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Mega POWER



Dec 1993
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ISSUE 5

not an official sega publication

strictly for Sega Drive players only



IT'S A STICK-UP!

Exclusive preview of
Bubba 'n' Stix



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FROM PARAGON
PUBLISHING

Microcosm CD ♦ Joe Montana Football CD ♦ Royal Rumble ♦ Zombies ♦
Fifa International Soccer ♦ Tournament Turtles ♦ Sensible Soccer ♦ Robocop
vs Terminator ♦ Virtual Pinball ♦ Sonic Spinball ♦ Lethal Enforcers CD

REVIEWED

INSIDE

**NOW YOU CAN PLAY THE MOST
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*** ORIGINAL GUN ACCESSORY INCLUDED IN GAME PAK.**

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MULTI-STAGE BATTLE FOR JUSTICE.

KONAMI

SUPER NINTENDO
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MEGA-CD

SEGA
MEGA DRIVE



cover story

Core Design's latest offering graces our cover this month.

Check out our exclusive preview on pages 16-17 inside.



Does *Microcosm* really live up to the hype?

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Creepy, undead and hungry for action.

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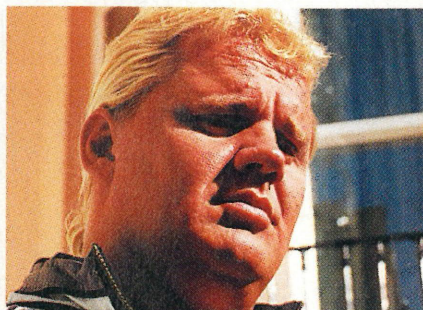


Flipping good action from Sonic.

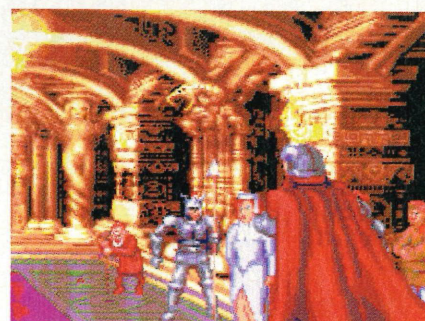
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december 1993

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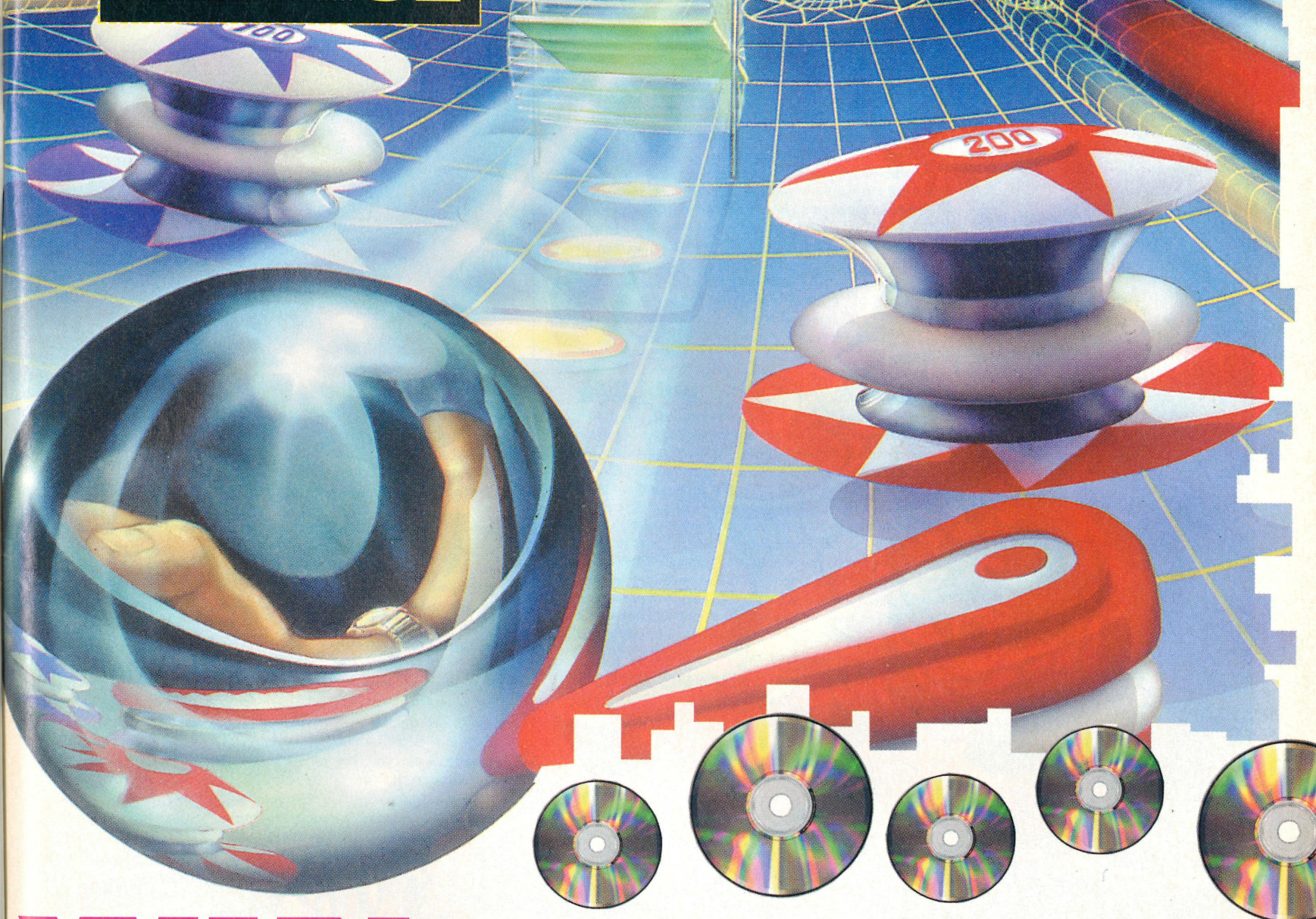
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Pinball on the console is nothing new, but in Electronic Arts' *Virtual Pinball* you can even create your own tables. See what we thought of it on page...

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WIN A MEGA-CD 2!



As a special bonus this month, we've managed to organise this mega competition with top software house Psygnosis. Those clever Liverpoolian guys are well into the Mega-CD, with several titles in the pipeline, including the long-awaited *Microcosm*

(reviewed in this issue), plus CD conversions of *Puggsy* and *Wiz 'n' Liz*.

Psygnosis are at the leading edge of technology and they want you to be too. Yes, one lucky reader will win a superbly styled Mega-CD 2, plus some stunning Psygnosis CD software to play on it. But you'll have to be quick on the draw: only the first 200 entries received will be put into the hat. To stand a chance, answer this simple question...

Q. Which well-known musician composed the soundtrack for *Microcosm*?

Send your answer on the back of a postcard to: PSYGNOSIS CD COMP, Mega Power, Paragon Publishing, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 1NF. Remember, only the first 200 entries will stand a chance so there's no time to waste!

**on the next issue of MEGA
POWER...
the Psygnosis Big Three CD
demo!**

MICROCOSM

PUGGSY

WIZ 'n' LIZ

HASTA LA VISTA, BABY



CHUCK ROCK II SON OF CHUCK

Eighteen months after his victory over Gary Gritter, Chuck Rock is now the owner of the hugely successful 'Chuck Motors' and has become a father. Kidnapped by his evil enemy Brick Jagger, Chuck Rock is likely to become Chuck Dust unless somebody rescues him... A sudden crash as Chuck Junior bursts from his play pen "Goo Goo Gaa, I'll be back".

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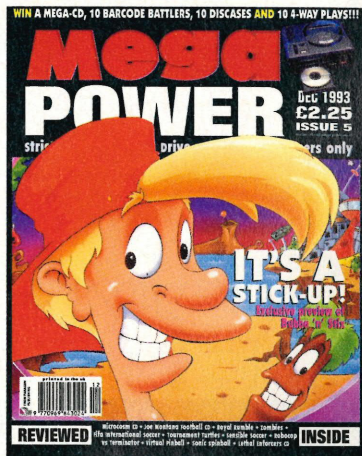
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PRESS

s t a r t



Mega-CD owners don't despair. Although we couldn't bring you a CD cover-mount this issue, there'll another great CD demo on next month's issue for you to peruse at your leisure. Dammit, we work hard for you!

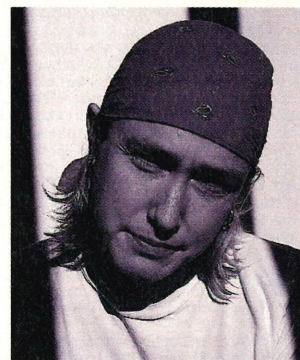
We are very lucky to be able to put a CD on the cover of next month's magazine as we were under a lot of pressure from some of the industry's marketing departments to include a brilliant new item on the front of the mag instead. Something that they have been using for a long time and now seem all too willing to force on the rest of the games industry as well. What am I talking about? Rose-coloured spectacles, of course!

All of a sudden it seems to be de rigeur for the money men in suits to try to tell the people who play the games what ratings they should be giving their products. No, no, no, that's not how it works. At MEGA POWER, as I would hope it is with any other magazine, our loyalty is to our readers first and foremost. We have a responsibility to maintain editorial integrity, and if a company wants its game to receive a high score then the secret is simple; produce a good game. I have never yielded, nor will I ever yield to bullies so you can be sure that the opinions and ratings given to games in this publication are 100% based on our honest opinions, unbiased and uninfluenced. If a game does not appear within our pages then be very wary as I also do not believe in reviewing absolutely every title that comes along, just for the sake of it. MEGA POWER only reviews what it considers to be the biggest releases each month, and we review them for you.

dave perry

dave perry

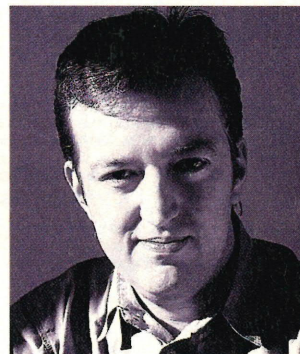
Nearly always first to the office CD player or the tatty ghetto-blasters he has fixed to his desk, Dave has no qualms about inflicting his musical tastes upon the rest of the team. You always know he's about as the booming beats of Public Enemy or Ice T echo down the hallways, shaking pictures from the walls. Strangely though, he often lapses into bouts of glittermania with chants of "leader, leader" as he stomps his feet and pumps the air to his Gary Glitter CD. Very mixed up. Dave has been up to the hi-tech offices of EA for the first-ever previews of their new CD games, and across to London for a nice cup of tea with Mr Perfect from the WWF. He's also been taking on all-comers on *Street Fighter II* for six hours in an Asda store for charity and, of course, showing his best side for TV.



phil king

Phil is fast becoming the Indie man of the office, wandering around with his copy of Melody Maker tucked under his arm and slyly slipping on CDs by The Cocteau Twins and Meat Beat Manifesto. It's all come as quite a shock really, but you know what they say about the quiet ones...

Inspired by his strangely alluring musical tastes, Phil has been working like a Demon on this issue, reviewing *Zombies*, *FIFA International Soccer*, *Sonic Spinball*, *RoboCop Vs Terminator*, *Tournament Fighters*, *Joe Montana* and his beloved *Sensible Soccer*. However, he's been finding life at MEGA POWER a little tougher than at his previous mags and our *SensiWorld* Champion has been getting his ass kicked on his favourite game lately. We take no prisoners here.

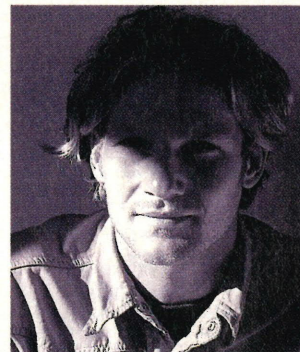


steve bough

Stevie's musical tastes don't change: he is still Mr Ambient and keeps driving the office wild with tapes and CDs that sound like you just dialled a fax machine on the phone by mistake. But he's happy, he just pronounces everyone else as unimaginative and unhip and drifts off into a world of flashing lights and funny-smelling cigarettes.

Our very own Johnny Utah has been blasting his way through *Lethal Enforcers* on the Mega-CD and getting to grips with *Royal Rumble*. He also flipped over *Virtual Pinball* and has been teaching Phil the fine art of *J League* in his lunch breaks despite finishing second from bottom in the office league.

A tenacious opponent in the games room and out on the five-a-side pitch, Steve is fast becoming a dangerous adversary.



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POWER NEWS

PREVIEWS

WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER

Codemasters

'Ere we go, 'ere we go again... Yes, next year is World Cup year and whether England are there or not – the "Mexican wave" of Mega Drive football games seems unstoppable. Already this year we've been treated to *Ultimate Soccer*, *J League*, *Sensible Soccer*, *FIFA International Soccer* and *World Cup Soccer*, so only Jimmy Hill knows how many there'll be in '94. Already US Gold have snapped up the official *World Cup '94* licence, although we've yet to see anything of the game. So if the World Cup's gone, what can anyone else have? Well, Codemasters have cleverly created a fictional tournament for their *World League Soccer*. By golly, you can even go on to win the World League Cup!

Controlling one of the real-life soccer teams from around the globe, you can change strips, select players (with genuine names and full statistics) and choose your tactics. The action itself is viewed from overhead, with tiny sprites reminiscent of *Sensible Soccer*.

The game is the first in Codemasters' planned "Master Sports" series and takes the form of a fictional TV show, complete with presenters who make comments about the teams before each match. It should be a good game, Brian... we can't wait for the kick off.

Street Date: March 1994



MARKO'S MAGIC FOOTBALL

Domark

No, it's not yet another soccer sim for to fork out for – although there will surely be a mountain of them in World Cup year. *Marko's Magic Football* is, in fact, a cartoon platform game starring a footy-mad hero. All Marko wants to do is play footy in the park with his mates, but his mum has other ideas and tells him to clean his room. Bah!

So Marko obediently tidies up all day and that's the end of that... no, of course he doesn't. Instead, the little scamp sneaks out of the house and sets off for the park. On the way he's sidetracked by some funny goings-on at the local toy factory and decides to investigate. He enters an epic cartoon adventure with over a hundred different enemies to avoid or knock over with his magic football. Yes, the young lad looks like the next Ryan Giggs as he uses his supreme footy skills to tackle the baddies in ten levels.

Due for release next spring, Domark promise *Marko's Magic Football* will feature secret bonuses, amazing background graphics, unique gameplay and – above all – loads of cartoon humour to keep you laughing for months.

Street Date: March 1994



DRAGON'S REVENGE

Tengen

If pinball fans aren't satisfied by the release of *Sonic Spinball* and *Virtual Pinball*, the great news is that Tengen are set to bring out the sequel to their very popular *Dragon's Fury* – reckoned in its day to be the best pinball sim on any format. The original game (also known as *Devil Crush* on import) was highly addictive with very slick graphics and sound, so great things are expected for *Dragon's Revenge*.

The sequel features three main "playfields" (large scrolling tables) plus eight hidden bonus levels. Some of these include special scaling of the ball to give the impression of realistic perspective. Tengen reckon *Dragon's Revenge* retains the superb gameplay of its classic predecessor, though whether it'll measure up to the latest pinball games is yet to be seen.

Street Date: January 1994



AERO THE ACRO-BAT

Sunsoft

Known best in the UK for *Batman: Revenge Of The Joker* (only available on import), Japanese giant Sunsoft have created a new company mascot for their latest game. Aero The Acro-Bat is a vampire bat who performs amazing stunts in a circus. All is well until Edgar Ektor appears on the scene. A human determined to close down all circuses, Ektor has planted booby traps all around Aero's big top.

In this platform adventure, Aero has to find and destroy all the explosives in each of 25 large scrolling stages. As well as simply jumping, Aero can hover in mid air and go into a baddie-destroying kydive. Along the way, he also jumps through hoops, bounces on trampolines and gets fired high into the air by cannons. On later levels, the batty hero even goes outside to take a ride on such airground attractions as the big wheel, rollercoaster and water slide. He even gets to perform a bungee jump!

Combining a humorous theme with varied gameplay, *Aero The Acro-Bat* looks set to be a big-top hit. Initially available on import, let's hope it gets the UK release it deserves. Its cheeky-looking hero could even rival Sonic for megastardom.

Street Date (Japan): November 1993



LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE II

Electronic Arts

We were hoping to get a review of this superfast racing game in this issue, but unfortunately it fell through. Never mind, here's a little taster of what's to come.

In terms of racing action, *Lotus II* is much like its predecessor. Putting your foot down to overtake computer cars and reach the checkpoints in time, you race through diverse scenery including motorways, deserts, icy roads and fog. As the original, there's a choice of cars: you can let the wind blow through your hair in a Lotus Elan convertible, which also handles differently from the Esprit. There's also the split-screen two-player mode for ultracompetitive head-to-head racing.

The major addition is a facility to design your own tracks, so you can pick loads of bends and hills in to make things as challenging as you want. This is an important improvement as many gamers found the original *Lotus* game far too easy.

Street Date: November 1993



VIRGIN COCKUP

Oops. It seems we got the wrong end of the stick in our news item about Virgin's stamp-collecting scheme in MEGA POWER #3. It is not Virgin Games (as the item stated) but Virgin Retail who have introduced this promotion in their stores all across the UK. Our sincere apologies go to all our readers, Virgin Games and Virgin Retail for the inaccurate article.

Aiming to build games loyalty amongst customers, the Virgin Retail promotion is entitled "Get Levels Ahead With Virgin For Free Computer And Video Games" (bit of a mouthful, eh?) and is being implemented in all 19 Megastores and 30 Games Centres.

For every £10 spent on games (by any publisher) in a Virgin store, the customer receives a stamp which they can stick in a special booklet. When enough stamps are collected, they can be exchanged for money off further game purchases. Up to 30 stamps can be collected for a total redemption value of £40.

The promotion will run for approximately one year, continuing throughout Christmas as an added incentive to customers during that period. So, you see, stamp collecting needn't be a boring pastime after all.



GAMES CENTRE

ACCLAIM FOR NEW JOYPAD

Joypad cables, don't you just hate 'em? Not only do they always seem to get tangled up, but you have to sit so close to your Mega Drive that it's impossible to sink back in your armchair and play – never mind at the other end of the room.

Acclaim reckon to have solved the problem with their new Dual Turbo Remote Controllers. For the very reasonable price of £49.99 you get two cordless controllers and an infrared receiver that plugs into the Mega Drive. It can receive signals from up to 25 feet, so you can sit wherever you like without worrying about people tripping over any cables.

The pads themselves have been "ergonomically designed" (a fave cliché of joypad manufacturers) to be held comfortably for long periods of time without developing the dreaded "gamer's thumb". They're also packed with features, including Turbo and SuperTurbo rapid fire, autofire (without pressing any buttons) and a slow-motion mode.

Entering the hardware market for the first time, Acclaim hope their controllers are as big a success as their games – they've just reported record sales of \$327.1 million for the fiscal year ended August 31.



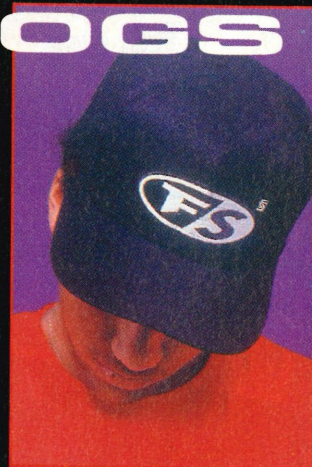
TRENDY TOGS

Sega have announced a "cybernetic deal" with underground clothing label Future Shooter, whose "gamewear" designs have already scored a big success with London clubbers and gamesplayers.

Emblazoned on T-shirts, hats, jackets and accessories, the main Future Shooter characters are a pistol-packing gamegirl called Trigger Happy; the eponymous Future Shooter; a "cyboy" screen hero; and Cyber Dread, a game DJ at the fictional Megarcade where he "mixes games together to frustrate even the most hardened system warriors". Erm, yeah.

A cartoon strip featuring these cyberpunk characters is currently being developed and Sega aren't ruling out the possibility of a video game based on them. Sega's David Joseph comments, "Up until now the main licensing ventures for the industry revolved around an eponymous blue hedgehog and a little plumber. Future Shooter marks a change in this area – the characters are more underground, refreshing and irreverent."

The Sega/Future Shooter range will be available in selected game and clothes stores across the UK, and also via mail order on 071 490 2422.



DOUBLE HORROR



Loads of people have already written in asking why we printed the *Splatterhouse 3* review twice in MEGA POWER #4. Well, the reason isn't because we liked it so much. Of course, it was a mistake.

As revealed by that issue's contents page, what should have appeared on page 67 was a review of Tengen's *Race Drivin'*. Unfortunately the inclusion of an extra advertisement at the eleventh hour meant many pages were shuffled at the last minute. Somehow during this process in our internal press bureau, the *Race Drivin'* write-up was replaced with a second *Splatterhouse 3* page.

What can we say except that we're very sorry? For those still wondering about *Race Drivin'* here's a brief resume of the review...

This supercharged version of the classic *Hard Drivin'* adds two new tracks for extra variety and challenge. The Superstunt track is more like a giant roller coaster than anything, with the road rising hundreds of feet into the air. As well as the usual loops, there's an even more stomach-churning corkscrew to go round.

The Autocross circuit, the other new track, comes as something of a disappointment: just a dull triangular speedway really. A much better addition is the track editor, enabling you to build your own custom tracks — it's a shame that you can't put bridges or corkscrews in them, though.

Good as the extra features are, the best bit is still challenging the Phantom Photon on the original Stunt track. It's a pity this option wasn't extended to provide competitive racing on the new circuits, whose only challenge is in setting ever-faster lap times. *Race Drivin'* is okay, but it could have been so much better.

OVERALL 70%



SIX OF THE BEST



Now available in high street shops, six-button joypads are really taking off. This is undoubtedly due in no small way to the inclusion of a six-button option in *Street Fighter II: SCE*, but most publishers are planning to use the six-button facility on future releases so it looks set to become a standard feature.

So it's well worth getting hold of Spectravideo's new six-button Propad 2. As the name suggests, it features "programmable synchro fire" for those beat-'em-up special moves. Just allocate the fire buttons you want to the additional Left or Right buttons; now every time you press one of the latter, the pad simultaneously triggers the buttons you programmed into it.

The Propad2 also has independent autofire for all six buttons plus a slow-motion mode. At £22.99 it's well worth the money for the fighting advantage it gives you over your friends!

FOUR-PLAY WITH FIRE



Hong Kong-based peripheral manufacturers Fire have launched the ultimate joypad adapter for four-player games on the Mega Drive. Solving the dilemma of whether to buy the rival — and incompatible — Sega Tap or Electronic Arts 4-Way Play devices, the new Fire Multitap is compatible with *all* four-player games. So now you can get your mates round for marathon soccer tournaments, playing *FIFA International Soccer* followed by *J League!* Fire's Multitap should hit the shops in the first two weeks of December, retailing for "less than £29".

And what better to plug into your Multitap than Fire's new Patriot joypad? Not only does this have six buttons for all the latest games, but it has *all* the *Street Fighter II* special moves pre-programmed into it, so you can access them at the push of a button. Surely the ultimate beat-'em-up joypad yet, the Patriot will cost a mere £24.99 when it's released in December (the SNES version is pictured here).

P R E V I E W S

DRAGON

Virgin

As the song goes, "everybody was kung-fu fighting" in the Seventies, mainly due to the martial arts films of the late Bruce Lee. Virgin's latest combat game, *Dragon*, is licensed from the recent film about Lee's life.

Unsurprisingly the game takes the form of a head-to-head beat-'em-up, cashing in on the current popularity of the genre. However, *Dragon* goes one up (literally) on *Street Fighter II* and *Mortal Kombat* with the addition of a third fighter on screen. This enables one player to simultaneously take on two computer opponents (tricky), or alternatively two players can take each other plus a computer fighter. This three-way fighting has never before been seen in a console game, although it was surely inspired by a similar feature in the ancient *IK+* karate game on computer formats. That'll be no bad thing if *Dragon* is anywhere near as playable as that old classic. It certainly sounds accomplished enough with 12 intelligent opponents and 36 fighting moves that are adapted as progress is made. In fact, Virgin claim it's the biggest beat-'em-up ever and are using compression techniques to cram no less than 30Mbits of information into a 16Mbit cart. Let's hope it lives up to the Lee legend.

Street Date: February 1994

WINTER OLYMPICS '94

US Gold

Manchester may have lost out to the infinitely more glamorous Sydney in the battle to host the Olympic Games in the year 2000, but the next Winter Olympics are coming to Britain... well, sort of. Birmingham-based US Gold have won the licence to produce the *Winter Olympics '94* game. The real event will take place in Lillehammer, Norway, where US Gold have already sent their programming team on several research visits.

Unsurprisingly *Winter Olympics '94* will be a multi-eventer, featuring ten sports. These include all the usual Alpine skiing events (downhill, slalom etc), plus ski jumping, luge, bobsleigh and fairly new Olympic sports like short-track speed skating (Wilf O'Reilly's event) and freestyle moguls. On Mega Drive these last two will offer a head-to-head option for two players. Due for a pre-Christmas release, US Gold are hoping *Winter Olympics* follows the record-breaking success of their 1992 licence *Olympic Gold* (based on the summer games). After all, there's no business like snow business.

Street Date: December 1993

ETERNAL CHAMPIONS

Sega

The hottest one-on-one beat-'em-up since *Street Fighter II*, this huge game will be packed onto a 24Mbit cart. In the year 2225, the fighting entity known as the Eternal Champion — which maintains the balance between good and evil — is dying. Before he snuffs it he must appoint a successor and so he searches through time to find the best fighter suited to become the next Eternal Champion.

A bit of a weird plot, admittedly, but it enables vastly different fighters from various eras to face each other. These range from a club-wielding caveman to a futuristic ex-cop, all with their own unique fighting styles and special moves.

The gorgeous scenery often plays a part in the action: for example, in one location the fighters are waist-deep in water which splashes as they do their moves. With over nine levels, the solo game should prove a great challenge, while the obligatory two-player mode promises even greater lasting appeal. If *Eternal Champions* plays as good as it looks, it could even outdo *Street Fighter II*.

Street Date: January 1994

ANOTHER WORLD I AND II CD

Virgin

Aiming to give gamers "more bang for their buck" Virgin have not only converted *Another World* to Mega-CD, but also added an all-new sequel — so you effectively get two games in one.

In the original adventure you take the role of scientific genius, Lester Chaykin, who is zapped into an alternate dimension. Somehow he must survive and escape this dangerous place, populated by alien creatures and laser-firing baddies. It's a stunning cinematic adventure with rotoscoped character animation and plenty of action. As well as the obvious laser-fire shootouts, there are plenty of puzzles to be solved along the way.

To avoid frustration, passwords are given every so often. Virgin also hope to include an option to start straight away on the second adventure — for those who've already played the first on Mega Drive. That version deservedly won four major industry awards, and the Mega-CD game should be even more spectacular with live actors' speech plus a continual audio mix of digitised sound effects and full musical score. We can't wait.

Street Date: January 1994

F-117: NIGHT STORM

Electronic Arts

If you're asking what exactly an F-117 is, you probably know it better as the Stealth fighter. This radar-invisible plane was designed for surgical strikes on tactical targets and made its military debut in the recent Gulf War — remember Stormin' Norman showing all those mission videos on the news?

Now this technologically astounding aircraft is about to make its Mega Drive debut. One problem the game designers have encountered is that the plane is so flippin' brilliant, if the missions were totally realistic they'd be far too easy! Hence a little artistic licence has been taken so there's more resistance from the enemy, including exciting air-to-air combat.

Nevertheless, this is no shallow arcade game but a complex flight simulation with very realistic flying and lots of tactical objectives. The full campaign takes you from training missions in Nevada to the troubles in Panama, followed by the Gulf War itself. The core of the game is air-ground bombing of strategic installations, so you have to plan your missions well to reach the target and use fast reflexes to see off aerial attackers.

As you obviously won't be able to see *F-117* coming on your radar, we'll keep a special watch out for this epic game when it appears in the new year.

Street Date: January 1994



POWER

NEWS

POWER DATES

When's a game out, who's producing it? The MPs give you the definitive guide to the next six months' releases.

November

Addams Family	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Aero The Aero-Bat	Sunsoft	Mega Drive	Japan
Asterix And The Great Rescue	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Battle Mania	Vic Tokai	Mega Drive	Japan
Blades Of Vengeance	EA	Mega Drive	UK
Blue Wolf And White Doe	Koei	Mega-CD	Japan
Brett Hull Hockey	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
C&C Music Factory: Make My Video	Sony	Mega-CD	UK
Castlevania: The New Generation	Konami	Mega Drive	UK
Chuck Rock	Sony	Mega-CD	UK
Cliffhanger	Sony	Mega Drive	UK
Cosmic Spacehead	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK
Dark Wizard	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan
Davis Cup World Tour	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK
Ecco The Dolphin	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
F1	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
F15 Strike Eagle II	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK
Gauntlet 4	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK
Gods	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Home Alone 2	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Hook	Sony	Mega-CD	UK
Incredible Crash Dummies, The	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Instruments Of Chaos	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
International Rugby	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
James Pond 3	EA	Mega Drive	UK
Kris Kross: Make My Video	Sony	Mega-CD	UK
Last Action Hero	Sony	Mega Drive	UK
Legend Of War County	Sami	Mega-CD	Japan
Lotus Turbo Challenge II	EA	Mega Drive	UK
Madden NFL '94	EA Sports	Mega Drive	UK
Madden NFL '94	EA Sports	Mega-CD	UK
NFL Quarterback Club	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Pele	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Pirates! Gold	MicroProse	Mega Drive	USA
RoboCop 3	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
RoboCop Vs Terminator	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Sensible Soccer	Sony	Mega Drive	UK
Sewer Shark	Sony	Mega-CD	UK
Sherlock Holmes II	Sega	Mega-CD	UK

Silphheed	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
Sonic CD	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
Sonic Spinball	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Spider-Man And X-Men	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Spider-Man Vs Kingpin	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
T2 Judgment Day	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Thunderhawk	Core	Mega-CD	UK
TNTH: Tournament Fighters	Konami	Mega Drive	UK
Unnecessary Roughness	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Virtual Pinball	EA	Mega Drive	UK
Wing Commander	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
Winning Post	Koei	Mega-CD	Japan
World Cup Soccer	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
WWF Rage In A Cage	Acclaim	Mega-CD	UK
WWF Royal Rumble	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Zombies	Konami	Mega Drive	UK

Dune	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
Dune II	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Eternal Champions	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
F-117: Night Storm	EA	Mega Drive	UK
Greatest Heavyweights	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Gunship	US Gold	Mega Drive	UK
Indiana Jones	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
Joe Montana Football	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
Jurassic Park	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
Mean Bean Machine	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Microcosm	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK
Power Drift	Denpa	Mega-CD	Japan
Sister Sonic	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
Terminator: The	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
ToeJam & Earl 2	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Wonderdog	Core	Mega-CD	UK

December

AX 101	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
Burning Fist	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan
FIFA International Soccer	EA Sports	Mega Drive	UK
Lethal Enforcers	Konami	Mega Drive	UK
Lethal Enforcers	Konami	Mega-CD	UK
Mutant League Hockey	EA	Mega Drive	UK
Ottifants, The	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Phantasy Star IV	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
Powermonger	EA	Mega-CD	UK
Puggsy	Psygnosis	Mega Drive	UK
Stellar Fire	Sierra	Mega-CD	USA
Tinhead	MicroProse	Mega Drive	USA
Winter Olympics	US Gold	Mega Drive	UK
Young Indy	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
You You Gaiden	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
Zool	EA	Mega Drive	UK

February

Beastball	MicroProse	Mega Drive	USA
Bubba 'N' Stix	Core	Mega Drive	UK
Bubba 'N' Stix	Core	Mega-CD	UK
Chaos Engine, The	MicroProse	Mega-CD	USA
Dragon	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Jungle Book, The	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Lost Vikings, The	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK

March

Aggressor	Core	Mega-CD	UK
Charles Barkley Basketball	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Flashback	Sony	Mega-CD	UK
Liberator	Core	Mega-CD	UK
Marko's Magic Football	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
Mike Ditka American Football	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Prince Of Persia	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
RoboCop Vs Terminator	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
World League Soccer	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK

April

World Cup '94	US Gold	Mega Drive	UK
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May

Kawasaki Superbikes	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
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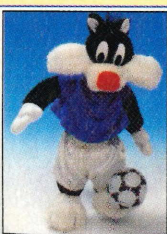
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THE INCREDIBLE HULK



Back in the mid Eighties, The Incredible Hulk guaranteed great ratings for the Saturday tea-time TV audience. However, as quickly as he appeared he disappeared, and the series was replaced by that other fantastic show from across the Atlantic, The A-Team. Bill Bixby and the green man himself, bodybuilder Lou Ferrigno, went on to make a trilogy of films about The Hulk's adventures, but it did seem to all and sundry that the superhero had had his day.

Not so according to US Gold who are set to unleash this legendary Marvel Comics character onto the Mega Drive next year. If you don't know the story, Dr Bruce Banner was working on an experiment in his laboratory when he was hit by a blast of gamma rays. This affected his metabolism and consequently every time he gets in a rage he changes into The Incredible Hulk, a super-being with amazing strength. Only when Dr Banner calms down does he return to his normal peaceful self.

The Hulk/Dr Banner has battled through many a difficult adventure in his quest for normality, but none tougher than the challenge he faces against his notoriously evil enemy, The Leader. Having returned to Earth, The Leader has decided he wants the planet for himself. He invents a robo-chemical army to strike terror into the hearts of humans and force them to surrender the planet. The only person who can possibly stop him is, of course, the Hulk. Anticipating this, The Leader has already sent his cronies to dispose of the green superhero. He's enlisted four of the Hulk's most fearsome foes: Tyrannus, Absorbing Man, The Abomination and The Rhino.

The game follows the Hulk through five platform levels, each with an end-of-level guardian. When the Hulk's power is at its highest, he can smash buildings, walls, anything that he feels like. Trouble is, as his energy level drops he turns back into Dr Banner – he's slower than the Hulk and can't pick up heavy objects.

With three difficulty levels, The Incredible Hulk should have most gamers in a rage when it's released in February 1994 at £44.99. Get it and your friends will no doubt be green with envy. Just don't make them too angry, though – you never know!

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feedback

The letters are already flooding in after the very first Feedback last month. If you want to make a point about the magazine, games, hardware or anything relevant to the Mega Drive, write in to: Feedback, MEGA POWER, Paragon Publishing, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Rd, Bournemouth BH1 1NF. Remember, this column couldn't exist without you.

DANGEROUS GAMES

Dear MEGA POWER,

After much nagging from my 12-year-old son, Charles, I bought him a Mega Drive last Christmas. He was delighted with his present and played *Sonic 2* in his room nonstop all day for weeks. Peace at last, I thought, as I didn't have to put up with his constant whinging to play various board games and sports with him. But it was not to be. By about February he was bored with *Sonic 2* and was once again nagging me and his mother to buy him a new game.

Well, being just a humble stockbroker I'm not loaded with money, so I had to put my foot down. "If you want a new game, you can earn the money for it," I told Charles. He agreed to help me paint the house for the reasonable rate of 50p a room. Well, he was so good at painting I just put my feet up and let him get on with it. Working from when he got back from school to about midnight, he managed to paint all the rooms in our modest eight-bedroom Georgian town house by the end of March.

Beaming with relief, he approached me for his earnings. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not a strict Victorian-style father, but I do believe in discipline. You see, Charles had somehow managed to drip a tiny blob of paint onto one of my exclusive Armani suits. Showing him the damage, I said, "Sorry, son, but your earnings of £11.50 won't cover this. I'm afraid I'll have to sell your Mega Drive to pay the difference." Of course, the little wretch threw a tantrum to try and make me feel guilty, but I was

having none of it.

In the next few months, Charles became abusive and I noticed objets d'art around the house were going missing on a regular basis. Soon, Charles was mixing with the wrong sort of boys and staying out late at night. No matter how hard I punished him, selling off his toys and records, he wouldn't stop behaving in this horrid manner.

At last, it dawned on me what had caused this dramatic change in my boy. It was playing that damn video game. I'd heard of the harmful effects these things can have on young minds and it had obviously turned Charles into a delinquent. By this time, however, he was impossible to control so we packed him off to live with his Uncle Peter.

Sadly it was too late to save our family, but mother and I just want to warn other parents of the appalling effects these video games have on youngsters. I also hope that MEGA POWER will reconsider its moral responsibility and cease publication immediately.

Mr J J Warner, Richmond, Surrey

Thanks for writing in, sir. You're obviously right to blame evil video games for your son's delinquency. We have to admit, the evidence is simply overwhelming. In fact, we think that video games are the sole cause of all that's wrong in society today. Sadly we're already so addicted to our Mega Drives, we can't stop playing. Oh well, it looks like we'll have to carry on producing our magazine for all those other poor addicts out there.

MP

TENNIS BATS?

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you because in the third edition of MEGA POWER, on page 49, the tennis game *Wimbledon* is reviewed. The only problem is that the Instant Access part on the bottom right-hand side of the page is showing the overall marks for *Batman Returns* on the Mega-CD. I don't know if you have noticed this, but unfortunately it is stopping me from knowing the overall marks for *Wimbledon*.

S Binder, Wolverhampton

Thanks for pointing that out, but we had already spotted the error – it was pretty hard to miss! As we have set items – such as the Instant Access box – in all our reviews, it would be silly for the designer to have to redo them from scratch each time. Hence he uses a standard review template, including these items, and adapts it for each review. As you will have probably guessed by now, the game and ratings on the template's Instant Access box is none other than *Batman Returns*. Somehow the updated ratings box for *Wimbledon* was replaced by the original template box during the process of producing the pages. We apologise for any inconvenience caused and, for those interested, here are the real *Wimbledon* ratings that should have appeared...

Gameplay	08
Graphics	08
Sound	07
Addiction	08
Overall	08

MP

COMPACT CONGRATULATIONS

Dear MEGA POWER,

I'm just writing to say how much I enjoyed your *Thunderhawk* Mega-CD demo on the last issue. Being almost broke having just bought a Mega-CD, I wasn't sure whether to splash out on *Thunderhawk*. Your demo was just the thing I needed to see for myself if the game lived up to the hype. Well, it certainly did – your review in Issue 3 hit the nail on the head, as this game is absolutely superlative.

I know some people will complain about the cover price going up to £4.50 but, for me at least, it was excellent value for money. I hope you'll be putting more CD demos on the cover of future issues.

Stuart Davison, Edinburgh

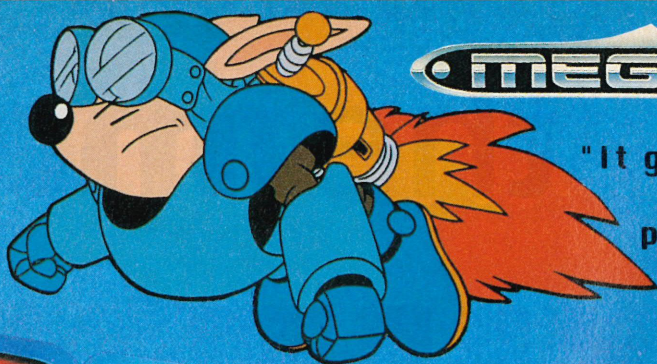
Thanks for your letter, Stuart. You're just one of the many readers to write in congratulating us on our ground-breaking CD cover-mount. Unfortunately we've also had one or two angry people ringing up to complain: these were folks who hadn't got a CD player at all, never mind a Mega-CD – so they couldn't even listen to the stunning game soundtrack.

The bad news for them – and great news for everyone else – is that after the huge success of Issue 4, we'll certainly be putting more Mega-CD demos on the cover of MEGA POWER.

MP

SEGA

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"It gets a top mark because it is a top class product with attention to detail second to none....**Amazing.**"

Mega Action, September 1993

94%

ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES



91%

"This is one of the best games I have ever played ... (It) is and shall remain a classic for quite some time!"

Mean Machines, September 1993

92%

"...RKA is"possibly the best game on the Mega Drive ever,"...a fabulous game..."

"It's a stormer."

Games Master, September 1993

92%

"...Rocket Knight is a dead cert winner, it's a long time since we've seen a game of this quality on the Megadrive...Buy it."

Mega Tech, September 1993



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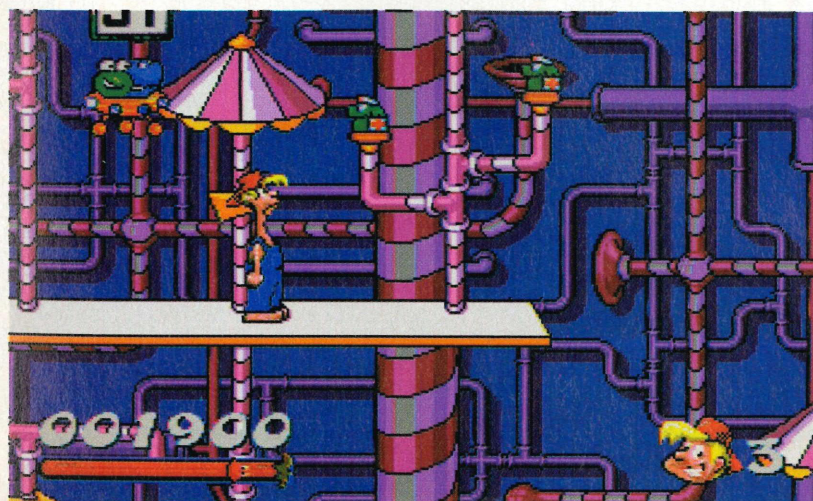
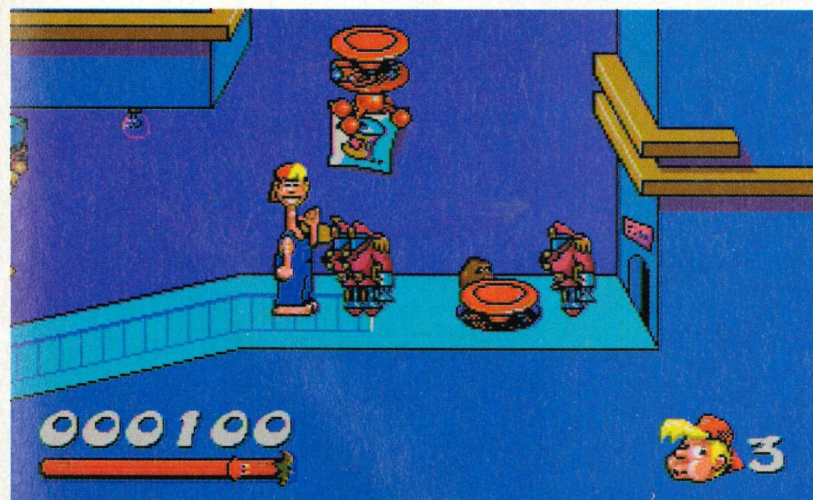
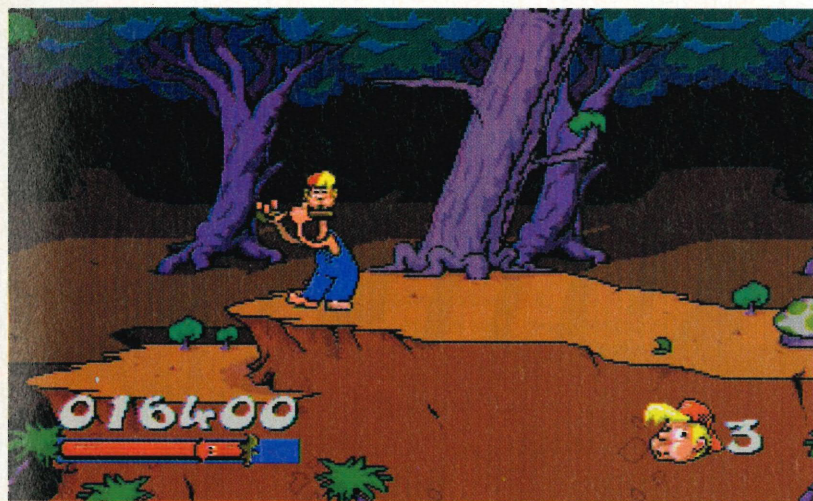
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the man THE ST



After wowing Mega-CD owners with the stunning 3-D graphics and action in *Thunderhawk*, Core Design are hoping their next game, *Bubba 'n' Stix*, has just as much impact. First featured in *Mega POWER #1*, we now take a closer look at this truly extraordinary platform adventure.

As we predicted in the very first issue of *MEGA POWER*, Derbyshire-based Core Design have really made a name for themselves with Sega owners this year. Already a top publisher on the Amiga, they've had even greater success with the stunning *Thunderhawk* on Mega-CD (which we had a playable demo of on *MEGA POWER #4*, plug, plug). An astounding debut, this is the game that has really made people sit up and take notice of the Mega-CD, using its graphical rotation and scaling capabilities to the full. On Mega Drive, Core have had similar critical acclaim for their debut cart, *Chuck Rock II*, although this platform adventure's release date has now slipped back to January.

Though these are their first MD and MCD titles to be released on their own label, Core are no strangers to the machines, having previously programmed such games as *Wonderdog* for the Wondermega (JVC's unofficial combination of Mega Drive and Mega-CD), *Corporation* and *Chuck Rock* for Virgin, and the *Wolfchild* and *Jaguar XJ220* CD titles for Sega.

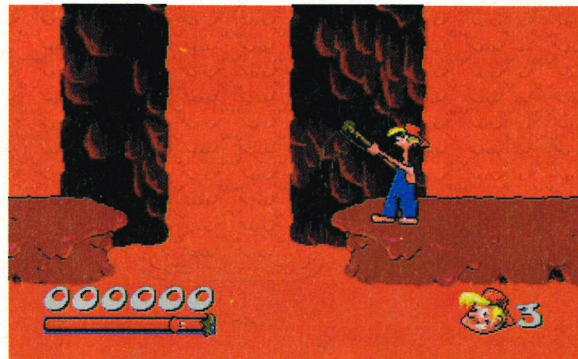
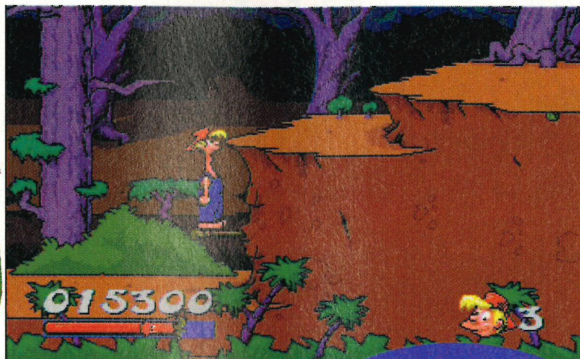
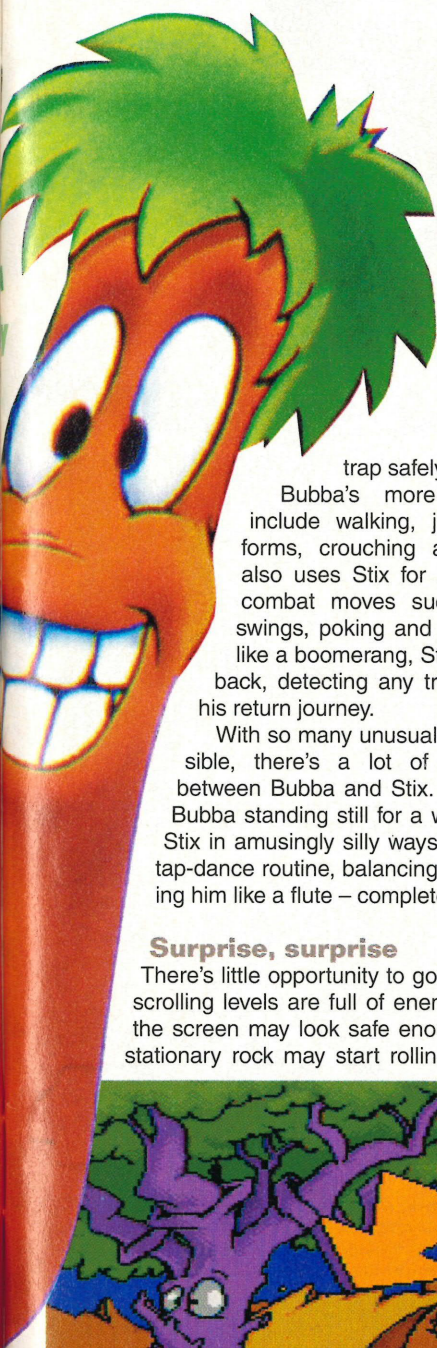
Core blimey

Innovation has always been one of Core's strengths and this is very prominent in their latest game, *Bubba 'n' Stix*. To be released on both Mega Drive and Mega-CD, it tells the story of a typical delivery man, Bubba, who is taking a lorry load of animals to the local zoo. Suddenly an alien spaceship appears and kidnaps Bubba and his lorry. However, as the craft zooms through space, it goes out of control and its doors burst open, releasing Bubba and all the other collected aliens onto a nearby planet.

All standard "daft plot" stuff so far, but when Bubba gets up and walks off, he realises he's being followed by a stick. It turns out to be a friendly alien creature called Stix, who wants to help our hero. In fact, he must be extra-friendly as Stix allows Bubba to use him in all sorts of ways to see off baddies and negotiate hazards. His most obvious use is to beat unfriendly aliens on the head, but Bubba can also use Stix as a lever, snooker cue, tightrope balance, javelin, baseball bat and even a platform to walk across.

A strong element of the gameplay is in solving puzzles and avoiding traps by using Stix in lots of different ways. The control system has been designed to provide the player with the maximum number of movement options, yet also to be "pick up and play" so you don't have to constantly refer to the manual. To avoid overcomplicated controls, unusual actions are context-sensitive: for example, if Bubba stands next to a cauldron trap, pressing button A makes him put Stix in the cauldron to stir it to activate the

with TRICK



trap safely.

Bubba's more standard actions include walking, jumping onto platforms, crouching and crawling. He also uses Stix for beat-'em-up-style combat moves such as overhead swings, poking and even throwing – like a boomerang, Stix always comes back, detecting any traps or aliens on his return journey.

With so many unusual manoeuvres possible, there's a lot of comic interaction between Bubba and Stix. In fact, if you leave Bubba standing still for a while, he starts to use Stix in amusingly silly ways. These include doing a tap-dance routine, balancing Stix on his nose and playing him like a flute – complete with appropriate sound FX!

Surprise, surprise

There's little opportunity to goof around, though, as the horizontally scrolling levels are full of enemies and nasty surprises. An area of the screen may look safe enough, but step into it and a previously stationary rock may start rolling towards you. The game has been

designed so that you have to negotiate a number of small traps and puzzles in order to reach the activation area of the major puzzle that's blocking your path. With so many hazards to deplete Bubba's energy, you need to look out for extra lives, restart points and vitality top-ups – which appear as a small monster holding a medical case!

No less than eleven varied levels take the two heroes through all sorts of alien landscapes and buildings. These include a derelict starship, the mechanical interior of a volcano, a traffic jam in the sky (where Bubba jumps on the roofs of space vehicles), some underwater levels, the subway (with Bubba on top of a speeding train) and an alien zoo. All of these feature a parallax scrolling effect to add depth to the backdrops and – on

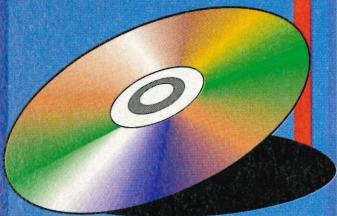
Mega-CD – are introduced by stunning cartoon animation sequences.

As you can see, *Bubba 'n' Stix* is not just another platform adventure, but looks set to take the genre to new heights of playability and variety. Due to appear on Mega Drive and Mega-CD in early '94, this is yet another game that should make the name "Core" stick in your mind.



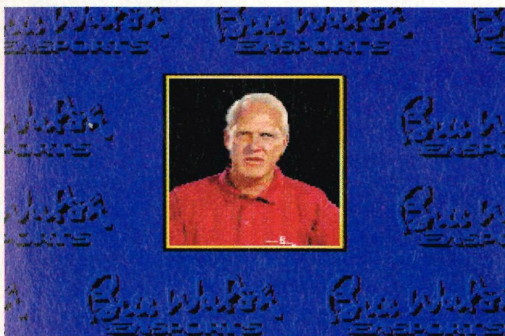
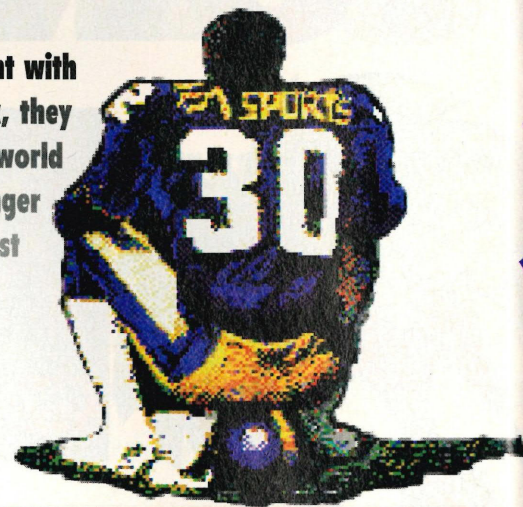
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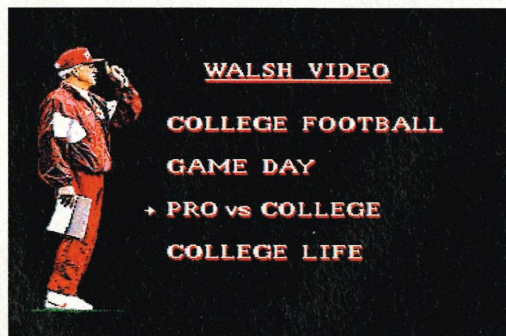


DEBUT DISCS

Electronic Arts just seem to be going from strength to strength these days. Not content with producing the majority of the consoles' best sports titles through their Sports Network, they are further consolidating their position in the market with a well-timed lunge into the world of the Mega-CD. With top titles like *NHL 94*, *Bill Walsh College Football* and *Powermonger* nearing readiness, Dave Perry was invited up the M3 with the honour of being the first person outside of Electronic Arts to see how two of the games were shaping up.



Bill talks! American football guru, Bill Walsh lectures the masses on how to approach and cope with every aspect of the game. This section will be a favourite with gridiron fans.



Take your choice. Old Bill is ready to impart to you solid advice based on his years in the game. I chose *College Life* but there was nothing about home-brew or dating cheerleaders.

American Football games are not something that you would immediately expect to see on the Mega-CD, but this December the market looks set to be flooded with them. One of the first could be *Bill Walsh College Football* from EA, a great game that provided the engine later used in *Madden NFL '94*. A first-ever preview was certainly the order of the day as PR man Dave Wilson and I reminisced over our epic battle in the first ever *Power Challenge*.

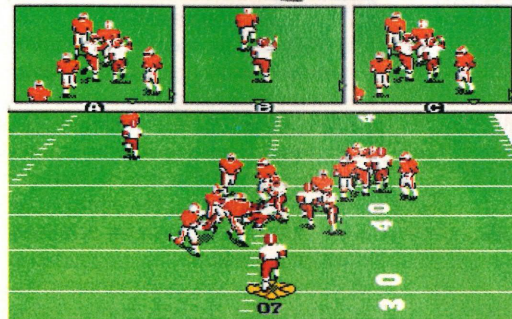
Off to a flying start, *Bill Walsh* loads up with a low-down funky track complete with wah-wah guitars and catchy synth hook. This certainly wasn't on the Mega Drive version and only confirms in my mind that silver-haired Bill is certainly a whole lot cooler than that dough-boy John. Seriously though, the sound on the CD is a vast improvement and anybody who doesn't hook this up to stereo speakers will certainly be missing out on a bit of a treat, not just for the music but for the speech (which I'll talk about later) and the great in-play sound effects.

The first thing you notice when playing the game is how little it has changed from the Mega Drive version. It uses the same realistic, lower-to-the-pitch perspective and large sprites and is no faster than its 16-bit predecessor. There are no new moves, the game still supports four-way play and most of the referee and crowd screens are exactly the same. The big difference, however, is in the atmosphere created by the great new crowd sound effects. All the way

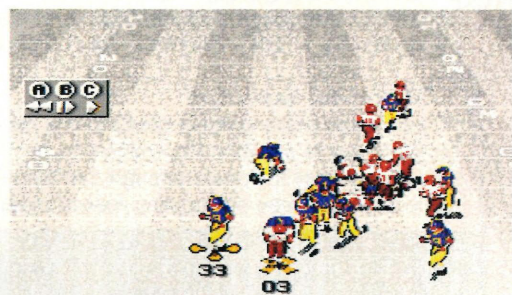
through the game there is a constant buzz with the spectators permanently chattering and whistling, and the solid thuds of impact that you get from the players make your hair stand on end. Also the play-calls from the quarterback are crystal clear. Small details, I admit, but important to the game's fans.

So far, these small tweaks may be viewed in two ways. As a plus to those who enjoyed the original and just want a slightly glossier helping of the same, or a bit disappointing to others who had hoped for something revolutionary on their shiny new machines. But be fair, what more could you do to an American football game?

I'll tell you what. You can give real football fans a real treat by including copious amounts of video footage from the great coach himself on all aspects of the sport. No, I'm not joking, *Bill Walsh* appears in person on this CD in a section specially dedicated to those impresarios who want to push their knowledge just that little bit further. Simply select from an endless array of categories and sub-categories and sit back as Bill appears on screen and casually chats away on everything from fourth-quarter strategies to how to choose a college. He imparts both sound playing and tactical advice as well as career guidance, which is quite amusing as it allows you to understand more about the background of the sport and how important it is in American society. The speech is very clear and each little section is surprisingly long and detailed. It will, I'm sure, provide a real treat for keen followers of



Out on the field *Bill Walsh* delivers quality football action and an impressive array of moves. I could notice no real difference from the Mega Drive version other than the crowd effects.



"Get him! It's a snowy day in...wherever we are and number 3 is making a desperate attempt to get away from the horde of defencemen who are looking to grind him into the slush." Excellent, these reverse-angle replays.

Apart from this, *Bill Walsh College Football* has gone through all the usual face-lifts that you would expect from a CD conversion, with improved loading and static screens, and is simply a deluxe version of its little brother. Even with so much competition appearing in the next few months, this could be the one to keep an eye out for if you are a CD-owning football nut. Look out for a full review in the next issue.

Bill Walsh College Football CD

Powermonger CD

I remember Powermonger from those halcyon days spent as an Amiga journalist. I remember the hype, I remember the impatient wait, and I remember all the late nights I spent conquering obscure worlds in my games room. I must say though, how disappointed I was with the game when it appeared on the Mega Drive. Games like this so rarely transfer successfully across to cart, as the joystick is usually far too clumsy a control method for products of this intricacy and the Sega Mouse seems to have done a remarkable disappearing act. However, recognising all these problems, EA promised to provide the answers in their Mega-CD version, so with eager anticipation I was looking forward to seeing how my old favourite was bearing up in its new revamped form.

For those who don't know the story behind Powermonger, you are cast as the leader of a displaced tribe, newly arrived in uncharted territory. Each territory is an individual world in its own right and your job is to take your ill-prepared band of warriors and form alliances with the other tribes that live on the island or if you feel like it, wage war on them (far more fun). The spoils of war may bring you new weapons, food and townships in which to settle. You can invent more lethal instruments of destruction by using the raw materials provided by the land around your settlement, recruit men from conquered villages into your ranks and even farm to provide food for your armies that are away fighting. The whole point is to become as strong as possible so that eventually you can destroy all the other tribes and rule the whole territory before moving on to conquer new worlds.

Programmed by Bullfrog, the perspective is very similar to that of Populous, although the lands are far more vividly rendered, with animals wandering across them, and birds flying squawking into the air when disturbed. The seasons change visibly and aurally, with flowers growing in spring, trees losing their leaves in autumn, and snow driving down in winter. The level of computer logic and intelligence is very high, making this a thinking game as each character has an occupation, level of intellect and age which must be allowed for when making your grand designs on world domination.

By now you should have the general gist of the game, so what does the Mega-CD version have to offer that the others don't?

Converted for CD in Leeds by Sprytes, the same company who did the Mega Drive conversion (although a different team was used), the game itself has differed very little from the original. There are still 195 worlds to complete, although now they are slightly larger. It seems they were condensed on the Mega Drive version, as was the playing area. The play screen on the new CD version is now 30% larger and back to the original size of the PC and Amiga versions, giving a far more detailed view of your kingdom and taking away some of the cramped feeling that accompanied the Mega Drive conversion. The other big amendment to the main playing area is the repositioning of the icon menus: these are now placed in a row along the bottom of the screen as opposed to their previous positions to the left and right of the play area. This makes selection with the joystick far more easier and speeds up the gameplay no end as you no longer have to fumble around trying to select a desired command while your men are getting their backsides walloped in battle. A very welcome improvement, this.

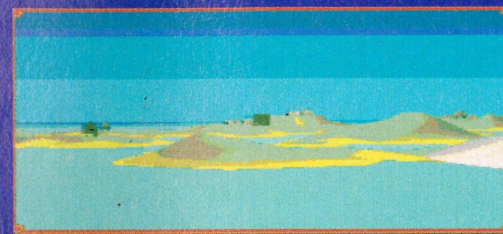
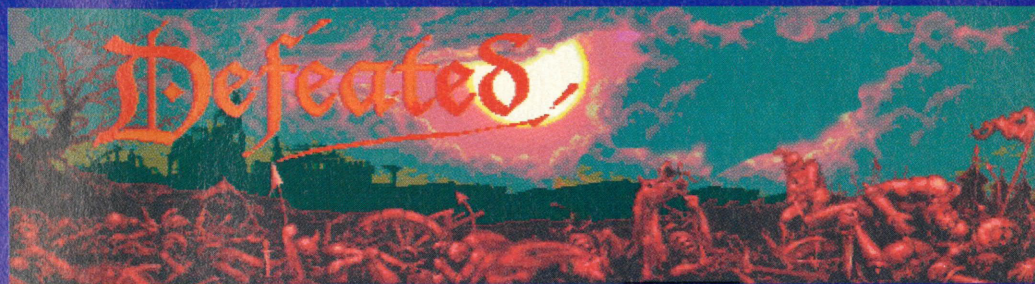
Whilst the core logic has remained pretty much the same, the basic presentation in the main screen area has undergone a few little tweaks for the CD. Firstly, there is now a pop-up map upon which you can move your armies about and give orders. This saves a lot of time faffing about on the main playing area and gives



The generals in the new *Powermonger* are far more detailed and even move about when selected. These two are arguing over whose turn it is to rape and pillage.



The pop-up map is a new feature of this CD conversion. It certainly makes life a whole lot easier and allows you to play the game without being slowed down by screen updates.



The fly-by screens at the start of every world are a very impressive addition to the game and help to set the scene nicely as you begin to plan your strategy and prepare for the battle ahead.

you an instant and concise overview of the game. If you want, you can even play from here, although that would mean missing many of the dramatic actions of your characters and the beautiful scenery like waterfalls and forests.

Whilst we're on the subject of beauty, the second most noticeable change in the main screen is the improved rendering of the area around the world table. The backgrounds are both vivid and dramatic and the new generals have changed in appearance and are now far more realistic and rugged looking and even move about whilst you play. This may at first sound superfluous but it all helps to set the atmosphere and when you are commanding more than one general and his troops it is easy to see who is selected as they will be animated whilst the others stand still. Good eh? But that's not the end of it. If you decide you want to move the perspective of your game view about a bit, see a village from another angle, then not only does the world table move but now the whole room around it changes perspective with it, including the generals – very clever.

Probably the most exciting of the new features on this version of *Powermonger* is the wonderfully smooth fly-by at the beginning of each world. Very PGA Tour Golf, this: before you begin your conquest you are given a swooping aerial guide around the island, including castles, towns, and waterfalls. More cosmetic than anything, I'm not really convinced as to how much practical use this is, but it's a great touch and helps to set the scene wonderfully, and when you finally complete the whole game, instead of weeping like Alexander you can enjoy a complete fly-by of all your conquered kingdoms in sequence. Hurrah!

When it comes to setting the scene, of course the Mega-CD is perfectly at home and the new intro and

Over, scary screens like this all help to give the CD version of *Powermonger* a fierce atmosphere. There is no doubting that you lost this one as your men lie bleeding about you.



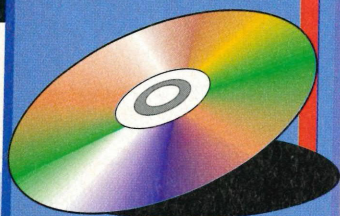
You'll like this. As you move around the world you're attempting to conquer, the general and the room he's stood in changes position too. This has no real bearing on the gameplay but is a new feature that probably took an awful long time to program.

Intro screens to *Powermonger* are quite stunning. Rendered by fine artists, as opposed to computer artists, they are expectedly lush. The death screen after you have been defeated is wonderfully gory, with horses writhing in agony and wounded soldiers staggering about in front of you. There is no doubt about the carnage your bad decision-making has caused.

The only element sadly missing from the game was the breathing of the generals. This was one of my favourite parts of the Amiga version, with the breath hastening if you were in trouble and giving you that nice feeling of panic and urgency. At the moment that has not been included in the game as it is feared that it might slow the action down – but following my concern, it might still appear in the finished version.

A thinking game for closet tyrants, *Powermonger* really is a great game. Whether or not it will appear so to CD owners remains to be seen, but with the Mega-CD fast becoming the console market's answer to the PC I'd be surprised if it was received with anything but open arms. We can expect to see the finished version on Mega-CD hitting the shelves in December at £39.99.

POWER



Ladies and gentlemen! In the red corner, we have the current wrestling champions Acclaim with their new game Royal Rumble. And in the blue corner, it's the challengers... erm, Acclaim with Rage In The Cage on Mega-CD!

accclaim seem to have gone wrestling mad. You'd think they'd be bruised and battered from all those suplexes and legdrops in their latest Mega Drive smash, Royal Rumble (reviewed in this Mega Power). But no, they're climbing back in the ring for more in their second WWF licence, and Mega-CD debut, Rage In The Cage.

Incorporating all the razzmatazz and action of The World Wrestling Federation, this game is being billed by Acclaim as the biggest and meanest wrestling title to date. Rage In The Cage features 20 of the WWF stars, ranging from "Raging Randy Ramon" to "The IRS" and the most lethal of wrestlers, that man of death "The Undertaker".

Following an impressive full-motion-video intro showing the real WWF stars in action, the game itself uses wrestler sprites much like those in Royal Rumble – no bad thing. For extra realism, sampled stereo sound has been added so you feel that you're actually at a wrestling match. Similar to Q sound, found on CD games such as Ecco The Dolphin, the stereo gives a boost to the meaty sound FX, panning them deliciously from speaker to speaker.

The game options bear a striking resemblance to those in Royal Rumble. You choose between normal one-on-one bouts, tag-teams or go all-out with a no-holds-barred brawl that starts and ends in absolute mayhem. Of course, the usual antics that go on in everyday wrestling have been integrated into Rage In The Cage. There's as much action outside of the ring as there is inside, and the referee will probably catch a few blows as he tries to control the often out-of-control wrestlers.

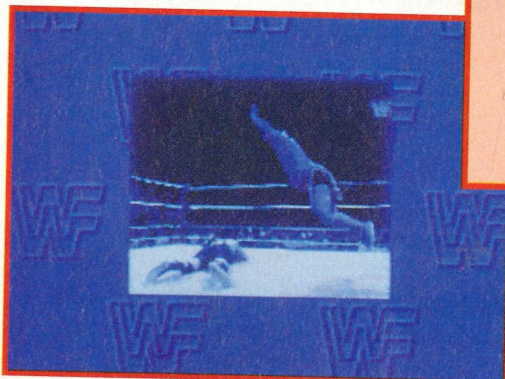
Each of the 20 wrestlers in Rage In the Cage has his own unique special move. For example, check out The Undertaker's deadly Tombstone Piledriver, guaranteed to whack huge chunks off your opponent's energy. Every superstar's winning move has been incorporated to make victory that bit sweeter. Apart from all the special moves, illegal manoeuvres have been added. Dirty tricks include the infamous eye-gouge and the continuous fighting out of the ring.

The extra memory that compact discs allow (up to a massive 600 megabytes – the equivalent of 300 16Mbit carts!) means that more graphics, sound and action than ever before has been squeezed into this WWF product.

Rage In The Cage is all set to instantly establish Acclaim in the fast-improving Mega-CD market. It's due to hit the streets in November, with a price yet to be confirmed, so prepare yourself for some madcap tomfoolery. And finally, to quote Acclaim themselves, "Those of a squeamish nature had better look away – the Rage In The Cage is coming to a Mega-CD near you!"



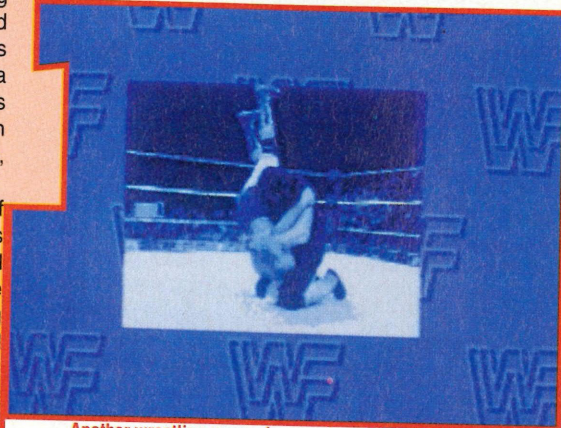
The two wrestlers going hell for leather, as usual. Samu is inflicting a rather harsh kick right into the stomach of a hapless Kamala – rather him than me.



A screenshot of the introduction sequence from *Rage In The Cage*. Using full motion video, the intro shows how real wrestling is done. Smart, eh?



More action showing these two heavyweights of the wrestling world. This time the Big Boss Man is out for revenge after the total mulling in the last bout.



Another wrestling move shown using FMV. After this impressive sequence the game then goes into the full action of out-an-out wrestling, so get ready for those special moves.



Yokozuna inflicting some serious pain on the Big Boss Man, by means of a weighty slam to his rib-cage. Yokozuna is the present World Champion, and using these moves it's no surprise.



One of the many special moves featured in *Rage In The Cage*. Getting to grips with the special moves is a process of "the more you play, the more you find out".

THE RAGE

One, two,

three

...Submit!

WIN, WIN, WIN VIDEOS GALORE IN OUR GREAT ACCLAIM GIVE-AWAY

five "Invasion Of The Body Slammers" videos

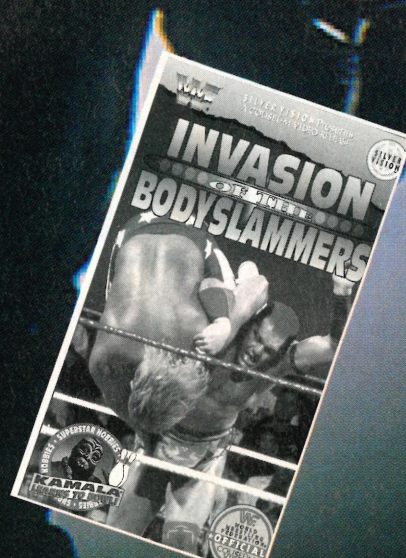
five "Brett Hart's Greatest Hits" videos

You'll never have to lose a fight again, when you win one of these superb videos. Direct action and tips from the greats of the WWF are featured in these action-packed tapes. All you have to do to stand a chance of winning one is simply answer this question:

Q. What is the real name of that wrestling giant "Big Daddy"?

Send your entries on a postcard to: **Rage In The Cage Comp, Mega Power, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 1NF.**

All entries must be received by December 31 at the latest.



PREVIEW



THE INCREDIBLE

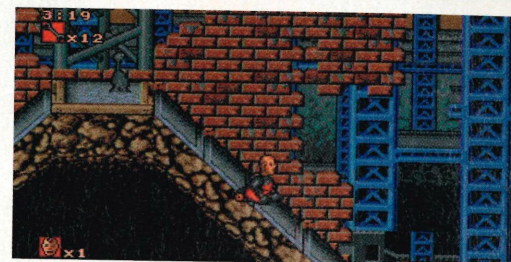


See that fibre-glass dummy flying through the windscreen of a crashing car in those TV public information films where Jane Asher warns you to wear seatbelts? Well, that's you, that is... That's you in Acclaim's latest licence, **The Incredible Crash Dummies**.

The funny thing about consoles is that you can turn any object, inanimate or not, into a game. Such is the case with **The Incredible Crash Dummies**. Starting out life in car-crash experiments, the Dummies went on to appear in the Volvo advertisements before being made into toys by Mattel. And now they're about to star in their first adventure on the Mega Drive.

Those mortal wonders at Acclaim have brought to life one of the Dummies, even to the extent of adopting him with the rather subtle name of Spin. So, what's the story behind all this madness? Well, to cut a long story short, the Dummies' creator – the supposed genius Dr Zub – has been kidnapped by one of his own inventions, the rogue robot known as the Junkman. The reasoning behind Junkman's tomfoolery is that he is intent on discovering the secrets behind the design of his own extraordinary T-1000 armour. You guessed it, the only things capable of saving the day are the Crash Dummies.

All the levels that Spin must travel through are in some way mechanically linked. The action changes throughout the game, ranging from left-to-right scrolling obstacle course to a multidirectional platform game with a wide range of special features and bonuses. For example, you'll take a car through a bonus stage where, in order to



One of the comical aspects about this game is the quick loss of limbs that the Crash Dummies encounter. Here you witness Spin trying to survive with only one arm and no legs.

achieve maximum points, you have to jump the numerous hurdles standing in your way. The journey starts off in a test area, where Spin has to take on and avoid all the mechanical deformities. The levels are diverse, ranging from car scrap yards to robot factories, and containing robotic rottweilers and even rogue Crash Dummies.

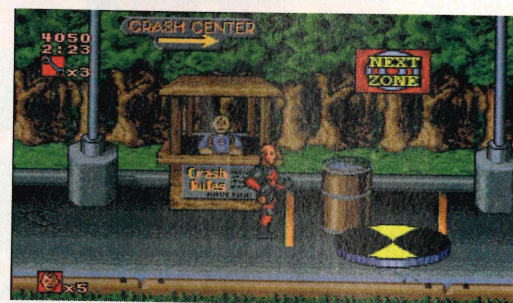
Acclaim have added a touch of humour to this game. The strange baddies bring a slight chortle, but the funniest moment is saved for Spin. When he gets hit, he loses a limb; firstly a leg, then another, followed by his arms until he's just a bouncing torso! Get hit in this state and you lose one of five lives. Luckily you can replenish Spin's limbs by collecting screwdrivers.

The only defence Spin has apart from jumping or crouching is the spanners which he can throw at baddies. The other important factor is that on each level you're competing against a time limit. To make the game even harder, no continues have been given: so when you die, no matter where you are, it's back to the start.

The Incredible Crash Dummies will be smashing headlong into your Mega Drive in January '94, and looks set to be yet another game from the Acclaim stable destined to do very well – particularly as it'll retail at a very reasonable £39.99. All that's left to say is go break a leg!



On the first stage of **Crash Dummies**, Spin has to avoid motorcycles, cars and anything else that Acclaim have chosen to throw at him. Hop to it, mate!



Bounce onto this circle to enter into the next level. Time is the essence as if you don't complete it within the limit you'll either lose points or a life.



Jumping is a movement that Spin must get used to, as he'll often have to leap out of unpleasant situations. This second level is charged with absolute brutality to Crash Dummies.

Be a real dummy

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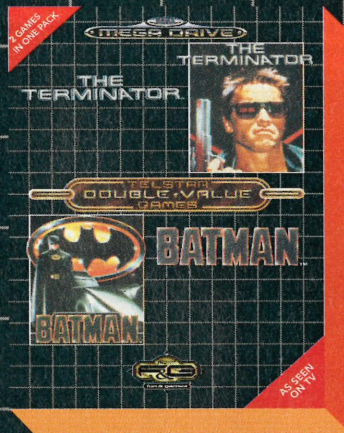
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ten **Mega-CD Discases** to be won

There'll be no more juggling your Mega-CD games when you want to take 'em to your mate's house. Not with the new Mega-CD Discase there won't. You can carry up to six game CDs in this mega-stylish device which offers a 65% reduction in storage space. Discs are held in special Disclam inserts which protect them without any contact with the playing surface.

Normally a Discase would set you back a very reasonable £9.99, but if you're strapped for cash after buying a Mega-CD, you could win one of ten Discases we're giving away in this easy-to-enter competition. To stand a chance, answer this compact question:

Q How many
CDs can
a Discase
hold?

Write your answer on the back of a postcard and send it to Discase Competition, MEGA POWER, Paragon Publishing, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 1NF. All entries must be stored in our postbox by 31 December



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the review

Mega Drive or Mega-CD. Look here first to see if it's on your machine.

A bit of background to familiarise yourself with what sort of game we're reviewing. You're bound to find something here that you didn't already know, so this is the best place to start.

Percentage, here's the rating we gave it.

Where applicable, we tell you a bit more about games similar to the one we're reviewing.

If all you want to know is what we think about the game, this is where you should start. Each of us has our own gaming likes and dislikes, and it's here we can let rip. Our strict reviewing policy means every one of us must justify our opinion to the others.

We get deep in the pixels of a game and try to convey the action by showing close-ups from the game. Here you could see anything from a series of slams to the demise of General Ortega.



One picture in each review will have numbers scattered over it. Using these, we can go even more in-depth explaining elements of the game. Each number corresponds to a numbered caption near the picture.

Instead of blathering on for thousands of words explaining every single element in the game, we give you pictures instead. After all, a picture tells a thousand words, and with the amount of pictures we use, you'll be getting the equivalent of a magazine's worth of text for every review. Beneath each picture, we tell you exactly what's going on and what we think about it.

No, we won't be pulling some strange facial expression in the hope that you can work it out (that's so Eighties...). Each picture fulfils two purposes: it tells you who's written the comment, and what they thought of the game. Red (hot!) means "I think the game's great". Green (neutral) says "It was fun, but I wouldn't buy it". Finally, the blue (cold) face says "I wouldn't even recommend this to that annoying kid in MacDonald's". Any game with a blue face on it should be approached with trepidation.

Here we give you the hard facts. Read this and the personal comments to get a quick view of the game.

the ratings

A comparison with other games you might consider buying instead.

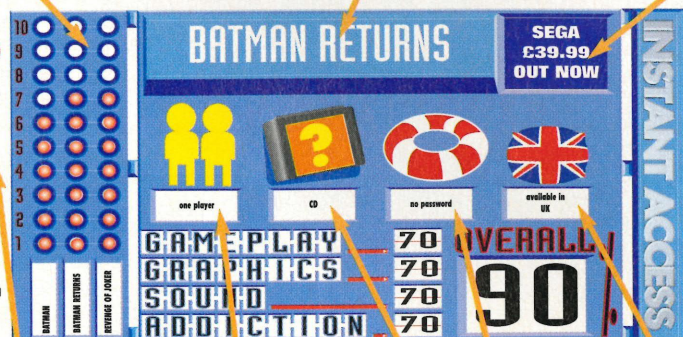
Game name.

Who it's from, how much it is, and when it's coming out.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"A brave attempt at bringing the caped crusader to the small screen. Unfortunately the jerky animation poor collision detection render this cart virtually unplayable. This game makes even Adam West appear believable."



A Final verdict from the MPs. This is a conclusive statement based on all of our feelings about the game. You'd be well advised to heed this.

How many players can partake in the action.

How big the cart is (not applicable to CD games).

If there's a save option, how it works and what it saves.

Where in the world it's available.

GAMEPLAY

Takes into account how the game feels. Is it fun to play? Was it difficult to get into? How original is the design?

GRAPHICS

Looks at animation, use of colour, definition, variety and functionality. Ultimately, does it look as good as it should do?

SOUND

Are the tunes and sound effects any good, and, secondly, do they suit the game and build a convincing atmosphere?

ADDITION

Most games are fun initially, but how long will you be playing it? Is it the sort of game you'd play months after buying it?

OVERALL

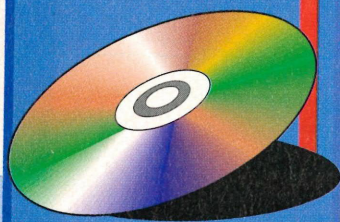
- 0-30% - Don't bother. A load of rubbish and serious damage to street-cred.
- 40-50% - A very risky purchase. Don't blame us if you get a dog.
- 60-80% - A decent game, but may only be suited to certain players.
- 90-100% - Everyone will love this. We'd lash out the cash for it.



THE MEGA BLAST

This is the ultimate accolade any game can receive. Only games that score above 90% are awarded this supreme honour and should definitely be near the top of your shopping list.

REVIEW



Microcosm

**MEGA
BLAST!**

Microcosm is without doubt wonderfully original. It's not every day – well, never in fact – that a game such as this appears. The wait is over as we now bring you the world exclusive of Microcosm, three years in the making.

Psygnosis, the developers of that frustrating yet marvellous game Lemmings have been in the business for over seven years now. Back in 1986, they were publishing products for the emerging 16-bit platforms while others were still concentrating on 8-bit computers. It is with this foresight that Psygnosis have established themselves as a company renowned for innovative, ground-breaking games.

Following on from their numerous successes on formats such as Amiga, Mega Drive and Super Nintendo, Psygnosis are now concentrating heavily on producing CD-ROM games. The ability of CD to hold such a large amount of data enables Psygnosis to take gaming one stage further. Using state-of-the-art computer equipment, incorporating custom fractal model generators which create complex 3-D images, they have created Microcosm.

The game's inspiration undoubtedly can be credited to that rather splendid and innovative film, *The Fantastic Voyage*. This followed Donald Pleasance and a crew trying to save a president by destroying a blood clot lodged in his brain. The voyage was a race against time and the film became a massive success, and is still shown regularly on TV.

In the same vein, Microcosm has micro-sub-

Entering a human body by launching a microscopic ship into the bloodstream would be a wondrous step in the development of medical science. Yet Psygnosis have managed to do just that and put it all onto Mega-CD. Steve Bough followed the route from his oesophagus to the stomach and wound up in his lower intestine.

mersibles, again inside a president's body but this time trying to destroy the enemy. If one had to describe a genre for this game, I would be forced to state that it was a shoot-'em-up, but it's far more than that. Within the game, there are over five areas of the body and a multitude of arteries to be explored. Take the wrong path and you could find yourself taking a long route to the end of the area. All infections must be dispelled from the body, and added emphasis is placed on not harming the president.

The

such as the submersible going down have been added, only lasting for two or three seconds, but they are both excellent and again enhance the game.

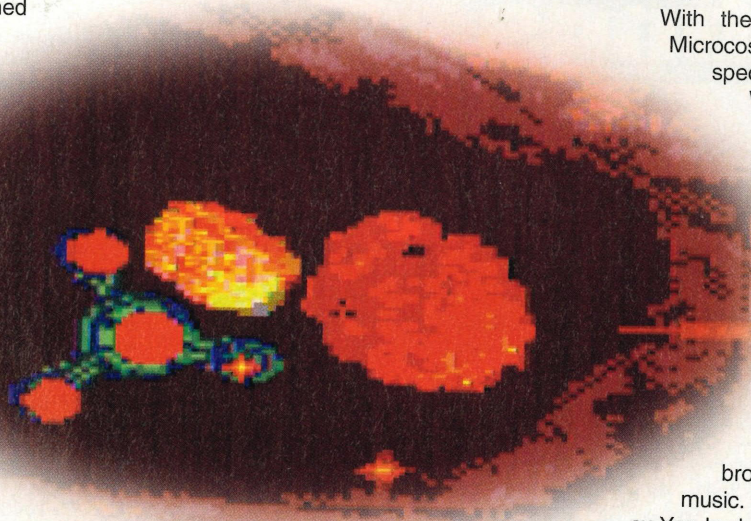
The question can be asked, is this another shoot-'em-up based inside a body? Well, essentially no. There is lots of shooting to be done, but at least this game has a reason. Destroying anti-bodies and infections has a purpose, and for any young and old player alike, this game provides educational information about the way the body works!

With the years of work that has gone into Microcosm, one would expect the technical specifications to be of a very high standard.

Well, they are indeed: over 500Mb of graphic and sound data have been imported onto the CD. Silicon Graphics imagery has been used for the introduction sequence, making it look as though you were watching *Total Recall*. The submersible changes with different areas of the body, and has a wide variety of weapons and movement.

Finally, Psygnosis, sick of hearing the same old demented soundtracks that accompany games, brought in a major star to record the music. That person was none other than the ex-Yes keyboard wizard, Rick Wakeman. A major star in the Seventies, he went on to record with band called GTR, and has recently been playing his keyboards with the likes of System 7 and The Orb.

The influx of more and more quality CDs onto the ever-increasing market is a sign that at last developers see great potential in the sale and growth of CD machines. With titles such as Microcosm leading the way in concept games, the future looks very bright.



introduction sequences are, of course, fantastic: more so than usual, mainly due to the expertise of the Psygnosis staff, and the sheer time that has been spent on the game. Adding irregularity to Microcosm has been achieved by giving the game very fast video cuts. This inflicts confusion on the player and enhances the effect that it's actually you inside the president. Sequences



a high-quality shoot-em-up that becomes increasingly addictive, but not a classic.

OVERALL %
90



We have been getting some rather fine games into the office lately. What makes me a great deal happier is that a lot of the quality games we have been receiving have been on CD. We'd all heard about how long Microcosm had taken to develop, and the serious amount of work that had gone into it, but we weren't sure if it would be any good. From the introduction sequence, which is brilliant, the game zooms straight into the action and you're off.

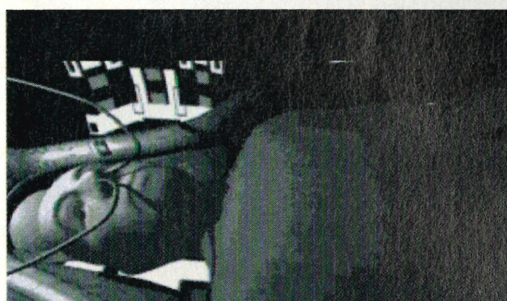
Guiding a submersible inside a human body is quite bizarre. Starting off in the cephalic vein, you'll instantly encounter antibodies and various types of enemy virus and infection. The graphics are deliciously smooth and the game doesn't suffer from any jerking, which is a rarity. Between areas are small examples of the graphic imagery used. This keeps you informed of your progress. For example, when you die you see the pilot of the ship deceased. The soundtrack is good, which makes a change. I'm always very critical of the nauseating music which accompanies most games, but this is different: Rick Wakeman's done a good job.

I could sit here all day and tell you how good the graphics and gameplay are. The best thing for me to suggest is that you go to your local store and check this game out. I assure you, you won't be disappointed!

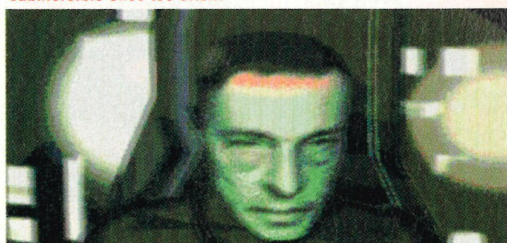
STEVE



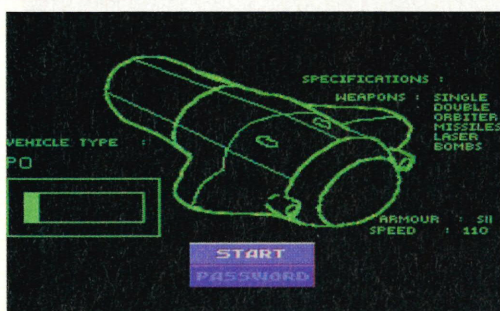
The second level shows alien infections shooting straight towards you at a top speed.



The pilot is on a life-support machine after crashing his micro-submersible once too often.

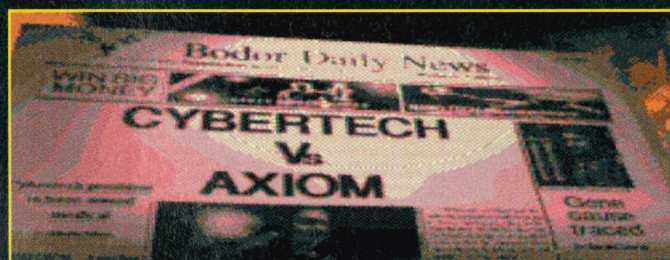


My favourite bit in the game, this brief sequence appears when the ship blows up.



Blueprints of the submersible. This is shown at the start of the game, and shows the innards of the craft you will be piloting inside the president's body.

THE STORY



Unlike most computer games which have rather escapist story lines, Microcosm has a strong, informative narrative. The basis of the game is that a corporate war has been raging between Cybertech and Axiom. The latter believed that Cybertech, the largest

corporation, had caused the untimely death of their former president.

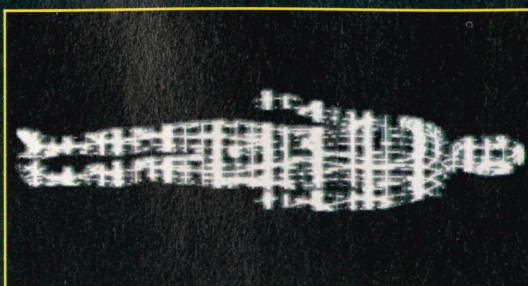
Axiom's cunning plan for revenge involved implanting a miniaturised brain manipulation droid into Cybertech's President Korsby. Using this, they could manipulate every decision he would make, and no-one at Cybertech would know - not even Korsby.

Watching from the operating theatre, Nurse Slater observed intently.



The routine tissue regeneration had gone according to plan, but surely Korsby should be in recovery by now, something was wrong and Slater and Vice President James Ferguson knew it. Before it was too late, a countering operation had to be performed.

The micro-submersibles were prepared, but neither Ferguson or the pilot were sure what they would find in there. It would be a world unlike any other they had witnessed, and by far the most dangerous mission they would ever attempt.



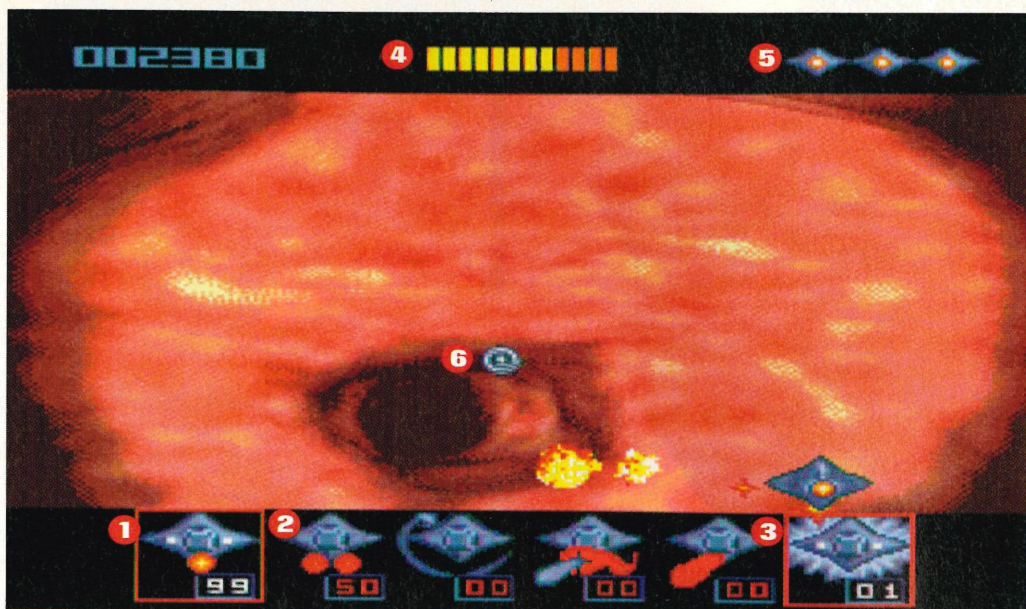


Microcosm is not quite the game most people expected, but it's still a good old blast. The 3-D backdrops look truly stunning, making you instinctively sway and duck for cover as you're whipped round veins and other bodily tubes. Of course, the way these graphics are constantly pumped directly off the CD means there's very little interaction with them. You can't choose which route you take, as this would inevitably have interrupted the action as the CD's laser moved to the right section of the disc. This is okay for RPGs like *Dune*, but it would have ruined the frenetic shoot-'em-up in *Microcosm*.

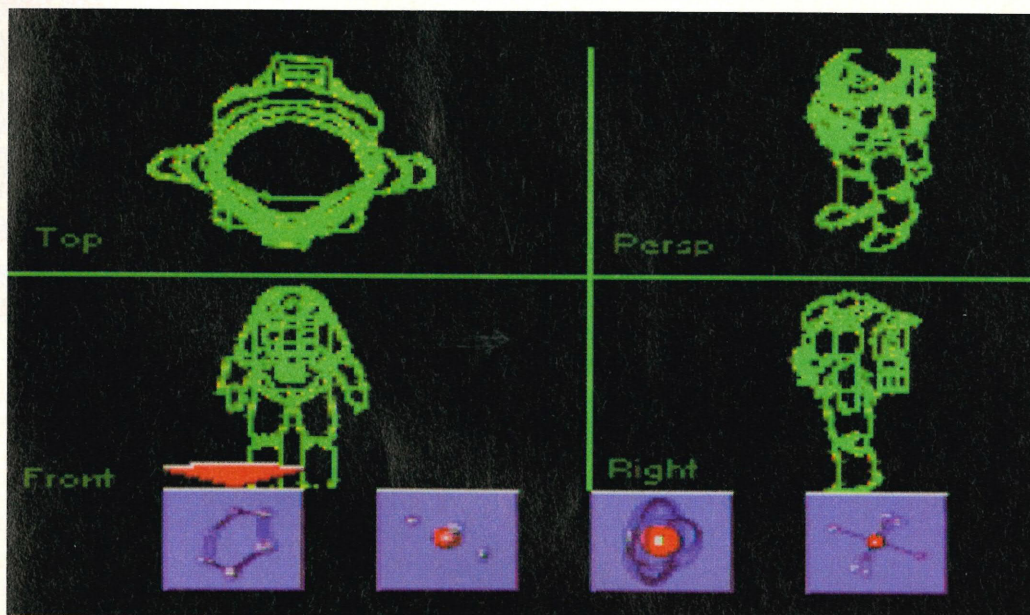
Thus the backdrops are largely a cosmetic enhancement, not being affected or having any effect on your actions. Take away this graphical glitz and what you're left with is a pretty straightforward 3-D blast-'em-up. Not that there's anything wrong with that – it's all really playable and the promise of more amazing video sequences as you progress keeps you hooked.

Though hardly the mind-blowingly innovative CD title we had been led to believe, *Microcosm* is an aesthetically stunning piece of software. It's not just pretty, but pretty addictive too. Just don't expect too much and you'll enjoy it.

PHIL



- 1 On this setting you will get standard fire power. This basically never runs out, but is not as effective as others mentioned in this text.
- 2 This is much more like it. Collecting items will give you extra and more improved weapons. This, for example, gives you double fire, much needed to fight the infections.
- 3 These bombs come in very short supply, but are hugely effective. They are worth saving for later stages, particularly the end-of-level guardians.
- 4 The all-important energy bar. When you first start expect this to rocket down as you get blasted from all sides, but the better you get, the higher it stays.
- 5 You'll start *Microcosm* with three lives. You won't be given any continues, so you'll have to make sure that you don't die too quickly.
- 6 This object that is fast approaching the submersible is a collectible item. This will increase your fire power, which is much needed in this game.



More blueprints of things you will find in the game. Below is the password. Instead of normal passwords, you'll be given medical symbols which you have to remember by drawing them on a piece of paper.



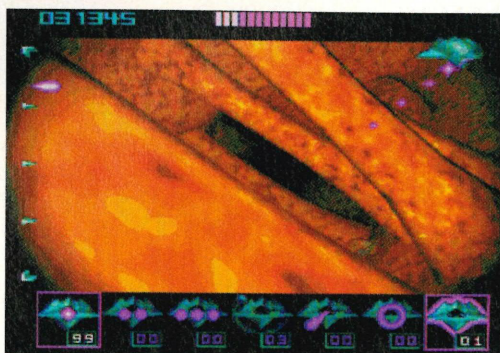
Entering the bowels, the micro-submersible has to contend with loads of enemies. On the weapons front, this doesn't look too hot for our luckless pilot. If you catch the walls of the bowels, the ship will go astray, so critical flying is called for. Good job the pilot's not drunk. Mind you, I bet they don't get tiny police subs going round doing breath tests!



The pilot of the submersible is dead, and unfortunately for you, you're responsible for his death. I hope you feel bad about it. This bloke probably has a wife and kids with a mortgage...



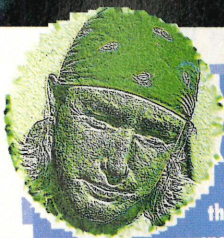
The submersible entering the pod on the second level. Graphically, this is rather wonderful. Back to the old graphic imagery, eh lads?



Zooming through the second level, you'll encounter antibodies, viruses and whatever else sees fit to attack you. After all, the president's body thinks you're an infection too.

Again the graphics speak for themselves on this area. I've personally no idea which part of the body this is meant to be but wherever it is, it sure looks impressive. Beware the viruses and infections that are fast approaching.

Although it often looks like you have a choice of routes, with all the tunnels leading off, the game always drags you down its preset path, no matter how hard you try to avoid it.



With a new-age product like Microcosm, you can never be sure of what to expect when you load up the CD. I'd seen loads of pictures of the game in various mags and received copious numbers of press releases. It looked great, so I was ready to be disappointed.

The game didn't let me down: I was disappointed, initially. At first play I was a little shocked at the basic nature of the gameplay. Very similar to Silpheed in its run-of-the-mill behind-the-ship perspective, you simply make your way along a huge vein shooting everything that comes at you. However, the more you play the better it gets. The backgrounds are very vivid and the screen update extremely smooth, and the gameplay and haddies get progressively faster and tougher the further you get into the game. The guardians are particularly nasty, really testing your joypad dexterity to the full, and strangely enough the game flips from dull to wickedly addictive in a blink of an eye. Much of this addiction comes from a compulsive curiosity to see the next level as you realise that things are only going to get more and more impressive.

The combination of Psygnosis's flamboyant visual style and the vast memory capabilities of the Mega-CD ensures that the intro screens and in-play animations are very, very watchable. And whilst the sound is a little disappointing, the general atmosphere of the game is superbly pitched between frenetic action and inner-body tension.

Microcosm is a high-quality shoot-em-up that becomes increasingly addictive. Not a classic, but a very brave attempt by a company who are surely well-suited to this kind of format.

DAVE



A gaping hole in front of your eyes, but as usual it's blocked by many obstructions. Destroy these before passing through into another hazardous bodily area.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"Microcosm can be described as a cross between *Silpheed* and *Sewer Shark*. It's a straightforward shoot-'em-up, but one that has an original story line, plenty of blasting action and some of the best graphics we've ever seen."

10	○	○	○
9	○	○	○
8	○	○	○
7	○	○	○
6	○	○	○
5	○	○	○
4	○	○	○
3	○	○	○
2	○	○	○
1	○	○	○

SILPHEED

MICROCOSM

SEWER SHARK

MICROCOSM

one player

fast access

passwords available

available in UK

GAMEPLAY	86
GRAPHICS	93
SOUND	82
ADDICTION	89

OVERALL

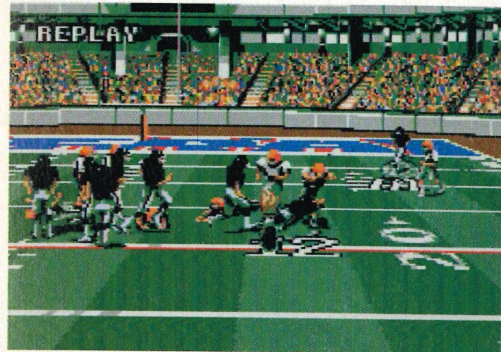
90

%

INSTANT ACCESS

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OUT JAN

REVIEW



Sometimes the tackles are so hard that helmets go flying off. Here, however, it's the ball that's released after being fumbled by the Atlanta player. It's a live ball so whoever dives on it first will gain possession.

As a long-time fan of the San Francisco 49ers, Joe Montana is my sporting hero. Surely one of the greatest quarterbacks of all time, he always seemed to pull out the stops just when it was needed – he was the king of the fourth-quarter comeback. He also managed several career comebacks after terrible injuries: doctors once told him he could never play the game again, but of course he did. Even now he's left the 49ers for the Kansas City Chiefs, I still think he's the greatest.

Joe's career on the Mega Drive has been one of gradual improvement. Following a universally panned debut, his second appearance featured the novelty of a sampled commentary but still played like a brick. It was only in his third title that things improved for a pretty playable game. Even so, Joe's games were always overshadowed by those of the porky commentator John Madden, whose fourth game NFL '94 earned 91% in the last Mega Power.

Not to be outdone, Montana's own fourth game has the advantage of being on Mega-CD, so there's room for video sequences and lots of sampled commentary. It also uses the Mega-CD's graphical scaling capability for its 3-D low-level view of the pitch.

This being an official NFL licence (like the new Madden game), you can play any of the 28 pro teams in one- or two-player exhibition matches, or



It's the Atlanta Falcons versus the Cleveland Browns. The Falcons' quarterback has the ball and is preparing to pass it to the receiver on the right, though he looks well covered.

With three games already to his name on Mega Drive, gridiron hero Joe Montana lines up for his CD debut. Can he score over John Madden and (his old coach) Bill Walsh? Phil King spins his way into the end zone...

a full season. Ten all-time great teams are also available, including Joe's own 1984 49ers.

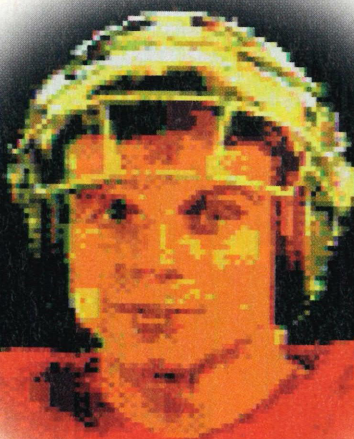
After the kick off, it's "first down and ten" for the offence and they get to flick through the possible plays. Shown three at a time and represented by diagrams, these range from short runs to long passes. Pressing a, b or c selects the play you want, but you can switch to one of the other two plays at the line of scrimmage by calling an audible.

The defence call their plays in a similar way, choosing between various formations and man-to-man or zone coverage. If you're unsure what to go for on offence or defence, you can always ask Joe: he appears in video footage to give you his advice.

Back on the pitch, once the ball is snapped, all the players go hell for leather at each other. Running with the ball, you need to use 360° spins, charges and dives to get past that hungry defence. On passing plays you control the quarterback, flicking between receivers which can all be seen on screen – so there's no need for

Madden-style windows. Perform a great play, or make a huge cockup, and you usually get a piece of commentary afterwards, such as "the quarterback really had his bell rung on that play".

Sega are certainly help this game rings the bells of gridiron fans. With EA's excellent Madden NFL '94 and Bill Walsh College Football both due to appear on CD, Joe Montana certainly faces one of the toughest matches of his career.



Joe Montana NFL Football



- 1 The quarterback stands just behind the centre who snaps the ball to him through his legs. The QB then either hands the ball off to a running back or passes to a receiver.
- 2 The currently selected receiver on a pass play is shown with a grey circle below him. By pressing the B button, you can switch between all the eligible receivers.
- 3 When playing defence, you can toggle between any of your men before the snap. The selected defender is indicated by a grey circle and can be freely controlled.

Joe Montana's Football



Joe may be my hero in real-life American football, but his previous video games have left a lot to be desired. Instead, I must confess to being a dedicated fan of EA's Madden series, the latest one ('94) being the best of all. The tactical depth of those games is still unrivalled by Joe Montana's NFL Football. There are plenty of offensive and defensive plays here to choose from, but flicking through them is fairly confusing as you only get to see three at a time — often it's hard to find the play you want.

Out on the field, things aren't so clear, either. This is particularly the case during passing as it's often difficult to spot your receivers: so flicking between them and getting the pass off within a few seconds is a panicky business. I suppose this sort of pressure on the quarterback is quite realistic, and you do eventually get used to it.

This is a sound American football simulation, though somehow never quite as playable as Madden NFL '94. Where it really scores is in capturing the rough and tumble of the sport. With crunching sound FX and great scaled graphics, you can really feel those tackles — particularly on the close-up action replay. Then, of course, there's the often amusing commentary and the novelty of asking Joe for tactical advice — although when I really needed help, he grinned, "You're on your own on this one!" With all this razzmatazz it's disappointing, then, that nothing much happens when you score a touchdown — you just go straight onto kicking the extra point.

In the main, though, Joe Montana's combines a "big game" atmosphere with decent gameplay. Nevertheless, I'd be tempted to wait for the arrival of Bill Walsh and Madden on CD before I bought this one.

PHIL



Using the various camera angles on the instant replay, you can zoom right in to watch the action in extreme close-up. This effect is made possible by the use of the Mega-CD's graphics scaling.



Joe Montana and John Madden have been going toe-to-toe in the console market for a long, long time now, and poor old Joe always seems to be coming off a very poor second. Could his foray into the CD market put the records straight? Well, when I first loaded this game I thought perhaps it could. The on-screen angles and graphic style of the game is brilliant. I was stunned at how the replays could swoop right in to grass level and place you right amongst the players out on the field, and at the realism of the player animations. Unfortunately, all this realism costs memory and the game can be a bit slow at times. It can also be very confusing out of the park when you try to make plays and the visuals become slightly merged and disconcerting, a little like Core's Thunderhawk.

The commentary throughout the game is great fun. Every play you make is summed up and commented upon by Joe himself, and sometimes he even appears to give you some digitised advice or a good telling off. The stats are also worth commenting on as they are wonderfully presented as bar charts and allow you to ascertain your side's strengths and weaknesses at a single glance, as do the play-book illustrations.

I liked this game a lot. It falls short only because it attempts so much. But at least the CD is being pushed to its limits. I'd rather see more games like this, that at least try to push back boundaries than the rather dull "safe" conversions that are flooding the CD market. Look out for Joe Montana's, my favourite American football game this year.

DAVE

OVERALL %

81

With crunching sound FX and great scaled graphics, you can really feel those tackles



The Dallas Cowboys elect to punt the ball after failing to make first down. The top-left graph is a position and power meter — stop it at the top for the longest kick possible.



The quarterback has unleashed his pass and the action zooms in to watch the elected receiver trying to catch the ball. He should manage this as the defenders aren't near enough to knock it down.

4 The time left in the current quarter. As in real life, the clock only stops if the previous play was an incomplete pass or went out of bounds, or if a time-out is called.

5 The play clock. On offence, you have only 45 seconds to call your play and get it started. If you don't get the play off in time, you're penalised for "delay of game".

6 The end zone. This is the ultimate objective of the offence. Running or successfully passing the ball into here results in a touchdown worth six points, plus the point-after kick.



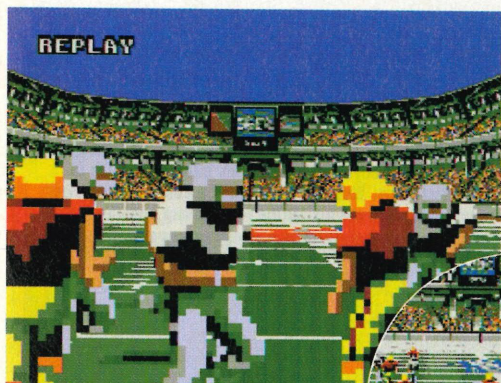
The potent San Francisco 49ers offence lines up with their quarterback shown authentically as number 8, Steve Young. Joe Montana recently left the team to join the Kansas City Chiefs. Even so, he appears in the video sections in his old 49ers gear!



I'm not really a big fan of American football, but even so I still appreciate a good game when I see one. Well unfortunately Joe Montana isn't one of them. It's all very well adding the humorous commentary and flash sequences within the game, but if the game's not very good in the first place, it's hard to make it better. There are some deft touches within this game, take for example the very realistic sound FX and the close-ups given in the action replay. But if you're a fan of the John Madden series, then I think you'll be disappointed with this.

The gameplay is pretty good, but nowhere near as good as it should have been. Unfortunately there's so much stopping and starting that the game became a bit of a pain. The tactical aspect is very sharp, but again suffers from hesitation on the part of the CD. If you adore American football, and can't wait to get your hands on any sort of CD version, take a look at this. But if you start to complain after ten minutes, don't write to me about it, you'll get no sympathy.

STEVE



(Above) The Dallas and San Francisco players are shown battling it out on close-up action replay. No, the colour isn't wrong on your monitor - for some reason, the 49ers' helmets are bright yellow instead of gold. (Right) Niners QB, Steve Young, gets sacked by the Dallas defence for a serious loss of yardage.



(Above) Playing for his new team, Kansas City, Joe Montana is rated five out of five on the team stats. Here he successfully locates a receiver with a long bomb pass. He could well go all the way for a touchdown.



(Left) Philadelphia quarterback, Randall Cunningham, is sacked in his own end zone. Known as a safety, this gives the opponents two points and forces Philadelphia to punt. (Above) The Philadelphia defender grabs hold of the Green Bay receiver, but it's surely too late to stop him diving in for a touchdown.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"With close-up views and thudding sound FX, this captures the hard-hitting feel of real American football to a tee. But whether it'll measure up to the soon-to-be-released CD versions of *Bill Walsh* and *John Madden* is questionable."

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

BILL WALSH

JOE MONTANA NFL

MADDEN NFL '94

JOE MONTANA CD

1-2 players

slow access

save league position

available in UK

GAMEPLAY	80
GRAPHICS	84
SOUND	90
ADDICTION	83

OVERALL

81

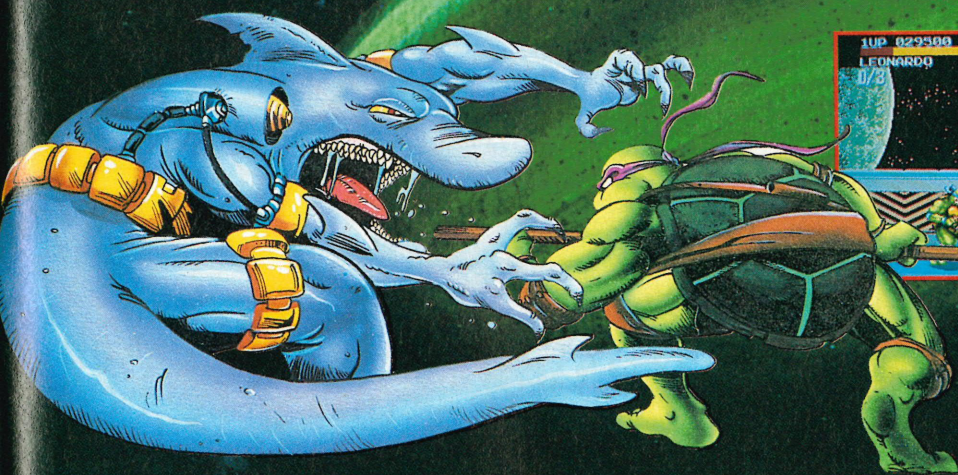
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From
Michaelangelo's
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to Donatello's Futuristic City,
the Turtles transcend time
through to another dimension,
in this, the ultimate
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fighting game.

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS



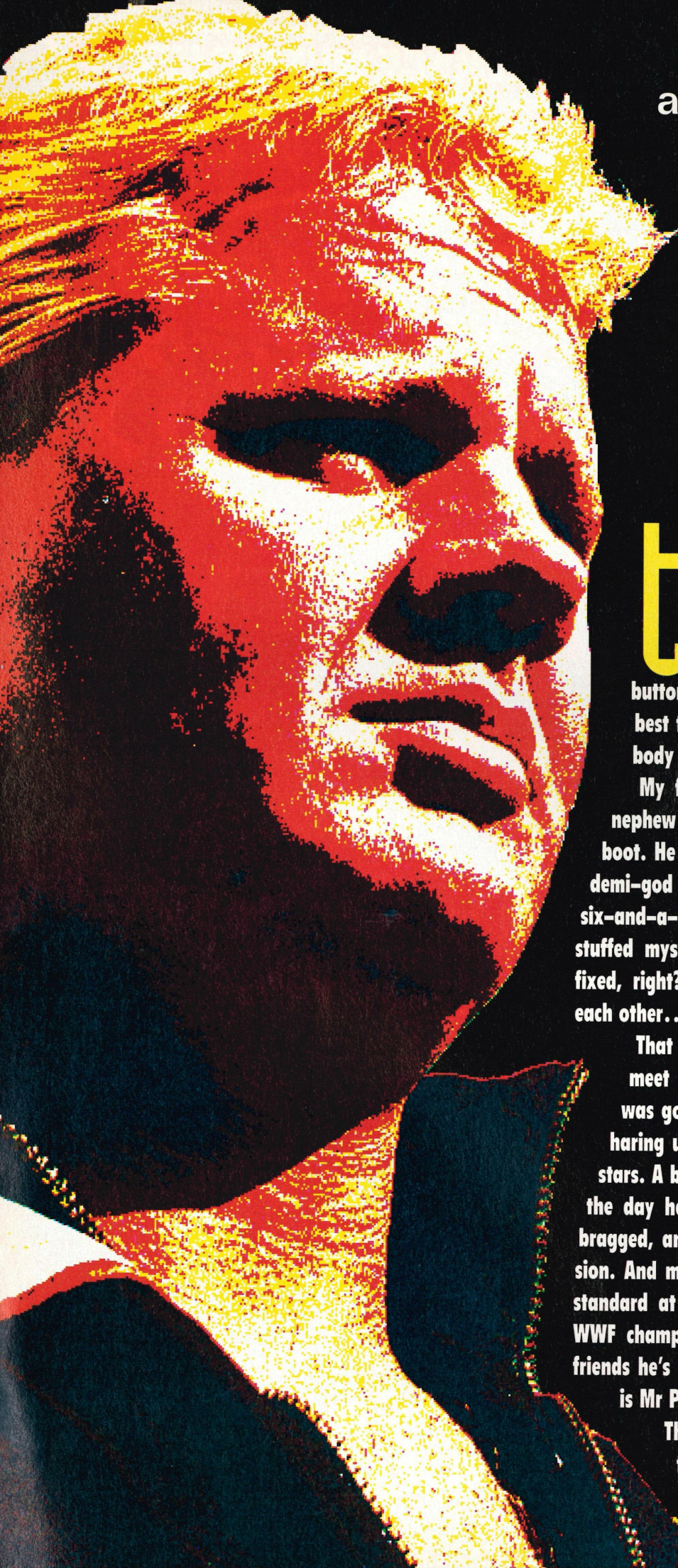
SEGA
MEGA DRIVE

SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM



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When Dave "The Kid" Perry declared himself a fan of *Rage In The Cage*, he didn't know what he was getting into and he was lined up for a meeting with the

mister

The World Wrestling Federation seems to be firmly ensconced in the pages of this month's issue of MEGA POWER. With reviews of *Rage In The Cage* and *Royal Rumble* demanding copious amounts of space and everyone around me frantically pumping their fire-buttons and yelling "a-one, a-two, you're out!", I thought it best to seek further advice on the subject of strangleholds and body slams.

My first port of call was to my three-and-a-half-year-old nephew Kurt, an avid WWF fan and a very good wrestler to boot. He proceeded to try to convince me that Hulk Hogan was a demi-god and that Donk the Clown was a really cool name for a six-and-a-half foot tall man. Patiently I watched his videos and stuffed myself with Smarties but I wasn't convinced. I mean, it's fixed, right? Anyone can see that. Those guys aren't really hitting each other... are they?

That was it, I was fascinated and decided that I just had to meet one of these modern-day giants and find out just what was going through his head. A few phone calls later and I was haring up the M3 on my way to meet one of the WWF's leading stars. A bad guy turned good. A man who dispensed with modesty the day he learned how to perform a sleeper hold. A man who bragged, antagonised and bullied his way to the top of his profession. And most importantly a man who has wrestled to the highest standard at all levels, from college to World Championship. Twice WWF champion and the present intercontinental champion, to his friends he's known simply as Kurt [spooky eh?]. To everyone else he is Mr Perfect.

The first thing I noticed about Mr Perfect when he entered the room was his sheer size, although I stopped thinking about this when he shook my hand... ouch. I take it all back, I never said it was fixed, honest.

himself ready to take on all-comers on Acclaim's new wrestling games *Royal Rumble*... what he was letting himself in for. A few shouted boasts and insults later... fighting with top World Wrestling Federation star, Mr Perfect...

100%

"I was blessed with an athletic gift, with my body frame I never had to lift weights as much as the other guys. I rely mostly on genetic athletic ability."

How do you become a WWF wrestler?

"My case is very different from other people's. My father was a wrestler. Both Brett Hart and myself are second-generation wrestlers and I was raised in a wrestling family so it was a little bit easier than it would be for somebody off the street trying to get into the World Wrestling Federation. Through my father and the wrestling school they have in Minnesota, I began at a very young age."

We don't have it over here, but in American high schools, wrestling is a very big sport, isn't it?

"Oh it's big time. I've been an amateur wrestler since I was six to eight years old. I wrestled through junior high school, high school, college, all the way through."

So do the kids who are champions at that early age try to get through to the WWF?

"Not necessarily. In pro football you have to have been a major college football player before you make it to the pros. The World Wrestling Federation is wide open. We've got guys from football, we've got guys from basketball, we've got weightlifters, we've got construction workers, guys from all walks of life. You don't have to have been an amateur wrestler to be a professional wrestler. I think that's what makes me different from the rest, I was an amateur wrestler."

So you can wrestle, it's not just all just show-biz?

"Entertainment-value-wise, there is a lot of show business, but I am one of the few guys who can wrestle and actually went to the top in the amateur sport of wrestling."

Have you seen any British wrestling?

"There's not as much action. If you are talking sports

and entertainment combined then I think that's what the World Wrestling Federation provides. People don't just want to sit there and watch moves – they want to see glitter, they want to see the lights, they want to see superheroes and villains go at each other. They want action, it's a show."

So how much of a sportsman do you have to be and how much of a showman?

"Well, I think you have to be more of a sportsman than a showman. Three-quarters of what we do is wrestling; the entertainment comes in with the music and the robes and the characters. 75 percent is wrestling."

Do many of the guys try to keep living their characters outside of the ring, or are they purely alter-egos for fighting inside the ring?

"That's a very good question. A lot of the time, guys who do bring their character outside of the ring with them get too mixed up about who they are and the character they are playing. With me being Mr Perfect, that had to be inside me somewhere or I wouldn't be able to do that character. Every athletic thing I've tried to do in my life I've done well. I am a scratch golfer, I can dive, I play basketball, I can play hockey, I can play tennis. I do all the sports and I do them perfectly. For me it wasn't much of a transition because I am an all-round athlete."

Are you really that good at everything or are you driven to work at things until you get them right. Are you a perfectionist rather than perfect?

"That has a lot to do with it too. I'm one of those people, if I wasn't able to pick something up, I'd keep trying till I did, whether it's juggling balls or whatever. But actually I think I was blessed with an athletic gift. My



parents are very athletic and my dad is a former wrestler at six foot four and 340 pounds, so with my body frame I never had to lift weights as much as the other guys. I work out five days a week, but only with light weights and light repetition. I rely mostly on genetic athletic ability."

So how long have you been wrestling? What kind of changes have you seen?

"12 years professionally... I've seen a lot of changes. Many changes. When I entered the World Wrestling Federation in 1981 I was a young man and I lost a lot of matches, but that was the ladder I chose to climb. I believe that in any walk of life if you set your sights at any level, to reach that level you shouldn't skip any steps in between. As a result I'm living proof that if

"I'm gonna be champion again. I'm not talking about the intercontinental championship, I'm talking about the world title, the big belt."

you want to accomplish something you should do it right. I did it right and I am now in complete control because I know what I'm doing."

In the days before the worldwide success of the WWF, were there a wide number of 'colourful' wrestlers, or did the ensuing television coverage encourage them to become 'colourful' wrestlers?

"I think from the early days of cable television a lot of wrestlers realised the need to be, as you said, more colourful and to further advance their characters and their characteristics in order to stand out."

As an old-time wrestler, what does your father think now when he watches all these new guys with their prancing around and bright costumes? Does he ever think 'I could take these guys!'?

"Well my dad, to be honest with you, probably could. At age 57 and still 330 pounds, he's in great shape and probably the toughest 57-year-old man I know. Yeah, he sometimes agrees and disagrees with the way wrestling is today compared to his day. But you can't judge it by that – the time and era you are born into is the one you have to accept. Sure, wrestling has advanced a lot, but so has football, so has basketball, so has baseball. Everything has become more entertaining and so wrestling has to in the Nineties as well."

So the big question, which I have to ask, albeit somewhat cautiously... is it all fixed? Because it certainly looks that way to me.

"Well that question certainly is one that I've been asked throughout the years. Um, I think everybody can think what they want to think, because everybody believes what they want to believe. If we do 83,000 tickets in ten hours at Wembley, then whether they believe it's fixed or not they are there for one reason only... because it's the greatest show on earth."

"For me, no-one's ever come up to me and said 'you're going to beat this guy' or 'you're going to lose'. But on television bouts it is always real easy to spot the guy who's going to win, because he laces his boots right, his hair's right and he's very professional about what he's doing. As far as wrestling being fixed, nah, I think that's up to the imagination, that's up to the individual."

Maybe 'fix' was the wrong word because nobody doubts the power of you guys, but do you ever get together and think like 'hey, wouldn't it be good if it went this way tonight, wouldn't it make it a better show'?

"I think a professional knows what's wrong and what's right and it's the same in any sport: boxing, baseball... I don't have that answer for you because I've never been confronted with that situation, certainly not with money exchanging or anything. But certainly I know in my own mind, as a professional in wrestling, that if I was able to bring the people back one or two times more, I know what I'd do. That's what I think wrestling's about, controlling the crowds. We work off the draw, the numbers, we want them to watch our show again week after week after week. So you have to be creative, you have to think what would happen if

I..."

So who creates the signature moves, where did the 'Perfect plex' come from?

"All the fighters come up with their own moves. I use both pro-wrestling moves and amateur moves. The 'Perfect plex' is a mixture of both, it is a suplex, and it is used to pin a guy in the professional ring. I learned that from one of my dad's old tag-team partners, a guy called Harvey Race, and he was a great wrestler and was seven times world champion and that was one of his finishing manoeuvres. That is the difference between me and many of the other wrestlers, I've been around the sport all my life. I used to go to all the bouts, I have all the old fights on tape and I watch them again and again and again, and somehow all these moves seem to be in the back of my mind when I wrestle and they come out, I have that knowledge. Now when I'm in a situation in the ring I remember what the great Bill Robinson or Harvey Race or any of the all-time greats used to do, and it all comes back to me and I use a lot of those old moves and that's what makes me better than the other guys."

How did you become a bad guy?

"I'll tell you how that happened. For seven years of my career I was the good guy and I didn't enjoy it and I wasn't comfortable with it. When I talked to the WWF, this was five or six years ago, I said I want to change roles. They said 'well you have no experience in that role', but I told them that I felt I would be a better asset to their company if I played the villain. Well, a year went by and they said 'no, I don't think so'. So I started doing it for myself, wrestling out of Minneapolis. I could feel it from the very first match I did it, and from that moment on I was the 'worst' bad guy that the WWF ever had. I wrestled Hulk Hogan and beat Hulk Hogan, and eventually people began to respect my wrestling ability. They may not have liked me but they knew when Mr Perfect climbed into the ring there was going to be some action, they were going to see something they had never seen before. I could take the worst beating in the ring and still keep coming. Maybe that was my asset, but it worked."

So how come you made the switch from bad guy to good guy?

"Well, I was being taken advantage of by Bobby 'The Brain' Heenan, my manager, I hurt my back and had to take a few months off. The TV people said 'would you like to try commentating, doing the colour', I'd never had any training or nothing but I said 'sure, I'll give it a try'."

"Well, they kept me on for a year and a half, then we began testing real heavily for drugs. Steroids,

cocaine, marijuana, every kind of drugs there is, and we lost a lot of wrestlers that way, the Ultimate Warrior fell into that category. Well, his partner was 'Macho Man' Randy Savage and he was left in a predicament. He came to me and said 'Hey Kurt, my partner is gone, I need a new partner and I can't think of anyone I'd rather wrestle with than you. Is your back healed?' Well, my



back was healed but I wasn't sure I wanted to come back as the good guy so I said 'I'll come back but I can't guarantee what I'll do. In the middle of the match I might even turn on you.' So I came back and people were watching for it. I'm wrestling as the good guy now but I can feel myself beginning to change back. Like I said, be ready for anything, there's no reason why I shouldn't be sat here right now with the World Wrestling Federation title. It's just that I took that year and a half off and I have to work my way back up and I'm getting to the point I'll do anything I have to win that belt, I don't care what anybody thinks."

So you want to be champion again?

"I'm gonna be champion again. I'm not talking about the intercontinental championship,



I'm talking about the world title, the big belt. I'm in prime shape right now and I don't think that there's anybody in the Federation who can beat me right now, including Yokozuna. In the next year, and you can put that down as a quote, I will be the World Wrestling Federation champion."

Yokozuna's the present world champion, right?

"Yeah, and he's gonna be a tough man to beat too. He's sumo and he's 568 pounds, but if you've been around as much wrestling as I have all my life, then you learn how to handle the big guys, you just run them out of gas."

At six foot you're not a big guy for wrestling, are you?

"Who's six foot? I'm six foot three, 250 pounds."

That's big but it's still not as big as most of the guys, is it?

"No, but I can go all night. It's a matter of strategy. I've wrestled for an hour before. I wrestled for an hour with Harvey Reece, I tied him up to a draw. The other guys can't go that long. With Yokozuna, if I can take him to 25 minutes I've got the advantage. My heart beats like a marathon runner, it's only 40 to 44 beats to a minute, and that's a genetic thing too. I'm in great shape. It's not about bodybuilding, it's about stamina. I don't waste energy in that ring, every move I make means something."

Have you seen the WWF video games?

"Yes, I did the TV commercial for the Nintendo version of *Royal Rumble*, but I don't play as my spare time is spent reading and watching old wrestling videos. I keep on top of my business and that's wrestling."

Do you think the games are accurate?

"Yeah they really are. It's a little odd to see a little version of yourself on screen, the Perfect Plex and everything. In America I was in an airport when I heard '...from Minnesota, Mr Perfect!' and it showed my exact weight and size and all the moves etc. I'm working on one at the moment that they are shooting with cameras from eight angles. The way I stand, the way I move, it's all gonna be real. It's gonna be me, not the robot, even the facial expressions. I tell you, the technology they're using is unbelievable."

How can anyone retire from something as all-consuming and exciting as the World

Wrestling Federation?

"I can answer that better than anybody because my father went through it. He wrestled from 1962-87 and he told me 'kid, when it's over it's over', and you have to recognise that. But when you are a known celebrity and recognised walking down the street, it's hard to turn your back on it all. But that's the ego part of it, the love of the sport is what's going to really hurt a guy like me. When I hurt my back I felt like I was never going to wrestle again, and I had to work real hard to get back in the ring again, but wrestling was my life and I was in my prime. How do retired wrestlers spend their time? I hope they play golf all day. I love being outdoors."

"I tell the young guys who are coming in now to enjoy it all while you can, because like the whiskey you drank it went down too fast, you gotta know how to make each swallow last."

Finally, let me ask one last hypothetical question. Boxers and wrestlers are always being compared. If a world-class boxer and a world-class wrestler got into a ring together, who'd win?

"They tried this years ago between Ali and a Japanese wrestler called Inoki and the crowd didn't like it because Anoki just laid on his back and threw kicks. But my theory is that any good wrestler could always take a good boxer, which doesn't mean that I want to fight Mike Tyson, but if that opportunity came up I wouldn't be worried whatsoever. I'd be worried if he hit me, but you can't hit a moving target. I almost went to Olympic level in amateur wrestling so if I get him down on the ground I can get one half of his body going this way, the other half going that way, he's gonna give up or something's gonna break. We wrestlers know submission holds, we know sleeper holds, little clusters of nerves. So the real question is do professional wrestlers really hurt themselves? I don't know. But can they hurt other people? Yes they can."

Ulp! I decided to leave Mr Perfect there before he suggested demonstrating a few sleeper holds on me. I'm still not convinced about the authenticity of WWF wrestling, but let me tell you this guy is the real McCoy. If those guys really fake hurting each other in the ring it's probably through common sense more than anything else because I don't doubt for a minute that Mr Perfect could inflict some very serious damage if he wanted to. I mean, he nearly crushed my hand just shaking it.

Of course, I could have taken him...



ROYAL RUMBLE

Steve Bough joined the ranks of the World Wrestling Federation when he beat "Hacksaw" Jim Duggan in a no-holds-barred brawl. Gaining respect from his fellow wrestlers enabled Steve to get an exclusive review of the latest smash from this group of fine fighting men.

Do you remember the days of Big Daddy and Giant Haystacks on ITV World Of Sport with Dickie Davies? It must make me sound really old - well, that's because I am. Since those days of wrestling back in the glorious Seventies, the sport has gone into somewhat of a decline in Britain. Not so in the States where they like nothing better than to watch two ham actors throwing each other about the stage. The WWF in America is absolutely massive and stars such as Hulk Hogan and The Undertaker have taken wrestling to new heights. Capitalising on this success, the federation have brought out annuals, videos and a record that even hit the top five in this country. So what else could be expected from these guys than to release a computer game of their antics?

You can now play as Hulk Hogan, Jim Duggan or Papa Shango, to name but a few - the choice is yours. Keeping in true tradition with the wrestling rules and regulations, Royal Rumble features a variety of options to offer hours of hilarious entertainment. Incorporated within this game are brawls, wherein all the wrestlers jump onto the stage and headbutt and fling each other around the ring, including the referee. There's the usual choice of challenging a computer opponent, or taking on your

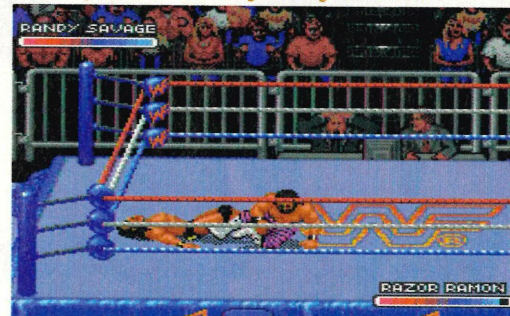
best mate if you desire. Then there's the main tournament, Royal Rumble, where you compete against a number of wrestlers, all hoping to win the bout and eventually the coveted title. The 12 fighters featured in the game are all real wrestlers: very large men who eat folk like you and me for breakfast. The tallest of these is the giant "The Undertaker", who stands in bare feet at a towering 6ft 10in.

Not only can the wrestlers do the usual things like body slams and forearm smashes, they each have their own special moves. For example, Randy Savage's is the "Flying Elbow Smash". This is accessed by pressing buttons A+B - or Z on the six-button pad - to make Randy climb the turnbuckle (the corner post) and jump onto the opponent's head, using his elbow from a great height to cause irreparable damage. If successful, each fighter's special move knocks the opposition's energy bar down by half. Finding these moves is again a SFII process, in which the more you play, the more you find out.

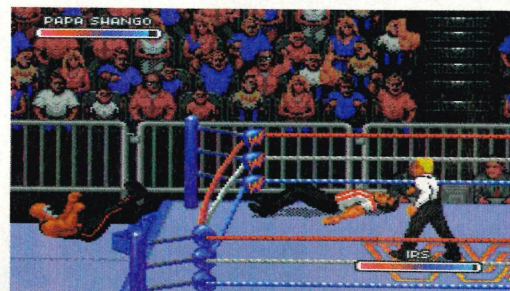
All the usual wrestling features are incorporated into this game, including tag teams and fighting out of the ring. Basically anything that goes on in the real ring happens in Royal Rumble. After the massive success of Mortal Kombat, Acclaim are hoping for a similar stranglehold on sales with their latest beefy combat game.



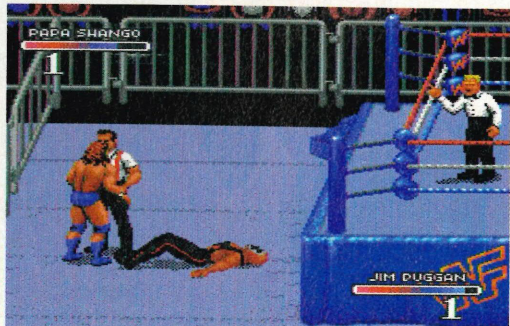
This is the Royal Rumble. Basically you have to take on all-comers in this out and out bout. A good tip is to try and stay out of the way and let the others fight among themselves!



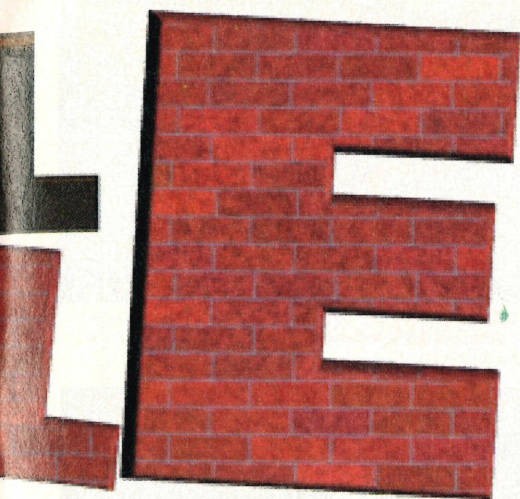
Randy Savage is shown here laying into the sharply named Razor Ramon. With Razor on the canvas, this is a good opportunity for a pin.



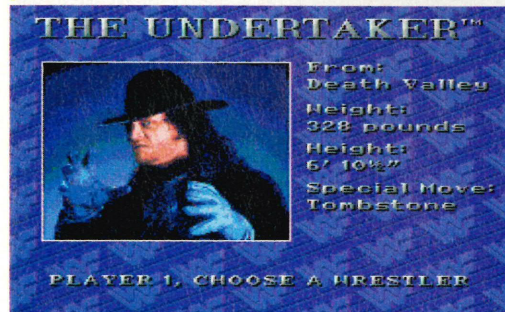
Papa Shango was trying to be flash by standing on the top of the ring, but along comes IRS and headbutts him, resulting in this dramatic fall.



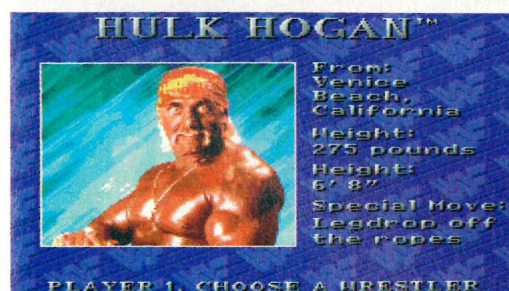
The IRS isn't even meant to be fighting, but here he crops up to hassle Jim Duggan, whilst the Shango is out for the count on the floor.



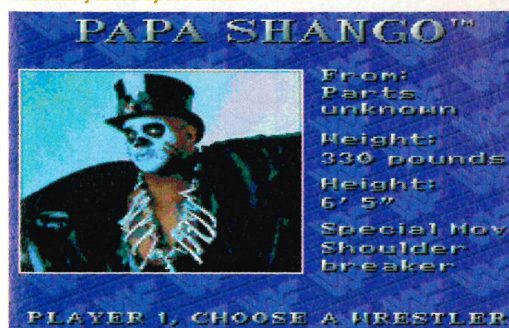
When executed correctly, this move knocks loads of your opponent's energy bar. But it's all down to timing: miss him and your back hurts.



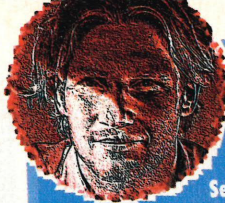
The wrestlers' statistics are shown at the start of the game. Each has his own special moves and particular strengths which you must discover.



Hands up who hasn't heard of Hulk Hogan. This man has even made a film (Suburban Commando). A very powerful wrestler and totally loved by the crowd.



This voodoo master, all 6ft 5in of him, is one tough cookie. His special move is the Shoulderbreaker. From the grapple, press buttons A+B to do this devastating manoeuvre.



When I was a lad, I remember me and my brother sitting and waiting for World Of Sport to come on television. This was back in the late Seventies, in the days of Big Daddy (alias Shirley Crabtree) and Giant Haystacks. Well, when it came on we would shout and throw each other about the room just like real wrestlers. With Royal Rumble, you don't even have to like wrestling as it provides great fun for all gamers. The other good thing with this game is that it provides a brilliant challenge. The sound FX are also worth a mention, as you get a real feel for this game, especially when you access one of the special moves or anything else that inflicts pain. As usual the music isn't worth much of a mention, it just trots on merrily and inanely. The best thing is most definitely the gameplay: there's loads of fun hours to be had from Royal Rumble. There's plenty of moves and features to discover, and this is the sort of game that you'd find difficult to get bored with. The other most important factor with Royal Rumble is that it's a great laugh. So if you're a bit bored of all the games you've got, take a look at this - I don't think you'll regret it.

STEVE

OVERALL %

82

far more entertaining than the real WWF as you get up to all sorts of dirty tricks.



- 1 The all-important energy bar. Keep your eye on the state of this at all times. When it goes into the red, you know you're in trouble, and possibly will lose.
- 2 The referee tries to control this match at all times, but more often than not loses it as the wrestlers go haywire. He is liable to get punched out, which is very funny.
- 3 The Narcissist is a really nasty piece of work. His special move is the running shoulder butt. Throw your opponent into the ropes, on his return press A+B.
- 4 Crush finds himself on his back and facing the wrath of the Narcissist. This is an ideal time to pin this sucker to the canvas. Press buttons B and C together to hold him down.

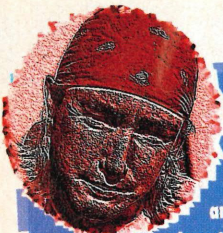


I don't care much for the real WWF: it's not so much the wrestlers' silly pantomime antics that get on my nerves but the oh-so-obviously stage-managed fights. Ironically, that's probably why I like Royal Rumble so much: you can get your favourite wrestlers in the ring for proper competitive contests.

The often hilarious action provides much more entertainment than the real WWF as you get up to all sorts of dirty tricks. It's great fun stamping on your opponent while he's lying on the canvas, kicking him where it hurts, throwing him right out of the ring and even pummeling him while your tag-team partner holds him on the ropes. Admittedly a lot of time is spent simply trading punches and kicks, but once you get used to the controls it's possible to string together some really spectacular moves. It's particularly satisfying when you manage to pull off your character's special move as it can only be accessed in the right situation.

With 12 different wrestlers and loads of play options I reckon I'll be wrestling with Royal Rumble for some time.

PHIL



Wrestling games are always received with a high degree of scepticism at Mega Power. For a start, they are usually exploitative and unimaginative and they are also usually very limited in the gameplay department and uninspiring graphically...

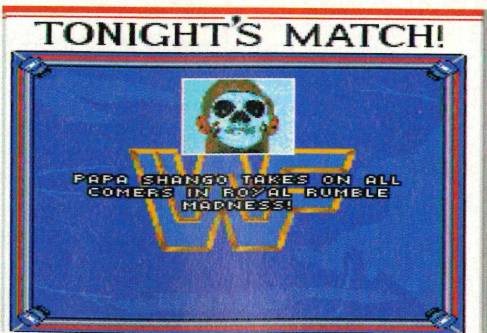
...However, and it is a big however, Royal Rumble quickly became an office favourite, with even the most cynical of the MPs dropping everything he was doing and queuing up for a go.

Wonderfully rendered, most of the characters do look amazingly like the wrestlers they are supposed to be and there movements around the rings and various holds and kicks are beautifully fluid. From head-butts to smashing your opponent over the head with a chair, the variety of stunts you can pull in order to win are as numerous as the match options. From a one pin bout or a no-holds barred scrap, to an all-out rumble with every fighter taking part to a three man tag challenge, Acclaim have assured that you can play Royal Rumble for a long, long time without getting bored.

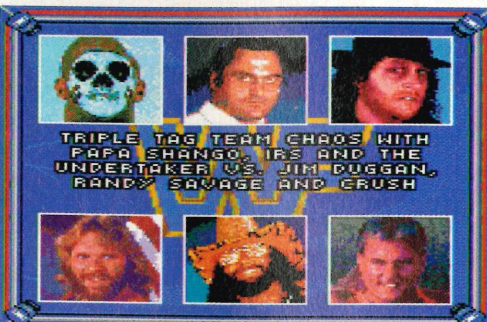
Grumbles? Well, it is annoying if you get thrown out of the ring and then bang against the side as you try to get back and your wrestler falls over and loses loads of energy...very annoying actually.

But little bugs aside, this is undoubtedly the best wrestling game we have seen to date, all it lacks is a have-a-go-at-your-opponents option.

DAVE



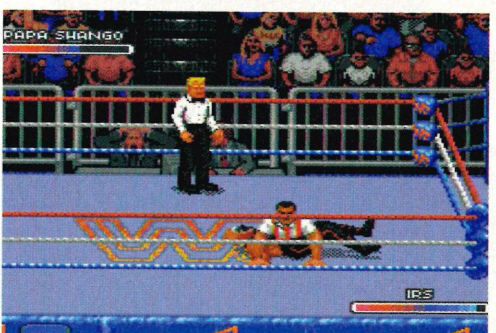
At the start of every game, you'll see this appear on screen. It tells you who's fighting and which tournament will be contested.



Make sure you have nimble fingers for the triple tag team, as using three wrestlers really knackers you out. Any of the wrestlers can team up, so you can mix goodies and baddies.



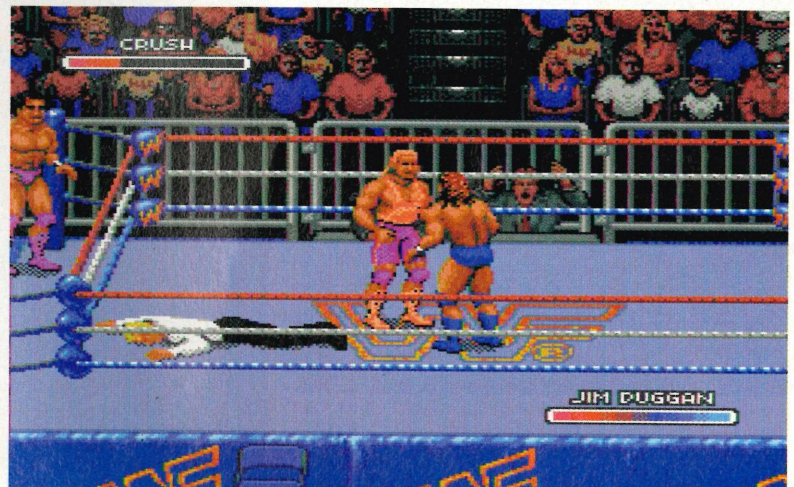
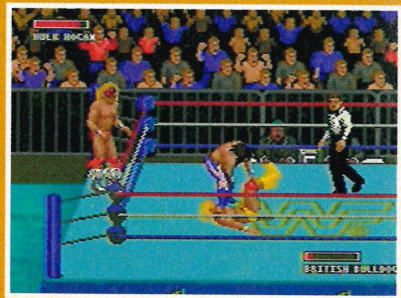
The Hulk accessing his special move "The Legdrop Finisher". Press the A and B buttons while standing by the head of the fallen player.



This pin-down by IRS does look rather compromising, but I assure you they're just good friends. A great finishing move by the IRS, though.

SUPER WRESTLEMANIA Released February 1993

This release from Flying Edge was principally the same format followed by Royal Rumble, with a similar ring and fighters. Most of the wrestling stars were featured in this game, including the likes of Hulk Hogan and IRS. The game was well received by not only the specialist press but also the games-buying public. It made a change to see a quality wrestling game brought to the Mega Drive, after the dire results of the earlier Wrestle War, which was nothing short of diabolical. Super Wrestlemania provided something original and different which is no bad thing, and it was little wonder that this game



One example of the referee being out for the count. The wrestler doesn't get penalised for this, but with Crush's energy being the way it is, "Hacksaw" Jim Duggan looks set to win this battle. Maybe it's a good time for Crush to tag his partner.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"Overall Royal Rumble is the best wrestling simulation yet to hit the Mega Drive. Immense fun can be had from this game as the options are very varied. A few bugs let it slightly slip, but all in all, this is one hugely funny game."

10
9
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MORTAL KOMBAT
ROYAL RUMBLE
WRESTLEMANIA

ROYAL RUMBLE

1-2 players

8Mbit

no continues

available in UK

GAMEPLAY	81
GRAPHICS	79
SOUND	78
ADDICTION	82

ACCLAIM
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OUT NOW

OVERALL
82%

INSTANT ACCESS

REVIEW



MEGA
BLAST!

FIFA International SOCCER

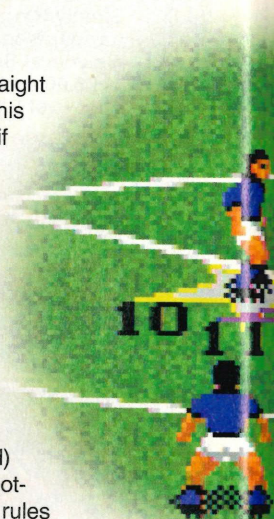
The Mega Power office has gone football mad this month with two new soccer sims provided by Sony and Electronic Arts. But at the end of the day, which will be top of the league? Phil King kicks off with EA's championship contender.

Computer football: over the years, they've looked at it from all ways. Early games used a grandstand view with the pitch scrolling left/right. Then there was a flood of over-head-view soccer sims, including Super Kick Off and Sony's new Sensible Soccer (also reviewed in this issue). Some have tried an eye-level 3-D view, while others have even given you a choice of viewing angles. But no-one's ever used isometric 3-D before – it's usually reserved for arcade adventures like Haunting and Landstalker. FIFA International Soccer utilises this graphical technique for a bird's-eye view of its scrolling pitch.

Typically from EA, the game offers a vast range of playing options. You can play a one-off exhibition match between any of the 48 international sides, control up to eight of the teams in a World

Cup-style tournament, go straight to the knockout stages of this (omitting qualifying – useful if you're playing England), or compete in an international league. As tournaments take a long while to complete, the facility to save your position to battery backup is essential.

Other options include setting the half length (anything from 2 to a full 45 minutes), weather, goalkeepers (computer- or player-controlled) and pitch type. Unlike real football you can also change the rules





As a long-time fan of Sensible Soccer, I was a bit sceptical about whether EA's debut footy game could rival it. After all, what sort of soccer sim uses an isometric view? Well, FIFA International Soccer is a funny old game, but I found it very enjoyable to play.

The first few matches we had in the office were pretty scrappy as everyone kept using the shoot button to knock the ball up the field. Although we gradually refined our tactics to include some passing, the game still encourages a lot of kicking the ball behind the defence and chasing. The pace of the action is so frantic, you usually don't have enough time on the ball to consider what to do with it. So Continental-style passing play isn't very easy, particularly as you never know where your off-screen team-mates are. Nevertheless, with practice you can still construct some clever "one-tuos" with the neat one-touch passing facility: as soon as your team-mate receives the ball he plays it back to you.

The ability to use overaggressive tactics has spoilt many footy games and, although you can shoulder-charge and foul in FIFA, the ref usually takes a dim view of it. The result is a good, clean game with plenty of spectacular goals and near misses to enjoy watching on the instant replay. Long-range rocket shots, diving headers, banana shots, backheels, bicycle kicks... they're all here.

Best of all, the four-player mode is an absolute joy. This is an obvious advantage over Sensible Soccer, along with the infinitely more spectacular action. However, I still reckon Sensible is the more satisfying game to play, due to the way you can plan your attacking moves better, thanks to the small pitch scale. It all boils down to personal preference really. FIFA and Sensible represent two completely different approaches to simulating football and are each extremely enjoyable in their own way. So if you get a windfall of cash this Christmas, it's well worth buying both.

PHIL

OVERALL %

94

the furious action will have you leaping out of your seat screaming "goal!" This is the must-have soccer cart.

by turning offsidies on/off and selecting fouls: none, intermediate (free kicks given but no bookings) or full. There's also a choice of game type: arcade or simulation – the latter has players gradually getting tired as the match goes on.

Phew! But there's more... Before the kick-off – or even midway through the match – you change your team formation, select your tactics (long ball, defend etc), substitute players and even choose how far forward/back your

defence, midfield and attack will go on the pitch.

After a coin toss it's time for the kick-off. As the ball moves up and down the scrolling isometric pitch, you can toggle control between nearby players. Perhaps the most revolutionary feature is the way you can make your men run faster by repeatedly pressing C, much as in EA's ice-hockey games. To tackle an opponent, simply run into him – alternatively try a slide tackle or maybe even a shoulder charge, though both of these risk giving away a free kick.

Once in possession, it's easy to dribble with the ball stuck to your foot. You can then pass to team-mates along the ground or do delicate chips into the box. Another clever feature is the "one touch" passing where you pass it to a teammate who immediately plays the ball back to you. However,

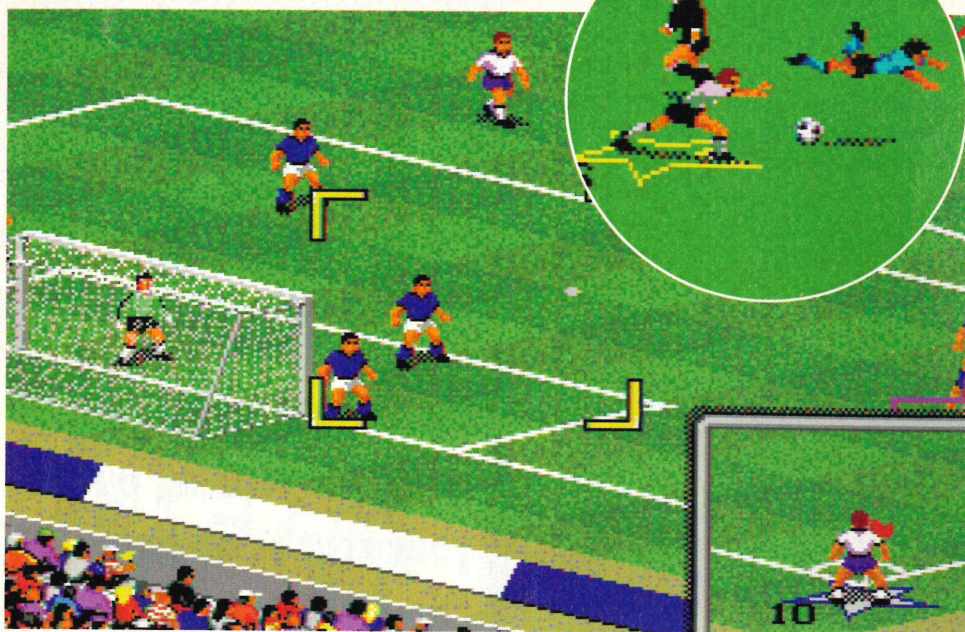
the most useful function is the way you can shoot automatically towards goal – sometimes you can even score from a good 40 yards out. To further fool the defence and goalie (computer or manually controlled), all passes and shots can be swerved by using aftertouch.

If the ball's in the air you can perform powerful diving headers or even spectacular overhead kicks – if you time them right. Hit the net and the crowd goes wild, the scorer celebrates (sometimes with a cartwheel) and the stadium scoreboard displays one of several graphic sequences.

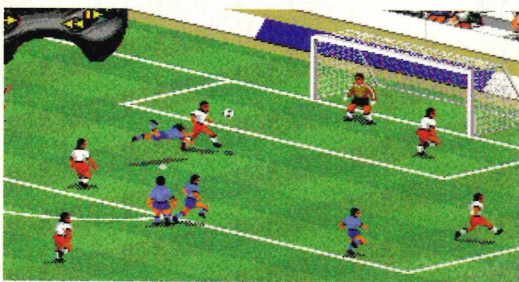
With such razzmatazz, instant replays, full match stats and – most importantly – compatibility with the 4 Way Play adapter, FIFA International Soccer looks positively world-class. Can it possibly be beaten?



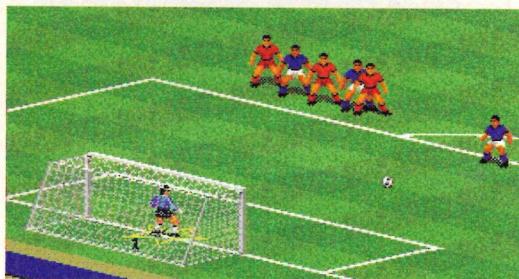
player. Here one of the Germans blatantly pushes an Argentinian, right under the ref's nose! Uh oh, this could well be a booking, or even a sending off.



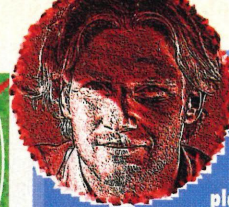
It's a corner kick to England. The number 10 is taking it and is shown in his own little window. The kick is aimed by moving the large cursor and can then be swung in or out with aftertouch.



When the ball's in the air, you can dive in for spectacular, powerful headers. But you need perfect timing to connect with the ball and send it flying into the net. Go for it!



Fouling an attacker in the box results in a penalty kick. This is taken like a normal shot and can be swerved with aftertouch. The opponent controls his goalie, making him dive either way.



Remembering back to those sunny summer days when J League came into the office, oh, I was so happy. So could FIFA Soccer make me even more ecstatic? As with J League, controlling the players is tricky to work out at first, but with practice it becomes second nature. After lots and lots of goes in the office, this game is starting to reach maximum appeal, it's blooming marvellous. Not only does it have the beauty of four-player action, the perspective that the matches are played in is also wonderful. The sprites are very large: compared to Sensible Soccer, they look like giants. Most importantly, the gameplay is brilliant. You can't help but get really involved in this game. I was singing "Ooh, ah, Cantona" throughout the match, and jumping for joy whenever I scored a goal. The other most excellent thing is the inclusion of real football songs and chants. This does absolute wonders for the match atmosphere, as you feel as if it's Cup Final day for every game you play. With the huge amount of football games about, you won't want to be wasting your money on rubbish. Take it from me, this game is everything and more. I won't betray my love for J League and say this is better: it's as good, and in my book that means it's the bee's knees.

STEVE



This is it! This is it! This is the soccer game I've been waiting for, hang on... I just had to go and have another game, I can't stop playing it. Over the moon I am, triffic it is, FIFA International Soccer seems to have combined all the fiddly features that the more techie gamesplayer may want, with all the excitement that your grass-roots armchair athlete demands. This is the soccer cart that you must have in your collection. The league and cup competition are great, the head-to-head action is furious, and the four-player link-up will have you leaping out of your seat screaming "goal!" loud enough to have your neighbours beating down the door with the police in tow.

The from-the-stands perspective is brilliant and is, I think, exactly right for the sport, capturing all the action and excitement of the real game and taking away some of the advantage that the team playing up the pitch always used to have. It also seems perfect for framing the brilliant animation that EA have put into the sprites. Overhead kicks, backheel flicks, little nod-ons and even off-the-ball incidents, it's all here, and what's more it's as exciting to watch as it is to play as the goalies make one-handed saves and forwards send blistering curlers into the top corners before doing somersaults in celebration.

The one feature that really sets FIFA International Soccer apart from the rest, and it's so simple, is the ability to give your players an extra burst of speed by pumping the c button. This introduces that little bit of adrenaline rush that other games lacked and allows you to make breathtaking forays into the area from the midfield, streak away from your marker, or even get ahead of a forward when defending.

The only real downside with the game is the monotonous crowd sounds. They buzz at the same level all the way through a match and don't really pick up even when you score, leaving you wondering for a split second whether the ball went in or not. But this aside, FIFA International Soccer is my favourite game this month and looks set to become the console soccer king.

DAVE

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"There's only one FIFA Soccer, there's only... As soccer sims go, this is the business. Not only do you get gorgeous 3-D graphics for the spectacular action, but the game is incredibly addictive, particularly with four players. Superb."

10	●	○	○
9	●	●	○
8	●	●	○
7	●	●	○
6	●	●	○
5	●	●	○
4	●	●	○
3	●	●	○
2	●	●	○
1	●	●	○
	SENSIBLE SOCCER	FIFA INTERNATIONAL	J LEAGUE

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GAMEPLAY

GRAPHICS

SOUND

ADDICTION

94

93

94

95

OVERALL

94%

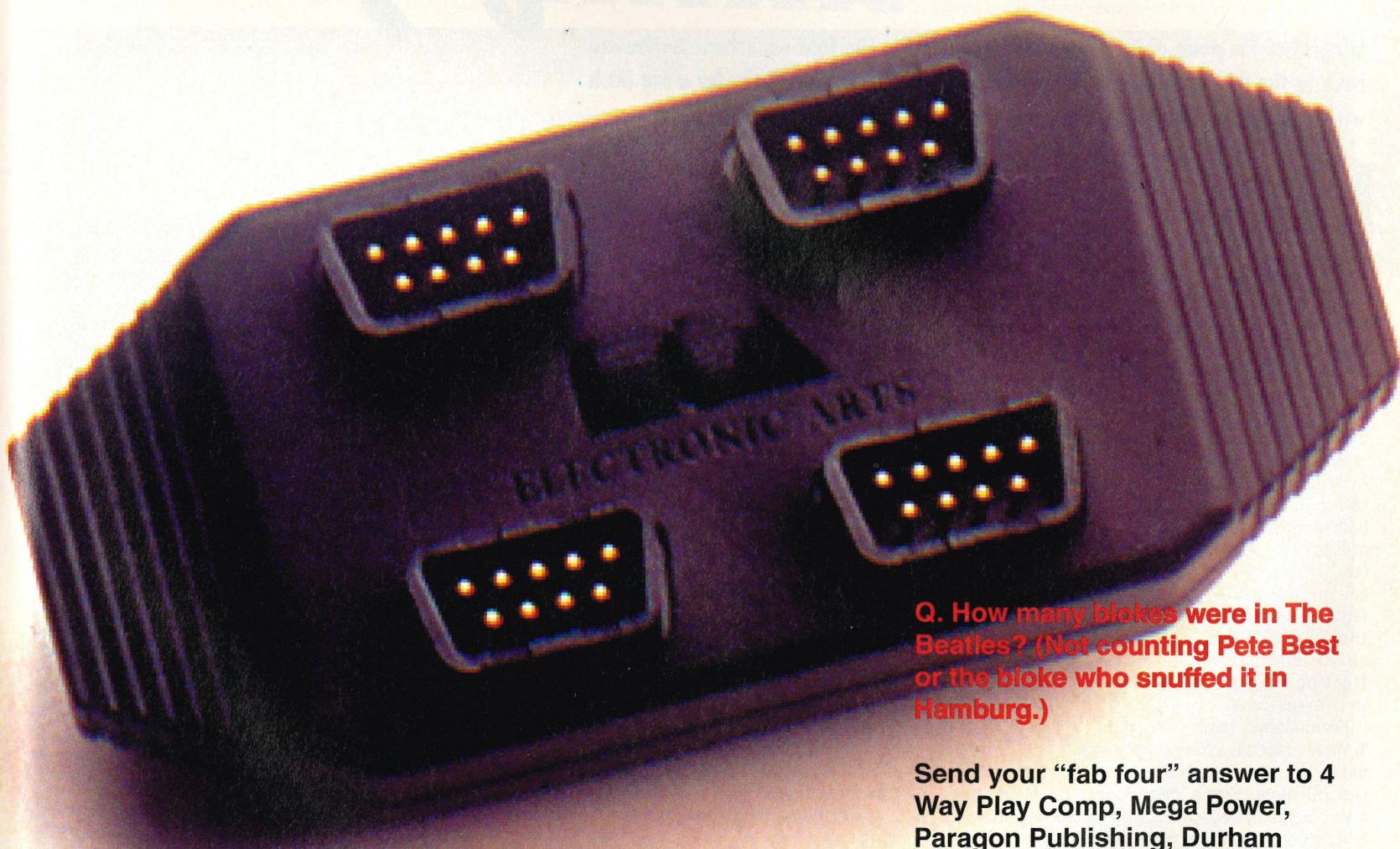
"I want to play! Let me have a go! It's my turn now!" These cries must be familiar to any Mega Drive owner with a little brother. Of course, there are two-player games but even these aren't enough sometimes. You've got a group of friends round and they all want to play; what do you do? The answer is provided by Electronic Arts' new 4 Way Play which enables up to four players to join in the fun in a host of EA games. Compatible releases so far include *NHL '94*, *Madden NFL '94*, *General Chaos*, *Bill Walsh College Football*, *Mutant League Hockey* and, of course, *FIFA International Soccer*. All sorts of playing permutations are possible: two on one, two on two, three on one, even four vs the computer. At last everyone can have a go

EA SPORTS
P R E S E N T S

ten

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to give away



Q. How many blokes were in The Beatles? (Not counting Pete Best or the bloke who snuffed it in Hamburg.)

Send your "fab four" answer to 4 Way Play Comp, Mega Power, Paragon Publishing, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 1NF. All entries must be in our 4x4 postbox by 31 December 1993.



TEENAGE MUTANT TURTLES TOURNAMENT *fighters*

Tournament Fighters is a slick, playable beat-'em-up but aesthetic similarities force a comparison with SFII

Long after the peak of their worldwide popularity, the four superhero Turtles are back in the limelight. This time they emerge from their half-shells for a big bash with their friends. Phil King dials out for a pizza and shouts "Cowabunga!"

It was a typical day for the world's unluckiest superheroes. Despite the massive crime wave of the Nineties, the Turtles were partying on in their sewer home, scoffing pizza and watching television. However, their favourite TV show was suddenly interrupted by a pirate broadcast from none other than their arch-enemy, the weird alien called Krang. He informed the quartet that he had kidnapped their master, Splinter (the ninja rat who taught them how to fight). The only way the Turtles could save him was by fighting Krang himself in Dimension X.

Fortunately, four of the Turtles' friends offered to help them in this hazardous mission. Unfortunately, Krang has cloned all eight of them, perfectly replicating all their fighting moves. It is these cronies that you have to take on in one-to-one combat. You can choose to control any of the eight fighters. They all have their own moves, including special ones activated by using often-complicated joypad and button combinations — similar to the ones in Street Fighter II.

The comparisons with that game don't end there: it's obvious that many of the gameplay ideas have been inspired by SFII. There are two red and yellow energy bars at the top of the screen, a 99-second time limit, best-of-three bouts, bonuses for energy and time left, and even a sampled "perfect" when you don't lose any energy. Many of the fighting moves also look familiar, including fireballs, rapid punching, shoulder throws and even a sort of "flaming torpedo".

All the same, this isn't just SFII with different graphics (so don't go calling your lawyers yet, Capcom!). For a start, some of the fighters are armed. There are also many novel moves like

Leonardo sending an electric charge along the ground, Michaelangelo doing his helicopter impression and April performing an impressive shoulder charge.

With two-player and tournament options, Tournament Fighters looks worth shelling out for. But is this hard-hitting beat-'em-up a real contender to SFII and Mortal Kombat, or will it end up in the soup?



When I first saw the Tournament Fighters combat screen, I had to go and fetch my glasses. Apart from the much-different fighter sprites it looks incredibly like Street Fighter II. Not only that, it even sounds similar, right from the sampled "round one, fight" to the speech from the victor at the end of the bout. However, though many of the moves look familiar, the fighting gameplay isn't quite the same. With only two buttons (punch and kick) used for most of the characters, there isn't quite the same variety of moves. But it's a shame that aesthetic similarities force a comparison with SFII, as Tournament Fighters is a slick, playable beat-'em-up in its own right. Of course, the four turtles are the real stars of the show. Their distinct weapons and fighting techniques prove that it's not just the colour of their headbands that's different.

The game isn't completely lacking in innovation either. An instant-replay feature at the end of bouts is a brilliant idea. My favourite bit, though, has to be the way you can press c to make a verbal taunt and gesture to your opponent. This is mainly reserved for two-player games, as the solo mode is very, very tough — even on the easiest skill level. It should certainly provide an enjoyable challenge for those constantly moaning about Mega Drive games being too easy.

PHIL

T HERO ES ENT



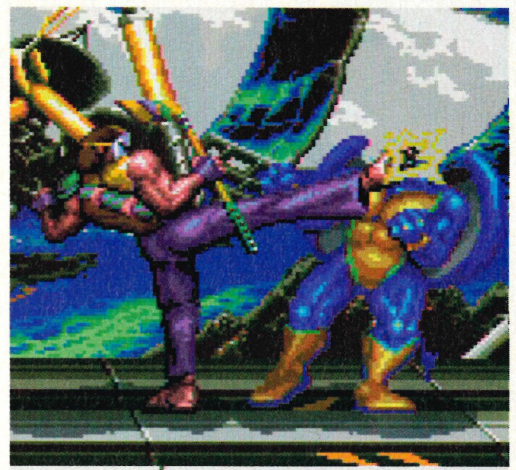
Tournament Fighters is yet another attempt to cash in on the huge success of the now legendary Street Fighter II. Instead of a steroid-overdosed bunch of superhuman freaks, Konami have adopted a dubiously original approach to the game's choice of characters and utilised the familiar figures of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and their dodgy friends. Unfortunately Konami have unwisely released the game at almost exactly the same time as Street Fighter II and can only look forward to a merciful first-round KO. It's a shame though, because as fight games go this isn't half bad. The action is frantic, the sprites are chunky and smoothly animated and the whacks and grunts are satisfyingly sickening. This is, in fact, probably the best Street Fighter II clone I have played, discounting Mortal Kombat as being a different game in its own right, but it suffers from being way too difficult and from being far too obvious a rip-off.

Fantastically programmed, you cannot fault the quality of the gameplay and the obvious appeal of the novelty value alone, but I have to wonder whether anybody really cares about the half-baked Turtles any more and if the shouts of "Cowabunga!" have not long since had their day. RIP, dudes.

DAVE

OVERALL %

86



Casey the ice-hockey player executes his special roundhouse move on the weird character called Ray Fillet. This move has him spinning both his ice-hockey stick and his leg round twice. Casey is also the only character able to drop bombs.

MASSIVE POWER



1 Your score goes up every time you successfully execute a move on your opponent. Defeat him and you get big bonuses for time and energy remaining at the end of the bout.

2 These meters show how much energy each fighter has left. Varying amounts of energy are lost depending on the type of move used - when the meter's all red, you lose.

3 This shows how many bouts the character has won and also the total number of bouts to be fought in the match. Here he's already won one bout in a best-of-three contest.

4 The timer counts down as the bout goes on. If it reaches zero before either fighter is knocked out, the winner is the one with the most energy remaining. You can turn the timer off.



April O'Neil's shoulder charge is one of the most potent moves in the game. She flies across so fast, it's hard to defend against.



Leonardo has some great moves. As well as sending electricity along the ground, he can spin rapidly across the screen.



Donatello's staff makes him a good long-range fighter. Here he executes a spinning jump reminiscent of Guile's flash kick.

LEONARDO



The leader of the bunch, Leonardo is a scientific boffin. He's no mean fighter either, brandishing twin swords which when scraped on the ground produce a spark of electricity. He also does a nifty spin to traverse the screen quickly.

MICHAELANGELO



This dude's always in a party mood, with a passion for breakdancing (remember that?). This obviously helps him to perform spinning fighting moves, including whipping up a whirlwind. He also likes to swirl his nunchukas around.

DONATELLO



Don carries a staff which enables him to perform some good long-range moves, including his special power swish which sends a wave of energy across the screen. Closer up he can use his staff to lift and throw his opponent.

RAPHAEL



While his twin short tridents (or whatever they're called) don't look too impressive, he can swirl them around himself to do some neat special moves. Best of all has to be his spinning torpedo, reminiscent of M Bison's in SFII.

APRIL O'NEIL



News reporter and friend to the Turtles, April has been turned into a real tough nut for this game. Her speciality is the shoulder charge, leaping quickly across the screen to crash into her opponent. She can also perform a higher, more powerful version of this.

CASEY JONES



This ice-hockey player uses his stick for good long-range swings and jabs, and to throw his opponent. His unique ability is to drop a time bomb which detonates within a few seconds. He must be careful to get out of the way in time, though.

RAY FILLET



This weird winged bloke can perform a flying torpedo move across the screen. He also has a very powerful long-range move, a sort of sonic shockwave. Closer up, his size and power make for a devastating jaw crush.

SISYPHUS



A mutant beetle, Sisyphus can do some very rapid punching with his four arms. He also spits a plasma bolt from his mouth (yuk) and slides across the screen to headbutt his adversary. Those arms comes in useful again for an energy-draining crush.



Switching on the Turtles, the first thing you notice is the remarkable similarity between this and *Street Fighter II*. Obviously comparisons are going to

be made, because undoubtedly *Tournament Fighters* is based on the success of SFII. But don't let this distract you from the game itself. Returning for yet another adventure, this is by far the best adventure that the four cool green dudes have starred in. The many moves that are accessed by special combinations give the game great variety, as does the option of being able to use eight different fighters.

Slight drawbacks are that punch and kick are the only two normal moves, so this gives it slight restrictions; but with the large number of special moves, the game really comes alive. On the one-player or tournament setting, this game is very difficult and ensures hours of fun. Playing on the two-player mode against your mates is even better, so you can be rest assured there will be no shortage of game playing.

If you like games like SFII and *Mortal Kombat* – and let's face it, who doesn't? – *Tournament Fighters* is yet another worthy addition to your beat-'em-up collection.

STEVE



Although most of their flashier moves are executed at medium or long range, when the Turtles get in close they can climb on the opponent's shoulders to inflict loads of damage in one go.



Michaelangelo spins around to whip up a mini-whirlwind and send it hurtling across the screen. As well as swirling his nunchukas in various ways, he can perform an M Bison-style flaming torpedo move.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"It may look like a *Street Fighter II* clone with different graphics, but *Tournament Fighters* is an excellent beat-'em-up in its own right. The two-player mode is a lot of fun, while the solo game presents an enormous challenge."

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1			
	STREET FIGHTER II	TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS	MORTAL KOMBAT

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GAMEPLAY	85
GRAPHICS	90
SOUND	93
ADDICTION	87

OVERALL

86%

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MEGA
BLAST!

Sensible SOCCER

With EA currently making their soccer debut, Sony's Sensible Soccer has a tough match ahead. After winning the official World Cup on the Amiga version, Phil King swaps joystick for joypad to tackle his favourite footy sim once more.

Last Christmas, Sensible Soccer scored a massive hit on the Amiga and ST. It was the Manchester United of soccer sims, rising up to knock Liverpool (Kick Off 2) off its perch. However, footy on consoles is a whole different ball game and – as revealed in our interview last month – programmers Sensible Software had to adapt the game for its new format.

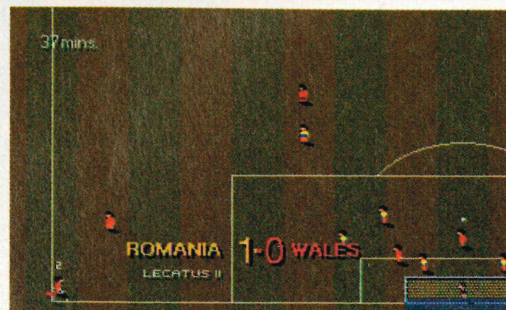
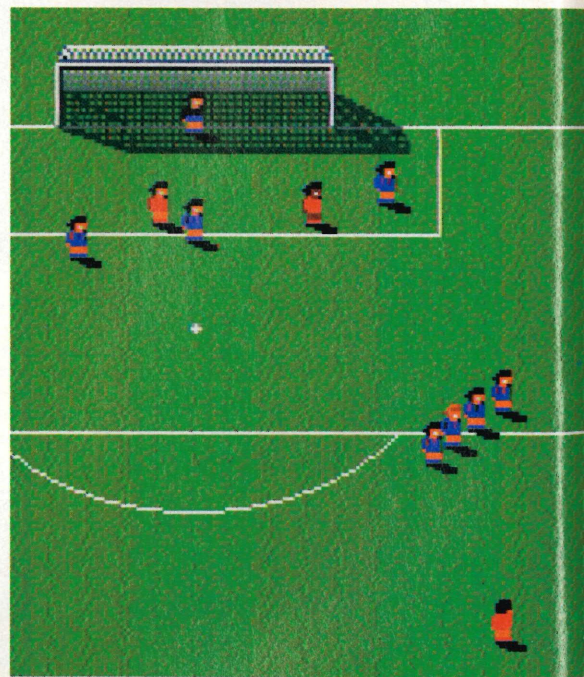
It still looks and plays much the same, though. The match action is viewed from high overhead, so you can see a large chunk of the scrolling pitch as the tiny players zipping around it at high speed.

The most obvious change is the easier controls. Not only does the ball stick to your player's foot as he dribbles (apart from in Expert mode), but – as in J League – you can automatically shoot towards goal by pressing the a button. Your players can do much more than that,

however. As well as passing intelligently to team-mates, they can swerve shots by changing direction just afterwards, jump up to perform powerful headers, and slide in for crunching tackles. Mistiming the latter leads to fouls and the possibility of yellow and red cards, as well as a free kick or penalty.

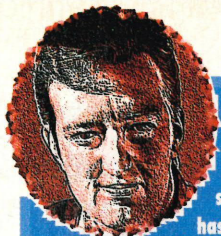
Perhaps the game's most impressive feature is its vast library of club and international teams which compete in an array of tournaments. These include the UEFA Cup and the World Cup qualifiers. Even better, you can create your own customised cups and leagues with how many and whichever teams you want – any number of which can be player-controlled, so you can have massive multiplayer competitions.

So, at the end of the day, does Sensible Soccer make you over the moon or sick as a parrot? Obviously, Brian, that's a question only the critics can answer...



Oh dear, Wales are losing to Romania coming up to half time. The ball's just gone out for a corner to Wales though, so hopefully they can bend one into the area for Rushie to hit.

le ER



Gooooooooaaaaaalllllll! Yes, this is the business. I know a lot of players might be put off initially by the tiny scale of the pitch and sprites, but this has its advantages. Instead of hoofing the ball up the pitch to unseen team-mates (how many games have been ruined by that?) or having to refer to a radar scanner, you can see most of your team on screen and so pass to them intelligently. The Mega Drive version is even better than the original in this respect, as the players take up more realistic positions, including the full backs pushing up to help the attack. Another improvement is the way fouls can be punished with a red card anywhere on the pitch (rather than just outside the box). This makes for a cleaner, more skilful game — one thing I really hate in footy sims is unrealistically aggressive barging and fouling.

Perhaps the thing I was most worried about was the combination of joystick control and tricky dribbling. Thankfully Sensible have solved this with the old ball-glued-to-foot trick and an "idiot" shooting button. However, my old computer habits haven't completely deserted me yet and I couldn't resist plugging in a joystick to try the Expert mode. This is when I truly realised how good this game is: unlike most footy sims, the computer teams present a really tough (though never frustrating) challenge. While solo games are highly enjoyable, the best fun is to be had in multiplayer competitions. This is definitely a game to call all your mates round for. The lads done well.

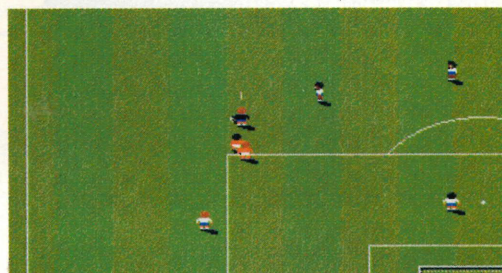
PHIL

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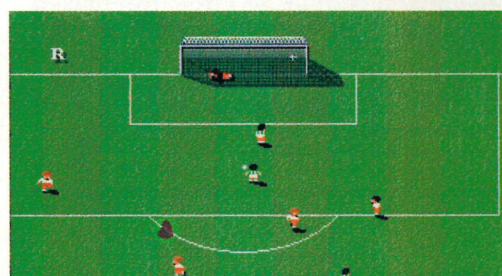
92



And the Rangers striker dives in for a powerful header past the despairing Norwich keeper. Goaaaaaalllll! The crowd go into a frenzy and you can watch it all again on the action replay.



The FIFA rule disallowing backpasses is in operation in *Sensible Soccer*. Pass the ball back to your keeper and he can't pick it up — instead he dribbles like any normal outfield player.



Foul an attacker in the box and you give away a penalty (no German refs here!). Taking a penalty is just like doing a normal shot, and at this range the goalie doesn't have much chance.

The ball flies into the top corner of the net, past the diving goalie. All the goalkeepers are computer-controlled and you usually have to swerve a good shot to get past them. Another good way of scoring is to curl a chip into the box and do a close-range header — you need really accurate timing for this, though.



It seems strange that console owners should have been deprived of a good console simulation of our national game for so long. Now, like buses, two come along at once: FIFA International and Sensible Soccer.

At this point I have to point out a clear distinction that has been missed by many people when reviewing these two games: Sensible Soccer is not a football simulation — it is a football game. In no way do the sprites in Sensi behave like realistic football players. Yes they slide-tackle, shoot for goal and tumble over when fouled, but at the end of the day the whole product is very stylised and very original. Don't be disheartened though because, in a field where it is tough to do something both new and effective, Sensible Soccer shines like a beacon of playability.

Grumble time. I hate it when good games are spoilt by big business paranoia forcing changes to a successful formula. I enjoyed Sensi immensely on the Amiga, and part of that fun came from being able to play as my favourite side with all my favourite players. Unfortunately due to legal reasons, all the team and player names have been changed. A bit sad really, the game sat at number one in the charts for 17 weeks on other formats and no-one sued then, did they? The good news is that you can at least edit the names to change them to real players, if you like.

Sensible Soccer is a very enjoyable footy game. There are enough options to keep everyone happy and enough challenge to make scoring a sky-punching experience. Play it first to make sure it is really what you want from a soccer game, but I don't think too many people will be disappointed.

DAVE

Bringing an attacker down on the edge of the area isn't a good idea (unless you're Dutch, of course): as well as the chance of a red card, you give away a free kick in a dangerous position. Using aftertouch, it's possible to bend a shot around the wall.

in a field where it is tough to do something both new and effective, Sensi shines like a beacon of playability.



Sensible Soccer is undoubtedly going to face comparisons with the greatest football game ever. I am, of course, talking about the wondrous J League Striker. The first noticeable thing about Sensible is the fact that the spites are tiny. But, don't let this put you off, this is one mean football game. Reiterating the fact that this is not a football simulation, Sensible Soccer is an out and out fun footy game that'll keep you preoccupied with the fortunes of the numerous teams and challenges you'll face in the various competitions.

The control of play takes a little getting used to, as does getting to grips with the tackling, shooting and passing. Once mastered (don't worry, it won't take very long), the game takes on a whole new light. Playing against our resident World Champion, Phil "Crusher" King was a real initiation into the game for me. Every mistake I made would involve either a goal, or a dramatic save from my ever willing goalkeeper. The three difficulty settings mean that however good you get, you'll always face a challenge whenever you play.

Following on from Dave's comment, it's really stupid that Sensible Soccer has changed the names of the players, for example Paul Gascoigne now becomes Peul Gescioigne - daft or what? Well, that's my only real complaint. For me, nothing will ever replace J League, but Sensible Soccer is certainly one that I'll be playing during my lunch breaks.

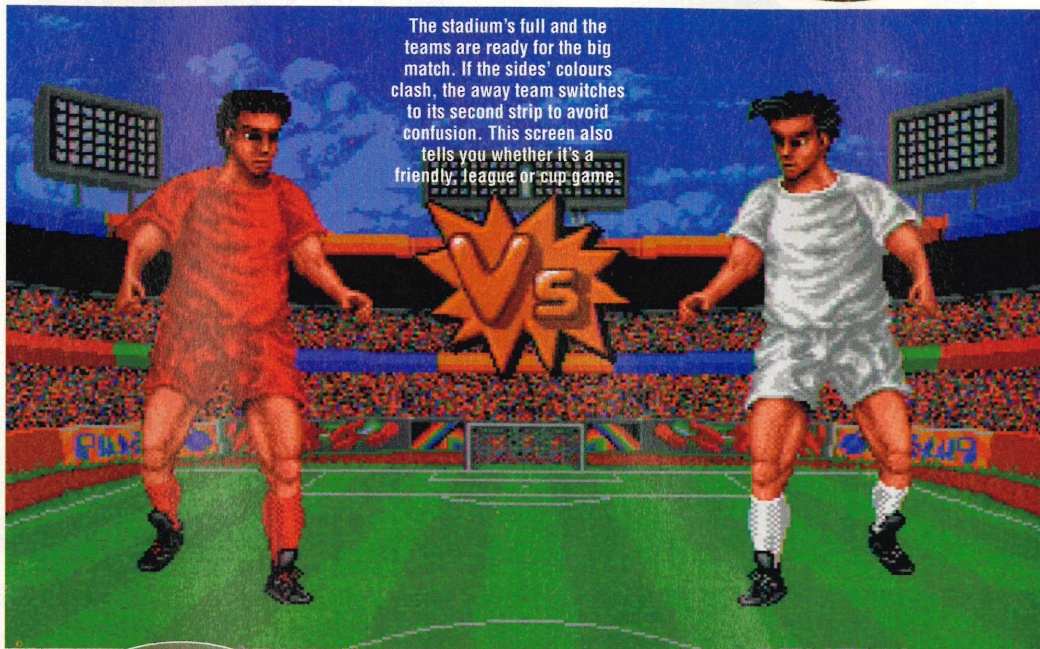
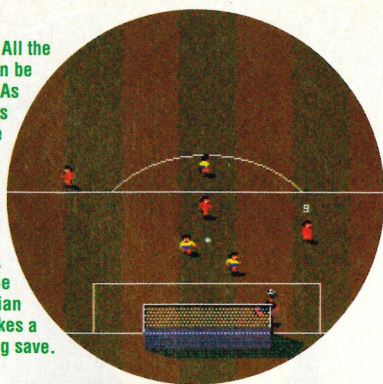
STEVE



Who's been a naughty boy then? It's an early bath for this player as he gets sent off for either a very nasty foul or his second bookable offence. In cup and league competitions, booked and sent-off players are suspended for one or more matches.



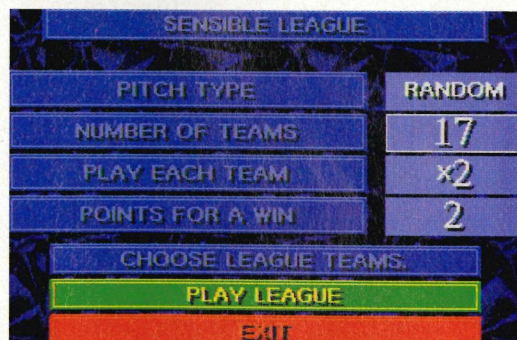
(Left) All the teams can be edited. As well as altering the home and away kits, you can change the players and manager. (Right) The Romanian goalie makes a stunning save.



The stadium's full and the teams are ready for the big match. If the sides' colours clash, the away team switches to its second strip to avoid confusion. This screen also tells you whether it's a friendly, league or cup game.



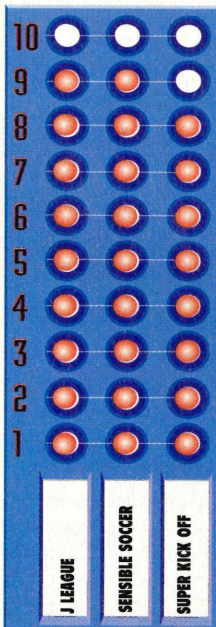
(Left) When the ball goes over the sidelines, a throw-in is awarded. Throw the ball in any direction, holding fire to set the power. (Right) You can create your own leagues and cups, setting the number of teams, matches and pitch type.



MP

FINAL VERDICT

"A completely different ball game to FIFA International Soccer, this is just as playable. The small scale of the pitch looks offputting but it enables you to plan your moves better as you can see more of the pitch and most of your teammates."



SENSIBLE SOCCER

SONY £44.99 OUT NOW

1-2 players
 16Mbit
 save tournament
 available in UK

GAMEPLAY	91
GRAPHICS	87
SOUND	85
ADDITION	93

OVERALL 92%

INSTANT ACCESS

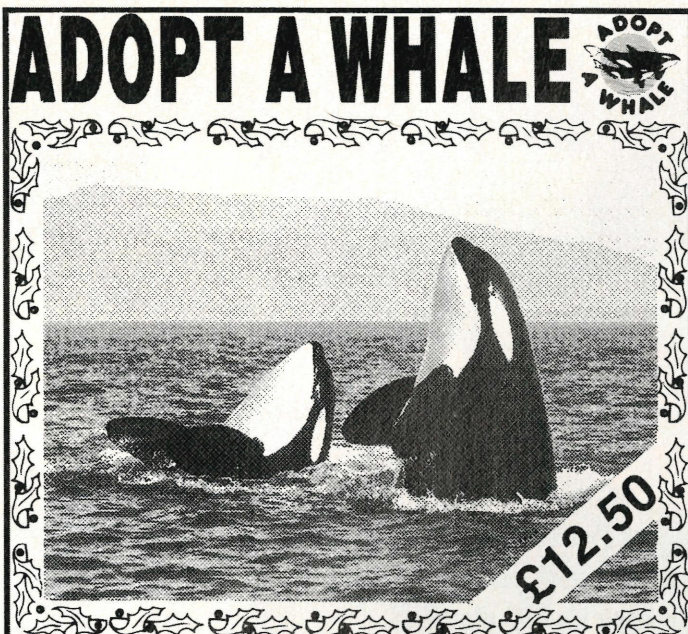


Photo courtesy Kelly Balcomb-Bartok

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<p>A5 TOP NOTCH Adult male. Born 1958. Easily recognised by the "notch" out of the top of his dorsal fin. He now spends most of his time with his brother, Foster.</p>	<p>A25 SHARKY Adult female. Born 1971. Named after the distinctive shape of her dorsal fin. She has a calf Spike, born in 1986.</p>

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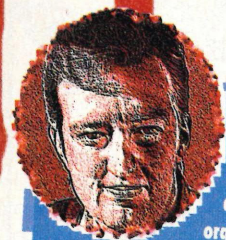
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Zombies

Even more terrifying than Jeremy Beadle! So real it'll make your flesh crawl with fear!! Yes, they came from outer space to steal our Mega Drives!!! Phil King munches his popcorn and dares to peer through his 3-D glasses...



I love all those naff B-movies, and *Zombies* is just like starring in one. The atmosphere is absolutely perfect, set by spooky organ music combined with graphics that ooze character. There's just so much humour within the game, you'll be in hysterics even when you die. Funniest of all has to be the range of weapons the heroes use, chucking everything bar the kitchen sink at the constantly regenerating nasties. Even the level titles are hilarious, often preceded by funny trailer-style phrases like 'even more terrifying than level 5' and really setting the scene for what's to come.

Playing the first couple of levels I thought it was good fun but there wasn't that much to it. However, the game just gets better and better as you progress, with new monsters making an appearance on every level – along with more weapons, items and scary surprises. The latter include the mad axemen chopping through hedges to get at you and giant snake-monsters suddenly emerging from the ground. You're soon yelling 'whoaahhh!' as you run for your life from a horde of chasing mutants. Two-player games are even more fun, often ending up in a mad frenzy to grab the goodies.

Despite the strikingly authentic atmosphere, *Zombies* is hardly the gaming equivalent of a B-movie – with gameplay this good it's a true blockbuster.

PHIL

Long before the days of multi-screen cinemas, there was the B-movie. For the price of a single admission you'd see not one but two films. Great value for money, eh? Well, it was if you liked science-fiction and horror flicks with extremely low budgets and very silly titles. The even dafter story lines were of the 'aliens invading to mate with Earth women' type, and nearly always set in small Mid West towns. Cheap props were often made from household objects, including spaceship seats adapted from garden furniture. Ironically, these dreadful movies have now achieved cult status among a new generation of fans watching them on late-night TV.

Now Konami bring you *Zombies*, a tongue-in-cheek horror game taking inspiration from virtually every B-movie made. It starts off with zombies rampaging through the gardens and houses of a quiet neighbourhood. Controlling either a geeky kid with 3-D specs or the attractive girl next door, one or two players have to rescue the neighbours before the undead baddies reach them.

A radar scanner helps you spot your neighbours as you explore back gardens, squirting the zom-

bies with your water-gun to destroy them. Ammo is limited, however, so other weapons need to be collected. These include a bazooka, lawnmower, tomatoes, dinner plates, knives and forks – you name it, the heroes throw it at the baddies.

Finding keys enables you to unlock doors and enter houses, opening cupboards to reveal more useful items such as first-aid kits and potions with varying effects – the most useful mutates the hero into a wall-smashing wolfman.

Rescue the last neighbour and an exit door appears, taking you to the next of 55 terrifying levels. With such classic titles as "Lumberjack Hedgemaze Mayhem", "Squidmen From The Deep" and "Mars Needs Cheerleaders", the levels get even hairier as the heroes are attacked by mutant plants, Martians (including their flying saucer), Egyptian mummies, ski-mask-wearing axemen and even a giant toddler!

Can you save your neighbours, and mom's apple pie, from the terrors of a thousand B-movies? Who knows, but you'll sure have a lot of spine-chilling fun along the way. Get a cushion ready to hide behind; this is going to be one long fright night...



MEGA BLAST!



Dr Tongue's castle is full of zombies and mummies. You need a lot of keys to open the doors to save the neighbours here: can you rescue that cheerleader and the baby? At the moment you're armed with knives and forks. The chest you're holding is actually a smart-bomb, destroying all the horrors on the screen.



The girl character ventures into a toxic waste dump populated by The Blob-style monsters. Here she's squirting one with the fire extinguisher to temporarily freeze it. However, a better weapon for these would be the ice lollies. She's also holding a mystery potion: when drunk, it produces one of several random effects.

AS



The bazooka weapon is particularly useful as you can use it to blast through doors as well as some walls and obstacles. The radar scanner on the right shows the position of nearby neighbours that you need to rescue. The little psychopaths are a real menace on this level: they're hard to kill and keep throwing lots of hatchets at you.

OVERALL %

93

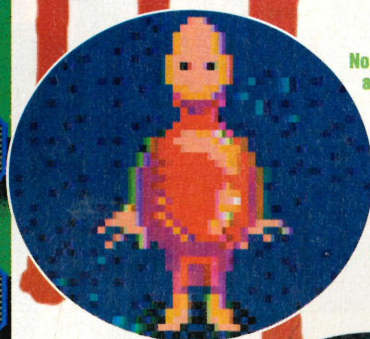
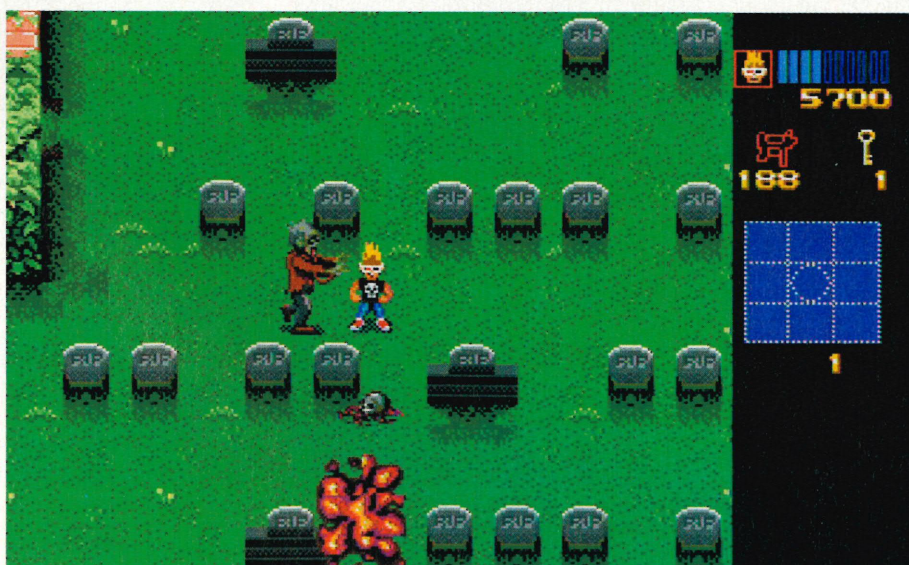
a glorious trip through horror's hall of fame and impossible to play without a wry smirk



- 1 Zombies keep regenerating as fast as you can shoot them, so it's only worth blasting the ones in your way. If they run into you, they decrease your energy by one point.
- 2 Oh no! One of your neighbours has just been killed by a zombie. It's too late for this one, but you need to find the other neighbours before they suffer a similar fate.
- 3 Your neighbours are really stupid, aren't they? I mean, there are all these zombies on the rampage and they're still out in the garden enjoying a barbecue!

- 4 As both heroes are excellent swimmers, you can venture into the water with no worries. It's a pretty safe refuge as most monsters hate water and so won't follow you in.
- 5 What is this, the training camp of the local trampoline team? Never mind, you can bounce on them to jump right over hedges to save going round.
- 6 Houses and sheds usually contain several cupboards and sideboards which can all be opened to reveal useful items and, occasionally, a nasty ghost.

This doesn't seem like the cleverest place to visit: the graveyard is absolutely full of rampaging zombies. Here, the wacky hero destroys a zombie with his water gun, but he'll have to be quick to avoid the one approaching from the left. His energy meter shows he's only got four points left. He needs to find a medikit to replenish it.



No, this isn't some weird alien monster - it's actually the boy hero who's just been trapped by a Martian bubble which removes some energy. If you find a bubble-gun you can do the same to monsters.

There are lots of special potions to find and drink, with varying effects. One of them turns you into this wolf monster, able to bash through brick walls.



Never billed as a blockbuster, *Zombies* has to be the "sleeper" hit of the year. Witty, polished, and eminently playable, you won't plug many games better than this into your console this Christmas. Based around every B-movie you've ever squealed, sniggered, or covered your eyes at, this brilliantly animated 55-level romp is a gloriously varied trip through horror's hall of fame and is almost impossible to play without a wry smirk on your face.

The sprites, backdrops and pick-ups are all perfectly illustrated and visually distinctive when used. Most are there for a particular purpose, and time and experience eventually educates the player as to where and when to utilise each object rather than simply wasting them willy-nilly. This makes the game enjoyable at both a visual and cerebral level and ensures that the challenge lies in both speed of reflex and quickness of mind.

Thoroughly enjoyable, totally playable, and very, very big, *Zombies* is one of the best value-for-money carts you'll see on the shelves this year.

DAVE

Zombie Items

Hidden around the scenery are lots of useful items and weapons. Here's just a few...

WOLF POTION

Potions often have very useful effects when drunk. This one is probably the best, turning you into the furry wolfman who can kill baddies with ease and smash through any obstacles.



BAZOOKA

This is one of the most useful weapons to be found. Not only does it blast most monsters away with just a single shot, it can also blast through walls and doors. It's best kept for this purpose.



CLOWN

When you're being attacked from all sides by mad axemen and psychos, this item proves essential. Release the laughing clown toy and all the monsters start hacking away at it, ignoring you altogether.



FIRE EXTINGUISHER

Although this weapon doesn't kill any monsters, it temporarily freezes them so you can make your escape. This makes it especially useful for tackling the really tough baddies – instead of killing them, just squirt 'em and run.



KEY

Keys are one of the most plentiful objects, often found inside cupboards and dustbins. They are used automatically to open any doors you pass through – don't waste them.



KNIFE & FORK

Unsurprisingly, this weapon is found in the kitchen, along with a set of dinner plates! Though knives and forks can be used to kill most baddies, it's best to save them for the werewolves, which they destroy with a single hit.



LAWNMOWER

We're not sure whether this is a lawnmower or some sort of weird rotivator. Either way, it's great for killing huge monster plants and essential for cutting a safe path through their poisonous spores on the ground.



MAGIC CHEST

Often found within Egyptian pyramids, this item acts as a smart bomb, destroying all monsters currently on screen. There aren't many of these chests about, so you'd better save them for when you're really in a jam.



MEDIKIT

Well I wonder what one of these does... of course, as in most games, it replenishes your energy to maximum. Therefore the best way to save these is to only use them when your energy is very low indeed – preferably one point.



MYSTERY POTION

These potions have random effects when drunk. Will you be turned temporarily invincible? Will your movement speed up dramatically? Or will you turn into a green, uncontrollable zombie? Drink it and see.



Agh! A zombie takes a bite out of the wacky hero who instinctively calls out for his mummy – uh oh, I don't think he meant that kind of mummy! He'd better grab those magic chests quick, as they act as smart bombs killing everything on screen. These Egyptian pyramids are full of surprises, including secret passages that lead through those dark areas to other parts of the level.



Uncannily resembling the office of one of MEGA Power's tired rivals, this spooky place is known as "The Office Of The Dead". Just above the hero lies some extra ammunition for his water gun, so it's a good idea to grab that before entering the exit door. The latter appears when all the neighbours on each level have been either rescued or killed – if they all snuff it, though, it's game over.



Welcome to Gardener's World with your host, Weird Kid. Here he demonstrates how to get rid of troublesome weeds with a lawnmower. Not only do these plants periodically splurt out ketchup-like gunge, but their poisonous spores spread all over the grass, hurting the hero as he walks over them – so even when the plant's dead he needs to mow a safe path through these.



The level called "Weird Kids On The Block" was obviously inspired by The Invasion Of The Bodysnatchers. Perfect clones of the heroes emerge from plant pods and roam around the neighbourhood. Bumping into your evil counterparts results in energy loss so, if you can remember which one you are, blast them to oblivion.

Toddlers are enough trouble when they're small, but this one's 40 feet tall! You'd better take cover or he'll crush you as flat as a pancake. Believe it or not, this is actually one of your neighbours' kids. You have to rescue him by repeatedly squirting him with your water gun until he reverts back to his normal size. This isn't as easy as it sounds, though, when the little scamp keeps squirting his massive milk bottle at you. And you still have all the other neighbours to save as well.



This game instantly reminded me of EA's Haunting, the graphics giving the effect of a cartoon-cum-B-movie. I progressed through the first five levels without too much hassle, more than anything getting a feel for the action. From there, when I became aware that there were 55 levels and no continues, I thought that this was one hell of a game.

Saving the neighbours is done in such a comical and amusing way that it's hard to find fault with this. Objects that you can collect and throw at the zombies are hilarious, the levels' scenery is diverse and the continuous organ music droning on in the background really enhances the feel of this game. The best thing about it is the more you play, the more you love it. It's visually stunning and the gameplay certainly sets you one huge challenge.

I suspect that this won't be as highly publicised as other games this Christmas, but make sure you look out for it. At £39.99 it's cheaper than most games, and certainly a damn sight better!

STEVE



Boing! Boing! Boing! Trampolining's such great fun I could stay here all day. It's also a great way of taking a short cut by bouncing over hedges and walls. It's so thoughtful of the neighbours to leave these things lying around in the garden. Talking of neighbours, there's one showing up on your radar scanner, so you'd better bounce over that wall to rescue them before they get killed by the zombies.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"This has to be one of the funniest releases of the year, recreating the classic B-movie atmosphere perfectly with much humour. It's also extremely playable, particularly with two players, and its 55 levels present a monstrous challenge."

10	●	○	○	○
9	●	○	○	○
8	●	○	○	○
7	●	○	○	○
6	●	○	○	○
5	●	○	○	○
4	●	○	○	○
3	●	○	○	○
2	●	○	○	○
1	●	○	○	○
GAUNTLET IV				
ZOMBIES				
HAUNTING				

ZOMBIES

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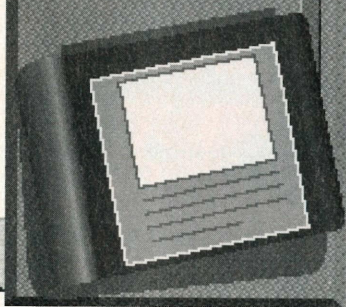
available in UK

GAMEPLAY	92
GRAPHICS	93
SOUND	91
ADDICTION	93

OVERALL 93%

INSTANT ACCESS

REVIEW



So you thought RoboCop had enough trouble defeating the monstrous ED-209? Pah, that's nothing — in Virgin's new game he has to face Terminators galore. Phil King eats up his baby food and prepares for the mother of all battles.

ROBOCOP VS TERMINATOR

This ingenious double movie licence offers two stars for the price of one. But how could RoboCop possibly face the Terminator?, you ask. Well, with a bit of artistic licence, that's how. Virgin have ingeniously adapted both movie story lines to mould them into one. We all know about Skynet, a computer-controlled totalitarian regime which sends Terminators back in time to make sure political rebels were never born. But did you know that one was also sent back to make sure RoboCop fought with ED-209 in the OCP headquarters? Hmm...

And why did Skynet bother? Well, it seems RoboCop's design was the only ever successful fusion of a human mind with machinery. This is obviously a useful capability for a megalomaniac computer aiming to control humans, so it duly nabbed RoboCop to absorb his technology. Now the only hope for mankind is that Robo can penetrate Skynet's Terminator-infested levels to destroy the CPU itself.

The action starts in Old Detroit as Robo aims to infiltrate the OCP headquarters in the first five levels, starting with an easy "trainer" stage. As in the levels to follow, RoboCop strolls along, picking off

gun-toting assailants with his trusty pistol while carefully avoiding their energy-draining bullets. More powerful weapons, like grenade and missile launchers, can be collected along the way. Old Robo is more agile than we remember, too. Not only does he crouch and jump, he can also climb up ladders and across pipes.

Although the multiway-scrolling levels are large, finding your way through isn't a problem when there are flashing arrows to guide you. Reach the end of the second level and you face the first Terminator. As in the film, he keeps coming back to life in ever more skeletal form. The next stage sees Robo taking out security cameras and finally battling with a robotic guardian. This is just a taster, however, for the dramatic appearance of the gigantic ED-209 at the end of the fifth level (a tour of the OCP offices). The chunky evil robot walks left and right, trying to stomp on RoboCop and only stopping to fire a salvo of bullets.

Beat him and Robo integrates himself into the OCP computer to reappear in the future for five even harder stages. Can RoboCop fry the Skynet CPU, or will he end up in the scrapyard? Only you can decide in this ultra-violent robotic romp.

It's quite satisfying when you blow enemies away. But that's all you really ever do.



While the title is a mouth-watering prospect for fans of the movies, unfortunately the game is not. For a start, it's a bit disappointing you can't choose between controlling RoboCop or the Terminator. Okay, this would have needed a dramatic redesign of the gameplay, but as it stands RoboCop Vs Terminator could easily have been named plain RoboCop if not for the occasional Terminator appearance thrown in for good measure (and added hype potential). While I'm at it, the shoot-'em-up gameplay's strangely reminiscent of the old RoboCop games on the computer formats.

Mind you, what else can you do with a robotic cop, other than having him stroll around and shooting bad guys? It's all fairly playable and quite satisfying when you blow enemies away in a bloody explosion. But that's all you really ever do and I'm afraid my interest started to wane after a few goes. Even the superbaddie confrontations aren't much to look forward to; merely a case of following a set movement and firing pattern to defeat graphically unimpressive adversaries. It's ideal gameplay for robots.

PHIL

ROBOCOP



Well, I'll second Phil's opinion that not being able to choose between RoboCop or the Terminator is a complete pain in the neck. For heaven's sake, the Terminator only appears at odd intervals. All said and done, this game is okay if you like mundane, run-of-the-mill shoot-'em-ups. The gameplay isn't exactly overstimulating, but there are some amusing scenes where you blow away the bad guys.

Graphically it's nothing to write home about, and the sound FX and music could certainly have done with some more thought and imagination. Producing a game from two film licences, one would expect it to be totally playable and full of action taken from the movies, but sadly this game lacks that. If you're a fan of this genre, it'll probably hold your attention for the duration of one game, but I don't think you'd want to keep going back to it!

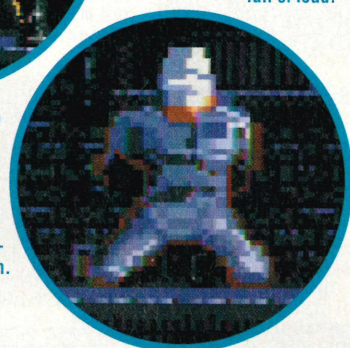
STEVE

OVERALL 7.

60



These fat blokes are a real menace. Not only do they fire loads of bullets at a rapid rate, but their flab obviously absorbs some of your firepower as they take quite a few hits to kill. You really have to pump these guys full of lead.



On some levels you need to rescue hostages or rebels along the way. These are easy to spot as they're usually tied up. Just run into the guys to free them. Don't bother to stop firing – you can't shoot them.

ROBOCOP POWER



- 1 RoboCop's life meter decreases every time he's hit by enemy bullets. It's just as well it can be replenished by collecting the baby-food jars found every so often.
- 2 Lives. If Robo's energy meter reaches zero he loses a life. This happens instantly if he's trampled by ED-209! Lose all five lives and you have to use a continue to carry on.
- 3 The score is increased every time you shoot a baddie. At the end of each level, score bonuses are totted up for hostages rescued, rebels freed, security cameras shot etc.
- 4 These icons show which weapons RoboCop has in possession (here, only his pistol). It's often a good idea to keep a more powerful weapon for the end-of-level baddies.
- 5 OCP and Skynet cronies often appear above RoboCop, firing their weapons down at him. Guys even poke guns through windows, so he's always got to be alert.
- 6 The shiny metal copper himself. By holding down the fire button and moving up/down, Robo can shoot baddies on higher levels or geezers who pop up from manholes.

ROBOCOP'S GUNS

RoboCop may be a baby as far as food goes, but when it comes to weaponry he's into real grown-up guns. Here's just a few of the ones he can collect...

LASER GUN

This medium-strength gun emits a fine red laser beam when used.

As such it's quite useful for picking off a line of baddies, but not that good if there are loads of enemies above and below – requiring exact aiming, it takes too much time to pick them off. Laser guns are quite plentiful.



GATLING GUN

Whoah! Now this is what I call a weapon! This monster machine gun isn't generally found throughout the levels, but drops off when you damage ED-209. It's the second most-powerful weapon in the game, firing short burst of high-powered bullets – excellent for superbaddies.



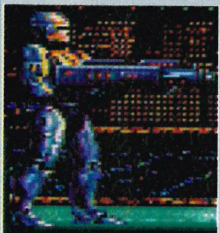
GRENADE LAUNCHER

This fires a stream of grey grenades which can then be directed by moving – a bit like guided missiles. This is obviously very useful for attacking baddies on higher platforms from underneath. Grenade launchers are just as plentiful as laser guns.



HOMING MISSILE GUN

This is the most useful weapon on the higher levels when it's important to stay as far away from the enemies as possible. It sends out a stream of small missiles which automatically make their way towards any targets on screen. Brilliant for paving a path through baddies.



PISTOL

RoboCop starts off the game with just his trusty police pistol. Unsurprisingly it's the least powerful of all the weapons in the game, shooting tiny bullets straight ahead. Even so, it should be sufficient to get you through the earlier levels without too much trouble.



Sorry, but I think everyone is being far too complementary about a below average game. There is no excuse for taking a great licence like this and turning it into an unimaginative piece of substandard blasting. The Terminators in no way resemble the ones in the movie, except at the end of the levels, and throughout this dull drudge of a platforming shoot-'em-up you could be forgiven for thinking that you were playing one of the ancient, and consequently dated, RoboCop games. There is absolutely no excitement or addictiveness in this game and the programmers seem to be relying upon the tasteless explosion of blood and guts – that you get when you shoot an enemy – to sell the game. There are far too many good games around at the moment for you to be wasting your hard-earned cash on bland sprinkling of thought too.

DAVE



(Left) After negotiating the Toxic Waste Dump with its barrels of steaming gunk to jump over, RoboCop comes up against this green Robo-tank. Trundling left and right on its caterpillar track, it fires streams of explosive bullets in varying trajectories. Even when RoboCop manages to destroy the turret, the bottom half carries on going, requiring quite a lot of hits to put out of action once and for all.



The fifth level takes RoboCop inside the OCP headquarters where he's assaulted by guys with missile launchers. As well as killing the villains, RoboCop's mission objective is to knock out all the security monitors, like the one above him here.



On the very first "trainer" level, RoboCop comes up against gun-toting thugs. Even with just the pistol, these are easy meat, exploding in a shower of blood when hit. Watch out for geezers poking their guns out of windows and manholes, though.

































On all the levels, RoboCop gets to climb up things – on the stage three building site it's chains. Here he hangs on with one hand and blasts that baddie at point-blank range with the grenade launcher. On this level, Robo must destroy security cameras.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"Two movie megastars for the price of one sounds great, but the actual game is a mediocre shoot-'em-up with very samey levels. Also, there's a lot more RoboCop than Terminator here, so fans of the latter will be disappointed."

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REVIEW



VIRTUAL pinball

Up to EA's usual high standard of slick graphics, but hard to get into and boring.

Remember the days of Seventies pinball, when you had to stuff a ten pence in the slot and not gasp in wonder at all the pretty lights? Steve Bough dragged himself out of his platforms and entered the Nineties to be faced with something called Virtual Pinball.

Electronic Arts, as you most probably know, produce more than their fair share of games. Being the second largest developer, only slightly behind Sega, means that they must carry on to produce top-quality games if they want to remain in that position. Of course, EA would not be EA without their beloved sports sims. Imagine if you will, hockey without EA, American football without John Madden, no PGA Tour Golf II. Sporting simulations aren't the only thing EA are famous for – look at the rather excellent Strike series, Desert and Jungle, and you'll see that they know a thing or two about giving the punters what they want.

They certainly hope arcade junkies will flip over their latest release, Virtual Pinball. Hearing the word "virtual", one might be forgiven for thinking that you put on a helmet, sit down and freak out in Cyberspace. The real reason is that the table has a layered effect to enhance the "virtual 3-D feel".

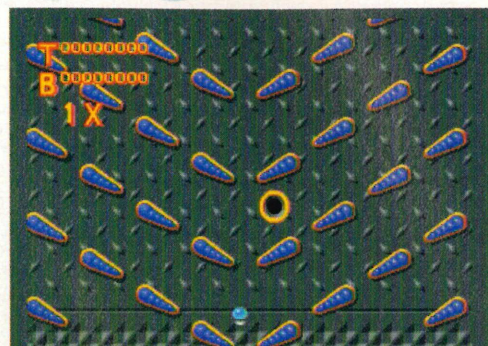
Essentially, it's an out and out pinball game, the emphasis being placed on your skill with the flip-

pers. As well as all the usual drop-targets and bumpers, each table has a multi-ball facility, making the whole game not only very tricky but quite insane as you try and keep more than one ball in play.

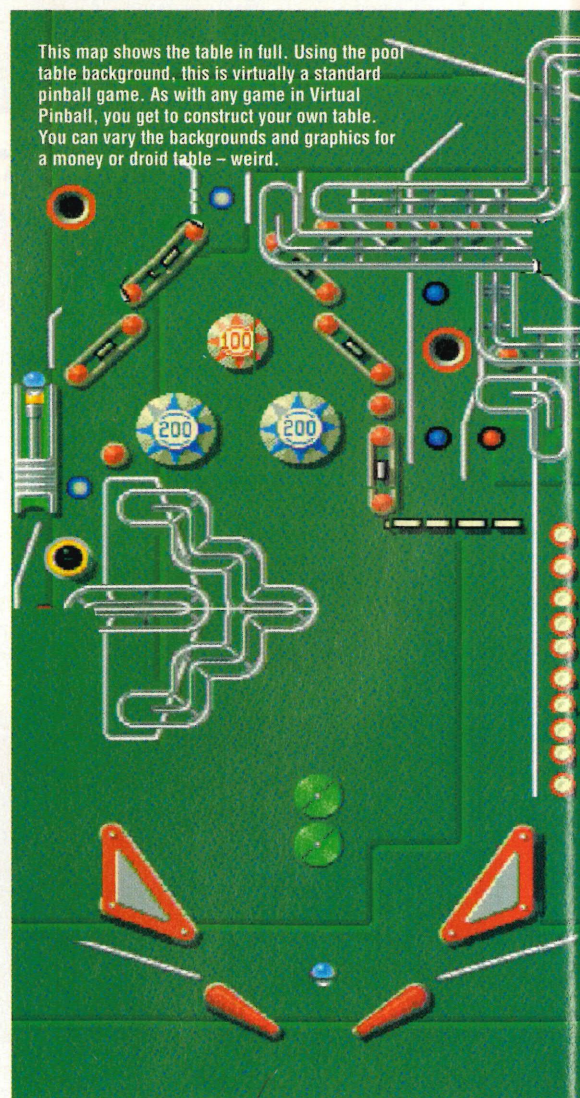
Virtual Pinball isn't just a normal game, though: it's publicised as the first pinball construction set.

You can modify the preset tables out of all recognition, adding extra targets, tracks and kick-walls etc. Not only this, but you can create your own tables from scratch in the Workshop, even choosing a graphical background and piece of music to suit. The cart includes a battery backup, so you can save up to eight of your own pinball tables to play later.

It does make a pleasant change to see Electronic Arts come up with something that is very different, rather than adding more updates to their sporting series – no matter how good they are. In the innovation stakes, Virtual Pinball is a step in the right direction – let's just hope we don't see Virtual Pinball '95 next year!



This small sub-game gives you an excellent chance to practise the art of flipping. Trying to stop the ball from hitting the bottom is easier said than done.



This map shows the table in full. Using the pool table background, this is virtually a standard pinball game. As with any game in Virtual Pinball, you get to construct your own table. You can vary the backgrounds and graphics for a money or droid table – weird.



When I first saw this game I must admit to being very excited about the prospect of being able to create and save my own tables, mix and match classic pinball table styles, and even choose the music that goes with them. The workshop function that lets you do all this is very impressive, very slick and very fast but unfortunately that's where it all ends. I wonder if the programmers ever really played pinball because it seems like they have grasped only the very rudimentary basics of the game. In fact, what they seem to have done is produced all the most basic elements of a pinball table and left out the game.

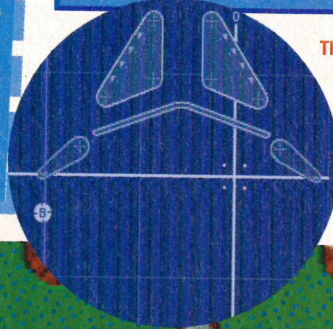
There is no skill to playing Virtual Pinball, the gameplay is slow and uneventful, the sound is totally flat and unexciting as the balls clunk and thud their way around the tables which are embarrassingly basic. No multipliers, no special bonus sections, no special features at all, I agree with Phil when he points out that should any of the featured tables, or in fact the ones you can throw together, appear in an arcade they would be lucky to take a penny.

The cart has almost certainly suffered for its clever customising function and although it appears very bright and slick, is devoid of almost all atmosphere. I don't know why it has been given the 'virtual' tag, but be warned, the only three Ds contained in this game are dull, dire and disappointing.

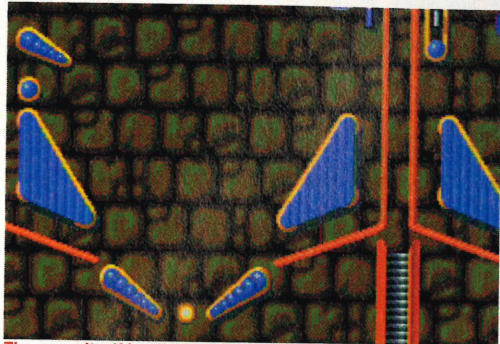
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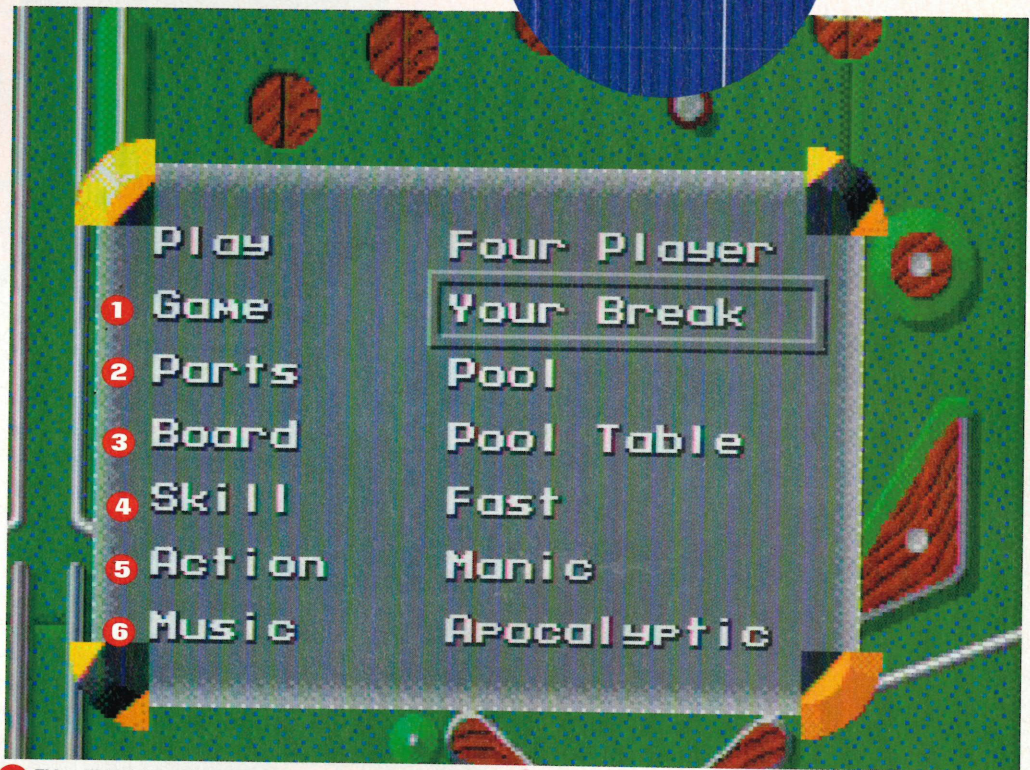
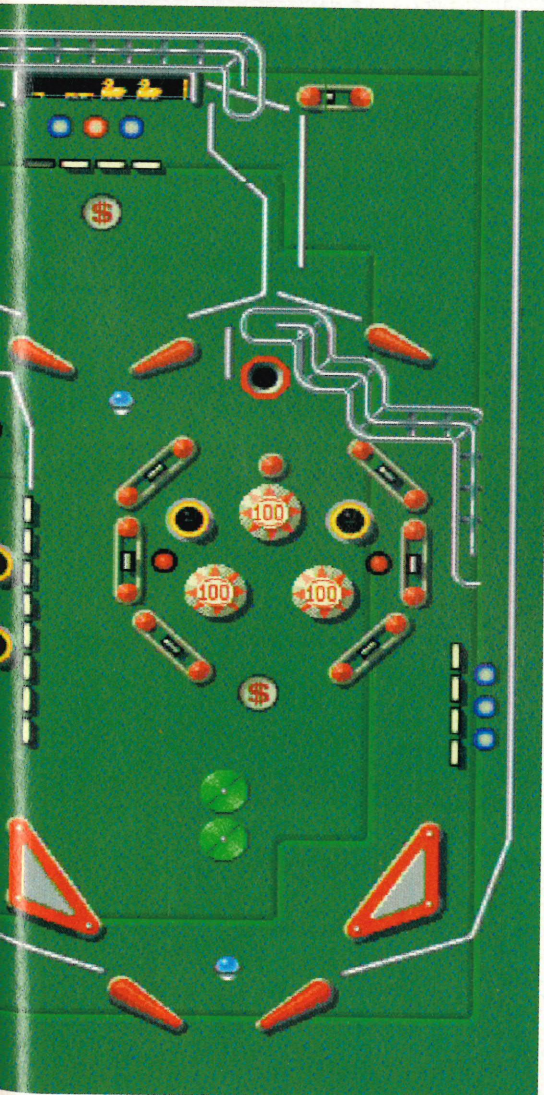
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This table is classed as the blueprint, and is for me the most artistic and good-to-look-at table within this game. Using the workshop mode, you can add more and more to this table, what fun!



The game itself hardly ever varies, pinball is pinball. All that does change is the backgrounds and the tables. Yes you can add more objects to make it harder, but why bother?



- 1 This will flick through the list of games from which you can choose. There is a battery backup featured enabling you to save up to ten of your own tables.
- 2 This shows which parts will appear on the table when you start to play. For example, if you play on the pool table, expect to find pool-related parts.
- 3 The pool table is only one of a number of tables that you can choose from in *Virtual Pinball*. Other choices include classic and gore themes.
- 4 The skill level is self-explanatory. There are three levels: normal, fast and super-fast. As is to be expected, the super-fast is really fast and very tricky.
- 5 The action can be again varied from being manic to the extreme of hyper-manic. This basically means that the action gets faster and faster as you get better.
- 6 The music can be changed from insane to unstoppable levels of madness, although why you'd want to listen to this rubbish beats me!



Hanging around amusement arcades as I did as a youngster in my beloved Newquay, the machines that always drew my attention were arcade games like *Kung Fu Master*. Pinball machines were mainly reserved for nights spent in the pub. Don't get me wrong, I find a certain affinity in pinball, but I wouldn't describe it as one of my loves in life.

Virtual Pinball didn't surprise me in any way. I had a preconceived idea of what this game would be like, and I wasn't far wrong when I sat down and got into the job of playing it. I must admit I really do like the way you get to construct your own tables, select the music and add extra items to make it harder. At the end of the day, though, if you're not a massive fan of pinball you probably won't enjoy this much.

The word "virtual" has been cleverly used. You only have to hear that immortal word, and images of *Cyberdelia* instantly surround your thought processes. Don't let this fool you, it's "virtual" from the point of having a 3-D effect, but that's about it. The game plays as a normal pinball game and, although it's up to EA's usual high standard of slick graphics and sound, I found it hard to get into and quite often boring.

STEVE

MASSIVE POWER

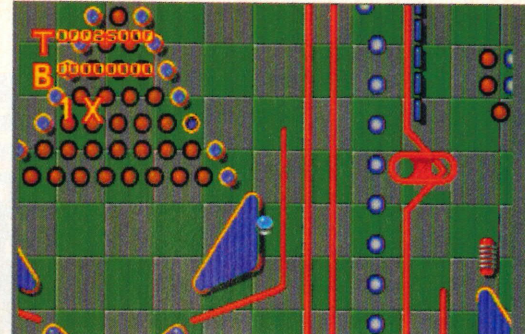
Flip back in time... CRÜE BALL

Released: December 1992

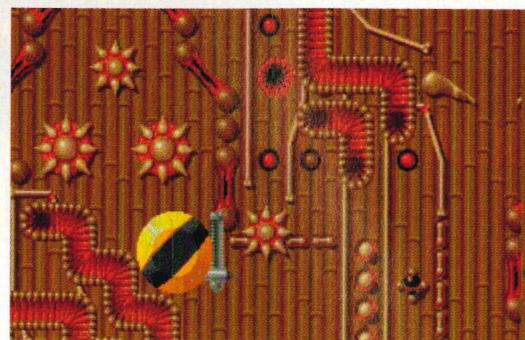
Electronic Arts released their first pinball game onto console with this rather fetching conversion. *Crüe Ball*, out last Christmas, featured music from that dreadful band Motley Crüe, but was in itself a rather good pinball game. Its nine tables were filled with all sorts of targets and bonus traps. Each table had to be "cleared" before it was possible to progress to the next level: the way you achieved this ranged from killing a certain number of creatures to hitting targets in a predetermined order.

Again, up to four players could play, and there was even an addition of a secret bonus level that allowed you to earn extra points and balls.

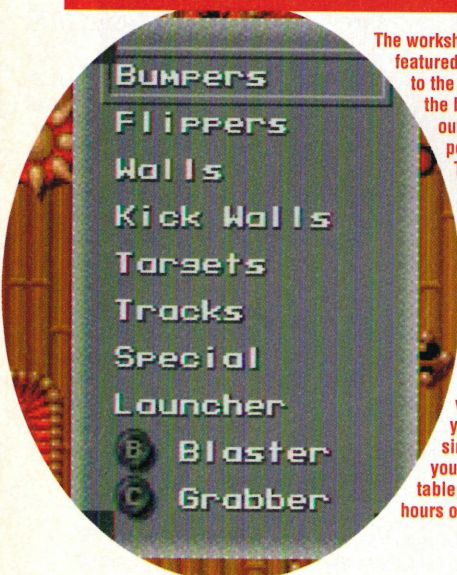
Crüe Ball was well praised by the specialist press, mainly on the strength that it gave gamers something different and adequately filled a niche in the console catalogue, this was definitely a must for pinball fans and metal heads alike.



The classic table features all these pretty graphics, and endless objects. Bouncing off each of the objects wins you loads of points, and hopefully more balls.



The gore level set against a bamboo background features tons of objects all waiting to get in your way. Flippers are allocated all over, but make sure you're quick on the buttons.



The workshop mode is featured in the picture to the left. This is the best feature out of a very poor bunch. The idea is that you can utilise any table that you want, whether you've designed it or not, and construct an even harder version. When you get better, simply design yourself a harder table, ensuring hours of gameplay.



Who gives a fig that you can create your own tables when the gameplay is so dull? And why is it so tedious?: because of the construction kit! You see, the limitations of this supposedly bonus feature has obviously hampered the programmers' ability to come up with good preset tables to play.

Creating an interesting pinball table with just the basic bumpers and chutes etc is an impossibility. You need a fun theme — like Jurassic Park or Dracula — and lots of unique, related features to keep you playing to see what exciting things will happen if you manage to hit all the targets etc. My idea of a good table is one where you can actually make progress, much like in a video game, activating new features and bonuses the longer you play.

The number of special features is limited on real pinball machines due to all the mechanics involved, so the potential for even better tables on a video game is enormous. This is what makes Virtual Pinball all the more disappointing. Although you can choose from vastly different (and technically excellent) graphical styles, the tables always seem very samey in the way they play — even if you design them yourself. And with no prospect of discovering any surprise features, hitting endless bumpers and targets soon gets flippin' boring. Tables like this would die a death in the arcades.

If you still fancy the idea of creating your own tables, my advice is to forget it until something better comes along. You're sure to be disappointed with Virtual Pinball's construction kit: using such basic pinball elements, you can't create anything worth playing.

PHIL

MP

FINAL VERDICT


"Well, the idea itself is really good, but sadly this game just doesn't work. Pinball isn't the best of games on console, and *Virtual Pinball* is a great letdown, especially coming from those masters of games, EA. Rent, don't buy!"

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REVIEW



SONIC SPIN



Emerging from the water below, Sonic starts his adventure at the foot of the first massive pinball table. When he walks into that short tube to his right, he's sprung up into the action. The flower-like item on the left is a special teleport plant.



Whoah! Can you save Sonic from the jaws of death? Quick, jump up and then flip the blue hedgehog up the table to safety. At least you get a second chance on the first level – on later ones, miss your flip and Sonic can fall straight to his doom.



Sonic goes for a ride on the rickety miniature railway. The bridge on the left has been raised by pulling a lever. This enables Sonic to go down to the left where he smashes through a door and grabs one of the three Chaos Emeralds.



Worms emerge from below to act as bumpers – they don't hurt Sonic. To the left is the gunk tank: you need to hit the targets either side of it to drain the slime so you can get the gem.

It's a wonder the British Hedgehog Preservation Society doesn't complain about this. A poor little hedgehog, obviously frightened to death, follows his instincts and curls into a tight ball to be battered against pinball bumpers and targets galore. But when the hedgehog in question is Sonic, a real tough nut, we all know there must be some other motive than cruelty.

Yes, the evil Robotnik is up to his tricks again. This time he's converted a volcanic island into an ultra-efficient factory, where he plans to turn all planet Mobius's inhabitants into robots. And guess what, this new "Veg-O fortress" is protected by a pinball defence system! There's only one thing for it: Sonic must infiltrate the fortress and grab all the Chaos Emeralds that hold the crumbling installation together.

Starting his mission in a short corridor below the first table/level, Sonic is controlled as normal. Until, that is, he walks into the launcher to be sprung upwards as a spinning ball. From here you control not Sonic but the table's flippers, aiming to knock the hero into the right targets and tubes to reach the three Emeralds needed to complete the level. Unsurprisingly these are well hid-

den within the scrolling table, and protected by quite a few obstacles. For instance, on the first level, one of the jewels is located inside a tank of slime: you need to hit the right targets to drain this before you can grab the Emerald.

Things are complicated by the inclusion of various mutant creatures wandering around. Most of these simply get in the way, knocking Sonic into awkward places, although they can sometimes be used to help him up overhead tubes. The real hazard, as in any pinball game, is allowing the ball to go down between the bottom pair of flippers. This usually means instant death, although sometimes there's a barrel from which Sonic can quickly jump back into play before a giant mechanical slime-dragon devours him.

Collect all three Emeralds and Sonic can enter a chamber to face the large end-of-level baddie – destroyed by repeatedly bouncing on its head.

Defeat this and it's onto the next table – after attempting to release all the animals in a single-screen 3-D pinball bonus stage. In addition, if Sonic manages to collect all the rings on a level, he enters a special stage similar to the bonus ones but with three balls to play with.

Hardly a standard pinball game, Sonic Spinball is an innovative hybrid that looks set to launch its hero to an even higher profile. Let's just hope he doesn't get too bruised in the process.



SPINBALL

After his recent debut on Mega-CD, Sonic's gone flippin' mad. On witnessing the massive pinball-style levels in his latest spin-off, he rolled up to play ball with Phil King.



Being a pinball fan, I was really looking forward to Sonic Spinball. To start with, I thought it was just a regular pinball game, and maybe a bit naff with not that many score bonuses and things to light. However, it soon became apparent that this is a very weird, and wonderful, game indeed. Each labyrinthine level is really several tables in one, all packed with features and surprises: Sonic even takes a ride on a miniature railway at one point.

The main criticism of pinball games is usually that racking up bonuses gets a bit tedious after a while. Sonic Spinball is different in this respect, due to its overall long-term objective. Rather than just trying to get a high score, there's a real purpose to the play. Completing a level is a complicated process, hitting targets and chutes to open other entrances and activate other necessary features.

Thus the compulsion to carry on playing and get further is just as strong as in any other Sonic adventure. The only real reservation I have is whether four levels will be enough for good gamers. There's certainly plenty of flippin' fun to be had.

PHIL

it soon became apparent that this was a very weird, and wonderful, game indeed

OVERALL %

89



- 1 Flippers are the key to the whole game as, apart from slightly altering Sonic's flight path in the air, this is your only means of controlling his direction.
- 2 These bumpers are just like you'd find on a normal pinball table. They send Sonic bouncing off in a different direction – sometimes he bounces several times between them.
- 3 At the moment these tubes are sealed, but hit the two targets at the top of this table section and they open. Hit Sonic up one and he travels to another part of the level.
- 4 These strange worms appear when Sonic enters this part of the table. They are quite useful, acting as bumpers to bounce Sonic up to hopefully hit the necessary targets.
- 5 When Sonic hits both the upper targets, the slime tank is drained. However, the Emerald can only be collected from above, once both the other gems have been grabbed.
- 6 Rings don't play as large a part in this game as in previous Sonic adventures. Nevertheless, they add to his score and if he collects them all he gets to play a special bonus level.

MASSIVE POWER



With the release of Sonic on the CD, and now Sonic Spinball, our spiky blue hedgehog is certainly back in the limelight. Normally wherever Sonic's involved you can be virtually guaranteed of a very good game. So, is this the case with Sonic Spinball? Well, the answer is most definitely yes. At first, because it's so different from Sonic's other adventures, you'll wonder what the hell is going on. The Emeralds still exist, but instead of collecting them by running, you take part in a massive game of pinball.

As usual, all the graphics are totally wonderful, and the gameplay is certainly challenging. It's slightly let down by the fact that there are only four levels, but each is big and will take a long time to complete. The addition level is again set on very high and this game is very difficult to put down once you've started playing, just like Sonic's previous adventures. This is one more in the Sonic series that's most certainly worth checking out.

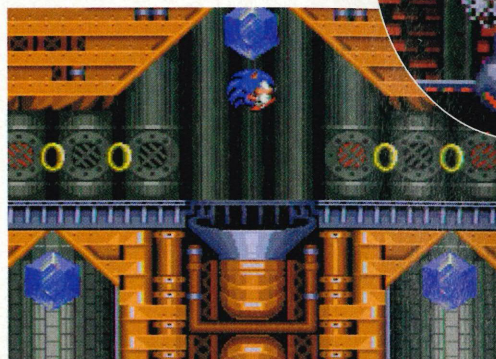
STEVE



Those two creatures jump on the bellows to send Sonic upwards under the power of steam. The spiky one often gets a steam boost upwards on the second volcanic level.



Between the main levels, Sonic gets to play this special bonus stage. Here he has to knock the ball into those containers several times to free the animals. Then he can knock Dr Robotnik out of his ship.



On the second level, Sonic flies up the big tube to grab one of the three Emeralds. If he lands on the side platforms he can run along and collect all those rings. To get the other two gems he needs to boost himself up the tubes by activating steam jets.



The third level sees things getting much trickier. Here Sonic is trapped inside a "power chamber": while it doesn't harm him, when it releases Sonic it'll send him flying off at great speed in a random direction, so watch it. There are loads of special tubes and loops to disorient you in this level.



Arrgghh! On the third mechanical level, there's a wider gap between the flippers. If Sonic falls between them he's mangled by those huge circular blades, so there's no room for error.



Sonic spins around a loop: when he reaches the bottom he's fired by that big gun thing. This sends him flying across at high speed into a gate that he needs to hit several times to open.



Sonic Spinball certainly adds an interesting twist to the growing family of Sonic titles. I have to applaud Sega for their bravery in taking their star character off in such a strange direction, but I must remind people that the pinball theme first appeared in Sonic 2 on the Casino level. I was well impressed by their originality at the time and thought that level an excellent piece of thinking and programming, so I must admit that the elaboration of that theme has not had the same mind-blowing effect on me that it may have on those with shorter memories. That said, Sonic Spinball is a far meatier proposition and it is clear that Sega have worked very hard to come up with a wide variety of novel approaches to the pinball theme in an attempt to keep both new and old Sonic fans happy.

As a Sonic game this may prove a little too diverse for many players, whilst as a pinball game it may be a little too simple, so where does this game sit itself in the grand scheme of console gaming? As a pleasant little oddity, that's where.

DAVE

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"Don't be fooled: this is much more than a normal pinball game. The scrolling levels are really several tables in one and contain a lot of special features that Sonic needs to activate to get through. Just like his previous games it's all a lot of flippin' fun."

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OVERALL

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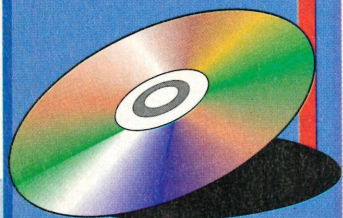


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REVIEW



great gunplay, graphics and realistic sound FX, it's like having the arcade machine in your bedroom

LETHAL ENFORCERS

As a youngster Steve Bough and his best mate David used to pretend to be Bodie and Doyle out of *The Professionals*. Well, not much has changed since those days, and with the release of *Lethal Enforcers*, Steve got the chance to relive his childhood.

Reminiscing here about the old days again, I feel compelled to tell you about my first encounters with this genre of game. Down at Carousel amusement arcade in my beloved Newquay, a game that caught all of our attentions was *Mad Dog McRee*. We used to go in with our pound coins, whack them in the slot and blast away.

Times have changed: I no longer hang around amusement arcades, I work and get paid for playing games. So imagine my delight when this game cropped up on my desk. *Lethal Enforcers* had been eagerly awaited in the Mega Power offices, and when it arrived, boy did we have some fun. All day yesterday, the only sound that surrounded the office was one of gunfire, as all the lads crowded round for a crack at the bad guys.

The game itself is a conversion of the *Lethal Enforcers* coin-op and is Konami's debut Mega-CD release. It comes with a light-gun included, and a second can be purchased later if needed. Admittedly this hardware does increase the price of the game, as

the guns don't come cheap. But take away the gun from this, and you only have half a game. You can use the joypad controls, but it does make the blowing away of the villains somewhat harder.

Lethal Enforcers is a very realistic shoot-'em-up where you take on the role of a rookie cop assigned to five levels of extremely realistic action.

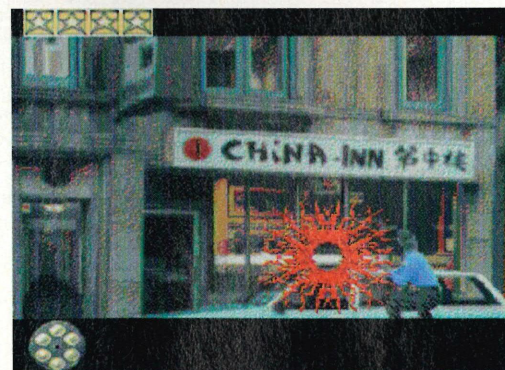
The opening sequences of the game have you in the middle of an armed bank robbery. There are victims in the bank which you must not shoot – if you do, you'll have to redo the mission.

On later stages, the highly dangerous criminals crop up in such places as trains, yachts and frequently automobiles. You'll have to blast fast-moving targets in a high-speed car chase, protect innocent victims from desperate and highly charged situations and – most importantly for you – avoid being shot.

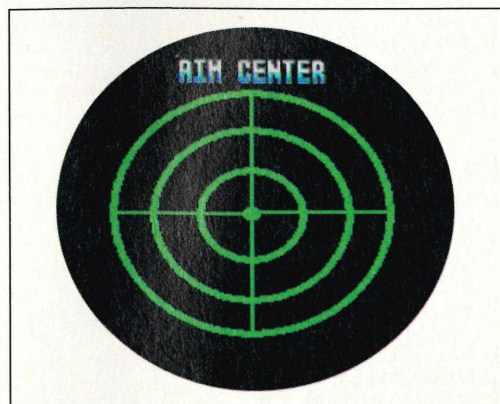
Converting a coin-op like *Lethal Enforcers* onto a console does take a lot of hard work, but credit to Konami for sticking to their guns and managing to bring the Mega-CD market something innovative to enjoy.



The cars play a prominent part in *Lethal Enforcers*. They'll appear, and before you know it, you're being fired at, so fire quickly. You can even blow the tyres to slow them down.



The shoot-out, outside China Joe's. The policeman in the picture must not be shot, because if you do, you'll have to redo the mission.



If you're not very sure about your gun's accuracy, this target enables you to check its aim is true. Simply point it at the centre of the target to set it correctly.



I'm sure if I'd hated this game you would have picked up the vibe in my review, but as you can plainly see I love this. As most kids did, I used to go out playing with guns pretending to be the police force, and always winning against the bad guys. How could I possibly not like something that gave me as much joy as when I was young? Lethal Enforcers could be classed as being a boy's game, but with over 80% of the games-buying public being male, I'm sure the sales figures won't suffer.

The only possible questionable aspect is the game's longevity. How long can you shoot the same villains without getting bored? The best plus factor for this game is that it's tremendous fun. It offers the same satisfaction of Street Fighter II in that you can come home from work or school and take out all your frustrations and anger on the game. Lethal Enforcers is a great one for that. My hands were shaking at some points, as I was so eager to blast the hell out of anything that moved.

The digitised graphics work very well, and don't suffer from being too blurry. Combined with the great music and sound FX it all goes together to give the total package an air of quality. The conversion from coin-op to console has been done quite marvellously, and the arcade feel is ever-present when playing this. If you're looking to buy something different for this Christmas, this would be a good choice. Lethal Enforcers does carry a hefty price tag, but compared to half the rubbish that's out there for £50, this does the business.

STEVE

OVERALL %

80



Annie (and anyone else) get your gun! Lethal Enforcers is yet another Mega-CD title to make people sit up and take notice. And it's such a surprise for me to like a

light-gun game at last. My earliest memories of them were as a kid when I had not a lot of fun shooting a rifle at a moving square on one of the first video-game consoles. Since then I've been subjected to naff light-gun games on computers and then the mediocre Menacer ones on consoles. So when Lethal Enforcers arrived in the office with its powder-blue and pink guns (snigger), I ducked for cover.

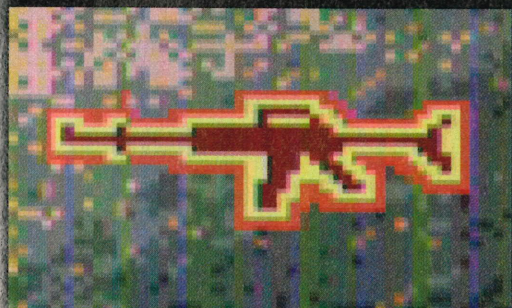
I soon realised this game was different from its predecessors, though. Picking up my gun, I had loads of fun blasting away at the screen and killing all those villains — plus a few innocent victims (serves 'em right for getting in the way, I say). Before I knew it I was completely hooked. You see, unlike other light-gun efforts, this has a great game behind all the techno-gimmickry. Maybe it's because it's a coin-op conversion, it just seems so well designed. Mindless blasting is replaced by careful aiming as you get heavily penalised for poor accuracy and hitting innocent bystanders. As well as the usual shootouts, with baddies popping up from all angles, I really enjoyed the car chases — although how they manage to fit all those villains in one car, I'll never know!

With great gunplay, superlative graphics (love that parallax) and realistic sound FX, Lethal Enforcers is like having the arcade machine in your bedroom. The only downer is the price — but hopefully Konami will release some more games to use the guns.

PHIL

HARDWARE

Three items shown below show the sort of weapons which are available. To collect them just shoot the icon that appears on screen.



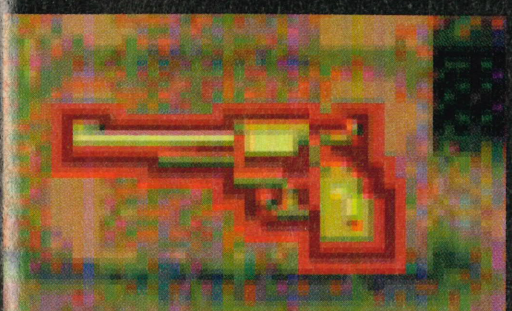
AUTOMATIC RIFLE

This sharp-shooting rifle means that lots of the villains only require one shot to kill. Make sure you don't lose it, or you'll cry.



COLT 45

One of the most powerful hand guns in the world, this will blast away any snivelling villains that stand in your way. Go ahead punk, make my day — whoops, that's a Magnum.



AUTOMATIC HAND GUN

Using this will increase your firepower substantially, meaning you can blast away the villains without having to reload so often as with a normal pistol.



These film sequences appear after every level, and give a brief description of what is going to take place in the next mission. Are you cop enough to handle it?



This geezer appearing from behind the crates needs killing fast. Shoot him first, then blast the gun icon that's shown on the crate for improved firepower.



This helicopter appears out of nowhere and instantly opens fire on you. Firstly you must shoot the bombs that are flying at you, then get a quick few shots on the man, before more bombs come.

MASSIVE POWER

GO FOR YOUR GUNS

Costing £54.99 on Mega CD, and £64.99 on Mega Drive, the *Lethal Enforcers* package includes one light gun. There's also an application card to send away for a second gun at the reduced price of £17.99.



Of course, the second player can always use a joypad instead of the light gun for this game, but it does become much harder as you try and direct the pad, fire and constantly reload. The game takes on a whole new light with the gun, and if you do decide to buy the second gun, the guarantee of great two-player blasting is assured.



Perfect evening suggestion 1:

Have a few beers with your friends, go see *Reservoir Dogs*, and then go home and play *Lethal Enforcers*. Oh yes!

If you're a bit young for that, don't worry, because in a few years time there will be a lot better games than this around anyway.

Lethal Enforcers is by no stretch of the imagination a classic, what it is though is an adequate reason to own a Mega-CD. The strength of this game lies not really in what it does but more in the variety it offers to a fairly limited games catalogue. Many CD games seem to take themselves far too seriously and deliver far too little, *Lethal Enforcers* pretty well delivers what it promises, an entertaining shooting game that should keep trigger happy front room psychos happy for a while.

Nice digitised graphics and the odd panicky squeal of "don't shoot!" helps push the action along nicely but the game never quite captures the adrenaline rush it tries to purvey, with lame criminals mumbling "eat lead!" and "you can't shoot me!" before you blast them away with relish. It is however, very challenging and the various shooting galleries and rating screens should provide interest enough to keep most people happy for a month or so.

If you want a light gun game and don't mind being seen with a naff pink pistol then *Lethal Enforcers* will do until something better comes along.

DAVE



1 The standard gun holds six shots. The best method on this game is to keep reloading, even when you've only fired two or three.

3 The stars indicate how many lives you have left. You'll start off with five lives and five credits, but these soon get blown away.

2 The bloody hole in the middle of the screen, shows you have been hit. This is normally caused by being slow to fire as soon as the villain appears on screen.

4 The credits are strange. Playing on one-player mode you get five; with two players, the second one gets none at all.



At the shooting range, you get to practise your obviously very poor shooting. You are set against a timer, so this is very good practice for the real thing.

MP

FINAL VERDICT

"*Lethal Enforcers* is a very good game that provides immense fun. The guns are an unusual colour, and you might find the price off-putting. All said and done, we're sure this will give hours of huge entertainment to fans of this genre."

10	●	○	○
9	○	○	○
8	○	○	○
7	○	○	○
6	○	○	○
5	○	○	○
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GAMEPLAY	80
GRAPHICS	85
SOUND	75
ADDITION	82

OVERALL

80%

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Made by Tomy, the Barcode Battler has been outselling the top hand-held computer games in Japan for some time now. The machine comes with preset barcodes which, when fed in, create the stats for your fighting character. But of course, half the fun is in tearing barcodes off various products to see what they'll do: some don't work at all, others create characters and some produce magical items and weapons. No doubt you've heard the infamous story of Japanese supermarkets selling out of a particular brand of noodles overnight, all because it had a powerful barcode.

Once you've created a good character, he fights against a computer or human opponent. Battles are very tactical with a choice of striking your adversary, performing a magic spell, or using special items. You have to make best use of your character's abilities to win and then fight the next more powerful opponent.

This year, the Barcode Battler has gone down a storm in the UK, with some products even changing their barcodes to more powerful ones, while others even carry more than one code. At just £39.99, the Barcode Battler is really excellent value as you never have to fork out for games – you get all your barcodes free with the purchase of products like cornflakes, baked beans and even MEGA POWER (I wonder what our code does?).

In conjunction with those generous folks at Tomy, we're giving away Barcode Battlers to ten lucky readers. All you have to do to enter is send us just one (not more) barcode from any product (tell us which) Important: if the code's floppy you'll have to tape it to a piece of card. We'll try all the codes in our Barcode Battler and the ten best ones will win.

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Why do many games appear in Britain months after their US and Japanese releases? **And if you want that mega-game early, is it worth forking out extra dosh on a "grey import" version?** Will it even work on your machine? David Graham explores a world of difference...

To be Grey?

What's the thing you hate most about consoles? The way your mates always brag about their systems, and how much better they are than yours? Or maybe it's something as simple as the fact that UK-spec machines run 17% slower and with a smaller image than their American or Japanese counterparts?

Well, that may be your main gripe, but for some of us, it's the fact that Britain always seems to be the last country to get the software. The magazines preview or review import versions of games and get everyone excited about them and then we all anxiously wait for the official release. And wait. And wait. Frustrating, isn't it, to see *Silpheed* or *Street Fighter II*: SCE get rave reviews on import and then have to sit around for three months or so before the official product hits the shelves?

Okay, so magazines have to accept a portion of the blame here. The console-mag world is a dog-eat-dog business, with reviews and exclusive previews promised by software houses desperate to drum up free publicity for their product. This naturally means that mags like *Mega Power* have to review the latest and greatest and, in a perfect world, the titles reviewed appear on shelves within a couple of weeks. But this is an imperfect world and, more often than not, software releases are put back. And back. And back.

Street Fighter II: Special Champion Edition is a prime example of just how long Sega can sit on carts. We were expecting this baby for months, and then Sega started booting dates

around, finally settling on October 29 as the roll-out date. And in the process, shot themselves in the foot. Nintendo, by scurrying away in the background, had their SNES *SFII Turbo* cart out by September, and were even circulating T-shirts with "Gotcha!" emblazoned across them to people in the business. It was obvious just who Nintendo had "got", and you can imagine how Sega felt about being trumped like that.

Going grey

All this sitting around on official versions, however, does nothing to aid our plight as purchasers.

There has always been an alternative to waiting, of course. You could go out and buy yourself an adaptor for your Mega Drive or Mega CD, which will set you back anything up to £50 or, if you own a SCART TV, trade all your gear in and buy a US or Japanese MD and MCD. Or, if you're a complete nutter and have a good credit rating for HP, you could buy American equipment, find out that it doesn't work with your telly, and then go and buy a new TV. Well, it seemed like a good idea at the time...

The problem with adaptors, as any SNES owner will tell you (smirk, smirk), is that the software publishers do have a habit of chucking in new DSP chips which require a brand new type of adaptor. While this is great news for the companies who make adaptors, buying a



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brand new one every two months to play a specific game is eventually going to bankrupt you!

Buying dedicated foreign equipment is the best bet, though it does mean spending a bit more. But at least you won't need to worry about DSP chips or the dreaded "This software is for use only in North America" security chips ruining your day, provided you only buy software sourced in the same country as your console (US Mega Drive + US games = happy player). Plus you get that full picture and that extra 17% worth of speed thrown in for good measure, which is actually more than you'd think.

Doing either of the above will open up the wide world of grey import titles to you and your console, allowing you to become one of the first people around town to own the latest games as they come out of the US or Japan. But exclusivity has its price, and you will need to save a few more quid up for that new game, as imports naturally cost more, thanks to reduced supply and increased demand. In fact, some people will try and charge the earth for a new game. Just take a look at SNES imports: £130 for Super Star Wars when it first came out? No thanks. Or how about £100 for Street Fighter II Turbo on the SNES?

Even Street Fighter II on the Mega Drive didn't come cheap on import. When it first arrived, around the end of

September, my local console shop was punting it out as a package which included the game and an adaptor for £80. Not exactly spare change and, I hear you cry, more expensive than some second-hand Neo Geo games. Taken in perspective, however, the cost isn't too wild.

With the price of Sega carts actually increasing rather than decreasing in the UK, thanks to the strength of the Japanese yen over the past year and its increase in value of 35%, maybe paying twice as much for a Sega import still isn't quite as painful as paying three times as much for a SNES game! And if you want to be number one, then you have to expect to pay for it: after all, the importer wants to make his money, too.

And that's the main problem with imports. In an ideal world, we wouldn't need them, because the big companies all want to see global release dates, such as the one Sonic 2 had. This would be good news for us, good news for Sega, and extremely bad news for the grey importers who are, in effect, stripping away some of Sega's profits and making money themselves.

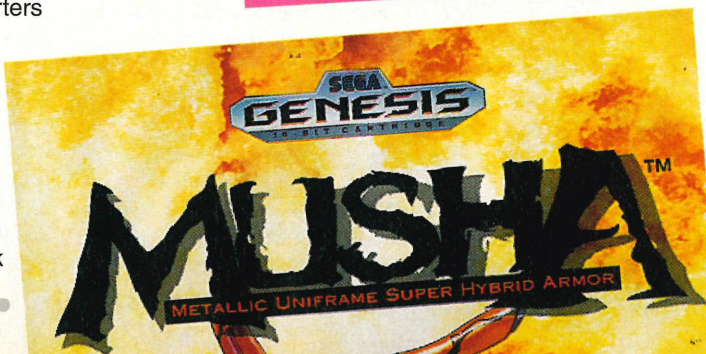
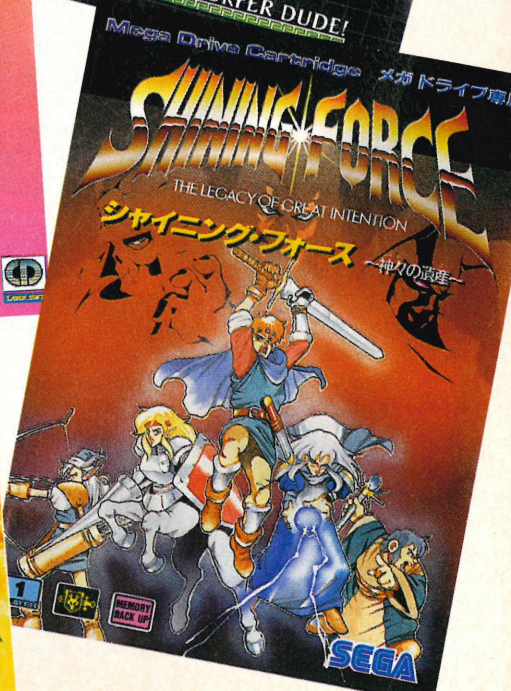
The official line

Sega take a traditionally poor view of grey importers. And not just from the point of view of lost sales, as Nick

Alexander, Sega Europe's CEO explained to me during an interview.

"There is nothing illegal about bringing a software product from the US or Far East and selling it in Europe if there are rights available for selling that product and nothing has been done to interfere with the code and hence the copyright... The illegality in grey hardware imports comes from the fact that in many cases, the power supplies have been altered – unauthorised, obviously – in order to make them meet with our [UK] power supplies and our TV systems. And without being a scaremonger, there have been some cases of problems with the PSUs where they've been dangerous. Certainly not in all cases, but there have been some. From our point of view, we cannot give a warranty on a product when somebody else has opened it up and played about with the electronics."

The possibilities of dodgy power supplies aside, the time lag between a US and UK software release is not something that Sega Europe particularly like, either, a s

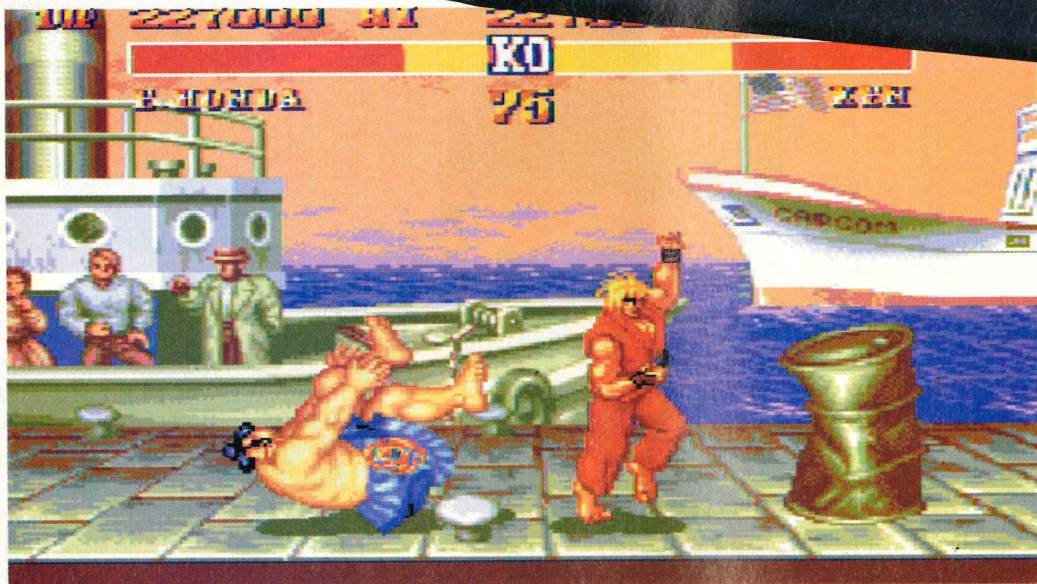


Global

to be

Grey?

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Street Fighter II is probably the most desirable of all the grey imports, paying over £100 can ensure that you are a master of any new characters at least two months before your friends even get a sniff of it. But is it really worth forking out all that extra money just to turn your friends green with envy?

Alexander admits.

"My problem is an internal one... we're fighting to have a product on simultaneous release globally, because it pees us off something rotten that the US - which is, at best, a market of a similar size to the European market - is getting preference in product.

"In the US, product life-cycle is much shorter. So if a title comes out and does less well than was expected, they may well clear out their stock and dump it at cheap prices. Whereas we haven't even introduced the title and maybe it's one that's more appealing to the European than the US market. Maybe it's something that we've put more marketing effort into, because we thought the game was more suitable for our business. And then you suddenly get a flood of grey products in, which completely undermines the marketing effort that we've put in, and the whole thing goes off like a damp squib!"

The reasons for delaying software aren't always as clear as we cynical journalists might make out. While it's true that publishers will release games at the optimum time of the year in order to outsell the competition, such as now, during the "Fourth Quarter", other factors can delay the appearance of official releases, too. In many cases, playtesting reveals hidden prob-

lems in a game, whether it's simply that the game was never great to begin with, or that the playability ranks lower than a snake's belly. In cases like these, it's common for a game to be re-jigged before it reaches our shores. Dracula on the Mega-CD is a good example, but so too is Alien Vs Predator on the SNES: a game which smelled worse than Linford's lunchbox after a 4 x 100m race on import, but was rewritten for the US.

Generally, though, it's the little things which cause the most problems, as any woman will tell you. From packaging problems (we like this box, but the Japanese don't), in-game text in foreign languages (witness those Japanese RPGs) and, on the Mega-CD, the conversion of NTSC (the US TV standard) full-motion graphics into PAL, the European format. And, should Sega choose to product more adult games in the future, we can expect more delays on Mega-CDs while the British Board of Film Classification decides upon certificates.

Global games

But just what happened to Sega's global releasing policy? Andrew Wright, Sega Europe's marketing honcho and all-round nice

guy was there to answer the questions.

"It's funny you should say that, because there's a global release date coming up next month! (November) It's 'Sonic x3 Day', and that's Sonic CD, Sonic Spinball and Sonic Chaos. I think Sonic CD is actually coming out before in certain territories, but Sonic Chaos and Sonic Spinball are being released at the same time."

But ideally, global releasing would mean that every cartridge was released simultaneously?

"Yes, it's an ideal scenario, but this isn't an ideal world... On large releases, I would imagine that release will be simultaneous, but it's not something we can do on lesser titles for various reasons."

Whether Sega ever get their global release policy sorted out is, to many players, academic. There are still enough imported machines in the UK to justify a solid business in grey imports and, when the next generation of consoles arrive, you can bet your bottom dollar that us Brits will be the last people to see them officially, thanks to our PAL TV system (both Japan and the US use NTSC). Prior to that, of course, a number of imported machines will have been sold.

So if grey imports are so damn good. Why aren't we all buying them? Well, the price, for starters, tends to put people off. As we've already established, imports don't come cheap. That, and the constant threat of buying a "protected" game (one that can only be used in the country of origin) mean that a lot of people would rather wait for official product to come through. But conversely, you could argue that if enough people buy import software, then perhaps Sega Europe would be pressured into speeding up their release process.

Even without that kind of pressure, Sega are already taking steps to counteract the need for us to buy imports. When their European cart-manufacturing operation becomes fully functional, as well as allowing Sega to prevent shortfalls in orders, it should theoretically make for speedier releases.

But right now, the Euro operation isn't up and running to that degree, so just what causes those delayed releases, other than the reasons we've already covered, from Sega's point of view? Over to Andy Wright again.

"Conversions. Believe it or not, but some games are converted so that they run more efficiently on PAL. Although some games can run a little bit slower than in America or Japan, others are converted to bring the speed back up to what it should be. Then there are text conversions on releases such as Shining Force and Landstalker which are heavy with Japanese text. And also things like contracts: if it's a third party game, negotiating contracts for distribution in Europe can take some time."

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Datel's Universal Adaptor works very hard as an electronic translator for the conflicting codes of imported carts, but it cannot do an awful lot about the making Japanese playing instructions legible.



Naturally, missing that big release because of delays could be damaging to Sega, especially if they've pumped money (or "spend" as they call it in marketing circles) into pre-release hype and then the greys come in and scoop up the money. However, according to Wright, all is not rosy in the world of imports.

"It used to present a really bad problem, because you'd get grey imports coming in and stealing some of the impetus on any kind of a campaign you'd want to run with that title. But, interestingly enough, it's not so much of a problem now, the reason being that the international money market and the pound/dollar exchange rate make grey imports less attractive to the importers, ie they're not making so much money on it."

Obscure imports

Nevertheless, the fact that greys are still coming in must be annoying to Sega Europe. But just how do a massive, multimillion-pound outfit view the small retailers and importers?

"To a certain extent, we try to discourage it, but at the end of the day, not every Japanese or American release is going to make it over here. And, if there's a market for 'obscure' import titles, then the grey importers are meeting it. When they try and steal the thunder from Sega's official releases, that's another matter."

The fact that grey importers exist at all must be a sure signal to Sega that all is still not well with their releasing policy. Someone, somewhere, wants either the latest game or one that Sega Europe has passed up on for release. But is the market in imports driven by consumer demand or retail need?

"I can't really answer that one. But I believe the market is decreasing because our releases are becoming closer to the Japanese and American releases of games. And I've mentioned the effect the money market is having on grey importers, and simply because we're getting our product selection right and picking the right games. And so the grey importers have only got the not-so-good games to work with."

The cynical amongst you might notice the lack of willingness to brand any Sega game as rubbish, even when it hasn't been imported by Sega Europe? Are we to believe that there are no bad Sega games, only "not-so-good" ones? It's a bit like saying old games journalists never die, they just lose control of their floppies...

But the final question, of course, is the

age old "Points Of View"-type poser: why, oh why are us Brits always the last people to see games?

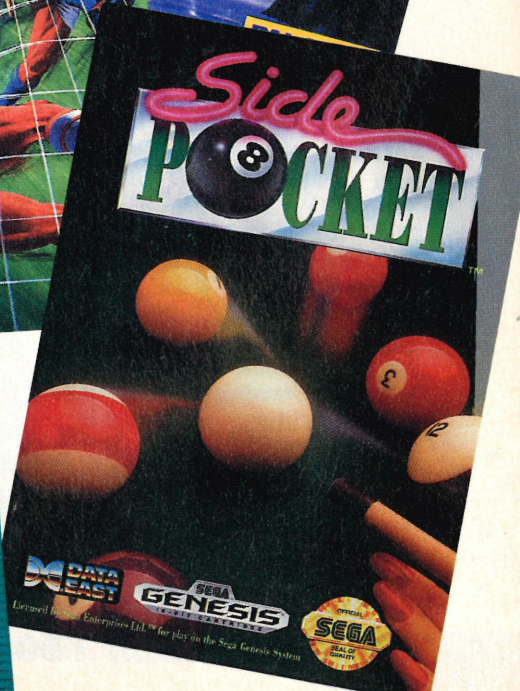
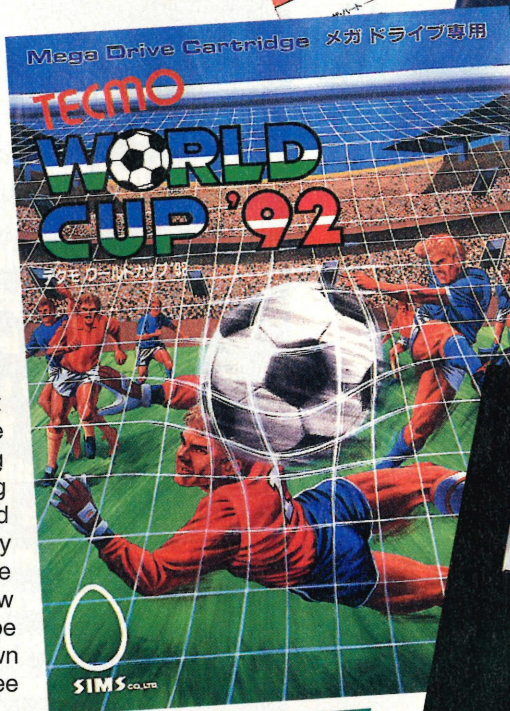
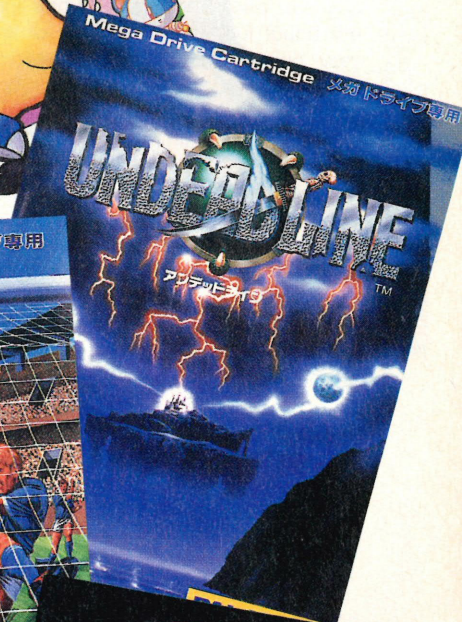
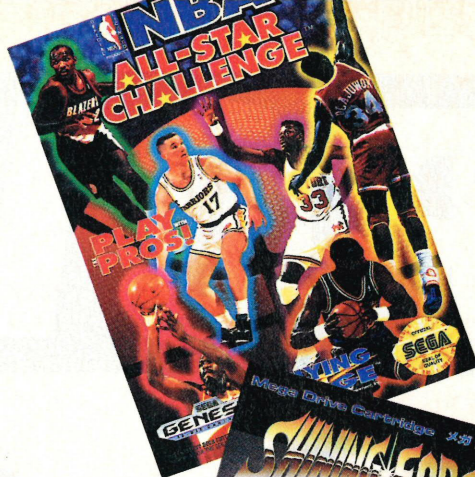
"Basically because software is developed in Japan or in America. If it's developed in Japan, it'll be more than likely Japanese text-based, so it requires a translation. If it's developed in America, as I say, there can be contractual problems. But more often than not, if it's developed in America we're releasing it - give or take a few days - within the same time frame."

Thirst for first

So there you have it. Sega are struggling manfully to improve their release schedule and get games out within days of their US counterparts, while grey importers are struggling to find good games to release. Even so, the importers I spoke to - while unwilling to be identified lest they feel the wrath of Sega - didn't seem to have any trouble bringing top titles like SFII into the UK a good month before their official release date. And for many of us, a month is all it takes.

After all, if you've read about it, heard about it and dreamed about it for three months, or since the first news story appeared, would you, could you, wait that extra month?

The choice really is yours, and ultimately, it'll come down to just how badly you want that game. But if you're thinking about buying that adaptor, hang around for a while and wait to see if they bring out a new one for Virtua Racing. Now wouldn't you like to be the first person in town to own that baby? See you down the shops...



POWER

challenge



THE CHAMP

Name:Dave "The Kid" Perry
Representing:the street
Position:leader to many
Age:true quality is timeless
Favourite MD game:
.....NHLPA Hockey
(this will never change)
Most favoured game in challenge:
.....Street Fighter II
Special abilities:
.....scaring off all challengers by
being far too bloody good!



After "The Kid's" total annihilation of Acclaim's Darren Lee last month, we realised that there was no-one in the industry that could match our very own "unstoppable gamesplaying animal", and like Alexander he wept for there were no more kingdoms left to conquer.

Was this to be the end of the Power Challenge? No way. We decided to turn our backs on the rather pathetic games industry and enter the realms of the music business. Stumbling upon the very brave Brinsley Ford from Aswad, we quickly shoved a joypad into his hands, offered him pizza and beers and dragged him into the Mega Power offices.

RULES

Slightly different rules this month, as our guest is from the music industry, so no particular software house is represented.

One game to be chosen by the challenger.

One game to be chosen by The Kid.

One game as yet unseen by both players.

Each player is informed of the other's game one week prior to the contest.

Each game is played until one player has won two contests.



CHALLENGER

Name:Brinsley "The Star" Ford
Representing:non-computer players
the world over
PositionPop Star, and would-be centre-forward for Tottenham
Age:Who knows?
Favourite MD game:
.....Brinsley was absolutely blown away by Street Fighter II
Most favoured game in challenge:
.....Street Fighter II
Special abilities:
.....sings to put off his opponents



Any Last Words...

DAVE: "Being a big fan of Aswad, I have the utmost respect for Brinsley as a musician. Nevertheless, I didn't come here to lose, grrrr!"

BRINSLEY: "I've heard about The Kid, and I'll tell you, he doesn't scare me. I reckon I'll beat him easy. Now give me a beer!"

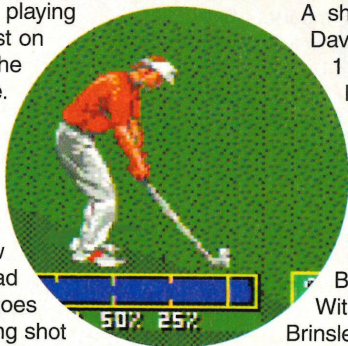
Brave words Brinsley, you may have to eat them if Steve doesn't hurry up with the pizza.

PGA TOUR GOLF II

Nobody can accuse us kind folk here at Mega Power for not playing fair. As Brinsley had no experience of this, apart from playing computer golf for ten minutes whilst on a flight to Japan, we decided that he could have Steve as his caddie. The Kid brushed aside any offer of help, claiming he could play blindfolded and still win.

Under tense conditions, the game commenced. Playing at Avenel, a delightful course with few hazards but tricky greens, Dave had the honour (golfing term for who goes first) and hit a rather clumsy opening shot which hooked and nestled in the heavy rough.

Gaining massive inspiration from The Kid's shot, Brinsley hit a beautiful drive that split the fairway, and had Dave murmuring under his breath, "I thought you'd never played this before." After recovering nicely, both players were on the green for three, the hole playing as a par 4.



RULES

Seeing as Brinsley was a newcomer to the world of computer games, we decided to choose games that both players could possibly win. Dave and Brinsley stood on equal footing on *PGA Tour Golf II* as both knew nothing about the great game. *Sensible Soccer* was one which could go either way, with both being huge fans of football. Of course *Street Fighter II* was the game, if any, where Dave could possibly shine through. But as everyone knows, *SFII* is in no way predictable, so the outcome would surely be very interesting.

PGA TOUR GOLF II

A brisk five holes set on the Skins Challenge. Basically, the one with the most money at the end is the winner.



Brinsley, faced with an 18ft putt, managed to hit it far too hard and the ball whizzed past the hole. Dave, on the other hand, kept his nerve and calmly placed the ball in the hole for his par. The first \$5,000 went in Dave's pocket.

Onto the second hole, a par 5, and both players hit excellent first and second shots using woods. Dave had the better lie, leaving himself a little chip onto the green. Brinsley again got a rush of blood and fired his ball off the green and into the light rough. Dave was left with a 9ft putt for a birdie. Brinsley had managed to par the hole so he was relying on Dave to miss the putt. Alas, he didn't: The Kid thrust his hand into the air and collected another \$5,000.

A short par 3 faced the players next.

Dave, holding the honour, drove with a 1 iron, but hooked his ball and it landed in the trees. Brinsley played an excellent shot and landed on the green about 40 feet from the hole. Dave couldn't manage to produce his earlier magic and Brinsley won the hole.

With whoops of delight, Brinsley punched the air, claiming there was no stopping him now. The money total was now The Kid \$10,000, Brinsley \$5,000.

Onto the fourth, a dog-leg par 4 that requires the first drive to be very accurate. The Kid played a delicious opening shot that landed in perfect position

SENSIBLE SOCCER

A final played over two legs, not counting away goals. If it's still all level after 90 minutes, extra time and then penalties (if needed) will decide the match.

STREET FIGHTER 2

Choosing the group battle, where each player picks five fighters each. These fight each other, and the winner is the first to reach three victories.

The Kid's Choice

Seeing as Brinsley had nothing whatsoever to do with the games industry, Dave decided for once in his life to play fair. Three games were chosen, two of which "The Kid" had hardly ever played. *Street Fighter II* was the game that Dave was *au fait* with, but Brinsley was certainly not going to stand for any nonsense, and went into deep meditation. "The Kid" could see Brinsley meant business and proceeded to follow his own routine of swallowing live fish whilst stabbing himself in the buttocks. Maybe it's time Dave took a holiday, as it seems the challenge is being taken too far.

on the fairway. Unfortunately Brinsley totally duffed his tee shot and managed to find the water. Dropping a shot and so playing his third, our pop star hit the ball to within 30 yards but found the rough. Meanwhile Dave, who was feeling very composed, landed his next two shots leaving the ball 20 feet from the pin. Two-putting gave The Kid the hole and the money, taking his total to \$15,000.

Brinsley's only hope was to tie the fifth hole so the money would be carried on to the sixth, meaning he could tie the match. This was indeed a very tall order, but the man from Aswad felt confident. This was well founded as he placed his ball to within 6 feet. Dave needed to get his 3ft putt but missed. Brinsley putted for his par, thus requiring Dave to hole his 17-inch putt to tie. Unbelievably The Kid missed, so Brinsley won the hole but the match was lost.

Burning with rage, Brinsley accused Dave of deliberately missing the putt, and a slight scuffle broke out. The decision was final though, and Dave raised his hands in victory. One-nil to The Kid.

SENSIBLE SOCCER

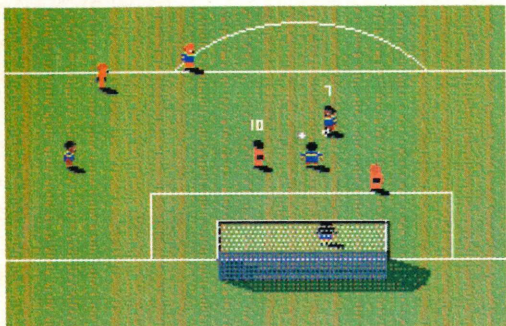
With the rules strongly enforced for this the second match, the game commenced. The Kid had chosen to play as "The Old Dear's Menu" and Brinsley chose quite aptly "The Big Band".

The whistle went and Brinsley appeared to be off to a good start, but Dave launched in to take possession and — before Brinsley could say "Don't Turn Around" — the ball was in the back of the net.

Calls of offside echoed through the Mega Power offices but there was no stopping The Kid now, his face reddened as he continued to punish Brinsley's mistakes. Dave's top striker in his team was "A nice cup of tea" and boy could this tea score. With the score at 5-0 to the Kid, the half-time whistle blew and the teams went for their half-time oranges. In our case, it was a quick swig of lager and then back to the action. Our angry pop star



challenge



appeared to be a changed man in the second-half. Out he came and within a few seconds Brinsley had hammered the ball into the back of the net: 5-1.

Maybe life as a pop star has affected Brinsley as he now decided to turn the joypad upside down, in order to improve his scoring chances. It all seemed to no avail as Dave took control and fired in goal after goal. The score soon became 9-1, and even worse for Brinsley he gave away an own goal. The consolation for the man from Aswad was a fine 35-yard goal, but you can't hide from the final result: 10-2 to The Kid.

The second match saw Dave adopt the Defend formation, whereas Brinsley went for out-and-out Attack. Dave, however, was the first to score.

Brinsley retaliated with a

superb goal to draw the second match level. After a long period of midfield battling, Dave knocked in another. Barring some kind of major miracle, it seemed that Brinsley would lose. The piece of cake continued to fire on all cylinders and quickly totted up a huge goal tally. Even with a last-minute burst which resulted in a goal for our Brinsley, the final score was 5-2 to Dave, giving him overall victory.

For his first attempt at this game, Brinsley did marvellously well, but at the end of the day The Kid's silky skills proved too much.

STREET FIGHTER II

After a few practice rounds, with Dave very kindly showing Brinsley some of the special moves, the battle got underway. From the off, our Brinsley loved SFII. He'd played it one or two times against his children, but had never managed to win. This time was different, Brinsley wanted to show the Mega Power readers that he was no pushover when it came to fighting talk. Selecting the group battle



mode, both player picked their five fighters. With each player clutching firmly on their pads - Brinsley opting for the six-button, and The Kid using his own special one - the match began.

Because the game was set on group battle, this meant that only one round per bout was the norm. The first contest had Brinsley as Ryu, and Dave as Ken. In a very close competition, Dave used all of Ken's special moves for a narrow win.

The second bout was a totally different story. Controlling E Honda, the pop star

completely cleaned up Blanka, with a devastating display of the 100-hand slap, resulting in a perfect. One bout all.

Bout three saw Brinsley's Zangief matched against The Kid's Dhalsim. This was a real turn-up for the books, as everyone thought that Dhalsim would easily beat Zangief. Well, to cut a long story short, The Kid was blown away by Brinsley inflicting endless spinning clotheslines on the hapless Dhalsim. Two-one to Brinsley.

Dave, feeling slightly rattled by this sudden urge of brilliance from Brinsley, realised he would have to step up a gear if he was to win. The next bout saw Dave as Chun Li, and Brinsley as M Bison. The action began with some excellent sweep kicking from Chun Li, and the follow-up lightning kick sealed the fate of Brinsley. Two bouts each.

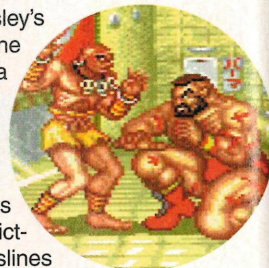
The last and deciding bout saw the pop star fighting with that supreme boxer Sagat, while The Kid had Vega. Both fighters attacked very strongly with the energy levels very close. As Sagat looked as though he was going to win, and Brinsley's face started to break into a smile, Dave unleashed a Barcelona attack and Brinsley was out. By this stage Dave was ecstatic and jumped up and down in the office. Meanwhile a rather dejected Brinsley offered his hand in friendship and the challenge was over for another month.

RESPECT IS DUE

Three cheers for Brinsley Ford for being such a brilliant sport. We all had a fantastic time doing the challenge, and Brinsley took his defeat like a real man. With no chance to practise, Brinsley showed us that he has massive potential as a gamesplayer, so his kids better watch out. Our closing words are, firstly, if you ever need us to appear in any videos or anything, we'd love to do it. Secondly, next time Brinsley, we'll get the pizza order right. Respect!

NEXT CHALLENGER PLEASE

Well, The Kid's done it again. If there is anyone out there man enough to take him on, I'd like to meet them. The whole games industry seems frightened of this man. Come on, is there nobody that can beat him? Even the pop industry fared better than our supposed experts from the games world. Well, having exhausted our challengers (or is it just that everyone's scared?), for next month we have something very special in mind. Something so special that we can't tell you about it yet. All we can say, is that next month The Kid is probably going to face the hardest challenge of his life. All will be revealed in the next issue of MEGA POWER.



"First you muck up my pizza order then you chalk up three lucky victories. Well smile about this!"

Mild-mannered Brinsley from Aswad demonstrates his deep understanding of the martial arts as Dave decides to have a lie down.

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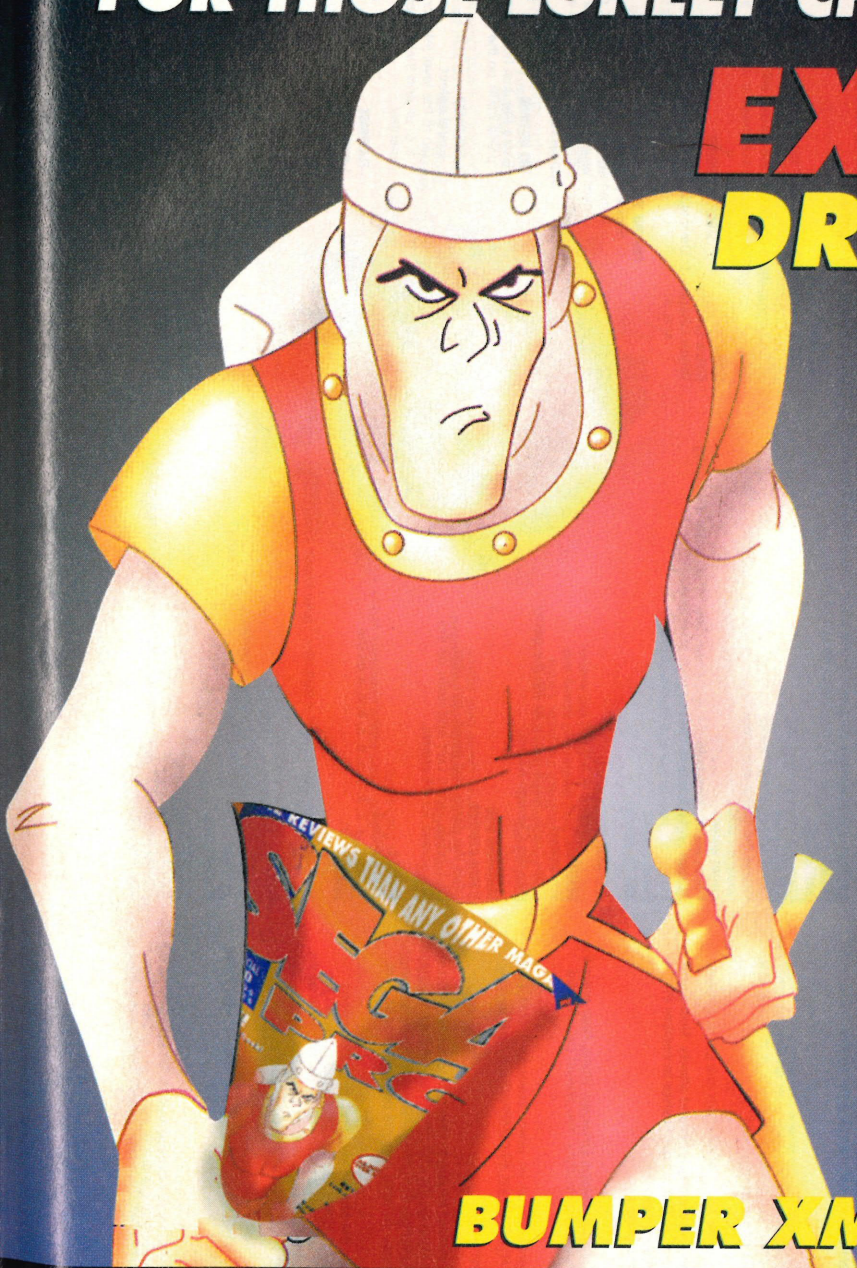
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BUMPER XMAS SPECIAL

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Tips, tips and yet more tips are what we've got here. In the A-Z of Tips we aim to give you the most useful tips we can find for every game on the Mega Drive and Mega-CD. Updated every month, you can easily spot our newest tips as they are highlighted in red.

But it doesn't stop there. If you send us some new tips and we reckon they're good enough to print, we'll send you a £5 software voucher. So do write in and help make this the best guide around.

A-Z of tips

AFTERBURNER 2

Level select
Hold A, B, C and press START on the title screen to enter a level select. Use the joystick to select a level, then press START to play.

AIR DIVER

Invulnerability
Go to the map screen and place the cursor over an area where there are no enemies. Hold START and press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, A and B. Now hold START until the game commences.

ASLE LORD

Avoid combats
Go to the config screen and choose no sound effects. Now press A, B, C, C, B, A, B, A, C, A, C, B, A. The screen flashes to confirm the cheat.

ALESTE

Level select
From the title screen, reset the Mega Drive ten times. Now enter the options screen while holding LEFT-DOWN. You should get an extra select option.

Extra continues
Pause the game and press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, C, C, B, A and START for 20 continues.

ALEX KIDD IN ENCHANTED CASTLE

Avoid sub-game
To continue the game without having to play scissors-paper-stone, go to any boss and as soon as the chit-chat is out of the way, press START to get the select screen, then START again to proceed.

ALIEN³

Level select
Plug two controllers into the Mega Drive and go to the options screen. Press C, UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, A, RIGHT and DOWN on the second joystick and you will hear a power-up noise. Start the game, then pause it. On pad one press C, A and B to skip the level.

ALIEN STORM

Unlimited continues
Choose Scooter. When your life gets to zero, self-destruct and you can carry on without dying.

ALISHA DRAGON

Level select
Hold A after the Sega logo has disappeared and then press a till

CHAKAN

Level jump
In the practice mode, jump on the platform above the air portal then go right onto the small platform. Press START and choose Alchemy. Return Chakan to the Navigation level and the first 12 levels will be completed.

COOL SPOT

Level select, time, health
Pause the game and press A, B, C, B, A, C, A, B, C, B, A, C then unpause. **CHEAT**

Level select
Press RESET, then button A and START. You'll then enter the config screen and be able to choose your start level.

COURSE

Level select
Press reset, then press a and start together for a level select.

CYBERBALL

Password
Enter CGBB B8FB BE2V to win the game with the Chicago Killers.

DANGEROUS SEED

Extra credits
Start the game and press LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, DOWN, RIGHT, LEFT and RIGHT on the title screen for 99 credits.

DARWIN 2

Zone select
Press C, A, C, B, C, A, B, A, B, C, A on the title screen.

DECAPATHICK

Extra lives
You can get extra lives by jumping straight down onto the springy poles. As you hit the top keep springing up and down and the pole segments should light up. When they're all lit you have an extra life.

DESERT STRIKE

Extra lives
To add ten lives to your Apache, enter the password BQQQAEZ and any level password.

Choose World Championship Mode and enter HAPPY NEW YEAR as your name.

Better tyres
Press A and START together to enter a hidden option screen.

FAUL FURY

Infinite continues
On the continue screen, hold up and press A, B and C together. Let go and press them again and the credits will pop up each time you do it.

FENDU

Extra credits
When Chapter 1: Devil in Diros comes on screen, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A.

FIGHTING MASTERS

Same players
When selecting the first player, put your cursor over your character and press up and A simultaneously. Player two will now also appear as this monster.

FIRE MUSTANG

Extra life Just hold LEFT and C then press START on the title screen.

FIRE SHARK

Level select
Go to the level info screen and press A, C, UP and START to enter the round number.

FLASHBACK

Level codes
Level 7 (easy) - INCBIN
Level 7 (normal) - CLIP
Level 7 (hard) - KALIMA
Last code - CYGNUS

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

Infinite continues
Start in two-player mode, then when player one kicks the bucket, just press player two's START button rapidly to get him in the game.

BADGET TWINS

Level select

Choose hard from the options screen then go to the sound select and listen to any tune for 70 seconds. The game should start and replace the difficulty setting with "YEAH RIGHT". Cheat mode is now active and you have 99 continues.

HERZOG ZWEI

Password
Use ULJOIGLAKKN to get to the last level.

HUMANS

Passwords
Level 60 - YNTEKYJYNWLK
Level 70 - VPKRNSXXTTR
Level 80 - XPKINWJFNOZC

THE IMMORTAL

Invincibility
Wait for the level name to appear then hold START. Now hold A until the game appears and finally release A to initiate invincibility.

INDIANA JONES & THE LAST CRUSADE

Level select
On the Lucasfilm logo, press A, B, C, B, C, A, C, A, B. The level option should show SHHHHHHHH.

INSPECTOR X

Infinite credits
When the continue option comes up after dying, hold DOWN-RIGHT and hammer away at the C button until the credits start to climb.

JAMES POND

Open all exits
Press C, LEFT and START on the title screen. When playing, press A, B and C while rotating the joystick to open the doors on the level.

JAMES POND II: ROBOCOD

Level select
On the title screen press A, C, DOWN, LEFT and START, then before you know it, a level select will be yours.

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS

Extra continues
Wait for the Game Over message to appear then press up and START together. You can only do this once, so only use it when you've got a chance.

JOHN MADDEN '92

Passwords

Gainax is whisked away. Now hold c and press START when the stars come out. A crime will confirm the cheat. During the game, press c to skip the level and b with up to increase your hit points.

ALTERED BEAST

Infinite continues
Press START and A on the title screen to continue from the last game played.

Character select
On the title screen hold LEFT-DOWN, A, B, C and START to select the character you play.

Extra options
Press START and B on the title screen for more options.

ARCH RIVALS

Easy scoring
Vinny's the best character. So start with the ball and pass to your team-mate, run straight up the court and press the pass-back button. Run into the corner and shoot and you'll nearly always get a three-pointer.

ARCUS ODYSSEY

Level jump
Enter EEEEEEEEEE as the password to start on level five with six reverse dolls.

ARNOLD PALMER GOLF

Super shot
Enter your name as EVE and you will be able to hit the ball great distances.

Hidden game
Take over 100 shots on a hole. Wait for game over, then press A, B, C and up for a hidden game of Fantasy Zone.

AVATON SENNA'S SNIP 2

End password
Use SENNA or CHAMPTON as your password to see the end of the game.

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3

Stage select
Pause the game, hold A and press up, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT to go forward a level.

BAD OMEN

99 balls
During the title menu press buttons A and C together, then START. The screen switches and you will notice that your ball stock has increased to 99.

BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER

Passwords
Stage 6 guardian: 6300
Stage 7 guardian: 7200

Cheat
You don't lose your invincibility capsules when you die, so you collect them again and again after dying, storing up dozens to use against the bosses.

BATTLEMANIA

Strange scene
When the Sega logo appears, frantically press START on the second joystick and something weird will happen.

BATTLEBOYS

Level three warp
Battleload—but the two pigs at the start of the first level and run to the first platform to find a glowing warp. Quickly walk into it and you're offered the chance to warp up to two levels.

BIO HAZARD BATTLE

Level select
When the Sega logo appears, hold c and press up, UP-RIGHT, DOWN-RIGHT, DOWN-LEFT, LEFT, UP-LEFT and up. Then press START for a level select.

BURNING FORCE

Extra lives
When the title screen disappears, press B, A, B, A, C, A, A and START to get ten more lives.

CASTLE OF ILLUSION

Extra life
Keep pressing start when your score's being added after each round for an extra life.

CENTURION

Password
Want the world? Type in this code.
QDJA YQZ5 5555
55NK VXXW IPTI

Level codes

Level 2 — WQJROBZ
Level 3 — VJUKTKY
Level 4 — BLTKIK

DRAGON'S FURY

33 balls
Try entering 0956335555 as the password for 33 balls.

DEVILSH

99 balls
On the title screen, hold A, C and LEFT, then press START.

DINOLAND

Test card
When the Wolf Team logo's onscreen, press A, B, C and then START.

DJ BOY

Action replay
Watch the demo when you've completed a game — it's your game over again!

EA HOCKEY

Best shots
Slap shot from the blue line, using LEFT and RIGHT to direct the puck. Close shots are best performed slowly with lots of dribbling directly at the keeper and then pressing c.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Level select
Enter PLEASE on the title screen followed by any of these letters: EE, FF, GG, HH, II, KK, OO, QQ, UU, WW or ZZ.

Code
Enter SHARKTIN and press START. Your sonar now kills jellyfish and you don't need to go up for air.

Infinite lives

Enter the code NIHPLQDS.
During the explanation of the next level, hold A and START. Unpause and you'll be invincible.

ELEMENTAL MASTER

Press A and START together to enter a hidden option screen

EL WENTO

Level select
Press START during the game, then up, LEFT, RIGHT, DOWN and B to jump to the next stage.

ESWAT

Level select
When you complete the game properly, you can go to any level by pressing RIGHT-DOWN and A, B, and C simultaneously on the title screen. Just press START to get the select.

EVANDEE HOLYFIELD'S BOXING

Green goddess
Start a new career and enter your name as The Beast. You'll turn green and have superhuman abilities.

EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

Password
Enter AGURAA61AA to get in the final.

F-1 CIRCUS

View ending
Choose world championship. Enter your name then press up-LEFT, B and START.

FIERYTILE ADVENTURE

View ending
Enter your password as:
7R2KJL68S2XSK6HGS
DCB720663RL2HO785P

FANTASIA

Extra items
Start stage one, go down the stairs and shoot at the two enemies. Two brooms will appear from the right. Take these to the left and shoot the first one, then loads of items will appear.

FASTEST ONE

Invincible tyres

When the two planes appear, press C, A, RIGHT, LEFT, then repeat.

GAIN GROUND

Level select
On the options screen press A, C, B, C.

GAAMES

Invincibility
Start playing then pause the game. Hold LEFT, A and c for a second then continue the game and you should be trouble-free.

Level select
Plug in two controllers and press START and B on pad one to go to the options screen. Select tune 18 and hold down A on pad two then select exit with pad one. Still holding A, press c on pad one and hold them down until the Sega logo disappears. Now press START for a level select.

GALANAD

Infinite lives
Type in LUTUS as your password then press A, B, C and START to skip levels.

GHOSTBUSTERS

Freaky stairs
You're totally immune to the ghosts while on the stairs.

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Invincibility
Go to the options screen four times. When you get back to the title screen press A, A, A, A, up, UP, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT and RIGHT. Then hold A and press START to enter the fray unharmed.

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

Level skip
Pause the game and press B, C, B, A, B, C, B, A, B. Unpause.

Infinite lives

When the Virgin logo appears, press A, B, C, B, A, C, A, B, C, B, A, C.

GOLDEN AXE

Level select
Hold DOWN-RIGHT, B and START simultaneously on the title screen.

GOLDEN AXE II

Extra credits
Move the cursor to the Options choice on the title screen and press A, B and C simultaneously. Keep them held down until you enter the options screen, then let go of A. Move to the Exit option and press START. Choose one or two players then a normal game by pressing A. Credits should now be eight.

GRANDPA

Dopey git
Once you've completed the game, wait till the music's finished and press A. Now your character will fall over — straaaange.

GRANDSLAM TENNIS

Hidden options
Enter CONFEG followed by full stops as your password.

GYNOID

Level select
On the options screen, put the cursor on 'controls'. Hold down button A for about five seconds to bring up a level-select screen.

Easy mode

On the options screen, put the cursor on 'game level' and hold down A, B, C and START simultaneously. Infinite credits

When the Game Over message appears, hold LEFT, A, C and START.

HARD DRIVING

Easier challenge
You don't have to race the Phantom Photon on the stunt track, just smash through the barrier to go around the speed track instead.

HEARTY UNIT

New skill level
Hit A, B, C, START on the title screen.

HELLFIRE

Extra continues

0465100 — quarter-finals
0075121 — semi-finals
0475352 — superbowl

JUNGLE STRIKE

Password cheat
By changing the first letter of most passwords, you can usually access about six other levels. Also, the password BNSH3NGMHJK puts you on level one with four lives and the ability to select your preferred co-pilot.

KID CHAMELEON

Final guardian
Go to the Lake Woods 2 level. Fight your way to the end and jump onto the last prize block above the exit. Now press DOWN-RIGHT and then press the jump and special attack buttons to warp to Plethora.

KING'S BOUNTY

Password

VRP 06 8TQ
FT3 VE MGN
DG1 ZZ 7B1
MOE 8W COR
WOA BD EHX
DCE FH Y22
VM1 JL MF6

KLAX

Special gems
On the title screen, hold LEFT-UP, A, B, C and START for a special game.

KRISTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

Open all doors
Enter SMALLTOW as the password.

LAKERS VS CELTICS

Password
3L2GJ5 — LA Lakers vs Philadelphia 76ers

LEMMINGS

Sunsoft passwords
Level 25 — BWFEB
Level 30 — CBMFL

LUX ATTACK CHOPPER

Passwords
Plain Aria — COIERDG
Domino Mirror — CSIEIYE
Freedom Train — CSIEAZE

LOTUS CHALLENGE

Passwords
SLUGFACE — infinite turbos
MANSELL — invulnerable

M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK

Unlimited ammo and invincibility
Wait for the demo screen, then press B, B, C, B, C, C, B, C, B, C, B, C and START

MARVEL LAND

Password
TRIDENT — last section

MASTER OF MONSTERS

End sequence
Press A, B, C and START on the sound test screen.

MEGA-LO-MANIA

Passwords
Level 8 — J5ZJZDMBQHY
Level 10 — KLFZDFRMMW

MERCS

Tougher game
Go to Commando mode and press A, B, C at the same time, then press start while holding the buttons. Enemies will now be faster and more intelligent.

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

Level skip
On the title screen, hold c then press START. During play, pause the game then press A to skip a level.

MOONWALKER

Level select
Hold UP-LEFT and A on the second controller, then press START on the first controller and select a one-player game.

MORTAL KOMBAT

Full gore
When it talks about codes enter A, B, A, C, A, B, B. Cheat

Answer yes to forget the match and you, strangely, win 1-0. It only works while you're fielding.

QUICKSHOT

Extra lives
Top up your lives by repeating this over and over again. Get to the Viking ship and go up the mast in the lift, collecting all the money bags. Walk right and follow the path down to the extra life. Now exit the screen, then re-enter it to see the reappearance of the extra life.

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Full complement
To get all the power-ups, on the title screen press up, B, DOWN, LEFT, C, A, A, B and C.

RAMBO 3

Full complement
Fight to the two firing walls on level three. Destroy all bar one of the cannons, then put the yellow icon on the dagger and go to the bottom of the screen. Slab the man in camouflage and collect what he leaves behind. Repeat this to top up on everything.

THE REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Infinite shurikens
Select zero shurikens on the options screen and leave the game for 40 seconds. The zero will then turn into an infinity sign (∞).

RINGS OF POWER

Money top-up
Get to 32", 2", 6", and you can constantly re-enter the secret temple to get the four gold chests.

ROAD RASH

Password
B0000 04RD0 11CAF 56C7B - level five, Panda, \$26,230

ROAD RASH 2

Password
04R 550H - level five, Diablo, \$20,000

Cheat

On the options screen, set the player mode to Mano a Mano. Go to the main menu and select your bike. Now change the player mode to Take Turns and start the game. You can now use any bike on any course.

Race select
On the title screen press up, A, C and keep them down. Now press START.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

Secret menu
On the title screen hold UP-LEFT, A and C, then press RESET. Keep holding them for a few more seconds and press B for a cheat menu.

ROLLING THUNDER 2

Password
Level 11 - A Private Thunder Created the Powder

SAMT SWORD

Password

Level six - JATIT0Z

SD WALS

Invincibility

On the title screen press up, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, A, B, UP, DOWN and START.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Infinite energy

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MANO A MANO POWER

THUNDERFORCE IV

Full weapons
Start the game then press pause. Now up, RIGHT, A, DOWN, RIGHT, A, C, LEFT, up and B. Now press up for full weapons, down to clear them, RIGHT for a claw and LEFT to get rid of it. Press START to return to the game.

THUNDER PRO WRESTLING

Extra continues
When Game Over appears, press up and C.

TINY TOON ADVENTURES

Open all levels

On the password screen:

NGOO WWOV QKWQ
QWQW WGRY

TUNIT

Level select

When the Konami logo appears, press C, B, A, A, A, B, A, C. On the title screen press A, B, C, C, C, B, A.

THE JAM & EARL

Secret level

On the first level, drop through the hole in the island to land on level zero. Have a bath and drink some lemonade. Jump off this level to zoom up to the highest level.

TROUBLE SHOOTER

Level select

Plug in two controllers. On the title screen, press START, RIGHT and C simultaneously on the second pad. On the new screen, press START, RIGHT and C to increase the level number.

TRUXTON

Power bomb

Set off a skull explosion then pause the game while the explosion's in mid-flow. Wait about 15 seconds then unpause and the bomb will increase in power.

TURRICAN

Infinite everything!

On the options screen, place the cursor on exit and hold DOWN while pressing A, B, A, B, A, A, A, A, A, A, A, A.

TWIN COBRA

Level select

On the title screen press UP, DOWN, RIGHT, LEFT and START.

TWO CRIME INDICES

Extra continues

On your last life, press START on player two's pad to bring in the second character.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

Passwords

Level six - JDRSD

Level 11 - BYTCH

VALS 3

Sound test

On the title screen, hold UP-LEFT, A, B, C and START.

CORRA COMMAND

Level select

On the title screen, press LEFT, RIGHT, A, B and C. Now press LEFT or RIGHT to change level.

ERNEST EMMIS

Level skip

Pause the game and press UP, A, DOWN, B, LEFT, A, RIGHT, B. Now unpause.

HEAVY MOVIE

Hidden bonus

In versus mode, if you manage to kill a guardian without losing any energy you'll get one million points! The same technique might work with your bank manager.

HOOK

99 lives

Drop to the bottom of the first pit in the caves on level five. Walk right and swim under the rocks to the left and 3-up. Pick them up then kill yourself. Just repeat the technique, killing yourself each time, to top up your lives to the maximum.

KRIS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO

Hidden scene

On the caller screen, press A, B, C and RIGHT.

MARRY MARK: MAKE MY VIDEO

Hidden scene

Hold A and C. Press START to go to the U-Direct mode and then A, B, C and RIGHT to see Mr. Wahberg and his girls.

MUSTALIA 1907

Skip intro

Turn on and when "SEGA" appears, press and hold button C till "Sur De Wave" appears. That boring intro will now be ancient history.

ROAD AVENGER

Level select

From the start, push up to access the options screen. Once there, press A six times. Now just play the game as usual.

SQU-FAUCE

Extra options

On the title screen, press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A. Press START when you hear a sound effect. In Config Mode you'll now find Start and Mode. Go to Start and adjust the start level with LEFT and RIGHT. Mode allows you to choose the difficulty of the game, again with LEFT and RIGHT. If you press RIGHT a few times whilst holding A, you'll get "muteki", invincibility!

TIME GAI

Passwords

SHXGJMP - 1991AD

XPTMCSHD - 2001AD

QWCDHKT - 3001AD

Level select

On the menu screen press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, UP. Go into the game and you can start on any level. START pauses the action and C takes you to end of the current level.

WONDER DOG

Passwords

REEVES - Planet Weird

PLAXIES - Planet Froggy

WOOF-IE - Planet Knitrus

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• THE ORIGINAL AND THE BEST •

And so the mighty Power A-Z rolls on. Like an all-consuming ocean of knowledge lapping against the ever-changing tide of Mega Drive and Mega-CD gaming.

In the Power A-Z you'll find a listing of every single Mega Drive game we have discovered — regardless of its origin. If the game isn't officially available, we've written import in the price column. Obviously, as the months go by, we'll discover more and more information, like the Japanese producer, or perhaps info on the official release details. All games are listed under the English names, with the Japanese or American game name mentioned where necessary in the small synopsis.

Finally, we've given each game a rating out of ten. Although our review pages rate out of 100 we have rounded each game down to the nearest ten, ensuring that no game ever scores ten out of ten. There's no such thing as a perfect game.

These may also differ from those in the original Mega Power review, but generally reflect what we feel the game deserves when we are compiling the A-Z each month.

title	producer	price	comment	rating
343				
688 ATTACK SUB	Sega	Import	Aircraft shoot-'em-up. Very dated but good, simple fun.	6
THE ANDAMANS FAMILY	Acclaim	\$39.99	Difficult submarine simulation, hard to play but the effort is worth it.	7
ADVANCED WW2Z SIMULATOR		\$39.99	Creepy goings on as Gomez tries to find his family in this movie tech.	7
AERO BLASTER		Import	Another difficult game, unfortunately you'll need a strong command of Japanese.	7
AFTER BURNER II	Sega	Import	Too short and easy shoot-'em-up, two-player is fun though.	6
AIR DIVER		\$34.99	Very accurate reproduction of the coin-op, but too easy	5
ALADDIN	Virgin	Import	Quite similar to <i>After Burner II</i> , but has more challenging gameplay and tougher guardians.	8
ALEX KID IN ENCHANTED CASTLE		\$44.99	Animation by Disney artists makes this platformer just like an interactive cartoon.	9
ALIEN ³	Sega	Import	Very amusing shoot-'em-up. Detailed graphics, but a tad too easy.	8
ALIEN STORM	Flying Edge	\$29.99	Platform adventure that is packed with levels but becomes slightly tedious.	6
ALISA DRAGON	Sega	\$34.99	Good graphics and sound on this basic shoot-'em-up, but poor playability.	7
ALTERED BEAST	Sega	\$39.95	Another shoot-'em-up that is far too easy; the two-player option saves it.	6
AMAZING TENNIS	Absolute	Import	Help this babe through eight stages of tough guardians and few lives.	7
AMBITION OF CAESAR		Import	The graphics are flickery and response slow. Don't rush out to buy it.	6
AMERICAN GLADIATORS		Import	Novel perspective from behind the player brings neat gameplay to this sim.	7
ANOTHER WORLD	Gametek	Import	Dedicated to fans of strategy games, graphics are excellent.	8
AQUATIC GAMES	Virgin	\$39.99	The game from the crap TV programme; six events to pound through. Monotonous.	4
ARCH RIVALS	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Revolutionary animation, brilliantly detailed graphics and addictive gameplay.	7
ARCUS ODYSSEY	Flying Edge	Import	James Pond competes in a series of fun sports. Great gameplay and graphics.	5
ARIEL: THE LITTLE MERMAID	Sega	\$39.99	Manic basketball extravaganza. Keeps you enthralled for a few hours but soon wears off.	8
ARNOLD PALMER TOUR GOLF	Sega	Import	RPG in the style of <i>Gauntlet</i> . A much-needed password save makes this slightly easier.	9
ARROW FLASH	Sega	\$34.99	Become either Ariel or Triton to defeat the forces of darkness. Plenty of vicious sharks.	7
ART ALIVE	Sega	\$29.99	Up against all the competition, this still proves to be an enjoyable simulation.	9
ASSAULT-SUIT-LEYNOS	Sega	Import	Very poor shoot-'em-up, grim graphics and sound. All round embarrassment.	2
ATOMIC ROBOWD		Import	Art package that encourages you to draw on the MD, but you can't save it!	3
ATOMIC RUNNER	Sega	Import	You are a robot who has to bash other robots. Innovative, but not much fun.	3
AXIS		Import	Scrolling shoot-'em-up, that's total rubbish.	3
BACK TO THE FUTURE III	Sega	\$39.99	Impressive graphics and sound FX make this a good solid platform shoot-'em-up.	7
BAD UNEN	Imageworks	Import	Worth seeing for the amazing 3-D graphics. Very addictive shoot-'em-up.	7
BART'S NIGHTMARE		Import	Massive let down, don't even think of testing it.	1
BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS	Acclaim	\$39.99	Break-Out clone, which is actually pretty good.	7
BATMAN	Flying Edge	\$39.99	Third cartoon adventure of <i>The Simpsons</i> in which Bart plays mini-games to rescue his homework.	6
BATMAN RETURNS	Sega	\$39.99	Fantastic everything in this game — even tons of challenge.	9
		Import	Fine conversion. It may get a tad boring, but accurate graphics hold things together.	9
		Sega	A good sequel that proves very difficult. Five levels of hair-pulling frustration	7

title	producer	price	comment	rating
F1	Domark	\$44.99	Probably one of the most accurate driving sims around, but seriously flawed in its gameplay.	7
F-1 CIRCUS	Import	Import	<i>F-1 Circus</i> is one of the best arcade driving sims yet. Plenty of courses, plenty of gameplay.	8
F-1 GRAND PRIX	Import	Import	Great sound FX and graphics with pukka visuals.	8
F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II	MicroProse	\$39.99	While this certainly looks passable, it never reacts like a real plane would.	6
F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II	MicroProse	\$39.99	A fair conversion of the old computer flight sim.	6
F-22 INTERCEPTOR	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Academy sim where you have to shoot at Iraq. See Saddam cry!	8
THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Fans of RPGs will love it; very accessible and ideal for newcomers.	8
FANTASIA	Sega	\$39.99	Tough with great graphics, let down badly by the gameplay which is very annoying.	5
FANTASTIC DIZZY	Sega	\$39.99	The eggy hero makes a sparkling arcade-adventure MD debut.	8
FATAL FURY	Sega	\$44.99	<i>Street Fighter II</i> done with varied moves but pretty dull.	6
FATEST 1	Import	Import	Split screen two-player racing — but that's about it.	4
FATAL LABYRINTH	Import	Import	Far too easy for the experienced adventurer; good for novices.	6
FATAL REWIND	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Conversion of <i>The Killing Game Show</i> . Strong platformer with superb graphics.	7
FATMAN	Import	Import	Punch-'em-up with comical characters parading across the screen.	6
FERRARI GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE	Flying Edge	\$39.99	One of the worst racing games available. The ear-splitting sound doesn't help.	3
FIGHTING MASTERS	Import	Import	Great visuals, atrocious game. Only for beat-'em-up wimps.	2
FINAL BLOW	Import	Import	Boxing game that again looks great, but don't be fooled.	3
FIRE MUSTANG	Sega	\$34.99	A WW2 shoot-'em-up that doesn't work. Large graphics enhance the slow pace of the game.	5
FIRE SHARK	Sega	\$29.99	Fun shoot-'em-up with everything except challenge. Good graphics and tricky opponents.	7
FLOCKY	Sega	\$34.99	Tiny sprites, simple backgrounds and awful gameplay make this simply appalling.	2
FORGOTTEN WORLDS	Sega	\$39.99	Shoot-'em-up with long stages and varied enemies. Tough but enjoyable.	7
G-LOC	Sega	\$39.99	Almost identical to the arcade version. Take to the skies and blast away.	8
GADGET TWINS	Imagitec	\$39.99	Action packed and very funny platformer. Brilliant graphics and wonderful cartoon FX.	9
GAIAIRES	Sega	\$34.99	Impressive shoot-'em-up which will keep all blast fans happy.	8
GAIN GROUND	Sega	\$34.99	Two-player game where you have to jump and shoot your way through a massive landscape.	1
GALAXY FORCE II	Tengen	\$39.99	So bad, it's unbelievable...	5
GAUNTLET 4	Electronic Arts	\$44.99	Fair conversion of the decade-old coin-op, with Sega Tap four-player option.	8
GENERAL CHAOS	Acclaim	\$39.99	Novel shoot-'em-up war game where you must position soldiers to blast the enemy.	5
GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING	Sega	\$34.99	Poor attempt that does nothing whatsoever to Acclaim's reputation.	2
GHOSTBUSTERS	Sega	\$44.99	Expensive but great arcade adventure that has already become a classic.	9
GHOLLS 'N' GHOSTS	Virgin	\$39.99	Wonderful platform game where you fire custard at slime monsters and collect McDonald's arches.	9
GLOBAL GLADIATORS	Import	Import	Not released here yet, but stunning graphics with authentic and powerful backgrounds.	9
GOONS	Renegade	Import	Great arcade game for its time but now looks terribly dated.	7
GOLDEN AGE	Sega	\$34.99		

POWER A-Z



Most POWER

POWER

title	producer	price	comment	rating
MIDNIGHT MADNESS	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Average coin-op conversion which fails to impress.	4
NIGHT & MAGIC	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Popular RPG which grows on you the more you play it.	8
NIKE DIVIA FOOTBALL	Ballistic	\$34.99	Similar to John Madden but without the character – still good, though.	8
MONOPOLY	Import	\$34.99	Fair representation of the game with good animation. But why buy it instead of the boardgame?	6
MONSTER HUNTER	Import	\$34.99	Controlling a sword-wielding young lass may appeal, but it becomes very tedious.	4
MOONWALKER	Sega	\$34.99	Save Michael's captured children (if you must). Detailed graphics, smooth animation and great sound.	8
MORTAL KOMBAT	Acclaim	\$34.99	Expensive <i>Street Fighter II</i> basher with lots of flaws, but also lots of fun.	8
MS PACMAN	Import	\$34.99	Much worse than the arcade version. Should have packed her bags and given up by now.	2
MUHAMMAD ALI'S HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING	Virgin	\$39.99	The best bruiser in the ring. Ali has many options, great visuals and gob-smacking sound.	8
NHL HOCKEY 94	Electronic Arts	\$44.99	Gameplay's almost identical to NHLPA, but sound and graphics are much more polished.	8
NHLPA HOCKEY	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Simply one of the best sports simulations you can slam into your machine. Super fast, super real.	9
NINJA BURA!	Import	\$39.99	RPG that requires an understanding of Japanese.	7
OLYMPIC GOLD	US Gold	\$39.99	Good simulation that is best played with two or more players.	8
ONSLAUGHT	Ballistic	\$39.99	Medieval platform beat-'em-up that comes highly recommended.	8
OUTLANDER	Import	\$39.99	Drive 'n' blast game that will please anyone who fancies themselves as Mad Max.	8
OUT RUN	Sega	\$39.99	Arcade conversion that is very similar and still great fun even now.	6
OUTRUN 2019	Sega	\$39.99	Set in the future, on a par with <i>Out Run</i> .	7
PAC-MANIA	Domark	\$34.99	The graphics are excellent which makes the whole thing a joy to play.	8
PAPERBOY	Domark	\$39.99	Lots of new streets and even more hazards, but lacks two-player mode.	7
PAPERBOY 2	Domark	\$39.99	Still no two-player mode, and pretty much the same but slightly bigger.	8
PGA TOUR GOLF	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Better than <i>Arnold Palmer</i> with four courses and great graphics.	6
PGA TOUR GOLF II	Electronic Arts	\$44.99	Fantastic follow-up to PGA, with more courses and bigger, better challenge.	9
PHANTASY SOLDIER 3	Sega	\$39.99	Quality platform adventure with excellent graphics and even better gameplay.	8
PHANTASY STAR II	Sega	\$39.99	Marmoth RPG which is fairly easy to get into, but still very tough – and steep!	8
PHANTASY STAR III	Sega	\$49.99	Ten quid cheaper than the original with improved graphics. But the sound is still very weak.	9
PHELIOS	Sega	\$34.99	Very average shoot-'em-up, which you'll probably finish the day you get it.	6
PIKESIN FOOTBALL	Import	\$39.99	Much more violent than American football which it's loosely based on. Also has two-player mode.	7
PIF-FIGHTER	Domark	\$49.99	Digitized graphics and gut-wrenching sounds enhance the experience of battering someone to death.	8
POPULUS	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Certainly isn't an action game, yet the strategy isn't complex enough.	6
POWERBALL	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	A cross between wrestling, martial arts and soccer. Innovative but poorly executed.	7
POWERMONSTER	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	A land mission has to be undertaken, unfortunately the graphics and sound let it down.	7
POWER CHALLENGE	Accolade	\$39.99	Not much different from every other golfing game, although the graphics are noteworthy.	7
PREDATOR 2	Flying Edge	\$34.99	Seven stages of futuristic street violence with plenty of hostage rescuing to be done.	8
PREDATOR 3	Import	\$44.99	Ardent sports fans will enjoy it, but it is totally unoriginal.	7
PUGS	Pynopsis	\$44.99	Playable platformer with the emphasis on puzzle-solving in 51 challenging levels.	8
QUACKSHOT	Sega	\$39.99	Splendid Disney game with Donald starring in a superb platform adventure.	8
QUAD CHALLENGE	Import	\$39.99	Four-wheeler buggies racing around a race track. Utterly useless.	7
RACE DRIVEN	Tengen	\$39.99	Souped-up version of <i>Hard Drivin'</i> with too few extra features to really shine.	6
RAIBEN TRAD	Sega	\$39.99	More shoot-'em-up fare from the Far East. Nothing new but quite challenging.	6
RAINBOW ISLANDS	Sega	\$39.99	Two games in one on this brilliant platformer. Totally addictive gameplay and awesome tunes.	9
RANBO II	Sega	\$39.99	Shoot the annoying inhabitants of a forest sounds boring, doesn't it. Well, it is.	5
RANGER-X	Sega	\$39.99	Amazing-looking shoot-'em-up with double the usual number of colours onscreen.	5
RASTAN SAGA 2	Import	\$39.99	Guide your gallant hero through a maze of dangly platforms. Poor gameplay, decent graphics.	6
RBI 3 BASEBALL	Import	\$39.99	Baseball sim without a difference. Screens full of stats and difficult batting motion.	6
RBI 4 BASEBALL	Import	\$39.99	Hitting the ball is hard enough. Once you've done this, you'll discover the outfield to be totally bland.	6
REVENGE OF SHINOBI, THE	Tengen	\$34.99	Yet another baseball sim in the RBI series. Only for real armchair sports fans.	6
RINGSIDE ANGEL	Sega	\$34.99	Considered to be one of the best beat-'em-up games, and rightly so.	9
RINGS OF POWER	Electronic Arts	\$49.95	Sluggish gameplay runs this women's wrestling game. Good play, though.	8
RISKY WOODS	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Colourful, extremely large and exceedingly difficult. Brilliant nonetheless.	8
ROAD BLASTERS	Import	\$39.99	Converted from the coin-op, but unfortunately it is disarmally poor.	6
ROAD RASH	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Varied backgrounds and atmospheric music make this fun to play.	7
ROAD RASH II	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Race a motorbike through the countryside, overtaking or clubbing other competitors. Great fun.	9
ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Virtually the same as the first but with the added bonus of two-player split screen.	9
ROLLING THUNDER 2	Konami	\$44.99	Smooth jaunt in the traditional style of <i>Ghosts 'n' Goblins</i> . Quite special.	9
RUNAR	Sega	\$39.99	Encounter hoods, panthers and 18-wheel juggernauts. How <i>James Bond</i> should have been.	8
SANK	Import	\$39.99	Save the world's wildlife in this indie-style adventure beat-'em-up. Untapped potential.	5
SAINT SWORD	Import	\$39.99	You've guessed it: a man with a sword, boring graphics and crap animation.	5
SD WILDS	Import	\$39.99	Sad Japanese arcade adventure with very little content to keep you playing.	3
SHADOW BLASTERS	Import	\$39.99	A beat-'em-up which fails to impress; poor graphics and virtually non-existent gameplay.	4
SUNSET RIDERS	Konami	\$39.99	Authentic cowboy and indian action on this platform shooter that shouldn't be ignored.	8
SUPERMAN	Virgin	\$39.99	Pretty difficult which in turn makes it frustrating. A bit of a disappointment.	6
SUPER ARMY	Import	\$39.99	Also known as <i>Crossfire</i> , this shoot-'em-up packs a punch. No TV lie-in evident, though.	7
SUPER BASEBALL 2020	Electronic Arts	\$44.99	This futuristic, robotic version of the sport is a bit gimmicky.	6
SUPER BATTLEMAN	Import	\$34.99	Tank sim that may appeal to your basic instincts, ie, point, shoot, blow up.	3
SUPER FANTASY ZONE	Sega	\$34.99	Big guardians and small sprites. Good fun for a while.	6
SUPER HANG-ON	Sega	\$34.99	Exciting motor-biking from this arcade classic.	8
SUPER HIGH IMPACT	Import	\$34.99	Good animation on this American football sim, but as usual sad lack of challenge.	6
SUPER HQ	Import	\$34.99	Arcade conversion from <i>Chase HQ</i> that doesn't live up to expectations.	4
SUPER HYDRA	Sega	\$34.99	Very boring RPG that has nothing new to offer.	4
SUPER KICK OFF	US Gold	\$39.99	Good in its day but now looks dated next to <i>J League</i> .	4
SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL	Sega	\$34.99	Offers enough options to stave off boredom. One of the decent attempts at the sport.	8
SUPER MILITARY	Import	\$34.99	Good war game that sets the scene for a challenging confrontation.	8
SUPER MONACO GP	Sega	\$34.99	Everything else is here, just lacks a two-player mode.	8
SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX II	Sega	\$49.99	Good graphics, but that's it on this relash of the first game. A real con at £50!	8
SUPER OFF ROAD	Ballistic	\$29.99	All the sights and sounds are here on this 4x4 racing game. Great fun, cute trucks.	4
SUPER REAL BASKETBALL	Sega	\$34.99	Neat sound FX and good graphics scoring sequences which make this enjoyable to play.	8
SUPER SMASH TV	Acclaim	\$29.99	Highly acclaimed arcade game that is very tough. Bit flickery, though.	8
SUPER THUNDER BLADE	Sega	\$34.99	A shoot-'em-up that's claim to fame is the two views – all it does is confuse gameplay.	6
SUPER VOLLEYBALL	Import	\$34.99	Side-view with super scrolling makes this a good, albeit odd, interpretation.	8
SUPER WRESTLEMANIA	Flying Edge	\$39.99	Addictive two-player action in the ultimate WWF simulation.	8
SWORD OF SUDAN	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Difficult to get into with sluggish gameplay.	3
TALSPIN	Sega	\$49.99	Massive RPG which is incredibly tough. Fantastic graphics, large landscape.	6
TASK FORCE HARRIER EX	Sega	\$39.99	Boring platformer with an additional shoot-'em-up section. Bad Disney licence – shock!	5
TALZ MANIA	Sega	\$39.99	Poor American offering that has dodgy graphics and gameplay.	6
TEAM USA BASKETBALL	Sega	\$39.99	Ambient backdrops and a charismatic main sprite give this game that something special.	6
TECHNOCLASH	Electronic Arts	\$44.99	Splendid adventure based around good old-fashioned RPG principles.	2
TECHNO WORLD CUP '93	Sega	\$34.99	Best played on the two-player mode for the most fun. Limiting moves.	7
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	Konami	\$39.99	Great beat-'em-up, with bright backdrops and colourful turtles.	6
TEL TEL BASEBALL	Import	\$39.99	Terry Venables baseball lie-in – er, no sorry, funny, lap baseball game. Whoops, sorry, Tel.	8
TERMINATOR, THE	Virgin	\$39.99	Packed with sills from the movie linking the four stages. Great blasting but too short.	8
TERMINATOR 2: THE ARCADE GAME	Acclaim	\$39.99	Use either the joystick or the Menacer. Nine stages of fantastic virtual realism.	9
TEST DRIVE 2: THE DUEL	Ballistic	\$34.99	The success of this game lies in the car handling which feels just like the real thing.	7
THUNDER FORCE II	Sega	\$34.99	Strong challenge and overall presentation with some super backdrops.	8
THUNDER FORCE III	Sega	\$34.99	Better than the original, this will have you playing for ages.	8
THUNDER FORCE IV	Sega	\$39.99	Magnificent graphics and gameplay. Shoot-'em-up at the peak.	3
THUNDERFOX	Import	\$39.99	Check machine compatibility, but you're not missing anything.	5
THUNDER PRO WRESTLING	Import	\$39.99	Limited moves means it's not much fun to play	2
TIGER HELL	Import	\$39.99	Totally uninspiring helicopter game with dubious graphics.	9
TINY TOON ADVENTURES	Konami	\$39.99	Wonderful adventure that borrows much from the Warner Bros cartoons.	8
TOEJAM & EARL	Sega	\$34.99	Cartoon graphics and some brilliant sampled sound. Weird sense of humour.	8
TOKI	Sega	\$34.99	Great platformer with arcade-quality graphics. Bit too easy, though.	7
TOKI TORAI TORAI	Import	\$34.99	Average shoot-'em-up which has little to offer if you want something different.	3
TOXIC CRUSADERS	Import	\$34.99	Take control of Toxie and help him in this dire scrolling arcade adventure.	1
TRAMPOLINE TERROR	Import	\$34.99	Nothing to do with trampolines. Not even bouncy or fun.	7
TROUBLE SHOOTER	Import	\$34.99	Female stars in Forgotten Worlds type game. Makes for a good looking and colourful game.	8
TRUXTON	Sega	\$34.99	A normal but easy vertical shoot-'em-up that's immense fun. <i>Tatsujin</i> on import.	4
TURBO OUT RUN	Sega	\$39.99	Our Run was brilliant, this sadly lacks any turbo charge.	8
TURRICAN	Ballistic	\$34.99	The innovative shooting technique adds a new twist to this platform shoot-'em-up.	5
TWIN COBRA	Sega	\$34.99	Control a helicopter through dreary battle zones.	8
TWIN HAWK	Sega	\$34.99	Average shoot-'em-up that is very easy.	5
TWINKLE TALE	Import	\$34.99	A psychedelic Japanese shoot-'em-up which plays well. Intense and challenging.	8
TWO CRUDE DUDES	Sega	\$34.99	The stars are two muscle men who are hell-bent on going on the rampage. Destructive fun.	8
TWO TRIBES	Virgin	\$44.99	The sequel to <i>Populous</i> has more powers, better graphics and bigger landscapes. Action-oriented strategy.	9
ULTIMATE DIX	Import	\$39.99	Plays like <i>Othello</i> , but totally rubbish with very few console-inspired surprises.	4
ULTIMATE SOCCER	Sega	\$39.99	Fast, furious and full of options, but fails to deliver in the all-important gameplay department.	5
UNDEADLINE	Import	\$39.99	Zombie level guardians add humour to this shoot-'em-up. Wicked title.	8

SHADOW DANCER	Sega	\$39.99	In this beat-'em-up a dog does the dirty work for you, which adds an amusing dimension.	3	UNIVERSAL SOLDIER	Accolade	\$39.99	Not as tough as it looks, but super gameplay. Could be called Turrican 2.	8
SHADOW OF THE BEAST	Electronic Arts	\$44.99	Psychedelic graphics enhance this otherwise poor platformer that becomes very monotonous.	5	VALIS	Import	The original hack-'em-til-they-die arcade adventure. Worth a playtest for a laugh.	7	
SHADOW OF THE BEAST II	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	This sequel combines teasing puzzles with atmospheric and mystical graphics.	7	VALIS III	Import	Looks great but is incredibly boring. Should have left it at Valis.	6	
SHINING IN THE DARKNESS	Sega	\$44.99	Hugely addictive, with fantastic graphics and very challenging gameplay.	8	VAPOR TRAIL	Import	Fun to play with some very fast gameplay, but not enough challenges.	5	
SHINING FORCE	Sega	\$44.99	12Mbit sequel to <i>Darkness</i> , featuring more intelligence and improved gameplay.	9	VERTEX	Import	Scrolling shooter that is actually quite good. Tough guardians and enemies throughout.	8	
SHINOBI III	Sega	\$34.99	Tremendous platform adventure with loads of pick-ups and plenty of ninja magic.	9	WANI WANI WORLD	Import	Psychedelic graphics, with very addictive two-player mode. Like <i>Bubble Bobble</i> .	8	
SHOVE-IT	Sega	\$34.99	As the title implies, you literally shove things into where they belong. How dull...	3	WARDNER SPECIAL	Import	Usual elements, but with sheer lack of detail from this poor arcade shooter conversion.	4	
SIDE POCKET	Sega	\$34.99	Uneventful pool simulation. The tables are dull but a few trick games and extra options liven it up.	6	WARPSPEED	Import	Deep space shoot-'em-up lacking enough strategy to keep <i>Elite</i> fans enthralled.	6	
SLINEWORLD	Tengen	Import	Todd has to escape the planet of slimy surroundings. Too green to make this bearable.	6	WARSPING	Import	Wargame where you'll have to be patient to appreciate it. One for armchair generals.	8	
SNOW BROTHERS	Import	Looks and plays like <i>Bubble Bobble</i> , but may be completed too quickly.	8	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	Gamelet	Absolute rubbish with 4500 uninteresting questions	2		
SOLOKID	Import	Not much fun as you move crates around a warehouse. Like working at Tesco.	5	WHERE IN THE WORLD IS...?	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	Edutainment game that tends to become boring for the experienced adventurer.	6	
SOUL-FAUCE	Import	A CD conversion without the sound quality. A very average shoot-'em-up.	5	WHERE IN TIME IS...?	Electronic Arts	\$49.99	More successful attempt than its predecessor.	8	
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	Sega	\$34.99	A bit easy now, but still the first truly outstanding Mega Drive game.	8	WHIP RUSH	Sega	\$34.99	Very playable and extremely fast shoot-'em-up with good gameplay. Dodgy title.	8
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2	Sega	\$39.99	Best game of 1992, this time Sonic has a mate, and again Sonic's miles ahead of the rest.	9	WIMBLEDON	Sega	\$39.99	Smashing tennis game utilising the Sega Tap for four-player matches.	8
SPACE HARRIER II	Sega	\$34.99	Awkward playing view and poor sound don't help this weak game.	5	WINTER CHALLENGE	Ballistic	\$39.99	Eight different events make up this snow-laden epic. Very original.	8
SPACE INVADERS '90	Import	Classic game updated. Still holds all the magic, but lacks the polish.	6	WIZ 'N' LIZ	Pygnosis	\$44.99	Chasing fluffy Wabbits is addictive, if repetitive. A neat two-player mode helps.	7	
SPEEDBALL II	Virgin	\$39.99	Techno-rugby for the insane - pitch and players are both superb giving a futuristic feel.	9	WONDER BOY III	Sega	\$34.99	Two-player game is brilliant fun and very interactive. Recommended for two players only.	7
SPIDER-MAN	Sega	\$39.99	Strong story screens and very tough gameplay on this brilliant platform beat-'em-up.	8	WONDER BOY IV	Sega	\$39.99	More fun than the original, but not an all-time classic.	7
SPLATTERHOUSE 2	Namco	\$39.95	Eight stages of blood-thirsty and totally outrageous graphics, combined with equally sadistic music.	8	WONDER BOY V	Sega	\$39.99	Should have stopped by now, no difference really.	7
SPLATTERHOUSE 3	Namco	\$44.99	More gruesome and gory goings-on in the land where Jason Voorhees is king.	8	WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	US Gold	\$39.99	Has speech samples, but nowhere near PGA Golf.	6
SPORTS TALK BASEBALL	Sega	\$39.95	Strong sim based on <i>Montana II</i> speech system. Works well, excellent graphics and great fun.	8	WORLD CUP ITALIA 90	Sega	\$29.99	Limited moves, but still pretty good. Reasonably priced which is definitely a plus point.	9
STAR CRUISER	Import	Completely unplayable due to Japanese text. For language students only.	3	WORLD OF ILLUSION	Sega	\$39.99	Outstanding Disney graphics and animation, which will keep young and old compelled.	9	
STARLIGHT	Electronic Arts	\$49.99	Deep space mining is the name of this game. Plenty of combat and strategy.	5	WRESTLE WAR	Sega	\$34.99	Getting the moves worked out with your joystick is more hard work than the actual game.	7
STEEL EMPIRE	Acclaim	\$39.95	Horizontal shoot-'em-up with huge sprites, which tends to become monotonous.	5	XOR	Import	Mysterious shoot-'em-up, mainly due to Jap text base. Mediocre gameplay.	5	
STEEL TALONS	Domark	\$39.99	Chopper combat at a lower level. Not exactly <i>Desert Strike</i> .	5	XENON II	Virgin	\$39.99	Excellent shoot-'em-up that falters slightly with occasional screen slowdown.	7
STORMLAND	Ballistic	Import	Adventure game with intriguing but not difficult puzzles	7	X-MEN	Sega	\$34.99	Should really have done a straight conversion from the arcade, but it's still okay.	7
STREET FIGHTER II: SEE	Sega	\$39.99	The ultimate beat-'em-up with a host of extra features and lightning speed.	9	Y'S 3: WARRIORS FROM Y'S	Sega	\$39.99	In-depth RPG which offers a considerable challenge. Fans of tough games will love it.	8
STREET SMART	Sega	\$34.99	Beat-'em-up with limited gameplay due to the small array of martial arts moves.	6	ZANY GOLF	Electronic Arts	\$39.99	More insane than crazy golf at the seaside. Fun game with very polished presentation.	9
STREETS OF RAGE	Sega	\$34.99	Beat-'em-up that was well-hyped but lacks challenge. Moves and sound FX make up for this.	8	ZERO WING	Sega	\$39.95	Horizontal shooter which is flawed by its small graphics and ease of completion.	7
STREETS OF RAGE II	Sega	\$44.99	16Mbit cart which has been used to its full potential. Teamplay and versus modes make it worthwhile.	9	ZOD	Gremlin	\$39.99	The eponymous ninja jumps through colourful levels in an enjoyable platform romp.	8
STRIDER	Sega	\$44.99	All stages bar the last are easily completed. Held together by colourful graphics and smooth sprites.	8	ZOOM	Sega	\$29.99	Cheap and cheerful puzzler. Average graphics and sound. Soon gets boring and frustrating.	4
STRIDER II	US Gold	\$44.99	More of the same slick Strider action, but little development on the original action adventure.	7					4

ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH, THE	Dynamix	Import	Pretty wacky adventures of a young lad who mucks about all the time.	8	NIGHT STRIKER	Taito	Import	Well-rough shoot-'em-up from a first-person perspective. Far too easy for a CD game.	2
AFTER BURNER III	CRS	Import	What a waste of a good CD. Why bother sticking this superb game on it?	4	PRINCE OF PESSIA	Sega	\$39.99	Another Mega Drive cart of conversion. Very difficult, but looks and sounds impressive.	7
BATMAN RETURNS	Sega	\$39.99	Basically the cart version, but the added music is superb - well worth paying extra.	7	NIGHT TRAP	Sega	\$49.99	The first of a new era of CD movie games. Big and very challenging.	8
BLACK HOLE ASSAULT	Sega	\$39.99	Heavy Nova wasn't much cop, and this is little improvement over it.	5	RISE OF THE DRAGON	Dynamix	Import	Superbly atmospheric adventure puts you in the shoes of Blade hunter PI. Excellent.	8
CHUCK ROCK	Sony	Import	Seems strange to stick this Mega Drive game on CD. Not bad though.	7	ROAD WRENGER	Wolfteam	\$39.99	Official version of Road Blaster FX. Looks fine, but allows little control over what happens.	5
COBRA COMMAND	Wolfteam	Import	Amazingly popular on import as <i>Thunder Storm</i> FX. Great visuals, limited gameplay.	7	ROBO ALESTE	Compile	Import	Looks great, with the obligatory intro screens, but is just a shoot-'em-up.	7
DEVASTATOR	Virgin	Import	Bar the flash intro, this could easily have been on cartridge. Simple shoot-'em-up stuff.	5	SEGA CLASSICS: ARCADE	Sega	n/a	Golden Axe, Super Monaco GP, Columns, Streets of Rage and The Revenge of Shinobi.	7
DUNE	Wolfteam	Import	One adventuring using CD video and speech sequences, but a bit linear.	7	SHERLOCK HOLMES II	Sega	\$44.99	Quite an amusing attempt at a mystery game. Only three cases to solve, though.	8
EARNST EVANS	Sega	\$44.99	Five more levels and some brilliant ambient music lift this one above the waves of CD drops.	9	SHERLOCK HOLMES	Sega	\$39.99	Double-disk extravaganza with three more cases. Same interface and graphics as the first game.	6
ECCO	Sega	Import	Take the band on a trip through a strange land. Funny but incomprehensible.	5	SILPHEED	Sega	\$39.99	Flagship Mega-CD pusher that fails to ignite after an explosive intro. Basically, just another shoot-'em-up.	5
FUNKY HORROR BAND	Sega	Import	Five more levels and some brilliant ambient music lift this one above the waves of CD drops.	9	SOL-FAUCE	Sega	\$39.99	The original CD shoot-'em-up with mad music, wicked effects and tough gameplay.	8
HEAVY NOVA	Micronet	Import	An early robot beat-'em-up that is laboriously slow.	5	SONIC CD	Sega	\$44.99	More Sonic magic in this excellent platform romp with neat 3-D bonus stages.	9
HOOK	Sony	Import	Beautifully enchanting story, with glorious visuals, but poor gameplay.	7	SUPER LEAGUE CD	Sega	Import	Grimola. This is one waste of good plastic. Looks dire and plays like a brick.	3
INXS: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sega	\$39.99	For £30 less, you could get more videos made by a professional.	6	SWITCH	Sega	Import	It's crazy, it's wacky, it's <i>Switch</i> ! The computer wiring's gone wrong but Switch can fix it.	6
JAGUAR XJ220	Sega	\$44.99	Very disappointing race game. Waste of a CD, get Lotus on cart instead.	4	TIME GAL	Wolfteam	\$44.99	Tons of ways to die in this Jappy cartoon adventure. Perfect difficulty ensures long-term play.	8
KRIS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sony	Import	Old concept disc where you cut and edit your own videos. Limited appeal.	5	THUNDERHAWK	Sega/JVC	\$44.99	A superb 3-D chopper-combat game, using the Mega-CD's full capabilities.	8
MARKY MARK: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sony	Import	Better quality than Kris Kross - ply Marky Mark's a dance.	6	WONDER BOB	Sega	\$39.99	A great game, admittedly, but why stick this on Mega-CD? Nothing exploits the format.	8
					WOLFCHILD	Sega	\$39.99	A freak experiment turns into disaster as the inventor is kidnapped. Tedious and predictable stuff.	6

RECOMMENDED

So many titles, some good, some not so good. We pick the games that we most regularly slam into our machines and explain why you should be doing the same.



ALADDIN

When I first went to see this game at Sega headquarters, we all waited with some trepidation on what it would really be like. It took everyone by surprise, purely because we didn't think it was going to be this good. When the finished version arrived in the Mega Power offices, I quickly plugged it into the console and got down to the heady job of playing it. Well, to cut a long story short, *Aladdin* is absolutely wonderful. It is by far the best-looking game I have ever seen, being totally reminiscent of the film. Disney have managed to produce their finest piece of work to date: this is effectively an interactive cartoon film. The game not only looks fantastic, but is also marvellously playable. The first few levels are relatively simple, but as you progress, the game takes on a new light. Full of Disney magic, this is an essential buy for anybody.



SENSIBLE SOCCER

I just love sports sims and, being a lifelong fan of Leicester City, I have a passion for soccer games. Over the years I've played an incredible amount of them, using all sorts of different perspectives and controls. Yet really good football games are few and far between. The Mega Drive has had its fair share of average and downright poor ones. Now, at last, MD owners can play the best football game of all time. The best thing is that you can tell it's been lovingly designed by people who know their football and are true fans of the sport. *Sensible Soccer* is the most realistic footy game ever, enabling you to make authentic-looking moves but requiring skill to do so. Hence when you score a really spectacular goal it's all the more satisfying. Also, too many soccer games are marred by too much barging and fouling. This is where *Sensible* really cleans up, making it so much more enjoyable to play. I love it.



ROYAL RUMBLE

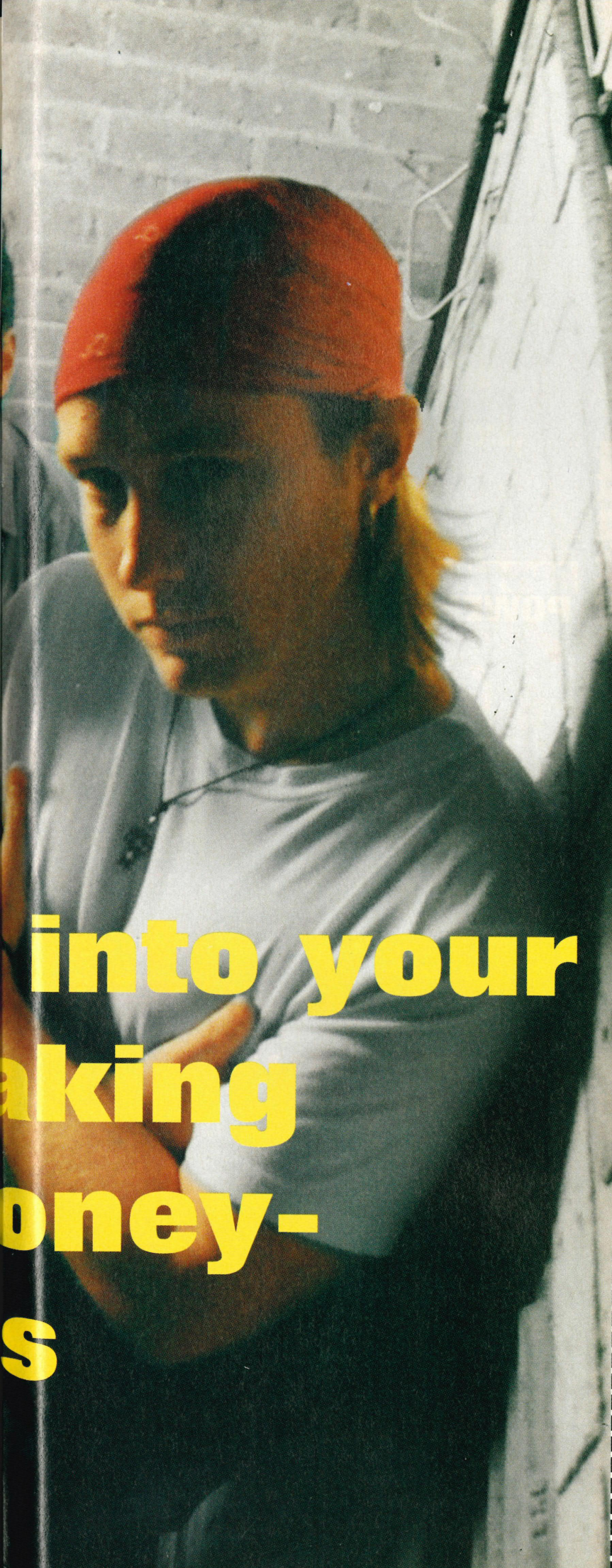
I've had a peculiarly WWF month actually. No, not saving pandas, but wrestling ginormous mountains of glitter-wearing muscle to the canvas and sitting on them. Grr! This all makes me feel very macho and *Royal Rumble* is by far the least painful way of going about my new hobby. Having met Mr Perfect I think my hopes of becoming World Champion are remote, although on console I am a towering figure of destruction. *Royal Rumble* is by far the most impressive wrestling game I have ever played and the wide variety of moves, holds and ring skulduggery (like smashing chairs over your opponents' head) keep the general gameplay very varied and extremely challenging. The options of a brawl, a one-pin bout or an all-out *Royal Rumble* with every fighter charging into the ring at once ensures that I never get bored of rolling up my sleeves and grappling with the WWF's best.

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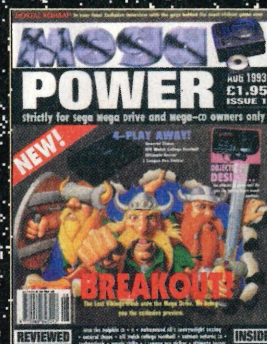
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MEGA POWER

once upon a time in a console market far, far away,
a brilliant new magazine was created. In their
wisdom, the creators decided to call it Mega Power.
Only the country's most accomplished games players
read the monthly publication but, as time went on, many
new readers wept for they had missed the chance to benefit
from the immaculate knowledge imparted in the early issues.
They wished that they had the chance to catch up with the other
gamers by being able to purchase the back issues...
...their wish was granted.

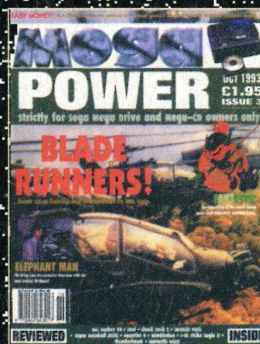
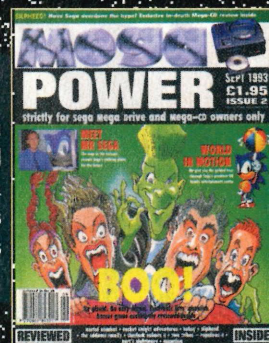


ISSUE 1 ● £2.50

Sensational launch issue featuring a look at the Mega Drive 2 and Mega-CD 2, an interview with the programmers of Mortal Kombat, an exclusive peek at Lost Vikings and ten essential reviews including: Ali's Boxing, F1, Techno-Clash and Ecco CD.

ISSUE 2 ● £2.50

Packed second issue containing an exclusive interview with Sega head honcho, Nick Alexander; first look at Sega World; previews of EA's many Christmas releases, including EA Soccer, James Pond 3 and Super Baseball 2020.



ISSUE 3 ● £2.50

The programmer of Ottifants gets a grilling. US Gold's first attempt at a Sega chopper flight sim is taken for a whirl. And are film licences all they are cracked up to be? Reviews this issue include Chuck Rock 2, Fantastic Dizzy & Jurassic Park.

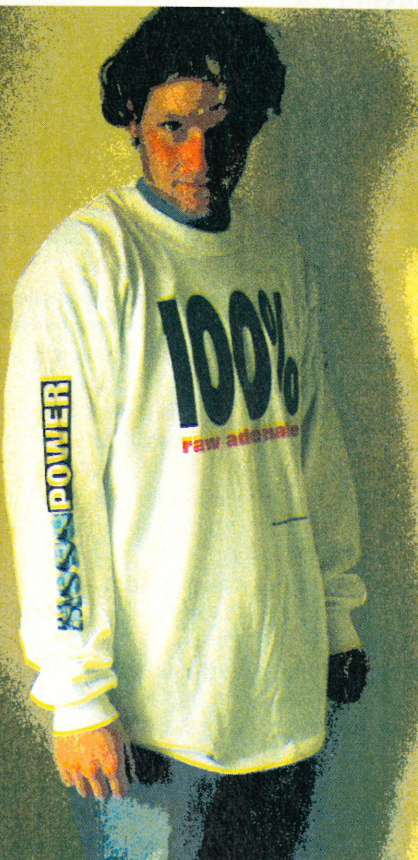
ISSUE 4 ● £4.75

The history-making first magazine ever to cover-mount a playable Sega game demo. We expose piracy and take a hard look at Sony's arrival in the games market. Great previews of Sensible and Fifa Int. Soccer, The Jungle Book and Dune 2.



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JURASSIC PARK



**OVERALL 7
86**

Power review-----issue 3

"Movie licence of the year, this game surprised everybody by being very, very good. Dinosaur fans will be thrilled by the excellent graphics and chilling FX."

power saver price -----£48.00

MORTAL KOMBAT



**OVERALL 7
89**

Power review-----issue 2

"Launched on Mortal Monday, this bruiser looks set to challenge *Street Fighter II* for the title of beat-'em-up of the year."

power saver price -----£49.00

SONIC CD



**OVERALL 7
91**

Power review-----issue 4

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE.....26th NOVEMBER

"This massive platform extravaganza rivals *Thunderhawk* as the best Mega-CD game yet. The 3-D bonus levels are particularly impressive."

power saver price -----£44.00

ALADDIN



**OVERALL 7
94**

Power review-----issue 4

"Disney animators helped create the silky smooth graphics in this magical platform game. It's so good, it's just like playing an interactive cartoon."

power saver price -----£49.00

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POWER

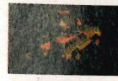
charts

HIGH STREET CHARTS

Compiled with the help of HMV, Our Price and Virgin.

mega drive

position	last month	months in chart	game title
1	[1]	2	Mortal Kombat
Still stuck at the top is Acclaim's guts-and-gore beat-'em-up, and it certainly deserves to be there.			
2	[2]	2	Jurassic Park
Nothing's managed to knock this off the number two spot – you try shifting a dinosaur!			
3	[-]	1	Ultimate Soccer
Rage bring us this top-quality footy game that enables up to eight players to compete.			
4	[-]	1	NHLPA 94
Sliding into the charts is the latest ice-hockey offering from Electronic Arts.			
5	[-]	1	Gunstar Heroes
Lots of shooting to be done if you can be bothered to reach the numerous guardians.			
6	[-]	1	Rocket Knight Adv.
Join Sparkster in this fantastic and very big platform adventure. No wonder it's rocketed into the top ten.			
7	[5]	5	Flashback
Still in the top ten, Flashback justifies its position as it's an out-and-out brilliant game.			
8	[-]	4	Jungle Strike
Word of mouth must be spreading for this game to reappear back in the charts. Mind you, it's a cracker.			
9	[4]	4	Bubsy
This brilliant platformer, starring the cheekiest of Bobcats, suffers a bit of a fall this month.			
10	[3]	5	Micro Machines
Down seven places, but obviously still doing a lot right as it's been in the charts for five months now.			



mega-cd

1	[1]	3	Night Trap
One of the best CD games available, that's why it's still number one.			
2	[2]	3	Final Fight CD
Highly praised, and justified by the chart position and the sales it's been receiving.			
3	[-]	1	Batman Returns
Bruce Wayne stops playing with Catwoman for a while to go out and defend the streets of Gotham City.			
4	[3]	4	Sherlock Holmes 2
There must be thousands of wanna-be detectives out there somewhere for this to still be in the charts.			
5	[5]	5	Road Avenger
Five months in the chart and it's still there. An indication that the CD market needs more quality games.			



INDEPENDENT CHARTS

Compiled with the help of Video Games Centre, The Software box and Lansdowne computers.

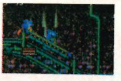
mega drive

position	last month	months in chart	game title
1	[1]	2	Mortal Kombat
Acclaim's hyped-to-death gory beat-'em-up, causing much controversy in the daft tabloids.			
2	[-]	1	Street Fighter II
What else can be said about this, apart from it's the best game ever?			
3	[3]	2	Rocket Knight Adv.
Sparkster makes his first appearance onto the Mega Drive in this delightful platformer.			
4	[-]	1	Haunting
Very amusing Electronic Arts game that has you trying to scare the wits out of some rather nasty people.			
5	[4]	2	Gunstar Heroes
Rather tedious shoot-'em-up that has far too many boring aspects for most blasting fans.			
6	[-]	1	General Chaos
Bizarre four-player beat-'em-up that will have you all in fits of laughter.			
7	[-]	1	NHLPA Hockey 94
Yet another addition to this highly successful series, but if you have NHLPA 93 don't bother buying this.			
8	[2]	3	Jurassic Park
The game of the film. Nothing could better the movie, but this is a brave attempt.			
9	[7]	5	Micro Machines
Still hanging in there is this ever popular racing delight from the Codies.			
10	[10]	2	PGA Tour Golf 2
The best golf game ever entices yet more players onto the fairway. Steve's still addicted to it.			



mega-cd

1	[3]	2	Sonic CD
It's no surprise that this is number one. Quite simply a brilliant game featuring the world's biggest star.			
2	[-]	3	Batman Returns
Re-entering the charts, this game is very hard and has the added bonus of a great soundtrack.			
3	[4]	4	Silpheed
Up one place for this mediocre space shoot-'em-up that promised so much, but delivered little.			
4	[5]	3	Night Trap
Watch out for all the foxy ladies in this highly original CD quest.			
5	[1]	4	Final Fight
Proving its worth by staying in the charts for four months, this is a superb beat-'em-up.			



POWER

POWER survey

If you don't fill this survey out and post it back to us then you'll have no-one but yourself to blame if Mega Power doesn't contain what you want to read. This is your mag so help us to give you what you want.

A

In which area do you live?

- 1 ☐ Scotland
- 2 ☐ Northern Ireland
- 3 ☐ Wales
- 4 ☐ North England
- 5 ☐ West England
- 6 ☐ East England
- 7 ☐ South England
- 8 ☐ SW England
- 9 ☐ SE England
- 10 ☐ Outside UK

B

How old are you?

- 11 ☐ Under 10
- 12 ☐ 10-14
- 13 ☐ 15-17
- 14 ☐ 18-21
- 15 ☐ 22-27
- 16 ☐ 28-35
- 17 ☐ 36-50
- 18 ☐ Over 50

C

Are you:

- 19 ☐ Male
- 20 ☐ Female

D

Are you:

- 21 ☐ At school
- 22 ☐ At college
- 23 ☐ Unemployed
- 24 ☐ Employed (job title)
.....
- 25 ☐ Self Employed
(business type)
.....

E

My weekly earnings are:

- 26 ☐ Zippo
- 27 ☐ Under £20
- 28 ☐ £20-£50
- 29 ☐ £51-£100
- 30 ☐ £101-£200
- 31 ☐ £201-£350
- 32 ☐ £351-£500
- 33 ☐ Over £500

F

How much, on average, do you spend on software purchases each month?

- 34 ☐ Zippo
- 35 ☐ Under £20
- 36 ☐ £20-£30
- 37 ☐ £31-£50
- 38 ☐ £51-£70
- 39 ☐ £71-£100
- 40 ☐ Over £100

G

How many carts do you own?

- 41 ☐ 1
- 42 ☐ 2-4
- 43 ☐ 5-8
- 44 ☐ 9-14
- 45 ☐ 15-20
- 46 ☐ Over 20

H

How many carts do you intend to buy over the next year?

- 47 ☐ 1
- 48 ☐ 2-4
- 49 ☐ 5-6
- 50 ☐ 7-8
- 51 ☐ 8-12
- 52 ☐ Over 12

I

How do you buy your games?

- 53 ☐ Mail Order
- 54 ☐ High Street Store
- 55 ☐ Specialist Store
- 56 ☐ Second hand

J

Why do you buy your games this way?
.....
.....

K

What single factor most influences your decision to buy a magazine?

- 57 ☐ Cover price
- 58 ☐ Gift
- 59 ☐ Front cover
- 60 ☐ Contents

61 ☐ Other (specify)
.....

L

What single factor most influences your decision to buy a game?

- 62 ☐ Price
- 63 ☐ Reviews
- 64 ☐ Publisher
- 65 ☐ Game type
- 66 ☐ Other (specify)
.....

M

How many people, on average, read your copy of Mega Power?

- 67 ☐ Only myself (1)
- 68 ☐ 2
- 69 ☐ 3-5
- 70 ☐ More than 5

N

How frequently do you intend to buy Mega Power?

- 71 ☐ Subscription
- 72 ☐ Every issue
- 73 ☐ Cover gift issues.
- 74 ☐ Issues without gifts
- 75 ☐ Occasional issues
- 76 ☐ Never again

O

How many hours per week do you spend playing games?

- 77 ☐ Up to two hours
- 78 ☐ 3-5 hours
- 79 ☐ 5-10 hours
- 80 ☐ More than ten

P

What magazines do you read regularly (please rate)?

- | | % Rating |
|---|----------|
| 81 <input type="checkbox"/> Sega Pro | |
| 82 <input type="checkbox"/> Sega Power | |
| 83 <input type="checkbox"/> M Machines Sega | |
| 84 <input type="checkbox"/> Seag Force Mega | |
| 85 <input type="checkbox"/> Sega Zone | |
| 86 <input type="checkbox"/> Games Master | |
| 87 <input type="checkbox"/> CVG | |
| 88 <input type="checkbox"/> Mega | |
| 89 <input type="checkbox"/> Mega Power | |
| 90 <input type="checkbox"/> Mega Drive | |
| 91 <input type="checkbox"/> Mega Action | |
| 92 <input type="checkbox"/> Sega Master Force | |

Q

Which other types of interests other than consoles do you have?

- 93 ☐ Sport
- 94 ☐ Music
- 95 ☐ Reading
- 96 ☐ Video/Hi-Fi
- 97 ☐ Movies
- 98 ☐ TV
- 99 ☐ DIY
- 100 ☐ Gardening
- 101 ☐ Motorcycle/car
- 102 ☐ Socialising

R

Do you watch satellite TV?

- 103 ☐ Yes
- 104 ☐ No

S

Which of the following types of TV programmes do you watch?

- 105 ☐ Computer Games
- 106 ☐ Sat Morning TV
- 107 ☐ Breakfast TV
- 108 ☐ Music TV
- 109 ☐ Late Night TV
- 110 ☐ Children's Soaps
- 111 ☐ Adult Soaps
- 112 ☐ Cartoons
- 113 ☐ Documentaries
- 114 ☐ Lifestyle TV

T

Which of the following it,ms do you own or intend to buy over the next year?

- OWN**
- 115 ☐ UK Mega Drive
 - 116 ☐ JAP Mega Drive
 - 117 ☐ US Genesis
 - 118 ☐ UK Mega-CD
 - 119 ☐ JAP Mega-CD
 - 120 ☐ US Sega-CD
 - 121 ☐ Master System
 - 122 ☐ Game Gear
 - 123 ☐ Action Replay
 - 124 ☐ Game Genie
 - 125 ☐ CDX
 - 126 ☐ Universal Adaptor
 - 127 ☐ 4-way Adaptor
 - 128 ☐ Monitor
 - 129 ☐ Turbo Joypad
 - 130 ☐ Joystick

BUY WITHIN

3 Months

- 131 ☐ UK Mega Drive
- 132 ☐ JAP Mega Drive
- 133 ☐ US Genesis
- 134 ☐ UK Mega-CD
- 135 ☐ JAP Mega-CD
- 136 ☐ US Sega-CD

- 137 ☐ Master System
- 138 ☐ Game Gear
- 139 ☐ Action Replay
- 140 ☐ Game Genie
- 141 ☐ CDX
- 142 ☐ Universal Adaptor
- 143 ☐ 4-way Adaptor
- 144 ☐ Monitor
- 145 ☐ Turbo Joypad
- 146 ☐ Joystick

6 Months

- 147 ☐ UK Mega Drive
- 148 ☐ JAP Mega Drive
- 149 ☐ US Genesis
- 150 ☐ UK Mega-CD
- 151 ☐ JAP Mega-CD
- 152 ☐ US Sega-CD
- 153 ☐ Master System
- 154 ☐ Game Gear
- 155 ☐ Action Replay
- 156 ☐ Game Genie
- 157 ☐ CDX
- 158 ☐ Universal Adaptor
- 159 ☐ 4-way Adaptor
- 160 ☐ Monitor
- 161 ☐ Turbo Joypad
- 162 ☐ Joystick

Next year

- 163 ☐ UK Mega Drive
- 164 ☐ JAP Mega Drive
- 165 ☐ US Genesis
- 166 ☐ UK Mega-CD
- 167 ☐ JAP Mega-CD
- 168 ☐ US Sega-CD
- 169 ☐ Master System
- 170 ☐ Game Gear
- 171 ☐ Action Replay
- 172 ☐ Game Genie
- 173 ☐ CDX
- 174 ☐ Universal Adaptor
- 175 ☐ 4-way Adaptor
- 176 ☐ Monitor
- 177 ☐ Turbo Joypad
- 178 ☐ Joystick

U

If you could do one thing to improve Mega Power, what would it be?
.....
.....

V

How do you feel about the worth of advertisements in Mega Power?

- 179 ☐ Very important
- 180 ☐ Quite important
- 181 ☐ Slightly important
- 182 ☐ Not important

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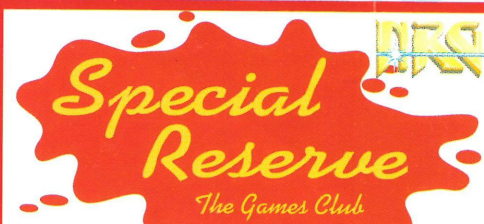
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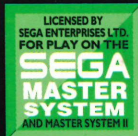
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