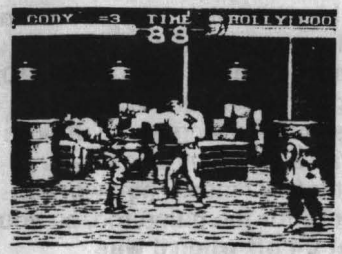


CONSOLE MAZINE



SEPTEMBER 1990 - ISSUE 16 - RECOMMENDED PRICE - £1



SUPER FAMILCOM
WHAT WILL BE AVAILABLE!



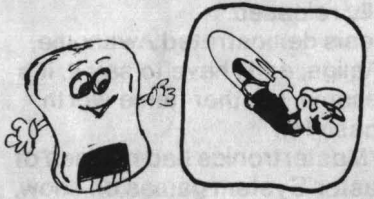
SHE'S BACK!



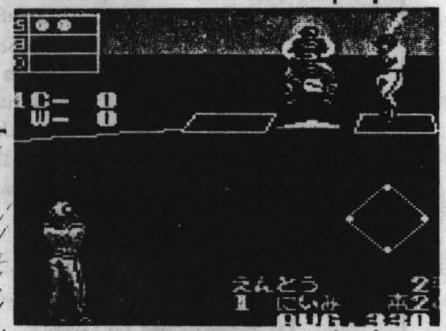
Valis III



AXE BACK 2!



HOT!



GAMEGEAR BASEBALL



Well, console fans... this month's issue is only just over a week late... I think I'll have to be sneaky again, and have a double-month issue to catch up - what thick twat invented the calendar system? 50 days for each month is more convenient!! Back to this month's 'zine, we've got masses of games reviews for the engine and megadrive, plus at long last the modification to display english text on a japanese machine, if you are brave enough. September was a great month, not only is it my Birthday, there was the E.C.E.S. at Earl's Court, London, plus I got shot 3 times, and killed 3 people playing 'Skirmish' (Grown people running around shooting each other with paint guns), in Sherwood Forest in the worst wet and windy conditions possible, but great fun!

Well, until next time.... see ya.

Onn

Credits

Editor/Art Editor

Onn Lee

Writers/Reviewers

Marc Foord, Justin Saunders, Carlo Bernhardt, David Cheung, Tai Ono, James Dobson

Games & News Suppliers

Tsuyoshi Yamashiki (Japan), PC Engine Supplies, Megaware, plus various magazines Monthly PC Engine, Beep! Megadrive, Marukatsu PC Engine, PC Engine Fan, Megadrive Fan, New Computer Express, etc...

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To contact C.M. send all mail to:

Onn Lee (C.M.), 125 Arnold Road, Bestwood Estate, Nottingham. NG5 5HR.

E.C.E.S. Report

The European Computer Entertainment Show at Earl's Court was the place to me for computer and video games, what with the official launches of most consoles from Commodore, Amstrad, SNK, Sega, and Nintendo, but all in all there weren't any new surprises.

The biggest stand at the show was Commodore's who had their "CDTV" incased in glass and displaying a number of CDs, but was it running anything? ... NO! SUGAR!! The C64 GS console was there in droves but didn't look all that impressive, you're better off with a proper C64 computer... it sure looks

better on your desk than the hugh piece of plastic. Amstrad's console were like rabbits, not only at the Amstrad stand, but all over the place set in arcade cabinets, mostly running Burnin' Rubber - which is quite a good game.

Nintendo really let ripp to boost sales of their NES and running the age old Super Mario Bros. on a super big screen, but if they are to sell more machines, I say they'll have to seriously cut the price of their carts. But the gameboy must have been selling like hot cakes as most stands sold out of them, even though there were only a few official games for the machine. As for the official Megadrives, they must have been giving them away as there were none for sale on the Sunday, when we were there. It was a different matter at the SNK stand... then again, would you buy the machine at that price? However, there were great interests in the system. Unfortunately, the eagerly awaited Cyber Lip wasn't present, but there was a new game called Super Spy, which looks quite good.

The TurboGrafx-16 was present at the show, displayed by an austrian company who didn't speak english too well after intense questioning... although it's believed they will officially sell the TG-16 in Europe in October, until NEC takes over, if successful. As the machine is not compatible with the japanese engine, this is rather bad news, not to mention, should they intend to sell it close to the price of the MD, sales will be low. Pitch it at the C64 and Amstrad console market, and it should be a winner.

Top stand at the show had to go to Ocean with their multi-screen display, arcade coin-ops, and freebies. The amount of new titles they were to release was hugh, including many top licenses : Robocop 2, Total Recall, Billy the Kid, Navy Seal, Narc, Nightbreed, EPIC, Puzznic, Plotting, S.C.I., Pang! and Toki.

Mirrorsoft showed off the Master System version of Xenon II which has graphics as good as the Amiga version minus the second layer screen, but in full screen looks well ace, even if the graphics are stretched. And with license of Turtles, they were going Turtle crazy. The other Bitmap game, Speedball 2 looked well ace too, and should be a winner.

Electronic Arts had a small stand, but highlight of the show was Bullfrog's "Work in Progree" of Powermonger, which looks absolutely brilliant, and should do better than

Populous... maybe it will make it's way to console format soon after? The game will be linkable using Midi ports, so all you Amiga owners should rush out and buy, borrow, make or steal a midi add-on... I will!!

Hewson showed off Paradroid '90, which again looked ace with fabo graphics, but knowing which droid is which was a problem, unless you played it a few times. They were taking orders for the game too, so you could get £4 off when it was eventually released.

Psygnosis demonstrated Awesome, for the Amiga, and I have to say it, it's real Awesome, another game worth parting cash for.

Virgin/Mastertronics had masses of Sega Master System games on show. On rep. even had his hands on a GameGear and I have to say, it looks 10 times better than the Lynx, as it's more compact, fairly light and really slick! Best game on the Virgin stand was Iron Mike's Off Road Racing, a maniac truck racing sim., similar to Super Sprint but with mud, jumps, ditches, drops, etc.

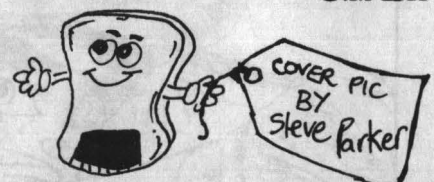
Although there were around 100 coin-ops there, Microprose had the best there, with their own 'F15 Strike Eagle' machine, based on the old 8-bit game, but this coin-op was far more playable with super fast, extremely realistic and ultra smooth action. It sure will be a hit if it ever makes it to the UK arcades.

Aswell as the games, there were also the cars - no need to go to the Motor Show here! U.S.Gold had a red Lamborghini Contach on show, Gremlin had a Lotus Espirt Turbo, and then there was Tom Cruise's racing car from Days of Thunder.

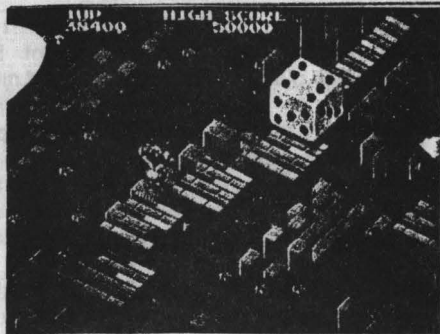
Then there were the mob of so called singers on the stage with the two furry Turtles - what happened to the original movie turtles? These furry ones look ridiculous!!

Overall, a great show, and it was a "SHOW", as there were so much on display, and hardly anything you could actually buy. If all the items were available, I could easily have returned with a few hundred pounds less! EG. Amiga: Powermonger, Paradroid '90, Indy 500, Awesome, SWIV, EPIC, etc. Well worth it! Oh yeah.. apart from Justin, I missed everyone else - maybe next year.

Onn Lee



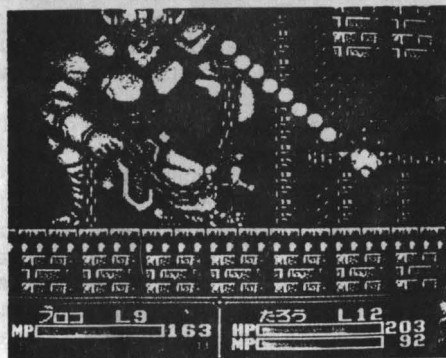
N-E-W-S



THE COIN-OP NAMCO GAME. IT'LL BE IN 2D ON THE ENGINE. WATCH THAT BIG DICE!

Engine News

New announced titles is becoming rare on the engine, and this month, is as bad as last month. The only new game not mentioned in previous issues of CM comes from Namco in the form of a cute and colourful 3D isometric arcade adventure. The title of which I don't know, but planned for a christmas release on only 2meg card!! Unfortunately, the 3D view may be dropped in favor of the traditional RPG/Commando style view... whatever, the graphics should be as good, as you control a small girl who must wander around high-rise platforms, avoiding/shooting wierd and wonderful creatures including fat penguins, giant dice, school boys... in fact, the girl looks like Alice - so they could be tweedledum and tweedledee... and reach end of the stage, and you must battle against the big bosses - a floating turtle wearing a hat and dark glasses, and a long nosed witch on a broomstick. Looks ACE! Maybe one day, the japs will write a 3D isometric game for the Engine.... or even the Megadrive, Sega couldn't handle Moonwalker like



CADASH : ENGINE

the coin-op!

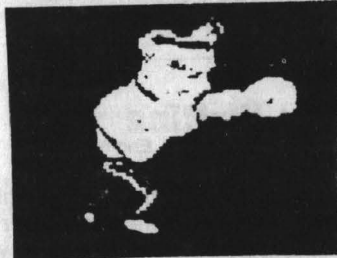
Well, that seems to be it... what else can I talk about? AHh.. yes, Taito's Cadash, the coin-op Role Play Game should hit the streets in the new year '91, on 3meg Card. Like the coin-op, the game will have dual play options letting you pick from the 4 characters available. The graphics are not quite as detailed as the coin-

op, but very nice. The only trouble of course, it'll be in Japanese. Before Cadash, Taito's Wrestling game - Champion Wrestler, should be available for Christmas on 3meg Card. This looks to be better than the other wrestling games with great graphics and life and power level indicators -



TAITO'S WRESTLING.. 4 MAN TAG, AND A DROP KICK

so you know how strong/weak you or the opponents are. The game has 8 wrestlers all with different abilities and special techniques... there's even a guy who can breath fire!! ... plus a devious fellow who picks up a bucket and use it on opponents - a bit WWF eh? Like Fire-Pro, the game can be played by 1 or 2 players in single, or up to 4 in Tag team... and all four can fight it out in the ring. Oh yeah, some wrestlers have managers too, that lurk outside the ring! All waiting for S.C.I. will have to wait to wait until '91. Hudson Soft with help from Kaneko will be releasing Air Busters at the beginning of November - 4meg and very good it looks too. The two player option will be included. Populous has already made it to the Megadrive and the engine version is looking just as good - like the Amiga version, but with 500 worlds. The first Cinemaware game - TV Sports Football should be available in October, and looks as good as the Amiga version, including the in-between animations. The unusual thing is, the game can be played by 1 to 5 players in different combinations. Out from Victor on 3 meg. Face's Cybercross 2 - Cyber Combat Police, is looking well ace. The game's very much like Sega's E-SWAT as you control a normal guy who can punch/kick and use his gun, also transform into a robot. Like the original, weapons come in the form of a red sword, blue gun, or green boomerang weapon. The game's another arcade adventure beat'em up with bigger and meaner nasties, plus you get to ride a hover jet bike in a shoot'em up like download. Out in De-



MEGADRIVE: KAGEKI CHARACTER SHOWING HE CAN PUNCH

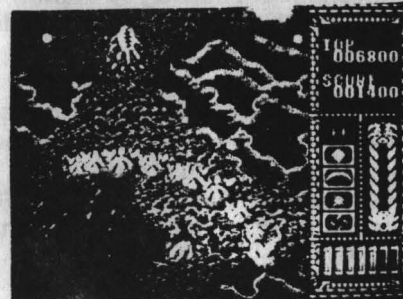
CONSOLE MA'ZINE

ember on 3meg. With Days of Thunder doing the rounds in the Cinemas and Computer format (terrible game!!!), Media Rings Corps will be releasing a car racing game of similar type on 4meg card for release in December. The game is viewed from behind the motor like most games these days, as you ripp along the circular track... hopefully it's faster than Thunder.

Although I said there wasn't any other new games, there are quite a few, but all are either war games or Role Play Strategy ones... all Japanese!!

Megadrive News

One of the best companies producing games for the Megadrive has to be Technosoft, although they have only released 3 games with Thunderforce 2/3 and Herzog Zwei, but their next game - Elemental Master is looking cool too, and could well be the vertical equivalent to Thunderforce 3. The game is similar to Phelios, but you control a wizard instead who can fly. Like other vertical shoot'em ups, you have a bagful of weapons (spells) and zillions of enemies to contend with. Coming out on 4meg cart., but no re-



MD: ELEMENTAL MASTER. WIZARD ATTACKED BY A RATHER LONG DRAGON

lease dates.

Taito's Darius II will be available in December and looks exceptionally good. Coming a lot sooner, is Space Invaders '90 (which should now be available) which is slightly better than the engine version. And set for 5th Oct. - Rainbow Islands Extra version. The game will be the same as the coin-op, but you can select "Extra" mode and play the whole game with new creatures. For example, instead of Insects on the first island, you have characters from Darius. Heavy Unit, already out on the Engine, will be out in December. The game looks more impressive with larger and more detailed graphics than it's engine counterpart, but the gameplay should remain the same. As for Air Busters, still no planned release date for that.

More news of Super Air Wolf is that, the game will have two different gameplays. The first is like Ultimate Tiger (Twin Cobra) as you fly your Airwolf upstream blasting all ground and air targets, and when you get to your destination - land, and rush out in to a Rambo III like game. Out in Nov.

Toaplan have licenced a few of their games off lately - namely Hellfire, Tatsujin, and Hurrican... but are to convert and release their next game by themselves, that of 'Same! Same! Same!'. The game is the proper sequel to Flying Shark, as you take on a bi-plane (the Fire Shark), in another up screen shoot'em up. Basically, the game is like Hurrican with swirling planes, tanks, ships, etc. to blow-ip. The weapons available to you are similar to that of Tatsujin, with multi-way fire, streaking lasers, and powerful green shots, plus super bombs. Out early Nov.

From Wolf Team, soon to release FZ AXIS, are to release Granada in Nov., a game that had already been released for the X68000. The game's a multi-directional shoot'em up, viewed from above, similar to the plan-view part of Thunderforce II.

As for NCS, they have nearly more games than Sega up their sleeves. Latest on their list is another horizontal shoot'em up, as you control a little guy with wings... sounds a bit like Insector X eh? But there are some wicked looking meanies to destroy - no planned release date as yet. Also on the no release date line is Explode Star, a cute platform arcade game, a sort of Bombuzal in 2D view. And Star Cruiser should be out in Nov., which looks well ace!!

The long awaited Kageki from Hot.B should be available in December... as the game goes, it should be as good as Karate Champ but with more complex movements, devious opponents, etc..

More horizontal shoot'em ups coming from Sega for Nov. will be V Attack. This one doesn't look too hot, resembling very much like Curse, but we'll give you the low down when we get hold of a copy!!

DEJA VU

Darius Plus -

NEC Avenue - 6meg - Engine/S.G.

Atlast, the HuCard version of one of the best horizontal shoot'em up for the engine arrives. As you expect, soundwise is not as good as the CD version, but all the music and FX are still present, and just as good.. infact, after several goes, you'll hardly notice the difference. The game features less big Bosses, which makes it slightly easier, especially as most of the really really difficult ones have gone, plus there are a few more power ups. Eg. On the Card version, if you collect all the powerups on stage A+B, you will have full power on all 3 of the first set of weapons, but on the CD version, you get full Red, but one missing from Green and Blue!! An added bonus if you own a SG, there's no noticeable flicker - if you don't own a CD-Rom, then Darius Plus is definitely worth getting. Rating, same as CD Version.

AfterBurner II -

NEC Avenue - 4meg - Engine

The Engine version is a very competent conversion, not as good as the MD one, but just as playable. The graphics are good, although very chunky when coming towards you, like in coin-op Thunderblade, but action is fast paced and just as good as the MD version with shouting warnings, barrow rows, tilting landscape, canyon strafing, plane and landing on air-strip refuel/arm., etc. The game has 3 difficulty levels, and will only let you continue once!! It also features a 3D room which lets you mess about with 3D shapes made from balls...interesting, although due to the engine's limits of displaying amounts of sprites per line, parts of the balls usually disappear. All in all, a great conversion, but certainly not the best, but then again - which also goes for other conversions, if you really want to play Afterburner, you're better off going to the arcades to play... nothing beats the rocking and rolling of the coin-op. Oh yeah, like the MD version, it will accept the analogue stick.

Review:

W-Ring

Naxat - 2meg - Engine

W-Ring is a horizontal Shoot'em up which 'looks' well ace! The game is similar in style to the Nemesis suite where you

control a small craft that moves left to right, with up and down movement. Because the play area is so large, and most of the enemy sprites are small, there are tons of them, swooping all over the place, but this isn't much of a problem, as taking them out is quite easy. Aswell as the small enemy ships, there are also floating asteroids to shoot/avoid, and quite a lot of foreground scenery to avoid.

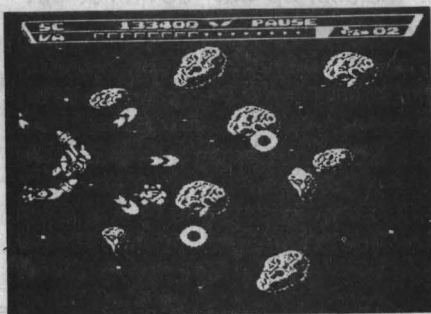
Your ship is equipped with a Ring Shield, fast firing short-lasers, and drop-bombs, but as you can guess, floating pods appear quite frequently, and shooting them reveal a circular icon that change colour. Collect it when it's a certain colour for the weapon you want. Red will give you Gyro Shields, Yellow - missile, Green - Ring Beam, Pink - Multi way, and Blue - Laser. The more you collect, the more powerful they become, although max. is 3. As you process, bigger nasties appear firing missiles, lasers, and generally getting in your way.

Reach the end of the stage, which doesn't take long, you'll meet the end of stage Boss(es). To make things easier for you, you are told where it's weak shot is by a target, so blast away at that point avoid it and it's shots and it'll blow up in no time. The Bosses are fairly easy to destroy, especially with powerups, most can be killed in seconds!! On stage 2, you can kill the Boss just after it fires his first shot if you have the laser!!

The graphics are real nice, and extremely detailed, even the small enemy sprites are brilliantly shaded. The landscape range from Nemesis-like organic rocks, grass covered boulders etc. with battered space craft, Irem style/Alien Crush 'alien' scenery to a sea world, & metallic structures, all with colour-cycle effects, which look quite stunning, and Unfortunately, for some strange reason, your weapons, and bomb explosions flicker like they are in Amiga interlace mode, which look awful - why they programmed it to do this is beyond me. The music is really strange, with mixture of piano, synths, horror, hi-tech, real ace!! Sound FX is restricted to weapon FX, and Explosions.

W-Ring features 3 levels of difficult - Easy is too easy and the game can be completed quite easily, although you don't get the very end of stage! Normal is set about right, and Expert, well.. rock hard! Overall, W-Ring is a good shoot'em up, very playable, but lacks variety, even the weapons are not a great difference as they fire so fast, it doesn't really matter which one you take (apart from taking the Gyro Shield). It's one of those games that - if it moves shoot it, doesn't move shoot it anyway, and if it's flashing - collect it. It certainly requires no mental thinking like some games where you have to think about the best weapon to pick, and best way to tackle the level/Enemy. Worth getting if you are after a horizontal blaster, if you already have Darius.

Graphics : 85% Sound : 85%
 Playable : 80% V.F.M. : 80%
 Overall : 82%



MDV ATTACK. ANOTHER SHOOT'EM UP...ZZZZZZzzzz??!

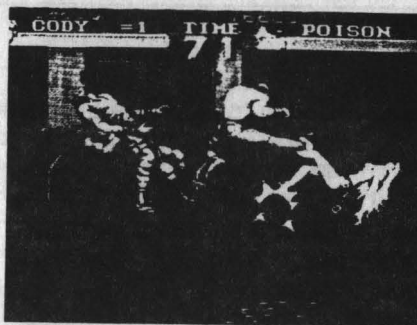
Super Famicom

At last the Super Famicom was shown to the Japanese public at the Japan Computer Show called 'Soft World 90' during August. The machine sports a new logo with red, yellow, blue and green shapes - the same colours as the buttons on the control pad buttons. The machine still is set for release on 21st November. And the games? -



'Super Mario World' will be released the same day on 4meg Cartridge and will cost 8000 yen. Mario World will be mostly the same as the previous Mario Bros. games, but ofcourse, a more massive arcade adventure with lots of wacky creatures, situations, etc. The game also features a dragon-like creature that lets you ride on and a magic cloak enabling you to fly, sure to be a winner - but then again, it's only one of a few games released the same time as the machine. The others also include - 'F-Zero', again on 4meg and cost 7000 yen. The game is like pole position but with futuristic crafts that can travel over 450km/h, meaning very possibly super amazingly smooth, ultra fast 3D graphics. Bombuzal, which have already appeared on computer format will be released on 4meg Cart again, and sell for 6500 yen.

12th December, sees 'Flight Club' (previously Dragon Fly), again 4meg - 8000 yen. As far as I can gather, the game's a soft of arcade flight simulator, where you have to get from one location to another within a set time. You get to fly a bi-plane, hanglider, a jet pack and also do a spot of parachuting on to a target. The game is



FF:FINAL FIGHT. COIN-OP PERFECT?!

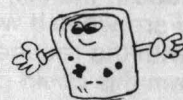
viewed behind the craft/man and features amazingly detailed 3D graphics.

'Sim City' should hit the Super Famicom in April '91 on usual 4meg cart. - 8000 yen. Konami should have 'Gradius III' ready by December '90, again 4meg/7800 yen. Graphically, it looks identical to the coin-op - sure is amazing how the whole coin-op game can fit onto a 4meg cart! For monster bashing - there's 'Ultra-man' - that red/white robot, friend of Godzilla in a sort of Street Fighter game but against some wacko monsters - some seen on Channel 4's monster movie series. On 6meg (!), but title unknown and no release date, will be a Rastan Saga type game featuring a warrior with a big sword in an usual kill all the nasty creatures, jump from ledge to ledge, etc. But even bigger on 8megs (!!!) - for 8500 yen will be Capcom's 'Final Fight' set for December '90. This one looks awesome with graphics as good as the coin-op and features dual play option., although I have to admit, I'm not a great fan of the coin-op game. Jaleco's 'Big Run' will be on 4meg and set for March '91, also looks great.

As you'd expect, 'Populous' should be available in December '90 on 4meg too, and so will a RPG. More RPG, the popular 'S.D.' will be converted to the S.F. for January, and 'Drakken' on a whopping 8meg Cart, set for Dec '90. You want Golf? HAL Laboratory Inc. has one in the works for Feb '91 on 8meg. 'R-Type II' and 'Darius II' are in the works too - but no estimate release dates or size/pri-

ce. All in all, the Super Famicom should be a real winner - I can't wait!!!!

GAMEBOY



With the Nintendo releasing the Gameboy officially at a great low price of under £70 with Tetris game and link cable, the Gameboy can only increase in popularity - and should become as popular as the Walkman. Unfortunately, the only thing letting it down is the lack of official games for the machine. More would be nice!!

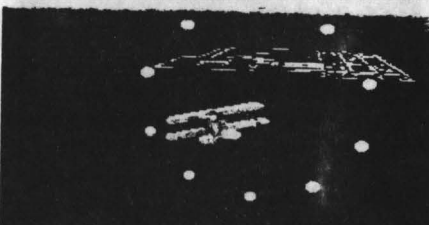
One of the problems with the gameboy is, you can only link two of them together unlike the other hand helds, namely the Lynx with a possible of eight. So, the clever japs have come up with a four player adaptor! The small device will be released on 9th November for 3000 yen. The device is a small box, not even bigger than a matchbox with a lead coming out for connection with one gameboy. The other three gameboys can be connected to the gadget. The only game that will implimate it at present is a Formula 1 driving game similar to Final Lap.

Gameboy games seem to increase in large quantities each month, most of them are rather below par or really wierd, but one game that should be instantly playable is Pacman! Yep, Namco has converted one of their most popular games for the Gameboy, hoping to achieve better things than their other oldie Space Invaders. On 1meg cart., and set for release in November. Another goldie oldie set for release for the Gameboy will be Burger Time - out for Feb '91.

More arcade conversions - December will be the release of F1 Circus (see Engine review).. screen shots look ace, but how the gameboy can handle the speed is a different matter! And more car games from Taito, would you believe they are to convert Chase HQ to the gameboy? Planned for January next year! One of the best looking Gameboy games has got to be Cosmotank from Asuka. As the title suggests, you take control of a tank, but the difference between this game and others is that, it features 2D top down gameplay, plus 3D - in the hot seat action... looks real awesome!

Nintendo Entertainment System

Nintendo again tried to show the UK public that the NES is the machine to get at the ECES, as shown by sales of the machine in Ja-



FF:FLIGHT CLUB. BI-PLANE FLYING WFFEE!!!

pan and the US, but never a great success in the UK, due to lack of software when it was first released. But with the reduced price of the system this could change things...it's certainly better than getting the C64 or Amstrad consoles, but then again, the machine is a little dated now - with a few extra pounds, you can get a Engine or Megadrive.

Back to the jap scene, Top game set for October will be Irem's conversion of their wicked coin-op game Legend of Hero Tonma. The

game's a ace arcade adventure, and the NES version looks brill! Already available on the Megadrive - Insector X, has also been released for the NES. However, the game has cartoon like graphics instead of more detailed realistic look. Personally, I think this look better as when you go up against a BOSS Bee, beating it, and you see the Bee all bandaged up! well cool!

OPEN FORUM



HOW SUPER!!

1. What are the technical specifications of the Nintendo Super Famicom (NSF) eg. graphics, sound, etc..?

2. What is better - the NSF or the Megadrive?

3. What will the prices be for the games for the NSF?

4. How arcade perfect will the NSF games be eg. Speech, sound, graphics?

5. Will there be a grey version?

6. Will the NSF have ghouls + ghosts programmed for it?

David Thomas, Essex.

1. We've given the main tech specs in previous issues - it's 16-bit machine, but runs slow in 3 configurations, although have custom chips that run independantly of the processor for speed. It has 1meg main ram, two 256K VRAM; 32,768 colour shades - 128 on per screen at any one time from palette of 256; 256x224 resolution; 8 channel PCM sound capable of 16mhz for clear smapling; special chip to handle screen - zooming in/out, rotation, etc. with ease at speed, etc....

2. The NSF looks to be better - coming close to the Neo Geo, but without the price!

3. See Famicom page in this issue!

4. Image the Amiga with 8 channels instead of 4, and that's close to what you have... and the Amiga's sound is mega! As for the current coin-op conversion for the NSF at present, Gradius III & Final Fight look identical

to the coin-op than any coin-op conversion I've seen!!

5. You bet! But likely to cost a packet... time to mortgage the house!!

6. Capcom are going to release the follow up, so unlikely to release G+G, as it's rather old hat now, considering Nintendo's policy of not releasing game on other systems on to their machines.... and G+G already out on the MD & SG.

CD compatibilitties

1. What happened to 'Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego' on Cd-Rom with it's English text?

None of the suppliers have heard of it?

2. Do American CD-Roms work on our imported Japanese systems?

You have mentioned this many times, but the suppliers haven't got a clue, I got these three answers from 'PC Engine Supplies'.

i) Yes they work and we're getting some in,

ii) No they don't work,

iii) Some of them work & some of them don't.

Please set the record straight, surely one of your readers tried one.

3. I'm confused over system cards. I have Ver 1.0, a friend has Ver 2.0, and now you mention Ver 2.1. I

know about CD-G compatibility, but what about the difference between Ver 2.0 & Ver 2.1? His Ver 2.0 was supplied with his CD-Rom System.

4. What happened to the 'Power Console' for the SG? Has it been released, what about other analogue joysticks?

Kevin Donovan, Gwent.

1. As far as I know, the game has already been released in Japan. It's possible that none of the suppliers over here think it'll sell well, so didn't get any in. Maybe if you try to order it from one of the suppliers, they might get it for you. I never bothered getting it because I have already got the game on the Amiga!

2. YES! American CDs work on the Japanese system. Unfortunately, there only a couple of them currently available. If you went to the ECES, Fighting Street (US Version) was available, but as myself and Justin already had the game, it's not much point getting. Also available is Wonderboy III.... again, not much point getting as it doesn't have any text or speech in it. However, Valis II, Ys I+II, Red Alert & Final Zone II, should be available in the US, that could be worth getting, especially YS. Oh... don't get confused about 'CDs' and 'CD-Roms'. Most people consider

CD-Rom as the hardware drive unit, and not the actual discs.

3. Well, that's news to me - I didn't know Ver 2.0 was available! Are you sure about that.. have you actually seen the system card with Ver 2.0 on it? If so, they could have just changed it to match with the little 2 on the CD-Rom. I think 2.0 is just the same as 1.0, but I could be wrong. Does your friend's manual say (show, as it would be in japanese) that it's CD-G compatible, or have the Graphic option when you insert the card?

4. The Power Console seems to have been delayed... what can you expect from NEC!! But as for the analogue joystick, it should be available soon...as Afterburner II is now available which should be able to use it, like the MD version.

..More CD Blues!

1. When is the release date roughly of the Handy Grafx (portable engine) How much £, and what games would work if I bought one from Japan, Turbo, Normal Engine, Japanese?

2. Could I connect it to the main/adaptor

3. If I bought Japanese CDs of Arcade themes, would these work on a normal (English) CD Player.Would a Japanese CD player work here?
William Azzoug, Lincs.

1. The machine is already available in the US (Turbo Express - will only work on TurboGrafx-16 cards), but the Japanese version should be available before Christmas, and it will run normal japanese cards.Cost of the machine have yet to be decided.

2. Yes.

3. Yes again. All CD music systems are the same around the world.

Talking of Arcade themes, latest available music CDs includes:

*Falcom's 'Ys II'

*Taito's 'DJ Station' featuring music from N.Z.Story, WGP, Op.Thunderbolt, Rastan II, etc..

*DataEast's 'Crude Buster & Midnight Resistance'

*UPL's 'Omega Fighter & Atomic Robo-Kid'

*UPL's 'Task Force Harrier'.

*Konami's 'Game Music Collection Vol.2' - Quarth, Trigon, Crime Fighters and another.

*Hot.B's 'Insector X.'

*Namco's 'Final Lap 2'.

*Also, you can get NEO GEO music on Tape.

POPULOUS

MEGADRIVE - BY BULLFROG/ELECTRONIC ARTS - APROX. £45
 SUPPLIED BY PM GAMES

Anyone who has not heard of (or actually seen) Populous on either the Amiga or ST must either:

- a. Have no interest in the ST/Amiga market whatsoever (!) or
- b. Been away on holiday on a remote island for 3 years.

As you may have guessed, it could be said that Populous was a very well received game on the 16 bit computers.

Anyway, for those who qualify for one of the above reasons, the basic idea of the game is as follows. There are two sides: good and evil. You play good (hooray!) and must defeat evil by gaining more followers. Simple, eh?!

There are a few points to note with Populous. Firstly, it is a Genesis NGLISH instructions (!!!) and fits in a Megadrive without any hassles at all (there is actually no need to file a hole or modify your MD to get the cartridge working, just plug it in and push your power switch on and off you go -don't force the on/off switch, just push it as far as it wants to go). To start with, the Electronic Arts logo pops up and this is followed by an average title screen (a castle on a mountain). If you leave the game at this point, a story is told on screen which basically gives the background of the game.

There are no options as there were on the Amiga (eg Custom game etc). After you have pressed 'A' to start you are shown the world description screen. This tells you everything about the current level (eg the landscape, the reaction time of evil etc). Here you can either select to start the game or select a new game. If you decide on a new game, you are then prompted to enter the password for the required level (these are given



POPULOUS:MOUNTAINOUS AREA, HARD TO POPULATE THIS PLACE!!

after each level is completed), the codes are exactly the same as on the Amiga!

On starting the game you are faced with a close-up map of the current world. This is seen as an isometric square in the middle of the screen. Little men wander about and there are various pieces of scenery around the place (trees etc).

You have control of a pointer which can be moved around the screen. By using button B plus any direction, you can scroll around the close-up map. In the top left corner is a miniature map of the whole level and this can be used to travel large distances quickly (by putting the pointer over the place on the map and pressing A). In the top right there is the info shield which tells you your current population level and evil's current population.

Beneath the info shield is a strip of icons which is the mana bar. This basically shows you how much godly power you have and what you can actually do with it! In the bottom left corner is a multitude of icons. There is the direction symbols (which can be used to move around instead of using 'B') and also the divine intervention symbols (more later!). Various other icons are also present, but most seem only to be needed if you become a more advanced player.

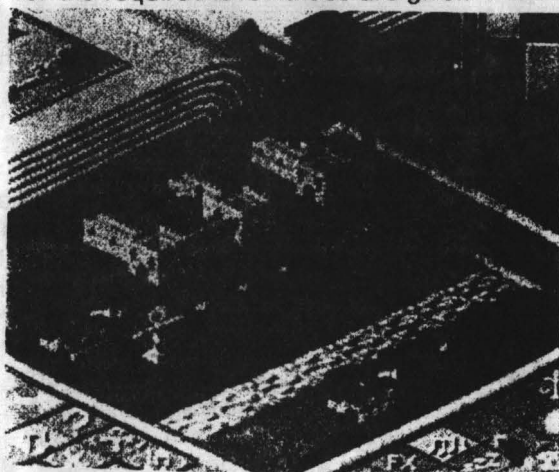
Both sides start out with the same amount of followers (usually!) and evil is always situated in the bottom of the map. The main part of the game involves flattening out land so that your existing people can build larger (or new) settlements. The 'A' button adds extra land and the 'C' button takes land away. As modifying the landscape uses energy (mana), you can at times find yourself unable to do anything! The larger the space, the larger the settlement. For instance, if there is

only a tiny square of space, a small tent will be put up. However, if more space is given this will change into a larger building (until finally it becomes a large castle). The more settlements you have, the more people will come over to your side - the more power (or Mana) you will gain. The mana bar mentioned previously indicates what you can do with this mana. Various nasty things can be afflicted on your enemy (which either slows his progress down or wipes him out totally!). These include : earthquakes, swamps, volcanoes, floods etc.

When you are sure you have a large enough following (check the population bars) and enough mana to do so, you can then declare Armageddon by selecting the icon. This results in the two sides meeting at a central point and fighting to the last. If you win you are given a password (the better you do, the more levels you can skip) and must conquer the next world. Otherwise, it's try again.

I have to say that I find it very hard to find any differences between the MD version and the Amiga original. The display is full screen (naturally) which the Amiga is not, but otherwise the graphics are exactly the same (perhaps a tad larger due to the lack of borders on the MD). No attempt seems to have been made by Bullfrog to actually improve on the Amiga version, and it looks very much to be a straight port-over. The sound is very poor (an average title tune but during the game only the sound of a heart beat).

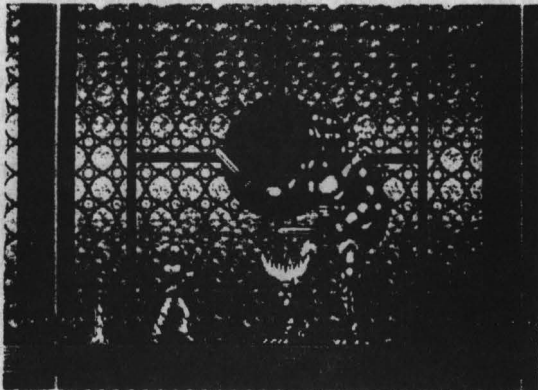
Considering what could have been done, it seems a shame that Bullfrog could not be bothered to update Populous for the MD. To be fair, it is the game itself which made Populous a hit, not its graphics and sound. However, some more use of the MD's palette and some larger and 'chunkier' sprites would not have gone amiss. The sound could definitely have been improved (the MD can handle music and sound fx at the



POPULOUS:DIVIDED WE STAND!!

REVIEWS

same time Bullfrog!) and some music would have been nice. Populous is a very large game and if you can really get into it, you could find yourself playing this for a long time to come. However, it is an acquired taste and some people may hate it. It is bordering very much on strategy but has more to actually do than most pure strategy games. Anyhow, the gameplay remains intact (in fact exact!) and this means that Populous is still a fairly good game. However, I would definitely not recommend any Amiga/St owners with MD's going out and buying it as they could save themselves £20 if they bought the computer version at £25 (and get the same game). If Bullfrog had updated the MD version sufficiently this game would come recommended (especially to strategy fans). However, as it is, I don't think Populous really stands up enough as a MD game and especially due to its price, I have to say I feel MD owners could spend their money on a

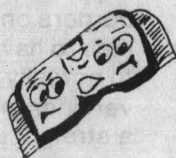


SHITEN-MYOOH: YOU ARE A BIG BOY AREN'T YOU?

lot better game than this. Sadly, an opportunity missed by Bullfrog.

Graphics : 68%
Sound : 38%
Playability : 85%
V.F.M : 50%

Overall : 70%



Marc Foord

SHITEN-MYOOH

by SIGMA ENTERPRISES - MEGADRIVE
RENTED FROM MEGAWARE

This game is the latest in the line of Super Shinobi-style games to arrive for the MD and, it has to be said, the worst to date! The game starts off with a poor looking logo (presumably the name of

the game in Japanese) and a bit of fairly average music plays away - no nice intro explaining the story which is disappointing as it is great to see the games companies showing off the MD in these intros.

Once you have pressed Start, you can choose 1 player, 2 player or Options. The options are: Level (normal, hard), Control (set up which button does what) and Sound test. The two player option is simultaneous (which is nice to see as these add a lot to a game if they are done well).

After this you are asked to choose which level you wish to start on. There are 9 levels shown in the booklet but only 6 can be accessed from the start (presumably, like Thunderforce III you must complete the other 6 to get to the last 3). Then, finally, you are asked to choose which character to play. The 4 characters available are Kotarou (a young warrior), Ayame (a young princess type), Kidenbou (a big bald-headed, bearded thug!) and Senshirou (a white haired magician type).

Each of the characters have the same amount of power but each has a different weapon, although this doesn't make a lot of difference in practice.

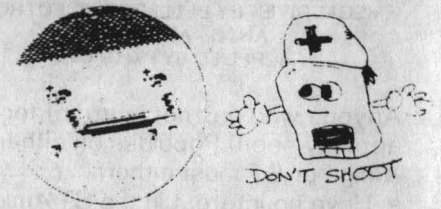
The idea of the game is basically to make it to the end of the level and defeat the guardian who waits there. The 3 buttons are all used (one for jump, one for fire and one for magic). The magic is the same for all 4 characters and just kills everything on screen (does damage to an end of level

nasty).

The graphics are really nothing special at all and have a slightly 'chunky' look to them and with few colours used, the overall effect looks poor. The scrolling also leaves a lot to be desired (bordering on jerky) and the animation looks as though it could do with a few more frames (why can't we have lovely fluid, lifelike animation like in Super Shinobi all the time?!).

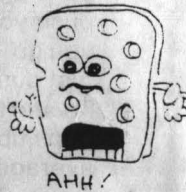
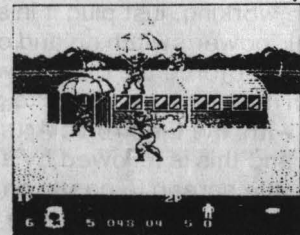
The music is sometimes quite atmospheric but mostly is average and, again, seems under par for the MD. If you are playing one player, each time one character is killed you are asked to choose the next character to play (characters are labelled 'Dead' if they have expired!). With two player, obviously the game doesn't last as long since the two of you must choose between 4 characters in total. The difficulty level is set far too high

CONSOLE MA'ZINE



and it usually takes all 4 characters to get to the end of one level. You are allowed to continue a number of times but the difficulty does tend to get frustrating and I ended up actually NOT wanting to continue!

There are also a few quirks (bugs??), like if you die and change characters you are placed a couple of inches from the ground and stay there for a few seconds before dropping back to earth! I have to say I was very disappointed with Shiten Myooh. The overall impression is that the whole thing could have easily been done on an Atari ST (dare I say it?!!!!) and there is really nothing to distinguish this as



a MD game. Steer well clear or rent/play first but certainly don't rush in and waste 30 odd quid on it as you will end up feeling well cheated.

Graphics - 60%
Sound - 60%
Playability - 45%
V.F.M - 40%

Overall - 45%

Marc Foord

OPERATION WOLF

by NEC Avenue - 4meg - Engine
Supplied by PC Engine Supplies

Operation Wolf is the latest Avenue arcade coin-op conversion, and like their other reproductions - they have done an excellent job. If you haven't played or seen this one, then you should be shot! The game involves shooting/grenading enemy soldiers, helicopters, gun-boats, armoured vehicles, etc... and rescuing hostages in a six stage shoot'em up.

The main difference between the engine version and the coin-op is,

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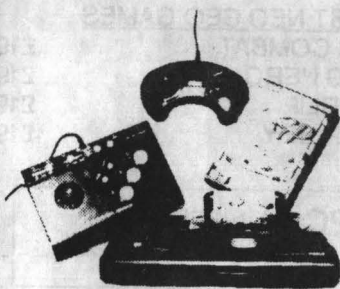
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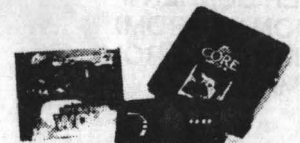
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The game plays the same as the coin-op, although unfortunately, the speech is missing. The graphics are exactly the same, and sound is close enough, and so's the gameplay, although you do get a gunsight. A reminder of the gameplay - you start with with a set number of ammo and grenades, and each stage has a set number of soldiers, armoured vehicles and helicopters which you (and your friend) must dispose off. As the game scrolls, soldiers etc. appear all over the place and if you can't shoot them quick enough, will start shooting at you,

where your health bar will decrease... until death! Some soldiers wear bulletproof jackets and must be shot in the head, vehicles require several shots to destroy (best use grenades), there are soldiers that throw knives and grenades which must be shot, and so on. As equipment runs low, extras appear which can be picked up by shooting them. There are either lying around or shooting chickens, pigs, vultures and coconuts reveal them. These include machine gun ammo and grenades, bottles and first aid to increase health, and dynamite which act like a smart bomb. Aswell as the mayhem, there are also people to avoid including a small boy, a couple of nurses, and a girl in a bikini, plus hostages to save in later levels. Shooting them will reduce your health!!

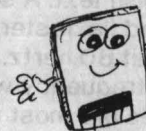
Overall, Op. Wolf is great fun, has super graphics including the inbetween screen, good sound, and generally frantic action. Because you can choose the first 4 missions, you can select the 4th first, and when you complete that, the 5th is revealed, then

6th... so can complete the game by only doing 3 stages! Having played the Amiga conversion, plus the sequel - Op.Thunderbolt, something like two years ago, the appeal and excitement of it is wearing thin, especially as the Amiga version is much more playable with a mouse! However, if you are a Op.Wolf fan, and haven't got another version, the Engine's is a must especially with the added second player option - plus with 3 difficulty levels, difficult to complete.

- Graphics - 93%
- Sound - 80%
- Playability - 85%
- V.F.M. - 80%

- Overall - 83%

Onn Lee



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TECHIE BIT IN THE MIDDLE

OK...it's a bit late, but here it is - how to convert your Japanese Megadrive to display English text, if software includes it. It took some time for us to get it to these pages as the guy wanted to modify another Megadrive before documenting it --so you know it definitely works!!

SEGA MEGADRIVE JUMPER OPTIONS

A word of caution, some soldering is required!

1. Open up the megadrive and closely examine the circuit board. You should see four jumpers labelled JP1, JP2, JP3 and JP4. These are located to the bottom right of the board. It looks a bit like this:

```

0 0 0 0  --- jumper points
| | | |  --- straps (illustration only)
| | | |
0 0 0 0
J J J J
P P P P
1 2 3 4
    
```



2. There are basically two modification options, one which allows you to select between 50 and 60 hertz, and one which allows the megadrive to detect and display english text. A selection of 60 hertz allows the megadrive to run at its native speed (ie. faster), but note that all scart versions of the megadrive already run at 60 hertz. PAL modified Megadrives run at 50 hertz, but changing the hertz frequency will mean the PAL TV signal will no longer work. Speed differences are most noticeable for 3D and scrolling shoot'em ups.

3. A quick explanation of terms is required. An examination of the jumpers will reveal two possible states, "open" and "closed". An OPEN jumper means that there is NO METALLIC STRAP (a thin strip of conducting material) across the jumper points. A CLOSED jumper means that THERE IS A METALLIC STRAP across the jumper points. Following is an illustration of the above:

OPEN = 0 --- Jumper Points

```

0 --- Jumper Points
    
```

CLOSED = 0

```

| --- "Strap" connecting Jumper Point
|
0
    
```

Note that to open a jumper you are required to remove the strap if there is one present. There requires the use of a soldering iron. To close a jumper, you will need to solder a strap across the jumper points.

4. JAPANESE/ENGLISH TEXT

i) Japanese text = 10 uF (micro faren) capacitor connecting JP2. JP1 is left open.

ii) English text = Remove capacitor connecting JP2 and replace with 6K8 resistor. JP1 is left open.

Perform ii) to get english text. i) is given in case you want to convert back to japanese.

50/60 HERTZ SELECT

50 Hz = JP3 closed & JP4 open.

60 Hz = JP3 open & JP4 closed.

The modifications explained above are not as complex as they seem, I hope they are understandable.

David Cheung, New Zealand.

SWAP-LINE

MEGADRIVE games for sale: DARWIN 4081- £20, TATSUJIN - £20, also Soccer. All as new. Will consider swaps. Phone Marc on 081-892-8441.

For Sale: Atari Lynx + power pack + California Games + Gates of Zendecon + Electro Cop + Gauntlet 3 + Blue Lightning + Chip's Challenge. All as new. £200 o.n.o or swap for Megadrive+games or PC Engine+games. Phone: 081-560-0197.

PC Engine and Megadrive games for sale or swap. Games include Devil Crash, Formation Soccer, Download, Super Foolish Man, Moonwalker, E-SWAT, Whip Rush, and Ghouls + Ghosts for £20. Also another 31 games. Also for sale, lots of Jap Mags. Games wanted:- Rastan II, Operation Wolf, Don Doko Don, Chase HQ, and lots more. Call Chris on 051-931- 2594 after 6.30pm weekdays and anytime on weekends.

Scart Super Grafx for sale, perfect condition, still under guarantee (£195). Also have Battle Ace, Tiger Road, Rastan 2, Namco Baseball, Digital Champ, Vigilante & Be Ball for sale, very cheaply. PS. Wanting arcade boards. Tel: 0246-207131.

PC Engine games to swap. Phone Richard on 051-922-7642 - 10.00am to 11.00am Only!!

(Brand New) games to swap Rambo 3, Kujaku 2, Alex Kidd. (Wanted) Final Blow (Boxing). Tel: 0443-431995.

Swap Blue Blink for either Mr. Stretcho Man, Bloody Wolf, Dodge Ball or Final Lap Twin. Derek Garforth 0493-652974.

I have PC Kid, Shinobi, Digital Champ, Altered Beast, Final Lap Twin, Mr. Heli, Don Doko Don, and Chase HQ. Swap for Formation Scooter, Splatter House, Fire Pro Wrestling or other good offers. Will also swap Drunken Master and Tales of the Monster Path for nearly any game. Phone Mark (061)-681-3978 after 4 on weekdays, and anytime at weekends.

For Sale, Super Shinobi MD £20, Super League Baseball MD £20, Rambo III £19, Final Lap Twin PCE £14, Atomic Robo-Kid PCE £20, Scramble Spirits Sega 8-bit £15:

RMK, 4B Currents Lane, Harwich, Essex. CO12 3DE.

Sega Megadrive games for sale or swap, Rastan Saga II, Altered Beast, Forgotten Worlds, DJ Kid, Super Hang On, Thunderforce II, and Rambo III. Games wanted: Space Harrier II, N.Z.Story, Columns, Budokan, etc.etc. If interested please send lists and S.A.E.s to: Kenneth Chau, 20 Carrick Road, Ayr, KA7 2RB, Scotland, or phone on Sundays between 2pm and 4pm (0292-289132).

For sale. PC Engine with stereo booster, Gunhed, Don Doko Don. All boxed. Only £110!! Wanted S.G. CD Rom interface lead, will pay a reasonable price. Ring 0435-882406 after 6pm ask for Simon.

For sale: Megadrive Games. Thunderforce III, Afterburner II, Ghouls + Ghosts, Kujaku II, Air Diver. All £20-25. Lynx with Cal. Games, Gauntlet III, Gates of Zendicon, Eletro Cop. Comlynx + powerpack. Still boxed £150 o.n.o. May split. Also Megadrive joystick. XE1SG £12. Phone K. Wickens on 0775-761609.

To Swap PC Engine, Megadrive and Amiga Original games. eg. Engine Blue Brink, Ninja Warriors, on Megadrive Batman, Kujaku 2, and on Amiga Dragon's Breath, Stunt Car, etc. Tel: 0602-612713

PC Engine (PAL) for Sale includ: 2 joypads (1 with 2 player adaptor for rapid fire and slow motion) and 6 recent games (Formation Soccer, Super Foolish Man, etc.) £250. Tel:0532-588162 - ask for Gavin.

Sell Engine + Download, GunHed, Cybercross £140 o.n.o. Also sell seperately. 2 jap mags £5 for both. William Azzoug, 95 Hawthorn Bank, Spalding Lincs. PE11 1JQ. Tel:0775 723746

For Sale: Sega Megadrive with Super Shinobi. Still boxed and warrenty until December 1990 and ofcourse, in excellent condition. £155 o.n.o. Send phone number or address to David Thomas, 37 Fennells Harlow Essex CM19 4RL.

Sega Megadrive Game for Sale/ Swap (E-SWAP, Moonwalker, Shiten-Myooh. Etc...) Games wanted Batman, Rastan II, Splatterhouse (Engine). Must be in excellent condition. Tel: Wayne on (0443) 431995.

TECH - TIPS

Most translated by Tai Ono

Image Fight

Turn your OF-1 Fighter into 'Mr.Heli'!!

Press select on the title screen to get the Sound Test.

1. The get the 19th sound - 'song C'.
2. Press down, Select, 'I', 'II' simultaneously.
3. On the sound test mode, you should now see 'Mr.Heli' printed under 'Song C'. Put the cursor on 'Mr.Heli' then press 'I', then Run to get back to the title screen.

KLAX

On the 'Game Option' screen, hold Select + press Run. Should now get an indicator telling you what the requirements are for stage clear.

Devil Crash

Here are two interesting passwords

BDGHTVWHGF

JDKMEJMFOH

Find out what happens for yourself.

AAAAAAAAAJ for Unlimited Balls (Sent in by Christ Mooney,Liverpool)

Super Star Soldier

Collect 3 Options before you reach the mini-boss on stage 4. Just before it appears, go to the top-center of the screen and leash out on the Select for 'Back fire'. Should destroy the mini-boss.

Ninia Spirit

On the title screen:

'I', 'II', 'II', 'I', Select, Run.

or

'II', 'I', 'I', 'II', Select, Run.

On stage 1 boss - don't kill the yellow ninja, be ready to use the magic of destruction. When the 6 armed wierdo comes our, use it, and this should make you laugh.

Veigues

Music Mode

1. Press 'I'.
2. Reset, and until you get the title screen, hold UpLeft and Select. 'I' for the tune, 'II' to 'rewind'.

Easy Mode

1. Press 'I' and 'II' together.
2. Reset, and until you get the title screen, hold UpRight and Select.

Continue Mode

1. Turn on, Hold DownLeft and Select.

Mr. Stretcho Man (Berabo Man)

On stage 9, where there are two (horizontal) sewer pipes stacked on top of each other, kill the enemies in the area, then crawl into the bottom one. You enter a warp and you also get a 1up!!

On stage 12 - yes the Die Hard, well hard boss, well just crouch in the left corner and he won't be able to harm you.

If you punch the yellow item robot many times, he gets peed off and doesn't give you anything!

Infinite continue mode

1. Obtain a score of 10000
2. Then die, -all lives- so that you get the continue countdown
3. Press Up, Right, Down, Left, 'II', Select, 'II', Select.
4. It should then say you have 'infinite' amount of continues.

Ghouls 'n' Ghosts (S.G.)

On the title screen hold 'I' and press Run to get the configuration mode.

Rastan Saga II

Stage 1, aquire a long sword. Then when you get to the boss - the wandering chef, turn your back against him, and swing your sword. When you raise it, and the blade touches him, he's a gonna in seconds.

Prisoner of Hell (Bronze Adventurer)

On stage 1, there should be an old shack somewhere. Shoot 30 wotsits into one of the stone blocks - then you can enter the item storage. Shoot all over the place to find more items.

To start off with large balls, hold Down, and press Select lots of times until you hear a noise. To Boost the credits to six, push Left and tap button 'I' very fast for a long time. (it's a lot easier on autofire). (* Chris Mooney, Liverpool)

Puzznic

Switch on, then hold 'I', 'II', and Select, then press Run.

City Hunter

To get to the end stage enter HQJURIY - NOERLO. (* Chris Mooney, Liverpool)

REVIEWS

MOONWALKER

BY SEGA RENTED FROM MEGAWARE

The MD game based on the Michael Jackson movie arrives and thank god that the MD hasn't been officially launched here yet or we would be overwhelmed by hype!

Michael-mania continues the world over and this game is almost bound to be a major hit just because it has Michael Jackson's name on it, which is a shame since most people often forget to actually judge whether the game is really any good or not!

Prepare for an un-biased view since I cannot admit to ever being (or becoming) a Michael Jackson fan!

The game starts in simple fashion- the Moonwalker logo appears and a single note is played. If you leave the game alone, it eventually enters demo mode and some of the possible moves and tactics are shown.

On pressing Start, you are given the choice of 1 player, 2 player or Options. The options are : level (easy, normal, hard), control (set up which button does what) and music test. The 2 player game is not simultaneous.

You are given 3 lives (including the current one) and an energy bar is effected by hits. When the bar goes down to nothing, a life is lost.

When you start you are told which level you are on (there are 5 main levels split into 3 stages each) and we are shown a car turning into Michael Jackson (is this guy weird or what?!).

Then you see a dark room. Michael then opens the door which lights up the room and then closes it which darkens the room again. He then flips a coin into the jukebox which turns on the lights and the music. All this is excellently animated.

Michael is about the same size as the character in Super Shinobi, but is actually animated BETTER!!! After my comments about 'Shiten Myooh' it's nice to see classy animation back again!

There are a great deal of moves you

can make. These vary from just walking around to jumps, attacks and magic use.

There are 3 types of magic, each requiring you to hold down the magic button for a different amount of time. The smallest allows you to uncover 'secret' ways down or up a level (eg pulling down a ladder which you can't reach).

The next magic sees Michael knock off his hat and side-foot it across the screen (killing or injuring anyone it hits).

The most powerful magic causes all the enemies on screen to dance with Michael and drop dead afterwards! (hilarious when it's dogs!!)

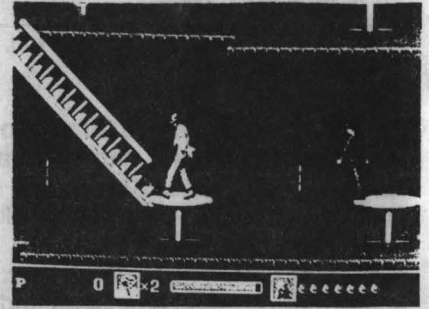
The basic idea to the whole game is to search the level for trapped kids. These may be hidden behind doors, bushes, windows, underground etc. Meanwhile enemies come after Jacko with guns or just fists! When a kid is found you see a little girl (previously kneeling down, crying) come running out and shout 'Michael!!!' in a happy tone!! (aahhh!).

After you have found the required amount of kids, the screen blackens and Michael's chimp jumps on his shoulder and indicates which way to go (his arm points up, down etc). This shows you where you must go to battle the end of level enemies. When you have beaten these enemies, the little girl appears and you must walk up to her to complete the level.

Each level has a distinct look and music. The first level is Club 30 with 'Smooth Criminal' as the music. There are nice touches throughout Moonwalker. For instance, there is a piano which plays notes if you walk over it, a pool player standing by the table and women who jump out in front of you.

Level two is in the street (music- 'Beat It'). Here there is some lovely parallax and actually getting to and finding the kids becomes more interesting (you have to actually work out how to get up to places). Each level also sees different enemies- all very well animated.

Level 3 is the woods (music- 'Another Part of Me'). I think perhaps this should have been called 'The graveyard' as there is a remarkable abundance of graves!. Mist floats around and later we



MOONWALKER: "HEY, YOU IN THE WHITE, GET OFF THAT TABLE!!!"

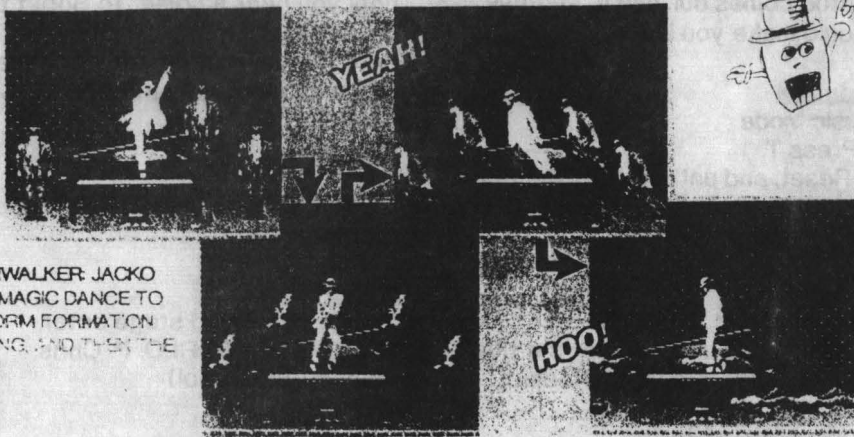
see waterfalls and birds flying about. Level 4 is the cavern (music- 'Billie Jean'). The graphics here are all sandy rock-like (together with spider webs and large rocks you can push around). There are also hidden rooms which are shown with spider and 'no dancing' logos. Here Michael must break the wall down to get inside. Level 5 (the last) is the enemy hideout (music- 'Bad'). Here the graphics are all high tech, future scenery type. There are teleporters, laser cannons firing at you and computers laying around all over the place on this level.

After there is the battle with Mr Big (a 3-D shoot out) and eventual victory! Graphically, Moonwalker is top notch- easily up there with Super Shinobi (and in most places better). The animation is superb- easily the best seen yet, I think. There are numerous neat graphic touches and these are the sort of things which make a good game great. The music is very well done- all 5 Jackson songs are reproduced, and without Michael singing they sound very good!. The speech throughout is good but the digitised picture of Michael is very grainy.

The game style is not a new one- we have seen arcade adventures where you search for things before and it really is Super Shinobi going up and down instead of just across. However, the game style has been considerably refreshed with a few new ideas and the immaculate presentation.

There are very few niggles with Moonwalker. It can be seen to slow down when the screen gets busy (naughty,naughty Sega!!!) and you can hear the music stopping just before the end of level attack starts (loading?!) but these are very minimal. The major annoyance is the scrolling when Michael goes up/down stairs. This is inexcusably jerky (why?) but fortunately does not spoil the game. The left/right scrolling is perfectly smooth, so Sega only knows why the up/down is so bad!

However, it has to be said that Moonwalker is TOO easy! (I can hear Onn saying now "Well I told you MD games



MOONWALKER: JACKO USES MAGIC DANCE TO PERFORM FORMATION DANCING, AND THEN THE DROP!

REVIEWS

are too easy and you should have bought a PC Engine!!!!!!). I managed to complete it (easy level) on my second go on the first day I had it (thankfully I didn't buy it) and even on hard level I can get to the end of level 3 without losing a life! Since there is also 4 continues, it doesn't seem likely that there will be many people who will not complete it, which is a great shame as the long term interest will no doubt suffer. So, I think it's tricky to say whether to recommend Moonwalker or not. If you're a fan of Jacko, the answer is probably YES as you will more than likely go back to it after you have completed it. For all us people who are not members of Michael's fan club; perhaps look first. It is definitely a good game, but it too easy and interest may wane after you have completed it. Also, I did find the whole game began to become very tedious after a while and a change of game-style after every three levels would have been very welcome. As it stands, fans of 'search and explore' type games will no doubt love this, but otherwise you should definitely play before you buy.

Graphics - 95%
Sound - 87%
Playability - 84%
V.F.M. - 72%

Overall - 80%



Marc Foord

A Great game license that hasn't been wasted. The whole thing is pretty playable, but first stages can get a bit repetitive. Although the game is very good, it is too easy and can be completed in your first sitting. I recommend you play in hard mode for better value and playability. Personally I think Moonwalker makes a better game than it did a film. "Who's Bad!"

Graphics - 90%
Sound - 94%
Playability - 88%
V.F.M. - 88%

Overall - 90%

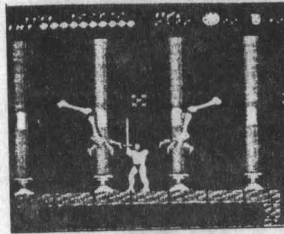


James Dobson

LEGENDARY AXE II

by Victor - 2meg - Engine

Axe II is not really a sequel to the original but more in the line of Taito's Rastan Saga. You take control of a



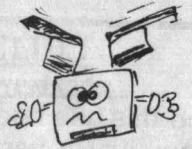
AXE II-BONE SMASHING ACTION FROM BOTH SIDES.

muscle-bound barbarian who has been forced down caverns packed with some mega nasties, and must make his way out, and take revenge on the attacker. 'Arnie' is equipped with a sword to defend himself, and he sure needs it, as right from the start, some freaky wierdos pounce from either sides trying to stab you with thier knives, but a quick swing here and stab there will make mince meat out of them. Arnie starts with three lives, with six energy units per life, and can preform the usual walk left/right, duck, jump and attack manouvres. Killing the ghoulies sometimes leave icons behind - including tups, extra health, weapons, and smart bombs. Weapons includes sword, weight on chain, and an axe. Each time you collect a weapon, it boost the weapons power up too.

Aswell as the wierdos that attack you, green slimy blokes throw missiles at you.. they require two hits to kill - chop off their legs, and they'll cawk on their hands! Later levels, there are also giant skeletons armed with swords and shields, bones that break out from walls to get you, gluey blobs that stick to your feet slowing you down, etc. If you manage to kill all the nasties and negotiate the caverns, you'll reach the hold of the Boss. These are more meaner and includes a giant 'orrid jumping skeleton on stage 1, a small bloke swinging a gi-normous ball on a chain, and a blood read serpent... all requiring several hits to kill, and wickely difficult to dodge - here's where the smart bombs come in handy, activated by pressing Run.

Overall, Legendary Axe II is great fun to play even if it's more Rastan-like, than the original axe, which I think is better and slicker. The graphics are real ace with nicely shaded sprites and backdrops, although at times, a bit blocky. The overall theme is dark and dank, and this is also reflected by the music which really drums in to you, although there are only a few of them, which repeat. There seems to be one fault in the game, and that's it's a bit too easy, especially with autofire, as you can get quite a number of lives - there's even a VIIUP (7 lives icon) on stage 4 (I'll let you find that yourself), plus three continue options, although later stages are a lot more difficult. If you like this type of game, Axe II is definitely for you... for a 2meg game, well worth the cash.

Graphics - 80%
Sound - 80%
Playability - 85%
V.F.M. - 80%
Overall - 82%



Orn Lee

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

by NEC Avenue - 8meg - SuperGrafx
Thanks to Alan

Wow! Just like the Megadrive but Better! You get the full start up sequence on this game, just like you do in the arcades with the woods in the background. We all know the story of Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, so theres no need to explain the story line.

Well, this one makes full use of the SuperGrafx - Parallax scrolling facility with some lovely background graphics, and no flickering. The big monster at the end of level 1 is just as big as the arcade and MD versions. Level 2, the windmills, have more parallax in them and theres slime handing from the sails, again the backgrounds are better. When you get to the end, the fire creature looks brill, real smooth.

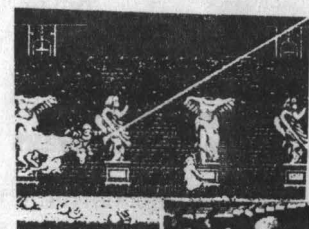
Level 3 - just the same, but a bit more colourful. The only time it flickers is on the Cloud monster, but we can't have everything can we?! Level 4 - Just the same again, as the rest. Level 5 - Good again, but the giants don't disappear like on the Megadrive.

The music, again how did they do it with the engine sound chip, because it sounds just like the Megadrive, well arcade. Anyway, a game that yet again shows off the power of the SuperGrafx - buy it oe weep.

Graphics - 98%
Sound - 95%
Playability - 90%
V.F.M. - 85%

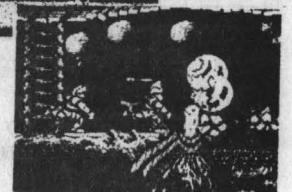
Overall - 90%

Justin Saunders



G'n'G
INTRO
SG
←

Double Knight
G'n'G





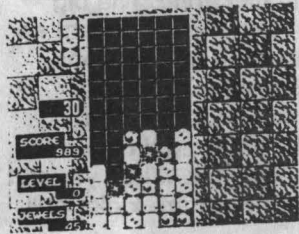
COLUMNS

MEGA DRIVE BY SEGA

Since this has been out quite a while now, just a very short review of Columns, Sega's answer to Tetris.

Columns is very similar to Tetris, except instead of interlocking shapes you must match up colours. Blocks of 3 bricks drop down the screen and you can move them into any order so as to make up block of 3 or more when you hit the bottom. Anyone who has played 'Colouris' on the Amiga - this is exactly the same idea.

There are a wealth of options available (including 1 or 2 player or doubles) and there are 4 distinct types of game- the original game, flash columns (make up a 3 pattern with a certain flashing square), time trial and arcade mode.

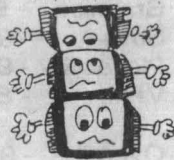


The graphics aren't great, but just serve a purpose (however, the game looks exactly like its arcade parent).

The music is very well done- really haunting. The real thing about Columns though is its sheer addictiveness and simplicity. Once you start playing, you just get hooked! A game like this is literally timeless- each game is different and so the lastability is ridiculously high.

Anyone who likes puzzle games should get this immediately. Anyone who normally doesn't like these sort of games should definitely gives columns a go (you never know, you might like it!).

- Graphics - 64%
- Sound - 88%
- Playability - 94%
- V.F.M - 94%
- Overall - 91%



Marc Food

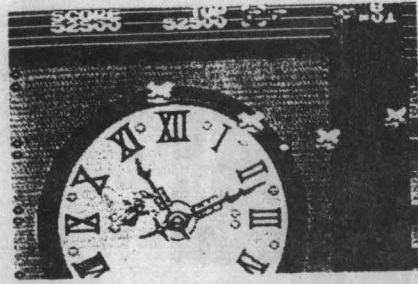
INSECTOR X

MEGA DRIVE BY HOT.B

GAME RENTED FROM MEGAWARS

Hot on the heels of Thunderforce III comes a new horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up by an independent developer- HOT.B.

To be fair, we really haven't had that many shoot 'em ups on the MD to date and in the horizontal department only Thunderforce II has really been of top



INSECTOR X-ROUND 3, INSECTS AT BIG BEN

quality. So, it's nice to see a new challenger for the crown and some more shoot 'em up releases (I feel shoot 'em ups are one of the few games which can always be enjoyable despite being released in many guises).

Insector X (as you can probably guess by the title) has an insect theme to it. You control a sort of half man, half insect character and must make your way through the levels in order to face (and hopefully defeat!) the end of level guardians. All the enemies along the way are all insects of some type and this give a neat (and original) tie-in to the whole game. It really isn't any point trying to put any sort of plot to a shoot 'em up- just waste everything in sight!

To start with, you are shown a really nice title screen which is an insect-eye view (eg the whole screen is made up of hexagonal pieces each containing the same view). You see a fly buzzing about in the view and the whole thing changes from colour to black and white. This is accompanied with a short (but very atmospheric) piece of music which really sets the scene for some good old fashioned blasting!

If you leave the game at this point, it goes into a short demo mode which (if left long enough) shows excerpts from all the levels. On pressing start you can then either start the game or play around with the options. The options are as follows: Rapid fire (on/off), Level (easy,normal,hard), Stock (amount of lives 1-8), Sound test and Control (set up which button does what).

All 3 buttons are used: one for normal firing, one for selecting weapons and one for firing special weapons. There are 5 levels detailed in the booklet and each level is split into two distinct halves. Between each half you stop and are automatically taken to the next half (usually directed through a hole etc). I somehow think this is a clever way of 'loading' in the second half without you directly noticing a stop in the action!

When you start off you are armed with only a single shot and the movement of the main character seems a tad slow. However, at regular inter-

vals fat looking flies come along and, if shot, these leave behind goodies. These can be a 'P' (power up weapons), 'S' (speed up) '1000' (bonus points), 'PP' (double power up), '1UP' (extra life), '?' (special bonus), a lightning icon (crash-smart bomb) and a red pod (special weapon). Speed ups and power ups are given most frequently and so it is not long before you are moving around very fast and has some more powerful weapons!

The power ups cause your laser to change (the first one changes your fire from single yellow to double yellow, the second changes it from double yellow to double red etc). After the first two, the actual type of laser changes and you are given wide shot, four shot etc. However, it is very hard to actually get hold of the higher weapons as each time you die you lose all your power ups and speed (a real pain!)

The special pods which pop up from time to time give you two special weapons (which can be swapped between and also used at the same time as the normal shot). These start of as propelled bombs flying about and mines being dropped but are powered up with the normal shot each time you collect a 'P' (the later ones look pretty spectacular!). The lightning pod can also be collected and used whenever you like and acts like a smart bomb. The special bonus pod seems mostly to enable you to keep your weapons and speed when you lose a life.

The difficulty level is very well graded- the easy level (with 8 lives) enabled me to get to level 5 (the last level I think!) after quite a few problems along the way (the third part of level 5 is VERY hard!!). This is good as normally the easy setting on MD games enables you to get through to the end without too much trouble (which spoils the game and is completely unchallenging). The normal and hard settings are pretty intelligent jumps up the difficulty scale- not silly things like 4 times as many enemies on screen at once, but sensible stuff like existing enemies firing when they don't on easy level etc. You are also given 3 continues which is very sensible (essential!) in a game like this.

The background graphics are a bit of a let down- most look very 'flat' and could do with a few more colours to smarten them up. However, the later levels do actually get better and levels 4 and 5 look very nice. The sprites on the other hand are all very well drawn and are animated nicely. The end of level guardians are really large (with loads of colour used) and are wonderfully animated- definitely worth seeing! One small thing I did notice is that if you get to the end of level guardians with a well powered up

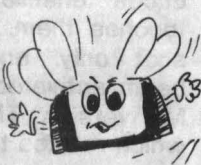
REVIEWS

weapon some glitches reared their ugly heads. However, this is a very minor criticism since the sprites that are being shifted around are huge and look great. Besides, this is HOT.B.'s debut game on the MD so they will undoubtedly learn from their mistakes.

The music throughout is up to scratch- some pieces are bordering on average whereas others are really good but all the pieces suit the game well. Sound fx are o.k but nothing special (the sound of your firing is rubbish and sound more like a pop gun than a laser!).

Overall, Insector X is a really good shoot 'em up. It is in the un-enviable situation of being released just after Thunderforce III and so will inevitably be compared to it (since Thunderforce III is now THE grade to reach). Nevertheless, despite the fact that Insector X is not as good as Thunderforce III, I recommend any MD owning shoot 'em up fans to check this out as it is as thoroughly good blast and well worth an hour or so of anyone's time!

- Graphics - 80%
 - Sound - 84%
 - Playability - 88%
 - V.F.M - 82%
- Overall - 84%



Mara Foord

KLAX

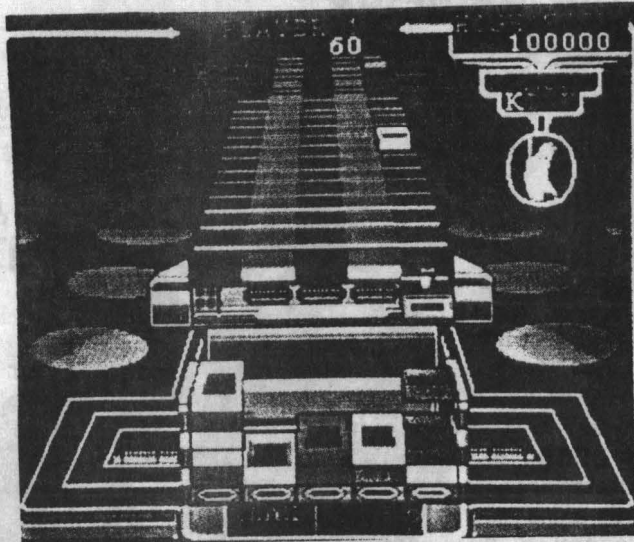
MEGADRIVE BY NAMCOT
GAMES RENTED FROM MEGAWARE

Atari's answer to Tetris (does everyone have to have an answer for Tetris? guess so!) hits yet another machine in its quest for eternal power- the good old MD.

Klax is a puzzle game in the classic mould- a very simple idea, extremely addictive once you start playing and almost timeless (ie each time you play it's different and you can never really complete it).

The screen shows a conveyor belt with tiles rolling towards you. You control a catcher and must collect the tiles before they fall and drop them down to form different patterns.

Before each round the MD announces (in o.k speech) what type of wave the next level will be. There are 5 types of wave: Klax wave (normal type, just play until you are stopped or drop too many tiles), Diagonal wave (you must get X amount of diagonals to complete the level), Horizontal wave (as diagonal wave, but with horizontals), Point wave (you have to get X amount of points)



and Tile wave (you have to use up X amount of tiles).

There are two modes of play- normal or versus. In normal mode you are first asked to select a starting wave (1,6 or 11) and off you go. In versus mode you play against another player and must fight on until one of you drops one too many tiles (four drops are normally allowed). In this mode you have to play through 4 types of wave to actually finish the challenge.

The title screen is very plain (and no music!!) with no nice intros or anything (just a demo of the game if you leave it long enough). The only options available are 1 or 2 player, nothing else.

In the game there is no music (why?) and the sound effects are very average (and could have been done better I think). The graphics throughout look the same as the coin-op (but to be fair, that wasn't exactly excellent!) and are really just functional (as with most games of this type).

The game itself is a very good one- the idea is simple and very addictive and you could well still be playing this in 2 years time! However, it seems that Namcot haven't made much attempt to improve the game at all and the lack of music is inexcusable.

Those people who really liked the coin-op should have no complaints with the MD version as it appears to be arcade perfect (as you expect it to be since the original was so simple).

I have to say though that games like Klax leave me wondering how little of the MD's power they are using (none?!) and that, for the price, you get a game which really exploits the MD further and is, as such, a '16 bit console game'. That said, in terms of long term interest and enjoyment, I don't suppose you could go far wrong with Klax.

- Graphics - 65%
- Sound - 35%
- Playability - 89%
- V.F.M - 89%



15

Overall - 82%

Mara Foord

I was going to review KLAX for the Engine, but atleast the game did not arrive - I won't mention the person responsible, however, it's basically identical to the Megadrive version... but then again, what can you expect, when both are done by Namco, and the original game never boosted fantastic graphics or sound to exploit specific machines. So, as it stands, the ratings are same as the MD version. However, my view on the game, it's great at first, but gets very boring after a few days of play, as each time you play, it's the same, unlike the random falling blocks of Tetris, which I think is still the best 'simple' puzzle game I've played.

PAST SPLAT ROM ROM STADIUM

Yet another Baseball game for the engine...yawn! This doesn't really show off the CD-Rom as the graphics are fairly bland. The music isn't too bad, but it could have been better. The in game music uses the engine sound chips but you get a jingle from the CD inbetween changing sides and when you get a home run.

The speech is quite muffled, not sampled very well. The gameplay is very very hard - the hardest baseball game that I have ever played. You only just about manage to get one base, but to make a run - I never have yet, or even a home run.

You also get this girl with a really annoying japanese squeaky voice who cheers you on in front of her telly/monitor thing. And you also get the big usual teams to choose from, with all their silly team names. Anyway, not a very good baseball game - only worth bothering with if you are really a fan of the sport.

- Graphics - 60%
 - Sound - 65%
 - Playability - 55%
 - V.F.M - 50%
- Overall - 55%



Justin Saunders

SPECIAL REPORT: JAPANESE LINK
CITY HUNTER

The Popular Character from Japanese Animation

Ryo Saeba, a detective in modern Tokyo, is always known as CITY HUNTER. He enjoys quite an up-market lifestyle, living in a penthouse and driving a red mini. To maintain this he takes whatever assignments are offered, (the majority seem to come from foxy ladies in distress!!). C.H. is an extremely good shot, as an example of his skill, when challenged to draw by an enemy, both guns are drawn but C.H. fires his and, in so going, his bullet enters the barrel of his opponent's pistol, - blowing it up, - how's that for fancy shooting? On another occasion, he will shoot off the baddie's trigger-finger! The girl pictured with C.H. on the Game-cover is, in fact, his flatmate. Theirs would seem to be a platonic relationship, but considering her reaction when C.H. looks at other young women, I reckon she has designs on him! She certainly provides the humour and is so jealous when his attention wanders that she hits him over the head with an enormous mallet, which gets bigger and bigger every time it's used (C.H. is quite a ladies man - hence the appearance of sexy girls in the Game).

On the ground floor of their high-rise block there is a cafe. This is owned by an older friend and his daughter - he's a big chap who likes to help C.H. in times of trouble, when he uses a Bazooka or an M16 and a few grenades. (he is so muscular that he uses these weapons one handedly in a very casual manner). This cafe proprietor also owns a shooting gallery in the basement, his daughter is often there as she is a good shot and the place is like 'open house' to C.H. as for his flatmate - she often appears down there to have a 'go' but usually completely misses the target.

CITY HUNTER is an intriguing character as he has terrific mood-swings and adapts immediately to different characters and situations - and the whole makes a slick and humorous how.

Carlo Bernhardt

HELLFIRE

by NCS - 4meg - Megadrive

I thought I'll review Hellfire, been a fan of the coin-op game by Toaplan, so have NCS done a good job? Firstly, the overall gameplay if you haven't clasped eyes on the coin-op,

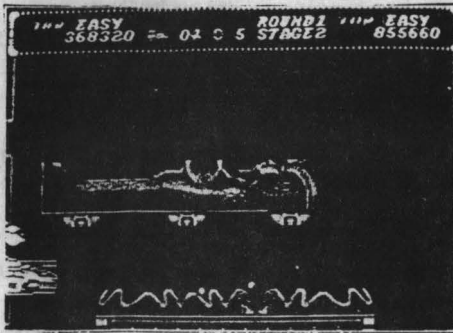


which is quite likely as not many Toaplan games sees it over here. The game is basically a horizontal shoot'em up with big graphics and a different approach to firing in that, you can fire forwards, backwards, up/down and 4-way diagonally... all of which are essential if you stand any chance of surviving long.

When you start the game, your mothership drops you off (why they never send in the mother ship is beyond me!) and within seconds, several strings of aliens head towards you... these are no trouble.. tap away at button 'A' to fry them with your rather naff bullets. After these, bigger pod-like items float towards you - shoot the front ends and they will reveal flashing icons. There are several types of icons in the game, more than that of the coin-op! Where the coin-op had 'P' for laser power up from naff bullets to powerful multi-lasers, 'B' - Bonus points, and 'S' for Speed-ups... note there are no speed downs, so don't collect too many of these! There are also different icons for a floating orb which reduces enemies' energy when it touches them, shield - sustain one shot only, and a mega-powerful beam, activated with button 'C' in the MD version. This leaves button 'B', which rotates the direction of fire of your weapons, which is needed if you wish to blow the back end of the pods which has cannons fitted on them, unless you wish to be shot at! Another thing I must mention, the game scrolls a little up and down too, like engine R-Type/Darius, so making the game slightly tougher as items can be off the viewable screen and easily take a pot shot at you, not to mention 'valueable' powerup icons missed.

After these floating pods, things get more harder as you have to use specific directional fire to get items, like cannons down shafts that require you to use diagonal fire, or Up/Down to blow 'em up, ships that fly in from corners of the screen or behind you. Because of this, you need to play the game a few times to get use to the directional fire changes of which comes after which - nothing worst than wasting time stabbing button 'B' twenty times to get the correct direction, only to die because of it.

Each stage is quite long, and before reaching the very end, half way through the stage, you'll come face to face with a medium size ship throwing out bullets all over the shop. To destroy it, you require to shoot it from all 4 angles front, back, top and



HELLFIRE: END OF STAGE AGAINST A FLOATING TUT!

bottom... the super beam comes in quite handy here! Get pass this, and reach the end, and a bigger ship looking like a road 'round-about' with cannons all around it, attacks you. The ship has a red orb in the center which must be shot - it moves around, so you must shoot it from different angles, before it eventually blows up, and off to the next stage. Hellfire is a really mean game, and harden arcade shoot'em up freaks will find it quite a challenge. The graphics are first rate, and very similar to the coin-op, and sound is just as good too. There is however one BIG niggle, nad that's it s-l-o-w-s down a great deal when a lot of things are on screen, sometimes it's so bad, you think you have slow motion activated on your joystick!!! This really is poor programming! Although with the extra weapons, making the game slightly easier, the coin-op was rock hard, so MD Hellfire is still a tough cookie, especially with these type of games - when you die, all weapons are lost, making it really difficult to recover. I do recommend Hellfire, even with the awful slow-down, as it's a good blaster, and some of the latter stages are well hard! Personally, I think they should have left the extra 'extras' out, the game is hard enough, but a conversion should be a conversion and not one that makes things easier. I wait for the engine version!

- Graphics - 85%
- Sound - 85%
- Playability - 85%
- V.F.M. - 85%
- Overall - 85%



Onn Lee

VALIS III

by Telenet Japan / CD-Rom - PC Engine

After a year, Valis returns to the PC Engine in her latest epic, so what have the CD aces done to improve the sequel.. if anything? The story

again if you missed the last game - Valis is a girl who can transform herself in to a phantasm soldier with the aid of her magical sword, rather like He-Man! She lives in our present world, but is 'called' to fight the forces of evil in a different dimension. In this latest game, the evil forces have killed two of the six guardians that hold the balance of the world together - with them removed, the evil forces could penetrate this weakness and take over the world. The only hope is to call Valis to help, so an elfen is sent to call on her. Knowing this, the evil forces follow the elfen, and just as she reaches valis, she is captured. Valis rushes out to rescue her, only to notice that the kidnapper has also taken her sword and thrown it off the skyscraper. Valis, still in her pyjamas, runs, and jumps off the skyscraper, where she catches up with her sword, grabs it, transforms, and zooms up onto the rook, where the game begins. Stage one is set on the roofs of skyscrapers as Valis must run along, jumping gaps, and killing the nasty creatures in her way. Unlike 'II', this time, Valis has only one weapon where she can fire a wide beam with her sword. Aswell as this, red icons are dotted around the game area. When shot, they reveal useful items, which must be collected quickly or they will disappear quickly. These include: 3 types of magic staffs for magic spells, if you have magic power - by collecting green magic icons, like in Son Son II. Magic spells include homing fire knives, big freeze beam, and a smart bomb. Heart icons increase health, 1up for extra lives, and sword icons to increase power. Reach the end of the stage and you'll meet up with the boss. Stage one has a floating cloaked bloke, who must be hit several times, and dodge the skiked ball it launches at you... which isn't too difficult. On killing the boss, the elfen is freed... where more animation is shown.

Stage two lets you play either Valis or the Elfen, by tapping RUN. The elfen has a different weapon - a whip, which is more powerful, but short ranged and not as wide a weapon. On this stage, you have to rescue the third member of the team, the priestest, and this stage is massive - split in to 3 sections. This has you moving across rock platforms, climbing a waterfall, cross a forest like Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, navigate a river in a boat, kill a sea serpart, climb a tower, eventually free the priestest prisoned in a

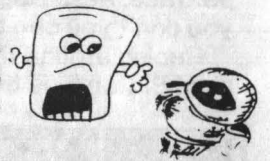
crystal, and finally destroy a floating monk who throws out fire.

As the game progresses, things get real difficult, not only do you have to have fast reactions dodging and killing the nasties, you have to figure out how to get past certain obstacles. For example, on stage 3, there are pillars too far to jump/slide across , so you have to use the freeze magic spell which turns the nasties in to stone so you can jump on to them to get across.

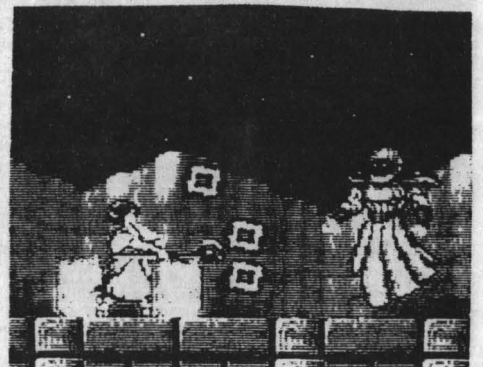
As you'd expect, the graphics are brilliant, especially the landscape with city scapes, forests like Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, ancient temples and ruins with running water, desert dunes, eerie graveyard, etc. The main sprites are also great too with giant scorpions that try to sting you, knights that shoot arrows and swing their mighty swords, etc., although animation isn't too hot. Sound FX are minimal but effective, but as you'd expect music is well wicked, plyed from the CD, although most are rather short and not quite as good as II. As always, the game has lots of inbetween animation which are just as good as the original, if not better, as they are more varied with more bigger screen action.

Conclusion: Valis III is a lot better and harder than it's predecessor, and will take some time to complete even with the continue option. Because of the varied gameplay, it's extremely addictive, but mega frustrating when you can't get past a certain part for the 50th time! If you've got a CD-Rom, then you shouldn't miss this game, especially if you like the original.

- Graphics - 93%
- Sound - 90%
- V.F.M. - 90%
- Playability - 90%
- Overall - 90%



Onn Lee



VALIS 3: THE PRIESTESS - TAKE THAT YOU MONK!

REVIEWS

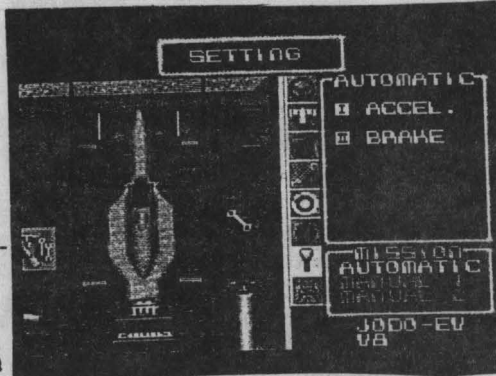
F1 Circus

4meg - by Nichibutsu - Engine

F1 Circus, not to be confused with F1 Dream is another plan-view racing game. However, F1 Circus at first looks very bland, but after several goes, is extremely addictive, and even more playable than Super Monaco GP!! Unlike most games, F1 Circus takes a more realistic approach, and contain two types of games. One is Construction, where you take on as a manager of your selected team - here, you don't actually race, just manage, but up to 4 people can take part. For the racing action, World GP is the biz! Here, you first select a sponsor, how many years you wish to play, and arrive at your first destination by lorry. Each season (year) comprises of 16 GPs from around the world starting from USA to Australia..... so is a long slog - good job there's a password and backup system available, especially as standard races are 3 laps for practice/qualify and 6-8 laps for the proper race, or if you really want to act out the real thing - can select around 22 laps!!!

Once you've checked out the course and weather conditions (sunny, cloudy or raining), you can either have a freerun, practice, or choose settings. Settings lets you customise your car, setting angle of the wings, type of types, gearbox, steering, suspension, etc. Practice: Here you must race round the course 3 times (with no other cars on the track). The first lap is not timed and lets you familiarise the course, while 2nd and 3rd are, and determines what position you take on the starting grid of the proper race, assuming you qualify - if you don't you can try again.

Racing around the track is hellraising! Button 'll' is the brake, 'l' is the



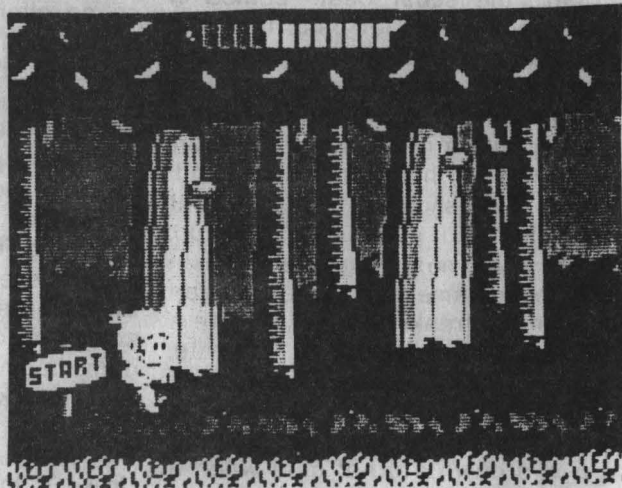
accelerator, left/right - steering, and Up/Down your gears, but I advise the automatic! The game basically has you racing up screen most of the time with bends to the left/right, however, the difference between this and games like MotoRoader or F1 Dream is the speed - it's Mega FAST! Anyone seen the beginning scrolling on GunHed/Super Star Soldier will know how fast the engine can scroll - F1 Circus moves faster!! The first time you play it - you'll most likely crash at every bend until you suss out how to take 'em. Luckily, the computer tells you what's coming ahead before you get there.

The graphics are not very spectacular, but adequate and has nice touches with smoke billowing from the rear of cars, bridges and tunnels, etc.. Sound is good too with bouncy, cheery tunes, and the usual engine sound FXs.

Once you've qualified, you are put on the starting grid, and wait for the lights. Once it hits green - total mayhem starts with cars trying to get ahead, and most likely, multiple pile-ups appear which you must try to avoid, which gives the game that extra appeal. Crashing into cars (or other obstacles) not only makes you stop and lose precious time, but results in damage to your wings. Too much damage to the wings and you won't be able to accelerate to full speed. Driving through rough ground also cause damage to your tyres and suspension,

CONSOLE MA'ZINE

and then there's your engine. All these are displayed in the bottom corner turning from blue - no damage to Red - Get in the pits quick!!! There is only one pit before the start/finish line, so miss it, and you'll have to go round the track again! Pulling into the pits and your crew will do the biz. As far as I can tell, the pit-crew are automatic, so you can't make them do the job quicker, which is a pain, as sometimes it can take them a few seconds, while others seems like minutes!



GAMEGEAR: WONDERBOY - ACE GRAPHICS!

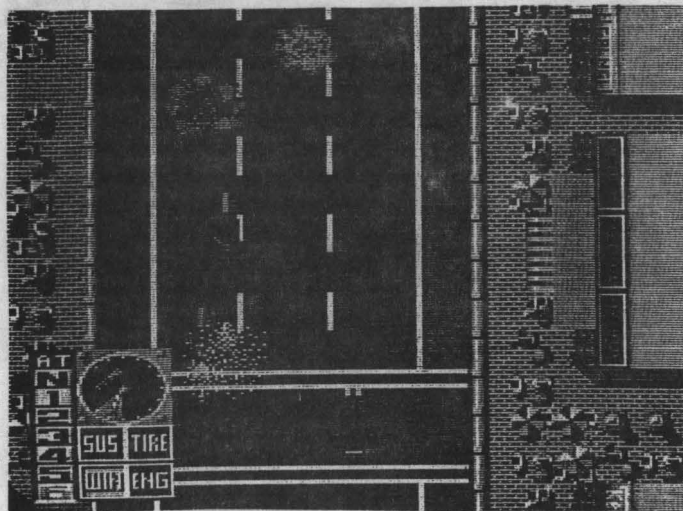
Points are given for the top six drivers, and the overall winner is the person with the most points for the complete season.

F1 Circus is a dream to play, and very addictive. Racing games should be measured by the "ZERO" rating of the amount of swearing and "Vvvvvrrrooommm" sound you make while playing, and F1 Circus gets quite a number! There are a lot more to the game like ramming cars off the road, retired cars stuck on the track, sharp 'S' bends, etc.. If you're a racing fan, F1 Circus is a must!! Don't miss it!! I only hope someone converts it to computer format and include a multi-linkup for multi-user play, that would be something!!

Graphics	- 85%	Sound	- 85%
Playable	- 95%	V.F.M.	- 90%
Overall	- 92%		

NEXT MONTH:

Yet again, we've run out of space... so reviews of Final Blaster, Die Hard, Legion and Gomola Speed on Engine will be in the next issue. I do recommend the first and last titles! And the Mega game Strider for the Megadrive, plus possibly Atomic Robo-kid (MD), etc... See ya!



ENGINE: F1 CIRCUS - WING DAMAGED CARS ALL AROUND...VVVRRROOOMMM!!