little about these characters. I'm sure you

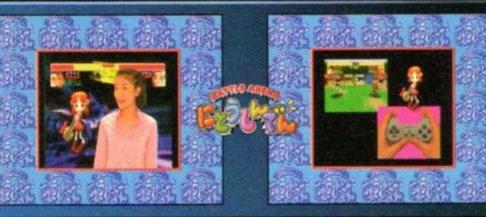


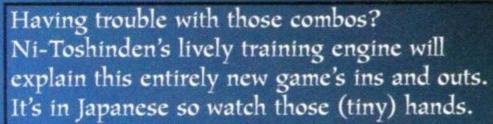


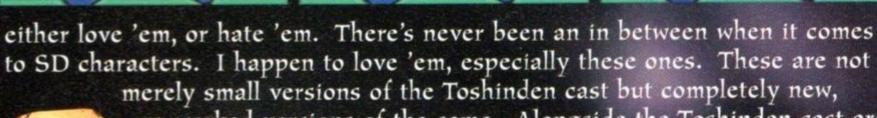












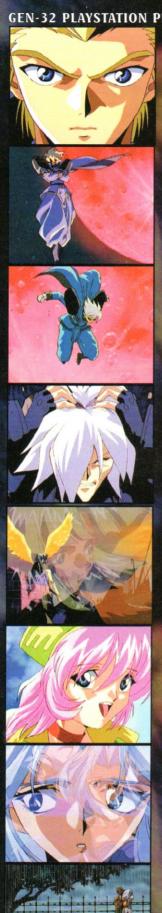
re-worked versions of the same. Alongside the Toshinden cast are famous characters from Takara's action toy line, an assortment of little warriors that range from the too cute to downright evil and twisted. Some of them rival the original cast members missing from this game, like the useless Rungo. Who knows, maybe we'll see Baifu in Toshinden 3. Any kid with that many tattoos deserves another shot! One thing's for sure, you haven't lived until you've seen Sofia's tiny body fitted with gargantuan, shall we say... augmented polygons.



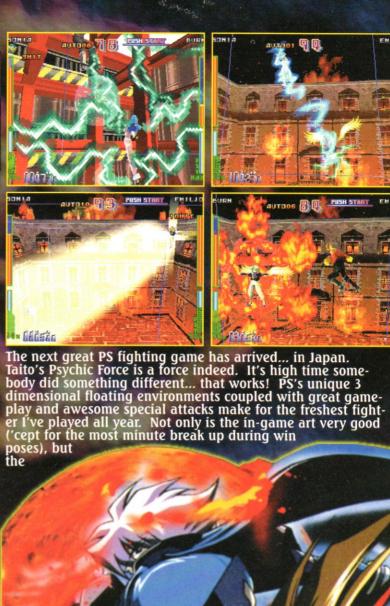




GEN-32 PLAYSTATION PREVIEW

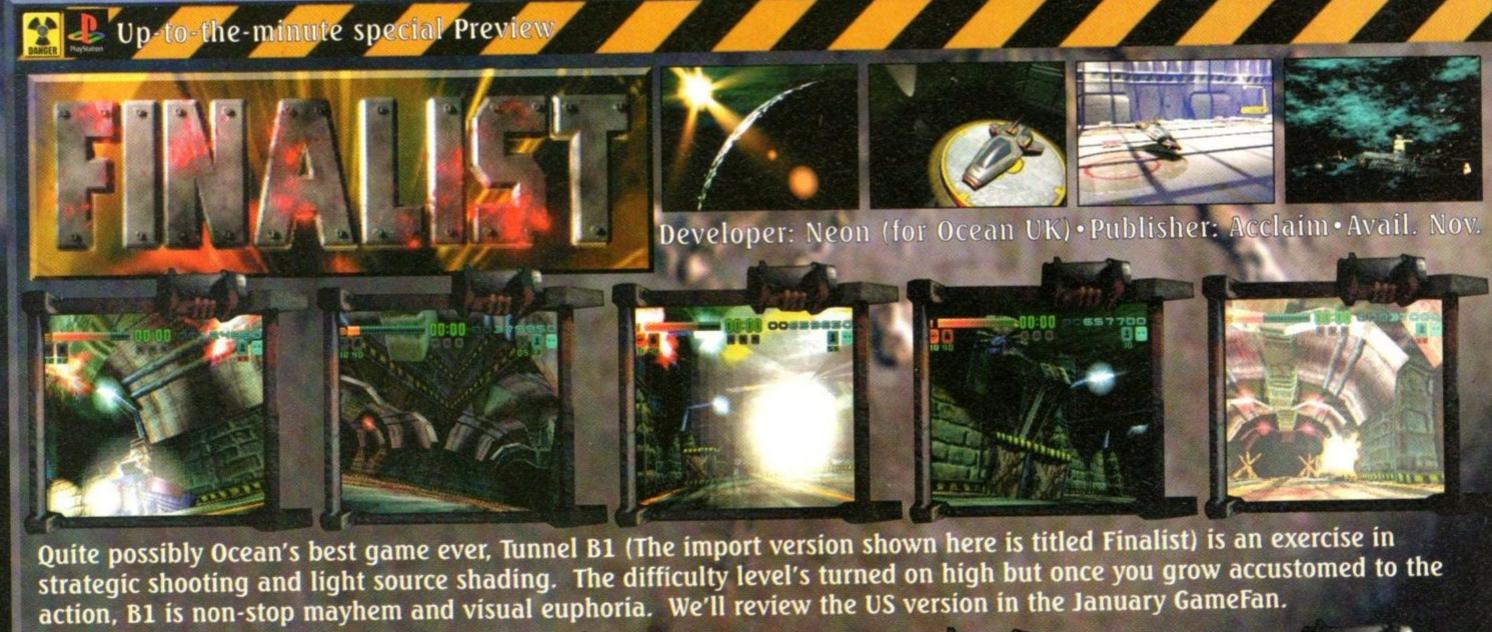


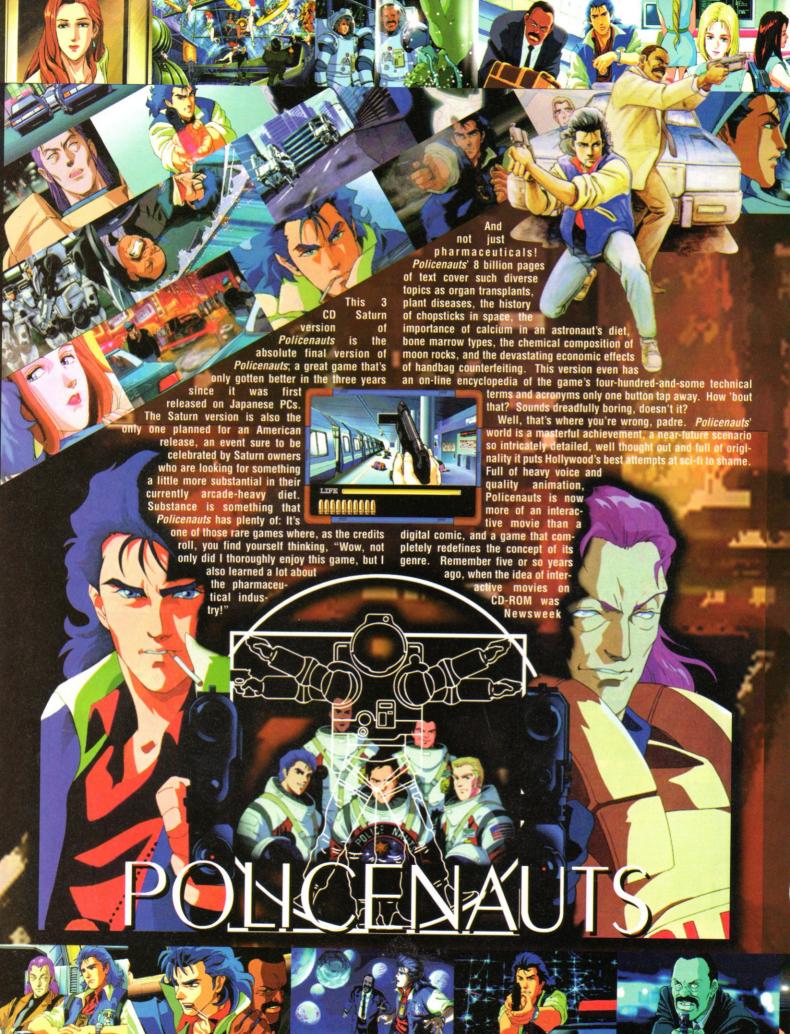






















DEVELOPER - TOMY

PUBLISHER - TOMY

FORMAT - CD

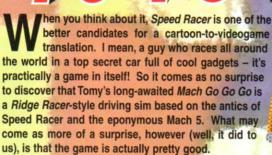
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



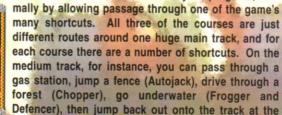
KNIGHTMARE GO, GO, GO!



On the surface, Mach Go Go Go looks like a hundred other Ridge Racer rip offs. All the generic standard features are here: three courses (short, medium and long), a choice of automatic or manual transmission, hidden cars (including Racer X), different viewpoints, an irritating commentary - everything you've come to expect from a PlayStation racer. And in the tradition of Burning Road, entire sections of the course (and soundtrack) seem to have been, er, 'influenced' by both Daytona USA and Ridge Racer (boy, have those tunnel builders been busy).

The graphics are good - not quite in the same league as Namco's classic - but still smooth and detailed, with a convincing sense of solidity. The sound is also above average, with authentic tunes and effects lifted directly from the show. Unfortunately, the vehicle handling is a bit of a let down. None of the cars have the ability to power slide. resulting in unrealistically sharp cornering. You do get used to it, but it's a far cry from the exhilaration of sliding horizontally around a tight corner in Ridge Racer.

Mach Go Go Go does have two major things going for it. First, the use of the license. The Mach 5 (the main car) retains its A-G gadget panel from the show. Each one of these gadgets can be used in a different fashion to aid your progress, nor-



Finding these shortcuts and using them

Secondly, Mach Go Go Go is fast. And I mean really fast. Living up to its name, the sense of speed you get from playing the game inside the car POV is mind blowing. Burning through a tunnel at 340 kmh, the slightest bump in the road sends you flying into the air. Very cool.

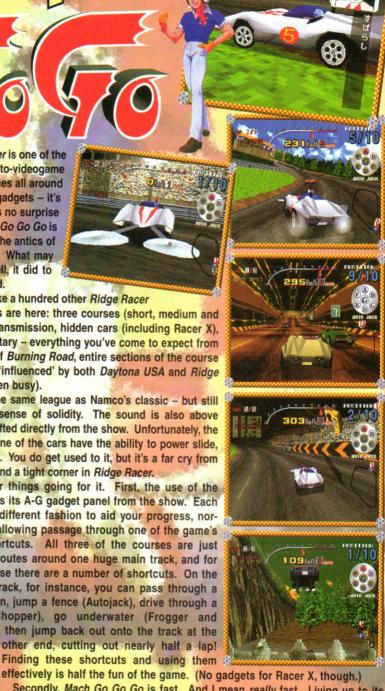
There's no word on an official American release yet, but if the game gets picked up Stateside (a very real possibility, given the show's popularity over here) it'll be more than worth checking out. K















NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER. PRINT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER ON A PLAIN PIECE OF PAPER OR A 3" X 5" CARD AND MAIL TO GAMEFAN MAGAZINE/SWEEPSTAKES, 5137 CLARETON DRIVE #210, AGOURA HILLS, CA 91301. ALL WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY MAIL. MULTIPLE ENTRIES ACCEPTED, BUT EACH MUST BE POSTMARKED SEPARATELY. THE DEADLINE FOR ALL ENTRIES IS MARCH 31,1997, AND ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY THIS DATE TO BE ELIGIBLE. GAMEFAN AND NINTENDO OF AMERICA INC. AND THEIR AFFILIATES ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LATE OR LOST MAIL. THE SWEEPSTAKES IS OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES EXCEPT EMPLOYEES OF GAMEFAN MAGAZINE, NINTENDO OF AMERICA INC. AND THEIR SUBSIDIARIES AND AFFILIATES. THIRTY-THREE (33) WINNERS INCLUDING (3) GRAND PRIZE WINNERS WILL BE SELECTED BY A RANDOM DRAWING ON APRIL 7, 1997 FROM ALL ELIGIBLE ENTRIES. ALL TAXES ON PRIZES ARE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE WINNERS. WINNERS RELEASE GAMEFAN MAGAZINE AND NINTENDO OF AMERICA INC. AND THEIR SUBSIDIARIES AND AFFILIATES IN ALL MATTERS RELATING TO THE USE OF PRIZES. NO SUBSTITUTION OF PRIZES OR CASH EQUIVALENT ALLOWED. ONE PRIZE PER FAMILY. WINNERS GRANT PERMISSION TO USE THEIR NAMES, ADDRESSES, AND PHOTOS FOR ADVERTISING OR PROMOTIONAL PURPOSES WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION. SWEEPSTAKES VOID WHERE PROHIBITED BY LAW, AND OTHERWISE GOVERNED BY CALIFORNIA LAW. © 1996

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ARE YOU READY FOR THE BATTLE OF THE CENTURY?!! STREET FIGHTERS AND SUPERHEROS FIGHTING SIDE BY SIDE!!

apcom kindly granted us an audience to show us their latest 2D excursion into the *Street Fighter* legend. Although some may argue that Capcom have been milking the *Street Fighter* name for longer than anyone thought possible, no one can deny that all those extra versions have added a huge amount of playability and strategy to a once-jaded genre. Now we're coming up to the next big thing, the almighty *Street Fighter III* (which is already causing a frighteningly large amount of interest on the Net). Capcom's new fighter to set the standard for the next five years.





However, in order to plug the gap until this momentous occasion; and to ensure their arcade supremacy, Capcom has shocked the more righteous members of the arcade fraternity (well okay, Nick's not happy) by introducing the craziest cross-over ever seen in 2D fighting! The game? X-Men versus Street Fighter.

From the very beginning, let me stress the word fun; you won't get too much strategy out of this title, as the emphasis is mostly on spectacular X attacks, cool double-teaming and simple hits that cause multiple wounding. You won't be relying on expert precision to halt a barrage of flailing limbs; just power up and unleash your devastating special, then sit back and watch the pyrotechnics! Those who've played X-Men: Children of the Atom will be instantly at home here (identical play mechanics); this is essentially the same game with a couple of big differences; the hand-drawn graphics are even better, and there's a whole team





COMBINE MUTANT WITH STREET FIGHTING POWERS FOR THE





of World Warriors anxious to test their might against (or even with) these powerful mutants!

There's an initial choice of 17 characters to pick and you'll want to get to grips with all of them immediately! First though, you'll need to master the new premise that defines this game; tag-team action! Now your usual street fight pits one on one as usual, but players have the added option of switching between their team members at any time during the round. This doesn't just confuse your enemy; you can substitute a wounded team-mate and replace him with a healthy hero. The fight continues, and during this time, your downed fighter heals up to prolong the bout and add to the tension!

THE CROSS-OVER COMBINED ATTACK! ARGE UP THE ENERGY AND UNLEASH!



CERTAIN CHARACTERS CAN COMBIN ATTACKS MORE EFFECTIVELY! FIND T DUO THAT WORKS FOR YOU!















ENDURE SPECTACULAR BATTLES WITH THE WORLD'S STRONGEST BEFORE

There's another reason to get all excited about this new beat-'emup; the double character Specials! Providing you've powered your character up, he or she can summon their inner Chi (or mutant power), join with their tag-team mate and launch a devastating multiple hit on a bewildered and soon-to-be-damaged foe. What's even more exciting are the different effects you get by combining two characters: Ryu and Cyclops, for example, execute a full-on optic fireball inferno; whilst Bison and Magneto are content with some

supreme psycho crushing.

For all these exciting additions however, I was expecting more from the new characters, but for the majority of the newcomers, I did feel a little short-changed. For example, the unfortunate Cammy not only looks rather tired, but animates without any finesse, and fails to produce any exciting attacks at all. Gambit has a commendable X-Attack involving those playing cards, but very little else; but Sabretooth does look really menacing, and even employs his assistant Birdie in one of

his attacks! All the characters you've seen before have one or two new moves (Bison's fireball, which passes through foes and then explodes, and can be used to start a floating combo, while Ken and Ryu both have (gasp) air fireballs). Some backgrounds are slightly flat, and drawn in the same X-Men COTA style, meaning the Street Fighter crew look

slightly out of place. Still, there's lots to look for on these stages (have you spotted that hairy green-skinned Brazilian yet?)

The final boss (Apocalypse) looks somewhat disturbing (a huge arm

EXPECT NO MERCY, MUTANT!!









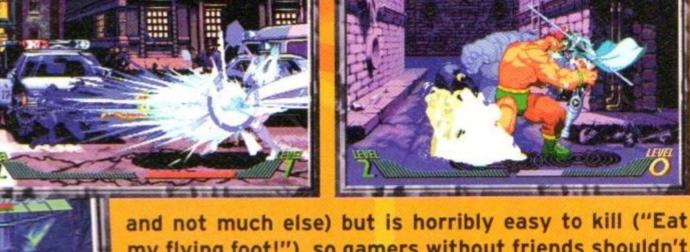




a whole lotta fun challenging their mates to a spectacular exhibition of superhuman skill with their favorite characters. I can't wait for the home version to arrive, and although disappointed by the lack of depth, this is still a great 2D fighter. CH

NEXT MONTH MUTANTS!

MORE MIND-NUMBING ACTION NEXT MONTH!! CHECK OUT THE AWESOME STREET FIGHTER VS. X-MEN GUIDE IN MEGAFAN ISSUE 2!!



HARING PARTS

my flying foot!"), so gamers without friends shouldn't have much trouble finishing the one player. However, it is the head-to-head bouts that the majority of arcade punters crave, and insert their quarters to

play; and X-Men versus Street Fighter is no exception. The arcade-meister will have this game licked in a matter of minutes, but the newcomer should have







QUARTER

CHIEF HAMBLETON MORE X-MEN THAN STREET FIGHTER.







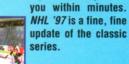
פפוצי בפר

bruiser that could shoot the three.

JACQUES STRAP



t's about time! NHL was beggin' to be 32-bit! The next-gen facelift yields a great 3D texture-mapped polygon engine running the arenas and players. There's also a ton of cool trading and Create Player options, as well as the expected season and playoff game modes. Did they mess with the gameplay we all know and love? Not a chance! Picture all that good stuff you're used to (great control, accuracy, and feel), and throw in drop passes, fakes, and pinpoint set-up shots. Every play-mechanic uses the PS pad to its fullest, and literally the entire gameplay experience hits you and stays with



STRAP'S GV



Game time arrived and I was pleased to see clear and vibrant home team logos blazing upon shiny wood floors. The game itself invites a voyeuristic feel perched from an upper level vantage point, enhanced by courtside commentary. One disadvantage of this perspective is that you never really get quality close-up play. When I'm sitting up high at an actual game I tend to watch more of the game on the big screen monitors to get the blood, sweat and tears. I quickly came to terms with this perspective however, and really appreciated the other coveted aspects of Live '97 like all of this year's rookie crops, cumulative

n NBA Live '97, EA covers all the bases via player and

game options – everything from signing free agents, releasing stiffs, and forcing trades, to creating your own

player, along with his skin tone, and the style of his facial hair. I'm a sucker for these options, customizing my team

and the season. It took me about 20 minutes to get the

game started, resulting in, among other things, a 7'10'

stats throughout the season (I love that stuff), and trade deadlines. Over all, '97 is enjoyable especially for option lovers and stat freaks

"STRAP"

I've played both hockey games extensively this month (this and NHL '97) and I've come away with this conclusion: I love playing both games. NHL Face Off has the crisper 3D engine, and better sound, but lacks the classic gameplay feel of NHL '97. Everything's still great, with multiple views, Create Player options, and full NHL support, but the gameplay isn't quite as refined as in NHL '97. I'm not complaining, the game has top notch control, second-nature play-mechanics, and hot looks, but EA's god experience on its side.

got experience on its side GCPM085 8 8 9 7 85

Well, it ain't World Series 2, but on the PS, *Pennant Race* is my "number one guy." You got your red hots, your 700 plus players, your stadiums, and all those juicy season options. Create a Player lets you bust out your own custom pitchers and players, and the in game options throw loads o' views and fielding options your way. The cherry comes with the control, which is fan-tastic, instinctual, and beyond easy to pick-up. A baseball must-buy.

GCPMO 8 9 9 (8) (8)

Wee-haw! 3D wrestlin PlayStation! Awesome texturemapped polygonal stadiums and wrestlers, a blazing frame rate, and perfect camera angles combine to form a visual masterpiece. Kick in some freakin' hot moves, dead-on control, and spleen busting realism courtesy of great motion-capture - and playin' Power Move is just like watching it...pure, anabolically enhanced, wrestling joy!!!

GCPMO 9 9 9 9



PlayStation Sonv



MLB Pennant Race PlayStation



Power Move Wrestling PlayStation

"JOE"

off the bat the best thing about Face Off for me is the control factor. Hockey games in the past have players sliding all over the place so that you can't ever do what you intend, let alone catch up to the ever-moving puck. That fact alone saved my thumb muscle from cramping up after 5 min utes, thus allowing me to enjoy the smooth play of Face Off and to actual-. I love the fast pace, too.

GCPM084 8 9 9 7 7

I was never into baseball games much, but I tell ya, this one had me smiling the whole time and I insisted on taking it home with me. It's easy enough for a rookie like me to play, yet realistic enough to take it serious. Plus, I always associate baseball with "slow" but PR manages to put the heat on and comes up with a winner.

GCPM092

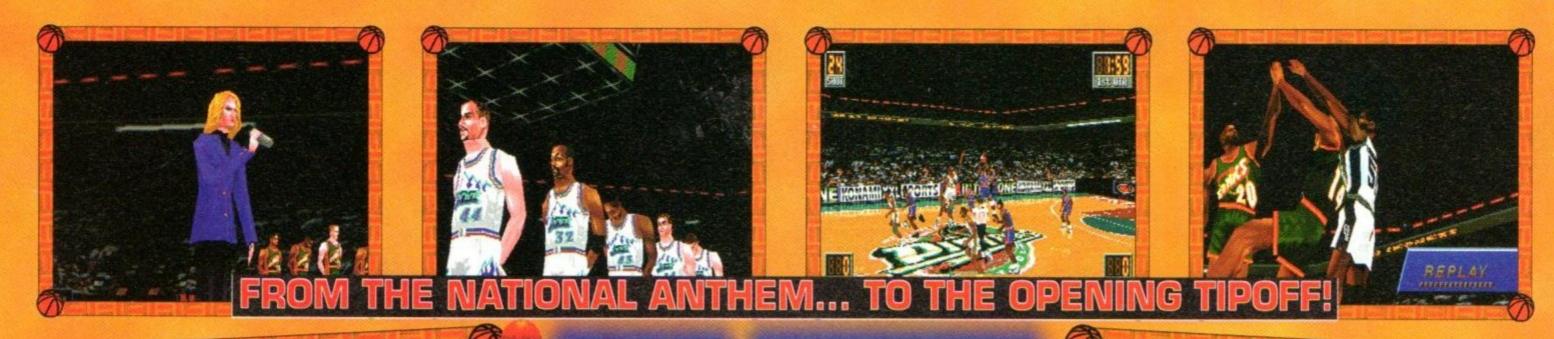
Well it seems Power Move is a big hit with everyone... everyone, except maybe me. I have to admit I was quite taken with it at first and I couldn't stop playing it. Movements were very realis-tic and the 12-Man Gauntlet mode was challenging. But in the end, there was-n't enough for me; not in concept, action, graphics, music or fects. Of course I didn't have nd effects. any preconceptions going in nor was I looking for anything in particular. Sorry,

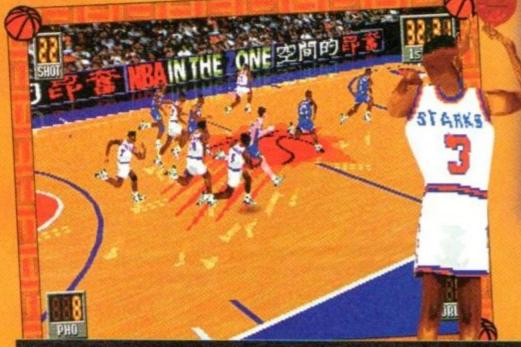
GCPMO 6 9 9 6 7

KIDD'S CORNER

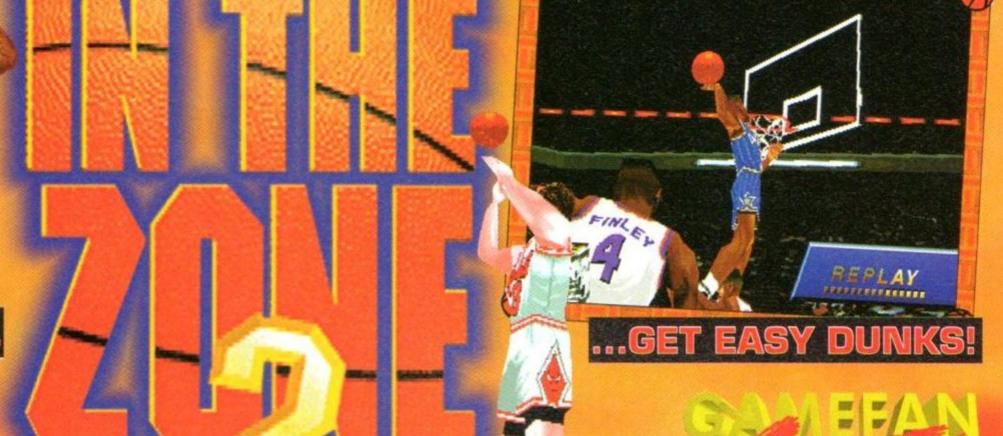


reetings, sports freaks, Joe Kidd here, fresh out of Nor-Cal, the latest free agent signing on here at GameFan. Well, I can hardly believe I'm saying this, but it's nice to be down from the Bay Area and in LA. I mean, sports-wise, I'm tired of Al Davis and his tireless Raider antics, games at the Oakland Coliseum with construction cranes in the background, the Giants' Barry Bonds crying about his daddy, the Warriors and their paltry off-season moves... However, life in Southern California has begun on a good note, with my mighty (5-0) California Bears coming into Riotville and taking down the University of Spoiled Children Trojans and their latex quarterback. Shaq is in the house along with Kobe, Eddie, Van Exel, Ceballos and Elden... Can you smell Championship? Tiger Woods has awakened from his slumber and is tearing up the fairways, Alomar's loogie-hawking days have been cut short, and it's been rumored that Michael Irvin will counsel him throughout his 5-game suspension. In hockey, it's the first time they've had an NHL team in Phoenix. Can you imagine... ice hockey in the desert? And they're undefeated! On the other hand, New York, a virtual hockey mecca in comparison, has united two of the best ever in Messier and Gretzky, and they can't buy a win. Midnight Madness is upon us as college campuses everywhere get ready to hoop it up. But where are all the stars? With the recent exodus of undergrads flocking to the NBA, ala Kevin Garnett, it's more like Midnight Mediocre. Well, I'm signed up for my NBA package on DSS. How I'll watch 800 games... I'm still working on the numbers. In the meantime I'm lacing up the boots en route to the black top.





INITIATE THE FASTBREAK...



IMAGINE... REGGIE MILLER ON THE KNICKS,

OR OLAJUWAN ON THE SUNS. THIS OPTION

MAKES YOU AN NBA FANTASY GM!

REPLAY

CUSTOMIZED MOVES:
YOUR FAVORITE PLAYERS EXECUTE THEIR

-

REAL-LIFE, SIGNATURE MOVES.

T HAT

haven't even
seen the finished version yet In The
Zone 2 is still, the most engaging,
provocative, real-to-life, fluent, detail-oriented basketball game ever to grace
the shelves of game retailers. ITZone
2 has moved beyond the stiff, impersonal drudgery of past hoop game
generations, and has replaced them
with accurately simulated NBA play-

ers, bodies writhing in the air for rebounds, chests heaving for more oxy-

gen, legitimate back to the basket, low-post moves, clear-cut behind the back and between the leg dribbling, and timing that is so balanced that it blends all of the components of this masterpiece into effortless enjoyment.

Two features that really sold me were the "Trade" feature and the "Create Player" option. With the trade feature all of you fantasy GM types can have the time of your life dreaming up any combination you desire. (I assembled the Nike "Revolution" team with Jason at the helm -- and this broadcast was televised). Trade features have been offered before, but only now can I really enjoy NBA player resemblance in appearance and play- style. For those of you looking for MJ, Shaq or Barkley they're not to be found, but a quick remedy is found in simply trading for Penny, Hakeem or Malone. In the Create Player option I can now give birth to a 7'7" rebounding machine, a versatile swingman to shoot the trey or a feisty playmaker to lend leadership to my favorite team.

The Winter will heat up with this Holiday release, just in time for hoop season! Yes ladies and gentlemen, Konami has put some serious hops into this one, and showtime is back. **JK**



PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - KONAMI

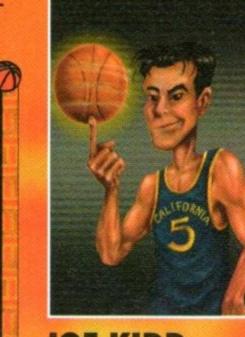
PUBLISHER - KONAMI

FORMAT - CD

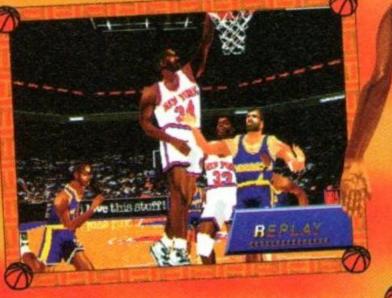
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

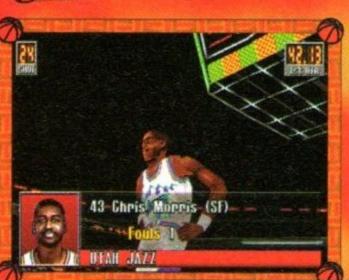
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

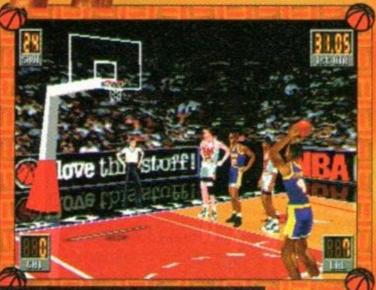
AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



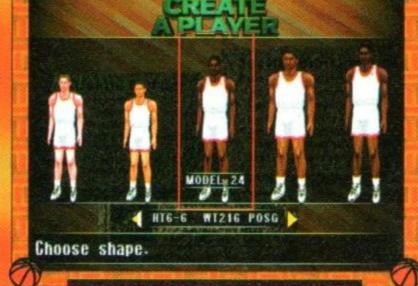
JOE KIDD







IALTIES ASSESSED... FREETHROWS AWARDED



CREATE PLAYERS!

123





PREVIEW

PlayStation

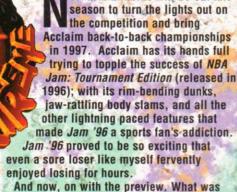
DEVELOPER - SCULPTURED PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-4

DIFFICULTY - BEG.-ADV. AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER

JOE KIDD KIND OF LIKE SAMMY AFTER DAVID LEE ROTH: DIFFERENT BUT GOOD



once a neck-breaking, full-court, 2-on-2 battle has suddenly slowed down to the speed of a half-court game. Sculpturedmay speed things up by game time but I'm not convinced I want them to . The new polygonal 3D engine provides more realism; even goaltending penalties are called much more frequently. In addition, users can now choose from several different offensive and defensive strategies. They've even added a dive feature where you literally hurl yourself at the opponent. Unfortunately, one change that wasn't made was not allowing us the luxury of making player substitutions until quarter's end (maybe a blessing in disguise since the extended load time is somewhat of a buzzkill).

Big name players are one of the main attractions of NBA Jam and X has doubled the amount of stars (6 per team) to choose from, including all of the rookie standouts like Joe Smith, Damon Stoudamire, and Kevin Garnett. To enhance the playoff like atmosphere, a center court giant screen has been added, as well as cheers of "Defense!" from the crowd, along with Mary Albert's relentless play-by-play. However, the crowd's applause sounds more like Gary Player sunk a putt for par, rather than Shawn Kemp electrifying 20,000 beer drinkers.

It appears in X we have a more serious and realistic version of its predecessor. But are we losing the essence of the game which is found in fantasized exaggeration? I'll be the first to admit that I don't readily invite

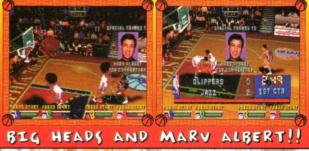
change to things I've enjoyed so thoroughly. But while there are obvious differences between the two expressions of this game, I'm hoping that it's one of those things that has to grow on me.

Kind of like Sammy after David Lee Rothdifferent but good. We'll wait to see and discuss this denial and acceptance thing in January.















IF THE THOUGHT OF

90,000 ILBS OF

DOOR-TO-DOOR

ROHHIGH HUNDER

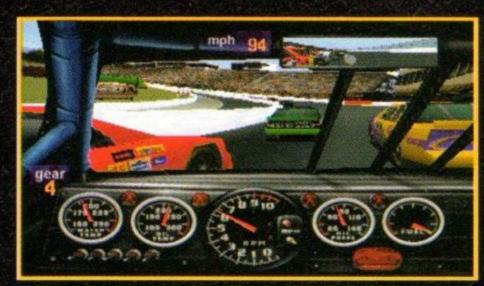
THE STOUS

WAIT TILL IT'S IN YOUR LIVING ROOM.



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NASCAR_® Racing for the PC was the biggest racing game ever. Now it's available for the PlayStation™ Game Console.



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- Officially licensed by NASCAR®
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PLAYOFF PICTURE!

CREATE PLATER

CREATE PLAYERS!

PLAYER CARDS





4 DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES!













POWER PLAY: SCORE WITH AN EXTRA MAN ADVANTAGE

DIAGONAL

ICE LEVEL

'm just a lonely sports editor. For the past couple of weeks. though, I've been keeping good company. My new buddy: Sony's NHL Face Off '97. I'm GF Sports' biggest hockey fan, and this game is one of the best I've ever seen.

Face Off '97 is so complete it's scary. One look at the menus, and I'm seeing all the options I could ever need. You know, period length, difficulty levels, penalties, exhibition or season and playoff modes, etc. That's all cool, sure, but step onto the rink and true hockey bliss is all yours. Gameplay has never felt this second

nature in a hockey game. The goods: one button to get closer, one button to shoot, and one for your speed bursts. That, my friends, is the way it should always be. Combined with this easy control are play mechanics that the great Lord Stanley would be proud of. Moving your player is realistic up to a certain point (hey, you're on skates, right?), but the skating is accurate, passing is hyper-instinctive, and the collision detection during play and fights feels just right.

If anything bad ever happens, it's your fault, not the game's.

The hot gameplay is surrounded by some scorching graphics and great digitized sounds. Players are well-animated traditional sprites. and the 3D rinks and arenas are constructed of texture-mapped polygons moving at a silky 30 fps. Besides the awesome textures covering the crowd and arena, you'll also see loads of team logos thanks to the NHL license. Multiple views are also included, so if you don't

like how you're seeing the game, change it!

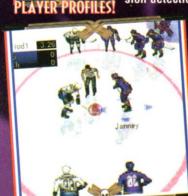
Sony is on a sports roll. I'm sure they recognize just how impor-

tant this genre is in determining success in the US. One thing's certain: NHL Face Off '97 is an amazing hockey game that should make a lot of people happy.









THE FACEOFF: GET READY TO RUMBLE

JACQUES STRAP

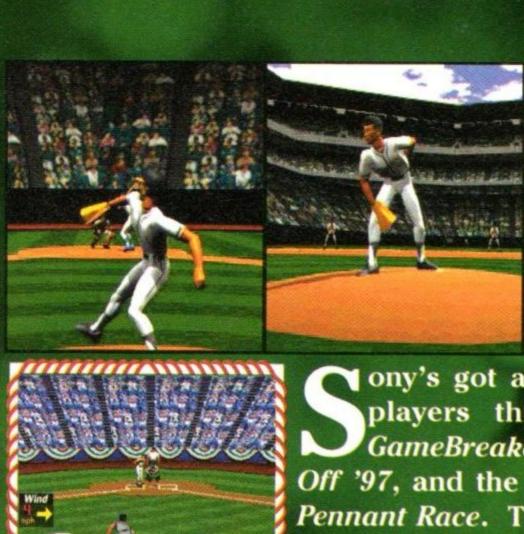
IS WOLFGANG **PUCK AN** HONORARY CITIZEN OF CANADA?







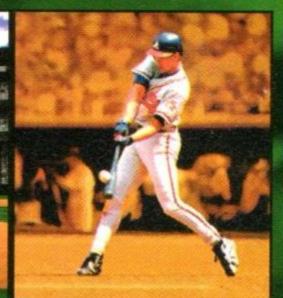




DADRES

DADRES

BOSTON



ony's got a whole lotta sports joy lined up for PS players this fall. Joining the wicked NCAA GameBreaker will be NFL GameDay '97, NHL Face Off '97, and the game you're lookin' at right now, MLB Pennant Race. They're all making a serious case for Sony to grab hold of the 32-bit sports crown from Sega.



Pennant Race is a realistic simulation in every possible way. Using CD storage to its advantage, PR has both Major League licenses (MLB and MLBPA) and includes over 700 players, every stadium (texture-mapped and

accurately measured), and every team. The well-animated motioncaptured players will actually appear in their home or away uni-

forms, depending on the game... major realism!

The player moves and animations include lunging dives, turf-munching slides, jumping, and wall-climbing home-run saving catches (using lots of easy button/controller combinations). The coolest feature, as far as gameplay goes, involves the use of the diamond-shaped PS pad button lay-

out. Each button represents a base, so if you're throwing to second, for example, all you gotta do is press triangle (the top of the diamond) and it's there. The game also shows you the diamond layout when you're pitching and batting and let's you choose various styles and speeds (sinker, fastoall pitches, and contact, power bats etc.) before beginning the play. # FLAYES - 1-2 Just like Bottom of the 9th, you'll be "aiming" your swing with a little targeting circle. While it works better than in 9th, allowing for more accurate timing, I'm still not sure I like the idea.

Everything else about *Pennant Race* is perfection. You can enter the playoffs, Homerun Derby, a 162 game season, and create your own player (customize player attributes like Speed, Arm, Glove, and more). Infield and outfield views and plays can be changed anytime, as well as stadiums. You read correct-

ly, if you're gettin' sick of the stadium you're in, simply load up a new one, mid-game, and continue!

> Overall, Sega's World Series 2 remains my pick the baseball king. MLB Pennant Race is, however, the undisputed champ of PS baseball and comes very close to matching the perfect feel that WS2 offers.

Comparisons aside, Pennant Race is one heck of a good baseball game. **JS**







JACQUES STRAP THE KING OF PS BASEBALL

RIFLE ARM OR BELLY-ITCHER? CLOCK THE SPEED OF YOUR PITCHER!













HIGHER RESOLUTION GRAPHICS DIFFERENT DUNK SHOTS FULL SEASON AND PLAYOFF MODES 00

STAMINA FACTOR

348 NBA PLAYERS

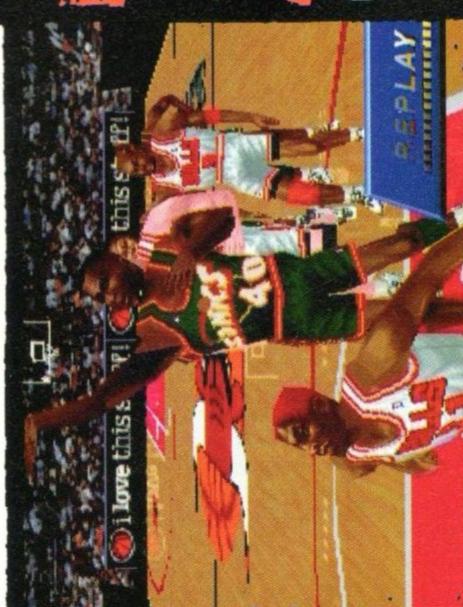
SUBSTITUTIONS

PUMP FAKES

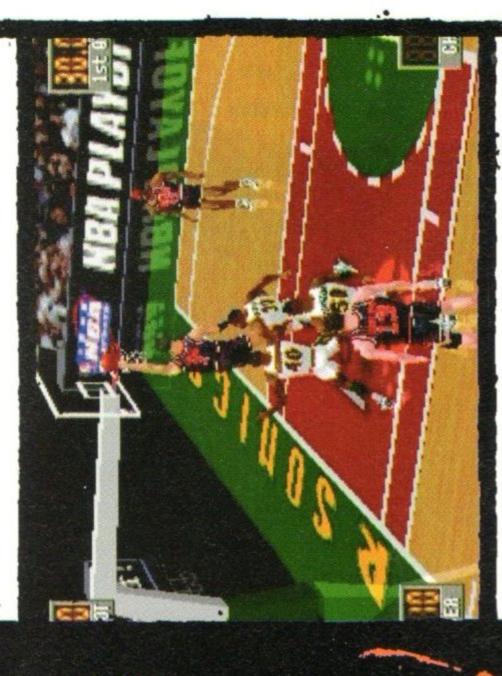
CREATE YOUR OWN PLAYER FOULS

NO TRADING LIMITS

ROSTERS FULL 12-MAN



CUITIVE GROWD REACTIONS ALL 29 NBA TEAMS PLAYS POST

























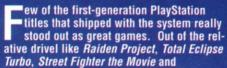
KONAMI

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DEVELOPER - SO





Toshinden only two can I look back on and think "Now those were great." They both happened to be racing games, and one of them went on to be the top-selling PS game in America for quite a while: ESPN Extreme Games. No wonder Extreme mixed Road Rash-esque fun (beating your opponents bloody while careening about) with luscious polygon graphics that only the PlayStation could provide.

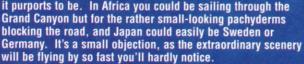
As you can see, Sony's back with a sequel... 2 Xtreme. This sequel's lost little except the ESPN license (it's "xtremely" similar to the original) yet has gained one new event and better graphics. As in *ESPN*, you begin the game by selecting from an assortment of OG athletes (is it just me or are there, like, two white guys in the posse?), or, via a cool new creation menu, make your own challenger. You can distribute your points as you see fit, concentrating on one event or crafting a wellrounded competitor. From there it's off to one of the events: skateboarding, blading, biking, and the newcomer, snowboarding. There's a puzzling lack of the street luge from the original, but don't fret; snowboard is way cooler.

The actual environments have been improved, and you can see way farther into the distance than you could in, er, "1 Xtreme," but the biggest graphical upgrade has been given to the skaters themselves. They're now either digitized people or motion-captured so well it's impossible to tell the difference. My only complaint regarding 2 Xtreme's visuals at this early stage in its development is that no locale, except perhaps Las Vegas, makes you think you're really racing in what

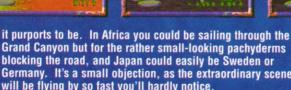








The gameplay remains largely the same, with a couple of additions: a revamped scoring system that gives you points not only for knock-downs, passing through gates or finishing, but for performing aerial tricks with button combinations, and power-ups that increase health, speed, strength and jumping prowess. Also, the number of tracks has been increased from five to twelve. 2Xtreme is looking good, and I can already say that fans of the first game will be more than happy with this one. As soon as we get a final version we'll have the review, so keep looking to GameFan Sports for an update! NR









PRO WRESTLING



DEVELOPER - MASAYA

PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

AVAILABLE - NOW

FORMAT - CD



12:26

Thanks to Activision, American gamers are about to experience the finest wrestling game ever made. Known as *Toukon Retsuden* in Japan, it's finally showing up over here (un-licensed), as *Power Move Wrestling*. This ia a powerhouse 3D wrestler with some of the hottest gameplay available in any sports game.

One look at the pictures on this page should be enough to hook you, but until you've experienced wrestling in a full 3D environment, pictures can't do *PMW* justice. The twelve wrestlers, four rings, and four arenas are constructed of 3D texture-mapped, gourad shaded polygons. Everything runs at 30 fps, so the wrestlers animate perfectly and the

ring pans and zooms flawlessly. Since the whole game is moving in 3D, *PMW* offers two horizontal and two vertical views to help you keep track of the action.

The hot graphics should keep any wrestling fan happy, but there's enough gameplay here for even the most die-hard fan. You can slam a friend in vs. mode, enter the Power Move Pro Wrestling championship, league, or tournament, and play it all in four difficulty levels. I spent

most of my time in the vs. mode, but I've been playing and saving as I progress through the other modes too, and find them equally addicting, much like a polished fighter. The control is so perfect, it almost becomes second nature. Even the most complex moves are easily executed and the response is instant. Perform spec-

tacular flying moves in the ring and off the ropes, and then sit back in complete control of the camera and play it all back. It's like watching TV. *PMW* has one of the best replay options I've ever seen. From the lock up position, pull off slams, suplexes, drops, and throws (into the ropes or outta the ring), then when the chal-

lenger's down, bring on the crabs, arm-breakers, and painful submissions. You can fight outside the ring as dirty as you'd like, for a limited time. Change views and follow the concrete pounding action from every angle.

The bottom-line: This is the best wrestling game I've ever seen or played. The wrestlers are cool, the 3D: amazing, and the play mechanics are incredible. Even the ring announcer sounds awesome! I urge all wrestling fans and newcomers alike to feel the power of *Power Move Wrestling*.. **G**



GLITCH

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DANNY MEGER

MALEE MIKE

LANCE

THE EGYPTIAN

EL TEMBLOR

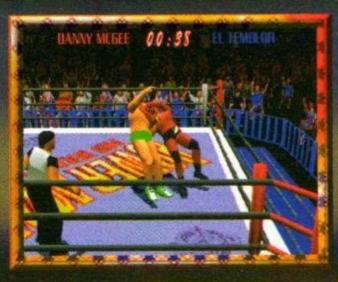
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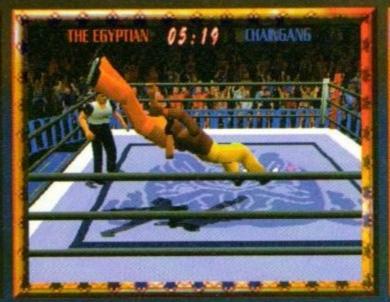
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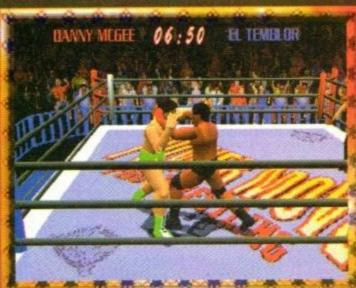
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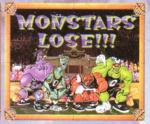














DEVELOPER - SCULPTERED

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - BEG.-ADV.

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



KNIGHTMARE **LOONY LOONEYS!**









Warner Bross

ver wanted dto shoot some hoops with the entire Warner Bros. car-

PlayStation owners, now you can, with Acclaim's latest movie to game license: Space Jam. Set to cash in, er, I mean, tie in with the movie of the same name, Space Jam is a wacky cartoon basketball 'simulation' that takes the basic mechanics of NBA Jam and spices

it up with a whole load of goofy 'toon

Well

stuff. Acme would be proud.

toon posse?

The plot behind Space Jam is functional to say the least. Aliens have invaded Tuneland and issued a challenge to its inhabitants: an intergalactic basketball tournament to decide the fate of all tunes (I thought that was meant to be 'toons'). And oh yeah, I almost forgot, somehow Michael Jordan got mixed up in the whole thing. Don't ask.

What this adds up to is a two-on-two or three-on-three basketball game featuring your favorite WB 'toons, and an army of zany aliens from the planet Veron. As I already mentioned, the game engine is based on NBA Jam. which means that most of you will already be familiar with the four button system (change player, jump/shoot, steal/pass and turbo). If not, it's pretty easy to pick up.

graphics are high quality, with each character looking and animating like his cartoon counterpart. Sculptured Software has done a good job of capturing the 'toon's personality, and ALL of the WB characters are in there somewhere, even if they aren't playing (see how many you

can spot in the crowd).

Turbo Jams sometimes produce character specific cartoon dunks (such as a Tazmanian Devil tornado, or Tweety giving Sylvester a lift) and the game has the same hectic pace that characterized NBA Jam. It may not be realistic, but it sure is fun.

There's more to Space Jam than just NBA Jam with WB characters (though, hey, that'd be enough for me!). For a start there are a bunch of cool subgames such as hunting around trophy or locker rooms for items, a rebound contest, and a brilliant Micro Machines military-style Space Race with Speedy Gonzales. Success at these sub games can improve your on-court character attributes.

I'll be back for a full review of Space Jam next issue, but things are looking good at this point. Hey, any game that lets me make a team out of Taz, Wile E. Coyote and Daffy Duck is already a hit in my books.











shooting

REBOUNDS

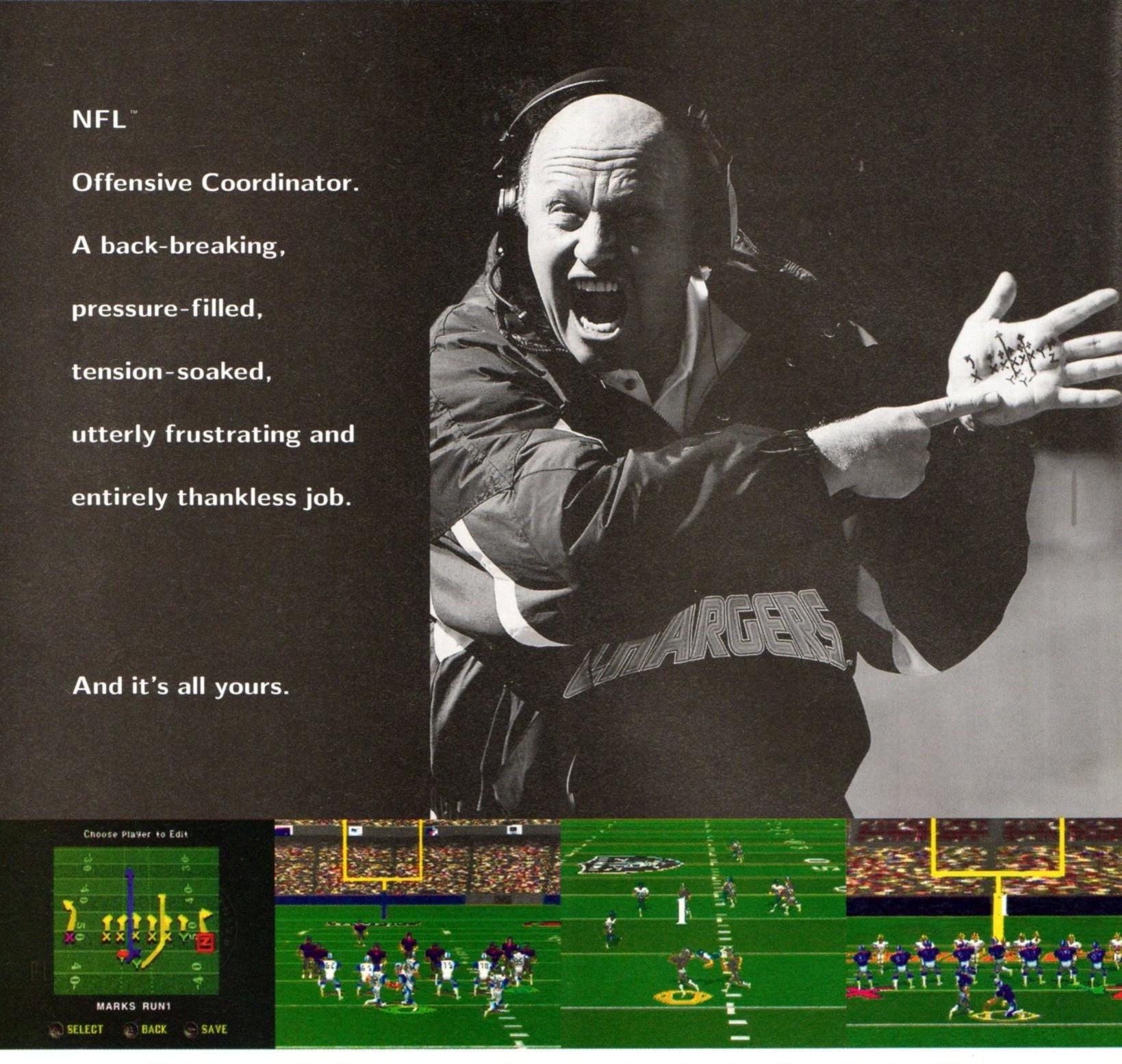
SPEED

SHOOTING

REBOUNDS

SPEED

SPEED



NFL '97's exclusive Play Editor feature lets you design your own plays and run them with any offense in the NFL. So you're offensive coordinator, you're head coach, you're in charge of all 1,500 NFL players. Now all you need is the game. Sega Sports™ NFL '97. Play football like real football players play football. Only on Sega Saturn.™



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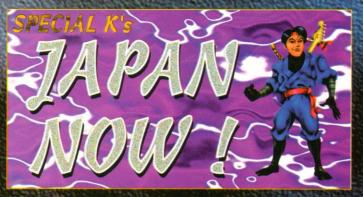








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"No matter how much or how little you know about the video game industry, I'm sure we can all agree on two things: The industry produces way too much junk, and the industry can never realize its true

potential as long as its products are regarded by the mainstream media as children's toys."

 Miyaji, president of GameArts and now president of ESP, has an idea about how to change all this.



EXCLUSIVE GAMEFAN INTERVIEW WITH ESP - THE CREATORS OF GD NET

You may never have heard of GD-NET or ESP, but it's a sure bet that their influence will extend far beyond the number of quality games they will inevitably produce. If successful, ESP could stand as a new model for the maturing video game industry, taking the industry's true power out of the hands of financiers, and putting it in the hands of developers, where it belongs.

The hot news in Japan is the formation of GD NET, a game designer's network, including the following 9 companies: Alpha System, Quintet, GameArts, CSK, Sting, Treasure, Japan Art Media, Neverland Company, and Bits Laboratory (see the individual company histories in last month's issue). I will be interviewing these companies and will be bringing them to you as a series starting with ESP and GameArts this month.



Mr. Youichi Miyaji, PRESIDENT OF ESP & GAMEARTS.

is concerned not only with creating quality games for his own company, but in recreating the entire industry through ESP.

GF: First of all, please tell us what motivated you to establish ESP?

I think the most important thing you need to do to make good games is to bring up good producers. A producer needs to know about game production, business, and financial matters. I think these are the three essential elements needed to be a producer. A producer has to have absolute authority on all matters that apply to his product. But, in Japan, this kind of

construction has not yet been established. I don't know about the US, though. Anyway, in reality, the most important thing is always money. And since the person who's providing the funding and the producer are different people, the person who is funding will cut in, and end up producing, even though he doesn't know about

games – and what do you think is going to happen? The final product ends up being something you can't even look at. Sometimes the financial interests will demand they publish the product, even when it's only halfway done. The product will be awful!

The movie industry has well-balanced relationships between the creator and publisher. This union produces great products, and makes the audience happy. Looking at this, I think it's clear that the producer is the most important. I think you need to have one very responsible person that can bet their life on the project, and have full control. Otherwise the product will be garbage.

The only people that can be doing all of these things are the presidents of production companies. They know all about financing, sales, and publishing. That's why this company is organized by the presidents of software producers. All of these people were only developers before, and were told from the top to "make this game with this much money." Since the finances and creative control are handled by an outside company, the producers could make a product, but not a true piece of art. So, we established this company to make an environment for producers to be free to create games for themselves.

GF: How long have you been thinking about this? ESP: Since about 5 years ago. I didn't start the actual planning, or telling people about it until last summer.

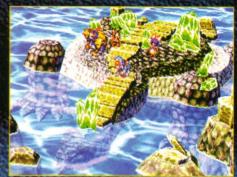
GF: Well, then why is it organized with these 9 companies?

ESP: Well, they are my friends of course, but they all have been thinking about exactly same thing. Everyone thought they were restricted when they were just developers, so everyone wanted to create their own product and take their own chances.

GF: Please tell us the pluses and minuses for the developers who join GD-NET?

ESP: Each company can enhance their company's individuality and create the products they choose. I think a product has to have individuality. I can't think of any minuses.

GF: So, who will manufacture and sell the games?
ESP: ESP will act as the sales agency, but the indi-



vidual companies will take responsibility for manufacturing the titles. Let me give you an example. About five or six years ago, I visited a certain company. This one game, which is now world famous, had just been developed. The game's producer presented his product at an executive meeting, but the executives said "There is no way we can sell this kind of game, so forget it." But this producer's wife and kids were playing this game every day, and loved it. So he said, "Please let me handle it, I'll bet my life on this product." Then, when the game finally went on sale, it sold millions.

The point is, no matter how many MBA's these executives had, they couldn't have understood this because they don't play games. The process is even more severe in the US, where people who make decisions usually have never even played the game, and can't help misjudging things. As far as I'm concerned, they make mistakes because they have none of the "producers" I talked about earlier.

The movie industry in Hollywood has this completely down, but the game industry in the US hasn't got it yet. In my opinion, Hollywood became successful because they had a well-balanced relationship between creators and producers. If it is not constructed well, great directors like Akira Kurosawa can't be brought up. So, ESP is not just another company — we established an organization that thinks seriously about reconstructing the industry in

order to make great games.

For example, if you need 10,000,000,000,000 yen (\$100,000,000,000) (100 million) to create one game, do you think ordinary companies can afford this? What would you do? If it's Hollywood, they have the organizational structure necessary to collect \$100,000,000 easily. There is a possibility that expenses will get this high in the game industry,



"ESP IS NOT JUST ANOTHER COMPANY, WE ESTABLISHED AN ORGANIZATION THAT THINKS SERIOUSLY ABOUT RECONSTRUCTING THE INDUSTRY IN ORDER TO MAKE GREAT GAMES"

"THIS INDUSTRY WILL BE DESTROYED IF PEOPLE THINK THESE ARE ONLY KID'S TOYS. THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL. THIS IS AN INDUSTRY OF CULTURE. MOVIES ARE PART OF CULTURE, TOO."



pretty soon, after DVDs are released. To make the environment necessary to provide such financing in the future, we need to start changing the industry now. Right now, all an average game needs is about \$1million, but if you compare that to 10 years ago, all we needed was \$100,000. 10 times more in 10 years. So, I think that'll rise to \$10 million within 3 or 4 years, and from \$10 million to \$100 million in another 3 or 4 years. Now is the time to change it. If a project is going to cost \$10 million, they'll need to get together investment funds. If that's the case, we need to build up relationships and experience with venture capital, publishers, distributions, etc., otherwise we can't create good products. I'm not saying everyone should make big titles, I'm just saying it will be necessary to be capable of making big titles. It is easy to understand ESP if you look at us from this perspective.

GF: How about other people's opinions about ESP?

ESP: I think even Sega and SCE welcomed us. Increased quality is good for everyone in the industry. It is important to be able to make good product. What's to disagree with in that?

I think the only people who will be negative about us are competitors, but there are none. Though ESP is a company, it's really presenting a new way of being a game company.

GF: So it's not about creating an ESP brand?

for making games. I don't think many ordinary developers can afford to make high quality CD-ROM games. I just think that we need a producer who can handle funding, profits, and coordinate things like that. If we don't have it, it will affect our future in the game industry. Neither Japan or the US has this construction. I think publishers in the US are irresponsible about it. The game industry in the US is screwed up as well, right?

This industry will be destroyed if people think these are just kid's toys. That's not true at all, this is an industry of culture. Movies are part of culture, too. I think Hollywood was the first to realized the importance of this construction.

GF: So, you just concentrate on those 9 companies?

ESP: No, no. If other companies approached us, I'd have no problem. Even American companies. We're just trying to introduce a new approach, and some new ideas.





GF: Isn't there a possibility that other companies will be impressed by your idea and try to establish the same type of companies in the future?

That would mean our thinking was right. That's why people copy established companies. I think that this industry would be better if this became the main form of construction. You use other people's ideas, that's business. I simply think that today's style is wrong and my way is better for everyone.

I think imitation of an idea is everything, like Seven-Eleven. In Japan, large supermarkets were incredibly powerful. Everyone thought that convenience stores were too small – and they definitely thought that they wouldn't last in Japan. So, 7-11 went through trial and error and now convenience stores dominate Japan. That's not the best example, but the point is that someone has to guide these companies. If this plan fails, ESP will be worthless. But if it succeeds, and people realize that this way of thinking is the way to make a great product, everyone will start doing it. You know, there are so many awful games coming out, I think this is the way to break that situation.

GF: So tell us briefly, what is ESP?

We just want this industry to become an industry which creates great products, that's all. I actually don't care if boring games are released, or games that just target small niches. A game about cockroaches is available in the US, I like that [He's referring to the PC game Bad Mojo. I think. -Ed.J. There are just too many losses in the industry, such as not releasing games that would sell, or releasing half-finished games. The reason this happens is because there are too many pressures from businessmen. So, we need to make an industry for the people, by the people (laughs), otherwise this industry won't grow. Even the movie industry has been supported by people who loves movies. There are so many people involved in this industry who don't like games. It's just because you can make money, that's all. People with MBA's think that the game industry is a good place for them to make money. I suppose that's ok, but don't you think we've had enough of those type of people by now? Those types are always thinking things like, "A genre called RPG seems to be doing well... Ok, let's make RPGs and make money. Make an RPG!" The creators don't even want to make an RPG, but since



it's an order, they copy someone else's game and release it. Of course it's going to sell a little bit. Then the businessmen would say, "Why do Final Fantasy and Dragon Quest sell so much, but not ours? Do they have more skilled people?" No, no, no, that's not it! It's all about the heart. Products with heart will sell, I think. I think we need people who love games and take them seriously to make this industry bigger. That's what Hollywood's like, right?

GF: Will any other companies be able to join?

ESP: Definitely. America, Europe, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, it doesn't matter where they're from. We've had a number of Taiwanese companies approach us, and 2 or 3 more from Japan.

GF: Are you thinking about establishing a subsidiary in the US?

ESP: No, not a subsidiary or anything like that. I want to establish the idea itself, for American companies to get investment funds like we do and establish a similar company [like ESP]. Since everyone would be investing, it would be everyone's company, like a union. If there are any American companies that are interested, I will work with them.

GF: Forgive me if I'm wrong, but it looks like ESP is leaning towards Sega...

Exactly. That's a strategic decision. PS users are becoming general users. Those general users buy 2 to 3 games per system that they own. Then they get bored with them and turn to other interests. In Japan, Saturn and PlayStation have the same market share, but PS has more general users. So, actual game enthusiasts buy Saturn over PS. Those people collect games, so they buy 10 or more games for each system that they own. To appeal to those type of people, Saturn is the suitable system. Saturn users are generally seriously looking for good games, which is not usually the case for PS users. PS users watch TV commercials and buy games. I think those Saturn users could be opinion leaders, because core users of Saturns tend to also have PlayStations. PS users usually don't have Saturns. So, these people can't be opinion leaders, and they just say, "Oh, this is a good game..." So, until we establish our status, we value those core users. The next step will be to try to appeal to general users.

Good product is common to the entire world.

GF: Thank you.





INTERVIEW WITH GAMEARTS - THE FIRST IN OUR GD NET SERIES!



Mr. Toshiyuki Uchida CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF GAMEARTS

The man who supports GameArts from the background. He also collects vitamins.

GF (Game Fan): Why did you decide to remake the Lunar games for Saturn, instead of simply starting anew with Lunar 3?

GA (Game Arts): First of all, we were 100% satisfied with the final product of Lunar 2. But after that, when we looked over Lunar 1, we all came to the same opinion, that we could've done more with Lunar 1. So we decided to work on part 1 one more time, and, as you will find out when you play it, this one is even better than Lunar 2. Of course, it's naturally going to be better on the Saturn over the Sega CD, but we've made every aspect of the game – quality, scenario, sound, animation – first class. Therefore, to answer your question, the best answer is to actually play it.

GF: Why did you consign this game to Kadokawa Shoten to release it?

GA: We wanted to expand our presence into many different mediums, so we decided it would be good to work with Kadokawa Shoten. (Kadokawa Shoten is a very famous Japanese publishing house, and their union with GameArts has also produced various books, manga, etc.)

GF: What changes have been made, compared to the original Lunar?

GA: There are just too many to mention. It's a totally different game.

GF: So, you mean the story is the same, but everything else is different?

GA: No, everything is different. We changed the whole thing, even the story. I guarantee you that people will be moved to tears when they play this game (laughs).

GF: Has the music also been improved?

GA: Like I said, everything has been powered up. All I can say is you won't understand unless you play it. There's about three times as much

of everything. Think of it as a 30+ hour masterpiece movie. Except, since movies are usually only about 2 hours, it's hard to draw fully-realized characters and settings. Since we chose to make *Lunar* as a video game, we could draw a much more fully realized world.

GA: I think that it will make everyone who plays

it very happy.

GF: But there's no one aspect over all others that will make people say "Wow! This is awe-some!"?

GA: Well there are many very memorable scenes, but no one area that really stands out. You know the feeling when you see a really good movie, and you're like, "Wow, I'm really glad I saw that." It's like that. It doesn't matter what system it's on, it's just the feeling that, "I'm glad I've spent so much time playing this game."

GF: So, you mean you want consumers see this as a piece of work that surpasses all formats?
GA: Yes, all I want is for consumers to see that this is a piece of art that happens to be

expressed as a video game.

It's the storyline that I have the most confidence in. I don't know what the English version will be like, but I tried to build this story out of the fundamental feelings that every human has. so I think everyone will love it. Things like love, courage, and the spirit of adventure. This isn't the usual save-the-world type story. You don't care about that sort of thing. It's like you want to save a girl that you love and happen to save the world along the way. In Lunar, when you're asked "Which would you choose, to save your girl [Luna] or the world," you choose Luna. Of course there will be many bad guys in the game, but even the bad guys are living within the realm of human reason, and from their perspective, they're really not that bad at all. Of course, those guys wouldn't understand things like the power of trust. I'm pretty sure that American people will also be fascinated by this story. Nowadays, it's become hard to judge what's good and what's bad. This story is not encouraging the good and punishing the evil. This is not a preaching kind of story. It's an emotional story made with sincere human feelings.

We want the player to feel that they're gradu-



NEXT MONTH: EXCLUSIVE! "SOLO CRISIS" ON THE SATURN! INTERVIEW WITH QUINTET – THE CREATORS OF ACTRAISER! ally falling in love [with Luna], and then the feeling of "I have to save her" comes naturally. And also, in American comics, the bad guys are all truly evil, aren't they? But it's not like that in Lunar... The villains are like real people, and if you see things from their viewpoint, they're the one's who are right. You have to compare what's good and bad from each character's perspective. For that reason, I think this is a very adult story. It's not for kids.

GF: So you mean the target age of this game

GA: Probably 18, 19, or older. I'm pretty sure that that age group will be purchasing it the most. So, we are not targeting kids. It is about the romance with love and courage, but we didn't make this game to fawn to kids. Adults can handle this game, so I think that 20 to 30 year-olds are the ones who will be happy with this game. Of course, kids are always looking upwards, so even 12 year-old kids would have fun with what 18 year-old kids are playing with. Don't you remember when you were 12 years old? Weren't you interested in adult stuff?

So, we can't fool people with this story. Even Disney movies are not targeting kids only. Adults can certainly understand and have fun with their stories. If Disney only targeted kids, they wouldn't have to spend that much money and insist on such high quality.

GF: By the way, when's the release date for Lunar?

GA: October 25th.

GF: Please tell us more about Lunar the Magic School (Mahogakuen).

GA: This is a gaiden (a supplementary story). We will use the actual *Lunar* environment, but all of the characters are different. If 1 and 2 were epic dramas, this *Magic School* is like a weekly TV high school drama. I just wanted to make a high school drama about the school of magic. There are teachers and students, and the students grow up as you play. A lot of the production staff is different from the regular *Lunar* team, and it's become a game with a definite comedic touch.

GF: How about Lunar 3?

GA: I can't say anything, except that the changes won't be any more dramatic than they were in the change from Lunar 1 to Lunar 2.

GF: And Lunar 2 is also going to be released on the Saturn?

GA: Yes, Lunar 2 is almost done. We will release Lunar 2 around June '97 and after that we'll either release 3 or something totally new. We haven't decided yet.

GF: Thank you very much.

NOTE: The more sophisticated readers of GameFan will already have noticed that the game shots that accompany this interview are actually taken from another forthcoming GameArts product entitled *Grandia*. The latest shots of *Lunar: the Silver Star Story* will be shown in the next issue. Sorry Folks!





This cute little tape is brief, with only two 15-minute episodes,

but has a lot of energy and good ideas. It's basically the old Alice in Wonderland storyline, but all of Lewis Carroll's classic characters are now attractive, busty, scantily-

Never follow a strange bunny ou don't know where she's b

are now attractive, busty, scantily-clad women. Okay, so the poor old guy's probably turning over in his grave right now, but everything in Miyuki-chan is pretty tasteful. After all, the entire thing was written and drawn by women, and not just any women, but the very talented women of CLAMP (who brought us *X* and *RayEarth*, among others).

There's not much dialogue, and the pace is pretty frantic, but the

animation quality is good and the whole thing keeps you on your toes while it lasts, which isn't very long. If you can get past the endlessly looping and incredibly annoying soundtrack, *Miyuki-chan* is definitely worth a look, but nothing to get too excited about.













This one's been available for years, but it's just been rereleased and I've found it especially interesting in light of *Evangelion*, the masterpiece this same team went on to create. Of course, *Gunbuster* (Aim For the Top!) dates back to 1988, and the animation certainly isn't going to impress anyone spoiled by today's high standards.

But good stories never get old, and Gunbuster's was a classic. Evangelion fans will see much reminiscent of that series' style, but the well-drawn characters and the highly emotional storyline can easily be enjoyed by anyone. This is one of the few classics that any anime afficionado should be familiar with.

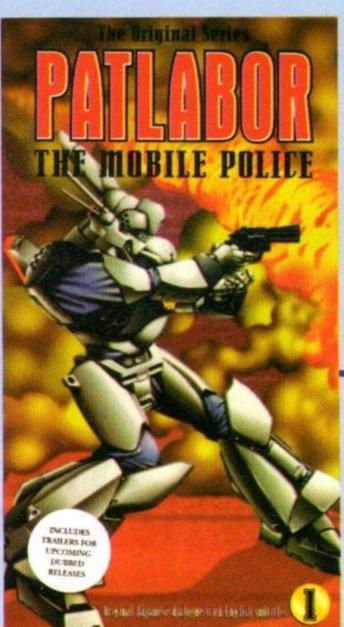
Hey, I'll level with you guys here... I really couldn't care less about most of the so-called classics out there, but I know a lot of people

hold much of Japan's early 80's output with much reverence. As for me, well, whenever I see so-called "Japanimation" that has production

standards less than that of Scooby Doo, well, it sends a shiver down my spine.

Armored Trooper Votoms falls right into that category. It's not for me, but if you're a fan of classic animation, and can enjoy Votom's storyline without minding the cheap animation and annoying sound-track, well, more power to you.







Before the now (somewhat) famous *Patlabor* movies, there was Mamoru Oshii's long-running TV series. Although it's a good eight years old now, its high animation standards and excellent Oshii direction make it relevant even today.

The story is similar to that of the movies, but with a heavier emphasis on character development and action, as opposed to the

obsession with incredibly intricate plotlines that made the movies simultaneously fascinating and somewhat dull. That formula works well in the

TV series, and although there are countless better anime series out there, there are certainly a ton of worse ones as well.

Like Cutey Honey and Devilman, Violence Jack is the work of one of anime's founding fathers, Go Nagai. The back of Violence Jack's box describes him as a "master of the macabre," and that's a pretty fitting description. But I can think of a better one: that guy is one messed-up, dirty old man. And though that would usually be accompanied by a wink and a grin coming from me, I definitely don't intend for it to be complimentary in this case.

Violence Jack is possibly the most tasteless bit of anime I've ever seen

(and that is saying a LOT), an amazing feat considering how little action it actually has. The storyline is worthless, the characters are ridiculous, and the animation is beyond cheap. Unless you're a big fan of rape, dismemberment, and various combinations of the two, you're not going to find anything with any redeeming value in this piece of trash.



















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5137 Clareton Drive, Suite 210, Agoura Hills, CA 91301.



Dear Postmeister:

I've never written to you before, and I was wondering if you would be so kind as to shed some of your divine light on a few of my humble questions. The questions are in order of decreasing importance, so I'd be exceedingly happy if you would go so far as to answer even the first few. Well, here we go:

1) I heard Crystal Dynamics is making Ghost

Rider for the PlayStation. Well, Ghost Rider happens to be my favorite comic book, and I happen to have a Saturn. Any chance of seeing it on Saturn? We don't want any dissatisfied customers around here, now, do we?

2) Are you guys going to review the Saturn import *Metal Black*, or is this one of those cases (like with *Don Pachi*) where it's too BAD to even consider reviewing? What about *Shinrei Jusatsu Taromaru*? Will GameFan review *Strikers 1945*? That I HAVE played and I think it's very good, but too short. What do you think?

3) In "Other Stuff," I read about *Castlevania* coming to PlayStation. Is Konami going to be lame about not putting out a Saturn version, or will we at least see it on the Japanese Saturn?

4) Say for instance that Capcom does release some of their upcoming fighters on the N64, like Street Fighter III, SF Alpha III, and DarkStalkers II. What would be the chance of seeing them on any 32-bit systems?

5) In the Gen 32 section, it says "KoF '95 and Samurai Shodown III will both be exclusive to the PlayStation before the Saturn versions hit (if they hit at all...)" It's that last part that hit me... "if they hit at all." I thought a Saturn version was definite? Damn it, am I smelling some "PlayStation favoritism" among these game companies?

6) Are there any more shooters on the way for the 32-bit systems? New ones, re-released ones? How about conversions of Alpha Plus, Saint Dragon, Strato Fighter, or 19XX? And when's Darius Gaiden II coming?

7) This is going to sound kind of silly, but you know what I wouldn't mind seeing on the 32-bit systems? You got it, *Adventures of Bayou Billy 2*! Now THAT would make my day!

Well, that's it for now. If you don't print any of my questions, at least my concerns would have been heard, and perhaps shared, by someone in your LOFTY positions (at the very least I hope they entertained you). I'm also bugging some of the game companies out there with letters, so don't think I'm just using you to empty out my complaints on. Now I think I'll go and write Capcom, Konami, etc., some letters of "Titanic" proportions.

"Throat Warbler Mangrove" Ventura, CA

Ah, it does the Postmeister good to receive a letter from such a polite and respectful young... um... Warbler. Ah, Warblers... Such beautiful birds, and they're good eating, too! But anyway, yes, I suppose you HAVE entertained the great Postmeister with your silly little questions, and as I'm in a generous and giving mood, I will deign to answer each and every one of them.

1) Well, I have good news for you! Ghost Rider has been cancelled. Hmm, well, it's good news in a spiteful, nasty sort of way, I suppose.

2) Metal Black wasn't particularly bad, it's just, you know, obscure, early '90s arcade shooters... Who really cares? Ditto with Strikers, in my opinion. We will review Shinrei Jusatsu Taromaru if it ever comes out. I'm starting to lose my patience with that one.

 I'm afraid it's a PS-only project for the time being. It's certainly possible that they'll port it over when they're finished, though.

4) It's pretty unlikely that any of those will ever see the light of day on the N64. First of all, the CPS-III is a CD-based arcade system, and the required cartridge size would have to be beyond anything anyone's ever before. Secondly, Capcom has repeatedly expressed concern with the price of N64 carts, and have not thrown their full weight behind the system for that reason. Capcom of Japan president Kenzo Tsujimoto did say that they might reconsider after the release of the Bulky Drive, though (Capcom is working on at least one N64 title, but I don't think it's an arcade conversion). Anyway, even if Capcom did decide to make SFIII exclusive to the Bulky Drive, a perfect conversion would require over 3 discs (and possibly more 2D power than is capable on the N64), and that's not likely. So while you may start seeing Capcom 3D titles on the N64, their 2D titles would probably be better served on the 32-bitters.

5) Well, the only companies involved in this decision are Sony and Sega, and I'm guessing that at least one of them (Sony) is somewhat more partial to the PlayStation. The deal is that Sony paid SNK for the rights to release these games, plus a little something extra for the 3-month exclusive. Sega has yet to announce that they've licensed the games at all.

6) Haven't heard anything about either of those... But the next Darius game will be Taito's G Darius, their second PlayStation hardware-based arcade shooter. The first, Ray Storm, is coming out in Japan in January (and it's incredible, by the way). Let's hope Acclaim will release that here, and G Darius too, when that comes out.

7) Of all the 8-bit games to wish for a sequel of... Bayou Billy? To each his own, I suppose.

Dear Postmeister.

First off, GameFan is second to none in the gaming magazine industry. You people really do care, and it shows in your work, game reviews and previews, clear game shots, humor, etc... Great job! Now, my feelings about Capcom. They sure pissed off a whole lot of gamers when they cancelled AD&D Tower of Doom. This game was the reason I bought a PlayStation! A pox on Capcom for making such a stupid business decision!

But alas, a glimmer of hope, *Dragonheart*! I pray that this game is my saving grace. My only fear is that Acclaim is doing it, and my confidence is as shaky as a 500 pound man going ice-fishing on a small lake in mid-March... Crrraaccckkk... Splash!!! Get my point? So please tell me your opinion of *Dragonheart*, and any possible action/adventure games in the future for PS, Saturn, or Nintendo 64. Thanks.

John Gurnee Appleton, WI

Well, Capcom claims that the conversion of Tower of Doom failed quality control, but I agree that they should keep trying. I mean, they have to get that out so they can begin work on Shadow Over Mystaria, which hasn't been announced for anything either. Haven't played Dragonheart yet, looks okay.

Dear Disgruntled Postmeister.

GameFan rules! Your anime section is awesome. Anyway, being a loyal Sega fan (you heard me right!), I have a few questions.

- 1) Will we ever see *Lunar 3*? Please say yes!
 2) Will games like *Indy 500*, *Rail Chase 2*, and *Die Hard Arcade* be out on the Saturn?
- 3) Do you have the slightest idea how *Sonic X-Treme* is coming along?
- 4) Will any RPGs like Albert Odyssey Gaiden, Lungrisser III, Phantasy Earth, Blue Seed or Wrinkle River Story ever come to the US? 'Cause if not, I'm buying a converter and a Japanese college student to translate the stories.
- 5) Is the Saturn Universal Adapter worth buying?
- 6) Since Virtua Fighter III will be hard to convert for the Saturn, would it be possible to use a RAM cart to store the backgrounds? King of Fighters '95 did. I think by doing this it would allow more room for character graphics.
- allow more room for character graphics.

 7) Any news on a Saturn 64? If so, will it be an add-on or a separate system?

 Sincerely.

Wes Ruscher Mission Viejo, CA

- 1) Yes! but not for at least a year or so.
- 2) It seems that Sega's passed on Indy 500, and I've heard nothing about Rail Chase 2. But Die Hard Arcade is pretty likely, as it's running on Saturn hardware already.
- 3) Slowly, it seems. Sega's plans seem very ambitious, and that's why Sonic X-Treme's been delayed until next year. It's still way too early to judge.
- 4) Albert Odyssey Gaiden is on its way from Working Designs, and I know a few companies are going for Lungrisser III.

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Blue Seed and Wrinkle River Story look like lost causes (trust me, you're not missing much), and Phantasy Earth's existence still has yet to be confirmed!

5) I haven't had any problems with it.

6) It's not memory that's the problem, it's the lack of polygon processing power. Rendered graphics take up very little memory, but Virtua Fighter III employs about ten times as many polygons as the Saturn can handle comfortably. An adequate translation would either require an unlikely programming miracle, or some sort of upgrade chip.

7) No news, and I'm sure there won't be any for a very, very long time.

Dear Postmeister.

We are so friggin' ticked that they took Sailor Moon off the air... Where do we send the bomb so they can get the message? The sailors rule! They're great influences on kids and my brother just absolutely looves their miniskirt outfits!

And what's the deal on *Teknoman*? They also took that off the air. It's getting to be that you can't turn on the screen to watch good anime anymore. And don't get my brother started on *Dragon Ball*.

And now, the games:

Enix, what's up with them? The Super N. has been out for 5 years, and there hasn't been a single *Dragon Quest* game released on it. Well, not over here. And what about Square? No *Romancing Saga 3?* I hear both have quit bringing games over here, unless Sony brings them over.

Is there going to be a *Dragon Force 2*? The first is amazing. And what about *Lunar the Silver Star Story*?

the Silver Star Story?
On to box art... When my brother gets hold of the moron who drew the cover for Ranma 1/2 Hard Battle, he's going to strangle them. I don't blame him. I can draw it better. (Skip: "I'll rip them from limb to limb!") When somebody messes with Rumiko Takahashi's art, they deserve to be dragged out into the street, lynched, shot, connected with two trucks going in opposite directions, while doused with gasoline and set on fire (once again, my brother's two cents).

Oh yeah, there are girls that play video games. I'm one of them. My brother is going as Ryoga for Halloween. Need I say more about where his loyalties lie? Skip wants to ask if *Devil Summoner* is ever coming out, too. Well, that's our damage for the month. Continue to rock.

Tara the Soaring Hawk & Skip the Godfather

Wow, clearly cartoons have been a great influence on you two. It's always good to see youngsters turn to violence to protect their network TV viewing habits... 'Cause hey, that's what America's all about! Speaking of violently defending viewing habits, I have some Sailor Moon-related messages to convey. I have no idea how my beloved letter page has turned into the Sailor Moon equivilant of the Soldier of Fortune want ads, as I really couldn't care less, but in the interest of inspiring the apathy-ridden youth of today to take a stand for something, and also to ensure the safe return of certain family members that have been taken hostage by the "Save Our Sailors" people, here goes:

Whine to the Sailor Moon-cancelling folks at DIC at:

DIC Entertainment
Fan Appreciation Department
303 N. Glenoaks Blvd.

Burbank, CA 91502

and sign the virtual petition at http://looney.physics.sunysb.edu/~daffy/sos. These addresses from Derek Pryor and Cedric Ordonez. And hey, though I may grumble, I really do endorse the semi-noble quest of these Sailor Moon fans. But you better believe that if any DIC executives mysteriously vanish in the near future, I'll waste no time in directing the FBI to the home of "Soaring Hawk" and "the Godfather." Heh heh...

And getting back to their questions, Enix no longer exists on this side of the Pacific, so unless a company like Nintendo licenses r products, you're not going to be seeing of their titles here. Square's back in business, though, although they're only considering their future PlayStation titles, none of the older classics. I don't think a Dragon Force 2 is in the works, but I know some of the members are at work on another simulation/RPG the name of Terrafantasia, that Sega of pan will be announcing soon. Sorry, Skip, but Devil Summoner's prospects depend on the success of Persona for the PlayStation. and you won't see it for a while, if at all ... I know that's not what you wanted to hear, but, um, please... no reason to get violent... put down the knives...

Dear Postmeister,

As a die-hard RPG fan for the past ten

years, I gotta say that I'm really sick of hearing companies make such statements as "RPGs do not sell in America" or "It's really hard to translate an RPG." Come on, we all know the reason RPGs do not sell is because they're usually outdated and of low quality.

1) I've heard a rumor saying that SCEJ has completely taken over the operation of SCEA and everything that's made by them is coming out here? Any truth to that?

2) Does SCEA have any other third party companies that make only RPGs,

besides Square?

3) Is SCEA planning on bringing RPGs other than Beyond the Beyond and Arc the Lad? How about Wild Arms and Popolocrois?

4) What's the chance of us (Americans) playing Final Fantasy Tactics, Saga Frontier, and other well-known Square RPGs in English? Is Square going to release only two games a year again?

5) I haven't heard about these two games for a while, is Konami still going to release *Genso Suikoden* and *Policenauts* on the US PlayStation? How about *Breath of Fire 3* from Capcom?

6) Now that neither Enix or Square is with NOA, who else is going to support Nintendo 64 with RPGs?

7) Is there still a chance to see *Dragon Quest* 6 or *Tactics Ogre* on SNES? Or is *Lufia 2* the end of the 16-bit era?

8) For the first time I'm really thinking about getting a Saturn because of all the RPGs. Do you think either Sony or Nintendo is going to prevent me from making the biggest mistake in my short-lived life by countering this RPG attack from Sega?

Daniel Lin

Placentia, CA

1) No, nothing like that. But they have been a lot more open to fringe games lately.

2) When you have Square, do you need anyone else?

3) They're thinking about them. Wild Arms looks pretty likely.

4) We'll see... Supposedly this is a whole new Square with a whole new staff and exciting new priorities and all of that, but I'll believe it when I see it.

5) Ah, Konami's still on our side. Genso should be out immediately, and shortly following (early '97) will be another PlayStation strategy/RPG, Vandalhearts (much more on that one next month) and Policenauts for the Saturn (but not the PlayStation). Breath of Fire 3 should hit at around the same time frame.

6) Enix is still with Nintendo, at least for now. Rumor has it that they'll be taking Dragon Quest elsewhere, but they have at least one RPG (of sorts) coming for the N64 (Wonder Project J 2) and supposedly a few more in the works. Nintendo's working on Zelda and Mother (Earthbound) 3.

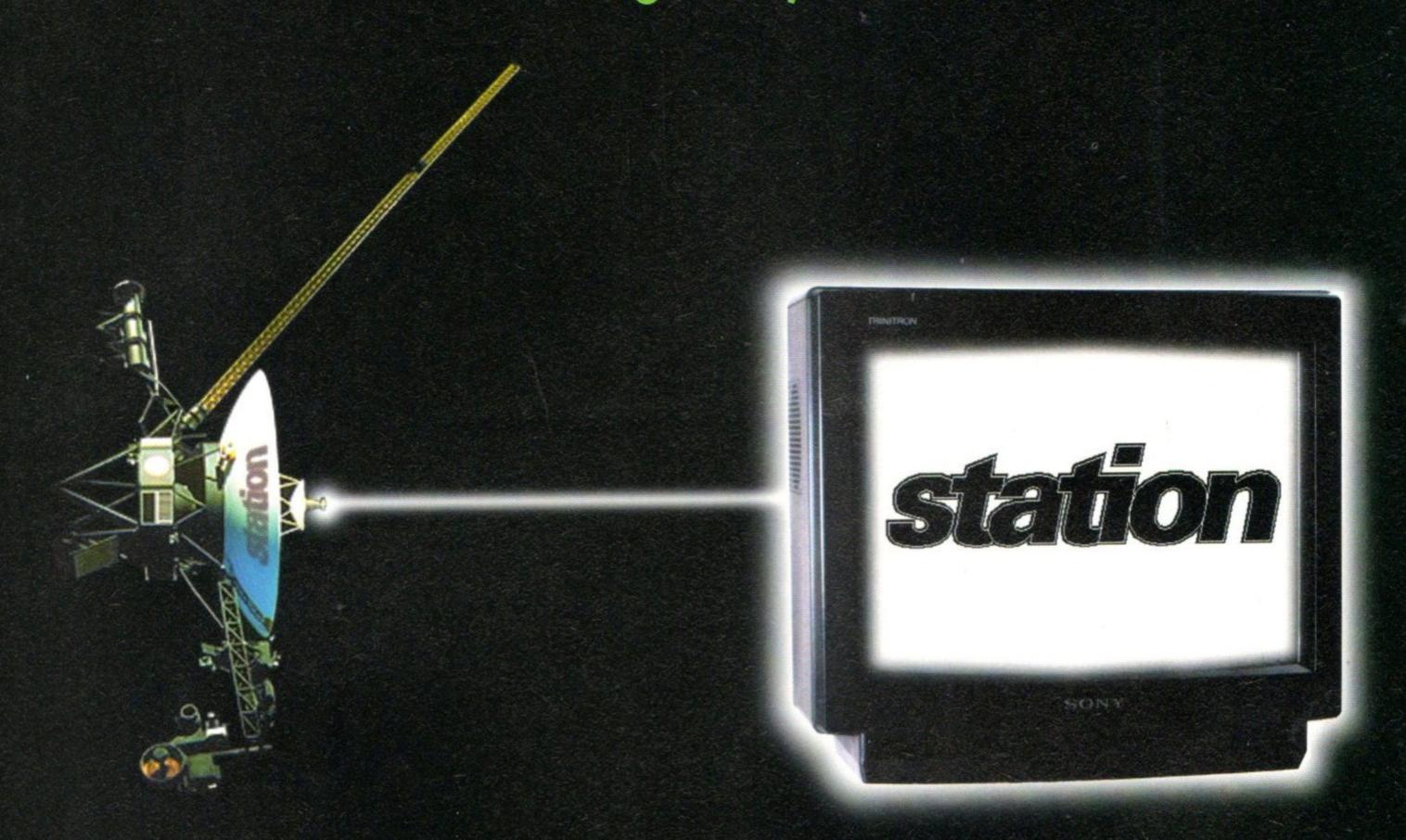
7) I'm sorry, friend. But sometimes you just have to let them go...

8) Sega's RPG attack isn't proving to be as ferocious as I might have hoped... A lot of titles for every system are being announced, but very few of them materialized. In my opinion, Sony's on top right now with Suikoden and Persona, but if Working Designs can start getting their line-up out there (Dragon Force, RayEarth, and Lunar) then Sega's definitely still in it...

And that brings another lovely episode of the Postmeister to an end. A brief note to readers: It's not that I only publish questions about RPGs and Sailor Moon, it's that that's all I GET. I used to have such great variety, letters from psychos obsessed with all manner of things... What's up, people? The Postmeister loves you all! Well not you Jaguar people, but everyone else! Write in! Seize your moment of glory! The Postmeister is waiting!



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It's the end of the year and the whole

industry is buzzing over the record-

breaking two day sales of the N64. On

September 29th and 30th Nintendo sold

approximately 350,000 units: 150,000 pre-sales, and 200,000 walk-in purchas-

es. Nintendo is also set to release a fur-

ther 300,000 units on October 11th.

According to sources at NOA. Nintendo

will release a further 300,000 units every

3 to 4 weeks accordingly until the end of

the year. Nintendo estimates that the

total number of units sold by the new

In celebration of the recent launch of the Nintendo 64 here's all the info we could dig up. PS: We looked under a lot of rocks.

PLAYER 1, WILLIAMS SECRET WEAPON?

After only 2 months of work on the N64 version of *Robotron X*, developer Player 1 is almost ready to start work on the N64 version of... wait for it... *Joust 3D*! While the concept and game design are nearly complete, Player 1 has informed me that they still need a few more weeks of planning before programming can begin. The game will feature real time 3D arenas, and best of all, a split screen two player mode with special arenas designed specifically for two player battles. The game isn't due for release until late '97, with a PC CD-ROM and PlayStation version also planned.

NINTENDO TO DELAY GAMES AGAIN?

Yep, you read that correctly. Nintendo is pushing back the Japanese release dates of some of their key titles. Below is a list of Nintendo's official Japanese release dates for the next three months, along with the US dates. Read on...

RUMORS, RUMORS... NOT!

year could be as high as 1.2 million.

The biggest story floating around is that the US version of *SM64* may be released in Japan as *Super Mario 64 Special*! For some reason Miyamoto feels that the extra voice and fixed bugs constitutes a more 'complete' version of the game that true fans will not want to be without. Besides that, sources at NOA recently disclosed that the Japanese version of SM64 was not 64 megs as previously reported, but 52 megs. The US version, on the other hand, was actually 64 megs.

N64 LODE RUNNER?

Yes, it's true. A company named Big Bang Software (based in Bellevue, Washington) is working on a N64 version of the timeless platform/puzzle classic *Lode Runner*. This version will feature real time 3D and multiple *Super Mario 64*-style camera angles. Production has just begun, so don't expect to see anything on *Lode Runner 64* until the 1st quarter of 1997. We'll keep you posted. Not.

VIC TOKAI JOINS THE N64 TEAM!

Another fighting game is on its way to the N64 courtesy of Krono Digital Entertainment, the team responsible for *Eternal Champions 2. Dark Rift* was shown at the Alias/Wavefront booth of the Japanese Tokyo SIGGRAPH show a couple of weeks ago, and spectators who saw the demo reported that it was graphically on a par with *SM64*. The gameplay might need a little work though. In spite of this we have an interview lined up with KDE for next month, along with some shots of the game. Vic Tokai is looking for a 1st quarter release of *Dark Rift*, so stay tuned...

Tetris Sphere

JP: Jan. US: Feb.

Shadows of the Empire
JP: Nov. US: Dec. 2nd

Golden Eye

JP: Jan/Feb US: Feb/Mar

Blast Corps
JP: Dec/Jan

Jan US: Feb.

Body Harvest

JP: Mar. US: Mar. Super Mario Kart R

JP: Dec. US: Jan.

Buggie Buggy

JP: Summer '97 US: Summer '97

StarFox 64

JP: Mar./Apr. US: Jun./Jul.

Climber

JP: Apr. US: May

Kirby's Air Ride

JP: Jan./Feb. US: 2nd qtr. '97

F-Zero 64

JP: May/Jun. US: Jul./Aug.

Yoshi's Island 64

JP: Mar/Apr. US: May/Jun.

Well there you have it. Once again, Nintendo is incurring massive delays in its schedule, in some cases up to six months off the projected release date. The reason for this is that Nintendo is discovering too late in the game just how long it takes to develop a 64-bit title, especially a 3D one. As with SM64, Miyamoto has requested more time to fine tune the games under his production, and who are Nintendo to argue? Personally, I couldn't care what the reasons are, just as long as the games are good!

SHOSHINKAI '97

It's only a month away. Rumor has it

we'll witness the debut of Zelda 64 for the 64DD, along with Capcom's official announcement that they ARE developing games for the N64. The Japanese press however, states that neither the 64DD nor Zelda will be present. There should also be playable versions of Super Mario Kart 64, Yoshi's Island, Star Fox 64 and F-Zero 64. Rumor has it that a Donkey Kong game for N64 might be at the show, but only on video. Sources have also indicated that other 64DD games (maybe Metroid 64) might be at the show, but only if Nintendo is happy with the game's quality.

NAMCO JOINS CLUB N64

Namco has finally officially announced that they will be developing for the N64. The first 2 titles will be a sports game (Family Stadium) and an RPG (Tails of Phantasia 64). Namco has already started production on these titles, but only at the design stage. The first shots should be ready for May or June of next year, and the release of both games is planned for 4th quarter '97.

WILLIAMS LEAKS MORE N64 GAMES

Sources at Williams have revealed that Mortal Kombat 4 is due for an arcade debut in either March or April of '97, with both a PlayStation and N64 version planned for 4th quarter '97. The other big news is that San Francisco Rush, Atari's new driving coin-op designed by the creators of Race Drivin' and Hard Drivin', is also headed to the N64 for late '97. The arcade game runs on a 64bit R4400 chip designed by SGI, with a Voodoo Graphics chip that allows for up to 1,000,000 polygons with all the trimmings. There's no word on a PlayStation version yet, but the N64 version is expected to be a 90% copy.





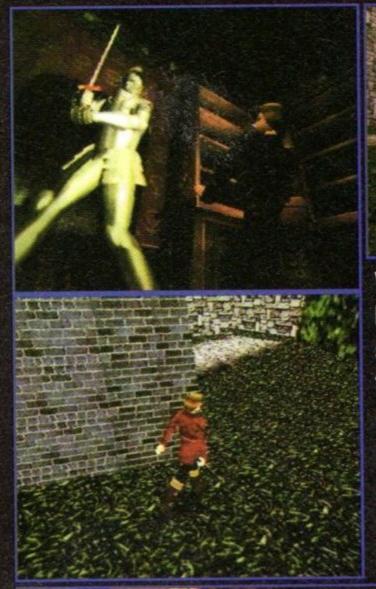
The rest of the stuff....

SQUARE DELAYS FINAL FANTASY 7

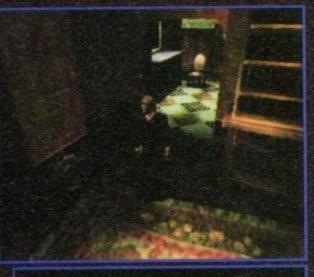
The release date for Final Fantasy 7 in Japan has been put back from late December to January 31, 1997, with no change in price (6800 Yen). Thankfully there has been no change in the US date - Square is still quoting March for both the PlayStation and Windows '95 versions. To date alleged Square has spent an \$20,000,000 on the production of FFVII, making it the most expensive video game ever! On a brighter note Sony has decided to release the demo disk of FFVII with Tobal No. 1 over here. The translation is complete and looking set for release.

ENIX TO MAKE SATURN GAMES

Enix recently announced their 1997 lineup, including a number of surprises. 9 games were announced in total, 6 for N64 and a further 3 unknown titles. But sources are indicating that one of the 'unknown' titles will be none other than Dragon Quest 7 for the Saturn! Information is scarce but I did manage to find out that one of the N64 titles is being developed by Quintet, the company behind Actraiser and its sequel. No word on any of the other games yet, but rumor has it that one of the other N64 games could be Dragon Quest Gaiden.







WARP has finally begun releasing actual screens of *D2*, their first M2 game. As you can see, no pixels are present and the game is running at a supposed 60fps. We'll have a report in Jan.





Burning Update:





And finally... post-review, Playmates did a very cool thing. Certain individuals didn't care for Burning Road's B-Univ-ish soundtrack. Chief H., for one, whined about it in last month's review. There was only one thing to do... track down Tommy Tallarico and have him whip up a hot US Remix. Playmates has done just that. What's better is that they left the original tunes in! Now you can decide, cheesy Daytona tunes or Metal. Hmmm... I'm torn.

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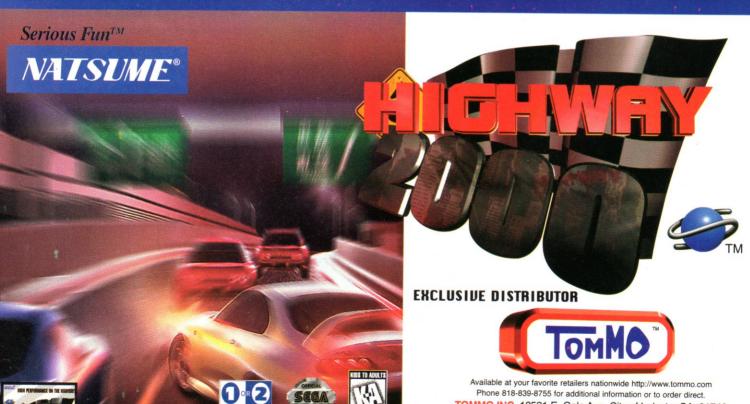
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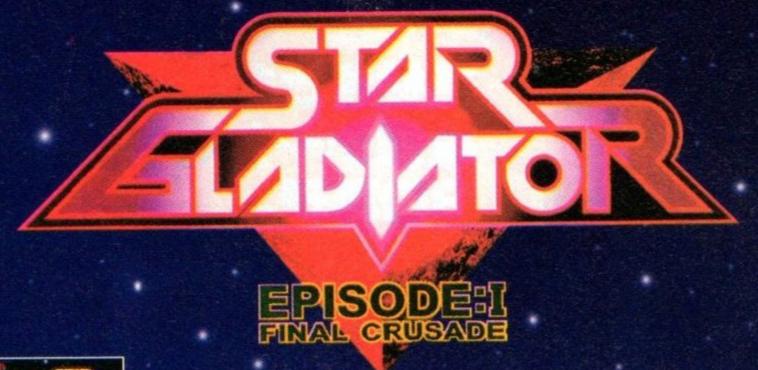


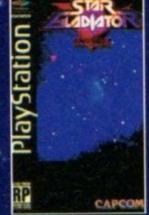






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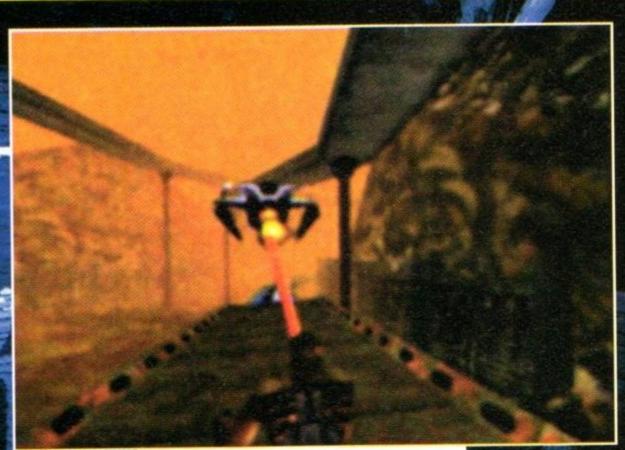
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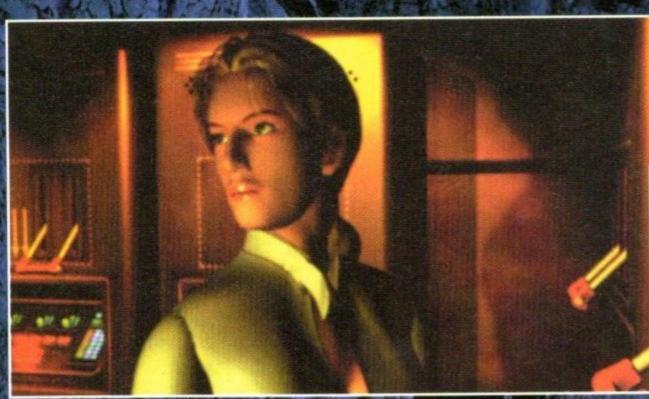


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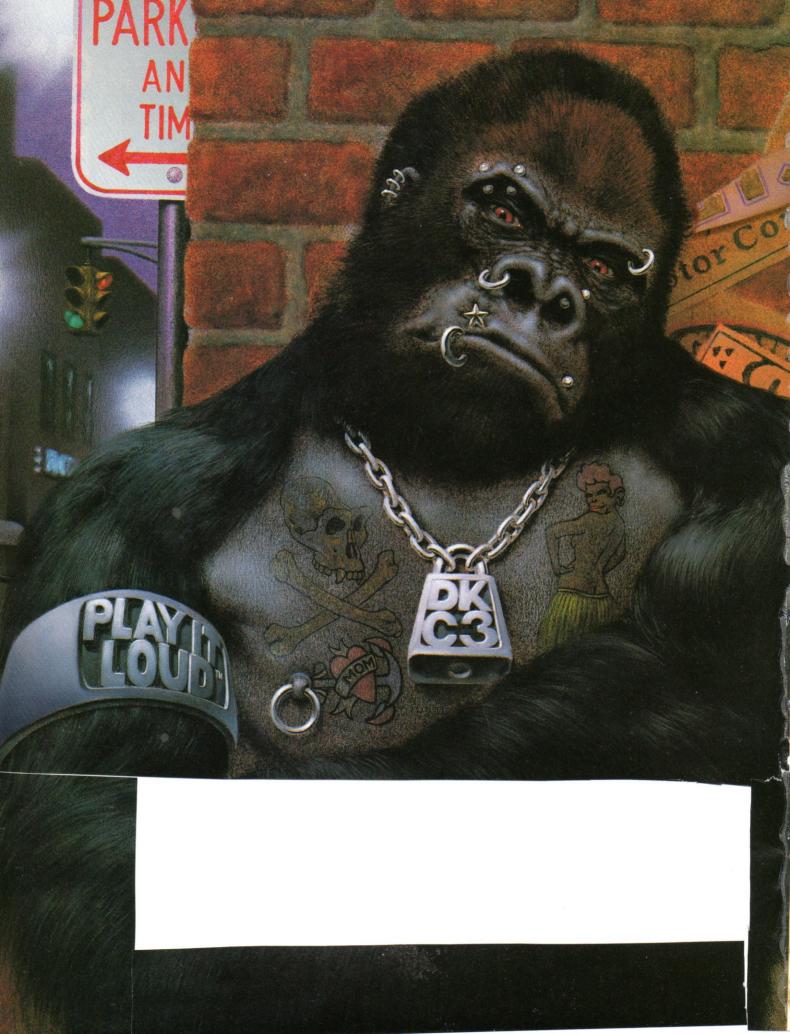






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