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AND ALL THIS

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- FINAL FANTASY
- SPLINTER CELL
- DEF JAM VENDETTA
- THE SIMS
- LOST KINGDOMS 2

P.N. 03

PRODUCT NUMBER



NEW SHOTS AND EXCLUSIVE INFO

WARIO WORLD

There's no rest for Mario's wicked alter ego

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"excite, enthuse and inform"



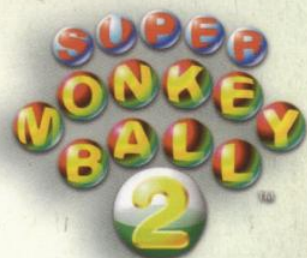


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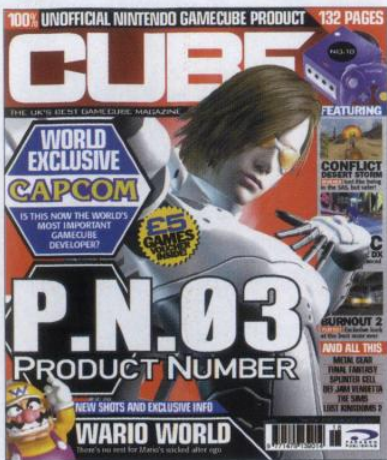
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WELCOME



IT'S BEEN A turbulent old month, what with the GC price drop, *Metrod Prime* becoming the first GameCube-only title since *Mario Sunshine* to top the all-formats chart and all sorts of rumours and counter rumours regarding the future of Nintendo as a whole. Oh, and a war started too. When periods like this come along you just have to ride them out and, although this has been a fairly quiet month on the reviews front, there's still plenty to keep you going until next issue, which is going to be something else! Top of the bill this month comes our world exclusive In-Depth on *PN03*. Kobayashi-san himself liked what we'd done with it in previous issues of **CUBE** so much that he agreed to give us the world's first playtest, and it looks the business. If you think static shots look smart, just wait until you see it in action. With her steely persona and figure hugging attire, Vanessa Z Schneider is all set to take her place among the new breed of leading ladies that make Lara Croft look like a giggling schoolgirl.

We've also had a chance to play *Burnout 2* and boy is it fast! With the amount of traffic, texture detail and particle effects going on, the constant 60fps Criterion has managed to squeeze out of the GC processor is little short of astonishing.

Elsewhere we have reviews of *Ghost Recon* and *Conflict: Desert Storm*, the ironic timing of which won't be lost on anyone. You wait over a year for a squad-based strategic war game

and then two arrive bus-like in the same month that it kicks off for real. They're similar games in concept – small teams of soldiers, real world scenarios and tactical action, but they also serve to highlight the difference between porting a game straight and tweaking it to the new format. Both have been out on PS2 for a while, but while *Ghost Recon* has been shoehorned onto the GC with no optimisation and is as a result terribly glitchy, *Desert Storm* has had a total overhaul. The GC incarnation is smoother, better-looking, has improved enemy AI and basically dumps all over the PS2 version. Well done Pivotal, and everyone else, please take note.

The biggest news, however, is the confirmation of a GameCube *Metal Gear* title currently in production with none other than Shigsy Miyamoto himself working on the project. This has to be a good thing in more ways than one, given that previous *MGS* titles have illustrated so clearly how style can be mistaken for content. Miyamoto is the master of pure, distilled gameplay, and his influence on Hideo Kojima's vision could make this one helluva special game.

Miles Guttery
Editor

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DAKAR
COMPO
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
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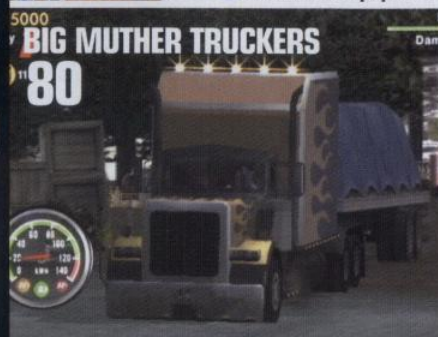
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REVIEWS

🕒 get 'em while they're hot

You want to know what's worth buying, this is the place. Our reviews are the only ones you should trust

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NETWORK CUBE

🕒 get with the program

All the cheats and tips you could want plus your opportunity to get yourself in the magazine

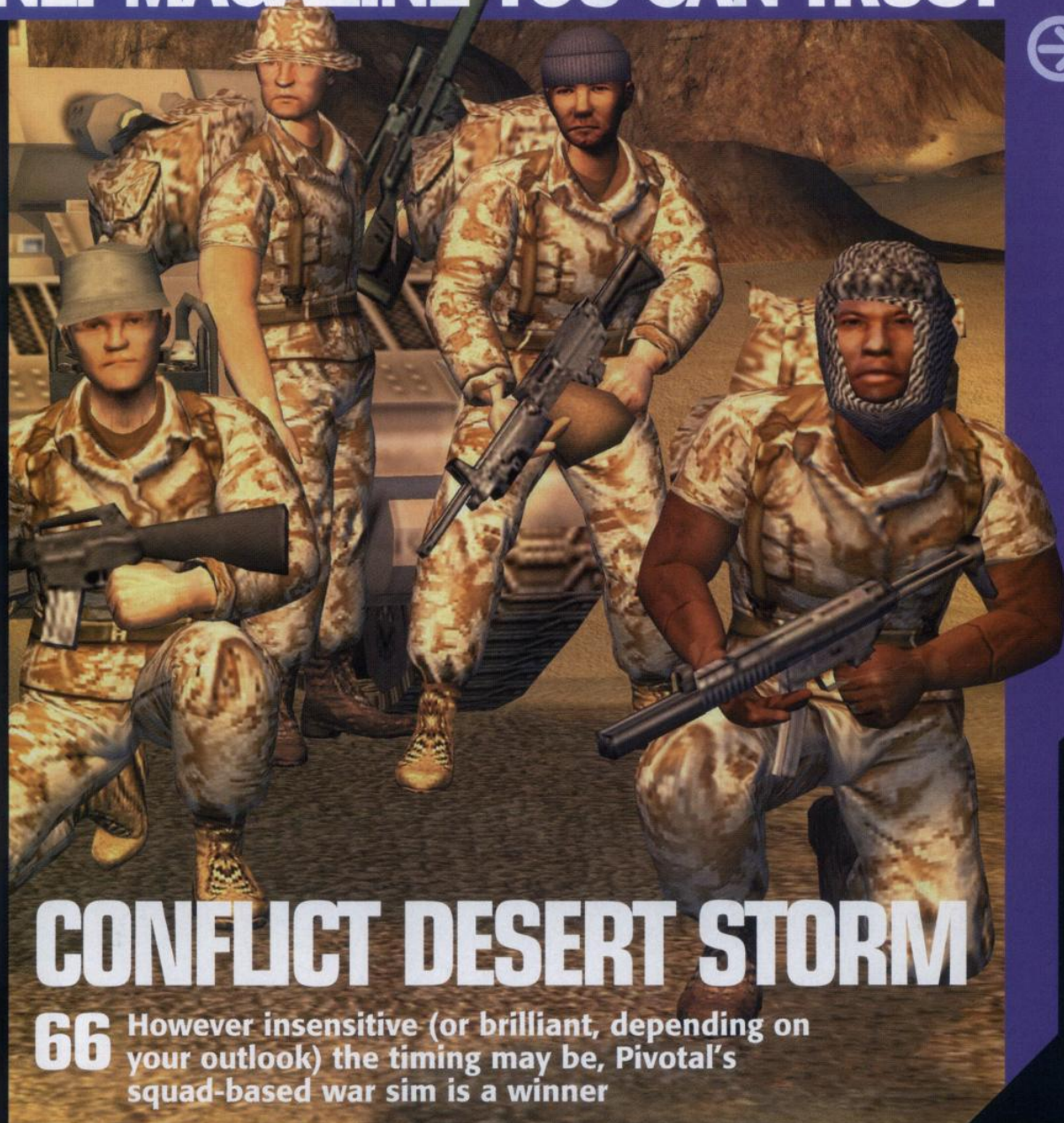
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ADVANCE

🕒 little screen, big thrills

Each month we pick out the best of the GBA releases, and this issue SEGA has done us proud

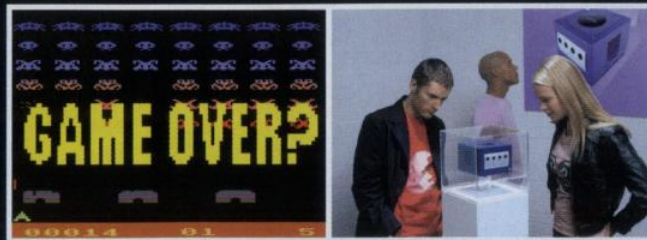
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CONFLICT DESERT STORM

66 However insensitive (or brilliant, depending on your outlook) the timing may be, Pivotal's squad-based war sim is a winner

FEATURE



GAME OVER?

Is the GameCube really down and out, or is Nintendo preparing for an onslaught of mammoth proportions? CUBE investigates.28



UP FRONT

FINAL FANTASY
CRYSTAL CHRONICLES

CUBE

INFORMATION

FINAL FANTASY: CC

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

DEVELOPER: GAME DESIGNERS'
STUDIOS

ORIGIN: JAPAN

GENRE: RPG

PLAYERS: 1-4

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



AT-A-GLANCE

■ FOUR-PLAYER ADVENTURE

■ JEWEL-BASED MAGIC

■ GORGEOUS LANDSCAPES

■ REAL-TIME BATTLES

■ INTERACTIVE SCENERY

TOTAL GAMES PRESENT MOVIES PICTURES



DEC '03

16 JULY '03

NOV '03

Character names and magic
system details revealed!

AFTER MONTHS OF waiting, Nintendo has finally released official shots and gameplay information for its take on the *Final Fantasy* licence. The arrangement between Square Enix and Nintendo has also been cleared up a little. *Crystal Chronicles* is being published by Nintendo but it's being developed by an offshoot of Square Enix, namely Game Designers' Studios. Why isn't the game being published by Square Enix? Previously it was thought that Squaresoft's Sony funding was the cause, but with the recent Square Enix merger this is no longer an issue. It's now apparent that Nintendo and Square Enix have an arrangement where Nintendo will publish *Crystal Chronicles* (a game developed by a Nintendo-funded Square Enix subsidiary), and Square Enix will publish the GBA *Secret Of Mana: New Testament* (a game developed by Brownie Brown, a Nintendo second-party staffed by ex-Squaresoft members). That's a nice little scheme there, and one that lays some foundations quite nicely for the future. Anyway, onto the gameplay information...

Crystal Chronicles is centred around a group of people from a small village. The Crystal's power is

↑ Treasure chests can contain jewels, money and even enemies



↑ Unlike other *Final Fantasy* games, *Chronicles* has simple puzzles to solve

"CRYSTAL CHRONICLES LOOKS TO HAVE BEEN HEAVILY INSPIRED BY FFFVII'S MATERIA SYSTEM"

running out and in order to fix it someone will need to go on a quest to find the Mist of Maura, which is essentially Mana Tree essence. The young boy seen previously is the lead character and goes by the name of Clavat. One other character has been named as well – the male, helmeted character is called Yoke.

The Moogles have returned and, as with *Final Fantasy IX*, they act as the postmen in the game. Throughout your journey your family and friends will send you letters via the Moogles. You can choose to send letters back and the game will evolve depending on your replies. If you don't reply your family will get angry. If you keep them happy though, they will send packages containing gifts such as items, accessories and perhaps even armour and weapons.

Areas can be explored in real-time and you'll often come across puzzles in the field. They'll never get too complicated however, and will be limited to things like weighing down switches to open gates. One aspect we were in the dark about was the magic system, but it's looking more promising all the time. Here at **CUBE** we're big fans of *FFVII*'s Materia system, and *Crystal Chronicles* looks to have been heavily inspired by that method. The magical jewels come in classes such as Magic, Command and so on. Jewels can be combined to create the desired effect, for instance combining Select All with Fire will result in a substantial flaming attack that hits all enemies (shown on the right). The main difference from *FFVII* is that once you use a jewel, it's gone. New jewels are released when you defeat enemies and can also be found in treasure chests.

That's about all the new info we have right now, but that should be more than enough to get you drooling.

CUBE

⬇ You start your adventure as part of a caravan train



⬇ You can combine 'Fire' and 'Select All' for devastating effects

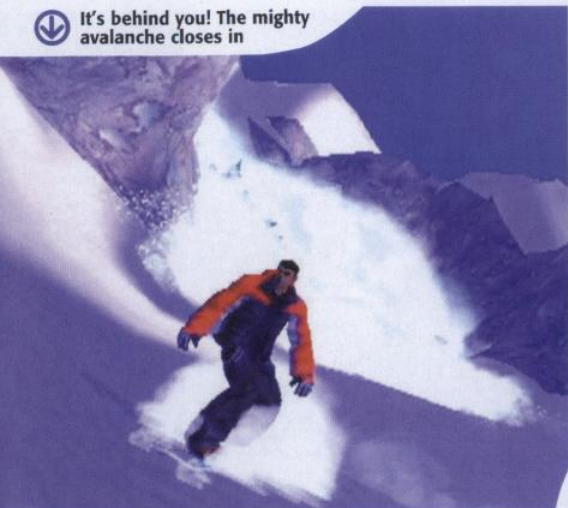


⬅ The magic system works elementally, much like other games in the series

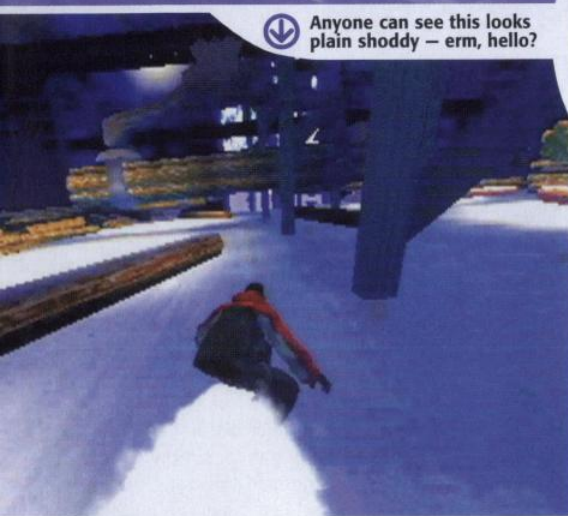


"THE SINGLE-PLAYER GAME WILL STICK TO ITS N64 'OUT IN THE WILDS' ROOTS"

⌚ It's behind you! The mighty avalanche closes in



⌚ Anyone can see this looks plain shoddy – erm, hello?

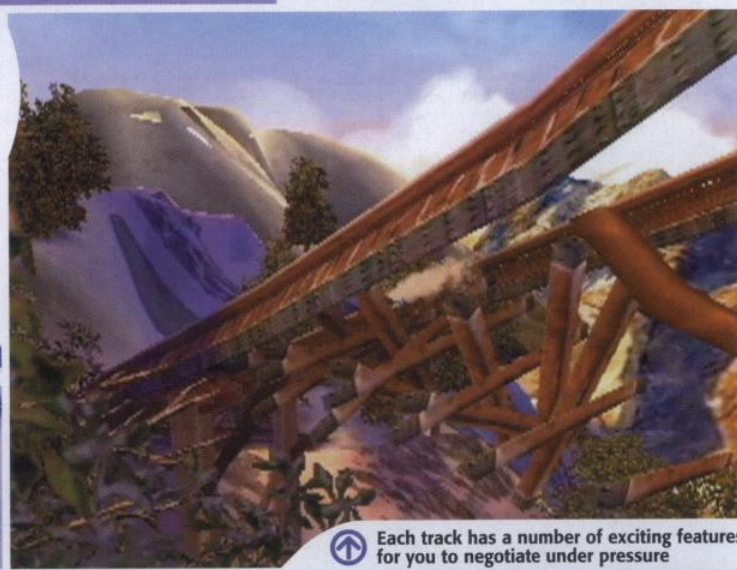


⌚ She must be a right nag for him to wear headphones



⌚ It certainly looks crisp and chilly, but the graphics and lighting in general are a little lame

⌚ Disappointingly the character models are very similar in style to the five year old N64 versions.



⌚ Each track has a number of exciting features for you to negotiate under pressure

AVALANCHE

in that direction. The single-player game will stick to its 1080° roots and will be much more of a battle against the elements. The new videos from Nintendo show the player being dropped off in front of an impending avalanche. From the moment you start, the storm of snow will be biting at your heels and all sorts of objects will be there to get in your way. For example, in one section you'll have to slide over a rickety log bridge which falls apart as you cross it. If your opponent gets there before you you'll have to find another way of getting across (the bridge supports stay in place so it's a matter of pulling off some skillful grinding).

We don't want to be overly down on the game at this

stage, and there are some promising aspects. The snow physics are outstanding and from the way each type of snow feels to the avalanche flowing down the mountainside, it's obvious NSTC has learned a lot from creating the water in *Wave Race: BS*. Still, we can't ignore the fact that the graphics in general are still looking quite lame and little more than 1080° in hi-res. The idea behind taking the game from Left Field and giving it to NSTC was to improve it, surely? The original game turned heads when it first arrived, but this one has failed to generate any real sense of anticipation so far. That kind of response for a first-party title is bad news, so let's hope that NCL keeps a close eye on NSTC's progress over the next few months.

CUBE

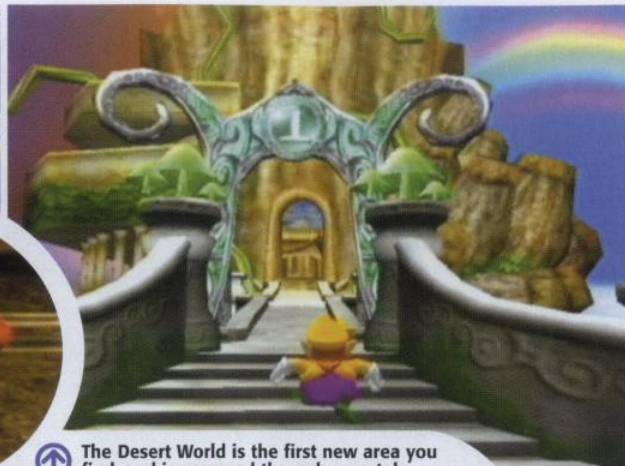


⌚ The helicopter provides an overview of the course

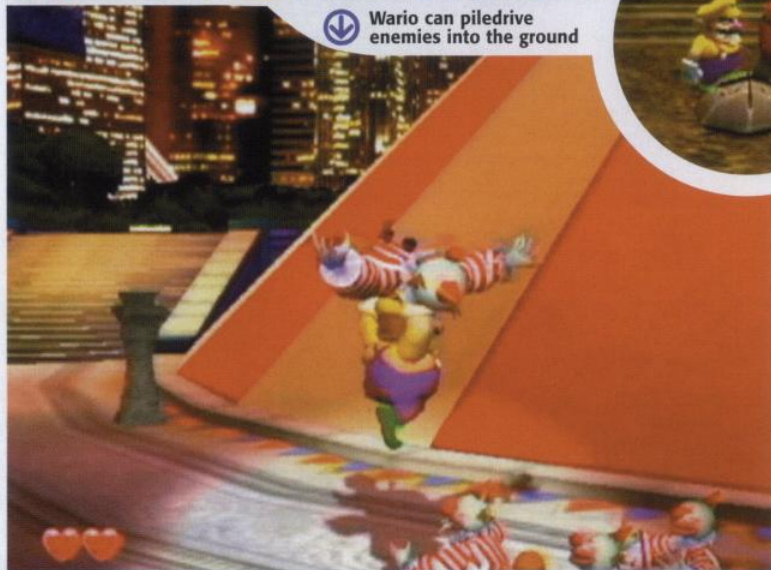




Wario can piledrive enemies into the ground



The Desert World is the first new area you find, and is accessed through a portal



Wario Struts his stuff John Travolta style

Mario's nemesis returns for more mayhem

WARIO

CUBE

INFORMATION

WARIO WORLD

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

DEVELOPER: TBA

ORIGIN: JAPAN

GENRE: ADVENTURE

PLAYERS: 1

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



AT-A-GLANCE

IT'S WARIO!

SIGNATURE MOVES

COLOURFUL, VARIED WORLDS

COOL BOSS BATTLES

ALL-NEW ABILITIES

MOVIES PICTURES

JUL '03 MAY '03 26 MAY '03



IT'S BEEN A long while since we last saw anything on Wario's first solo GameCube appearance, simply because Nintendo has released nothing new since the latter half of last year. The last time we saw the game was at ECTS '02 where a select few levels were playable. Originally due to hit shelves in October of last year, the game mysteriously slipped – Nintendo gave no reasons for the delay but it now appears that the game may have changed development teams.

At last year's E3, Treasure was the official developer for the title. The company behind *Gunstar Heroes*, *Go! Go! Troublemakers*, *Sin & Punishment* and *Ikaruga* was working closely with Nintendo, but then some internal restructuring occurred. Miyamoto-san also mentioned recently that he couldn't reveal who was developing *Wario World*, but that it was a second party that Nintendo had worked with before. This could lead to many different possibilities, the most likely being that Treasure is now an official second party. This would certainly explain the delay.

This all ties in with the latest *Wario* screens which show only a slight departure from last year's demo. The graphics are identical and all that's really

“THIS COULD BE ANOTHER CASE OF NINTENDO CREATING A GAME ‘FOR THE FANS’”



⌚ Dinosaurs with big sticks? Just what we always wanted...



⌚ Piledriving can harm up to ten enemies at a time



⌚ It'sa me, Wario, and I'ma gonna be da king of da worrrld, mwahaha!

WORLD

changed are the new abilities, both of which are apparent in the new levels on show. As well as his trademark Shoulder Barge and Piledriver moves, Wario can also throw his enemies across the room and make use of sticky balls to cross wide gaps.

Each themed level comes with its own similarly themed enemies. So far we've seen Dinosaur World, Desert, Circus and Haunted House, and in each area enemies come in droves. When surrounded by ten or twelve long-armed psycho clowns, Wario has to resort to knocking them over domino style. Bad guys can also be swung by their legs, thus knocking over anyone else in the vicinity.

In the short term it looks like it could be quite fun, but spread over multiple worlds there's a danger of it becoming a tad repetitive. From what we have to go on, Wario's latest adventure is looking like a by-the-book isometric platformer. There don't appear to be any standout gameplay features, and this could well turn out to be another case of Nintendo creating a game 'for the fans.'

This wouldn't be such big surprise since there hasn't yet been a *Wario* console game that was in any way mind-blowing. We can but hope.

CUBE

⌚ Coins are lying around everywhere – gotta catch 'em all!



GCN

GAMECUBE NEWS

NEWS CONTENTS

AT A GLANCE

PRICE WAR

After all the years moaning about the price of games, have we ever had it so good before?



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EA JOINS NINTENDO

What's in store now EA and Nintendo have joined ranks and what can we expect from GC online?



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THE GREAT ESCAPE

Pivotal give the GC some classic movie treatment and CUBE goes to investigate



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GC MGS

Absolutely unbelievable: Konami gives us the games we deserve



PAGE 018

TOTALGAMES.NET

Check out the latest on the forums, and grab your free fascias plus a £5 GAME voucher



PAGE 018-019

CHARTS/RELEASE LIST

See what's been selling this month and when your most anticipated titles are coming out

UK CHART 49/20% Chart by Nintendo Chart 1/2004

POS	TITLE	WEEKS ON CHART
1	THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER	10
2	METROID PRIME	10
3	THE SIMS	10
4	THE SIMS: HOUSEHOLD COMPLETE	10
5	THE SIMS: UNLEASHED	10
6	THE SIMS: SUPERSTAR	10
7	THE SIMS: MALLORY PARK	10
8	THE SIMS: VILLAINS	10
9	THE SIMS: THE SIMS	10
10	THE SIMS: THE SIMS	10

PAGE 021-022



⊙ Titles like *The Wind Waker* should help to launch a resurgence in the fortunes of the GC after a few tough months

⊙ *Metroid Prime* is the only GC-only title, other than *Mario Sunshine*, to have topped the all-formats chart in the UK



PRICE W

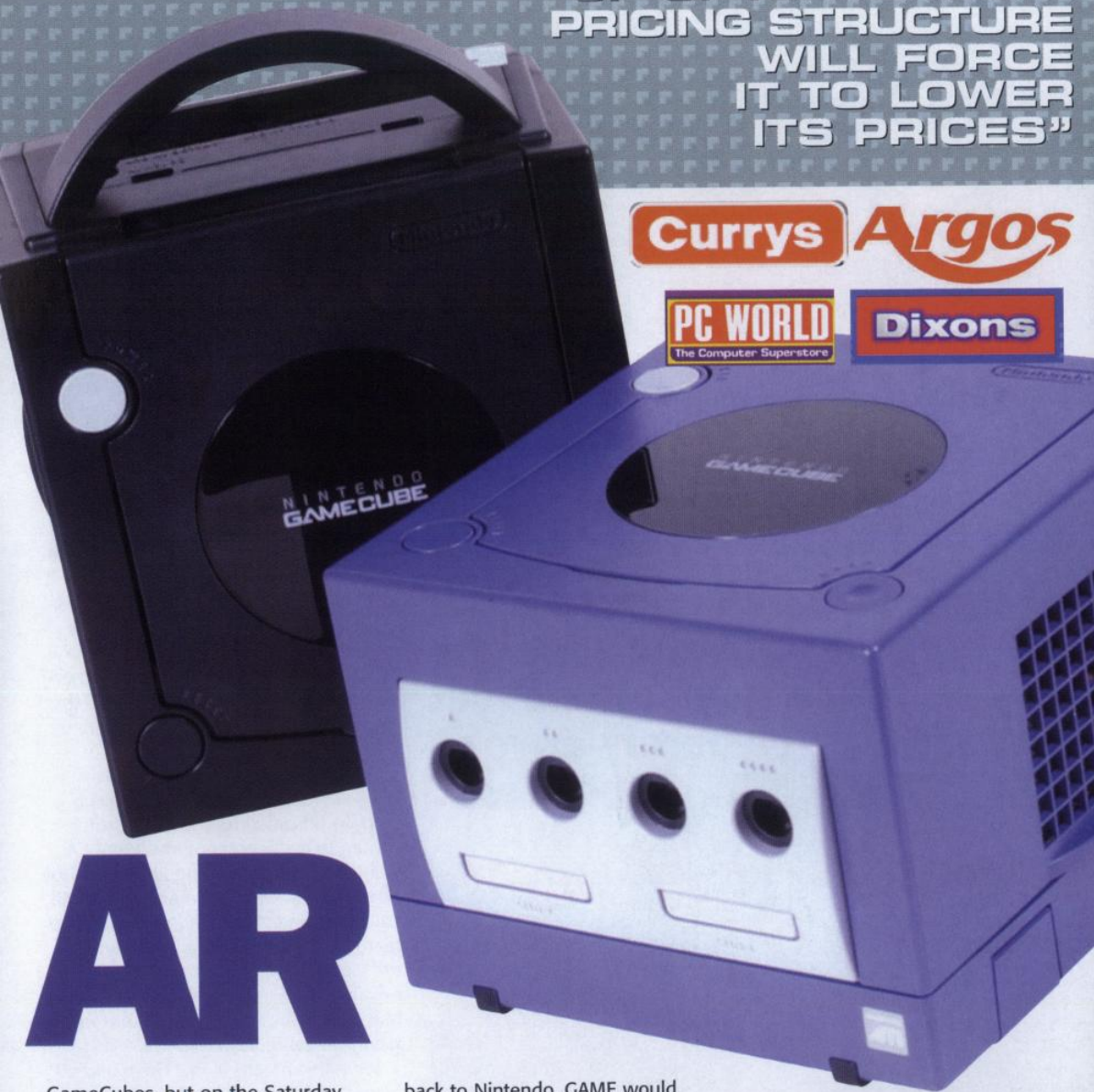
Nintendo's console undergoes a price slash, but at what cost?

BACK AT THE end of last year, in our Christmas issue news story 'The Price Is Right?', we suggested that Nintendo would probably suffer sales-wise over the festive period if it didn't lower the price of the GameCube. After all, *Metroid*, *Zelda* and *Final Fantasy: CC* were still many months away from a PAL release and, by comparison, the Xbox was being very heavily discounted. Accordingly, the GameCube failed to sell as well as was predicted and so began many months of cancelled games for the 'Cube, as retailers became increasingly uncertain about the saleability of Nintendo's console.

Rather unsurprisingly then, earlier last month the electrical retailer Dixons, which is part of the same retail group as Currys and PC World, dropped the price of the 'Cube down to £99 in an effort to clear a backlog of unsold stock. Faced with a similar piling up of unsold stock, Argos went a few steps better than this reduction and started selling the GameCube, a memory card and a choice of game for a mere £78.99.

Accordingly, gamers flocked to Argos in their droves and purchased what is easily one of the best videogaming packages ever sold on the high street. On the previous Saturday, Argos sold a meagre 100

"PERHAPS THIS UNOFFICIAL SHAKE UP OF NINTENDO'S PRICING STRUCTURE WILL FORCE IT TO LOWER ITS PRICES"



AR

GameCubes, but on the Saturday following the price cut nearly 5,000 'Cubes were bought. Just as astonishingly, GC games were also being sold remarkably cheaply, retailing at only £29.99.

Now whilst such a surge in sales is obviously welcome, it's difficult to see how retailers can sustain such a low pricing model. In fact, just before going to press we discovered that GAME, the UK's biggest videogame outlet, has recalled all its solo GameCube packs and is returning them to Nintendo. When **CUBE** contacted GAME about this, we were told that whilst unsold standalone packs were being sent

back to Nintendo, GAME would continue to sell the *Metroid* bundle at the recommended retail price of £129.99. Seemingly, GAME (and no doubt every single independent store across the country) could no longer afford to price match Argos or Dixons solo pack offers, hence it no longer wanted to sell GameCube.

So what will be the effect of the heavy discounting of Nintendo's console? If other retailers can't afford to price match Argos, why would they stock the GameCube or indeed any of its games? Alternatively, if the cost of the GameCube returns to the £130 mark with a game, then who, given

that it was previously less than £80, would feel compelled to buy it?

Such a problem has, as yet, not transpired. Our local GAME stores have told us that both *Metroid* and its accompanying GameCube pack have sold remarkably well and this situation seems to be replicated nationwide, across all retailers. Yet what of the *Zelda* pack when it launches? Will gamers be prepared to pay the full price for it? Perhaps this unofficial shake up of Nintendo's pricing structure will force it to lower its prices across the board. We shall have to wait and see...

CUBE

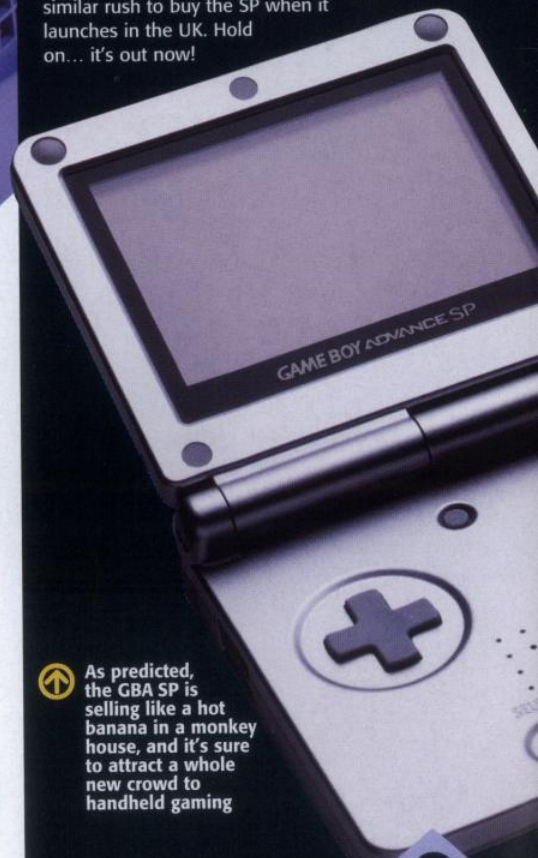


SELLING OUT

IT'S A SIMILAR STORY IN AMERICA AND JAPAN...

At a time when the world market for videogames is growing at a faster rate than ever before, Nintendo products across the pond and in the East are selling faster than turbo-charged greased lightning getting sucked up by a well-oiled black hole. Well, okay, so maybe they're not selling that quickly, but they're doing pretty well. Nintendo of America for instance, has reported a 110 per cent increase in sales, while *The Wind Waker* is now the most pre-ordered game in history, with over half a million gamers (600,000, in fact) choosing to get the game on its day of release. This figure outstrips even *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*.

Over in Japan, the launch of the Game Boy Advance SP has met with a similarly devoted and eager response. In its first month on sale, the new front lit and rechargeable handheld sold 365,000 units, beating the PS2 into second place in the sales charts. Surprisingly, even the original Game Boy Advance was the third best selling machine, outstripping both the GameCube and Xbox. Here at **CUBE** we're expecting a similar rush to buy the SP when it launches in the UK. Hold on... it's out now!



As predicted, the GBA SP is selling like a hot banana in a monkey house, and it's sure to attract a whole new crowd to handheld gaming

CUBITES

NINTENDO NEWS DELIVERED HOT FROM THE OVEN AND STRAIGHT TO YOUR EYES...



POCKET A DISCOUNT

To celebrate the launch on 28 March of the GBA SP, Nintendo is giving the first 400,000 buyers of its handheld a £30 discount voucher for a GameCube. Cleverly, this will sell more 'Cubes, and also advertise GBA to GC connectivity.

THE WRITE STUFF

Using a keyboard during online games of PSO is the only way to play it. Fact! Luckily, by the time you read this Dat! will have released its GC-compatible Powerboard. It plugs into the second controller port and costs just £19.99.



SKIES SEQUEL SETS SAIL

One of the Overworks developers behind SEGA's excellent Skies Of Arcadia Legends let slip in a recent interview that a sequel is already in the planning stages. In the meantime, the GC version of the original launches over here on 23 May.



RTX CANNED

The official line from LucasArts regarding its decision to drop 3D space adventure RTX Redrock is that development of the title for the GameCube was lagging behind other formats. So, it's got nothing to do with concern over potential sales.



Miyamoto-san worked closely with Retro Studios... now it's EA's turn



IT'S IN THE TH

Nintendo hooks up with the world's biggest publisher and the 'Cube goes online, yet barely anyone notices...

WHEN CUBE MET Shigeru Miyamoto last month, among many other topics we were told about Nintendo's approach to third-party support. Rather surprisingly, Miyamoto-san revealed that Nintendo was looking to strengthen its relationship with Electronic Arts, but little did we know that the great man himself would be so directly involved.

In an official announcement from Nintendo it's been confirmed that EA will be launching around 20 GameCube titles over the next 12 months and will collaborate with Nintendo on exclusive features for connected play between the GameCube and Game Boy Advance. Just as interestingly, Miyamoto-san will provide "input on technical gameplay elements".

What this means is that the world's biggest publisher, EA, will be treated more like a second-party developer. Ideally this will afford it a better knowledge of the GC and GBA hardware and grant its development teams not just access to Nintendo's internal libraries, but also to the genius of the world's greatest videogame creator.

A similar precedent had been set by Nintendo's close collaboration with developers such as Retro and Camelot, where Miyamoto-san oversaw the progress of such titles as *Mario Golf* and *Metroid*. However, never before has the notoriously insular and secretive Nintendo so openly courted such a large and independent developer and publisher.





GameCube went online last month, but only just. Did you notice, or did it pass you by?



Miyamoto-san is spreading himself thinly at the moment. No time for banjos, mate

E GAME

While such behaviour represents a markedly different approach from the Japanese giant, one thing that hasn't changed is the scarcity of detail regarding the actual games. What we can tell you is that the first three titles to support GBA to GC connectivity are *FIFA 2004*, *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004* and *Madden NFL 2004*, but exactly what exclusive features they'll contain – well, nobody knows just yet.

Although such news is obviously good and indicates a Nintendo that recognises its own limitations, not to mention its need to depend on others, some things haven't changed.

On 7 March last month, amid a marketing campaign best described as invisible, the GameCube crept online. As the first of the next generation consoles to offer networked play, the online roll-out was dismally underwhelming, with SEGA's *Phantasy Star Online* (minus any keyboard) the sole enticement for gamers to get connected. Again, in

Europe at least, Nintendo has undersold itself and seems indifferent as to whether UK gamers go online or not.

But with no official online Nintendo title yet announced, what has it got to shout about? Frankly, very little. There's scant profitability to be made as yet in online networked gaming, and without a hard drive, downloadable content doesn't seem much of an option or even a reason for getting connected.

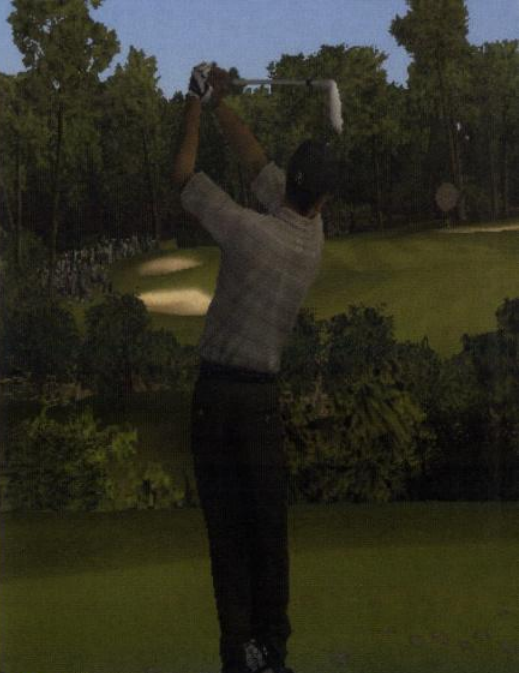
We'd love to see a wealth of connected features for GC games. *Animal Crossing 2* online would be great as would *Mario Kart*, *Golf*, *Tennis* and so on, but it's doubtful whether online gaming will really take off until later this year or even 2004. Nintendo's showing at next month's E3 will confirm whether it has a genuine commitment to the online cause or not.

CUBE

EA
SPORTS™



The GC modems are now on the shelves



With EA's main titles confirmed for the GameCube, the future is bright

INSERT COIN

FROM GAME OVER TO CONTINUE IN THE SPACE OF A MONTH

It was only a few months ago that industry insiders were predicting the demise of the GameCube. The 'Cube, we were told, had fallen prey to Dreamcast syndrome – a condition where games are canned left, right and centre, and software and hardware sales fail to meet expectations. Yet now, with the behemoth that is EA joining Nintendo, other publishers' fears over releasing games on the 'Cube are alleviated. Just how much it might have cost to secure this relationship with EA we'll probably never know, but what is clear is that the GameCube's future is secure. As you'll have found out in this month's news, there's still speculation and uncertainty from retailers, but sales are rising significantly and with *Metroid* out, *Zelda* around the corner and E3 revelations tantalisingly close, the future seems as good as ever. So, just how close did Nintendo come to blowing its chances globally? Well, take a look at our Game Over? feature on page 28.

He gets everywhere doesn't he? Enough with the gaming God pics



Metroid Prime has helped sales of the GameCube to outstrip the PS2



A MAN'S CASTLE



↑ Colditz as it looks now. Not so scary, is it?



FEELING COLD

Some of the areas in the game are heavily based on the famous POW camp Colditz Castle in Germany. This huge structure stands tall over the surrounding towns on the banks of the river Mulde, making it a formidable fortress. It dates back to 1014 and over the years has been used for many purposes, but perhaps most famously from 1940 to 1945 where it served as a 'Sonderlager' – a maximum security prison. Here, Polish, French, Dutch and English POWs who had previously succeeded in escaping from other prison camps were assembled. Unfortunately for the Germans, this created teams of escape experts who managed to perform over 300 escape operations, 31 of which were a complete success.

There are many tales of the courage and ingenuity that necessity bred, and so we recommend further reading on the subject. Recognising some of the locations in *The Great Escape* would surely enhance your enjoyment of the game.



↑ Not the most subtle of escape plans, granted, but it takes all sorts...

THE GREAT ESCAPE

Escape... there's no escape!



↑ Steve McQueen did most of the motorcycle work in the movie himself. True fact.

↓ It would seem sensible to make your escape attempt under cover of darkness



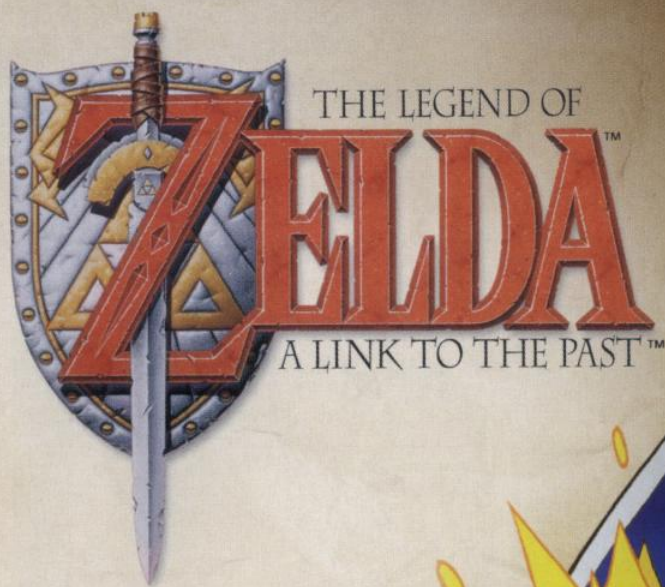
AFTER THE EXCELLENT review that *Conflict: Desert Storm* received this issue, we decided to take a look at Pivotal's latest game, *The Great Escape*. Currently down for a release on the Xbox and PS2 later this year, and a GameCube release won't be far behind. The game, as the title implies, is based on the film of the same name that mirrors real-life events that took place during the Second World War.

Taking on a very similar control method to that found in *Conflict: Desert Storm*, you will find yourself having to break out of a prisoner of war (POW) camp and then make a run through various occupied countries, either on foot or on a stolen motorbike.

To do this you'll be able to employ the skills of fellow prisoners who will distract guards for you while you perform certain tasks such as finding a key or destroying an electricity generator. On easier levels this will be

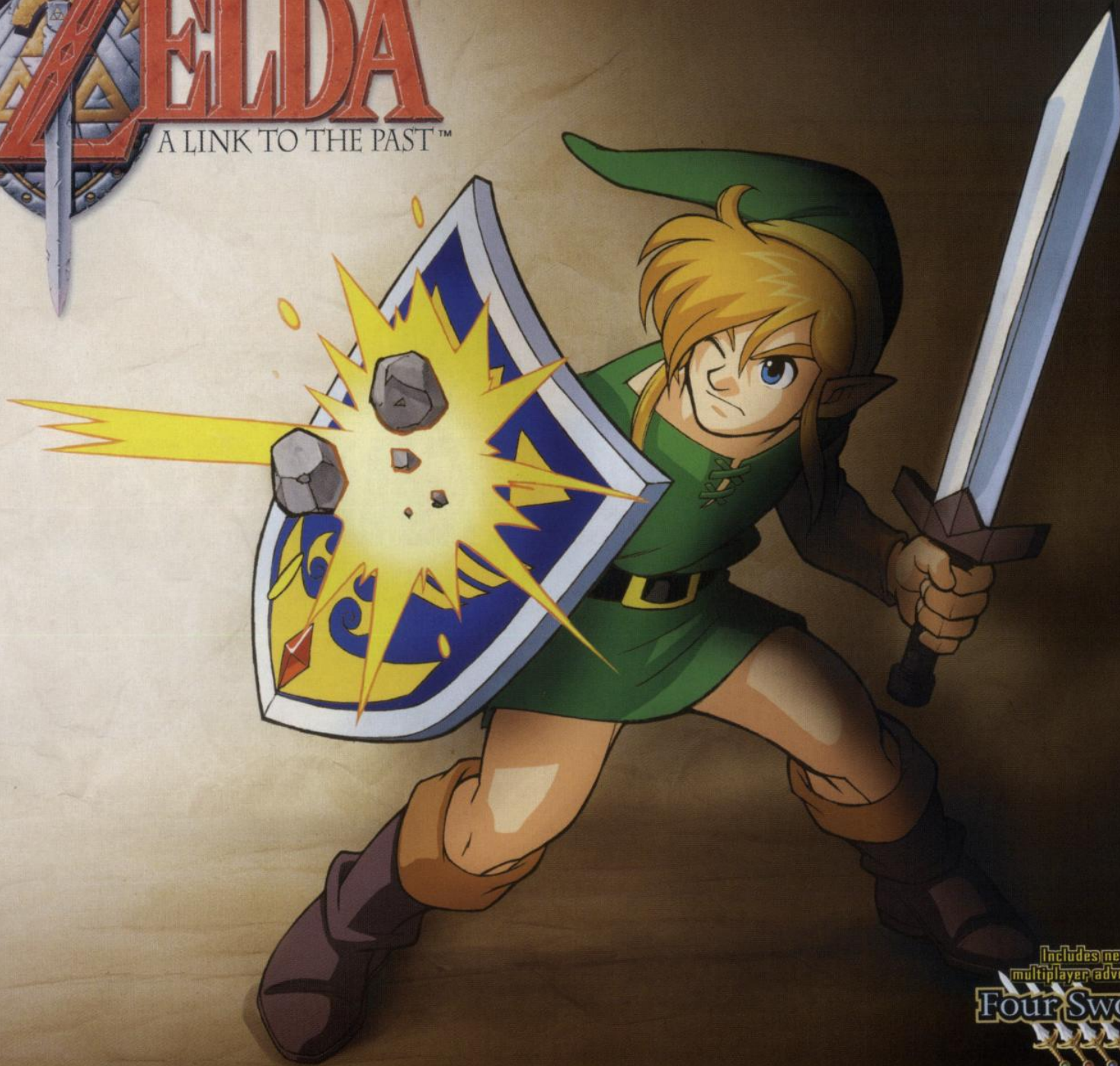
a straightforward enough process, but as the game goes on you'll find yourself having to not only plan your every move with care and precision as the guards become more alert, but you'll also have to draw on your past experiences to work out exactly what needs doing in order to make good your escape.

Essentially, *The Great Escape* is a game of two halves. On one hand you'll have to creep among shadows, throw things around to distract people and generally be extremely sneaky, and on the other the only solution to a problem will be to grab a guard around the neck and use him as a shield as you tear through a camp, stopping everything that moves with a pistol. Like a lot of games these days the gameplay will change in pace to emulate the accompanying storyline. We'll keep you up to date on its progress.



THE LEGEND OF
ZELDATM
A LINK TO THE PASTTM

Nintendo
GAMING 24:7.



Includes new
multiplayer adventure
Four Swords

Find the Princess, before darkness finds you.

"...arguably the most loved game ever made. Essential. For everyone." CVG.com

"One of the best SNES games ever, and a startling new multiplayer game. This is an essential GBA purchase." NGC 92%.

"One of the GBA's absolute musts, especially with the addition of Four Swords." Gamesmaster 95%.

GAME BOY ADVANCETM

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CUBITES

NINTENDO NEWS DELIVERED HOT FROM THE OVEN AND STRAIGHT TO YOUR EYES...



ROGUE RETURN

Rogue Squadron III has been confirmed and will be unveiled for the first time in a matter of weeks. We know nothing more, apart from the fact that Endor will be one of the levels.

PRIME TIME

Metroid Prime shot straight to the top of the All Formats charts this month, a massive achievement considering the installed user-base for the PS2. It's only the second GC title to do it.



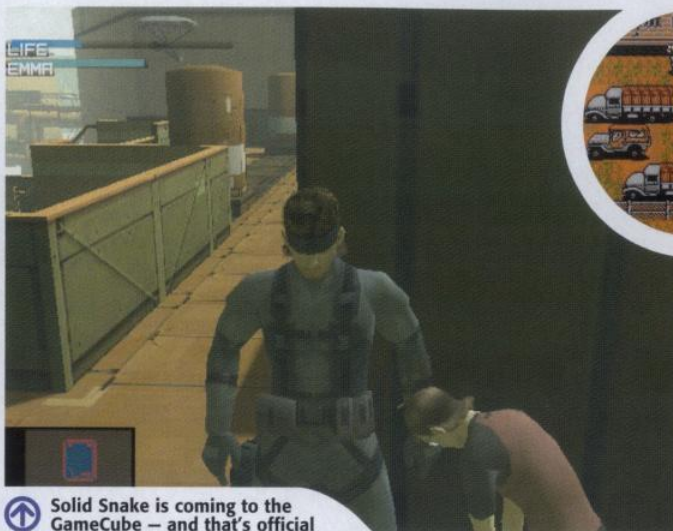
GB POWER

Import gamers will be pleased to hear that the newly launched GB Player has no territorial lockout, and will work on any machine and with any game. We'll run a mini feature next month.



ME TARZAN

Activision will bring Pitfall Harry to the GameCube later in the year. The update of the classic series will see Harry back on the jungle trail, avoiding crocodiles and screaming like Tarzan.



⬆️ Solid Snake is coming to the GameCube — and that's official



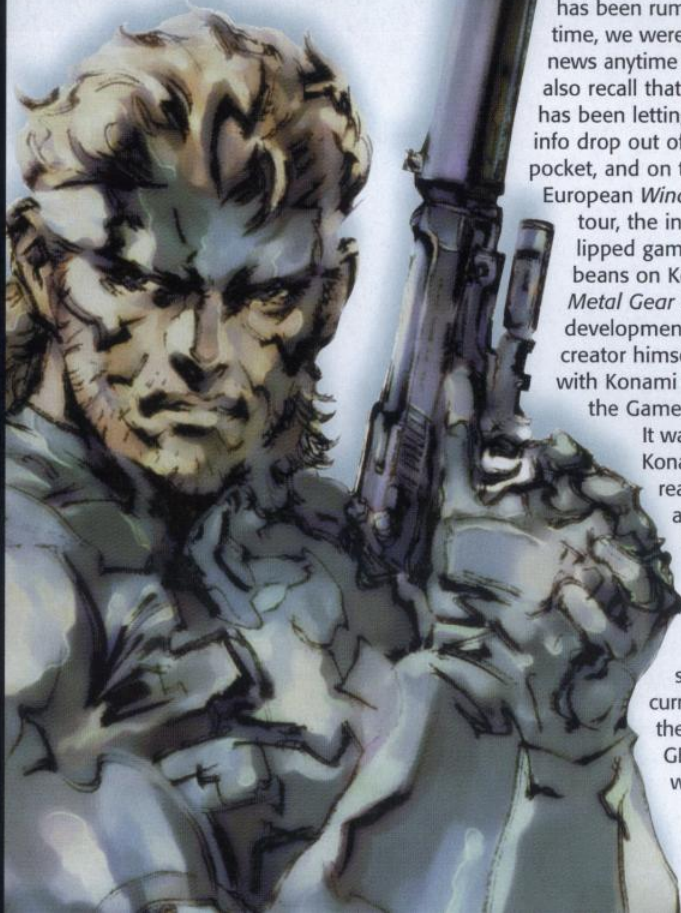
⬅️ The Metal Gear series started out on a Nintendo system... the NES, actually

⬇️ Nobody knows for sure what format the new game will take. E3 will reveal all though...



METAL GEAR SOLID

Nintendo's biggest scoop of the year so far



YOU MAY RECALL that back in CUBE 16 we reported that Konami was preparing to announce a series of games for the GameCube at E3.

In all honesty we were expecting a *Castlevania* game, and although a *Metal Gear* title has been rumoured for some time, we weren't expecting the news anytime soon. You may also recall that Miyamoto-san has been letting little snippets of info drop out of his gaming pocket, and on the recent

European *Wind Waker* press tour, the increasingly loose-lipped gaming God spilt the beans on Konami's plans — a *Metal Gear Solid* game is in development and the *Mario* creator himself is working with Konami to bring it to the GameCube!

It was apparent that Konami itself wasn't ready for the announcement, and it caught it off guard. As to whether Hideo Kojima, the director of the series (who's currently working on the light-sensitive GBA title *Eclipse*), will play a part in

development is, unfortunately, unclear. Similarly unresolved is what type of *Metal Gear* title is being created. *MGS2: Substance* (an update to *MGS2*) for the Xbox and PS2 has already been released. *MGS3* for the PS2 has also been confirmed, so we're left assuming that the GC version could well be a remake of the PlayStation original, in a similar style to *RE Remake*.

However, just (and we mean literally minutes) before going to press, word has reached us that in a further promotional interview, Miyamoto-san has alluded to some very interesting developments: not only will we receive some sort of remake but also, and exclusively, Nintendo has secured *Metal Gear Solid 4*! Disappointingly, we've been unable to confirm this news with either Konami or Nintendo, although it's worth bearing in mind that a lot of what Miyamoto-san has hinted at during these promotional tours has been proved credible. We're perfectly willing to believe that another *MGS* title, along with the remake, is under development, but for this game to be *MGS4* is remarkable — perhaps too much so. It would make sense though, as the *Metal Gear* series started out on a Nintendo platform — it's about time Snake came home.

We're expecting more concrete details to surface prior to E3 in May.

FORGOTTEN REALMS

Baldur's Gate™

DARK ALLIANCE™

Live the Fantasy...

"Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance looks like an absolute must-have game..."

- GameSpy.com



Explosive spell effects



Hordes of D&D® creatures

www.interplay.com/bgda



developed by snowblind studios



PlayStation 2



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CUBITES

NINTENDO NEWS DELIVERED HOT FROM THE OVEN AND STRAIGHT TO YOUR EYES...



GT NEWS

The developers of GT Advance, MTO, have announced that they are working on a GameCube title called GT Cube. It's reported to have over 20 tracks, variable weather conditions and famous cars.

FANTASIES DUE IN SUMMER

Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles has finally received a Japanese release date. July 18 is the day to remember for anybody wishing to get an import copy of the RPG so they can struggle through the it with a Linguaphone tape.



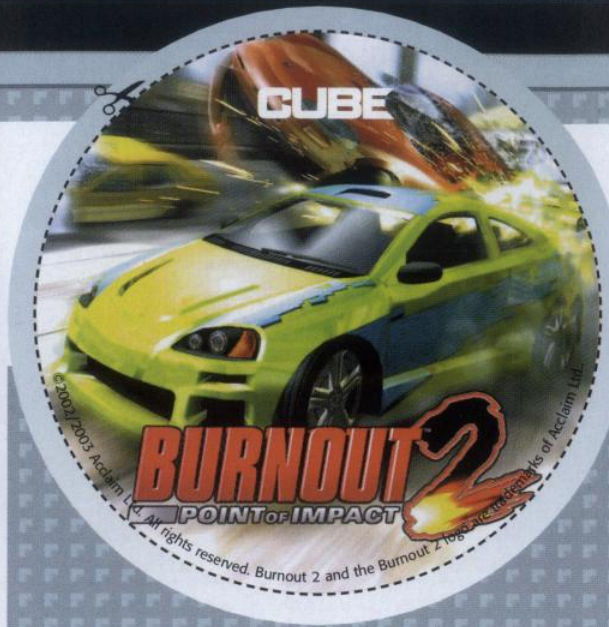
CAPCOM GO ONLINE

Good news for Capcom fans – Ghouls And Ghosts Online has been showcased. Although not officially announced, it was playable at the recent Games Developers Conference. Players will be able to interact with each other in vast medieval settings.



MEGA COLLECTION 2?

Yuji Naka, the head of Sonic Team, has stated that Sonic Adventure DX is to contain every previous Sonic Game Gear title. Expect to see titles such as Chaos, Triple Trouble and Labyrinth and possibly even a GBA linkup feature.



CIRCLES OF POWER

**Feel the burn,
and spin and turn...
Drive, dance and fight
the night away!**

THERE ARE THREE... amazing games on this page, and CUBE has been lucky enough to play them all this month. Don't worry though; one of them will be out on import by the time you read this and the other two will be out in a months' time. Until then the only way to respect their authoritah is to get these fascias on your GameCube...

FEELING LEFT OUT?

Missed out on our amazing free gifts from issues 9, 12 and 16? Go to page 126 and get yourself a copy then!



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4. This voucher is redeemable against GameCube games only.
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So what are you waiting for? Get it cut out and race as fast as your little game-addled legs will carry you to your nearest GAME store!



cube.totalgames.net

The place to be for the latest in GameCube news, reviews, tips and gossip!

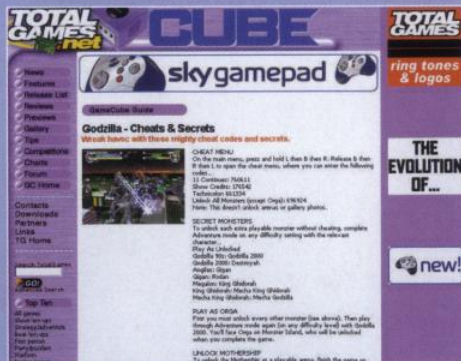


IT'S BEEN AN eventful month in the world of videogames, and whatever your inclination you're bound to have an opinion on the current hot topics – Nintendo's treatment of third-parties, Nintendo 'doing a SEGA,' the usefulness of FreeLoader and even whether Miyamoto-san would look good in drag. Aside from offering up all the latest screens, movies and gaming news, TotalGames.net offers you the chance to chat with other like-minded gamers. Not everyone will agree with you, but how boring would it be if that were the case? Exactly. Just for the record, we had nothing to do with the 'Miyamoto-san In drag' topic...



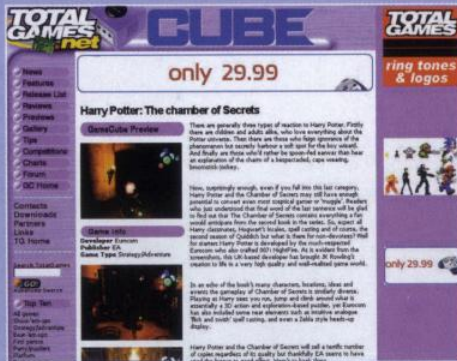
UP-TO-THE-MINUTE NEWS

There's never a quiet moment in the world of gaming, and if you don't keep an eye on what's going on you may be left behind. To avoid this potentially terrible situation, head on over to the front page of cube.totalgames.net each day to check out the latest gossip. From here you'll be able to hit a link to see what's new, or take a trip back in time using the search engine to look for any past entries.



THE HOTTEST CHEATS IN TOWN

Getting grief from Gannondorf? Receiving a kicking from Koopa? The tips index situated at cube.totalgames.net may just be your saviour! The CUBE Solutions team work night and day to provide their readers with the most helpful and relevant walkthroughs and cheats around, so if you find yourself all of a tizz, then you know where to go.



CUBE, WITHOUT THE PAPER

If you were crazy enough to miss an issue of the gaming bible that is CUBE, then fear not! Each month, all the reviews and previews are uploaded to TGN, so you'll be able to have a quick look at which titles are currently causing us to loosen our ties at lunchtime before you hitch a bus into town to spend your wedge, safe in the knowledge of what you're getting yourself into. We're just too kind!

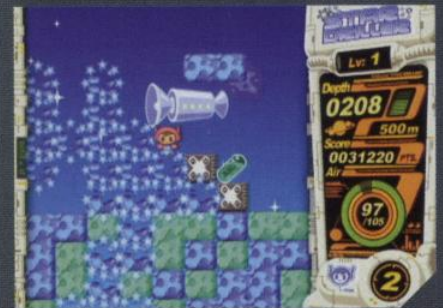


FRIENDS AT THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON!

If we've ever got a spare minute or two on our hands between typing and playing TimeSplitters 2, then we'll undoubtedly end up at the TGN forums and we think that you should too. People from all sides of the planet gather here to talk about games, CUBE and all things Nintendo. Come take a look, you never know who you might meet. It's like a big, fun party in Internet form. No, really.

CUBE MOST PLAYED

THREE IS THE MAGIC NUMBER... HERE'S OUR TRIO OF TOP GAMES



MR. DRILLER DRILL LAND

You've heard it all before, but we can't stress enough how good this game really is. Byron took it home a while back, and we haven't seen it since. Or him. His neighbours' reports of a bulk delivery by Black and Decker are unsubstantiated. But probably true...



THE SIMS

Our advice – stay away from this game. Gary certainly didn't heed this, and subsequently now sees real-life events in 'Sims form'. Whatever you do, don't take him to a nightclub (if he does sneak in, he'll be easy to spot – the yellow diamond is a giveaway).



BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS

This has been the cause of a few missed buses, and with good reason. Chandra is really bad at this. Really, really bad. If you've never seen a Bomberman game before, get it, and ask Chandra for a game. You may want to blindfold yourself and tie an arm behind your back. Just to make your victory more impressive...

CUBE MOST WANTED

ONCE WE'VE GOT HOLD OF THESE GAMES, OUR LIVES WILL FEEL COMPLETE



MARIO KART

With Miyamoto telling us the game is actually complete, what was once a fleeting wish far on the horizon is now alarmingly close to arrival. The whole office has started playing the SNES version again to brush up on our skills. This is one game where nobody wants to get left behind



GIFTPIA

We've got a feeling this will be a bit of a sleeper hit. Its *Chrono Trigger* heritage is reason enough, but the gorgeous graphics and promising gameplay features are what have really got us going. Given its heritage this is sure to be a gem.



BURNOUT 2

Twice the number of crash junctions, the *Chase HQ*-esque Pursuit mode, the improved engine... this will completely destroy the PS2 version. By the time you read this we'll have it, but at the time of writing our mailbox is agonisingly empty. Not fair!

UK RELEASE LIST

CUBE's at-a-glance guide to what you can expect in 2003

Game	Genre	Publisher	Release Date	Anticipation
Island Xtreme Stunts	Racing	Lego	April 2003	★
Red Faction II	Shoot-'em-up	THQ	April 2003	★★★★
WWE Crush Hour	Sports	THQ	April 2003	★
The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker	Adventure	Nintendo	3/5/2003	★★★★★
NBA Street Vol 2	Sports	EA	9/5/2003	★★★
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	Stealth-'em-up	Ubi Soft	Spring 2003	★★★★
TransWorld Surf: Next Wave	Sports	Infogrames	Spring 2003	★★
Def Jam Vendetta	Beat-'em-up	EA	16/5/2003	★★★★
Lost Kingdoms II	Adventure	Activision	16/5/2003	★★★
Black & Bruised	Sports	Vivendi	May 2003	★★★
Conflict: Desert Storm	Action Adventure	SCI	May 2003	★★★★
Dragon's Lair 3D	Platform	THQ	May 2003	★★
Enter the Matrix	Action Adventure	Infogrames	May 2003	★★★
F1 Career Challenge	Racing	EA	May 2003	★★★
Gladius	Beat-'em-up	LucasArts	May 2003	★★★
International Superstar Soccer 3	Sports	Konami	May 2003	★★★★
Shrek Super Party	Platform	TDK	May 2003	★★
Hulk	Beat-'em-up	Vivendi	June 2003	★
V-Rally 3	Racing	Infogrames	June 2003	★★★
Wario World	Platform	Nintendo	June 2003	★★★★
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Raven Shield	Action Adventure	Ubi Soft	Q3 2003	★★★
XIII	FPS	Ubi Soft	Q3 2003	★★★★
Bionicle: Mask of Light	Racing	Lego	Sept 2003	★
Driver 3	Action Adventure	Infogrames	2003	★★★★
Full Throttle II	Racing	LucasArts	2003	★★★
Gladiator: The Crimson Reign	Beat-'em-up	Midway	2003	★★★
Pikmin 2	Puzzle Adventure	Nintendo	2003	★★★★★
Pillage	Action Adventure	Zed Two	2003	★★★★
Soul Calibur II	Beat-'em-up	Nintendo	2003	★★★★★
Starcraft: Ghost	Action Adventure	Vivendi	2003	★★★
The Hobbit	Action Adventure	Vivendi	2003	★★
True Crime: Streets of L.A.	Beat-'em-up	Activision	2003	★★★
Worms 3	Puzzle	Activision	2003	★★★
Wrath	Action Adventure	LucasArts	2003	★★★
1080: Avalanche	Sports	Nintendo	2nd half 2003	★★★★★
F-Zero	Racing	Nintendo	2nd half 2003	★★★★★
Mario Golf	Sports	Nintendo	2nd half 2003	★★★★★
Mario Kart	Racing	Nintendo	2nd half 2003	★★★★★
NBA Jam 2004	Sports	Acclaim	2nd half 2003	★★★★
XGRA	Acclaim	Racing	2nd half 2003	★★★★

JAPAN & US

Jap	F-Zero GC	SEGA	Racing	Q1 '03	★★★★★
Jap	Pikmin 2	Simulation	Nintendo	Q2 '03	★★★★★
US	1080: White Storm	Sport	Nintendo	15 April 03	★★★★★
Jap	Final Fantasy:Crystal Chronicles	RPG	Square	16 July 2003	★★★★★
Jap	Mario Party Online	Party Puzzler	Nintendo	Q2 '03	★★★★★
Jap	Mario Kart Online	Racing	Nintendo	Q2 '03	★★★★★
Jap	Animal Forest Online	Adventure	Nintendo	Q2 '03	★★★★★
Jap	GameCube Wars	Strategy	Nintendo	Q2 '03	★★★★★
Jap	P.N. 03	Shoot-'em-up	Capcom	May '03	★★★★★
Jap	Killer 7	Shoot-'em-up	Capcom	Q3 '03	★★★★★
Jap	Dead Phoenix	Shoot-'em-up	Capcom	Q4 '03	★★★★★
Jap	Resident Evil 4	Survival Horror	Capcom	2004	★★★★★

CUBE RECOMMENDS

OUR TOP THREE DESERT ISLAND GAMES FOR THIS MONTH'S PAL RELEASES...



RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

The latest game in this top franchise is essential to anybody with a GameCube. The visuals, sound effects and pacing all add up to create a real sense of terror.



ETERNAL DARKNESS

This offering from Silicon Knights is a worthy alternative to Capcom's monster series with a very strong story and the alarming sanity effects.



LUIGI'S MANSION

The GameCube launch game received heavy criticism when first released, but going back reveals it to be more than the sum of its parts.

GAMECUBE CHARTS

BALLS TO IT ALL

MONKEY LOVER

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

ROLLING, ROLLING, ROLLING

Less skilful than the first *Monkey Ball* in places, but this is still a fantastic piece of software. It seems that people have finally realised this, and there isn't a more deserving title to take the number one spot. As if any more evidence were required that monkeys are the new rock n' roll!



1

UK CHART

TOTAL GAMES.net

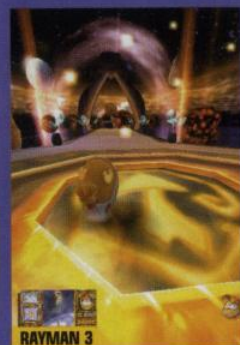
ChartTrack

Week ending 15 February '03

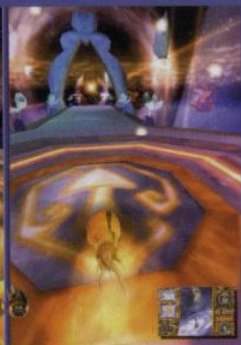
At last the monkeys are being recognised! *Super Monkey Ball 2* rolls in at number one, with some old speedy blue classics also making an appearance (although they're pipped into third place by those pesky zombies).

All information is compiled by ChartTrack and is the strict copyright of ELSPA (UK) Ltd.

POS	LAST	TITLE	PUBLISHER	SCORE
1	NEW	SUPER MONKEY BALL 2	SEGA	9.2
2	NEW	RESIDENT EVIL ZERO	CAPCOM	9.0
3	NEW	SONIC MEGA COLLECTION	SEGA	8.0
4	2	SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE	NINTENDO	9.4
5	NEW	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS	EA	7.7
6	NEW	PHANTASY STAR ONLINE	SEGA	7.5
7	6	ETERNAL DARKNESS	NINTENDO	9.3
8	7	LUIGI'S MANSION	NINTENDO	7.8
9	NEW	RAYMAN 3	UNI SOFT	8.1
10	NEW	PIKMIN	NINTENDO	9.0



RAYMAN 3



PIKMIN



PIKMIN



ROCKMAN.EXE TRANSMISSION



ANIMAL CROSSING

HOGWILD

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION

FEELING BLUE

Anybody who grew up with the Mega Drive will already know how essential this title is to any gamer. It's deservedly selling well and we've already had loads of fun with it. Coupled with the Hori pads which should be arriving soon, everyone will have the chance to enjoy some classic arcade gaming.



3

COLLECT 'EM ALL

FIZZY PHANTASIA

STAR TURN

PS2 EPISODES 1 & 2

STAR OF THE SHOW

Exactly half the **CUBE** team love this, and exactly half don't. Judging from the chart position of this glorious title, it seems that Gary and Byron are on the winning side. Now that the servers are up it should get even better. And you can ignore the bah-humbugging from the other side of the room.



6

A RAY OF LIGHT

RAYMAN 3

FRENCH CONNECTION

After favourable reviews it's no surprise that *Rayman* is selling well, but we didn't expect it to jump in quite so high. We still prefer Mario for platforming goodness, but this is a quality alternative and all credit to Ubi Soft for doing the business in such a competitive genre.



9

LET'S GET LIMBLESS

US CHART

POS	LAST	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	NEW	Rockman.Exe Transmission	Capcom
2	1	Metroid Prime	Nintendo
3	NEW	Nintendo Puzzle Collection	Nintendo
4	NEW	The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker	Nintendo
5	NEW	Mario Party	Konami

JAPANESE CHART

POS	LAST	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	2	The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker	Nintendo
2	NEW	Super Smash Bros Melee	Nintendo
3	NEW	Metroid Prime	Nintendo
4	NEW	Animal Crossing	Nintendo
5	3	Mario Party 4	Nintendo

CUBITES

NINTENDO NEWS DELIVERED HOT FROM THE QUEEN AND STRAIGHT TO YOUR EYES...

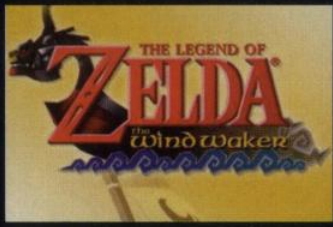


THREE MONTHS TO GO

Nintendo of America has just announced that Mario Golf will hit the US on 28 July. As yet, Nintendo has only released two screenshots of the game, which has apparently changed considerably. Best get a move on guys...

WIND WOKEN

By the time Zelda: The Wind Waker launched in the US on 24 March the pre-orders for the game had exceeded a staggering 600,000 copies. Whoever said that toon-shaded Link was unpopular



SONIC BOOM!

SEGA is to really push Sonic this year with a new animated series planned as well as a set of toys and five new games. What these could be is anyone's guess, but Sonic Adv DX and Sonic Advance 3 are probably two of them.



YOU'RE ONLY SUPPOSED...

Eidos has announced that it will bring The Italian Job to GameCube later this year. The game came out on the PSone some time ago, but this one will tie in with the imminent film remake.



Blood, pie and Redbull



WWW.HOT-HEAD-STUDIOS.COM



DEVELOPER DIARY...

PART SIX

Every issue we'll be speaking to HotHead Studios, and following the development of its up-and-coming horror-adventure game, *Shadow Of The Sun*

THE GAMES DEVELOPERS'

Conference may well be out of the way, but there's still no rest for the wicked. As one deadline disappears into the distance another one looms on the horizon, so the Hothead guys don't even have time to cook any more – well, apart from Tony who still lives with his mum.

Welcome to the world of the games developer – introducing the top ten snack sensations and a little insight into what programs the 3D artists use. Next month we'll speak to the animators.



What do you mean, I can't come in without a tie and that my crossbow is casual? You're walking a very fine line, m'laddo!



← Impressive looking work so far is attracting attention from major publishers

⬇ If they can keep the frame rate up, those textures look gorgeous!



HotHead Studios

Dear CUBE,

This month saw the completion of our GDC build of *Shadow Of The Sun*. It's been a hard couple of weeks but all our effort has paid off. *Shadow Of The Sun* is looking and playing fantastically. I know last month I promised you a report on Richard's GDC trip but unfortunately unforeseen circumstances prevented him from attending the main conference. He was, however, able to attend follow-up meetings in LA with several interested parties, all of which went very well.

At the moment we are adding new features and effects to the demo, which entails going back through the level and optimising every detail. We have also started building the next level, which sees the main character fleeing from the prison and into a forest. The Vampire Abilities that I've hinted at over the last couple of months will start to come into play in this level. Mallat (the main character) will come across new breeds of truly nasty enemies. He can steal abilities from some of these enemies by killing them and drinking their blood. The Mind Control/Possession ability also plays a big part in the forest, allowing Mallat to take control of numerous beasts to help him overcome certain obstacles and puzzles. For instance, possessing a wolf allows Mallat to use its speed and strength in order to scout the surrounding area, looking out for any possible ambushes or hidden secrets.

Over the past couple of weeks we've been working loads of late nights, so our usual healthy eating habits (lies) have gone out of the window in favour of junk food. The microwave has taken a hammering over the last month, cooking an exciting array of artery clogging goodness, including my all-time favourite, pie!

It gives me great pleasure to formally announce HotHead Studios' top ten late night snack sensations:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 10. Redbull | 4. Quindicie Pizza, probably the best hot and spicy pizza in the world |
| 9. Pies | 3. All day breakfast sarnie - with sausage, bacon, mushroom, tomato and onions |
| 8. Chilli cheeseburgers | 2. House Special kebab |
| 7. Pies | |
| 6. KFC | |
| 5. Microwaveable bacon sarnies | |

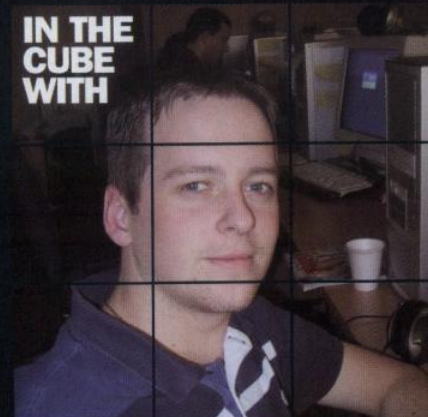
And the winner is... **PIE!!!!!!**

In the past month we've all put on about three stone and have had to get the office door widened so that we can get into work on a morning :o) Expect more madness next month!

Cheers, Tony ;-)
Executive Producer, HotHead Studios



IN THE CUBE WITH



STUART FLINT

POSITION: 3D ARTIST
COMPANY: HOTHEAD STUDIOS

CUBE: How did you get into the videogames industry?

SF: I got a job straight away after leaving school working for a games company near Liverpool called Maelstrom Games. I've been in the industry for just over 12 years.

CUBE: Top three videogames of all time?

SF: *ISS PRO* (PSone), *Resident Evil* (PSone), *Tiger Heli* (table-top arcade game).

CUBE: Some of the characters in *SOTS* have seen quite drastic changes over the past few months. What made you want to change them?

SF: We go through numerous stages in the design of our characters. Once a character is built and textured, we leave it alone for a couple of days and then go back and re-evaluate it. We sit down and discuss any ideas or changes that may be necessary and make them accordingly. This level of scrutiny allows us to get the most out of the original design of the character.

CUBE: Where did you draw your inspiration from for *SOTS*?

SF: All over really - from various books, films, graphic novels, comics and browsing on the Internet.

CUBE: What programs and graphics tools do you use in your job?

SF: I use all the latest 3D and 2D packages. For people wanting to start out in the industry there is a lot of free software available such as personal learning versions of 3D modelling packages (Softimage/Maya). Other excellent free software includes Gimp, which is a 2D art package similar to Photoshop.

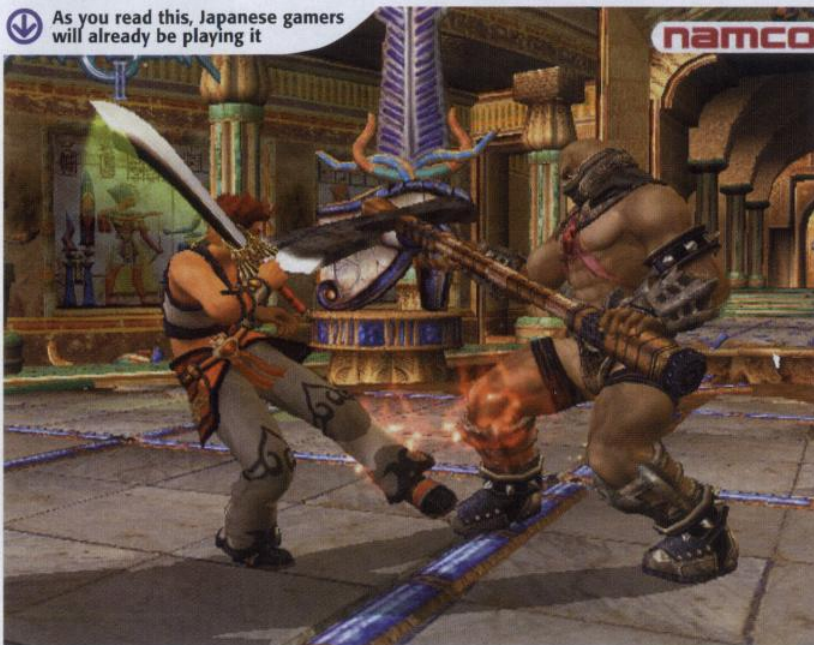
CUBE: Sketching characters is one thing but representing them in 3D is quite another. Do you think you've captured exactly what you wanted with the enemies?

SF: Obviously there is always room for improvement with anything you do, but I am very happy with the way the War Beast character turned out. The sheer size of him and how menacing he looks works really well within the *SOTS* game environment.

VIVORS



As you read this, Japanese gamers will already be playing it



SCII Could be the best fighting game ever, and the GC version is top dog



GCN

GAMECUBE NEWS

FINAL THOUGHT...

IN PLAYSTATION2 ADVERTISING many have claimed, somewhat mysteriously, that Sony's machine was 'The Third Place', but after an ominously slow Christmas and start to the year for Nintendo, such a description, sales-wise at least, seemed ironically a much more apt appraisal of the GameCube. Yet so much can change in just one month. Software sales are picking up significantly. *Resident Evil Zero* and *Super Monkey Ball 2* have both flown off the shelves, entering the high end of the top ten all-format sales charts. Initial sales reports regarding *Metroid Prime* are even more promising in that after only two days on sale, retailers have either sold out entirely or have barely any copies left and are resorting to having to sell their pre-order copies to keep customers happy. But this, we think, is only the beginning.

The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker is out next month and even games that have previously been 'canned', such as, *V-Rally 3* are reappearing on release schedules. Make no mistake — the 'Cube is alive and well, and with blisteringly good games on the horizon you may not even have considered yet (have we mentioned *Rogue Squadron 3* from Factor 5...?) there has simply never been a better time to own a GameCube.

PAST ITS CEL-BY DATE?

Shoot alors monsieur!

WE BROUGHT YOU a six page In-Depth on this comic rendered FPS way back (rather appropriately) in Issue 13, yet although *XIII* was initially meant to launch last month, shortly after our preview its release date slipped to 23 September. In the meantime though, it seems that what was already an exceptionally promising title has been tweaked to be even better.

In keeping with the unrealistic cartoon look, the eponymous and amnesiac hero of this title can now perform a lightning quick 180 degree turn. Even better though, *XIII's* multiplayer modes will be playable online. Networked games will include Deathmatch and Capture The Flag options, and just as interestingly we suspect that, much like many of French developer Ubi Soft's current GC titles, *XIII* will include some sort of GBA link-up.

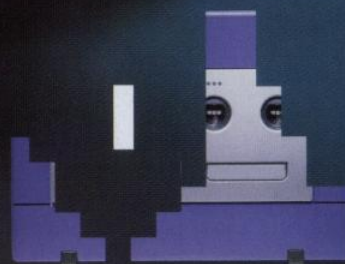


Super-stylised graphics suggest the game will have a very different feel from other 3D shooters

We'll have a full hands-on preview next issue when we'll be able to let you know what it's really like



What do you think was the most popular topic in this month's mailbag? Perhaps everyone's excited about the fact that they can now play *Animal Crossing* via the FreeLoader? Maybe **CUBE** readers are really looking forward to the PAL releases of *RE Zero*, *Super Monkey Ball 2*, *Metroid Prime*, *Skies Of Arcadia* and *Zelda*? Sadly not. In fact, there were hardly any letters of a positive nature at all. In what has resembled a nationwide panic of sorts, this month's mailbag has been filled by worried GameCube owners, desperately seeking some sort of reassurance that their beloved games console isn't dying a death.



GAME OVER

Is the GameCube already on its last legs?



ER?

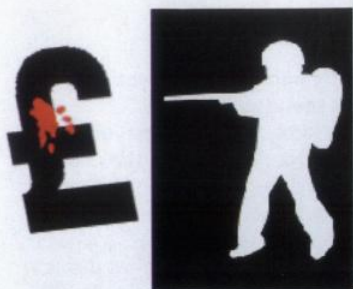
If you visit gaming websites you may well have seen the headlines – “Nintendo likely to lose GameCube battle,” “Nintendo down for the count,” “GameCube does a Dreamcast”... and it goes on. We all know that the nature of the press beast is to exaggerate everything, and something as major as this is just what the cynics have been waiting for. Still, when every news site is predicting Nintendo’s downfall it’s difficult not to worry a little, however much of a believer you are. Then, just when it seemed that the headlines couldn’t get any worse, the entire situation rose to a whole new level when the price war kicked in. A GameCube *and* a game *and* a Memory Card for £80? Sure signs of a platform on its last legs... or maybe not.

The truth, of course, is that Nintendo is in no way down and out, and comments such as “GameCube doing a Dreamcast” are verging on the ridiculous. Just to set the record straight, SEGA lost a lot of money with the Saturn, and the Dreamcast’s failure to catch on (RIP, what a great little machine) was the last straw. Nintendo, however, made a vast amount of money with the cartridge-based N64 format and an even larger amount of money from the Game Boy Color, Game Boy Advance and the *Pokémon* phenomenon. Nintendo is in a completely different position from SEGA, and it would take a complete boycott of the GameCube and the GBA to change that.

The wise people out there would never question Nintendo’s relative wealth, but no-one can deny that there are major problems brewing under the surface. All is not well at Nintendo central, and with actual GameCube sales falling a full ten per cent shy of last year’s predictions, Nintendo is having to take a serious look at what is going wrong. Nintendo has definitely changed for the better over the past few years, but it’s still not enough. Over the next few pages we’ll be asking the question: Is the GameCube really on its last legs already, what is it doing wrong and what is it doing right?

Firstly though, it’s very difficult to get anyone in the industry to say anything on the record. It’s a very tense time in GameCube publishing at the moment and everyone we spoke to was very cagey. Though all too willing to say what they think ‘off the record’ (so you’ll have to take our word for it), you’ll find very few revealing quotes in this feature. Disturbingly, Nintendo Europe didn’t think that standing up for itself was a priority this month, so our (admittedly probing) questions to David Gosen went unanswered.

CONTINUE Y/N?



PRICE WARS

WHAT AN ABSOLUTE MESS...

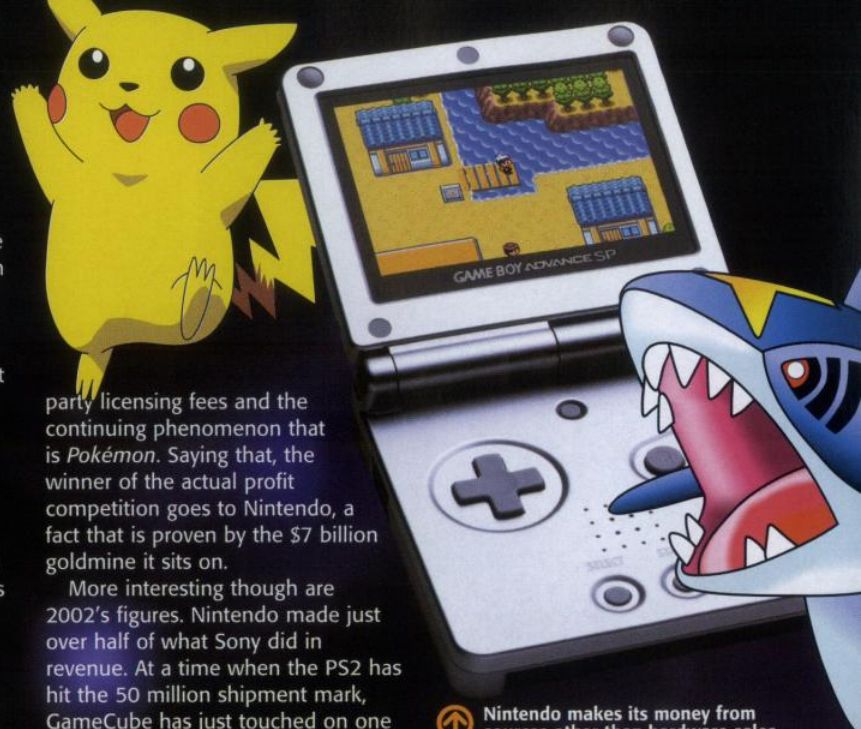
Things are on the up for GameCube in the US and Japan, but Europe is in a right mess at the moment. One aspect that is causing concern in Europe is the GameCube's pricing. The *Metroid Prime* bundle was due to hit Europe on 21 March for £129, a fantastic price as far as we're concerned. Then Dixons declared that it was to clear out its GameCube stock following a disappointing Christmas period, and would be selling the GameCube at £99. In the week of *Metroid Prime's* launch, Argos started selling the solo GameCube pack with a game and a Memory Card for £80. According to Argos it has some stock to clear out. In one day alone Argos stores in the UK shifted 5,000 units as opposed to the 100 they had sold the previous week. This pricing looks set to continue for the foreseeable future, but it means that you can buy a GameCube, game, Memory Card and *Metroid Prime* for less than the cost of a *Metroid Prime* pack. It's all good news for consumers, but long-term commitment from retailers is going to be on the rocks. Nintendo UK must be ripping its hair out right now...



DO THE MATH

Where there's money, there's Nintendo. Over the past two console generations Nintendo has been seen as second best. If you asked Joe Average which company they thought was more successful out of Sony and Nintendo they would most likely go for Sony. Unless you're a hermit with cement boots you will know that the PSone and PS2 are market leaders by a significant margin. Regardless of how many consoles Nintendo has sold, you have to remember that it is first and foremost a business — Its sole aim is to be profitable, and from this standpoint Nintendo is the most successful company out of the two.

From fiscal 1995 to fiscal 2002, Sony reportedly made \$36 billion in revenue from videogames. Over the same period Nintendo reported a figure of \$32 billion. Despite significantly lower hardware sales (Nintendo shipped 33 million N64 units worldwide as opposed to Sony's 27.6 trillion PSOnes) Nintendo still managed to make a comparable income due to sales of the Game Boy Color, massive sales of first/second-party N64 software, third-



party licensing fees and the continuing phenomenon that is *Pokémon*. Saying that, the winner of the actual profit competition goes to Nintendo, a fact that is proven by the \$7 billion goldmine it sits on.

More interesting though are 2002's figures. Nintendo made just over half of what Sony did in revenue. At a time when the PS2 has hit the 50 million shipment mark, GameCube has just touched on one fifth of that. Proof, if any were needed, that Nintendo is a very successful business.

In conclusion to this particular topic, Nintendo's main consoles don't have to outsell, or come anywhere near the competition's figures for the company to make massive profits — not as long as it has other sources of income by way of the Game Boy brand, software and *Pokémon*. However, Game Boy Advance has some worthy competition on the horizon, and the *Pokémon* brand isn't guaranteed to succeed past *Ruby* and *Sapphire*. The next generation could be a

↑ Nintendo makes its money from sources other than hardware sales

completely different story, and if GameCube slips to third place in the console war, it could spell disaster in terms of trust in the Nintendo brand. Nintendo needs to act now otherwise it could start the next generation battle on uneven ground.

SWINGS AND ROUNDABOUTS

Third-party relations have been an unsatisfactory area for Nintendo for as long as we can remember. Early indications with the GameCube were that all was well. With Activision, EA, SEGA, Ubi Soft, Konami, Capcom, Square Enix, THQ, LucasArts and Vivendi all on board, the general feeling was that Nintendo could do little wrong. Why is it then that there is so much bad feeling among the third-parties? Is Nintendo getting too big for its





boots? Well, not really but the initial third-party love quite obviously hasn't been an ongoing thing. After wooing the publishing community with revised licensing contracts and some wonderful hardware, Nintendo appears to have turned its back, concentrating more on striking up major deals with the likes of Capcom, Namco, Square Enix, Konami and other Japanese developers.

Meanwhile the Western GameCube scene has been going pear-shaped, and Nintendo has suddenly sat up and realised the situation it's in. Nintendo itself admits the problem, though not directly. Senior VP of Marketing for NOA George Harrison very recently went on record as saying "the real question is, as we start 2003, what are we going to do differently? For us, it's about trying to get the GameCube business moving and restore the confidence of the licensees."

What? Nintendo admitting it has stuffed up? Well, it had to really – the proof is there for the world to see. The US and European marketplace has under-performed significantly for Nintendo, but it's not all bad. Despite a dodgy first year the Japanese market is a different story. As we've already mentioned, Nintendo has spent considerable energies on wooing the Japanese third-parties, and the results are starting to show. With Namco, SEGA, Konami, Capcom and Square Enix all working on exclusive killer titles, Japanese gamers' attitudes towards GameCube have changed for the better. That's all well and good, but what about the rest of the world?

After speaking to many Western

publishers and developers, there is one unanimous opinion. In the Western world, GameCube came to within an inch of its life this January. You may have heard all the stories about Activision, EA, SEGA and Eidos pulling out of GameCube development, and while nothing official was ever said, these rumours were based on facts to a certain extent. SEGA was the company that started the ball rolling. Earlier this year it announced that it would be canning all of its GameCube sports titles because they simply weren't selling. Hardly surprising considering the GameCube versions were merely PS2 versions minus the online option. EA then added fuel to the fire by reducing its predicted 2003 GameCube sales figures by 5 per cent. SEGA's lack of confidence is one thing, but doubts from EA are quite another. The lack of support from EA was undoubtedly one of the main reasons for the Dreamcast's failure in the West. This was the news that made every publisher sit up and seriously consider the GameCube market. If EA can't make money from GameCube then no-one can.

It was at this time when CUBE started talking to developers and publishers about what their next moves would be. By mid-February, future GameCube support was balanced on a knife edge. Nintendo knew it had some major publisher-based announcements to make but the relevant paperwork hadn't been finalised, so it couldn't officially say a word. It just so happened though that Nintendo had an ambassador of

sorts in Europe at the time. Shigeru Miyamoto was doing his European *Wind Waker* press tour and this presented the perfect opportunity for Nintendo to unofficially let slip some life-saving news. "Metal Gear anyone? Oh, by the way, *Mario Kart* is finished... and, um, yeah – that EA company. We'll be working with them quite closely." About a week later (6 March, to be precise) came the shock announcement that EA would be working closely with Nintendo to bring 20 titles to the GameCube over the following year, with none other than Miyamoto-san having technical input. Yet again, we spoke to a number of publishers, and yet again the response was unanimous. "That changes the situation considerably... we weren't expecting that."

When Nintendo puts its mind to something it can perform miracles. Nintendo has also apparently struck a deal with Ubi Soft, which sees it placing considerable resources into GBA link-up and online options.

Nintendo may have been late to the party but it's certainly trying to make up for it. We have no doubts that there is a sweetener of sizeable proportions in the EA deal. We're talking lower licensing fees, access to internal libraries, the right to link games development to Miyamoto-san... and almost certainly, access to early GameCube 2 development kits. Oh yes – we can't forget about that. With the GameCube's successor due to hit the shelves at the end of 2005/early 2006, Nintendo will already be giving selected developers early impressions of what to expect.



IN THE CUBE WITH

NAME: ALEX WARD
POSITION: CREATIVE MANAGER
COMPANY: CRITERION GAMES

CUBE: GameCube has had a pretty dodgy last few months. Do you think publishers in general began to question the amount of support they were going to give the machine in 2003?

ALEX WARD: Yes, and I am sure a lot of them are continuing to do so. With strong sales from PS2 titles and increasing strong sales of Xbox titles, Nintendo's machine has fallen into third place.

CUBE: With the recent upturn in sales and the list of games on offer this year, do you think Nintendo can recover from this lull period?

AW: I don't think they have done anything wrong. They still have the most compelling software. There is no doubt as to the quality of titles such as *Mario*, *Zelda* and *Metroid*. It's certainly a good business for them.

CUBE: How about Criterion Games? Do you intend to continue supporting GameCube?

AW: Absolutely. As long as the publishers we work with want software for the machine, we'll develop for it.

CUBE: Nintendo's practices have often been questioned. It seems to have spent the last year wooing Japanese third-parties and ignoring the Western world. Yet still, after all the deals it has cut, it doesn't have a decent exclusive racer. Has Nintendo ever approached Criterion to make the next *Gran Turismo*?

AW: No. Most of our dealings with Nintendo have been on the development side, especially with our sister company, Criterion Software. On the game side, I'd be surprised if they knew who we were.

CUBE: How have GameCube sales been for you? Many publishers complain that sales of their GameCube titles are low. How did *Burnout* do for you?

AW: The first *Burnout* title was very successful, but over time sales of the Xbox version surpassed those of the GameCube version.

CUBE: What do you think Nintendo should be doing right now to save the GameCube from coming in third place?

AW: Change those *Zelda* visuals! Seriously though, both Sony and Microsoft are tough competitors. I'm not sure anyone believes that Nintendo will dominate the market again like they used to, at least not in this hardware generation.

www.csl.com

"THE REAL QUESTION IS...WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO DIFFERENTLY?" GEORGE HARRISON: SEN VP MARKETING NOA

↻ Miyamoto-san is working closely with many Japanese names – Yuji Naka has several titles in the works

➔ Nintendo has high hopes for *Pokémon* on the GameCube, but the brand won't stay strong forever



CONTINUE WIN?



Strategy Analytics

IN THE CUBE WITH

NAME: DAVID MERCER
POSITION: VP – GLOBAL BROADBAND PRACTICE
COMPANY: STRATEGY ANALYTICS

CUBE: Can you briefly explain what exactly it is that your company does?

DM: Strategy Analytics is a global research and consulting company that provides information and insights addressing the key planning issues facing competitors in broadband media and electronics, communications, automotive electronics, telematics and enabling technologies markets.

CUBE: What are your company's thoughts on the GameCube as a viable business model in this generation of games consoles?

DM: We don't believe that GameCube will reach the scale and penetration to make it successful. We argue that Nintendo should make the GameCube its last console and concentrate, in the future, on games development and publishing.

CUBE: Just recently the Dixons Group announced that it will clear out its GameCube stock, and may re-evaluate the machine's position in the market in the future. Why do you think this has happened? Is this just the beginning of the end?

DM: This is obviously a bad sign for GameCube. Dixons responds to market demand, and can ill afford allocating shelf space to products which don't pay their way. Unless there's a dramatic turnaround, it seems like the Dixons Group may only stock PS2 and Xbox in the future.

CUBE: Nintendo's attitude towards online gaming is that it is still not profitable enough to be a viable consideration. What are your opinions on this?

DM: It probably isn't profitable today, but this is a long-term bet. We believe online will grow in popularity as broadband adoption increases. Games developers will expect to include online capabilities in the future and they will increase the popularity of gaming in general.

CUBE: Do you think the public sees Nintendo's lack of online presence as a sign of an inferior product?

DM: Only a small minority are even aware that online gaming exists, so it's not a big deal for the general public. But specialist gamers probably see the GameCube as lacking certain capabilities like online and DVD.

CUBE: What does Nintendo need to do/change in order to save the GameCube, or is it too late already?

DM: It's too late.

CUBE: If things continue as they are, where do you see the GameCube in a year's time?

DM: The platform will obviously continue to be supported, both by Nintendo and third-party publishers, but it will be losing momentum and there will be fewer and fewer new GameCube owners to target.

www.strategyanalytics.com

CATCH 22

It's a fact that when it comes to sales of third-party, multi-platform titles, GameCube is on the bottom-most rung. Most of the time the PS2 version of the game comes out first because it's the main skew. This is understandable considering the machine's massive user-base. The Xbox version will have an increased polygon count, superior textures and, due to its lower user-base, will sell less. Now, the sensible choice with the GameCube version would be to, at the very least, base it on the Xbox version. But no – more often than not the GameCube version will be a port of the PS2 version, and, due to Nintendo's unfriendly, inefficient and quite frankly ridiculous reproduction system, the game will ship weeks after the other versions.

We could sit on the fence here but that would be pointless. Games such as *Wreckless*, *Minority Report*, *Ty Tiger*, *Cel Damage*, *Spyhunter*, *Turok Evolution* and *BMX XXX* are some shocking examples of the kind of dross third-parties are willing to sell to us. Why would anyone buy these versions of the game? Answer: they wouldn't, and this is reflected in the sales figures. It's a vicious circle though – GameCube gamers want decent versions of the games, but third-parties aren't willing to put the necessary resources into development because they can't risk losing all that money. If the GameCube had a higher installed user-base the risks would be far less. But in order for that to happen publishers need to develop decent

games. The solution to this catch 22 is for the publishers and Nintendo to work together. On one side Nintendo needs to provide an incentive for publishers to do something special with the GameCube version, and on the other side the publishers need to take a risk every now and again. There's a lot of money to be made on the GameCube if you can provide the right content.

Publishers are finally realising that they can't expect to make any money from sub-standard ports. The standard of up-and-coming third-party titles is far higher than last year. *XGRA*, *Hitman 2*, *Conflict: Desert Storm*, *Burnout 2*, *Splinter Cell* and the Capcom titles immediately spring to mind. These games will sell well on the GameCube because they offer the gamer something extra. It all seems so obvious really.

ONLINE GAMING: THE WAY FORWARD?

Nintendo is quite vocal about its opinion of the online market. As far as it is concerned, there is no money to be made, therefore there is no reason to enter that minefield just yet. Despite this, Nintendo has launched the relevant hardware so that third-parties can set up their own servers if they so wish. There has been a lot of fuss and bother over the past few months about Nintendo's online strategy, but when it actually comes down to it, very few publishers are that bothered about it. EA and Eidos have pulled out of Xbox Live because they can't agree on

terms and conditions with Microsoft. Simply put, these two companies can't make enough money out of it, so they won't bother. There are companies who want to get involved though, and Nintendo really should be concentrating its efforts on working with these companies to come to some arrangement. This is happening to an extent, but we won't see the fruits of these agreements until September at the earliest.

Companies such as Strategy Analytics think that this is way too late, and that GameCube is already belly-deep in the quicksand. It predicts that year-on-year sales of the GameCube hardware will fall by 4 per cent while Xbox sales will rise by 12 per cent. It lays the blame on waning third-party support and an unclear online strategy. It even goes so far as to say that GameCube should be Nintendo's last piece of hardware and that it should go multi-platform in order to take advantage of the full \$12 billion software market.

As far as we can see, Microsoft's Xbox Live may have clear intentions, but it's not much use if third-parties are unwilling to use it. Rest assured Nintendo is getting ready for online gaming and the broadband revolution, but we're not quite there yet, and probably won't be until well into next year. In the meantime, Nintendo is concentrating its R&D teams on something a bit special. Anyone fancy linking up two GameCubes and playing eight-player, (or more) LAN *Mario Kart*? Oops, we really shouldn't have said that...



⬇ The GameCube modem has a long summer ahead of it with nothing but *Phantasy Star Online* to keep it company

BACK IN THE GAME

It's been said before and we'll say it again — you'd be a fool to write off Nintendo. It's a decidedly traditional company, and as such it takes a long time for it to change its ways. It has taken years for Nintendo to come round to the fact that its audience has changed and that it needs to approach the videogames market as a whole in a different way. The company's attitude has come on in leaps and bounds, but it still has a long way to go before it can take on the might of Sony's proven formula for mass-market penetration.

Nintendo still makes blatantly bad decisions, and it all comes down to stubborn behaviour. For example, *Zelda: Wind Waker* is a fantastic game. We've said time and time again that after playing the game it's difficult to see how it would have been so charming without the cel-shaded graphics. The game has sold nearly 1.5 million copies in Japan and the US and will no doubt sell vast amounts in Europe, but just imagine how many copies Nintendo could have sold if it had gone with the original *Spaceworld '00* graphics. Yes, we know — Nintendo is all about innovation and pushing gameplay forwards, but in a situation where Nintendo needs to be appealing to the adult market, a *Lord of the Rings*-style *Zelda* adventure would have set the Western world alight. Nintendo needs to read the market far better than it has been doing.

One thing is for certain though — the 'mass-market' isn't quite so fresh any more. A large proportion of the new adopters are becoming

far more discerning when it comes to videogame purchases, and proof of this can be found in the charts. The only games that are really selling are the licensed titles (*Harry Potter*, *Simpsons*, *James Bond* and so on) and the first/second-party triple-A games (there are exceptions to this obviously — *Vice City* for one). This is true for all the formats to a certain extent, but is far more severe on the GameCube. It's becoming increasingly obvious that this situation is going to get worse as time goes on.

It's something that ex-Nintendo of Japan president Hiroshi Yamauchi has been saying for years. Many people dismissed his comments as the ramblings of a crazy old man, but his predictions are slowly ringing true. Other publishers are seeing it too — the marketplace is stale and needs something to really liven it up. This is why Nintendo has been working so closely with companies like Capcom to deliver fresh and innovative games. Production Studio 4 is the perfect example of companies willing to take a risk for potential long-term gain. The GBA link-up is another way of providing something fresh, and publishers are now jumping on board to provide exclusive content.

So what of the GameCube? Nintendo may well be setting itself up for global domination with

GameCube 2, but what is it doing right here, right now for GameCube owners? Aside from a diabolical couple of months over the winter period, things are looking up for GameCube. As Capcom's Marketing Director, David Miller, says: "with the right product portfolio and with a good pricing strategy, GC can easily take share quickly". It looks like the near-death experience has done wonders for Nintendo's attitude. Let's hope that it doesn't need to be reminded again any time soon. Nintendo is doing the right thing though. It's working closely with publishers and it's lowering the licensing fees on its games. It used to be the case that publishers would have to pay a licensing fee of \$10 per game regardless of how much the game was to be sold for. \$10 for a \$20 budget game is a ludicrous amount. Thankfully it has now been lowered to \$3.50. With these improvements, a fantastic 2003 software line-up and many big announcements still due over the next few months, Nintendo is definitely in this for the long haul. It won't be easy, but the March blitz has already about-turned Nintendo's fortunes in Europe.

The crazy price war will probably end up doing the market the world of good, and as long as Nintendo officially reduces the price of the machine (£99 will do us just fine), we can see the action really heating up in preparation for the most competitive Christmas the industry has ever seen.



"A LORD OF THE RINGS-STYLE ZELDA ADVENTURE WOULD SET THE WESTERN WORLD ALIGHT"



⌚ *Wind Waker* is great, but would a more serious *Zelda* title have been more successful? We all know the answer...

⬇️ 2003's software line-up could see GameCube finally pulling away



IN THE CUBE WITH

NAME: DAVID MILLER
POSITION: DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
COMPANY: CAPCOM EUROPE

CUBE: In terms of impact on the industry, EA is probably the most significant third-party. However, in terms of software support, would you say that Capcom is the most important third-party publisher on the GameCube?
DM: In terms of delivering high quality exclusive titles to the format, Capcom is probably as important as any other third-party. Capcom has an excellent, long-standing partnership with Nintendo that goes back many years.

CUBE: While other publishers are still having trouble making their ports any better than the PS2 versions, Capcom continues to move ahead both in terms of graphics and gameplay. Why is this 'black and white' situation occurring?

DM: Capcom's strategy in this hardware life cycle has been to create exclusive franchises for each format. This is a high-risk strategy for us, but is one that has largely paid off. It has certainly been great for the gaming consumer as we have invested a huge amount of resource and creativity into all formats, and not just ported over our big budget, licensed blockbusters from one format to another.

CUBE: Recently some publishers were hinting that they were going to drastically cut down on their GameCube support. Will EA's recent announcement change any of Capcom's plans?
DM: No.

CUBE: Is GameCube in Europe really that big a failure? How has Capcom Europe found sales of its titles over the past year?
DM: It has had a slow start, mainly down to a lack of killer first-party titles. I think Nintendo will turn the corner. It is a very experienced and very smart company.

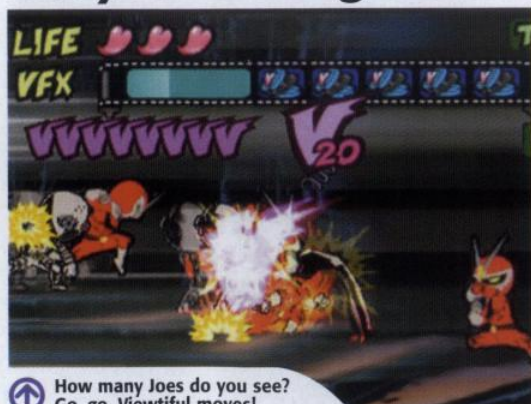
CUBE: Nintendo has come on a long way in terms of license relations. What do you think it can do better?
DM: Better biscuits in our meetings ;o)

CUBE: Where do you think the GameCube will be in a year? Downhill slide or triumphant second place?
DM: Remember this: it only took a couple of weeks of Xbox sales in December (heavily backed by very aggressive bundling), for Microsoft to capture the so-called 'second place'. Until then it was more like Sony was in first place, with Xbox and GC in third. I believe therefore that with the right product portfolio and with a good pricing strategy, GC can easily take share quickly. This is a very exciting and fast-moving business!

www.capcom-europe.com



Not your average Joe



⊕ There's nothing else quite like it, and there's more depth than you think

⊕ How many Joes do you see? Go, go, Viewtiful moves!

VIEWTIFUL JOE

Adjust your eyes for a pseudo 3D visual feast

CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

VIEWTIFUL JOE

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

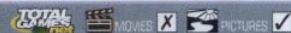
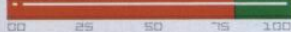
DEVELOPER: PRODUCTION STUDIO 4

ORIGIN: JAPAN

GENRE: BEAT-'EM-UP

PLAYERS: 1

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



04 '03 MAY '03 AUG '03

DAMN CAPCOM AND its secrecy.

With only weeks to go until the game is due to be finished, we've still only seen the first few levels. Still, at least now we can show you the VFX meter and one of the game's bosses.

Viewtiful Joe takes the form of a scrolling beat-'em-up – old skool underneath but bursting full of graphical techniques on top. Last issue we told you about the Viewtiful FX meter and explained how it ran down whenever you used one of your time-altering moves. You can see the meter in some of these shots, with the calibration coming in the form of film reels. Fifty film reels equals a full meter, and this all ties in with the fact that the entire story is based around

an action film of some sort. Whenever a special move is used, the screen turns into a film reel. With the meter empty Joe will revert back to average super Joe, shown in these shots by the blue-capped version of the character.

Shots of the first boss have also filtered through – a helicopter heavily armed with missiles. Joe has to use his Slow abilities to weave in and out of their path and look for an opportunity to deflect one back into the chopper's path.

As with all Capcom games, we won't know much more until the finished game arrives on the doorstep. But with the game due out within the next six weeks there'll be a full review very soon.



⊕ Slowing time enables Joe to kick back bullets

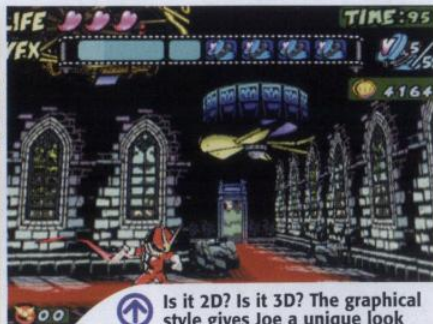


MIND GAMES

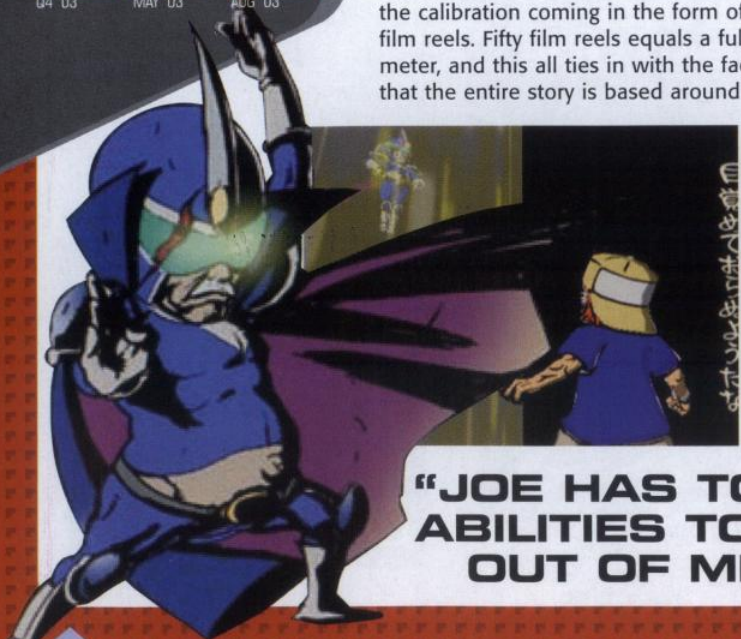
DON'T... UNDERSTAND... WHAT'S... HAPPENING

Capcom has gone with a unique graphical style for *Viewtiful Joe*. While the backgrounds are made up of layers of parallax scrolling, the interactive items and characters are modelled in 3D, rather like *Resident Evil*. The only difference is that instead of trying to make everything appear three dimensional, Capcom is trying to make it all seem flat. You'll believe it too, until the enemies and bosses come flying out of the screen towards you. It's almost like watching a 3D film with those special glasses on.

“JOE HAS TO USE HIS SLOW ABILITIES TO WEAVE IN AND OUT OF MISSILES' PATHS”



⊕ Is it 2D? Is it 3D? The graphical style gives Joe a unique look





⬅ Adhering to generic convention, a beautiful maiden has been snatched and needs rescuing, among other things...

⬇ In the grand old tradition of *Dragon's Lair*, expect to come a cropper rather a lot as you feel your way through the castle

⬆ Right, own up — who had the curry last night? Mmm — lamb bhuna...
GameCube 640x480x32



Some of the old 'uns out there may remember this...

DRAGON'S LAIR 3D

CUBE
 INFORMATION
DRAGON'S LAIR 3D
 PUBLISHER: THQ
 DEVELOPER: DRAGONSTONE SOFTWARE
 ORIGIN: US
 GENRE: PLATFORM/ADVENTURE
 PLAYERS: 1
 PERCENTAGE COMPLETE
 00 25 50 75 100
 TOTAL GAMES FREE
 MOVIES X PICTURES ✓
 MAY '03 TBA MAY '03

Dragon's Lair returns after 20 years

THE CARTOON WORLD of *Dragon's Lair* is certainly alluring, from the dusty flagstones that make up the floor to the big airy rooms that hide enemies, traps and gold. When you first start to play it you want to explore, and to a certain extent this is possible. Your character has a lot of moves at his disposal — you can run, creep, jump, swing your sword, roll around on the floor... and the way you target enemies is not dissimilar to the lock-on method featured in

Ocarina Of Time. Although our build is early, some problems outside of the usual frame rate/graphical glitches/camera hitches that are to be expected at this stage are quite apparent. Overall dungeon design is good, but not a patch on the likes of *Zelda*. Instead of forming one coherent castle, you tend to tackle each room separately, and the puzzles in these range from the satisfyingly devious to the annoyingly trial-and-error, which is

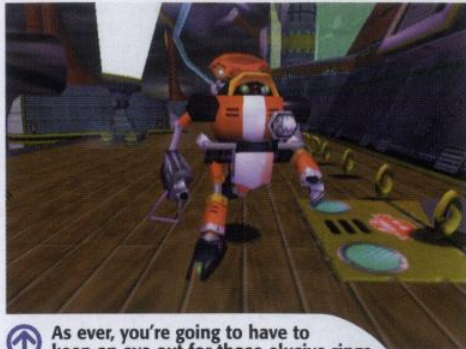
one aspect of the former arcade game that hasn't translated well into the console update. It's all quite enjoyable though, and the platform sections are well done, providing a stark change in pace to the usual dungeon crawlers. Some of the more outdated design philosophies are a little concerning however, and could hold the game's potential back for the sake of pleasing the nostalgia fans. Whether or not this is the case with the final product remains to be seen.



⬆ The laser disc original had a big cult following and is still revered in a rose-tinted way

“INSTEAD OF FORMING ONE COHERENT CASTLE, YOU TEND TO TACKLE EACH ROOM SEPARATELY”

He's faster than the average hedgehog



⬆ As ever, you're going to have to keep an eye out for those elusive rings



SONIC ADVENTURE DX

CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

SONIC ADVENTURE DX

PUBLISHER: SEGA

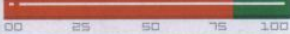
DEVELOPER: SONIC TEAM

ORIGIN: JAPAN

GENRE: PLATFORM

PLAYERS: 1-2

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



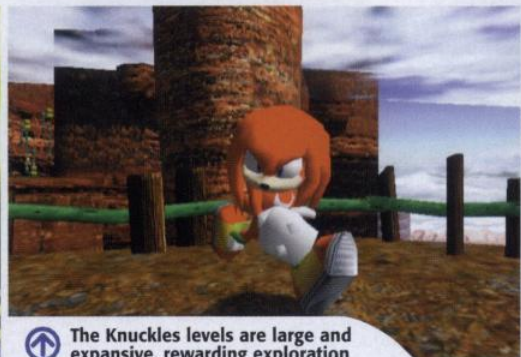
⊕ AT-A-GLANCE

- PLAY AS SIX SONIC CHARACTERS
- PLAY THROUGH SIX STORIES
- BLINDLY FAST ACTION
- HEAVY ROCK SOUNDTRACK
- MULTIPLE MULTIPLAYER OPTIONS

TOTAL GAMES MOVIES X PICTURES ✓

SEPT '03 JUNE '03 AUG '03

⬇ Four years on and the graphics still look great!



⬆ The Knuckles levels are large and expansive, rewarding exploration

The Dreamcast's flagship title comes to the GameCube!

SONIC ADVENTURE 2: BATTLE on the GameCube was a huge seller, which took us by surprise seeing as it was a Dreamcast port. However, instead of quenching the thirst for *Sonic* that many gamers have by releasing a new adventure, SEGA are set to port over the original *Sonic Adventure* to the GameCube. The *DX* in the title stands for Deluxe, meaning that you can expect nicer graphics, a solid 60 fps running speed and improved sound. Other features that will please Sonic Team fans will be the 50 brand new missions set around the levels, giving you even more Emblems to look for.

If you've never played *Sonic Adventure* before then you're in for a treat. Obviously it's similar to the second game, but this time around you don't take control of any of the bad guys, just Sonic, Tails, Amy, Big the Cat, Knuckles, E-102 'Y' and Super Sonic. You race around the various levels looking for Emblems and Chaos Emeralds that all serve to prevent Dr. Eggman from creating the horrendous Chaos, a big watery monster with an appetite for

PREVIOUS

FROM THE MAKERS OF...

ALL THINGS SONIC

■ The clue's in the name really. Basically, if you want your games fast and colourful, these are most definitely your boys!



TOTALGAMES.NET RATING: N/A

"YOU'LL HAVE TO FACE OFF AGAINST A MASSIVE CHAOS IN A SPECTACULAR BATTLE TO THE END"



↑ Fishing on Emerald Coast is certainly an original idea



↑ Miles Prower. Say it aloud. Aren't SEGA funny?

DIG THE CAT

LONGING FOR SONIC

As with *Sonic Adventure 2: Battle*, players don't just have to run to the end of a level. When you select a different character you'll have different tasks to complete. For instance, E-102 'Y' has to stomp around blowing things up with his lasers while Knuckles has to search for Chaos Emeralds using his special radar. Amy has the ability to crush things with her giant hammer and Big the Cat has to reel in fish of a certain size. Although this injects variety into the game, we can't help pining for a *Sonic* game that features exclusive Sonic Levels.



↓ Knuckles has more than one trick up his sleeve

↻ There's a Time Trial option for all stages where you can play as any character

destruction. Unfortunately for Sonic, the Emeralds he finds always end up getting stolen and fed to Chaos, which cause him to grow, so by the end of the game you'll have to face off against a massive Chaos in a spectacular battle, which is as fast as it is graphically impressive (or at least, it was back in 1998).

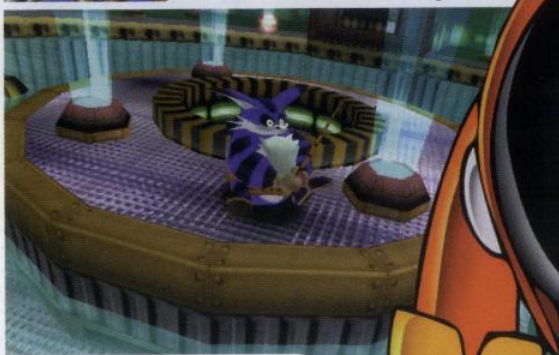
One problem that did become apparent when the game was shown at the World Hobby Fair was the lack of intelligence with the camera. Dreamcast players may remember that this was one of the biggest criticisms of the original game, and unfortunately it seems to have been transferred to the GameCube.

Those that bought and enjoyed *Sonic Adventure 2: Battle* will be pleased to hear that the bright colourful levels weren't exclusive to the second game in the series, and with one of the best opening levels ever to look forward to, massive leafy glades to race through, a casino to explore (complete with *NIGHTS* pinball!) and, in classic *Sonic* fashion, a big airship to navigate around, this should prove to be a fantastic addition to the GameCube library. We'll keep you posted.

CUBE



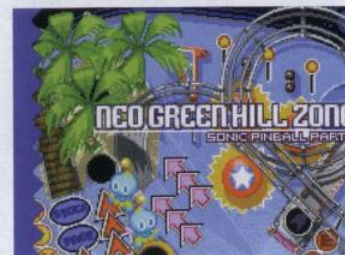
↑ The second Sonic level is one of the fastest in the game!



↑ Big the Cat likes nothing more than to settle down with a rod



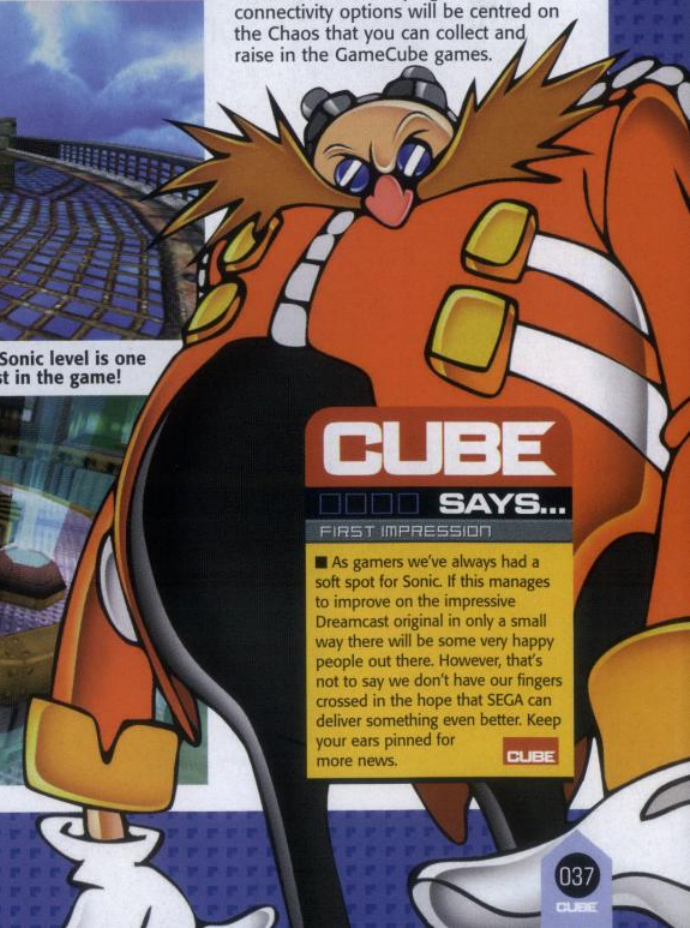
↑ Racking up the points in pinball is the most fun one person can have



PINBALL FANTASIES

BONUS GAMES

As well as the improvements to the game itself, we've also heard rumours that the forthcoming GBA game *Sonic Pinball Party* will connect to the GC *Sonic Adventure* games. *Pinball Party* is, funnily enough, a pinball game that contains boards based on past Sonic Team games such as *Samba De Amigo*, *NIGHTS... Into Dreams* and Sonic himself. There will be a four-player mode too. We're hoping that connectivity options will be centred on the Chaos that you can collect and raise in the GameCube games.



CUBE

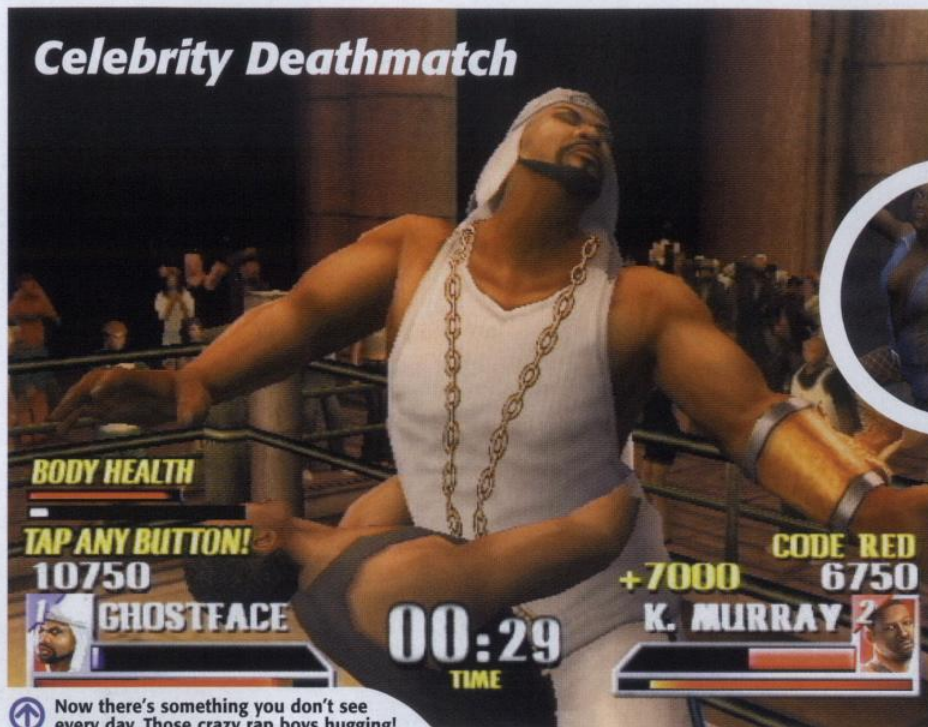
□□□□ SAYS...

FIRST IMPRESSION

■ As gamers we've always had a soft spot for Sonic. If this manages to improve on the impressive Dreamcast original in only a small way there will be some very happy people out there. However, that's not to say we don't have our fingers crossed in the hope that SEGA can deliver something even better. Keep your ears pinned for more news.

CUBE

Celebrity Deathmatch



⬆ The wrestling engine is far more playable than the WWE tie-ins

⬆ Now there's something you don't see every day. Those crazy rap boys hugging!

⬆ No quarter is asked or given, and some of the moves will make you wince

DEF JAM VENDETTA

Some sorry candy ass goin' down

WE'VE SEEN STREET fighting and we've seen wrestling, but now EA have decided to glue the two together with one of the biggest licences of the year – Def Jam Records. If you're into your hip-hop and rap then you should be quite excited, as this means that you get to face off against (or play as) several famous artistes such as Ghostface Killah and DMX, and if you're into your wrestling then the fact that it uses the Aki wrestling engine will bring back rose-tinted memories of the N64 titles.

What we like about *Def Jam Vendetta* so far is the gritty look. The arenas you fight in look like something out of *Robocop*, and the storyline that pits you against the

heavies of the local gangland boss D-Mob is suitably violent. Couple this with the fact that this has to be one of the more painful looking games out there and EA might just have a winner on its hands.

If you've been put off by the wrestling angle then pore over the screenshots for a while – *Def Jam Vendetta* sports a very 'street' look with lots of jeans and ripped t-shirts around, plus some of those chain things that everybody seems to be wearing these days. This provides a great atmosphere, far away from the cheese of Lycra and bad acting, but wrestling fans will love it too for its sheer playability and range of moves. The soundtrack is another plus point, with exclusive tunes from the Def Jam label. Look out for a review next month.

CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

DEF JAM VENDETTA

PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS BIG

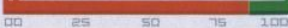
DEVELOPER: AKI CORP/
EA SPORTS CANADA

ORIGIN: CANADA

GENRE: BEAT 'EM UP

PLAYERS: 1-4

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

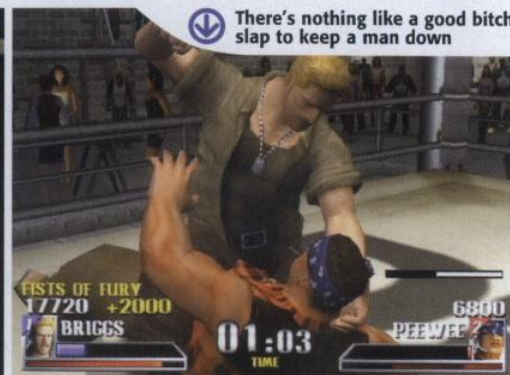


TOTAL COMPLETION: 25%
MOVIES: X PICTURES: ✓

UK MAY '03 JAPAN TBA USA OUT NOW



⬆ Delivery for a Mr Mob. Just sign here please. Thank you very much



⬆ There's nothing like a good bitch slap to keep a man down

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- 18 tracks across 6 futuristic locations
- Experience Dragster Racing as the ultimate speed challenge
- Featuring 7 amazing power-ups and 8 different cars



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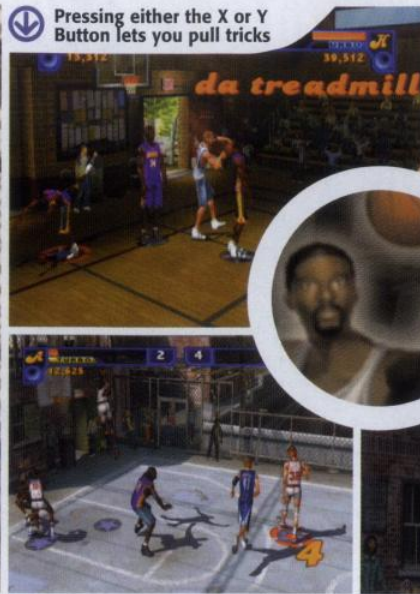


www.thq.co.uk

NBA Jammin'



Keepin' it unreal...



NBA STREET 2



CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

NBA STREET 2

PUBLISHER: EA

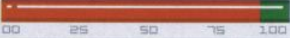
DEVELOPER: NUFK

ORIGIN: CANADA

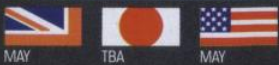
GENRE: SPORTS

PLAYERS: 1-4

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



TOTAL COMPACT MOVIES X PICTURES ✓



⊕ Holding turbo as you shoot gives a better style of dunk

AT A TIME then when sports games are becoming ever more realistic, EA Big are doing the opposite – they're taking it back to the streets and keeping it unreal. Featuring three players per team, one point for dunks and two for long shots, *NBA Street 2* flatly ignores the dull stat and shot percentages that mired last month's *NBA 2K3*. Instead, it replaces them with what can only be called (to use its in-game lingo) an 'Off the Hezay' – a one-two pass, pinged straight off the face of an opponent.

As the face-mocking passes would have you believe, *NBA Street 2* doesn't much care for rules. Blocking, hassling, blatant fouling... pretty much any type of defence is permitted so long as you get the ball back. It's a similar story for the offence. A depleting turbo feature zips you around the court and the overall pace of play is pitched somewhere between frantic and downright frenzied.

Such disregard for realism is further emphasised in the choice of players, encompassing over 150 NBA stars from the past and present, ranging from Clyde 'The Glide' Drexler to Magic Johnson. Similarly diverse is the suitably urban soundtrack featuring Nate Dogg, Jay Z and plaster fancier, Nelly.

All of which, wrapped up in Seventies visuals, accompanied by four modes of play and, strangely enough, the ability to 'Be the oop', means that *NBA Street 2* should be the best B-ball title yet when it launches in May. Expect a full review next issue where we'll explain just what it means to be an 'oop'.

CUBE

"THE OVERALL PACE OF PLAY IS PITCHED SOMEWHERE BETWEEN FRANTIC AND FRENZIED"

⊕ Here are some of the old skool players you can use

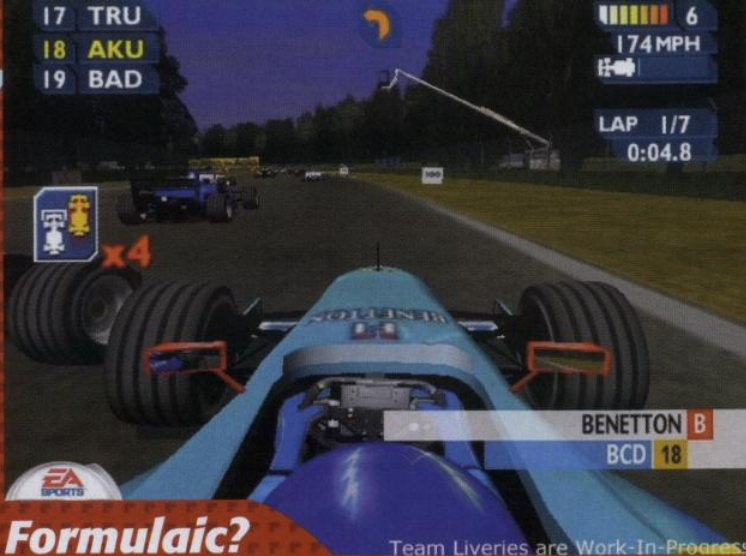


HE'S ON FIRE

STOP YOUR DRIBBLING

As in the original, by scoring successive baskets and pulling off certain moves, *NBA Street 2* gives you Gamebreakers. Functioning much like special moves, Gamebreakers allow you to add to your score whilst removing points from your opponent's tally. But – and here's the twist – by saving a Gamebreaker and building up another one then unleashing it, all three of your players engage in a cut scene that culminates in an outlandish dunk and, better still, the humiliation of your opponent.





Formulaic?

Team Liveries are Work-In-Progress



CUBE PREVIEWS

Start at the bottom and you never know, you may drive for Ferrari one day



F1 CAREER CHALLENGE

CUBE

INFORMATION

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE

PUBLISHER: EA

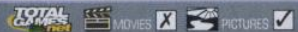
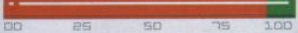
DEVELOPER: NUFK

ORIGIN: CANADA

GENRE: SPORTS

PLAYERS: 1-4

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



MAY '03 TBA MAY '03

"It's raining and the track is wet..."

JUST HOW ONE of the world's most lavish sports became so dull is beyond us. Honestly, how can hurtling round tarmac at hundreds of miles an hour, mere nanoseconds from death, seem so crap to watch? Perhaps it was the technology overkill, or maybe it was the gamesmanship and the fact that a charmless, smug German always seemed to win. Anyway, regardless of the demise of the sport (the rules have actually been changed this year to make it more exciting), EA are bringing us an update. Only this time it's not just last year's game with the addition of annual stats and tweaks — it's a whole new experience. Well, kind of.

Okay so *F1 Career Challenge* (from what we've played) handles similarly to last year's model and certainly

resembles its predecessor, but this time you've got a reputation to earn. Because you now start out as a rookie. What this means is that even before qualifying for races, you've got to earn your licence. Having completed the *Gran Turismo*-style challenges of cornering, braking and so on, you're then free to make a name for yourself with rival teams, with sponsorship deals reflecting interest in you according to your current levels of prestige. Oh, and you've only got four years in which to do it.

F1 Career Challenge includes every car, driver, track and team from the '99 to '02 seasons. In fact, such is the level of detail that seasons contain specific events that actually occurred. Obviously, such detail is bound to appeal to F1 fans, but then this game might just become a crossover hit with petrol-heads everywhere.



↑ Irve the Swerve's tasteful leopard-print helmet. Wouldn't you know he's rather popular with the ladies?



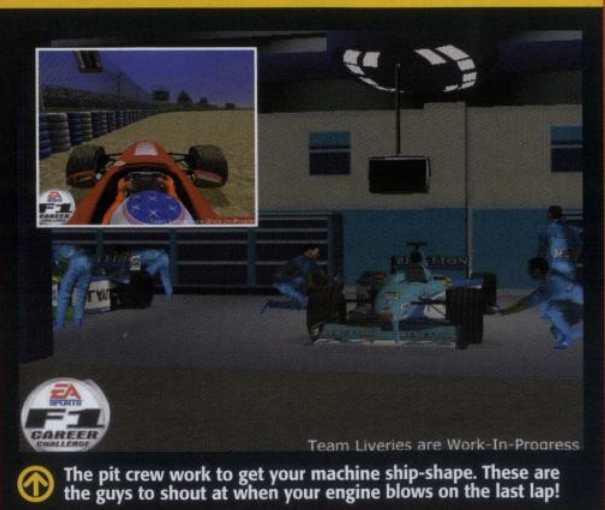
↑ Don't let the team down or you'll be out on your ear

↓ Riding the curbs makes for a bumpy ride

CAN'T GET BETTER THAN A...

KWIK FIT FITTER!

For a game so concerned with realism it comes as no surprise to find that pit stops (as in real life) play a crucial role in races. Pulling into the pits presents a test of your timing skills where a lack of ability to follow on-screen prompts will cost you dearly. Is this the most interactive virtual garage ever? Er, no, actually — that honour goes to *Sega GT*.



↑ The pit crew work to get your machine ship-shape. These are the guys to shout at when your engine blows on the last lap!

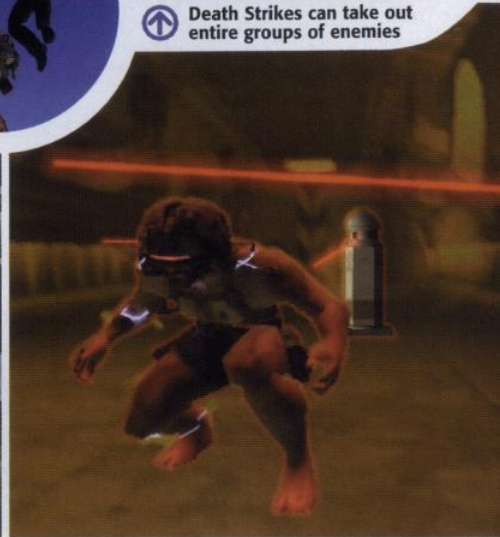
Team Liveries are Work-In-Progress

"IT'S NOT JUST LAST YEAR'S GAME WITH THE ADDITION OF ANNUAL STATS AND TWEAKS — IT'S A WHOLE NEW EXPERIENCE"

Mutants On The Brain



⊕ Death Strikes can take out entire groups of enemies



CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

X-MEN 2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

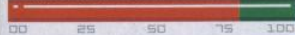
DEVELOPER: GENEPOOL

ORIGIN: UK

GENRE: ADVENTURE

PLAYERS: 1

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



⊕ AT-A-GLANCE

- OFFICIAL X-MEN LICENCE
- DOZENS OF MOVES
- MULTIPLE COSTUMES
- STEALTH MODE
- INTERACTIVE SCENERY

TOTAL GAMES PRESENTATIONS MOVIES X PICTURES



⊕ You even get to play out the episode where Logan has just been operated on

X-MEN 2 WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

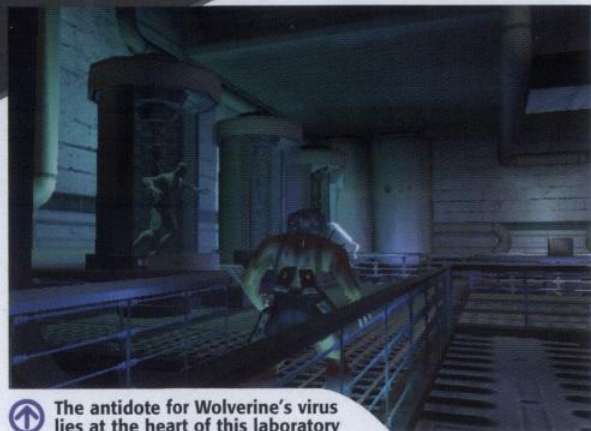
Yeah, we could have Wolverine any day...

IT'S BEEN VERY difficult to form an opinion on Activision's latest *X-Men* title given that the screenshots don't tell you anything more than 'another third-person film licence.' Thankfully, this month we visited developer Genepool to go hands-on with the title, and it isn't half bad.

Loosely based around the second *X-Men* film, *Wolverine's Revenge* follows mutant Wolverine's desperate mission to find an antidote for the deadly X-Virus which has managed to overcome even his remarkable immune system. The bladed mutant has 48 hours to break into Magneto's laboratories and retrieve the cure. The game takes the form of a

third-person adventure in which the player must use stealth, cunning and plenty of brute force to get through the many guarded and booby-trapped locations.

When it comes to sneaking around you can switch into a Stealth mode. Wolverine's senses will all be heightened and he'll be able to explore silently, see heat signatures (footprints, for example) and detect landmines. The game's main forte, however, is its combat system. Aside from the many manual combos available you can also perform predetermined Death Strikes. These are comparable to *Mortal Kombat's* Fatalities, although as you progress through the



⊕ The antidote for Wolverine's virus lies at the heart of this laboratory



DRESSED FOR XCESS

EVER SEEN A MUTANT'S WARDROBE?

The game's dog tags don't just open up new combos and Death Strikes – occasionally they also enable you to unlock alternative costumes. At the moment there are six different costumes to find, all dating from different points in Wolverine's history. We've got five here for you – the sixth comes as standard in the first level where Logan has just been operated on and wears only a pair of black shorts.

TAKE A LOOK AROUND

KNOW YOUR ENEMY AND KNOW YOURSELF

As you'd expect, the boss encounters are where the real action comes into play. Sabretooth, Wendigo, Juggernaut, Omega Red and Magneto will all challenge you along the way, and this is where the game's interactive scenery aspect is at its most impressive. For example, defeating Sabretooth is a case of waiting for him to throw a barrel

at you then kicking it back at him, thus knocking him into a burning truck. The barrel then explodes. During a rooftop encounter, massive neon signs can be used to fry your opponent. Genepool has promised us something very special with Magneto and Juggernaut, but wouldn't show us those at this stage.



PREVIOUS

FROM THE MAKERS OF...

STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER

■ A fantastic licence to have. Sadly the potential wasn't realised and we just ended up with an average PS2 port. Ho hum.



TOTALGAMES.NET RATING: 69%

FACT
ONE TRUE VOICE
Despite the fact that Hugh Jackman plays Wolverine in the film, Mark 'Luke Skywalker and not much else' Hamill provided the voice for the game character



⬆ It's possible to knock guards unconscious without killing them

game you'll learn new moves that can dispose of four or five enemies at once. For example, you might spike a guard through the heart, roundhouse the one behind you, then flip over the head of the first guard and throw him at the remaining two – and there are dozens of these moves to learn. Each time you kill a guard or a boss you'll receive a dog tag which earns you a move. The options screen teaches you the button combinations needed to pull them off, and when the situation arises you can choose whichever one you want.

As if the high-security labs aren't enough of a problem on their own, it turns out that your age-old rival Sabretooth is also suffering from the same virus, so he's doing everything he can to remove you from the equation since there's only one

antidote. The hulking mass turns up as a boss of sorts at several points in the game, and because he's blatantly stronger than you'll need to use your surroundings to defeat him. Pretty much any object can be thrown, and most items are flammable.

Throughout the mission you'll receive advice telepathically from Xavier, with voice acting taken from none other than Patrick Stewart himself (an indication of this game's calibre). Surprisingly, Mark Hamill takes care of Wolverine's voice acting, but you wouldn't really know it.

We're really looking forward to spending some quality time with this one, so check back next issue for the full review.

CUBE

CUBE

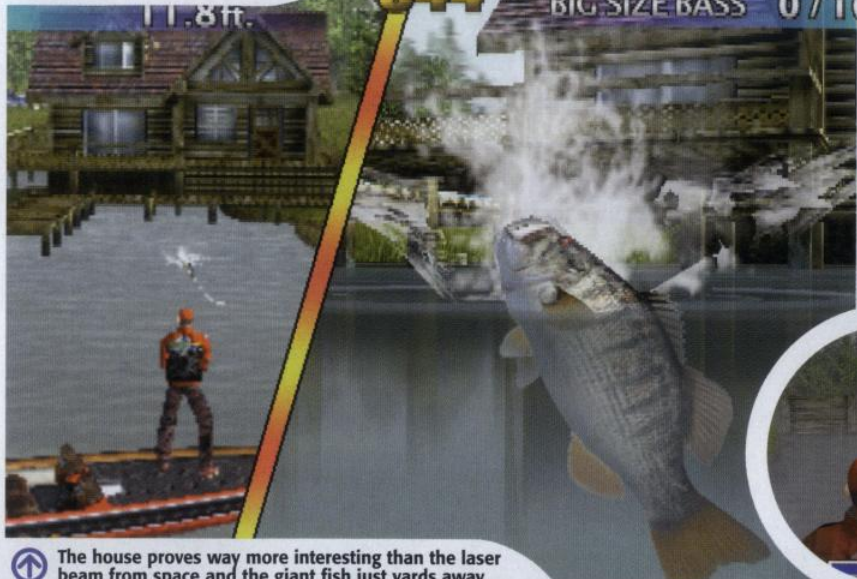
□□□□ SAYS...

FIRST IMPRESSION

■ Forget any presumptions you may have about Activision and film licences – WR is certainly no *Minority Report* and nothing to do with Next Dimension. The Genepool team are die-hard Marvel fans and their love of the licence is showing through in the game. With a good storyline, involving gameplay and plenty of moves to master, WR has the potential to be rather special.

CUBE

Reel 'em in
11.8ft.



⊕ The house proves way more interesting than the laser beam from space and the giant fish just yards away

⊕ If you look very carefully you can see me. I'm behind a tree



⊕ Okay, own up – who kicked my lovely red n' yellow beachball in the pond?



CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

TOP ANGLER

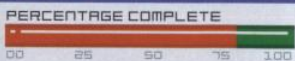
PUBLISHER: XICAT INTERACTIVE

DEVELOPER: IN-HOUSE

ORIGIN: US

GENRE: SPORTS

PLAYERS: 1-2



APR '03 TBA OUT NOW



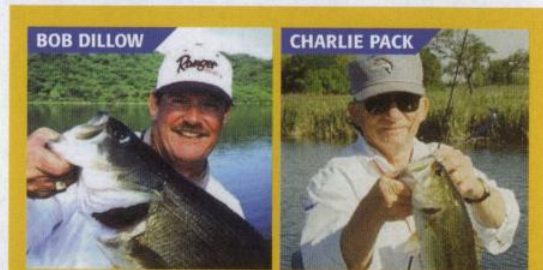
TOP ANGLER

Throw away those wellies...

YOU'LL ALREADY KNOW if you want this game or not. Although fishing games can be very enjoyable when done well, they're certainly an acquired taste, but they can be rather fun. Finding the best area to cast your line, experimenting with bait and then the frantic reeling-in makes for some surprisingly good multiplayer action, and the relaxing nature of the games is well appreciated on your tod late at night. However, spending £40 on a fishing game is a whole different kettle of fish. Unless of course you're into the whole fishing scene. For these people, *Top Angler* promises to deliver a lot.

This was originally a PS2 title, but for the GameCube version the graphics have received a lick of paint. As a result, all the lakeside cabins and background castles will look gorgeous, not to mention some scrumptious water effects. There'll be 36 lures to mess around with and a zoom feature so that you can take a close look at the well-modelled fishy fiends prowling beneath the surface. The game came in just too late for a full review for this issue, but by next month we'll have put it thoroughly through its paces so expect all the gen next time.

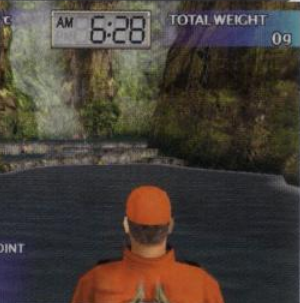
CUBE



GONE FISHIN'

HAVE YOU SEEN THESE MEN?

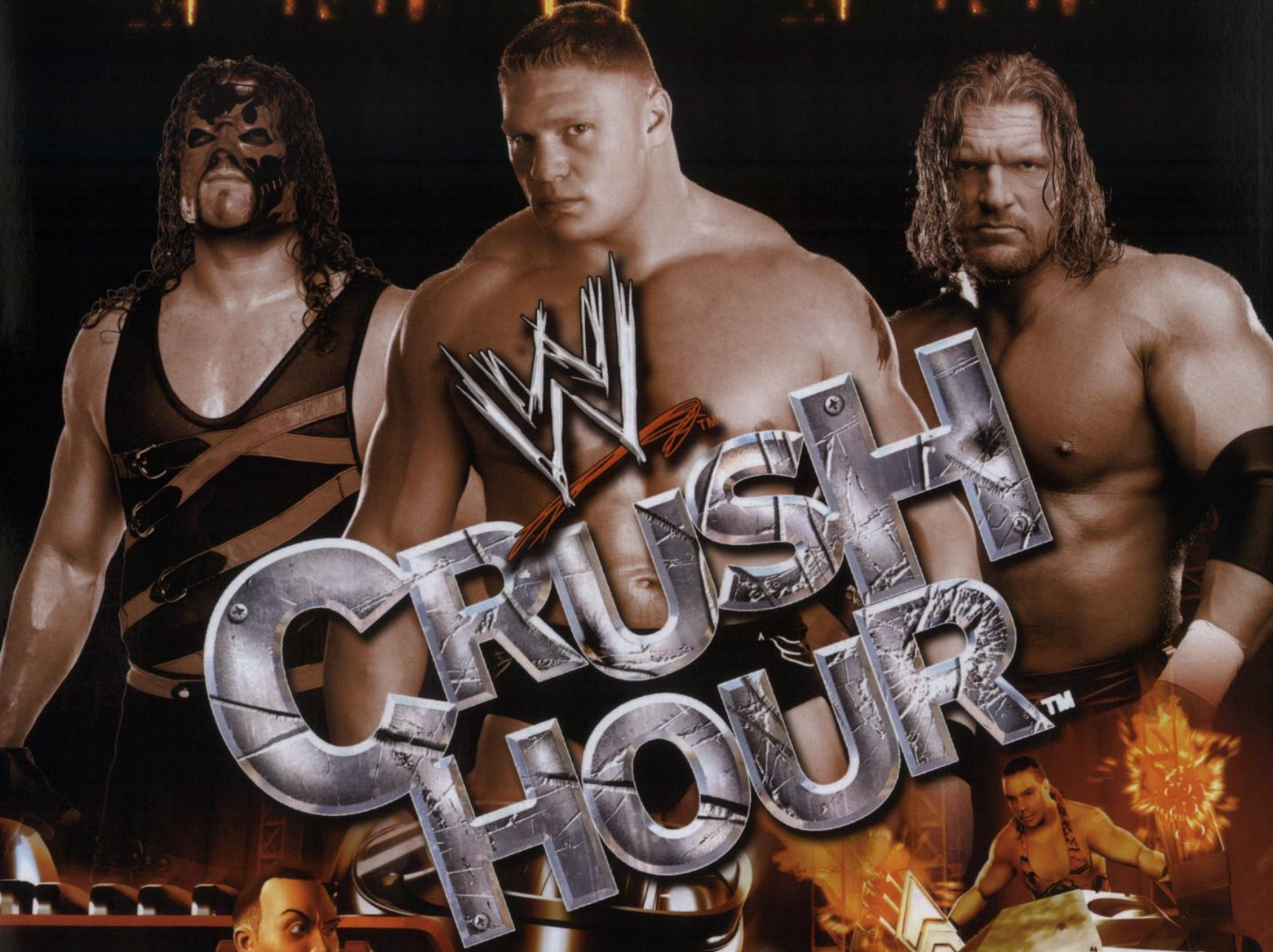
Fishing shows rule. It's not all about rednecks going on about bait and sitting around in shorts. We recommend getting access to ESPN and tuning into well established fishermen shows such as Bob Dillow, Hank Parker, Charlie Pack and Ronald Martin. Not only do budding fishermen get some good advice, but you're also treated to some absolutely stunning locations. And then there are the theme tunes... (snip – Ed)






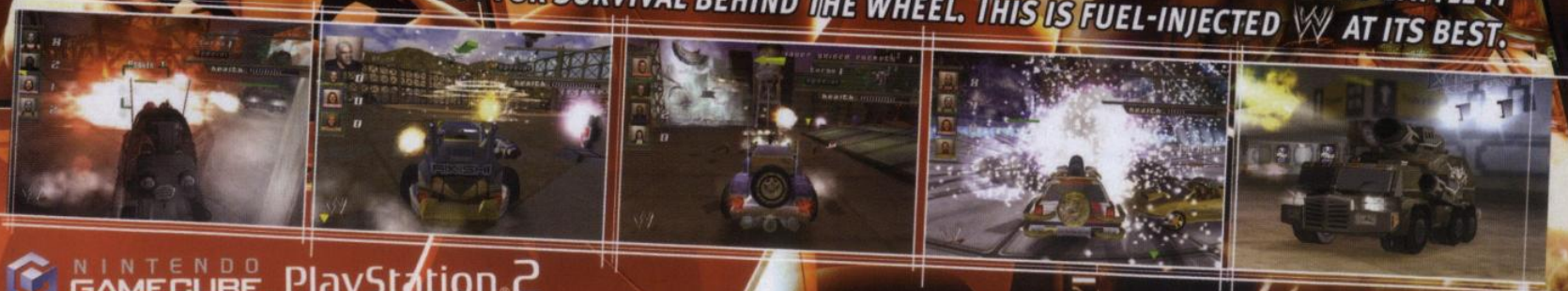
⊕ All was quiet. Alan put on a red hat to help him think



CRUISIN' FOR A BRUISIN'!



GET READY FOR A NO HOLDS BARRED BATTLE WHERE THE  SUPERSTARS TRADE IN THEIR MUSCLES FOR CARS. ALL YOUR FAVOURITE  MATCHES ARE HERE, INCLUDING CAGE AND HARDCORE PLUS MANY MORE. SO GET READY TO BATTLE IT OUT FOR SURVIVAL BEHIND THE WHEEL. THIS IS FUEL-INJECTED  AT ITS BEST.



  NINTENDO GAMECUBE. PlayStation 2

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CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

BATMAN: DARK TOMORROW

PUBLISHER: KEMCO

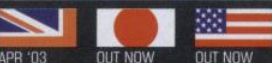
DEVELOPER: IN-HOUSE

ORIGIN: JAPAN

GENRE: BEAT 'EM UP

PLAYERS: 1

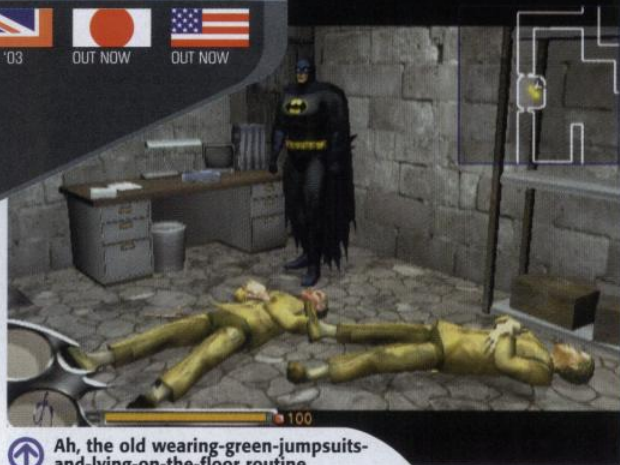
PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



⊕ Damn it, look at me when I'm talking to you!



⊕ The Dark Knight strikes a pose to show off his manly chest. Bloody ponce!



⊕ Ah, the old wearing-green-jumpsuits-and-lying-on-the-floor routine



BATMAN DARK TOMORROW

The Dark Knight returns

It's been a long time coming, but the latest Batman build looks almost complete

IT WAS DUE for release in Japan at the same time as the 'Cube, and while that obviously didn't happen, it's nice to know that the reason for this hasn't been Kemco forgetting about the project. We recently got hold of another build, and the good news is that it's been vastly improved. As well as the obvious graphical improvements, the game plays a lot more smoothly with Batman jumping around rooftops and swinging along with the greatest of ease. The combat is still pretty simple

though — punch and kick takes an enemy down, then pressing the right trigger will handcuff them.

There will be a total of 30 levels to fight and handcuff through, ranging from the burning streets of Gotham city to the Gotham docks and the Arkham Asylum with the overall aim being to rescue Commissioner James Gordon and uncover an evil plot that threatens the entire world (obviously). The handcuffing aspect is very important — if you don't do this once your quarry is down he'll just get up

again, regardless of how much you've pummelled him. You'll be able to use all of the well-known Bat-gadgets to aid you in your fight against evil, so don't be surprised to find that some levels require you to swing around rooftops Spider-Man style, or eliminate distant targets with your Batarangs.

As this is based on the DC comics rather than the TV series or movies (unlike most games that feature the Dark Knight) Kemco have been able to include authentic storylines, locations, characters and the full history of *Batman* which should please fans to no end. Because of this, the game promises to include one special master-criminal who's

never been seen before in a *Batman* videogame. We don't know who this is yet though, so it's no use asking...

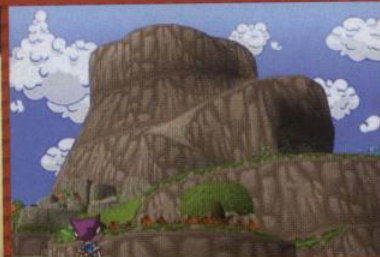
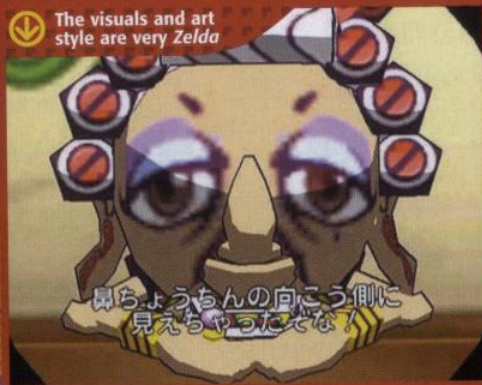
While the game has been in development, DC comics have been creating a special two-part series that acts as a prequel to the game. This will be available through specialist shops. The team in charge of the project includes the likes of Scott Peterson, Rick Burchett, David Baron, Martin Pasko and Michael Siglain. If these names mean anything to you then you'll know these comics are going to be well worth getting.

As for how good the game will be — well, you'll just have to wait for our review.



⬆️ Yikes – that old woman is a bit scary! And what's the blue thing all about?

⬆️ The visuals and art style are very Zelda



⬆️ Hmm – wonder what the top of that hill has in store for us...



The Gift of GameCube

CUBE

INFORMATION

GIFTPIA

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

DEVELOPER: SKIP LTD

ORIGIN: JAPAN

GENRE: RPG

PLAYERS: 1

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

00 25 50 75 100

TOTAL GAMES MOVIES PICTURES

TBA APR '03 TBA

GIFTPIA

It certainly looks good, but what's it about?



ON THE ISLAND of Nanashi – which is in the midst of massive modernisation – a boy named Pokkuru has come of age. This is celebrated in the traditional way of the island but, being rather forgetful and carefree, Pokkuru completely forgets to turn up to the ceremony.

Mr Mayor, the, er, mayor, informs him that the only way to become an adult is to go through the celebration, and because he missed it, Pokkuru will have to raise five million mane (the island's currency) to host another one.

This is the story behind the game but, typically, raising the money won't be a simple case of harassing people to buy

weak lemonade. No, you're going to have to interact with a whole host of crazy characters including Kyappie, your blue-haired love interest, Mr Mayor (who's also your dad as well as the big boss of the island), Mappo the robot who aspires to be a police officer, and Yukio the goat. Yes, a goat. That should please Jeff Minter fans.

With a seemingly strong cast of characters, a storyline that sets up the creative talents of Kenichi Nishi and Keita Eto (of *Chrono Trigger* fame) as the main driving force, and a common theme of introducing new ideas into the well-worn RPG formula, this could be rather special.



⬆️ With characters like these the game just has to be fun



⬆️ Superstar DJ? There's only one Tony Blackburn, one Tony Blackburn...

ではマッポくん
例のものを
よろしくな~のだ!

CUBE

⌚ INFORMATION

THE HOBBIT

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI

DEVELOPER: INEVITABLE ENT

ORIGIN: US

GENRE: ACTION ADVENTURE

PLAYERS: 1-2

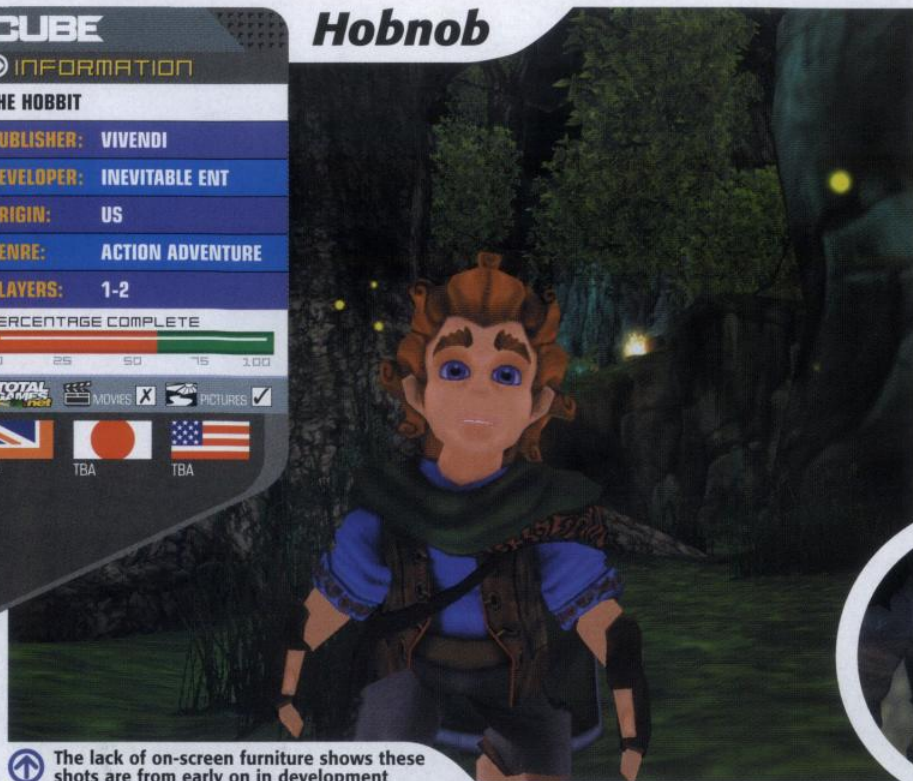
PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



TOTAL COMPACT MOVIES PICTURES



Hobnob



⌚ The lack of on-screen furniture shows these shots are from early on in development



⌚ Forgive us if we're wrong but since when did Bilbo Baggins ride a minecart?

⌚ Ginger, squat and hairy-toed. And obviously entirely unrelated to Robin Cook.

THE HOBBIT



⌚ A rustic Middle Earth green is all the rage among the tree-dwelling elves

"USE YOUR WALKING STICK TO GET MEDIEVAL ON SOME DWARF ASS"

'It is mine, I tell you. My own. My precious. Yes, my precious.'

JRR TOLKIEN ONCE said: "I am, in fact, a hobbit in all but size". Whether he was referring merely to his hairy feet is unclear, but what is certain is that he wasn't imagining himself digitised in a videogame and collecting jewels.

The Hobbit then (as in the game, not the book) is an item-collecting action adventure of melee attacks and projectile weapons, somewhat in the mould of *The Legend Of Zelda*. Playing as the squat Bilbo Baggins, *The Hobbit* sees you roaming Middle Earth, solving puzzles and frequently using your walking stick to get medieval on some dwarf ass.

While such aggressive behaviour may seem out of character for a peace-loving hobbit, more

recognisable are settings from the book, such as Hobbiton and Rivendell. Successfully traversing these will ultimately see you take part in the Battle of the Five Armies. On the way to reaching this almighty ruckus you'll meet characters such as Gandalf, Elrond and everyone's favourite ex-hobbit and ring coveter – Gollum. Also included is the precious Ring, aiding the sneaky stealth elements of the game, although it can only be worn in short bursts.

The Hobbit is divided into ten chapters, contains a mass of voice actors, an orchestrated score and should apparently take around thirty hours to complete.

As you can see from the screenshots, the grimy and atmospheric feel engendered by the books has not yet been replicated in the graphics. Ideally, we'd have loved to see it look like the cartoon version. Still, there's a lot of development time left.

JACKIE CHAN OWEN WILSON



SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

12A

TOUCHSTONE PICTURES AND SPYGLASS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT A BIRNBAUM/BARBER PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH JACKIE CHAN FILMS LIMITED PRODUCTION A DAVID DOBKIN FILM JACKIE CHAN OWEN WILSON 'SHANGHAI KNIGHTS'
DONNIE YEN AIDAN GILLEY BASED ON CHARACTERS CREATED BY ALFRED GOUGH & MILES MILLAR MUSIC BY RANDY EDELMAN COSTUME DESIGNER ANNA SHEPPARD EDITOR MALCOLM CAMPBELL PRODUCTION DESIGNER ALLAN CAMERON DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ADRIAN BIDDLE B.S.C.
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JACKIE CHAN WILLIE CHAN SOLON SO STEPHANIE AUSTIN EDWARD McDONNELL PRODUCED BY ROGER BIRNBAUM GARY BARBER AND JONATHAN GLICKMAN WRITTEN BY ALFRED GOUGH & MILES MILLAR DIRECTED BY DAVID DOBKIN



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CONTAINS MODERATE VIOLENCE AND SEX REFERENCES

AT CINEMAS NATIONWIDE FROM APRIL 4

BURNOUT 2

CUBE

➔ **INFORMATION**

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

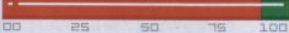
DEVELOPER: CRITERION GAMES

ORIGIN: UK

GENRE: RACING

PLAYERS: 1-4

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



TOTAL GAMES .NET MOVIES X PICTURES

MAY '03
 TBA
 MAY '03

Everything else stalls on the starting line in fear

PREVIOUS

FROM THE MAKERS OF...



BURNOUT

The original *Burnout* is a fantastic game. It just lacks a certain something which *Burnout 2* provides in bucketloads.



TOTALGAMES.NET RATING: 84%

“INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF CARS ARE NOW FULLY MODELLED, SO TYRES, BONNETS AND BUMPERS CAN FLY OFF AND AFFECT OTHER DRIVERS”



IT'S BEEN EXACTLY a year since the GameCube received its first serious, straight racing game in the form of the original *Burnout*. That particular game was translated onto the GameCube in the space of four months thanks to the developer-friendly hardware and, more importantly, the skills of the guys at Criterion Games. The first *Burnout* was a fantastic game that saw you racing through traffic-heavy cities, dual carriageways, cobbled village streets and even windy mountain roads in a race against three other adrenaline junkies. Although it was an accomplished title there was that little something missing that stopped it from being an absolute classic.

Late last year the PS2 received the sequel. Graphically it was miles ahead and featured many

more gameplay modes such as the Crash Junctions. You may well have sworn your fast and furious heads off at the fact that come the New Year the GameCube version still wasn't available, but the wait is going to be worth it. The GameCube version isn't just better, it's been vastly improved – so much so that we would recommend owners of the PS2 version get their hands on it too. For the time being though, we're going to forget about the PS2 version. What exactly has changed since the original game?

First up, the polygon count is almost double what it was before. The traffic cars now have as many polys as the main cars from *Burnout*. The individual parts of the cars are now also fully modelled, so tyres, bonnets and bumpers can fly off and affect other

drivers. The increased polygon count also includes the scenery, which is unbelievably detailed. The physics engine has been taken even further than before, so any 3D object will behave realistically within the 3D world. Never before have you seen crashes this good. The crashes are also helped by the superior AI routines. Drivers will brake, lock-up and lose control of their cars. Other traffic will then swerve to avoid crashing and inadvertently plough into oncoming vehicles.

So, in short, all the aspects of the original have been improved upon vastly. But what of the stuff that was missing from the original? Well, don't worry, you won't be getting bored of this one in a hurry – just look at all the extra stuff that's in there...

THINK TANKS

DAMN SUNDAY DRIVERS

■ All the general traffic features an increased polygon count, improved AI and when they get smashed up they even have security alarms and jammed horns going off. Does it get any better than this? We don't think so.

WET 'N' WILD

ALL-NEW WEATHER EFFECTS

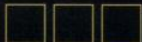
■ All manner of weather effects will hit you during the race. Naturally, this affects the handling of your car and also adds a lovely shine to the already bump-mapped road surfaces. If we weren't so hard, we'd weep at its beauty.

GRANDIOSE

CRITERION STRUTS ITS STUFF

■ If you thought the scenery was impressive before, take a look at this! As you pass the airport all the planes are parked up on the opposite side, just like in *Scud Race*. All this detail at 60fps – that's pretty damn good.

IN THE CUBE WITH...



HAMISH YOUNG

POSITION: GAMES PROGRAMMER
COMPANY: CRITERION GAMES

CUBE: *Burnout 2* looks amazing. It could very well be the best looking GameCube game to date. How have you beaten the first- and second-party guys at their own game?

HY: We have a fantastic team who work very hard to push the console until it bleeds, and we have a mantra which says "60Hz or nothing". Building on our extensive knowledge of the GameCube, we have managed to push the machine far harder than we managed in the original *Burnout*. If you place the games side by side, I think you will see how far we have come. But it's not just graphical excellence which drives us. We have improved every single aspect of the game – the handling, the game structure, the audio – everything has had a major overhaul. We do not believe in updates, we believe in sequels and that's what you've got in *Burnout 2*.

CUBE: Staying on the technical side of things, just how many polygons do you think *B2* is pushing at full tilt?

HY: All the traffic cars now have the same detail as the player cars in *Burnout 1* and the detail of the player cars has been significantly increased. We've also added body panels which can be ripped off in a crash and damaged in addition to the main chassis crumpling. The worlds have a slightly increased detail level over *Burnout 1*, but in addition to that, the road and worlds have a significant amount of real-time lighting going on which we did not have in *B1*. We also have many more special effects going on – sparks, debris, dust, rain, snow... We can have over 10,000 particles on screen at any one time in addition to the world, the cars and all the traffic.

CUBE: Last year you said that *Burnout* was really pushing the machine. Now you've come up with this. Do you think the hardware has anything left in it?

HY: I think however hard you push the machine there will always be something more. We have always pushed the machine very hard in terms of sheer polys. This time we have learnt how to squeeze a few more through and do much more in terms of lighting and effects on top. That is what keeps game development interesting – the benchmark is always being raised.

CUBE: Okay, let's talk about the AI. It seems even more realistic than before. Have you got real people in there or something? What's your secret?

HY: This time we had two AI programmers full-time rather than just one. This meant we could significantly improve the AI. The opponent AI 'drivers' control the cars through the same system that the player car does. In effect, they have a virtual pad and are competing with you directly. They judge the traffic in a similar way to humans and they can drift round corners like you can. This means they also make mistakes like a human player – for example, slightly misjudging the speed of cross-traffic and clipping a lorry. The traffic system also has been significantly overhauled. Of particular note is their behaviour when there is a crash in front of them. In *Burnout 1*, the traffic was far too sensible and was often able to stop in time before hitting a pile-up. In *Burnout 2*, we modeled the panic of crashes. Trucks and articulated lorries all lose it in much more spectacular ways.

CUBE: What's your favourite aspect of the game?

HY: The speed, always the speed. Oh, and also that wince as you pile headlong into a massive container lorry and see the car shatter into a thousand pieces.

CUBE: What other games are you really looking forward to this year?

HY: I'm really looking forward to *Soul Calibur II* and *F-Zero*.



⬇️ A boy racer's dream, every Wednesday night in Bournemouth



⬇️ The tracks are interlocked in a similar style to Ridge Racer



⬇️ There are no licensed cars here, so you can trash them as you like



MAX POWER

SOUPED UP TO THE MAX!

One downside to the original *Burnout* was that you could only choose from a handful of cars. This has been changed, and by the time you complete *Burnout 2* you'll have over 20 at your disposal. These can only be unlocked by going through Championship mode, which consists of 15 events ranging in style from four-track series to Face Offs and Pursuits.

The standard races work on a Championship points system so you don't have to finish in first place on every race. As long as you have the most points at the end you'll go through to the next event. However, if you want to win the extra cars and unlock other modes and tracks you'll need a Gold on every race. Every three or four events you'll be treated to a Face Off which means going head-to-head with a secret car such as the Hot Rod, the Gangster or the Super Car. Beat them to the finish and you'll win the car. Last up are the Pursuits – jump into a police car and ram the target vehicle into oblivion. It's Criterion's little homage to *Chase HQ*, and it's wicked.

With these 15 events completed, the Custom Championship opens up, allowing you to take part in far harder races against an entirely new set of cars. These custom cars are inspired by *The Fast And The Furious* and feature boy-racer paintwork and spoilers galore. Sweet.



FFACT
HEAD START!

You can get a turbo start by revving your engine, wheel-spinning (by tapping B), then releasing and re-applying the gas between 'one' and 'Go!'

⬆️ After *Gran Turismo* spawned all those anally retentive racing 'simulations', it's good to get back to pure gameplay

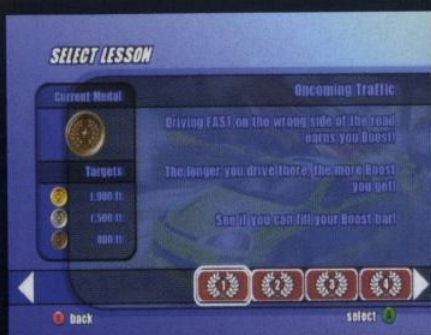
“YOU FEEL IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE CAR AND CAN TELL EXACTLY WHEN IT’S GOING TO SNAP BACK FROM THE REVERSE LOCK”



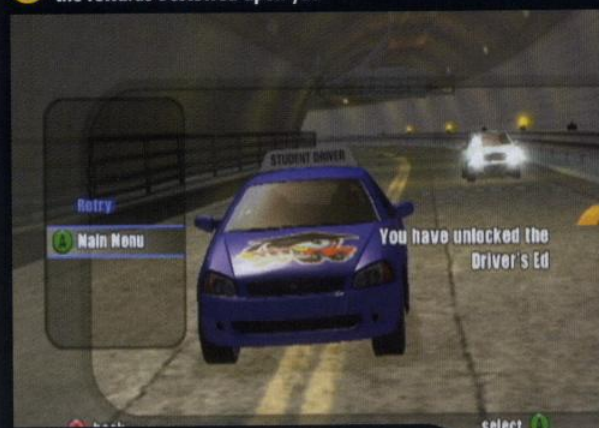
BACK TO SCHOOL

LEARN HOW TO BE A MANIAC

Before any of the single-player modes are opened up you'll have to take part in Offensive Driving 101. This takes the form of eight quick lessons in which you're taught how to play the game, how to fill up your boost bar and how best to use it once you've done so. The team made this compulsory after watching people play the original without ever understanding the point of the game. All eight lessons take less than ten minutes to get through, but if you manage to get a Gold medal on each you'll be treated to the Driver's Ed car!



The more dangerously you drive, the greater the rewards bestowed upon you



Strangely, this driving school is in no way affiliated to or endorsed by the DVLA



Look at me new halogens, £19.95 from Halfords!



BURNOUT 2 DOESN'T just have new additions – Criterion has changed the way the game works as a whole. In the original game you would take part in a race (either a set number of laps or an A-to-B run) and have to finish in a certain position to proceed to the next stage. This wasn't particularly fair, especially when you had to come first on a track you'd never seen before. This has all changed now with the races taking a championship format. Stuff up one track and you can always make up points on another.

The tracks aren't so separated any more either. Many of the tracks are intertwined, so you may well cross a bridge that looks over part of another track. The tracks themselves are vast, detailed sets with inspiration drawn from many other racers. One race sees you turning a corner to be greeted by a huge airport approach with the terminal on your right and Boeing 747s parked up on your left – it's all very *Scud Race* (SEGA coin-op). Criterion openly admits to the influence, but we love it. There are many areas where the team has paid homage to various games and landmarks, and all of them bring a smile to your face.

Handling-wise, *Burnout 2* is spot on. The

power slides have been exaggerated a little more for the sequel and as you tear round a corner you can feel the wheels starting to slide out. The GameCube analogue stick is the perfect tool with which to control the slide, and power slides (initiated by tapping the brake button) are the only way to get round sharp corners at speed. Surprisingly, there are elements of *Ridge Racer* here too. The cars are nowhere near as loose, but the way in which you can keep nudging the brake to keep a massive slide going is wicked. You feel in complete control and know instinctively exactly when it's going to snap back from the reverse lock.

The Burnout bar is back, naturally, but this time much more emphasis is placed on perfect driving and Burnout combos. For the uninitiated, getting 'near misses,' driving on the wrong side of the road, getting air and pulling off decent drifts all contribute to topping up the Burnout bar. It now features a sweet, animated flame effect, and once full you can hold down the R trigger for a limited nitro burst. The accompanying sound effects are very clever and very satisfying. In fact, the music and sound effects are so good that we've given them their very own section in

IN THE CUBE WITH...



CHRIS ROBERTS

POSITION: GAMES DESIGNER
COMPANY: CRITERION GAMES

CUBE: It's so annoying to have games like this on one hand, and rushed ports such as *Wreckless* in the other. The two are generations apart. What is your opinion on this situation?

CR: I think the main problem is porting over bad games in the first place. *Wreckless* was never any good.

CUBE: What would you say has inspired you in creating *B2*?

CR: One of our main inspirations for *B2* was the movie *The Fast And The Furious*. We all went to see it as we were finishing *B1* and decided we needed to get some of the speed and excitement of that movie into *B2* and the tricked-out cars looked really cool. Introducing enhanced *Fast And Furious*-style player cars is how the Custom Series Championship was born.

CUBE: Can you tell us about the structure of the game? How do you progress in the game this time around?

CR: The championships in *B2* are still the main area of progression and unlocking cool stuff, but this time they use a more traditional and rewarding Formula One-style points system. It's also possible to unlock some other cool stuff if you manage to get all Gold medals in any of the game modes.

CUBE: Can you tell us the names of the courses, a little about them, and a little about why you've decided to have them overlapping?

CR: All of the courses in *Burnout 2* are based in the same area and link together. This allows us to create our Point to Point tracks which run from one course to another seamlessly. The linking of the courses also allows players to see a landmark from one course while you are driving on another.

The courses in *Burnout 2* are as follows:

Pacific International Tracks

1. Airport Terminal 3: This is a high-speed ring with which is a good starting point for first time *Burnout* players. The reverse version of this track, however, is a real challenge as players will be locked into oncoming traffic for over two thirds of the track.
2. Airport Terminal 1 & 2: This is a twisty night-time track, which takes players all over the airport with the option of a heavy rain storm.

Interstate 88 Tracks

1. Interstate Loop: A high speed freeway-based track with a lot of fast moving traffic. A great track for really seeing just how fast you can go.

2. 88 Interchange: An epic track that throws all manner of driving challenges at the player as it winds up in to the mountains and down on to the busy freeway.

Palm Bay Tracks

1. Palm Bay Heights: A roller coaster ride through the hilly heights of Palm Bay.
2. Palm Bay Marina: A blast around all the sights that Palm Bay has to offer with hectic cross traffic junctions and splits in the road.

Sunrise Valley Tracks

1. Sunrise Valley Downtown: A night-time grid-based track with lots of traffic and some real flat-out straights.
2. Sunrise Valley Springs: An ever-changing track that takes you from the heart of downtown up in to the dusty suburbs.

Big Surf Tracks

1. Big Surf Groove: A twisty night-time track with a lot of changes in elevation and the option to race in the wet.
2. Big Surf Shores: Race along the coastline and look out for some serious opportunities for air and some really sweet drifting. Master this track and you can boost all the way round for three laps!

Crystal Summit Tracks

1. Crystal Summit Peak: A short, sharp lap to test your driving skills, this mountain top course will push your drifting skills to the max. You can also race this track in heavy snow.
2. Crystal Summit Lake: On this huge course you will have to make your way up and down the mountain through a series of tortuous bends, devious traffic and driving snow.

Point to Point Courses

1. Ocean Sprint: This mad dash takes you across Big Surf Shores and in to Palm Bay Marina.
2. Heartbreak Hills: A testing drive that starts at Crystal Summit Lake and winds down on to the I-88.
3. Freeway Dash: A massive challenge to drive right from the top of Crystal Summit Peak down on to the busy I-88 Interchange.

CUBE: What's your favourite aspect of the game?

CR: My favourite aspects of the game are the thrill you get racing at high speeds through traffic and the fun that can be had in Crash mode.

CUBE: What other games are you really looking forward to this year?

CR: I'm really looking forward to *PNO3*, *Biohazard 4*, *Zelda* and *F-Zero AC+GC*.

IN THE CUBE WITH...



STEPHEN ROOT

POSITION: HEAD OF AUDIO

BEN MINTO

POSITION: SENIOR AUDIO DESIGNER
COMPANY: CRITERION GAMES



CUBE: Can you tell us a bit about the audio set-up you have at Criterion?

SR/BM: Criterion is made up of two sister companies – RenderWare and Criterion Games. The RenderWare side of the company produces audio middleware called RenderWare Audio. We integrate RWA into our game code and use two audio programmers per team to extend the audio engine to meet our needs. For *Burnout 2* this includes an engine sound model (the main car sound), custom distortion code (to make the engine growl), the dynamically generated crash audio system (so each crash sounds different, but relates to the actual objects and actions involved) and modifications to the Dolby ProLogic II implementation to increase the immersion within the world and the sensation of objects passing at speed. All sound effects and field recordings were done by Ben Minto while the music was written, recorded and engineered by Stephen Root and Steve Emney, a freelance multichannel musician.

CUBE: Can you expand a little on the context-sensitive sounds that you have in the game?

SR/BM: In the main game we have two distinct states – ‘not boosting’ and ‘boosting’. While not boosting, the car engine and associated effects take centre stage – we bring the whole world to life with heavy traffic pass-bys, including various cars, vans, buses, trucks, tankers, planes and trains. The music plays a base arrangement of the track specific piece, with dynamic EQ to allow the engine notes to come through in the mix and sit comfortably in the audio spectrum.

The transition into boost is marked by a huge nitrous injection sound effect. The music track then swaps into a louder, extremely aggressive version of the piece with the whole arrangement coming in and all the tension pushing through. The balance of sound effects is also altered so that the presence of the turbo whistles, dump valves and waste gates of each car sit perfectly in the high end of the mix, with the main car engine FX being attenuated. Likewise, when exiting the boost state we play a nitrous release

sound. However, if you’re skilful enough and manage to chain boosts we play a re-boost sound effect, which is particularly useful in two-player mode.

CUBE: The engines sound great – what have you done to make them sound so realistic?

SR/BM: Thanks! The first step is recording a huge amount of extreme cars and taking special care to get the most aggressive notes out of each car. By using a lot of selective blending of sounds and custom engine code that maps the gear, load, rpm, torque, speed and accelerator depression into control data for the sounds, we achieve a basic engine sound model. It takes a lot of work to make 250k of sounds per car not sound dull and synthetic, but instead to sound extremely rewarding and enjoyable.

CUBE: What’s your favourite part of the game, in terms of sound?

BM: Hard to say. I love the scream of the Supercar – it’s so rich and tonal as it’s based on a V10 engine which adds a lot of complex harmonics. For one-off sound effects, it has to be the main boost sound – I used over 90 different elements to make that one sound, from widget sounds from a can of Boddingtons to the afterburner engaging on a micro jet engine – that was a lot of fun!

SR: There is nothing more satisfying that working your way through the game and earning the awesome Custom Roadster, putting your home cinema set-up into Dolby ProLogic II, selecting any of the long Point to Point courses and unleashing the beast onto the track. For me, I want to keep chaining the boost for as long as possible as the width of sound from the ProLogic II whilst in boost is amazing! The music is pounding with the full aggressive arrangement and the Custom Roadster is just whining with power and distortion with the dedicated DSP engine model putting the engine under load – whooo, deep breath! The adrenaline of this rush even comes across trying to explain it on paper. Trust me, the experience doesn’t get better than this on any racing game. *Burnout 2* is the ultimate, fastest, most aggressive sounding street racer you can buy.

AUDIO NUTS

WE’VE GOT A GROWLER HERE!

Criterion runs a portable disco on the side

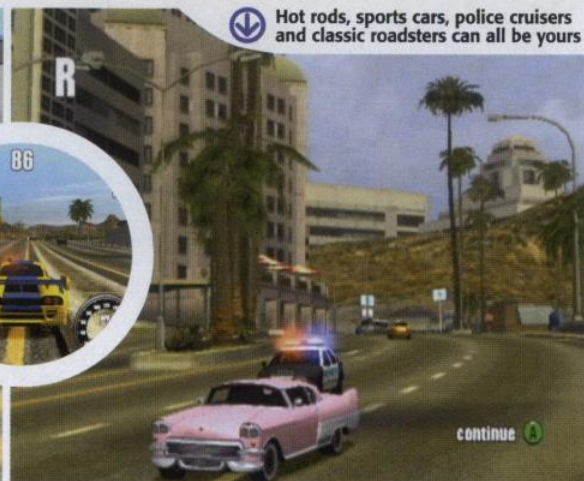
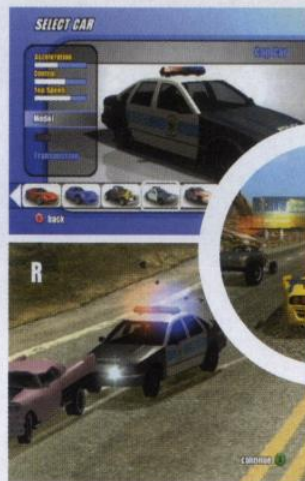


The audio in *B2* is outstanding. Every car sounds completely different and the supercars really growl at you. There’s nothing quite like having the game running through a decent set of speakers with a bass woofer. The music perfectly suits the game, but Criterion has held it back so that when you get a boost it really is something special. Upon using the boost, a



different mix of the music comes in with guitars and a massive increase in bass and sub-bass.

In Pursuit mode, the sirens sound particularly good and when you trash the car the siren even does a comedy pitch-shift as it dies a death. Every car also has a horn, so imagine the sound you get when you trash twenty cars in Crash mode. A sweet chorus of destruction!



Hot rods, sports cars, police cruisers and classic roadsters can all be yours

I AM DA LAW!

THIS PURSUIT CERTAINLY AIN’T TRIVIAL

Now this is special. Fans of *Dukes Of Hazzard* and *Chase HQ* take note. Pursuit mode allows you to jump into a police car and chase and engage in a high speed pursuit of a criminal. The idea is to smash the opponent to pieces within the time limit/distance limit. A damage meter is shown in the top left, and as you gradually wear them down, parts of their car will come flying off, sparks will fly from the impact and eventually the engine will smoke.

You don’t have to use the police car though, and once you’ve earned them you can use any car you want. You can also choose to go up against any other car on any track in any weather condition. Standard cars come complete with a flashing red light and you can switch between two different sirens sounds using the L trigger.



Driving into oncoming traffic is a good way of building up your boost bar, but you’d better have good reactions!

"THERE ARE MORE TRACKS AND MODES BUT THE MOST NOTICEABLE DIFFERENCE COMES IN THE FORM OF REAL-TIME SPECIAL EFFECTS"



It's like Evil Knievel, but without that big, red wind-up contraption

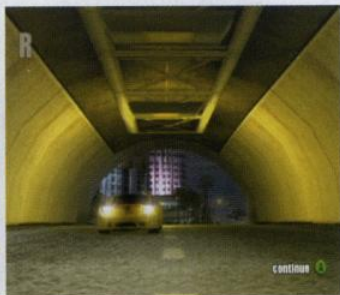
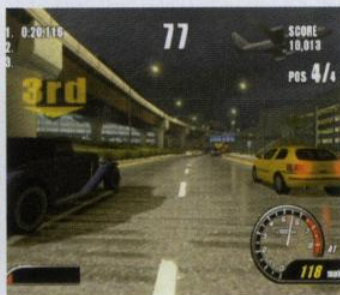
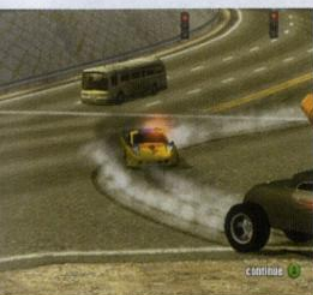
Cars deform and disintegrate on impact, all in lovely slo-mo



CRASH...AH-AHH!

IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE?

... nope, it's a car! Crash mode consists of 30 different road junctions. Your job is simple – tear down a hill and cause as big a pile-up as you can. Once you get to the junction some cars will be stationary, while others will be crossing and others will be approaching from afar. Every vehicle, be it a car, truck, bus or 18 wheeler, will act accordingly and will desperately try to deal with the situation. Get your initial impact right and you should create a cascade effect, with lorries jack-knifing and ploughing through cars like a hot knife through butter. There's no set way to get a great score, and every person will most likely have their own tactics. Speed and angle of approach are the obvious variables though. Better still, up to four players can take part in consecutive crashes. Thought *Mario Kart* and *Bomberman* were addictive? Wait until you play this. The only downside is that the GameCUBE version will not feature online support due to Nintendo not getting its arse in gear.



As far as Criterion is concerned, the GameCUBE version is the best out of the lot. A fact which is proven by this little homage to a racer that they're all looking forward to

this feature. See page 54.

So, there are more tracks, bigger tracks, more modes (we'll talk about those in a bit as well), wicked sound effects and a great multiplayer, but the most noticeable difference comes in the form of real-time special effects. It's very difficult to show these in still screenshots, but when you see this game moving it really is something to behold. The rain is easily the best yet in a racing game, and comes pretty close to

bettering *StarFox Adventures*. However, if you drive through a petrol station or go under any sort of cover the rain won't be falling in that section, which is a nice touch. Criterion has even put in *Gran Turismo 3*-style wet tracks that reflect all the buildings and lights – this on top of the bump-mapping results in some truly gorgeous track textures. Naturally, these wet roads affect the handling of the cars. Then there's the snow... ooh, the snow. One track

features a steady incline into the mountains, and once you get to a certain height the snow begins to set in. It's very light at first, but before you know it you'll be in the middle of a blizzard. The snow even changes direction with the wind. Lastly, there's the specular lighting and reflection effects. Glare from the sun, the reflections on the bodywork, sparks that go flying all the time, dust, smoke, it all combines to spectacular effect.

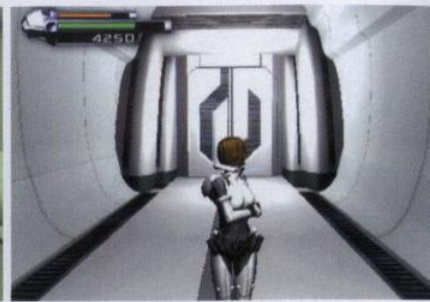
CUBE

CUBE
SAYS...
FIRST IMPRESSION

■ We spent days playing this. The code we have may as well be complete and we can tell you now that *Burnout 2* is one of the best racing games we've ever played. Great cars, great sounds, great crashes, great chases, great graphics – *Burnout 2* is the new *Ridge Racer*. This is definitely a Star Game and we'll blow it apart properly for you next issue, if you can wait that long!

CUBE

CUBE IN-DEPTH



CUBE

INFORMATION

PRODUCT NO 03

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

DEVELOPER: PRODUCTION STUDIO 4

ORIGIN: JAPAN

GENRE: SHOOT-'EM-UP

PLAYERS: 1

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

00 25 50 75 100

TOTAL GAMES.NET MOVIES X PICTURES ✓

04 '03 27 MAR '03 SUMMER '03



Capcom dances
the fight away!

PRODUCT

PREVIOUS

FROM THE MAKERS OF...

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

A beautiful game, and one that was worked on by PNO3's Mikami-san and Kobayashi-san. Surely that's enough!

TOTALGAMES.NET RATING: 90%

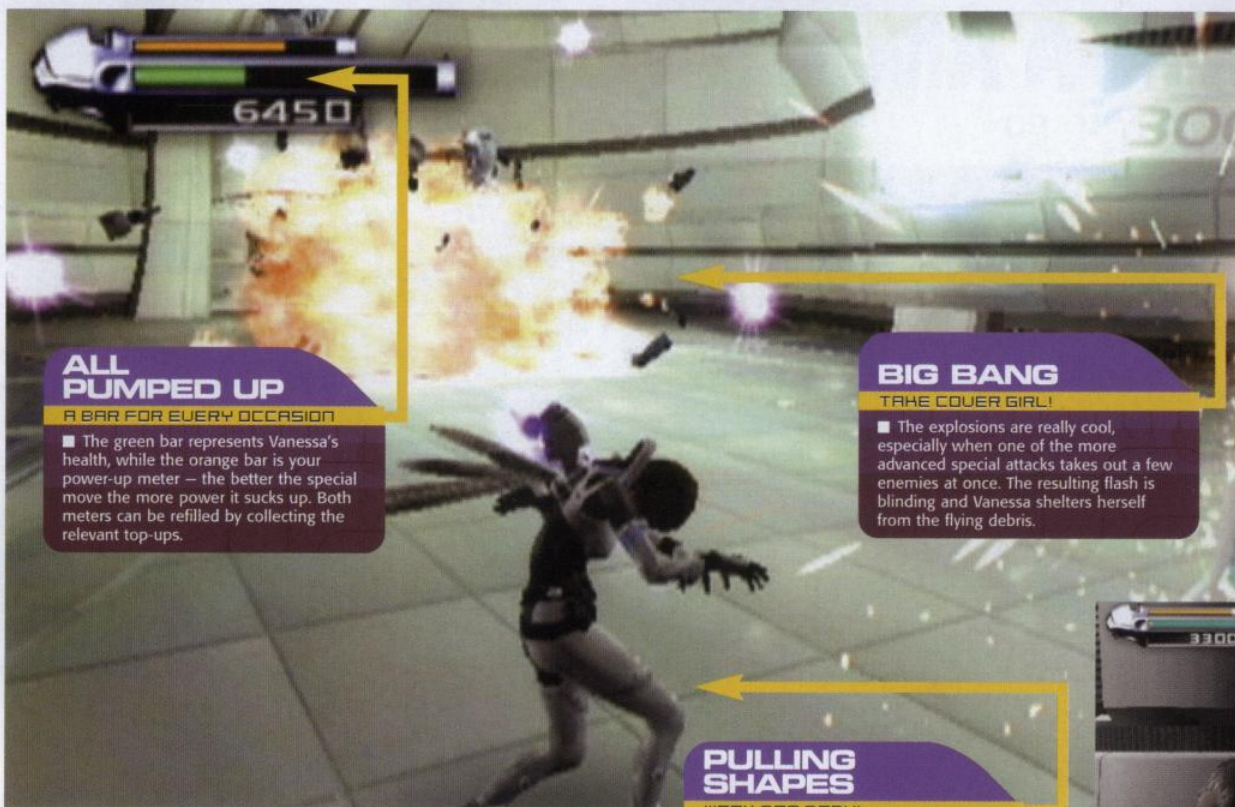
056

CUBE



Each sleeky cyber suit comes with unique and devastating special attacks

“THE FIRST SHOT IN PRODUCTION STUDIO 4’S FIVE-PRONGED ATTACK AND A FANTASTIC EXAMPLE OF WHAT TO EXPECT OVER THE NEXT YEAR”



ALL PUMPED UP

A BAR FOR EVERY OCCASION

■ The green bar represents Vanessa's health, while the orange bar is your power-up meter — the better the special move the more power it sucks up. Both meters can be refilled by collecting the relevant top-ups.

BIG BANG

TAKE COVER GIRL!

■ The explosions are really cool, especially when one of the more advanced special attacks takes out a few enemies at once. The resulting flash is blinding and Vanessa shelters herself from the flying debris.

PULLING SHAPES

WORK OBT BODY!

■ The animation is outstanding. Vanessa glides around the floor like a ballerina, and special moves see her arching her body into all manner of shapes before releasing balls of energy through her hands.



↑ Vanessa takes down her enemies with style and poise



↑ You'll often need to use bits of scenery for cover

NO 03

CAPCOM REALLY IS saving the day at the moment. If it wasn't for the existence of Production Studio 4, the GameCube's release list would be five triple-A titles shorter right now. Not just that though — we'd also be missing out on five titles that are trying desperately to offer something different. In a market where gamers are becoming wise to below-average film licences and stale roaming shoot-'em-ups, Production Studio 4 is leading the way in terms of fresh, new ideas and captivating gameplay. Delivering these ideas in a commercially attractive package was always going to be the big problem though. Games such as *PN03*, *Viewtiful Joe*, *Killer 7* and *Dead Phoenix* are bound to do well in Japan, simply because it's Mikami-san's studio, but how

will they fare in the West?

This is something that we've been unsure of ever since the original announcement, but after extensively playing one of the titles, we can definitely say that Mikami-san and his teams know what they're doing. *Product Number 03* is the first shot in the company's five-pronged attack and is a fantastic example of what to expect over the next year. Despite boasting fresh gameplay, *PN03* still manages to fit in neatly with current gaming trends and boasts a stylish, futuristic female character — Vanessa Z Schneider is the perfect follow-up to Samus, and the stuff that Solid Snake's dreams are made of.

It's difficult to explain what sort of game *PN03* is,

but in its most basic form, it's essentially *R-Type* or *StarFox* in the form of a third-person, character-based game. As in those games, Vanessa has unlimited shots, can move forwards and backwards, dodge left and right and can unleash super attacks every now and then. The enemies come in waves and in exactly the same pattern every time you enter the room... all of which makes this an arcade game at heart. This means that, as with *Ikaruga*, you can get very good at this game — very, very good, in fact, but you'll need a hell of a lot of practice because another *Ikaruga*-ism comes in the form of the difficulty. Even on Normal this is rock hard, but the addictive gameplay means you'll be cursing until the sun comes up.



SUITS YOU MA'AM

Suited, booted and ready to go

VARIABLE VANESSA

PRETTY AS A RAINBOW... FOR A PRICE

As you progress through the game you're given the opportunity to buy new variations of the Aegis Suit. You start off with the white Prima Fusion, but will soon be able to upgrade to the gold Prima Blazer and the blue Prima Guardian. There are nine suits in total ranging in colour from jet black to pure white to red to purple. Each suit has a set of stats and at least two special moves allocated to it. The stats can be upgraded to an extent but every suit has its limit. The stats are as follows:

- **Barrier** — essentially this is the protection that the suit offers, ie your health
- **Palm Shot** — dictates how powerful Vanessa's main attack is
- **Automatic** — later suits allow you to automatically shoot whenever you're within range of an enemy instead of having to tap the A button repeatedly
- **Energy** — how large your Energy Drive meter is



A career as a limbo dancer beckons



FIRST THINGS FIRST — Vanessa does not have any guns. Apparently Mikami-san purposefully gave her a gun in the early videos as a joke. Her only method of attack comes from her hands and is called a Palm Shot. Tapping the A-button repeatedly will unleash balls of energy that automatically seek the nearest enemy. Targeted enemies have a green energy bar over their head to show you how close to death they are.

Generally the targeted enemy will be the one in your line of sight but you can turn left or right to target a different foe.

Vanessa's movements are much like Lara Croft's, albeit far more elegant. Rather than jumping or stepping Vanessa tends to spin gracefully. The analogue stick lets her run forwards or take a small spin-jump backwards. The B-button makes her jump and, when combined with directions, you can leap

forwards or perform a backflip. The L and R triggers make her spin to either side, and a double tap will pull off a side-spin/cartwheel manoeuvre. Y allows you to crouch, and moving while crouched sees Vanessa using her forward roll movement. The D-pad is used to input beat-'em-up style special move commands.

Playing *PNO3* initially seems strange — no other game feels quite like it, and

as a consequence you'll most likely die within the first few minutes. The game is broken down into huge levels, each one ending in a boss battle. Each level consists of around 19 'rooms'. These rooms range in style from huge open areas, to cargo holds, to corridor networks, to boss rooms, and after each room is cleared you'll get a score based on your performance. Your task is always the same though — destroy the

“VANESSA DOES NOT HAVE ANY GUNS — MIKAMI-SAN PURPOSEFULLY GAVE HER A GUN IN THE EARLY VIDEOS AS A JOKE”



LET'S TALK SHOP

MMMMM... POWER TOOLS

Every now and then (not often enough though, dammit) you'll come across a glowing pink orb. This allows you to access the *PN03* shop where you can buy upgrades using your hard-earned points and save your progress. Items

on the list of goods include continues, superior Aegis Suits and upgrades for your current suit. You can also use the shop to enter practice missions where you can try out new suits and test their new abilities on simulated enemies.



COMBO BREAKERS... LET'S DANCE!

RACK UP THOSE POINTS

The best way to get high scores is to take advantage of the Combo system. Each time you kill an enemy, a Combo meter will flash up in the top-right corner. A timer will count down from ten seconds — if you manage to kill another enemy within the ten seconds your combo will continue. With another enemy killed, another ten second countdown begins. Once the timer runs down to zero you receive a score which is then added to your overall score in the top-left corner. It's not essential to keep the massacre going, but your score increases exponentially with each consecutive kill. "What's the point of scoring though?" we hear you screaming. Hey, what do women love best? Shopping of course!



↑ Weaken several targets before going for the kill to build combos

enemies, overcome the obstacles and try to stay alive. Whatever the style of the room, Vanessa will always face forwards — even when you push back she will spin-jump back and remain facing forwards. If you push the analogue stick left and right she will turn in that direction and the camera will stick with her.

Awkward moments are catered for though, and you can turn 180 degrees by tapping the Z-button. The camera system

takes a while to get used to, but after about an hour of play you'll realise that it works quite well and suits the style of the game. It was necessary for the camera to be this way to make the game flow so well. With four enemies in a room you can hide round a corner, spin into the open, fire off a few shots to weaken the stronger enemy, cartwheel over one set of lasers, flip forwards over the next and then pull off a special attack to finish the rest.

SWAN:

☺ Sends three explosive energy balls towards multiple opponents



FISTS OF FURY

DESTRUCTION AT THE FLICK OF A FINGER

Using Vanessa's Palm Shot is all well and good, and admittedly once you get it really powered up it's a nifty little attack, but there's only one way to kill in style — the Energy Drive attacks. Every suit has at least two Energy Drives, the first of which comes free when you buy the suit. Using a special attack will drain your Energy Drive bar (the orange one on the screen), which can be topped up by picking up the relevant power-ups. The more powerful the move, the more energy it will consume. Before you start each level you can choose which suit to wear from those you've unlocked so far.

GULLWING:

☺ Sends one massive electrical ball towards an opponent



HARRIER:

☺ Vanessa arches her back and shoots out a wave of explosive energy



FALCON:

☺ Vanessa spins rapidly while energy beams shoot out in all directions

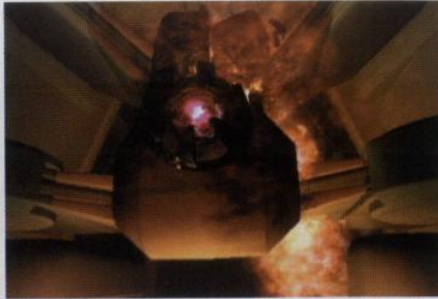


GRIFFIN:

☺ Vanessa arches back and shoots two powerful beams over her shoulder



CUBE IN-DEPTH



MOVING ON UP

VANESSA GETS HER GROOVE ON

We've already told you about most of Vanessa's moves, but here they are in more detail and with pictures:

Vanessa leaps backwards, head over heels. Useful for giving you some airtime if you need to avoid enemy fire.



BACKFLIP

Vanessa spins to the left or the right. Useful for quickly darting out of the way at the last minute.



SIDE-SPIN

An extension of the side-spin, Vanessa cartwheels left or right. More effective at evading enemy fire than the sidespin.



CARTWHEEL

Vanessa jumps into the air. Not really useful for anything that we've seen so far. So much still to discover!



JUMP-SPIN

Similar to the backflip, but Vanessa flails her limbs around a little more, helping to evade oncoming fire.



FRONT FLIP

Vanessa crouches down and rolls forwards enabling her to get under low objects and make herself a smaller target.



FORWARD ROLL

Yellow energy replenishes the Energy Drive meter



JUICED UP

THE THINGS PEOPLE LEAVE LYING AROUND...

There are three collectable icons that you'll encounter during your missions. These are Barrier top-ups, Energy top-ups and Continues. A Barrier top-up will refill your entire health bar whereas an Energy top-up will only fill a section

of your Energy Drive bar. Continues provide you with an extra life on the continue screen.

These top-ups come in the form of swirling, coloured orbs that are found randomly and are sometimes dropped by defeated enemies.



All sorts of goodies are available at the shop, but it's those suits you really want

Grabbing green energy clouds recovers your health. Don't waste them

“THE AI GETS FAR MORE ADVANCED, AND ENEMIES WON’T GIVE AWAY THEIR PATTERNS UNTIL YOU’RE CLOSE ENOUGH TO BE HURT”



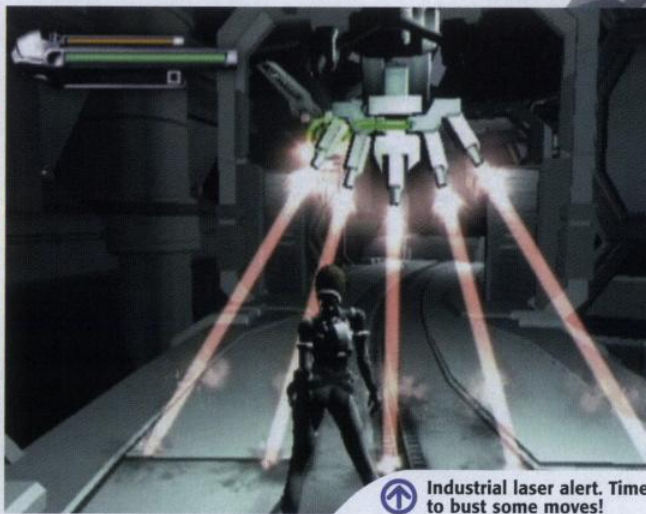
LORDS OF THE MANOR

RUST-BUCKETS THEY AIN'T

The bosses we've encountered so far haven't been particularly difficult to deal with, their attack patterns being relatively straightforward. Unlike *Metroid Prime*, the bosses in *PN03* are simple target-and-shoot affairs. Still, each boss has a number of moves that will destroy you in one hit so you need to be very careful. We've already shown you the Sonnenblume laser monster (back in issue 16), but we came across another boss in our hands-on playtest. Surrounded by an impenetrable forcefield, the main core is protected by two giant laser cannons, and it waits until both are powered up before lowering the forcefield and unleashing its attack.

⬇️ When powerful enemies and big specials collide there are some spectacular pyrotechnics, adding to the many visual treats

⬆️ Like the fearless action chick she is, Vanessa runs headlong into what can only possibly be another tight spot. Good girl!



⬆️ Industrial laser alert. Time to bust some moves!

CONTINUED

Every enemy in the game needs to be dealt with in a specific way, and even the early enemies won't be a pushover. Some enemies will take a few seconds to assess things before firing off bursts of laser fire. With these types of enemy Vanessa is better off being patient and hiding behind a strut, darting out and firing a few rounds in the periods when the enemy is analysing the situation. Other enemies may fire off a few laser rounds before taking a short break. It's then that you have to take them out as they're

probably powering up for a massive attack. When you first encounter a new enemy you need to keep a safe distance and figure out what its pattern is. Even so, as you progress through the game the AI gets far more advanced, and enemies won't give away their patterns until you're close enough to be hurt. For example, the AAS-12G Weißbirke comes at you with one constant laser beam, but just when you think you've got it sussed it opens up and fills the corridor with five vertical beams. Git!

The robots aren't the only obstructions

that the Computer Arms Management System will put in your way. Wherever possible, the corridors are lined with banks of laser beams. Some flicker on and off in set patterns whereas others move around randomly. Thankfully, Vanessa is athletic enough to somersault over or crawl under them. In some cases athleticism isn't enough though and you'll just have to stay out of the way. One enemy drops a collection of mines, which in turn sprout laser sensors and these need to be taken out from a safe distance.

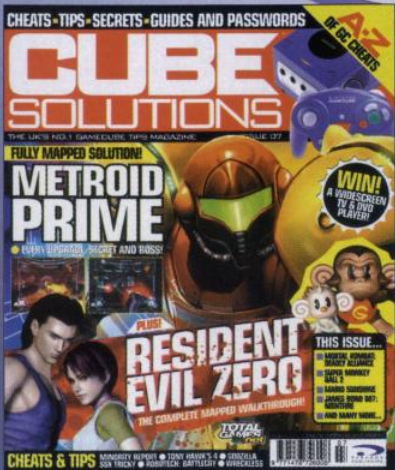
CUBE

CUBE

■■■■ SAYS...
FIRST IMPRESSION

■ We were allowed to play through to the end of the third level – Mikami-san won't let anyone see anything past that point until the game hits the shelves – and it's looking very good. Despite taking a while to get used to the controls, after an hour or so you'll find everything becomes second nature. Our only worry is that all the other levels will be set inside the same laboratory and it could all end up getting rather samey, but at the moment we have no way of telling. You'll just have to check out our exclusive review next issue.

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**ISSUE 7
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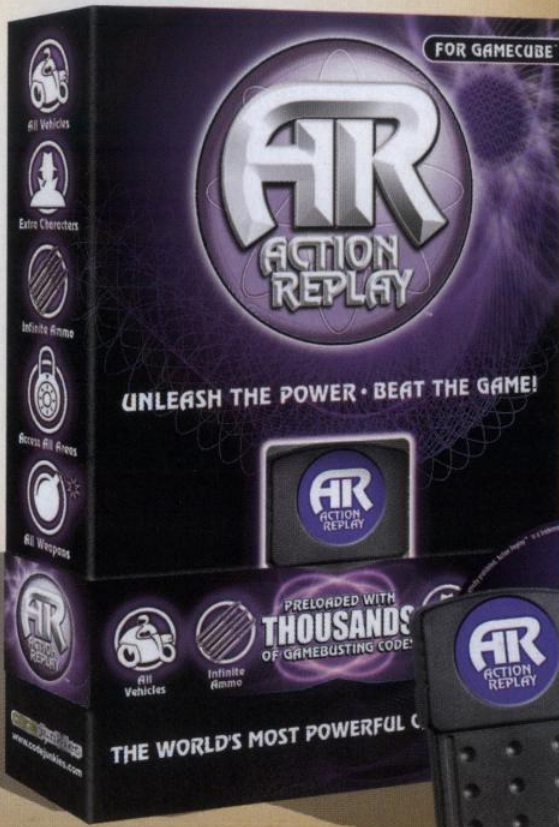
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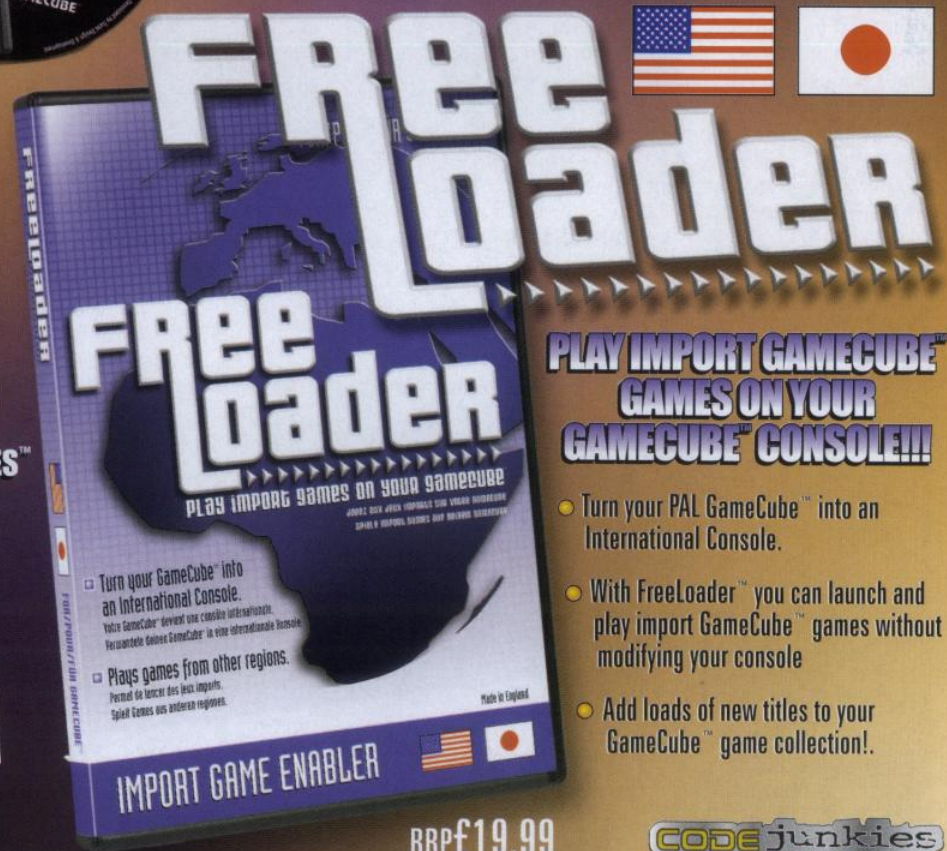
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CUBE

ISSUE EIGHTEEN

REVIEWS



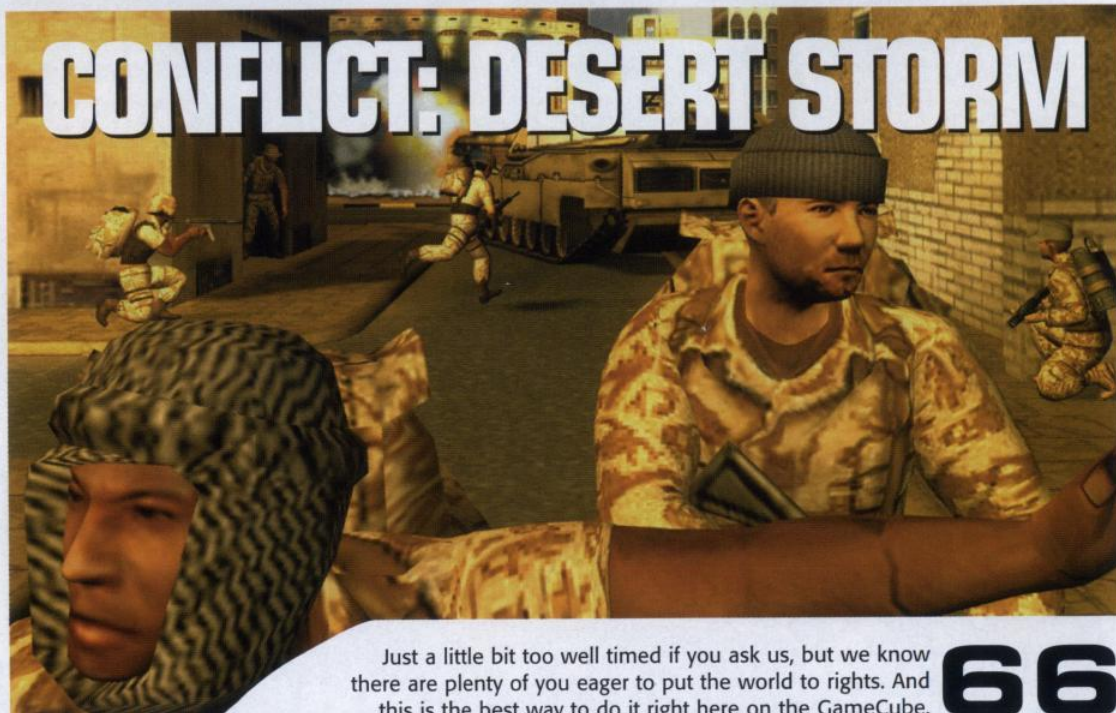
JUST A BIT LONGER

AS FAR AS reviews go, it's been a very quiet month. There's a lot of good stuff out there but nothing to set your pads on fire. Saying that, the games that are available are ones that will keep you going for a good while, and if you get frustrated by the news, just switch on *Conflict: Desert Storm* and live the war in your bedroom. You even get to finish off Saddam at the end.

In comparison, next month is going to seem like Christmas all over again. *PN03*, *Soul Calibur II*, *Zelda*, *Splinter Cell*, *Hitman 2*... oh, and the wonderful *Burnout 2*. We already know that *Burnout 2* is amazing – the version we have is pretty much final code, and in all honesty we could have given you the review this month. But then that's not us. You may find that other mags will do just that, but we're going to hold out for the proper finished version... just in case.

After all, we wouldn't want to miss anything now, would we?

■ CHANDRA NAIR



CONFLICT: DESERT STORM

Just a little bit too well timed if you ask us, but we know there are plenty of you eager to put the world to rights. And this is the best way to do it right here on the GameCube.

66

CUBISTS

Does anyone know what chocolate eggs have got to do with the rebirth of Christ? Answers on a postcard...

MILES GUTTERY



EDITOR
CUBE

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Girls to dress up in bunny suits
THIS MONTH: The **CUBE** team just happened to be looking through Miles' bag when we found a full-size bunny suit. Miles claims he bought it for a one-off fancy-dress party, but from what we can see, the suit has seen plenty of 'action'.

CHANDRA NAIR



DEPUTY EDITOR
CUBE

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Taking time off to do your own thing
THIS MONTH: Chandra realised he still had a week of holiday to take before the end of March, so he did, then he came to work anyway, because it gives him the power to be who he wants to be. "I..." he booms, "...AM CHANDRA FROM **CUBE**!"

GARY ADAMS



STAFF WRITER
CUBE

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Taking your meat in
THIS MONTH: With the sun riding high in the sky as opposed to peeping over the horizon, Gary has had to put his meat away again. We still don't understand what last month's statement was about, so don't expect us to explain this one.

BYRON WILKINSON



STAFF WRITER
CUBE

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Sitting in the dark
THIS MONTH: After sitting in a dark pub at lunchtime with a Guinness and some toasted sandwiches Bys is feeling the pain. Upon walking out into the Easter Sunshine he screams: "aarrgh, it burns me eyeses, nasty rabbitsssss".

CHARLOTTE MARTYN



SUB-EDITOR
CUBE

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Dressing up!
THIS MONTH: Turns out Miles was lying about the bunny suit and it actually belongs to Charlotte, who's taken to wearing it at night on deserted country roads, scaring the bejesus out of dog-walkers and narrowly avoiding the headlights of oncoming cars. For no reason.

MARTIN MATHERS



DEPUTY EDITOR
GAMES™

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Playing games
THIS MONTH: Is there a time when Martin isn't playing games? Nope, don't think there is. Marty boy recently took on the mammoth task of writing a complete solution to *Wind Walker* (hah, sucker!). He's got two weeks to do it and Steph has got the whip at the ready.

STEPHANIE PEAT



SENIOR DESIGNER
CUBE

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Whipping Martin
THIS MONTH: Stuff animal suits – Steph is quite happy with her whip. Everyone's fave designer is on the verge of losing it this month and Martin was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Worrying screams have been heard from the dungeons...

NICK TRENT



ART EDITOR
CUBE

EASTER...A TIME FOR: Rebirth and cleansing
THIS MONTH: Designers the world over fear for their jobs as Trent contemplates starting anew with his design team. Easter is a time for new blood to shine and old blood to spill... apparently. Trenty, you're scaring us mate.

100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED THE ONLY REVIEWS YOU CAN TRUST



Love is in the air, and you'll love the game too. Devilishly addictive!



THE SIMS

72 It was only a matter of time before the reality TV shows made their way into videogames, and that's exactly what this is. You might love it, you might hate it, but you'll always come back for more.

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Confused? Suffering a spot of information overload perhaps? Use this handy guide to successfully navigate our info-packed reviews

INFORMATION

This is the place to look for all the essential statistics on the game including release dates, players, publisher, developer and whether or not you can watch movies of the game in action on TotalGames.Net.



2ND OPINIONS

If you're still not one hundred per cent sure whether you're going to take one expert's opinion, you'll find an alternative point of view right here.

ALTERNATIVES

Obviously, not every game will be to your taste so if there are titles that might be of interest instead, they'll be outlined here for you to think about.

BOXOUTS

If you want more detailed information on what the game's all about, or hot tips on some of the tougher bits, the wide selection of boxouts are ideal for you.

COMMENT

The reviewer's frank and honest opinions on what he or she thinks of the game will be right here. You'll be needing this to make up your own mind...

VEXX

70 Acclaim's big white hope finally turns up and, sadly, it's not a patch on what it should have been. Still, it's a good crack if you've exhausted *Mario* and *Rayman*

LOST KINGDOMS 2

76 From Software takes the original and, erm, doesn't really do anything new to it. If you like the original you'll like this, but *Skies* commands the RPG genre for the time being.

JIMMY NEUTRON

78 Yes, we know that this is supposed to be for kids, but even my little sister thinks this is rubbish and she lures the boy Neutron. Kids aren't stupid... and neither are we for that matter!

SUPER BUBBLE POP

79 Why do developers think that puzzle games don't have to look good? It's a mystery that will always remain just that.

BIG MUTHER TRUCKERS

80 Liked the idea behind SEGA's *18 Wheeler*? Well this is what it should have been like. Miles is obsessed by this, but that's because it all reminds him of home. There are a lot of big rigs and interstate highways in Shropshire apparently.

GHOST RECON

82 It's always 50:50 with Ubi Soft. Either their games are really good or just absolute trash. *Splinter Cell*, *Rayman 3*... *Pro Rally*, *Tarzan*. *Ghost Recon* could and should have been one of the former, so what went wrong?

ROCKMAN EXE NETWORK TRANS.

84 A quality chunk of old skool, side-scrolling platforming. Not outstanding in any way, but if you're a sucker for solid, rock hard gameplay, this will definitely float your boat. Rockman, or Megaman as we know him, looks a bit odd though



Chucking playing cards isn't everyone's idea of top fun action...

THE BREAKDOWN

Confused as to the purpose of those big numbers stuck on the end of all the reviews? The meaning is explained below through the medium of words...

RATING 90

9.0 OR ABOVE

Naturally, games scoring a 9.0 or over are well worth your hard-earned cash... otherwise they wouldn't score so highly. Hey, we're professionals – give us a bit of credibility here, okay?

RATING 75

7.5 > 8.9

Although they haven't quite made it to the dizzy heights of greatness, games with this kind of score are still worthy of your attention and will no doubt keep you happy for a fair old while.

RATING 50

5.0 > 7.4

Yep, it's that tricky middle ground that a lot of games walk. With 5.0 branding a game decidedly average, scoring up to 7.4 means you might want to try it if you're into that sort of thing.

RATING 25

2.5 > 4.9

If your granny gets you a game with a score like this, it's probably because she doesn't know any better... or you just didn't tell her what you actually wanted. It's all your own fault really.

RATING 00

0.0 > 2.4

It's a sad fact that we have to review games this far down the scale but it's for your own good. Otherwise, you might actually go out and buy one of them. Shame on you!

Wargasm

CUBE

INFORMATION

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM

PUBLISHER: SCI

DEVELOPER: PIVOTAL

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGIN: UK

PLAYERS: 1-4

MEMORY: 8 BLOCKS

STATS

FIFTEEN MISSIONS

MULTIPLAYER CAMPAIGN MODE

CLEVER AI

GUNS, BOMBS AND VEHICLES

ESCALATION MOVIES PICTURES



18 APR '03



TBA



22 APR '03



BULLET TIME

**BANG!
YOU'RE
DEAD**

About one in every four shots is accompanied by tracer fire helping you see both where you're shooting and who's shooting at you.

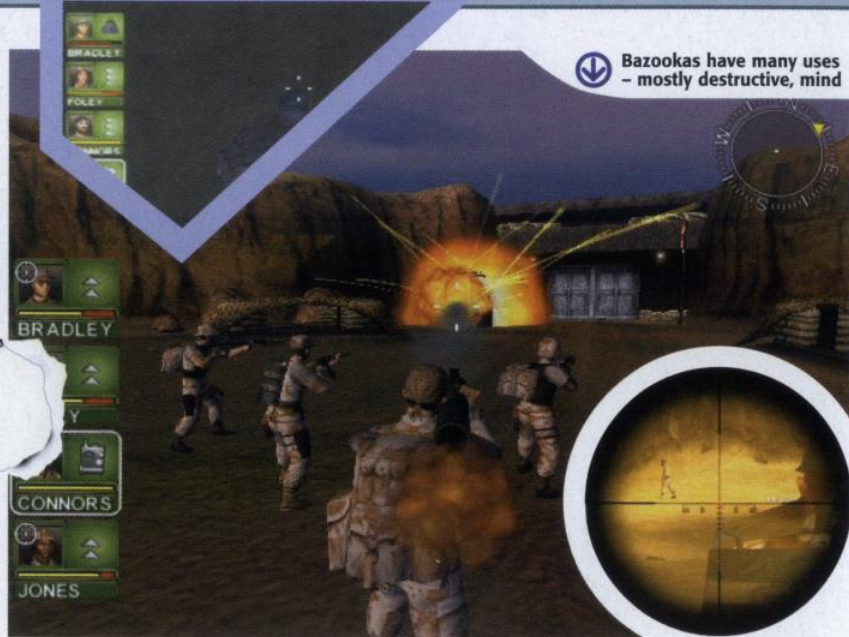


CONFLICT D

"DESERT STORM REMAINS ENTERTAINING BECAUSE WHAT IT TRIES TO DO IS SUCCESSFULLY AND SOLIDLY ACHIEVED"



I'M FREAKIN' DYING HERE: If one of your squad is seriously injured they don't die instantly. Instead you get about about 90 tense seconds to deliver a medikit.



Iraq and ruin...

THE THUNDERING

sound of a tank is audible in the distance. Taking control of Jones, your demolitions expert, you crawl face down in the sand, towards the underside of a Scud missile launcher. Explosives planted, you return (by pressing down on the D-pad) to using your heavy weapons specialist, Connors, and order all your men (except sniper Foley who you've placed up high for cover) to regroup around you. "On me, on me!" barks Connors, casually waving around a rocket launcher. As you retreat to a safe distance before detonation, a tank lumbers over a nearby dune and rotates its turret towards your group. Automatic gunfire peppers the ground in front of you – Iraqi soldiers are sprinting towards you! Amid yells of "Infantry spotted!" from your men, Foley (thanks to his clever AI) begins picking off the advancing troops with headshots from his cunningly placed vantage point. Now this, in the heat of battle with a tank bearing down on you, is where you start making decisions.

Throwing a grenade at an armoured tank won't be effective; in fact, it'll probably rebound towards you, blowing up in your face. So perhaps you should use a LAW (light anti-tank weapon). Or maybe you should create a diversion and use Jones to plant some C4 on the tracks

of the tank. When **CUBE** first faced this situation, we panicked – we detonated the Scud, took out the tank in the explosion and simultaneously shell-shocked three of our squad to within an inch of their lives. Gladly though, we still had sniper Foley – healthy, armed and clutching three medikits – to patch up the wounded. This unpredictability, the AI, the atmosphere and the range of approaches to combat is what makes *Desert Storm* such a neat and enjoyable gaming experience.

Whilst many of the game's fifteen missions are search-and-destroy-based exercises, it remains entertaining because what it tries to do is successfully and solidly achieved. Beginning with only one soldier and a comrade trapped in prison, the game starts out with the infiltration of an Iraqi desert camp where you rescue your team mate, blow up a bridge and then get to the landing zone to be rescued by helicopter.

Such missions may sound like familiar territory but *Desert Storm* plays unlike most other squad-based games. By the third level you'll have a team of four men under your control, and managing this group is surprisingly straightforward. It has to be when you consider that it's all about clever use of your group, both individually and as a team, yet although there's obviously a strategic element to the game, it never becomes too laboured or complicated. In fact, it's very much an

DESERT

STORM



There are only two missions involving vehicles, but they're fun whilst they last

CONTINUED

arcade-style experience. For instance,

commanding your men to advance by covering each other with overlapping lines of cover is undoubtedly important, but just as essential is the ability to go from this wary style of movement to all-out ambush and slaughter in the time it takes to bite a pin from a grenade. Fortunately doing so is surprisingly easy.

Using individual men and your group as a whole is commendably intuitive thanks to the control system. Among the range of orders you can give to your team are instructions to move to certain points, to stay, to follow, to hit the deck under fire or to shoot at will. All of which can be done on the move simply by holding Z and using the face buttons. Just as importantly, the AI of your group is very convincing and adds greatly to the experience. Not only do your men behave realistically, but they also tell you what's happening even when you can't see them. Gratifying shouts of "Target down" and the unsettling "Armour ahead" continually inform of you of your group's situation, keep tension levels high and really bring home the feeling of playing at war.

In bringing *Desert Storm* to the GameCube, developers Pivotal have listened to many of the criticisms levelled at the original. While the visuals are still best described as effective rather than lavish, there's now a better frame rate and texture work than previously. Similar degrees of improvement are evident in the enemy AI which uses new algorithms

ensuring that adversaries have none of their previous extra-sensory powers of sight, nor do they have the ability to seek you out instantly. In all, this is a thoughtful and well-implemented port to the 'Cube which clears up many of the niggles of the other versions, which is a practice we can only hope other developers will emulate.

In terms of team-based and tactical shooters, then currently *Desert Storm's* only competition is *Ghost Recon*. Comparison between the two makes it an even more attractive proposition since it has none of *Ghost Recon's* AI glitches or dodgy collision detection, plus it's considerably less punishing and hence a lot more fun and accessible. However, where *Desert Storm* really gets one over the competition is in its multiplayer.

Teaming up with a mate who knows what he's doing is undoubtedly the best way to experience the game. You'll negotiate routes and cover for each other, argue over weapons and feel genuinely gutted when a comrade takes a bullet trying to save you. All of which makes up considerably for the similarity between some missions and a general lack of finesse throughout.

Although it could have been improved even further – the graphics and vaguely cumbersome feel of the movement still need more refinement – as a tactical squad-based shooter, this is easily the GameCube's best.

BYRON



AWOL

MISSING IN ACTION

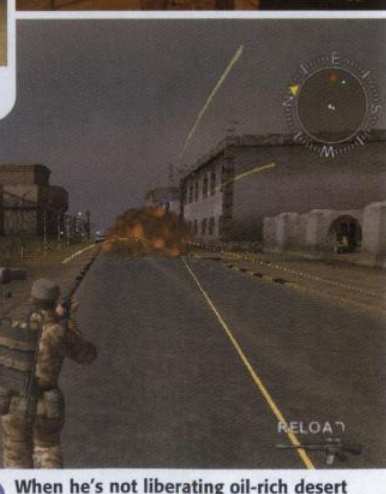
Although you can finish any mission with only one man left standing, whoever got left behind or died will be replaced by a rookie in your next scenario. The reason this matters is that at the end of each level, soldiers who survive evolve according to how they performed. Because of this levelling up according to how you played, you can't help but want to keep your men alive and use them all individually so as to improve their abilities. Just as importantly, you need to bear in mind that different soldiers have their own particular skills, be it using heavy weapons, acting as a medic or blowing things up.



Cheeky – it looks like the developers have placed an Xbox on that table



In the heat of battle this gesture says "I'm bricking it"



When he's not liberating oil-rich desert peninsulas, Bradley enjoys flower arranging

SAVE ME! *Desert Storm* avoids making you restart missions when you snuff it by allowing saves mid scenario, but you've only got two per mission.



Keeping your men alive improves their abilities for the next mission



Crouching when using a rocket launcher steadies your aim



A MAN ON THE INSIDE

TACTICAL ADVICE FROM THOSE IN THE KNOW

Weeks before the first Gulf War and ground-based operations in Iraq, the SAS were hard at work. Cameron Spence, a former Sergeant Major in the SAS, was at the time carrying out clandestine operations behind enemy lines. In fact, much like the in-game scenarios he did actually capture a Scud missile and infiltrate enemy territory, overcoming Iraqi soldiers. As an advisor to the game designers, Spence made recommendations to *Pivotal* about strategy and scenarios. Apparently, the SAS always preferred to operate at night and wherever possible they'd try to be as hidden and stealthy as they could. Which is worth bearing in mind when you're playing the game.



Lobbing a grenade at an armoured tank doesn't cut the mustard

SCATTERGUN

READY, AIM, FIRE!

Try firing on the run and you'll spray bullets everywhere. Instead you should crouch to improve your accuracy (narrowing your sights) or better still, lie down.



"AS A TACTICAL SQUAD-BASED SHOOTER THIS IS EASILY THE GC'S BEST"

BAND OF BROTHERS

YOU'RE ONLY SUPPOSED TO BLOW THE BLOODY DOORS OFF

The actual combat mechanics of *Desert Storm* probably aren't like many other games you've played. Although in commanding either a British SAS or US Delta Force group of soldiers (you choose which at the start of the game) you're given access to a vast arsenal of weapons, you need to use them in the right way. Running around like Rambo on angel dust won't get the job done. Instead, you need to be a bit cagey, keep your distance, kneel when aiming, hit the ground when being shot at and use your team's strengths to your advantage. All of which, in multiplayer at least, is pretty unusual for most people to grasp. As a result, and while the multiplayer modes are excellent with very little deterioration in visuals or frame rate, you really need to play with someone who knows what they're doing.



Can you shoot each other in multiplayer mode? Oh yes...

CUBE VERDICT

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM

A SOLID AND ENJOYABLE ARCADE-STYLE WAR SIM

- VISUALS**
Improved from the PS2 version with better textures and draw distance
- AUDIO**
An atmospheric score swells and ebbs in the background
- GAMEPLAY**
Strikes a good balance between strategy, action and bloodshed
- LIFESPAN**
Fifteen substantial missions and a really good multiplayer set up
- ORIGINALITY**
Strategic real-world action currently unrivalled on the GameCube

ALTERNATIVE

A game that could have been a lot better if it weren't for some very dodgy AI and collision detection



GHOST RECON

Reviewed: Issue 18

CUBE Rating: 6.5

2ND OPINION

SHARPSHOOTING! "An odd blend of arcade and simulation that works surprisingly well. Sometimes the controls feel a tad woolly but overall highly enjoyable."

GARY

FINAL SCORE

8.2

A HEADY MIX OF SAND, STRATEGY AND SLAUGHTER — OH, WHAT A LOVELY WAR

DID YOU KNOW: SUNDIALS APPEARED OVER 5,000 YEARS AGO



A platform game that you can really get your claws into – quite literally!

TO LOOK AT this game you'd be forgiven for thinking it was it might be a sequel in a decent selling franchise, but you'd be wrong. It does have a distinct quality, but with Vexx it seems as though the developer started out with an average platform game and tried to make it more interesting.

Odd really considering this seems to be the start of yet another platforming franchise. So what's the gimmick? What makes this one rise above the rotating platforms and spiky pits of other happy jumpers? Herein lies the start of the problem because Vexx has claws and,

Jump up, jump up and get down!

VEXX

CUBE

INFORMATION

VEXX

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

DEVELOPER: ACCLAIM AUSTIN

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGIN: US

PLAYERS: 1-4

MEMORY: 1 BLOCK

STATS

■ 18 LEVELS TO EXPLORE

■ HIDDEN MULTIPLAYER GAMES

■ DAY AND NIGHT CONTROL

■ FREE CLIMBING

TOTAL GAMES MOVIES X PICTURES ✓

OUT NOW TBA OUT NOW



"THE CHARACTER MOVES AROUND WELL AND FEATURES SOME SUITABLY COOL ATTACKS"

HOOKED!

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Using your claws (made of Adamantium, no doubt) you can climb up any surfaces the developer wants you to. Just make sure you don't fall because re-attaching isn't easy.

Jump, punch, collect power-ups. Hmm, seems familiar...

The lighting effects are pretty basic when compared to something like SFA

er, well that's just about it.

It's not that Acclaim hasn't tried, but if you're going to create a new character you want some gimmick to reel in the punters. Not some guy with claws jumping around platforms in the name of good and collecting stuff. But forget the average character feel for now because they've made a real effort with this game which is obvious right from the outset. The level design in each of the *Banjo*-esque worlds is superb and the puzzles (with their tongue twisting riddles) are well thought out. Worrying it may be, but it's very easy to get sucked into collecting the hearts to save the planet of Astara from the Dark Yabu (don't ask).

The control system has also received a lot of work. The character moves around well and features some suitably cool attacks. Using a combination of just two buttons you can start an impressively long string of attacks that link between ground and air. Just make sure you don't

get too carried away on a high up platform though, because once you start it's difficult to pull your character back, which is a completely unnecessary addition to the frustration factor – never good in a platform game, and especially not in one that has such an annoying camera. Start to play *Vexx* and you realise that you can position the camera wherever you want, which is normally a good thing, but it does slow down the action massively as you constantly have to keep fiddling with the stick.

This pretty much sums up *Vexx* – half full of good ideas. If only there had been a little bit more development time to iron out these small problems. If only more thought had gone into pre-development to come up with a truly original concept. If only. In such a saturated genre, perfection is necessary but *Vexx* only comes off as average.

MIKE



⬆️ It can't be good to bottle up all that teenage angst. Vexx's lid is about to blow...

BY DAY ONE WAY...

IF I COULD TURN BACK TIME

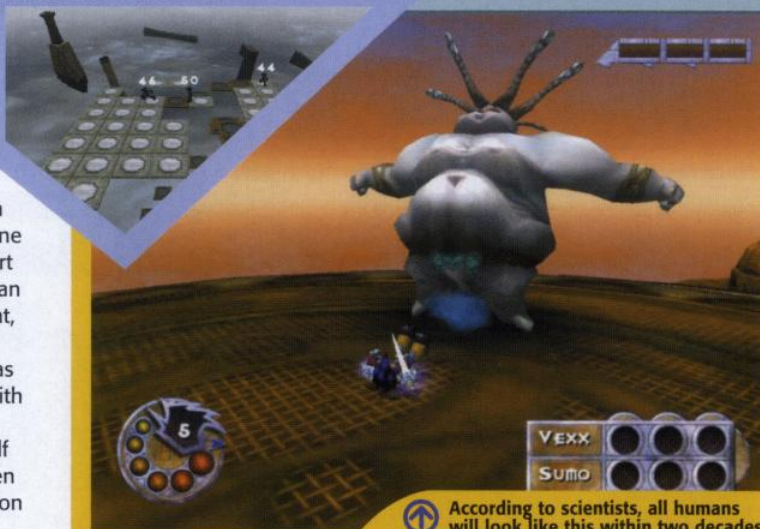
One neat trick is the inclusion of a sundial on each of the levels. When you find it all you need to do is jump on board and start spinning the dial to watch the entire game world change form right before your very eyes. This not only looks good but it also unlocks a variety of secrets on each level. The main reason is to unlock special time-sensitive doors that lead to otherworldly areas and (yep, you guessed it) more hearts to collect. Crazy!



⬆️ Press left and right on the stick to watch the moon dance in the sky – hours of fun

⬆️ Sadly the romantic sunset won't convince your enemies to kiss and make up

INNER DEMONS: There are a variety of mini challenges to break up the platform jumping gameplay. Win each one to receive a heart.



⬆️ According to scientists, all humans will look like this within two decades

DAVID AND GOLIATH

EXACTLY THE KIND OF ODDS WE LIKE!

In every world there is an oversized boss character just waiting to be brought down to size. The first one you come up against is this gigantic Sumo wrestler. As you might imagine, running in and attacking this tank on legs doesn't have much of an effect so you need to lure him in and dodge his attacks. Not very original, but what did you expect? It's worth letting the tubby one have his wicked way because if he catches you he picks you up and brutally punches you in the face. Never friendly, these boss types!



CUBE VERDICT

VEXX

⬆️ A SOLID GAME THAT FALLS SHORT OF GREATNESS



VISUALS

Not quite up there with *Metroid Prime*, but they do the job



AUDIO

There's nothing really to complain about here, but nothing to inspire



GAMEPLAY

Well-designed levels and challenges suffer from unnecessary annoyances



LIFESPAN

Should you have the patience there's plenty to do



ORIGINALITY

It's a good game but we've seen it all before

ALTERNATIVE

Rayman has consistently provided decent platform action and the latest is no exception.



RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

Reviewed: Issue 16

CUBE Rating: 8.1

2ND OPINION

VEXED! "Vexx looked so promising, but the reality is that this is one of the most tedious, frustrating and bland platformers of recent years. Stay away!"

KENDALL

FINAL SCORE

7.0

THERE ARE BETTER GAMES BUT IF YOU'RE A CASHEW FOR PLATFORMS IT'S QUITE FUN

CUBE

INFORMATION

THE SIMS

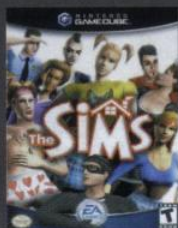
PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: MAXIS,
EDGE OF REALITY
PRICE: £39.99
ORIGIN: US
PLAYERS: 1-2
MEMORY: 98 BLOCKS

STATS

- MISSION-BASED GAMEPLAY
- UNLOCK A MULTITUDE OF ITEMS
- REAR A VIRTUAL CHILD
- FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR SIM

TOTAL CRASHES MOVIES PICTURES

4 APR '03 TBA OUT NOW



Living the life of Riley...

THE SIMS

Your Sims are a danger to themselves and others until properly trained



Virtually perfect or virtual insanity?

THE NEXT time somebody points out that you've been playing on your GameCube too much and that you should 'get a life' you should quietly smirk to yourself, go back into your room and play *The Sims* even more than before. You see, this is a version of the biggest selling PC game ever in which you control the lives of tiny people known as Sims. These little darlings can be created by you, selected from a list or even born and raised in-game. Small they may be, but they're certainly more than a handful to keep happy.

Throughout the game you're going to have to keep them entertained, not only through contact with the other people in your neighbourhood, but also via a huge array of items that can be bought with the game currency, Simoleans. However, as in real life, to earn enough money to lead a comfortable and enlightening life, you're going to need to get a job that pays well – and as anybody knows, these don't exactly fall into your lap. To people who prefer to plug themselves into more action-orientated games this may sound a trifle dull, and a glance at the screenshots would appear to confirm this. But as with a lot of things in life, you shouldn't judge a book by its cover – or in this case a game by its premise.

The one thing that *The Sims* does better than any other game on any console or PC is completely and utterly draw you into its world. Whole days will disappear in a haze of toilet breaks and food supply runs

"THE THING THAT THE SIMS DOES BETTER THAN ANY OTHER GAME IS COMPLETELY DRAW YOU INTO ITS WORLD"

ICON 2 ICON

THOUGHT BUBBLE

Whenever characters talk to each other, their current subject will be displayed in a thought bubble via an icon. You can see what their favourite topics are in this way.



FEELING BLUE: As your characters learn new skills such as creativity and logic, their progress is displayed using a blue bar that gradually fills up.

CHECK THE STATS

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

If you go about creating your own character there's a certain amount of customisation involved when it comes down to their nature. You have two choices — select their star sign or fiddle around with their stats yourself. Obviously, if you select their star sign then the relevant attributes attached to the stereotypes will immediately be transferred to the character and you can go from there. But the other option gives you a certain amount of points that you can assign yourself. There are plenty of choices to be made — if Kate here is messy she's going to leave dirty plates around and urinate wherever she pleases. Not good if she fancies finding a partner. If she's physically active then she'll stay healthy and get sporty jobs. Throughout the game these tendencies will become apparent, and nurturing your character correctly will give you the option of improving any dubious traits they may have.



Although they look like adults, yours are like small children. They love to touch stuff and put their fingers where fingers shouldn't go



You can encourage Sims to build relationships, but some won't get on



Filling the house with mod-cons will keep the occupants happy



Get a decent job and maybe you'll be able to afford a nicer motor



The girls gather for a chinwag, no doubt to moan about their boyfriends

HAGGLING FOR FUN

TO ME, TO YOU

A new element not seen in the PC version is the two-player mode. As you complete tasks in the Get A Life mode you unlock various games that see you and a friend performing some very strange tasks. A typical one sees you facing off against each other to see who can scrounge the most food out of your virtual friends at a barbeque. If you cook some food your friends are going to like you, but if you beg them for a portion too much then they're going to become rather exasperated and may palm you off with a few sharp words, or even a slap.



FEELING ELECTRIC: If you attempt to do something you have no skills in, like cook dinner or fix a TV, something shocking might just happen!

⚠ For goodness sake, love, go put some clothes on!



YOU SCRATCH MY BACK...

...AND I'LL SLAP YOUR FACE!

Your relationship with other characters is of the utmost importance. If you spend too long as a hermit then your character will become depressed and lack the enthusiasm to commit to anything. The secret is to greet people as they pass your house, then talk to them. If you have a phone then you can give them a buzz in the evenings – but don't overdo it otherwise they'll be put off. Eventually you can throw a party or invite them over and seduce them with incense and a good romantic film. Try giving complete strangers backrubs for a laugh.



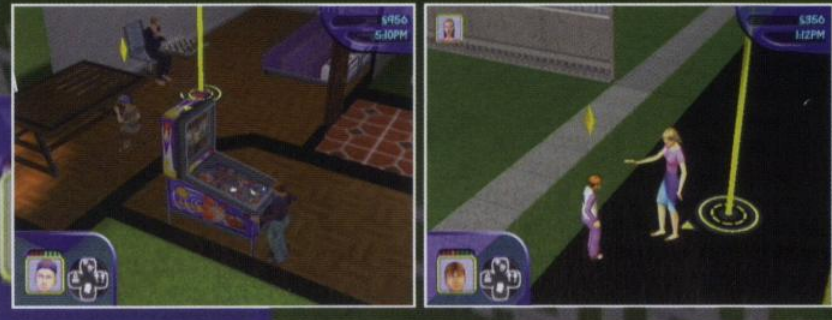
⤴ Chatting with other characters helps to forge friendships...

⤴ ... and sometimes those friendships go one step further



⤴ Thought bubbles let you know what's on the Sims' minds, helping you to keep them happy

⤴ Chatting about football probably isn't the best way to pull. Or maybe it is...



as you gaze intently at your little character doing exactly the same things, and your own life will start to take a worrying large step down on your list of priorities.

The reason for this is quite simple – the interaction you have with your characters. Unlike a lot of games of this nature that try to simplify things to make it smoother and more intuitive, *The Sims* goes completely overboard. You'll have to keep an eye on your character at all times, instructing it when to eat, when to clean up, when to go to the little boy's room, when to wash its hands, when to get ready for work, have a bath, look for a job, pay the bills, empty the bins, play the piano, chess, basketball, pinball machines, computer games... sounds tedious doesn't it?

Well, this is the clever bit – all of these activities have a bearing on the shaping of your character. If you make them spend a lot of time in front of the mirror, on the exercise machines and on the 'phone then their confidence will go up, thus improving their chance of getting a girl/boyfriend or securing a job promotion. If you play chess a lot and read a book in the evening then your character's intelligence will improve. Get two

intelligent characters together and their offspring will clean up grades-wise at school. There are no pointless activities that have been put in for the sake of it – everything fits together in some way, and the result is an absolutely fascinating three-dimensional jigsaw that can be solved in an unlimited number of ways.

When you start up the game there are two gameplay options – Get A Life and The Sims. The second game is the PC original – you start off with a neighbourhood, and you can either take control of one of the existing families or evict them from a house and import in your own created sims. The first option is exclusive to the console versions, although we're guessing it's only a matter of time before it appears in some form on the PC. It throws you into the game as somebody still living with their mum, with no money and no skills. You're given a checklist of tasks, and completing these (fix the TV, clean up the house and so on) earns you the right to move out on your own. From here you have to keep progressing through gradually nicer houses.

Completing the tasks also unlocks items that you can buy both in the Get A Life mode and The Sims mode. These range



SERVICE CALL

MAID IN HEAVEN

Once you have a phone you can call out services such as a plumber, fireman, the police or a maid – this is a perfect solution for any after-party mess (if you can afford it).

from espresso machines to vanity mirrors that allow you to change your characters' appearance at any point during play. This gives some structure and order to an otherwise very freeform game, and is a welcome addition.

Graphically *The Sims* isn't so great. Despite everything being rendered in 3D, you can see for yourself from the screenshots that everything is a little dull. The colours are subdued and the items and characters very blurry, causing a lot of the finer details present in the game to be lost without prolonged study of the screen. This is a great shame, as there's a lot of character and style to *The Sims*, but it's not immediately apparent.

The sound, on the other hand, is nothing short of fantastic. Friendly, light, throwaway jazz accompanies you as you play, and if you've got a hi-fi in your house and you tune in to a station, you get some wonderfully twee incarnations of, say, gangsta rap. Ask your character to dance to this for some amusing results.

If you're wondering if the characters speak or not when on the 'phone or conversing with friends, the answer is yes, but it is an odd one. As it happens, they speak in SimSpeak, an entirely made up

language. You may occasionally pick out the odd English word here and there, but chances are that this will merely be a coincidence. It's a bit like listening to Marlon Brando. This babble speak is completely incoherent, but the tone they use, coupled with their thought bubbles allows you to get a fair idea of what they're talking about.

The problem with *The Sims* though, is the longevity (or lack of it). In the PC version there is no limit to the number of items you can have in your house like there is in the console games. The PC version also has numerous add-on packs that give you more items, characters and locations to play with. A lot of this scope is missing on the GameCube (as well as the Xbox and PS2) and so after finishing the Get A Life challenges and playing around with your neighbourhood for a substantial amount of time, you're going to get very bored of what's on offer. If you've got a PC lying around then you're better off with the PC version, but *The Sims* on GameCube is still a mind-blisteringly good game if judged on its own merits.

GARY

CUBE VERDICT

THE SIMS

A FASCINATING GAME TO PLAY AND OBSERVE

- VISUALS**
Functional but drab. There's nothing to separate this from the PS2
- AUDIO**
Jazzy, stylish music and charmingly incoherent babble
- GAMEPLAY**
This is a tube of Pringles in digital form. Once you've popped...
- LIFESPAN**
Technically this could go on forever, but the number of items is limiting
- ORIGINALITY**
There's nothing else like this on the GameCube at the moment.

ALTERNATIVE

Still a sim, but with a slightly more 'Nintendo' taste. Not as involving, but has a few unique features.



ANIMAL CROSSING

Reviewed: Issue 12

CUBE Rating: 8.5

2ND OPINION

MAMA! "If being a virtual parent appeals then you'll love this. Most people are aware of *The Sims*, but not everyone realises what an all-consuming experience it can be"

MILES

FINAL SCORE

8.6

A CLEVER AND CREATIVE GAME THAT WILL KEEP YOU UP WELL INTO THE NIGHT

Deck 'em



CUBE

INFORMATION

LOST KINGDOMS II

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

DEVELOPER: FROM SOFTWARE

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGIN: JAPAN

PLAYERS: 1-2

MEMORY: 2 BLOCKS

STATS

■ UNIQUE COMBAT SYSTEM

■ 25 WORLDS

■ OVER TWO HUNDRED ENEMIES

■ ONE HUNDRED NEW CARDS

TOTAL GAMES MOVIES PICTURES

18 APR '03 OUT NOW 16 MAY '03



LOST

Should you get Lost?

FOR SOME gamers, RPG is a four letter word. Put simply, there are those out there who just don't enjoy the genre's tradition of random battles, stat-heavy gameplay and a central character unable to walk over surfaces above ankle height. Whilst *Lost Kingdoms II* is, at first glance, a straightforward RPG, it's actually quite different to its genre cohorts. Okay, so it trades on the standard role playing fare of dungeons, dragons and magic, but *Lost Kingdoms II* also has an unusual emphasis on action. Playing as the heroine Tara — an orphan raised by thieves — you rather less unusually have to save the kingdom in which you live by using magic, flipping switches and slaying evil-doers, but to do this you'll need to throw cards.

Essentially, *Lost Kingdoms II* is an elaborate version of Top Trumps. Instead of engaging in hand to hand combat, Tara can

DEALER

DECKED OUT

Before going into battle it's important to arrange your deck of cards according to the enemies you'll encounter. Otherwise you'll get caught short and, er, die.

There's no antidote to poison, so leg it before you get bit!

EAST MEETS WEST: In Japan, *Lost Kingdoms* is called *Rune* because fallen enemies drop magic replenishing coloured diamonds called Runes.



⬅️ With many of the lesser enemies it's best to just run away from them rather than waste your cards defeating them

⬆️ This sequel lets you perform two moves with a Transform card rather than the solitary move you got in the first game. Nice, that

PAPER CUTS

WHAT'S THE TWO-PLAYER DEAL?

In a move to better its predecessor, *Lost Kingdoms II* has a two-player mode. Unfortunately, this option doesn't allow a co-op mode, but instead provides a head-to-head battle to the death. Playing with someone who understands the elemental attributes of the cards can provide a good bit of strategic fun, but all too often there's the temptation for battles to descend into a competition over who has the most powerful deck and who can use them quickest.



⬆️ If only they'd included a mini-game of *Sam Fox's Strip Poker*



⬆️ Unfortunately, two-player combat doesn't much improve things

KINGDOMS II

lob cards at enemies which in turn either perform a melee attack, transform you temporarily into some beast or summon a creature to fight on your behalf.

There are six types of cards, namely Earth, Fire, Water, Wood, Mechanical and Neutral. These six elements all have an obvious relationship to each other (Water-based cards work best against Fire cards and so on) that you need to bear in mind at all times, and that's pretty much the crux of the gameplay. You simply need to use your cards wisely and sparingly, attack mainly when you have to and trawl each and every environment until completion.

So, is it any good? Well, actually it's pretty average. The looks and the audio are standard and the gameplay using the cards doesn't actually reveal as much strategy or intrigue as we'd hoped for. Instead, *Lost Kingdoms II* walks a middling line between being a straightforward RPG and an action

explorer, but unfortunately excels at neither style.

Because of the cards, the game's biggest selling point is also its most damning drawback. Using cards in combat, while novel at first, ultimately lacks involvement. Merely pressing a button and watching a Venus Fly Trap hobble towards an enemy and then perish after one attack is hardly interactive, and neither is transforming into a winged beast that's cumbersome to control and expires after a solitary blow. The cards draw you into the game when assembling your deck or working out elemental relationships, but using them in combat is surprisingly straightforward – pressing a button is often the most demanding part of your task.

Lost Kingdoms II is an average if unusual attempt at creating an action role-playing game. RPGs are often best when accompanied either by great atmosphere, character design and story

(such as *Chrono Trigger*) or, alternatively, by devious puzzles and excellent combat as in *Zelda* and *Grandia 2*. *Lost Kingdoms II*, despite its wealth of worlds, cards and creatures, is ultimately a game that won't convert those who don't enjoy RPGs. You might want to give it a whirl though if you've already got *Skies Of Arcadia* and can't wait until *FF: Crystal Chronicles*.

BYRON



"IT'S AN ELABORATE VERSION OF TOP TRUMPS"

CUBE VERDICT

LOST KINGDOMS II

⚙️ A GAME BEST SUITED TO DIE-HARD RPG FANS



VISUALS

An improvement over the original, but only just above average



AUDIO

There's not much of an atmosphere created by the ineffectual sounds



GAMEPLAY

Starts out quite interesting but it's ultimately too straightforward



LIFESPAN

Takes around thirty hours to finish, and there's a two-player battle mode



ORIGINALITY

The combat system is better but everything else is standard fare

ALTERNATIVE

The best RPG the GC has to offer. Classic gameplay mechanics and a vast gameworld make this a must.



SKIES OF ARCADIA: LEGENDS

Reviewed: Issue 16

CUBE Rating: 9.0

2ND OPINION

RIPPING YAWNS! "One for the RPG aficionados. It's hard to see anyone else getting anything much from a game that wears its hard-core styling like a badge of honour."

MILES

FINAL SCORE

7.0

NOT MUCH OF AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE ORIGINAL BUT STILL A COMPETENT AND NOVEL RPG

CUBE

INFORMATION

JIMMY NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS

PUBLISHER: THQ

DEVELOPER: IN-HOUSE

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGIN: US

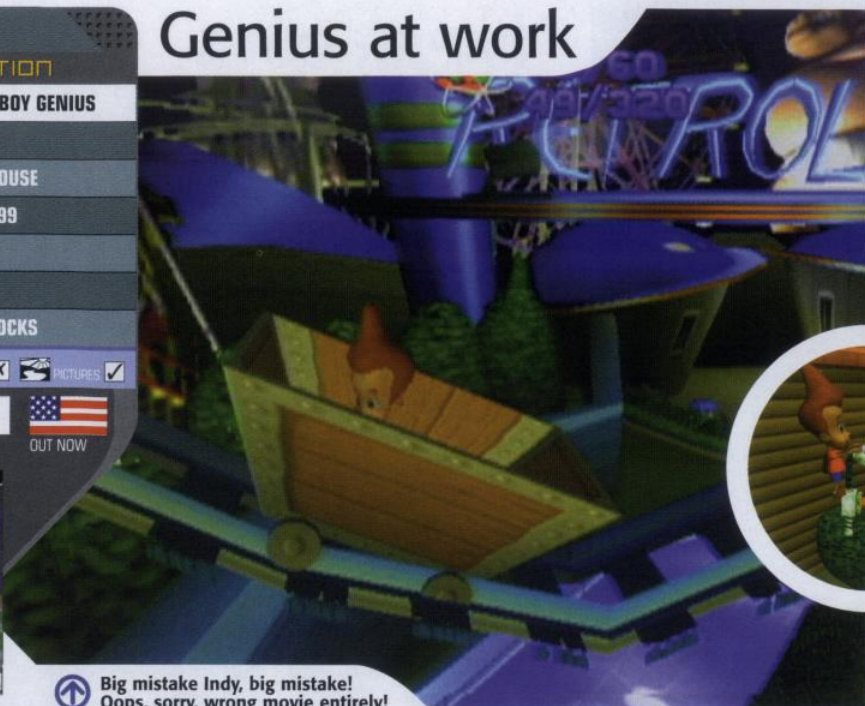
PLAYERS: 1

MEMORY: 3 BLOCKS

TOTAL GAMES: MOVIES: PICTURES:



Genius at work



Each weapon only lasts for a few seconds

Big mistake Indy, big mistake! Oops, sorry, wrong movie entirely!

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS

All Mario-d out? Want Sonic different?

THERE'S SOMETHING to be said for mediocre platformers, and that something is 'why bother?' *Jimmy Neutron* is as daring and innovative as buying a loaf of bread. There's simply nothing that jumps out, grabs you and refuses to let you leave until you've satisfied your gaming thirst.

We're talking collectible items (in this case, Neutrons), ten of which will grant you another life to waste falling into some radioactive sludge, making leaps of faith that see you jumping towards the screen while fumbling around with the joypad, trying to cross your fingers at the same time and, of course, scrabbling around in fire/ice/toxic/cave levels.

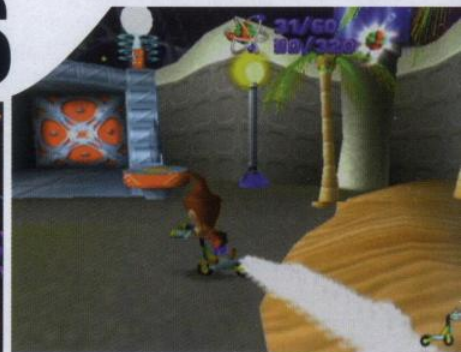
The story goes that some nasty alien types have kidnapped the parents of the Retrosville neighbourhood so it's your job to rescue them, being a boy genius an' all. No problems here – searching a fairground for prizes at the start of the game is quite good fun and has some nice varied challenges, but the game

soon degenerates into typical platform fare, and before you know it you're turning your TV off and flirting with the idea of going outside.

The problems are not just with the dullness of the game, the scrappy presentation or the lack of focus, but the controls are a bit shoddy too. The camera is fixed, causing you to misjudge jumps at an alarming rate, and it's also zoomed in too close most of the time so you can't take in any of the level. The design of the areas is quite simple, and when there are mazes to traverse they're normally far too fiddly for their own good. Level boundaries are also extremely inconspicuous, so while you're busy trying to jump onto a foot-high log you'll be attacked from behind, causing you to lose a life. How were you supposed to know that you couldn't get onto that log after all?

Unless you're buying this for the very young, you won't get much pleasure from it. A shame, because it's a good licence with potential.

GARY



CUBE VERDICT

JIMMY NEUTRON

BY-THE-NUMBERS PLATFORMER



VISUALS

Looks like a five year old PC game in high-res.



AUDIO

The voice acting is brilliant, but the tunes sound like a Game Boy.



GAMEPLAY

Collect the Neutrons, find items and hit the baddies.



LIFESPAN

Sit down with *Jimmy Neutron* for a day and you'll be done by dinner.



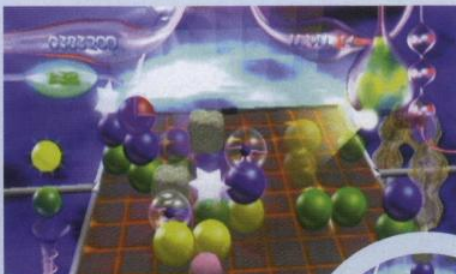
ORIGINALITY

This game is about as original as an all-teen cast horror movie.

FINAL SCORE

4.0

WILL ONLY APPEAL IF YOU'RE DESPERATE FOR A PLATFORMER AT ANY COST



⌚ The next two balls in line are displayed on the right of the screen. Keep an eye on them

⌚ When the balls get too close it's game over. Make sure you don't lose track of what's going on



CUBE

➔ INFORMATION

SUPER BUBBLE POP

PUBLISHER: JALECO

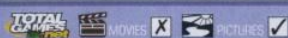
DEVELOPER: RUNCRAFT

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGIN: US

PLAYERS: 1-2

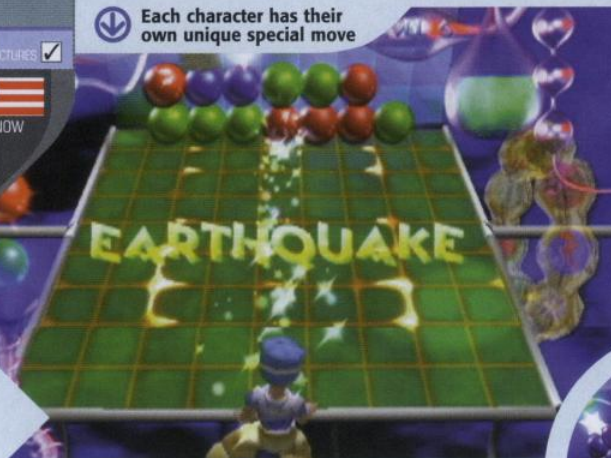
MEMORY: 1 BLOCK



Pop, pop tarts!

SUPER BUBBLE POP

⌚ Each character has their own unique special move



⌚ Allowing the board to become this packed is a sure way to disaster

Love Bust-A-Move and fed up with 2D? We'll you're a bit odd then!

TAKE ONE LOOK

at this game and it's hard not to think of an early N64 title. Blurry textures, garish colours and little animation on the uninspired characters completely ruin something that you'd think would be difficult to get wrong. The odd palette gives the game a surreal look that's strangely unsettling, and if you combine this with the hard-to-use menu system, the lack of play modes and total repetition of the levels, it doesn't look as if you have much of a classic on your hands.

Essentially being a 3D version of *Bust-A-Move*, there's a fair amount of gameplay on offer. You can earn power-ups that allow you to do things such as flip columns upside down or clear the whole board – and with 150 levels to go

through, plus a multiplayer mode there's plenty to get your teeth into.

Unfortunately there are a few problems that prevent prolonged enjoyment. For a start, your character moves too slowly around the board. Not only is this a problem, but it's also difficult to place the character exactly where you want due to the slow response times, meaning a lot of stray bubbles go flying into the wrong columns. The 3D viewpoint is clearly there only because it could be, and doesn't add anything substantial to the already-proven gameplay. At first it doesn't seem too bad and is actually rather enjoyable, but it very quickly became tedious. Only consider this if you're a hardened puzzle fan.

GARY

CUBE VERDICT

SUPER BUBBLE POP

➔ A FLAWED PUZZLER

- VISUALS**
Scrappy and garish, looks as if it's six years old.
- AUDIO**
Good dance tunes get you pumping, and you can create a playlist.
- GAMEPLAY**
Awkward to play due to the unnecessary 3D viewpoint.
- LIFESPAN**
There are 150 levels and a multiplayer mode – it's pretty huge.
- ORIGINALITY**
It's an ancient 2D game gone 3D. Ring any bells?

FINAL SCORE

5.5

REPETITIVE ACTION PUZZLER THAT WILL CAUSE FRUSTRATION AND ANNOYANCE

\$48463
Day 42
E12

18 wheels a-rollin'



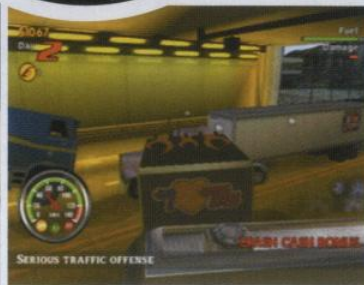
DAISY DUKE

TRUCKLE BROTHERS

Mama must be so proud of her brood. Funny how the girls always seem to turn out fit despite the in-breeding though, innit?

You are being held in jail by the... and can pick your truck up... from

⬆ You get a real feel for the power of the rigs



CUBE

⊕ INFORMATION

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS

PUBLISHER: EMPIRE

DEVELOPER: EUTECHNYX

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGIN: UK

PLAYERS: 1

MEMORY: 9 BLOCKS

⊕ STATS

- FOUR DIFFERENT TRUCKS
- COMEDY AMERICAN HICKS
- ELITE-STYLE TRADING
- COUNTRY SOUNDTRACK

TOTAL FRANCHISE MOVIES X PICTURES ✓

APR '03 TBA TBA



⬆ Doesn't it just make you want to hit the road!



⬆ Watch out for bikers hijacking your truck. You need to dislodge them before they reach the cab

⬇ The truck interiors are nicely detailed, but the external view works better in-game

Time to go truckin' crazy, man!

OKAY, NO

sniggering at the back. *Big Mutha Truckers* (settle down) is a game about trucking. Trucking and big muthas. Well, only one big mutha, but plenty of trucking. Let's make one thing clear right off the bat. *BMT* is not a serious game. You can probably tell that from the title. It's a no holds barred, traffic-bashing arcade game with a trading element to give some context and which pokes fun at a whole heap of ludicrously overplayed American stereotypes. If you liked the idea of SEGA's *18 Wheeler* (who didn't?) but found the console conversions to be utter crud (who didn't?), then consider this a big 10-4 on your back door, or something, because *BMT* is a chromium-plated, diesel-guzzling, air horn-blowing salute to trucked-up motherlovers everywhere.

By way of a little strategy, there's a trading element in there which works in a rather similar way to the classic game *Elite*. There are five cities to visit, each of which has various goods to buy and sell. The secret to success is fairly obviously to buy low and sell high. Hang around the local bar and you'll hear rumours that beer, for example, is in big demand in Capital City.

Then scoot across to the store and if the local beer's going cheap, load up and haul ass. When you start building up a bit of capital, however, you can start trading in more valuable commodities like gold or industrial machinery that offer far bigger margins. Keep your ear to the ground long enough round the local boozers and you'll also come across some dodgy illegal challenges that can earn you big bucks, and these come in a range of flavours. One involves smashing newspaper vendors for a local politician in an attempt to stop an incriminating story getting out, another features a truck tug-o-war contest which is basically a button-bashing exercise, but it's the variety offered by stuff like this that really holds your interest long term.

There is a reason for all this money-grabbing, and that's to earn enough to buy the family trucking business (*Big Mutha Truckers*) from Mama, who's decided to retire. The only snag is that there are three other siblings with same idea. Choose your character, then you have 60 days to make more money than your brothers and sister (unless you choose to be her, of course), pay Mama off and become some sort of trucking big shot.

The simple trading might sound straightforward, but there are other things to worry about. Fuel and repairs are a constant expense. You need to keep your

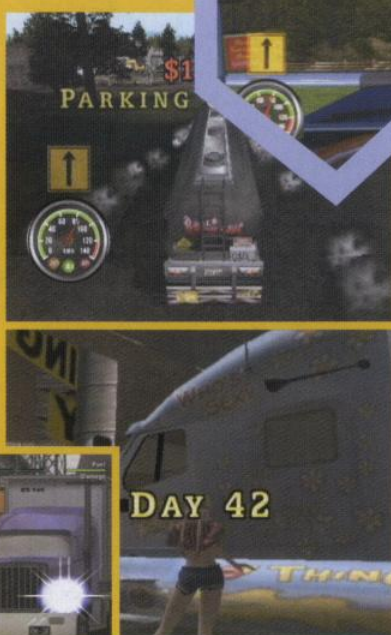
BIG MUTHA TR

RADIO YEE-HAW: Although not as varied as *GTA*'s, the selectable radio stations are cool with genuine laugh-out-loud moments and groovy tunes to boot.

TRUCK STOP

SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD

There's loads of stuff to buy and sell. Check out the inventory of each store and you'll see a list of available goods along with a cash value and a coloured icon. A single red arrow indicates it's reasonably cheap, while a double red means it's a steal. Conversely, green and double green arrows mean you'll be paying top dollar. For example, if you hear that gold is in big demand at Smokestack Heights, but expensive where you are now, you're better off taking a punt on something with a double down arrow and picking a destination at random. You'll be pretty unlucky not to make some sort of profit on it. Also bear in mind that certain goods require certain types of trailer – flatbed, refrigerated or tanker.



rig in good condition and top up those tanks or you won't make it to your destination. Breaking down or running dry will cost you a valuable day and you need to make them all count if you want to make enough bucks to buy the business. Also, if you run out of money it's game over. Loan sharks can be found in the bars of each of the five locations and they'll happily put up a large wad of cash, but be sure you can afford the extortionate interest rate. If you don't go back and pay within the allotted time they get rather angry and jack up the interest. Stall them too long and they'll come looking for you. In short, only use these guys if (a) you're absolutely desperate or (b) you have a dead cert big score.

To really succeed you need to speculate to accumulate. Spending money to improve your rig is an expensive business which at first seems unnecessary, but it'll help you in the long run. Bull bars reduce collision damage, the fuel miser add-on improves the mpg and you can buy larger trailers enabling you to haul more merchandise and make bigger deals. You can purchase more parts to improve performance, turbo chargers, power brakes and spoilers improve handling and speed of your rig and give you more chance of completing the big money challenges.

At first, the trading side fools you into

thinking the game's deeper than it actually is, but really it's just a device to hang the driving sections together and give the whole thing a point. It also offers set-piece comedy relief but you can skip through the buying and selling quite quickly when it starts to get tiresome.

The driving itself serves up a nice alternative to all those serious racers. You don't have to worry about racing lines, or even crashing into other road users (well not too much, and less so when you've got the bull bars), but simply getting from A to B isn't terribly engrossing after a few hours of play. To keep things perky there are race challenges where other truckers will race you to your destination for money. Then there are those illegal challenges to keep things fresh, offering something a little different to the standard buy-drive-sell-buy structure.

Whether you'll enjoy *Big Mutha Trucker* depends on what you're looking for. Like the title, the game itself is a bit of a throwaway gag, but in many ways all the better for it. It's not a *Metroid* or a *Zelda* that you'll plug away at solidly to completion, but it's a great way to let off steam and something you can dip into for a quick blast with the promise of something new always around the corner. If that doesn't appeal, then get the truck outta here!

TOWN AND COUNTRY

BREAKER ONE-NINER, YOU GOT YOUR EARS ON? COME ON BACK...

There are five cities to visit and each one contains a depot where you do your trading. Once you've parked up you have three options – the bar, the garage and the store. The first thing to do is get to the garage, fuel up and repair any damage from the previous trip, then head to the bar where you'll be told that certain merchandise is doing good business somewhere. Then you need to head over to the store, sell your current load (hopefully for a profit) and reload your rig for the next run. After that you can head back to the garage and spend any remaining cash on souping up your rig. If the cash reserves are running low, go back to the bar where you'll find some dubious character prepared to loan you some extra bread, but if you don't pay it back with interest in the allotted time you'll lose your truck, and probably your kneecaps.



⬆ Although imaginary, the cities are recognisable from Vegas...

⬆ ...to San Francisco. Hurting down Nob Hill in an 18 wheeler is some ride!

"A CHROMIUM-PLATED, SALUTE TO TRUCKED-UP MOTHERLOVERS EVERYWHERE"

CUBE VERDICT

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS

⬆ BIG RIGS, REDNECKS AND FUNNY ACTION



VISUALS

Not great technically but plenty of variety and style.



AUDIO

GTA-esque selectable radio stations get you giggling and toe-tapping.



GAMEPLAY

Good fun with enough going on to keep you interested.



LIFESPAN

The kind of thing you can keep coming back to.



ORIGINALITY

Driving and trading aren't original ideas but the way it's packaged is.

ALTERNATIVE

The arcade original relied on its hydraulic cabinet for kicks. As a result the home versions sucked.



18 WHEELER AM-PRO TRUCKER

Reviewed: Issue 8

CUBE Rating: 4.4

2ND OPINION

TRUCKULENT! "Fast and furious arcade action mixed with twisted humour adds up to a trucking great adventure – fasten those seatbelts and join the convoy now!"

KENDALL

FINAL SCORE

8.3

A TRUCKLOAD OF FUN, AND THAT'S A BIG 10-4. BRING IT HOME!

UCKERS

Leave 'em waxed and booby trapped

Bravo: Enemy Armor Spotted



Look what eating carrots can do. Or to quote *Jurassic Park* – “cool night vision!”



The lads stop for a bit of a breather. Right, who bring the sandwiches?

That chopper's totalled. Now how are we gonna get out of this mess!?

GHOST RECON

Welcome to the first line of defence

WHEN THE brown stuff is poised to hit the rotating air cooling device, who do Western governments turn to straighten things out? Well, as a matter of fact it's you. Yep, dozy Herberts like us can now take command of a crack squad of elite Green Berets and lead them to a sorry demise in various political hotspots around the world. Osama Bin Laden must be quaking in his cave. At any rate, that's the idea behind *Ghost Recon*.

Here, squad level strategy with two fireteams of up to three members each meets FPS action for the first time on the GameCube, and it comes with some pedigree. Since *Rainbow 6*, the Clancy-inspired mix of stealth, strategy and real-time combat has proven increasingly popular, and why not? Beneath every placid exterior is a tough guy trying to get out, and doesn't the sound of gunfire always make you feel manly? Um,

anyway, the 'Ghosts' of the title are so-called due to their ability to get in, get the job done and get out again virtually undetected.

Well, undetected until stuff starts blowing up all over the shop, but by then our boys will have been airlifted out of trouble with the smell of victory in their nostrils. Except that the first few times you play *Ghost Recon*, chances are you'll send everyone steaming in behind a hail of gunfire. You'll suffer casualties, but on the lower skill level it works and generally you only need one of your team to make it to the extraction point, although some missions involve rescuing people who also need to be kept alive.

With up to six characters under your command divided into two teams, the strategic side is never going to get too convoluted. You can set waypoints on the strategic map screen, then back in the action view pressing left on the D-

pad cycles through your men. The team not under direct control will move to the next waypoint but you'll always be in command of one or the other.

For example, if the currently selected character is a member of Alpha team then the rest of Alpha team will follow you while Bravo team will move independently to the final waypoint. An arrow appears on the direction finder at the bottom of the screen indicating the direction of Alpha team's next waypoint so you can find your way there manually without too much fuss. It's best to stop every few yards and scan the surrounding area however, as enemy troops are likely to be lurking.

The real-world scenarios and tactics-based combat makes for compulsive entertainment, but it's very difficult to disassociate this from the extremely shoddy job that's been made of the port. The iffy frame-rate that occasionally chugs down to only a few frames per second is a hangover from a flaw that

CUBE

INFORMATION

GHOST RECON

PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT

DEVELOPER: RED STORM

PRICE: £39.99

ORIGIN: US

PLAYERS: 1-2

MEMORY: 17 BLOCKS

STATS

VS AND CO-OP MODES

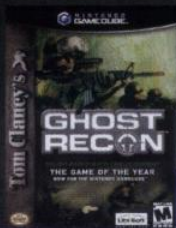
15 MISSIONS

VARIED CONDITIONS

ACTION AND STEALTH

TOTAL GAMECUBE MOVIES X PICTURES ✓

OUT NOW TBA OUT NOW



SIGHTS FOR SORE EYES: On lower skill levels an indicator shows the direction of enemy fire and the crosshair turns red over targets

Even when the area seems secure you have to be alert



SUCKERS

OFF THE WALL

A memorable graphical dropout we encountered involving one of our team members kneeling happily on the side of a building

This shows the tactical map screen which enables you to plan your route to the target and pinpoint potential trouble spots



SIR, YES SIR!

JOIN THE ARMY - IT'S GREAT. YOU CAN HAVE A GUN IF YOU WANT...

Up to six soldiers taken from a pool of raw recruits are under your direct control during any mission. You can select team members individually before each sortie depending on the requirements of the job, or choose to rest men wounded in the previous mission and in need of a spot of R and R. At the end of missions, all surviving soldiers are given points which you can allocate to various attributes from leadership (improves the overall stats of the whole group) to weapon accuracy (think about it). It's therefore helpful to keep your men alive. However, it's also worth bleeding a couple of fresh faces on each mission so you've always got a bit of experience in reserve when the going gets tough.

ECON

afflicted the PS2 version, but new glitches are evident that are simply down to the laziness of the conversion.

Periodically, your highly trained troops will come across sinister obstacles like an inconveniently placed bush that will utterly flummox them. Frequently unable to fathom the complexities of shrub-circumnavigation, they start jerking about like they're having 5,000 volts of electricity channelled up their rectums. Similar problems occur inside buildings where your team will follow you into a room but not have the presence of mind to get out of your way so you can get out again. You either have to spend several seconds wriggling past them or cycle through to the last guy who came in and therefore has a clear path back out the door. This can lead to further problems if you accidentally select a team member involved in a firefight - you'll often find yourself cut down by enemy fire before you've had a chance to get orientated.

Team members who survive missions are awarded stat points that can be distributed across a variety of attributes as you see fit, which is important in the tougher missions. Those that don't make it home are replaced from a reinforcement pool of wetbacks which encourages you to try to keep your men alive. Otherwise the temptation is to do everything yourself and treat them as lives, which certainly doesn't work on the higher difficulty setting.

The glitches are unforgivable in themselves but the AI problems have been prevalent since the original *Rainbow 6* game and really should have been sorted out by now. If you can ignore the many obvious flaws in the graphics and presentation there is, believe it or not, an addictive game to be had, but the numerous obvious technical problems prevent a higher score. Despite first opinions it's far from awful, and could have been great, but it isn't.

MILES

"THE AI PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN PREVALENT SINCE THE ORIGINAL RAINBOW SIX GAME"

CUBE VERDICT

GHOST RECON

FALLS WAY SHORT OF WHAT IT COULD HAVE BEEN

- VISUALS**
At best average, at worst glitchy with massive frame-rate dropouts
- AUDIO**
Wind, gunfire and radio chatter give off the right mood
- GAMEPLAY**
Compulsive enough with a good mix of stealth and action
- LIFESPAN**
Two-player mode and replayability is always there to try and do better
- ORIGINALITY**
The first of its kind on the 'Cube but it's been done on other formats

2ND OPINION

MAN DOWN! "Having enjoyed the PC original, this watered-down version is a complete let-down for console gamers. The AI is a total joke too. Oh, well."

GARY

FINAL SCORE

6.5

A DECENT GAME STRUGGLES TO REVEAL ITSELF THROUGH SOME DREADFUL PRESENTATION

ALTERNATIVE

It doesn't have the strategy elements, but as military shooters go there are few better



MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE

Reviewed: Issue 14 CUBE Rating: 8.6

Megaman will rock your world!



He might be the first boss, but he's a lot of trouble to overcome

FILESHARE

ADVANCED GAMING

Program Advances are special supercharged power-ups. These can be equipped in your very own file folder, which is found in the pause menu.



ROCKMAN.EXE NETWORK TRANSMISSION

The traditional platformer is back, and Megaman is at the helm

ROCKMAN has endured something of a turbulent past. The diminutive character, known as Megaman outside Japan, has starred in some great games but has also suffered the indignity of being pitched into some quite poor ones. Fortunately for Rockman, his fans and GameCube owners in general, *Rockman.exe Network Transmission* is part of the former group. In short, it rocks!

A cursory glance at the screenshots will tell you the most important thing that you should know – *Network Transmission* is indeed a 2D platformer. Original 2D action games are pretty rare these days, but a cel-shaded 2D game with 3D characters and structures? Now that is unusual! When you actually see it moving, this weird fusion of styles is really rather impressive. Praise must go to Arika for developing such a polished game. Rockman himself, along with all other characters, is neatly drawn and well animated, and even though characters are 3D they don't look out of place. In fact, thanks to the solid 3D nature of walls,

floors and structures, everything fits together seamlessly. There are no rough edges in *Rockman.exe*, no dull bits and no slowdown – it's 60fps all the way, baby.

But you're still probably questioning the merit of a GameCube title that revisits a long-dead genre. No need. If it's fun, it's a good game. And *Rockman.exe* is jolly good fun. The premise on which this game is based is similar to that on which *Megaman Battle Network* (on the Game Boy Advance) is built. It goes like this: Netto Hikari has a so-called Net Navi – Rockman – whom he uploads to his PET (Personal Terminal – i.e. his PC) and to various mainframes where Rockman must battle viruses in order to clean up different networks. These viruses take many different forms from little guys in hard hats with pickaxes to embedded turrets and dangerous bosses. The whole Internet is infected and it's down to Netto and his Rockman.exe file to sort it out.

In *Megaman Battle Network*, battles were slow and procedural. Thankfully *Rockman.exe* dispenses with all that,



You'll fight on the land, in the air... and in the sea.



CUBE

INFORMATION

ROCKMAN.EXE NETWORK TRANSMISSION

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

DEVELOPER: AKIRA

PRICE: £59.99

ORIGIN: JAPAN

PLAYERS: 1

MEMORY: 3 BLOCKS

STATS

137 DIFFERENT POWER-UPS

EIGHT SAVE GAME FILES

THREE CONTROL SET-UPS

TEN POWER-UPS IN TOW AT ONCE

TOTAL CAPCOM MOVIES X PICTURES ✓

Q2 OUT NOW TBA



OUR HOUSE: Netto's house is a nice little place. He's got a computer (of course) as well as a desk, a bed and a few cupboards. He's even got his own football.



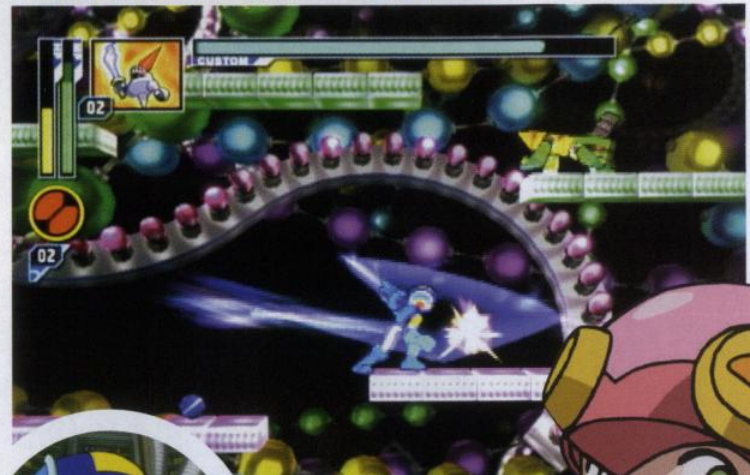
⬅ All of the boss fights take on a traditional beat-'em-up style, with energy bars and small arenas. The only problem with these is that they are so tough!

⬇ For close range combat there's nothing like the sword weapons. Do bear in mind that you're very vulnerable when using them, though, so look out

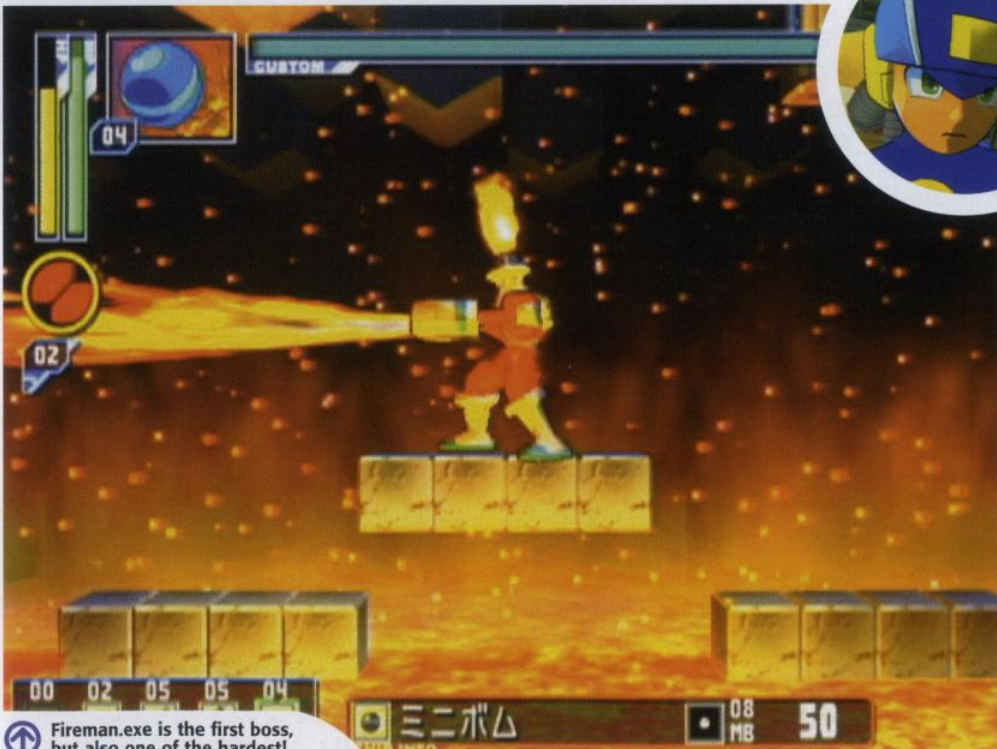
HARD AS NAILS

BOSSING AROUND

In typical fashion, a boss character guards the end of each level. Like Rockman himself, the bosses purport to be executable files, only these ones are nasties. The very first boss, Fireman.exe, is actually one of the toughest in the whole game. Strange game design, perhaps, but Fireman.exe certainly provides a rigorous and valuable introduction to Network Transmission. From there onwards the difficulty level rarely lets up. Bosses such as Quickman.exe, Needleman.exe, Elecman.exe and Swordman.exe do exactly what they say on the tin, and a bit more. Boss battles are fought in arenas not dissimilar to those found in *Super Smash Bros. Melee*. Considering Arika and Capcom's expertise in one-on-one fighters, it will come as no surprise to learn that these battles are incredibly engrossing, and the Megaman hard-core will be pleased to learn that both Zero and Forte appear as bosses late on in the game. Nice.



NETWORK



⬆ Fireman.exe is the first boss, but also one of the hardest!

"A CONSIDERED ADVENTURE THAT DEMANDS FORETHOUGHT AS MUCH AS IT DOES SHARP REFLEXES"



GOING TO TOWN

INTERWEB TRIPPING

As Netto (with Rockman.exe on file) attempts to defeat Internet viruses, the two visit other computers. A map of Akihara town shows Netto's own house, but it also displays three other houses, a bus station, a subway, Akihara Park, a school and a shop called Higureya. The role-playing element is highlighted when visiting Higureya, where you can purchase new chips with the money earned in *Network Transmission's* levels. These levels can be accessed from the homes in Akihara as well as from the bus station, school and subway. Each of these locations contains computers that access different parts of the Web but you won't be able to visit any location other than Higureya until you've completed the stages accessible from Netto's PC. And Akihara Park? Well, it's unfortunate that you can't play on the swings, but you can have a scrap with any boss character you've previously defeated in the game proper. What a friendly little town Akihara is.



Every location in Akihara houses a challenge. Make sure you visit them all!

The mix of 2D and 3D graphics looks very good.



Make sure you use every one of Rockman's abilities



HEAVY ROCK

LET'S ROCK!
 Check out the intro to the Japanese Rockman.exe anime series along with the theme that booms from your speakers, but don't expect to see it in the Western release...



Fight elemental enemies with their opposite attacks

Take your time when choosing your special attacks as they all have their strong points

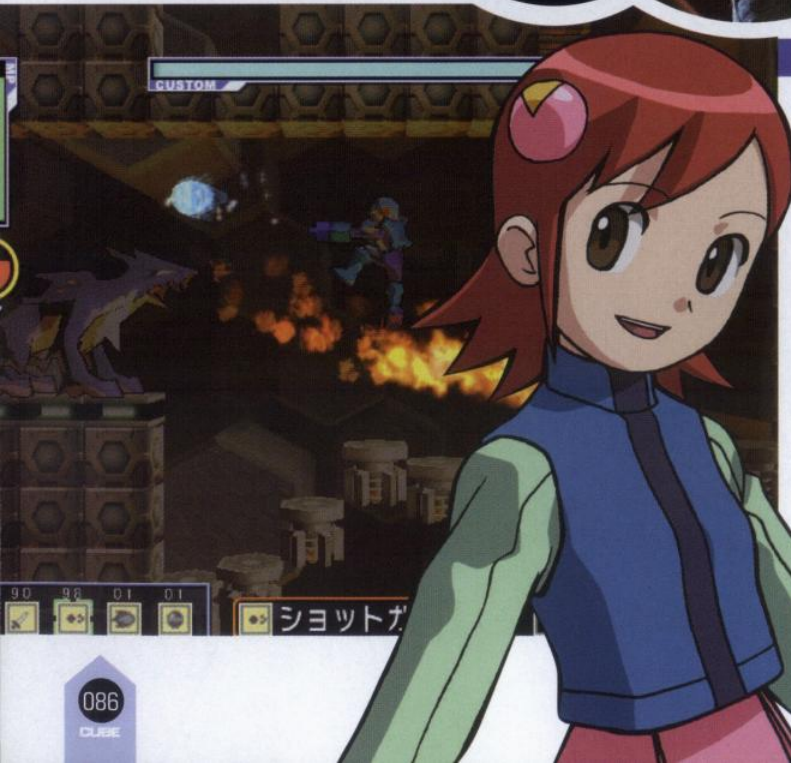
CONTINUED

featuring instead quick 2D action. *Network Transmission* is not a *Mario*-style 'jump on heads' game, more of a 'shoot and hit' platformer in the style of old skool *Rockman/Megaman* games. Both designs are conducive to enjoyable gameplay, of course, and *Network Transmission* picks up the baton from the good old days in this famous series.

As you run around (not just left to right but, in a *Super Metroid*-type fashion, in all directions) you'll find a balanced mix of enemies, jumps and climbs. Rockman can jump, slide, hang from wires and climb up ladders, and control of these core functions is simple: all these controls are on the A-button and D-pad (or you can use the analogue stick according to your preference). On the attacking front, B fires the weak but ever-present Rock Buster, although its ineffectiveness makes it very much a last resort.

The real key to progression is the use of chips. These can be cycled through by tapping L and R and used by tapping Y. How and when you use these chips is the single most important factor in determining whether or not you will survive. Since you can only use each chip a set number of times (sometimes as little as once or twice) it's vital to use the right chip in the right circumstances, and sparingly. So while *Rockman.exe Network Transmission* is an action game, it's also a considered adventure that demands forethought as much as it does sharp reflexes. It's this combination that makes it so interesting to play.

The mechanics are certainly sound, and it's great to see a game with this much style. It's not just the cel-shading — though it does look fantastic here — but it's little things such as the choice of colours in levels, which convey the impression of actually being inside a mainframe and at



THE PERFECT FIGURE: Oust a boss and you'll receive a memento of your victory – a die-cast model of the defeated foe. These look great in Netto's house.

"AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF HOW TO UPDATE AN OLD TYPE OF GAME FOR A NEW TYPE OF GAMER"

⬇ Be careful of the clockwork rabbits... but you already knew that!



⬇ Before every boss there's a small cut-scene just to scare you



the same time being in a fantasy world. *Network Transmission* succeeds in using a pretty garish palette yet maintaining the illusion of Rockman being inside a network. On the audio side of things it harks back to the days of 8- and 16-bit *Rockman* games. The cheesy little tunes that accompany the in-game action could just as well be from the early Nineties in terms of their composition, but of course their quality is far superior in this GameCube revival. To complete the stylistic circle, *Network Transmission's* front-end is sleek and pleasing to the eye.

But let's put a caveat paragraph here. Thanks to the FreeLoader, just about every GameCube owner in the country is (or could be) in a position to sample import games such as this, but sometimes it's not wise to do so. *Rockman.exe* isn't a glaring example of "Don't touch it!" syndrome, but it should be treated with caution if you don't have

any knowledge of Japanese. In particular the customisation menus could be quite tricky to navigate. There's no real problem in following the plot – it's all fairly self-explanatory – but if you'd rather be absolutely sure of what you're configuring, hang on for the American release instead.

Overall, Arika has done a sterling job. It's brought the *Rockman* licence right up to date without sacrificing the staunchly 2D nature of the series. *Rockman.exe Network Transmission* is an excellent example of how to update an old type of game for a new type of gamer, and for those who do remember the good old days, this is a splendid way to revisit an old style of gameplay but also to enjoy it with 21st Century graphics and a few original touches. Old fogie or bright young thing, *Rockman* fan or not, almost everyone will find this a cracking game.

JONTI

CHIP UPGRADES

LIKE ALL OF US, ROCKMAN NEEDS LOTS OF CHIPS IN ORDER TO SURVIVE...

As you run around the game's winding levels, a meter at the top of the screen gradually fills up. When it's full, Rockman is able to get some power-up chips from his ever-helpful buddy in the real world, Netto Hikari. A selection of five chips from Netto's collection – offered in a completely random way – are available in differing quantities at this stage. You can choose to take them all into your inventory or you can select only those that you perceive to be worth having. Or, if you want to be really clever, you can decline Netto's offer, let the bar fill once more and then choose from ten chips instead of the standard five. This is an especially useful option when the initial five are a bit duff. There are 137 chips in total, though many of these don't become available until later on. Statistics are given to denote whether a chip can be used in all circumstances or whether it's exclusively for use in a certain position – on the ground, when hanging from a ladder or a wire, or when jumping. Therefore it's important to change an inventory that's geared to the area in which you find yourself. Clever stuff.



⬆ Before you can choose your next five weapons you have to fill the bar up

CUBE VERDICT ROCKMAN.EXE

➔ A GREAT GAME, ESPECIALLY FOR MEGAMAN FANS



VISUALS

Cel-shading done well. *Network Transmission* looks lovely and crisp



AUDIO

Catchy music throughout. Pure anime cheese, and that rocks!



GAMEPLAY

Rockman himself is agile and control over his movements is tight



LIFESPAN

There are loads of chips to see and plenty of tough bosses to fight.



ORIGINALITY

It's a 2D action game, but the upgrades give it a tactical spin

ALTERNATIVE

A collection of super 2D platformers, most of which outshine even Arika's game. Simply classic.



SONIC MEGA COLLECTION

Reviewed: Issue 17

CUBE Rating: 8.0

2ND OPINION

MEGATOUGH! "Unless you're a *Megaman* fan you may find this a little too difficult to play. It's very fiddly, and the boss fights are insane. Be warned!"

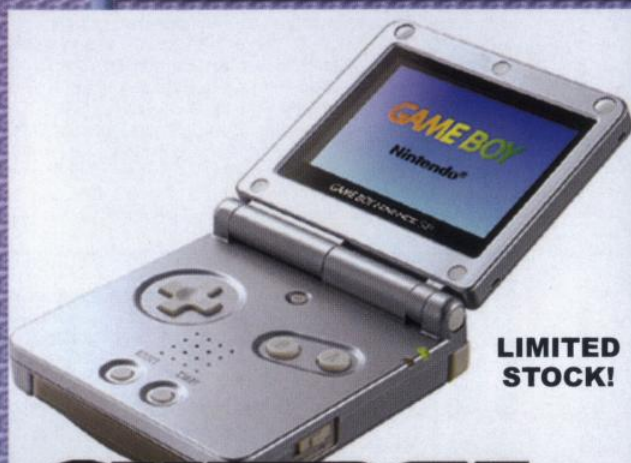
GARY

FINAL SCORE

8.0

A FINE PLATFORMER IN THE CLASSIC MOULD, WITH AN INTERESTING STRATEGIC TWIST

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gamestation
where it's never game over...

CUBE

ISSUE EIGHTEEN



Come on in, the water's lovely and so are we!
Now there's an offer you can't refuse

YOUR LETTERS

VIEWPOINT

90 If you've written to us in the last few weeks, it's possible your letter might be here. Exciting innit?

FORUM FRENZY

92 The usual selection of views, banter and weirdness harvested from the CUBE forums this month.

READER REVIEWS

93 Two things must ye know of the Reader Reviews. (1) They are reviews, and (2) They are by readers.

CHEATING MONKEYS

96 Despite their exertions a couple of months back, we're still awaiting the pitter patter of little cheating monkeys. It would be easier if we could at least tell which one was the girl!



BEAT THE TEAM

94 If you think you have the skills to take on CUBE's team of professional gamers we've got a bunch more challenges to test your abilities. So put your scores where your mouth is...

ADVANCE

110 SEGA takes over this month with two crackers for you – *Sonic Adventure 2* and a brilliant conversion of *Super Monkey Ball*. It's the (monkey) business and an amazing achievement on the part of the developers

STUDIO EYE

112 This month we've been 'mad for it' up in Manchester to check out progress on *X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge*. Everyone loves a violent, insane mutant, after all!

COMPETITION

114 Acclaim is giving away five Logitech Force-Feedback steering wheels and five copies of its gravel-slinging rally game *Dakar 2*. As usual, the questions are pretty tough!

REGULARS

SOLUTION

METROID PRIME

100 Free with this very issue is a 144 page book containing a complete walkthrough guide to Retro Studios' masterpiece, while here in the magazine we've got 10 pages of complete and exclusive maps to go with it.

SUBS & BACK ISSUES
Missing that elusive Issue 01? Can't find CUBE where you live? Then you'd better check these pages!
126 & 128

BEAT THE TEAM
RE Zero, Rocky and a double-hit of Monkey Ball! Come and 'av a go!
94

Want to get past the first level? Check out our glorious, full-colour maps!

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CUBE

ISSUE EIGHTEEN

VIEWPOINT

YOU COULD WRITE TO DANNII MINOGUE, BUT HER LETTERS ARE ALL ANSWERED BY BOUNCERS, SO WRITE TO US INSTEAD!

There's been a lot of whining this month which we put down to post-hibernation blues. We can get pretty cross too after five months in a dead tree trunk.

RANT ON!

OSWALDTWISTLE

Dear **CUBE**
What's with your reviews? Do you purposefully try to be controversial and disagree with other decent mags? Sometimes I wonder how long you play a game before writing a 'comprehensive' review - what is it, three to four days? Seems like it sometimes.

For instance, *Aggressive Inline* is not better than *Tony Hawk's 3* and nowhere near as good as *Hawk's 4*. It also takes 57 blocks on a memory card to save it - ridiculous.

StarFox Adventures - Yeah, it looks nice, but is the most unoriginal game I have ever played. Four years and two consoles in development and Rare have managed to come up with an unchallenging *Zelda* rip-off. Good riddance to Rare, I say, if they are going to take this long to produce a clone of a four-year-old game they've had their day.

What do you have against *Smash Bros*? 8.3? That's a bit low isn't it? It's a huge game and an amazing challenge. Unbeatable

multiplayer (until *Timesplitters 2* came out - shows where Rare's genius went). *Crazy Taxi* - yes, it's almost three years old, but it's also one of the best games ever. It takes time to master and is exactly the same as other versions, but that's not a bad thing when the gameplay is top notch. And although I love *SEGA Soccer Slam* it's not worth 9.0. It's aimed at multiplayer (despite the Challenge mode) and like a lot of your reviews (*Monkeyball*, anyone?) you assume people only play games in groups of four. Many people play solo and even a game in two-player mode is not as enjoyable as going at it with three friends (so to speak).

I would like to see more info concerning these differences and also more in-depth knowledge about longevity.

JAMES FORD, OSWALDTWISTLE

➔ **CUBE:** Consider yourself in some way applauded for being the first person from Oswaldtwistle ever to write in to CUBE.



➔ **SEGA Soccer Slam** - as good for Billy No-mates as it is in multiplayer?



GET IN TOUCH

This month we tested our contactability by holding a seance. Elvis and William the Conqueror came and it was really good.

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To be sure they land in the right place, aim your emails at CUBE@paragon.co.uk

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PHANCY PANTS

I COULD BE YOUR PHANTASY



➔ Are we a little too sophisticated now for the simplistic online experience of *PSO*

Dear **CUBE**

As most people say, I love your magazine (that's why I subscribe), although the other day I was happily reading issue 16 and I came to page 66 and the review of *Phantasy Star Online Episodes 1&2*. When I first saw the title I was quite excited because I owned both *Episodes 1* and *2* on the Dreamcast and I thought it was an amazing game, but you gave it a 7.5 and you slagged it off quite a bit.

You said it was a pointless experience offline, which isn't true because you need to train up (like *Pokémon*, and that was one of the greatest games ever, wasn't it?). If you don't train up offline, you won't have any friends online! Training up online will make you skint! But apart from overlooking the offline

mode and under-rating it, you're damn right about online.

ANDY TIMLETT, HORSHAM

P.S. Is the modem annoying like the Dreamcast one?

➔ **CUBE:** *The Phantasy Star debate rumbles on and seems to have split opinion down the middle. What you have to remember is that people expect a bit more now. Two years ago, the novelty of going online with a console game was a great gimmick in itself, but it doesn't disguise the fact the game is soooooo shallow. As a community generator it's great, but we really want to see an online game that explores the possibilities of the medium, not just a glorified chat engine.*

ALIENATED

Dear **CUBE**
Having had my GameCube for about four months now, I have had the opportunity to play some rather interesting games, and while I can congratulate Nintendo for producing some good products, I still feel as though there is one question at the back of my mind.

There is one game which everyone has been talking about since it came out, a game which I desperately want to own... and what is that game? *Alien vs Predator*.

So I thought I would write to you for your wisdom and seek out any information that you may have on if this game is coming out on the GameCube. **ANDREW REILLY, BIRMINGHAM**
P.S. If there are no plans for it to be released, can you beat up those good folks at Fox Interactive for me please.

CUBE: 'Fraid not, which is a shame since the PC version was outstanding. It could have been a problem translating the speed of the gameplay to the GC, however, given the limitations of controlling an FPS using a joystick.



↑ If you burrowed into the **CUBE** teams' brains and downloaded their thoughts, this is what you'd get

PEDANT POWER

Dear **CUBE**
I read your article "What has Nintendo Ever Done For Us?" in issue 15, but I feel that I must put you straight as it seems you have not done your research properly.

Nintendo did not invent the force feedback or Rumble Pak. SEGA's Afterburner cabinet had a joystick that rumbled and this came out back in 1986.

Nintendo did not invent the system expansion. The ZX Spectrum had an expansion port and it was out in 1982.

The SNK Neo-Geo Pocket could be linked to SEGA's Dreamcast long before the GBA to GC link cable hit the market.

So the question should be changed from: What has Nintendo ever done for us? To: What will Nintendo rip off from other companies next? Yours mockingly
BJORN BEM, WOLVERHAMPTON
PS E20 says you don't print this letter because you don't want anybody to find out how thick you all are for not doing your homework.

CUBE: First up, we're talking home systems here. Duh!

The Spectrum supported RAM packs which offered increased memory but nothing in the way of increased functionality. Also, the Spectrum was a computer, not a console, so there. As for the Neo Geo-Dreamcast link-up, okay, fair enough, but it only worked with one game - King Of Fighters - and we very much doubt many people reading this will have had the pleasure of seeing it in action. So even if Nintendo didn't come up with the original idea, they sure as hell made it work.

So, of 16 innovations that were mentioned in the feature you have picked tenuous holes in the three of them, and that renders the whole thing meaningless does it? It is you who is mocked, sir.

P.S. You owe us E20

ANIMAL

Why did Animal Crossing vanish from releases in Issue 15 and no diary in Issue 17?

CUBE:
Cause it's never gonna happen. Sob.



↑ Thanks to the FreeLoader we can all experience the variable weather of Alftown

LET'S TALK ABOUT TXT

⤷ WILL THERE BE ANY GOD GAMES RELEASED FOR THE GC SUCH AS THE CLASSIC COMMAND AND CONQUER SERIES?

CUBE: You already have *Pikmin 2*. What more do you need?

⤷ HAVE U NOTICED THAT IF YOU HOLD Z WHEN YOU START UP THE GC IT PLAYS A DONKEY KONG-LIKE TUNE?

CUBE: Yes. Try plugging in four pads and holding all the Z buttons down :o)

⤷ HOW DO THOSE CHEATING MONKEYS SURVIVE IN THAT SWAMP YOU CALL AN OFFICE?

CUBE: They have their wits about them at all times, and scuba gear

⤷ WHAT HAPPENED TO MEGA MAN?

CUBE: He's back. Check out page 84

⤷ NO, I'M SERIOUS. BODY HARVEST 2 NOW! YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE

CUBE: Always with the *Body Harvest* already! Sigh...

⤷ WILL FINAL FANTASY 11 BE COMING OUT ON CUBE?

CUBE: Nope

⤷ ARE YOUR GAMES RATED BY THE PERSON WHO REVIEWS THEM OR DO YOU MAKE A GROUP DECISION?

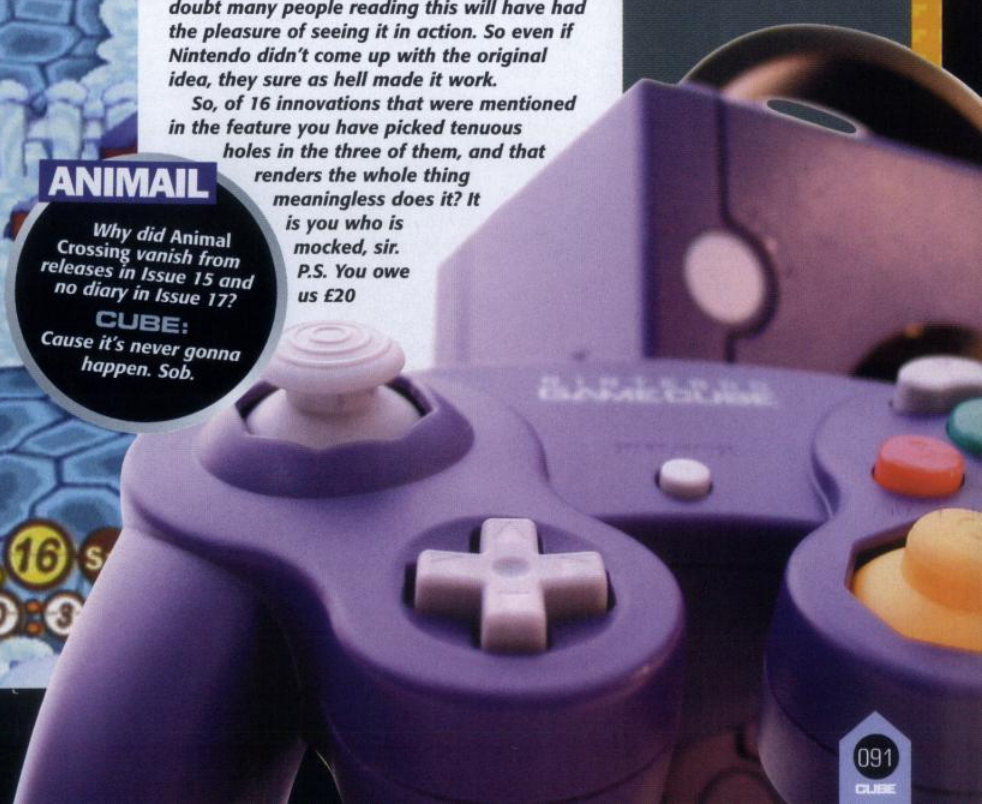
CUBE: Usually the reviewer, but sometimes we argue and fight and scratch

⤷ CAN U TELL THOSE CHEATING MONKEYS TO DO SOMETHING USEFUL AND MAKE ANOTHER 1 OF THOSE COOL LVL EDITORS 4 T5Z

CUBE: Unfortunately, they are too busy draft-dodging at the moment

⤷ R U MAD? I HATE METROID PRIME!

CUBE: Loser for table 5!



CUBE

ISSUE EIGHTEEN

FORUM FRENZY



What you lot have been saying on the **CUBE** forum, located at www.totalgames.net/forum/

Sexism, Sonic and unsung heroes – it's nice to see you young people having a sensible debate. Much better than going out joyriding or something.

TOPIC: SONIC MEGA COLLECTION

Author: Gromley
I think that this game is really good – it's fun and brings back lots of good memories, and is also surprisingly challenging. Who else has this, and what do they think of it?

Author: Nimmo
Well, since *S3+K* is one of my very favourite games of all time (and I don't care about the people that say "*Super Mario World* is better FACT"... I disagree), I bought it a while back and I love it.

Author: Lyris
Sonic Mega Collection I'd give an 8/10 – mostly excellent games and well worth the price. Shame there's not more movies, a 3D world like on *Sonic Jam* (on the Saturn) and *Sonic CD*, the best *Sonic* game ever, isn't on there. Still well worth it, though.

Author: Thebeesarecoming
I was so disappointed with it. It's just *Sonic Jam* with three extra games and no *Sonic CD*. Again. They used the space they could've put it in for *Ristar* and *Flicky*. What were they thinking? Heck, the *SCD* movies have the American songs! NOOO! Bring back *Super Sonic Warrior*! It's NO WAY worth £35. I picked up *Sonic Jam* for a fiver. *Mega Collection* cost me £40. I'm OUTRAGED.

CUBE: We think it's a very good disc, but some of Lyris' and Thebeesarecomings' comments are very true. You can always wait for it to come down in price, remember. And Nimmo, you are wrong!

TOPIC: SEXISM IN GAMES

Author: Light-Angel
There is loads of sexism in games. In the game they probably make the female characters more appealing to men. Why? In *BMX XXX* they have naked women going across the screen but no men. In *FF10-2* they're planning to make Yuna go around in hot pants and a thin bikini top. Don't the programmers know that there are female players around? If female characters are made to look more appealing to men then why not the male characters made to look more appealing to women.

Author: Voodoo Doctor
You gotta get over this. Unfortunately, the gaming industry is kept afloat by hairy-palmed sexist pigs (much like the rest of the world). That's life. When a pig starts flying, the industry will change its representation of men and women (just like the film industry).

CUBE: A little harsh maybe. There are plenty of strong female lead characters in games, its just a shame that they too tend to follow a

stereotype – 'tough girl with attitude', for example.

TOPIC: MOST UNDERRATED GAMES ON THE GAMECUBE

Author: Super Ted
Dave Mirra 2 – this is a great game, and offered a lot harder challenge than *Tony Hawk's 3* did.

Author: boxcarboy
Aggressive Inline – better than *Tony Hawk's Sega Soccer Slam* – totally passed over by most, but it's good for multiplayer games.

Author: The Baker
Starfox Adventures – lots of mags/sites gave it a hard time, but it's one of the best games out on the 'Cube.

Author: Chris Walker
I'd have to say *Pikmin*. It may not be the longest game in the world, but it is absolutely fantastic while it lasts. I've never experienced a strategy game work so well on a console before. It is a game that is at least worth a rent, but don't expect to complete it first time round – the Snagrets and the final boss can be a right royal pain in the backside.

CUBE: Chandra says *Virtua Striker 3*, Byron says *Tiger Woods 2003*, Miles says *Rocky* and Gary says *Dashin the Giant*.

WHERE IT'S AT!

To find out what all the fuss is about, why don't you check out the forum yourself – if you haven't already. Joining In the fun couldn't be simpler...

STEP ONE:

Get yourself online. It's fairly simple – most PCs and Macs these days are Internet capable, whether they're at school, college or in the library. Tempted to surf the Web at work? Check carefully what your company's Internet policy is first – it might be a better idea to go to an Internet café. If you're very lucky, you might be one of those people who have a computer at home.

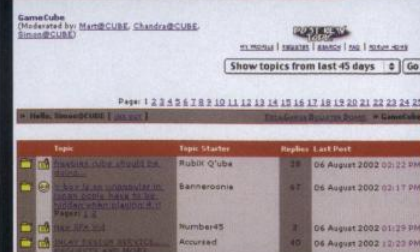
STEP TWO:

Type the following into the Net browser window: www.totalgames.net/forum/. This will give you read-only access to the forum. To get in on the fun you'll have to register – you can do that by clicking on the cunningly titled 'REGISTER' icon at the top of the page. Fill in your details, choose a name and then wait for a password to be emailed to you (which will arrive in no time).



STEP THREE:

Er, that's it... Thousands of you have already joined in, so it's obviously pretty simple – heck, even the **CUBE** team managed to register first time, and if you're lucky, you'll get a chance to speak to us there!



HONOURABLE MENTIONS

(The people that shouted loudest over the last four weeks)

Thanks to: Volvgia for being correct about SUPERCUBERDUDE and LORD KRISTOF, [munch] for having an interesting homepage and DarkPenfold for understanding the pleasure of *Worms* on the Amiga. We bite our thumbs at The Critic. Two words – grow up.

READER REVIEWS

Don't agree with our reviews? Then send us yours! Vent your spleen, get it off your chest or simply gush about a game you love. Make them 130 words long and if we print them you'll get a JOYTECH memory card!



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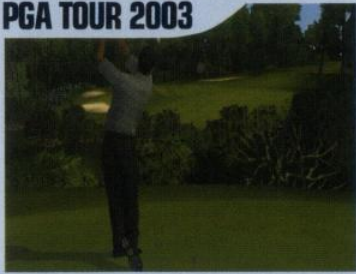
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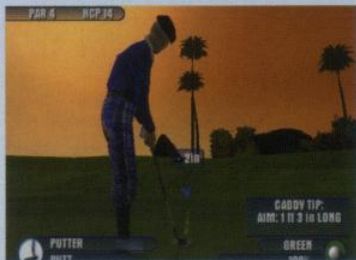
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TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003



PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER: IN-HOUSE
ISSUE REVIEWED: 14
CUBE RATING: 9.0



THIS IS THE best golf game ever released! Sure, there have been some great golf games released in the past, like *Mario Golf*, but none have had the wealth of options that this has. In single-player mode the tournaments, scenarios and Tiger Challenge will keep you going for ages but it's the multiplayer that really shines with skins, Matchplay and the great Skillzone. Also, the ability to buy player stats with the money you earn increases the longevity no end.

The Fantasy courses are a great addition to the real life courses and all the real pro golfers are in there to play and beat.

The graphics are crisp and detailed, the sound is realistic and the commentary is amusing. A classic.

DAVID MCKINNIE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE



NIGHTFIRE



PUBLISHER: EA
DEVELOPER: EUROCOM
ISSUE REVIEWED: 14
CUBE RATING: 7.9



NIGHTFIRE IS ONE of the best shooting games on GameCube. It beats *Goldeneye* on several features, including the graphics, which are some of the best on the GC, and also the locations that range from underwater to outer space. The shooting levels are a massive improvement over the ones in *AUF* because on harder settings you don't receive any help. And as each level is split into several sections you don't have to complete a mission in one go.

The driving missions are also better than the ones in *AUF* - there are five in total ranging from driving underwater to piloting a helicopter. When the single-player gets boring the multiplayer modes add replay value. The cars, gadgets and girls make this a contender for the best *Bond* game ever.

CHRIS NICHOLS, SHEFFIELD



JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST



PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER: LUCASARTS
ISSUE REVIEWED: 14
CUBE RATING: 4.7



I BOUGHT STAR Wars Jedi Outcast: Jedi Knight II and I thought it was one of the best games of the year. Sometimes it was a tad repetitive, but so what? A little bit after the bland parts was an action-packed, edge of your seat part where you had to use your guns, Force powers, Lightsaber and smart bombs to survive.

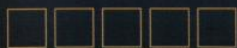
Jedi Knight II's plot brought back memories of classic moments from the trilogy and the Lightsaber duels were deep and fast paced. But the parts where you had allies were the coolest parts by far, be it a group of Padwans, rebel soldiers, Luke Skywalker or Lando.

So I was disappointed with your score of one of the best games of the year, as I have thoroughly enjoyed it.

RYAN LANDES GILMAN



BEAT THE TEAM



ISSUE EIGHTEEN

WIN!

AT THEIR OWN GAME



A smorgasbord of JOYTECH pads and peripherals

FOR THOSE OF you who don't already know, Beat The Team works like this: we set four challenges and you try to beat any, some or all of them. In order to prove you've given our scores a hiding you need to send us either a photo or video of your achievements (see What A Picture, right). Having been suitably humiliated by your scores, **CUBE** then decides who's beaten the team in the most convincing manner as we mop up Gary tears of defeat. That person is our Beat The Team winner. Being selected as the winner not only gets you the accolade of having your name in print as some sort of gaming monolith, but it also grants you two advanced controllers, a 4MB memory card, a GBA link-up cable and a gold-plated RGB SCART cable, all of which comes courtesy of JOYTECH. Now is that quite tidy or what?

The challenges this month come from two new releases in the shape of *Resident Evil Zero* and *Super Monkey Ball 2* while the other two are old favourites *Rocky* and the original *Super Monkey Ball*. So come on then – lets 'ave you...

THE WINNER!

Despite very close competition from Adrian Jewell and David Peacock our winner is... **DAVE EVERY FROM CHESHIRE!** Good on you, fella! Here's that special score that won him the loot:

CHALLENGE ONE: **CRY ME A RIVER**
SCORE: **1'24"829**



CHALLENGE ONE

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

RUNNING SCARED

Resident Evil Zero has sold like hot cakes. Accordingly, we're expecting quite a few of you out there have got a copy, so there should be plenty of entries for this challenge. With this in mind, Chandra decided he'd have to set a pretty tough task. However, you'll probably need to complete the game at least once to gain the special weapons you'll need to beat his time.

CHANDRA'S TIME

2:45:43



CHALLENGE TWO

ROCKY

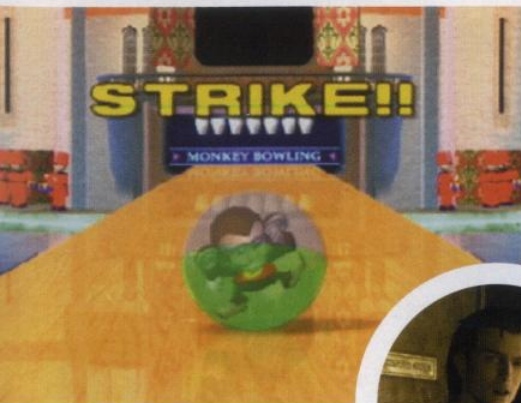
EYE OF THE TIGER

Feeling good now, getting strong now, punching meat now, etc. Yep, Miles reckons he's a greasy fast Italian tank, and you can go toe to toe with our editor by choosing Movie mode and going for the fastest knockdown possible. Fastest KO times appear in the options menu under Records. Miles tells us that one of his most effective combos is "the old one-two". He also says: "You goin' down, chump!" We worry sometimes.

MILES' SCORE

0:44 SECONDS





⬆️ And that, my friend, is how you bowl a monkey

⬅️ You can always tell the quality of a hero by the sweatiness of his vest

⬆️ Did you ever see a creature happier to be wanged at high speed at sturdy wooden objects?



⬆️ We think you'll agree that there's no prouder sight than a monkey in drag

⬆️ I got one thing to say, to my wife at home... yo, Adrian, I DID IT! We still get goosebumps

CHALLENGE THREE

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO

At the time of writing, *Super Monkey Ball 2* is the GameCube's best selling title, outselling even *Resident Evil Zero*. We suspect, then, that quite a few of you out there have got a copy so we expect some pretty good scores. Gary's challenge is to complete the first ten levels of Story mode with as high a score as possible. It really couldn't be more simple, a bit like young Gaz himself, really

GARY'S SCORE

83853



RETRO CHALLENGE

SUPER MONKEY BALL

STEEERIKE!

Seeing as how the GameCube is just a month shy of being one year old in the UK, we're giving you a challenge from its very best launch game – *Super Monkey Ball*. Simply knock down more pins than Byron in a ten frame round and the JOYTECH goodies are yours. Oh yeah, and you might be interested to know that he used Gongon. This is a game where brawn is most definitely the key.

BYRON'S SCORE

229



WHAT A PICTURE

HOW TO TAKE THAT PERFECT SNAPSHOT

Right, so you've played like a madman and finally managed to beat one of our challenges – so what do you do now? Well, you'll need to get a photo of your accomplishment or, better yet, record the whole thing on video so that we can check it out for ourselves. If you're going to be adventurous and record a video, please be warned that we can't return any tapes sent to us. Those of you sticking to regular photography though might want a few tips on how to snap the perfect piccie...

- Turn off all the lights in your room so that you reduce the chance of light reflection on the screen. Also, turn down the brightness slightly on your TV to reduce any glare that the camera might pick up on.
- Switch off the flash on your camera – the light from the TV will be more than enough to illuminate the picture, and besides, the last thing you want is to have your photo ruined by flashing out the screen.
- Take several pictures, in case your first few turn out to be duds. No picture means no prize... remember that!

Be warned – photos sent by email are NOT acceptable, as they can be doctored in any bog-standard paint program. People who use cheats or NTSC copies of games to get a better score (unless you're entering the import challenge, of course) will also be scorned and most likely ridiculed within these very pages. Finally, please note that we will NOT be able to send back anything that you send in as proof of your score – those of you who've been asking us for videotapes back or even sent in the only memory card you own, please take note of this rather important point.



YOU'VE GOTTA BE IN IT TO WIN IT!

Once you've beaten any of our challenges and got your proof, you'll need to send it along to us – no proof means no entry, so make sure you post it to the usual address:

I'VE BEATEN THE TEAM!
CUBE MAGAZINE
PARAGON HOUSE
ST PETER'S ROAD
BOURNEMOUTH
DORSET
BH1 2JS

THE DEADLINE FOR THIS ISSUE'S CHALLENGES IS
12 MAY '03
SO GET ON WITH IT...

CUBE



ISSUE EIGHTEEN

CHEATING MONKEYS



This month our Cheating Monkeys have mostly been going down under, playing with robots in disguise and fiddling the Ring...

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

Not a bad game at all. In fact, it's much like a good version of *Gauntlet*. Anyhow, to restore your health at any time during your game do the following:

RESTORE HEALTH

Pause the game, press and hold L and R, then press Y, DOWN, A, UP



Great movie, fun game and now you can cheat at it too!



Big robots battle it out for supremacy. Beautiful!



ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY

An enjoyable shooter from TDK that's as close as we've had yet to a Transformers game. Here are some useful cheats:

Go to the main menu and select the New Game option. Then hold L + R + Z and press Left, Up, Down, A, Right, B and Start. Doing this brings up the cheat entry screen. From here you can now enter the following codes:

CHEAT	ENTER
Invincibility	"SUPERMECH"
Level select	"WEWILLWIN"
Multiplayer levels	"MULTIMAYHEM"
Disable active cheats	"CLEAR"



With a nice little invincibility cheat that old chap won't pose too much of a problem

CUBE

GAMECUBE HINTS, TIPS AND CHEATS 7 DAYS A WEEK!

LIVE CHEATS HOTLINE

0906 9060374

Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Call charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. Please seek permission from the person paying the bill before calling. Operating hours seven days a week, from 8am til 11pm. If you have any queries call the customer helpline on 0870 739 7602

CHIMP'LL FIX IT

They spend all month poring over your questions and in return we let them share a felt banana – that my friend, is the life of a cheating monkey. So, keep our chimps in fabric food by sending your gaming queries to **Chimp'll Fix It**, **CUBE Magazine**, Paragon Publishing, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS or you can drop them an email at cube@paragon.co.uk

CHEATED

Dear Cheating Monkeys, I'm really confused. On *Wrestlemania X8*, I'm trying to use a cheat to unlock every secret in the game but it just doesn't work – it's really doing my head in. Do you have to hold an extra button whilst you input the cheat? I feel like I'm ripping my hair out, please could you do me this favour. Lewis Hall, Leicester.

The monkeys say...

"The reason your cheat isn't working is that there aren't any codes for Wrestlemania X8. That's probably not the news you wanted to hear, but at least now you know."

CAN YOU DIG IT?

Dear Cheating Monkeys, In *Animal Crossing*, how do you get the NES games that are only available on the GBA island? Richard Wilson, via TGN

The monkeys say...

"Okay, what you need to do is this. Take items from your house and bury them on the GBA island, ensuring



Let's get this straight. You've bought a GC and *Animal Crossing* in order to play NES games?

that you leave a spade (preferably the golden spade) next to your hidden treasures. Next you should link up your GBA and give the spade to your islander. He'll start digging up your stuff, making him happy, and ultimately he'll begin burying rare NES games for you. Lastly, you need to go back to your 'Cube and dig up the games. Lovely."

WAX ON, WAX OFF

Dear Cheating Monkeys, I can't seem to beat Musclefoot on *Starfox*

Adventures. Do you have any tips I can use? Christopher Wickens, via TGN

The Monkeys say...

"Yes we do. Use the old Track And Field technique. What you need do is pull your sleeve over the base of your palm, rest it on the A Button and 'wax on, wax off' as if your life depended on it. Or you could just press the A button really quickly."

YOU WHAT?

Dear Cheating Monkeys, What's a Gamecube? Zilon, via TGN

The Monkeys say...

"A what?"

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER

It's not a particularly great game by any means, but if you're somehow unfamiliar with platform games then it's worth a go. Here's a cheat to make it easier:

SHOW ALL OBJECTS

Mid game press L, R, L, R, Y, Y X, B, B X, Z, Z



Sometimes we make jokes about going home to Play Ty. So funny we are!

SHARE YOUR GAMING GENIUS!

If you've come up with a game hack you want to share with the world, send it to the monkeys at: **Chimp'll Fix It**, **CUBE**, Paragon Publishing, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS. Or whack it on the forum at www.totalgames.net



CUBE

CHEATING MONKEYS

CODE JUNKIES

ISSUE EIGHTEEN



Every month we'll be bringing you all the latest Action Replay codes for the greatest GC games!

METROID PRIME

1 OTZA-TQMF-XY6MB

2 4GEF-YRJE-9BCJC

3 B33T-BJ8E-DAKUM

4 VUYB-0ECB-P3CUH

5 E9FZ-A3QA-YCERP

6 R3Y6-HXXK-F6K84

7 A1EN-R5CT-9AYTP

8 9MRY-J35Y-QOYCM

9 3FUA-M5P6-PRC5N

10 BQGC-V5QE-CU0M5

11 EM4H-V8VH-96DCY

12 HFYZ-ZKF9-HH8D7

Infinite health

1 11EB-Z4FM-47XRO

2 999D-Z5J1-Q08NW

Infinite missiles

1 KBAR-32F9-643VJ

2 XOQU-WCU2-X6GGR

3 EU7Z-X40A-WRB1H

Infinite Powerballs

1 FKB1-H3T6-5AARV

2 PFJA-9AZ3-66X48

Moonjump (Hold B)

1 XBQN-6QB0-1QPXT

2 NTBW-D22D-2YB1

3 25DB-G0PG-F38FD

Crazy Controls

1 U8KE-UPOX-RGFCK

2 TTY7-0M36-PE50P

NES Metroid (Press L+X at bonus screen)

1 U03D-4ZKA-9ZEN9

2 38JG-9VKN-W7PD3

3 2198-8G5Y-HF0ZQ

4 YXPZ-AMAU-VCFNH

ARM CANNON CHEATS

Have Ice Beam

1 T2NR-44AR-P1GMR

2 2W3P-AP5C-6NQW9

Have Wave Beam

1 PMF5-ZET1-39EB7

2 6TG9-KY0N-WQJVD

Have Plasma Beam

1 8W7B-M967-ABRJV

2 XV06-20B5-RFREN

Have Phazon Beam

1 QB54-7QEG-6Z6YM

2 V8QQ-KCG5-88E8E

MORPH BALL CHEATS

Have Morph Ball

1 JDZU-3UX1-3N8QU

2 4FDR-DVY1-J3M30

Have Boost Ball

1 UB6T-2Y34-RPX6Q

2 HFRJ-7Z00-PNRCM

Have Spider Ball

1 6ABZ-PNCK-N8515

2 M9MQ-Q1HJ-3KT73

Have Morph Ball Bomb

1 KBJ1-C9Q2-NJYB3

2 09Q5-ER4B-0C385

Have Power Bomb

1 9XR7-TE3N-UVZ5C

2 3NMM-AE9A-GRXAE

SUIT CHEATS

Have Varia Suit

1 3R89-0BEX-Q7VKW

2 UPR3-JR6M-V6FP4

Have Gravity Suit

1 A1UW-EKPF-R7JHD

2 9PFY-M20E-86MP1

3 0R3B-P9CC-7K5U1

Have Phazon Suit

1 JJ70-XFUE-2XY44

2 V8QQ-KCG5-88E8E

VISOR CHEATS

Have Combat Visor

1 FH7K-HGUJ-EZZ85

2 MEJA-1RRY-R11TD

Have Scan Visor

1 VUHY-1ZPQ-RJZ2H

2 NVFQ-XE1U-QB4XV

Have X-Ray Visor

1 ZPMT-3NJD-6KWU3

2 MAJG-PFB1-EPMGK

Have Thermal Visor

1 V8FJ-RQV1-4RKZT

2 U5DM-U2EB-DEAX5

SECONDARY ITEM CHEATS

Have Space Jump Boots

1 TFEU-6K44-BURVV

2 BFG6-0U8Q-NAJ2B

3 P3AB-BT89-JBH8Z

Have Grapple Beam

1 8KAE-BZKJ-9YRU5

2 EK4M-AE5V-J5MAX

Have Missile Launcher

1 GJCD-NDW2-1UMY6

2 KCK6-JMHN-V3YXK

Have Charge Beam

1 QGU-NK79-R6W1Y

2 X929-KAT2-1C34F

Have Beam Combo A

1 8QU8-Q52B-UKAOP

2 H06A-RB2U-XVJVV

Have Beam Combo B

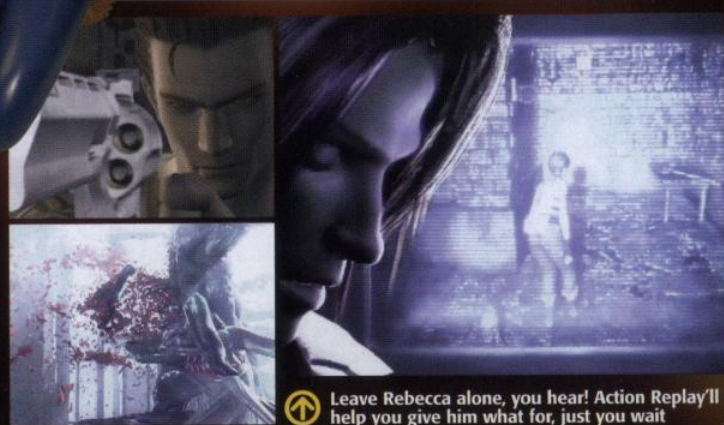
1 5D45-KCXU-7PB34

2 PA3H-FMFR-WM3G6

Have Beam Combo C

1 KU71-8BAD-8EDXJ

2 MUHY-RMAH-ZTXGC



Leave Rebecca alone, you hear! Action Replay'll help you give him what for, just you wait

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

1 MP8F-9M8H-Z6EFN

2 8675-1FPC-PGZAP

3 Y8P7-281U-XG18V

4 QBJ2-A2RK-CP1W2

5 E9FZ-A3QA-YCERP

6 R3Y6-HXXK-F6K84

7 A1EN-R5CT-9AYTP

Can always save

1 ANN2-A7C4-YX2CX

2 00VY-EPTH-GKXK6

3 CT38-JUBK-C8JXX

Zero saves

1 6EK3-TJMX-TG4ZE

2 KX09-6XT8-WC5GG

Have all maps

1 6NND-8N0V-FTWUH

2 8608-J1FE-PEMN8

Have all files

1 U2UB-0JKN-XJ11C

2 RBVV-9E0F-T2CTU

3 AM4P-EMU5-3TUTB

Timers don't decrease

1 KU2T-K3V8-EDKUY

2 B19H-Q3CC-QYKKN

Infinite Ammo (All slots)

1 920V-8Z08-TU935

2 NB44-8VFA-PAQDZ

3 1R2K-ZP8X-8F1KD

REBECCA CODES

Infinite health

1 AS5Y-2DGH-7UVVW

2 2TE8-MU3Y-2XZCC

Infinite Ammo (All Slots)

1 PR30-8XWB-HQZBV

2 30AH-KCEB-7M2NX

3 59K2-R2N3-QV1PJ

4 22HO-A02J-3TF7D

5 617K-F80J-AVJ59

6 0FAD-9NFY-D1KCT

7 8NP7-6YB3-W8GK1

Note: These codes will replace the items in Slot 1 and 2.

Slot 1/2: Shotgun

1 696P-6EEW-9T60E

2 KYK1-C55K-0F8GV

Slot 1/2: Grenade Launcher

1 TWINQ-DQPP-ONTKD

2 MEV5-J4K2-1QE4N

Slot 1/2: Sub-machine gun

1 WP6C-ADX1-CZW84

2 DCMY-YFJK-A65JH

Slot 1/2: Rocket Launcher

1 HX4J-APJJ-J4D9A

2 NA1B-SUNR-3BAM3

Slot 3: Magnum Revolver

1 PWZ9-7AJT-8M2X1

2 EJDV-507G-UHZZ3

Infinite Ammo (All Slots)

1 Z2AF-J1ZP-2U3N6

2 BFA3-4131-01CMD

3 WBGK-91H0-28Q4R

4 EG81-URRA-EX8QD

5 Q9M4-VFJ7-8NZWH

6 BCPG-EP3T-KE1B0

7 DKAY-A9Z5-71QQE

Slot 4: Molotov cocktails

1 2GDC-8J7K-QWA92

2 FG4V-ZANN-291R2

BILLY CODES

Infinite health

1 VRRP-QHJO-KPUCY

Q*Bert

Hop 'til you drop



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Q*Bert



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METROID PRIME

Lost on Tallon IV? Well, grab the free book that came with this issue and, along with these maps, you should be able to find your way around no bother...

TALLON OVERWORLD

KEY

-  MISSILE EXPANSION
-  SPACE JUMP BOOTS
-  X-RAY VISOR
-  CHOZO ARTIFACT
-  ENERGY TANK
-  ELEVATOR
-  SAVE STATION
-  MAP STATION
-  MISSILE STATION

ARBOR CHAMBER ROOM 399

ROOT CAVE ROOM 398

TO CHOZO RUINS

ALCOVE ROOM 147

TRANSPORT TUNNEL B ROOM 117

TO MAGMOOR CAVERNS

LANDING SITE ROOM 056



LANDING SITE



TRANSPORT TUNNEL B

INFORMATION

METROID PRIME

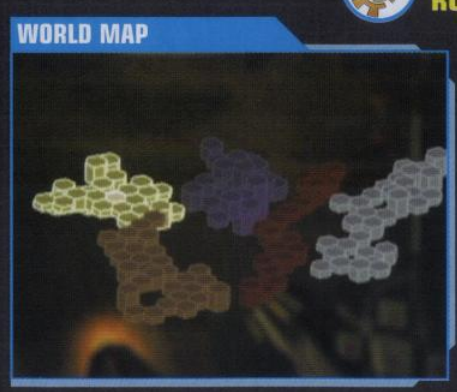
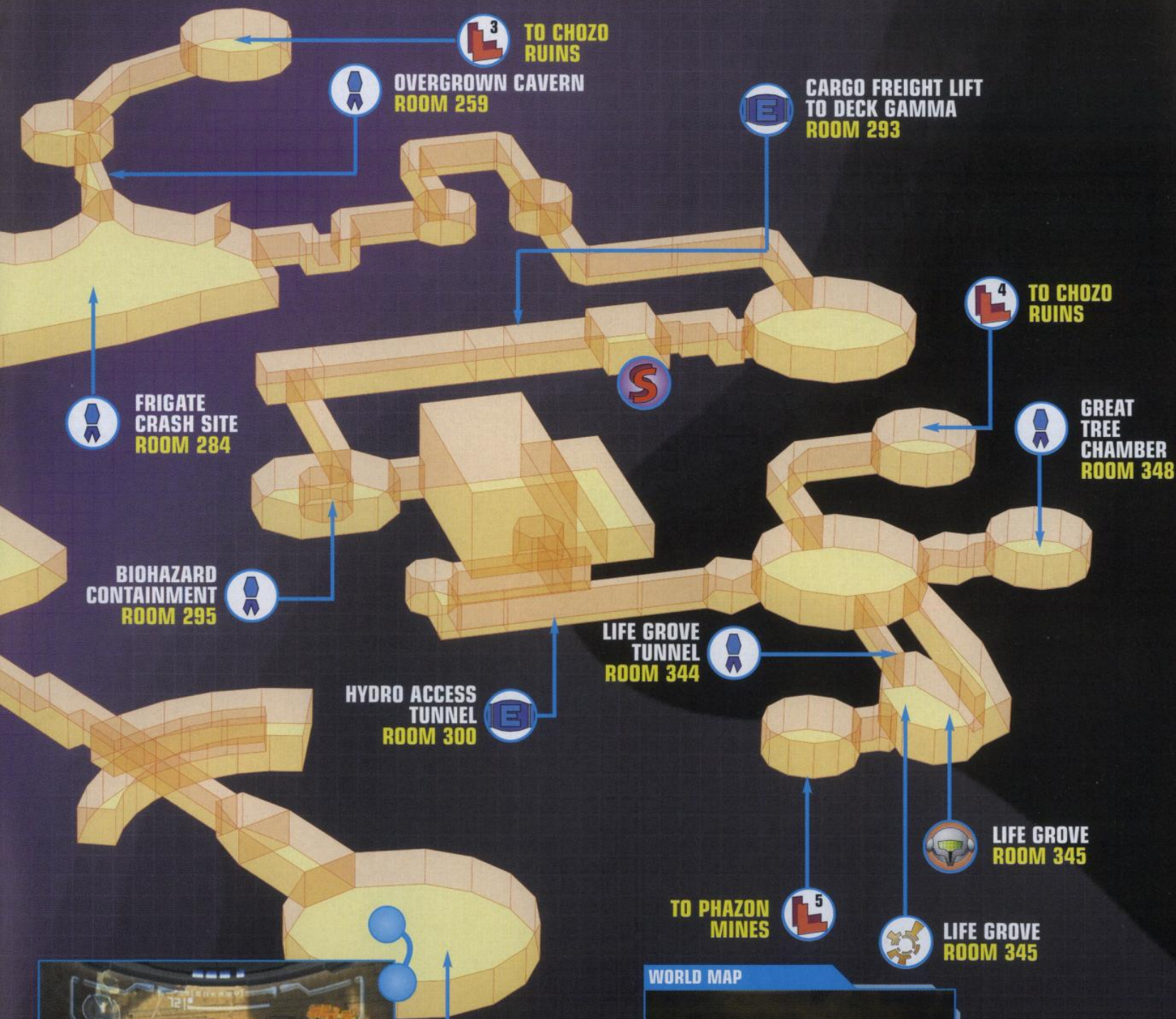
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

DEVELOPER: RETRO STUDIOS

GENRE: ADVENTURE

PRICE: £39.99

PLAYERS: 1



CHOZO RUINS

KEY

	MISSILE EXPANSION		MORPH BALL BOMB		ELEVATOR		MISSILE LAUNCHER
	ENERGY TANK		MORPH BALL		POWER BOMB EXP.		WAVE BUSTER
	ICE BEAM		VARIA SUIT		SAVE STATION		
	CHOZO ARTIFACT		CHARGE BEAM		MISSILE STATION		



TRAINING CHAMBER
ROOM 363



TOWER CHAMBER
ROOM 282



TOWER OF LIGHT
ROOM 238



TRAINING CHAMBER ACCESS
ROOM 362



RUINED FOUNTAIN
ROOM 234



TO TALLON
OVERWORLD



MAIN PLAZA
ROOM 013,
232, 265



MAIN PLAZA
ROOM 067



RUINED SHRINE
ROOM 089 & 151



MAGMA POOL
ROOM 361



RUINED NURSERY
ROOM 090



RUINED
SHRINE
ROOM 055



RUINED GALLERY
ROOM 051
& 091



WATERY HALL
ACCESS
ROOM 082



TRANSPORT
ACCESS NORTH
ROOM 050



WATERY HALL
ROOM 083



VAULT
ROOM 092



TO MAGMOOR
CAVERNS



HIVE TOTEM
ROOM 049



WATERY HALL
ROOM 283



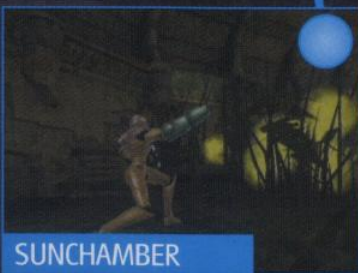
SUNCHAMBER
ROOM 241



SUNCHAMBER
ROOM 096













WORLD MAP



SUNCHAMBER

MAGMOOR CAVERNS

KEY

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
|  MISSILE EXPANSION |  PLASMA BEAM |  ELEVATOR |
|  ENERGY TANKS |  ICE SPREADER |  SAVE STATION |
|  POWER BOMB EXPANSION |  MAP STATION | |
|  CHOZO ARTIFACT |  MISSILE STATION | |



FIERY SHORES

TO PHENDRANA DRIFTS



PLASMA PROCESSING ROOM 373



TO PHAZON MINES



MAGMOOR WORKSTATION ROOM 210



WARRIOR SHRINE ROOM 154



FIERY SHORES ROOM 370



TO TALLON OVERWORLD



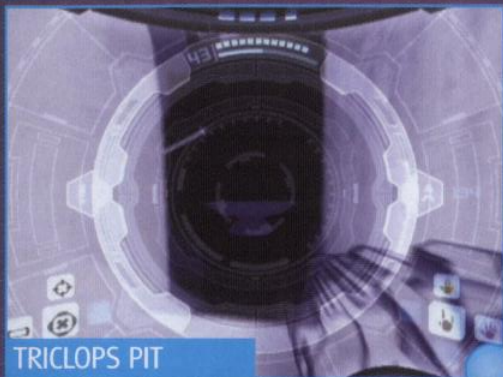
SHORE TUNNEL ROOM 371



FIERY SHORES ROOM 113



PLASMA PROCESSING



TRICLOPS PIT



LAVA LAKE

TRANSPORT TUNNEL A
ROOM 124

TO PHENDRANA
DRIFTS

STORAGE
CAVERN
ROOM 108

LAVA LAKE
ROOM 224

TO CHOZO
RUINS

TRICLOPS PIT
ROOM 366



TRANSPORT TUNNEL A

WORLD MAP



PHENDRANA DRIFTS

KEY

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
|  MISSILE EXPANSION |  BOOST BALL |  ELEVATOR |
|  WAVE BEAM |  THERMAL VISOR |  SAVE STATION |
|  SUPER MISSILE |  ENERGY TANK |  MAP STATION |
|  SPIDER BALL |  CHOZO ARTIFACT |  MISSILE STATION |
|  POWER BOMB EXP. |  GRAVITY SUIT | |



QUARANTINE CAVE

QUARANTINE CAVE ROOM 203

TRANSP ACC ROOM



QUARANTINE MONITOR ROOM 380

TO MAGMOOR CAVERNS

ICE RUINS EAST ROOM 230

ICE RUINS WEST ROOM 381

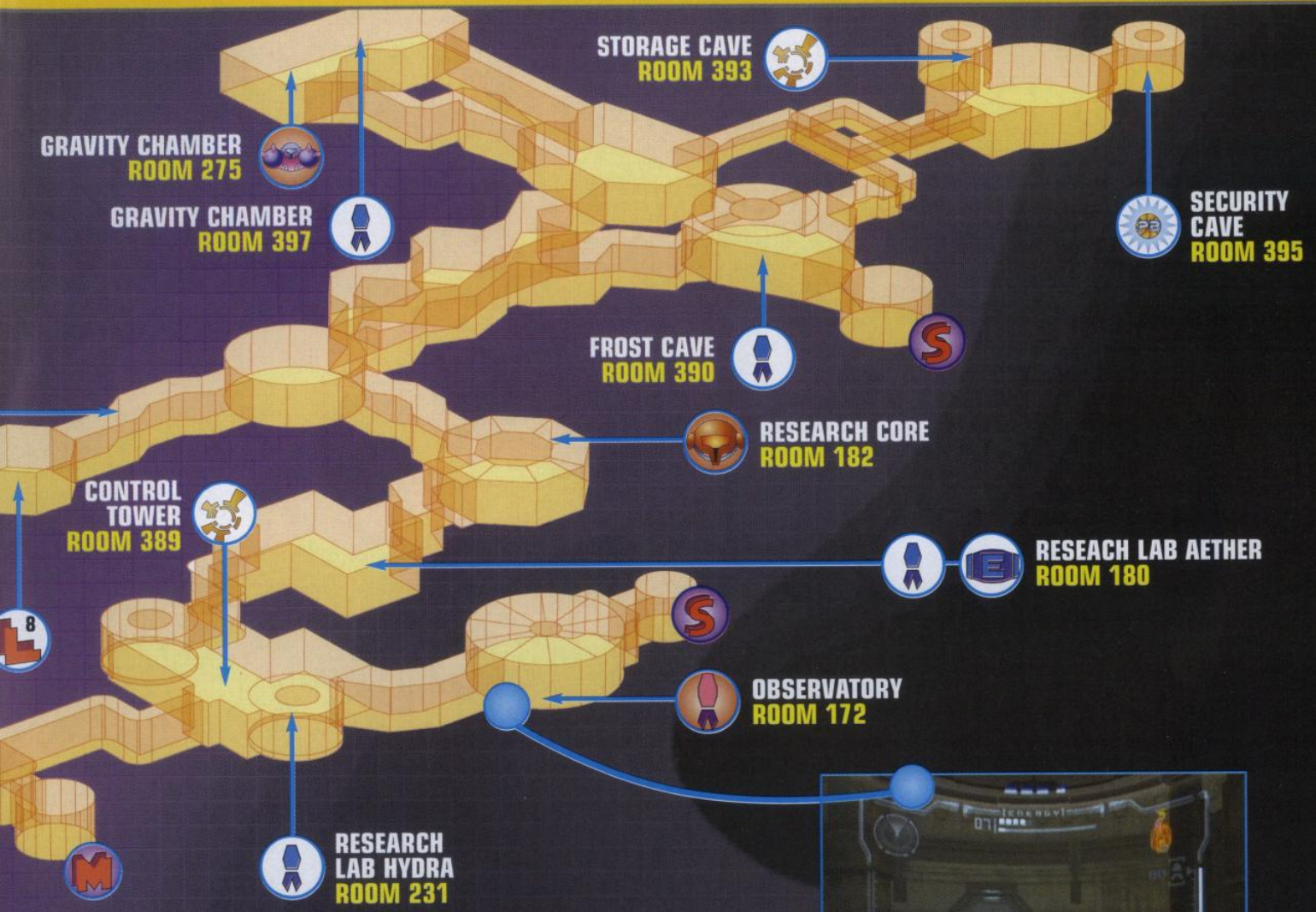
RUINED COURTYARD ROOM 162

TO MAGMOOR CAVERNS

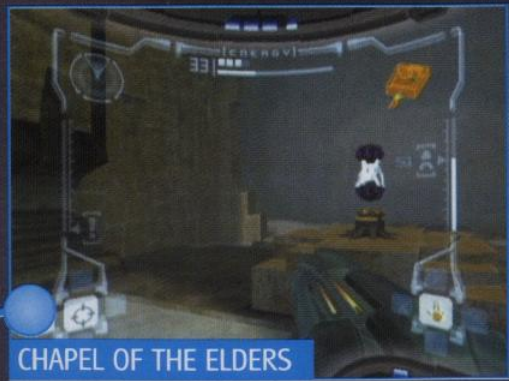
CHOZO ICE TEMPLE ROOM 387

PHENDRANA SHORELINES ROOM 228 & 385

CHAPEL OF THE ELDERS ROOM 159



PHENDRANA CANYON ROOM 138

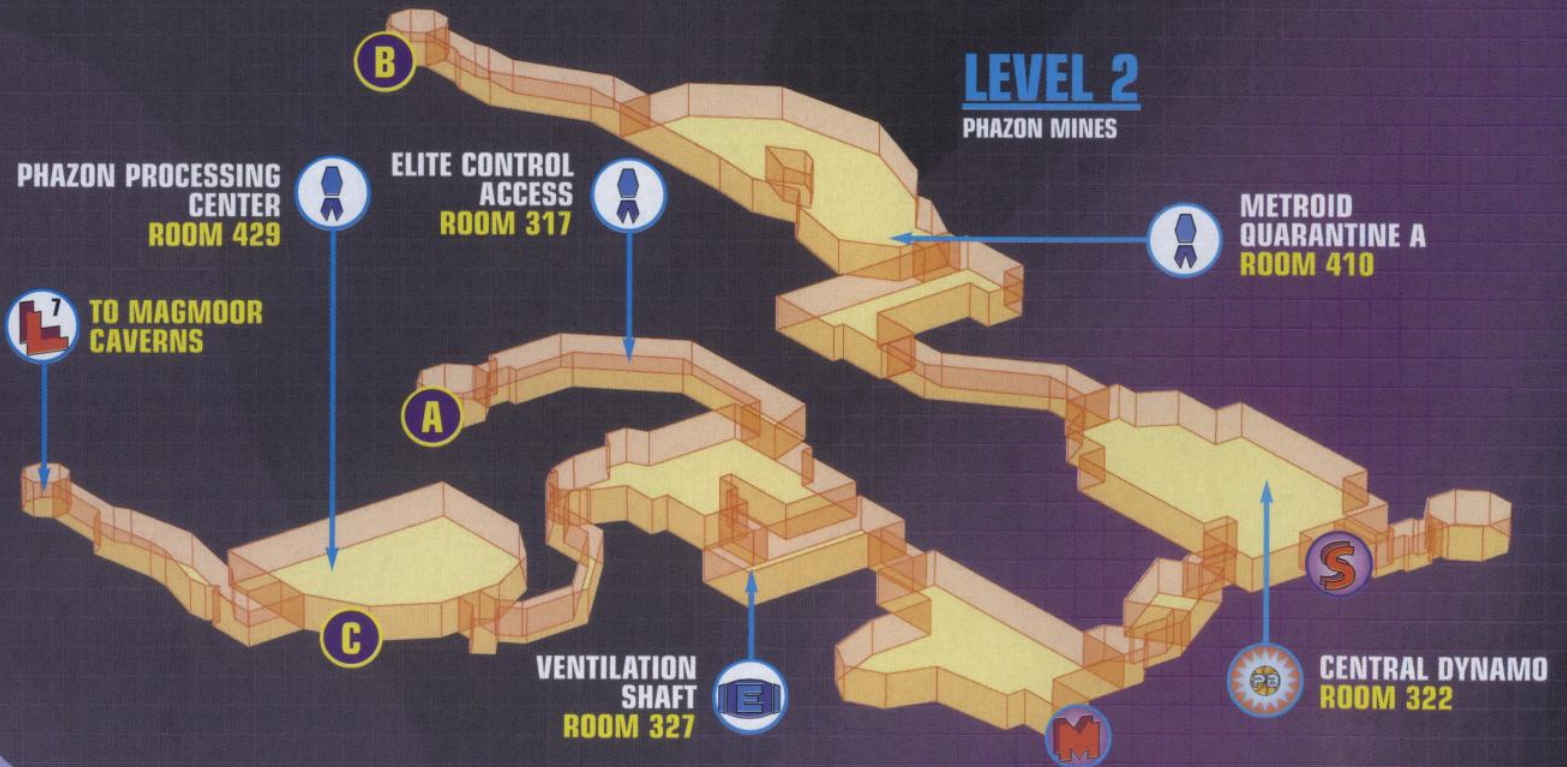


PHAZON MINES

KEY

	MISSILE EXPANSION		POWER BOMB		ELEVATOR
	GRAPPLE BEAM		ENERGY TANK		SAVE STATION
	FLAME TROWER		PHAZON SUIT		MAP STATION
	CHOZO ARTIFACT		MAP LINK POINTS		MISSILE STATION

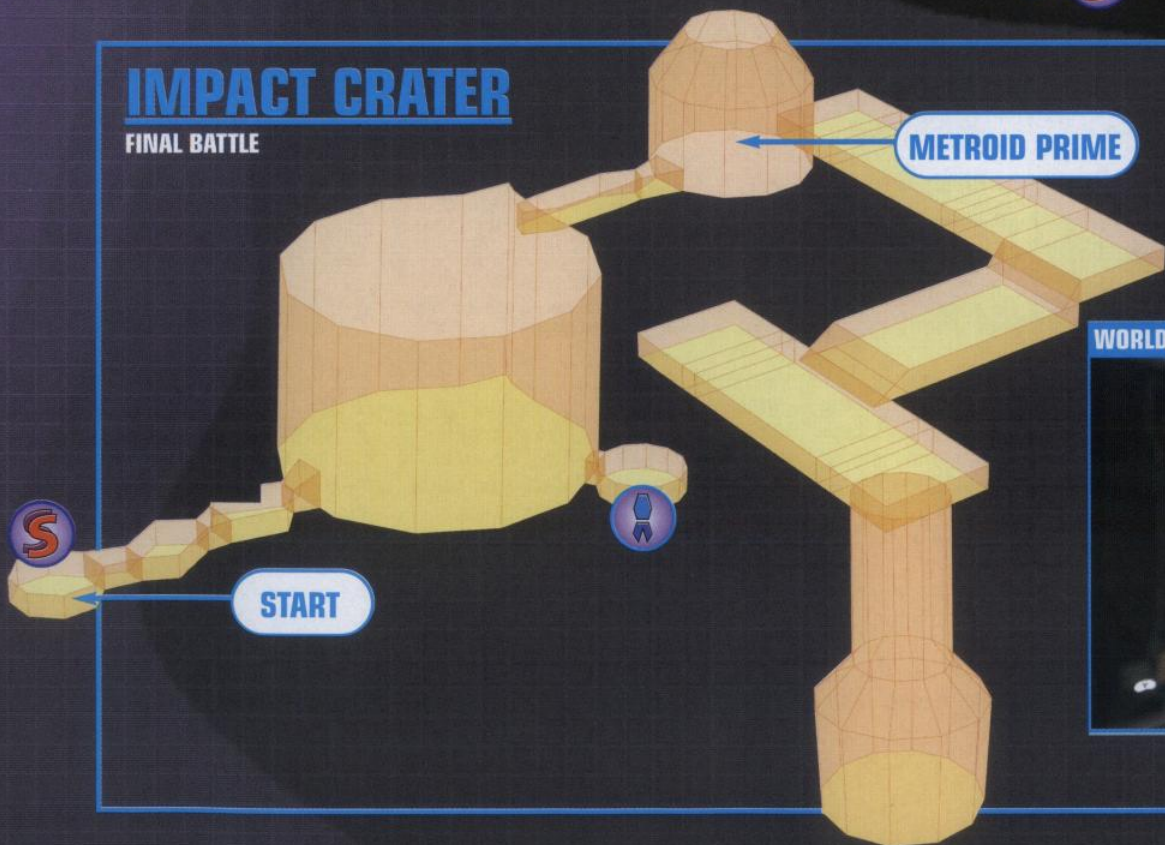
WORLD MAP





IMPACT CRATER

FINAL BATTLE



WORLD MAP



WELCOME TO ADVANCE...

Super Monkey Ball was an odd case. The finest launch title for the latest Nintendo system and it was created by SEGA. A few years ago nobody would have seen that one coming! Now it's on the GBA, and making a home on our brand spanking new SP's. And we love it.



ADVANCE

Don't push too far, your dreams are monkeys in your hand

Take one monkey, one ball and a lot of levels...

SUPER MONKEY BALL JR



Yes, it really does look just like its big brother



Not all the mini-games have made it to the GBA, but *Monkey Bowling* rocks



CUBE

INFORMATION

PUBLISHER: THQ
DEVELOPER: REALISM
GENRE: PARTY/PUZZLE
PLAYERS: 1-4
RELEASE: OUT NOW

STATS

- ALL THE ORIGINAL COURSES
- THREE MINI-GAMES TO PLAY
- MULTIPLAYER ACTION
- LOOKS AMAZING

FIRST THINGS FIRST – this game is bloody excellent. It contains all the charm and subtlety of the GameCube original which sees you guiding a monkey in a ball through ever more deviously designed levels by manipulating the mazes directly. But frankly, if you don't know the gameplay mechanics of *Monkey Ball*, we'd suggest you're reading the wrong magazine...

When we first heard of *Monkey Ball* on the GBA we were more than a little dubious, expecting 2D

gameplay at the very most, but graphically this game is astonishing. The polygon levels move smoothly and with very little slowdown and the monkeys are packed with personality. Not only this, but the sound is spot-on too. All the courses are here complete with the over-zealous commentator providing such insightful comments as 'Fall Out!'

In fact there are only two things to separate this from its big brother – the lack of mini-games and the non-analogue control. Obviously Realism

have had to adapt to the D-pad to control the levels, which means that, at first, control feels very clunky. To combat this, Realism have added functions to the B and A buttons, allowing you to tilt the level quite dramatically, or slow the ball down.

As it is, *Monkey Ball* on the GBA is the perfect handheld, even though the issues with the camera that we had with the GameCube version are still here. It's intuitive to play, easy on the eye and a good tough challenge.

CUBE
RATING
9.5



⤴ Tails struts his stuff. It's not all hedgehogs, you know



CUBE	
INFORMATION	
PUBLISHER:	INFOGRAMES
DEVELOPER:	DIMPS
GENRE:	PLATFORM
PLAYERS:	1-4
RELEASE:	OUT NOW
STATS	
■	FIVE PLAYABLE CHARACTERS
■	14 STAGES
■	FASTER THAN EVER!
■	STILL FRESH AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

SONIC ADVANCE 2

The little blue hedgehog is back on the GBA!



⤴ Back in the day when 3D didn't maketh the game

IT'S FASTER, IT'S trickier, it's more devious, and it's ever so slightly bigger. *Sonic Advance 2* is everything the first game was and more, giving you the chance to play as one of four characters (with one more unlockable after collecting certain items) and the task of speeding through the 15 levels on offer.

The game itself plays like any other 2D *Sonic* game except for a few additions. The first is the new trick

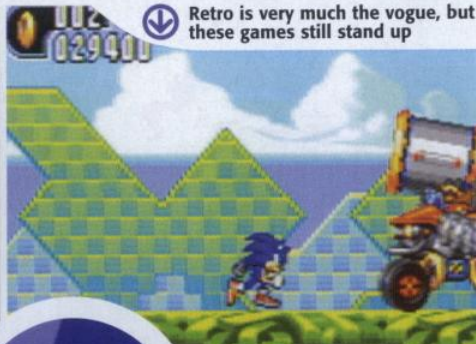
button. Pressing R and either Left or Right in the air after launching off a spring will send you hurtling in that direction, ideal for finding those SP rings (see boxout). It's also a very fast game. Very, very fast. In terms of speed it totally annihilates every other platformer – even the other *Sonics*!

However, this does cause a few problems, namely untimely deaths. A lot of the time you'll be speeding down a slope, and suddenly find

yourself in a pit of lava. A lot of memorising is required to get everything in the level, which can be very frustrating. The level design also raises a few issues – for example, it's impossible to backtrack in some places. But for *Sonic* fans this is a dream – gorgeous animation, fast gameplay and absolutely stacks to do make this a cartridge well worth owning, even if it does have its faults.



⤴ The sheer speed and exuberance of *Sonic* has never been surpassed



⤴ Retro is very much the vogue, but these games still stand up

“IN TERMS OF SPEED IT TOTALLY ANNIHILATES EVERY OTHER PLATFORMER OUT THERE”



⤴ A treat for those too young to remember the original *Sonic*



WHAT A RUSH!

There are seven worlds with two acts in each and a boss rush at the end. What sets this apart from the 2D *Sonic* games though is the exploration factor. Distributed around the 14 main levels are seven SP rings that need to be collected – by doing so you earn the right to compete in a bonus stage. Navigate your way around the level, avoid the robot Zero who's out to get you, collect 300 rings and you'll earn a Chaos Emerald. Collect (you guessed it) seven of these and you can start unlocking extras!



➔ **THEY LIVE IN A GOTHIC MANSION BUT THEY'RE LOVELY PEOPLE, REALLY. MEET GENEPOOL.**

STUDIO EYE

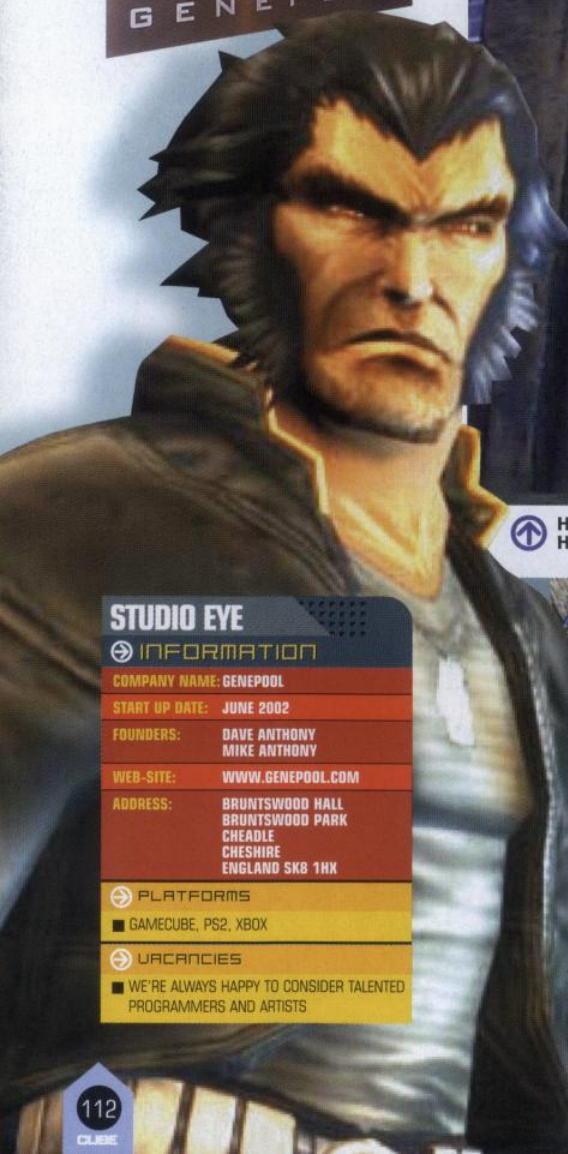
THIS MONTH... GENEPOOL



CUBE pays a visit to Genepool – inhabitants of one of the most suburban studios we've ever seen. Don't forget to wipe your feet...



⤴ Home of Genepool and setting for countless Hammer Horror classics, probably



STUDIO EYE

➔ INFORMATION

COMPANY NAME:	GENEPOOL
START UP DATE:	JUNE 2002
FOUNDERS:	DAVE ANTHONY MIKE ANTHONY
WEB-SITE:	WWW.GENEPOOL.COM
ADDRESS:	BRUNTSWOOD HALL BRUNTSWOOD PARK CHEDIALE CHESHIRE ENGLAND SK8 1HX
➔ PLATFORMS	■ GAMECUBE, PS2, XBOX
➔ VACANCIES	■ WE'RE ALWAYS HAPPY TO CONSIDER TALENTED PROGRAMMERS AND ARTISTS



CUBE HAS SEEN visited many studios over the past one and a half years, and we really thought that we had UK-based studios down to a tee, but then we went to Genepool. About half an hour's drive from Manchester, it's hard to say what we were expecting, but after driving through Manchester's suburbs we weren't expecting much more than a converted warehouse. It came as quite a shock then, when we suddenly found ourselves in a beautiful country park complete with clean, flowing water and a huge country house. No, we weren't going out for lunch with the Earl of Cheshire

– we had come to see a group of programmers and producers.

The small developer has only been going for a year, but the teams are nicely settled in and the studio is even looking to further expand into the old house. There are three main teams in the company, each one dedicated to a certain platform. *Wolverine's Revenge* (see page 42) is the company's first game, although many members of the team have been in the industry for quite a while. At the time when we visited, all three teams were working like crazy trying to get the game through the final stages. The previous day had seen

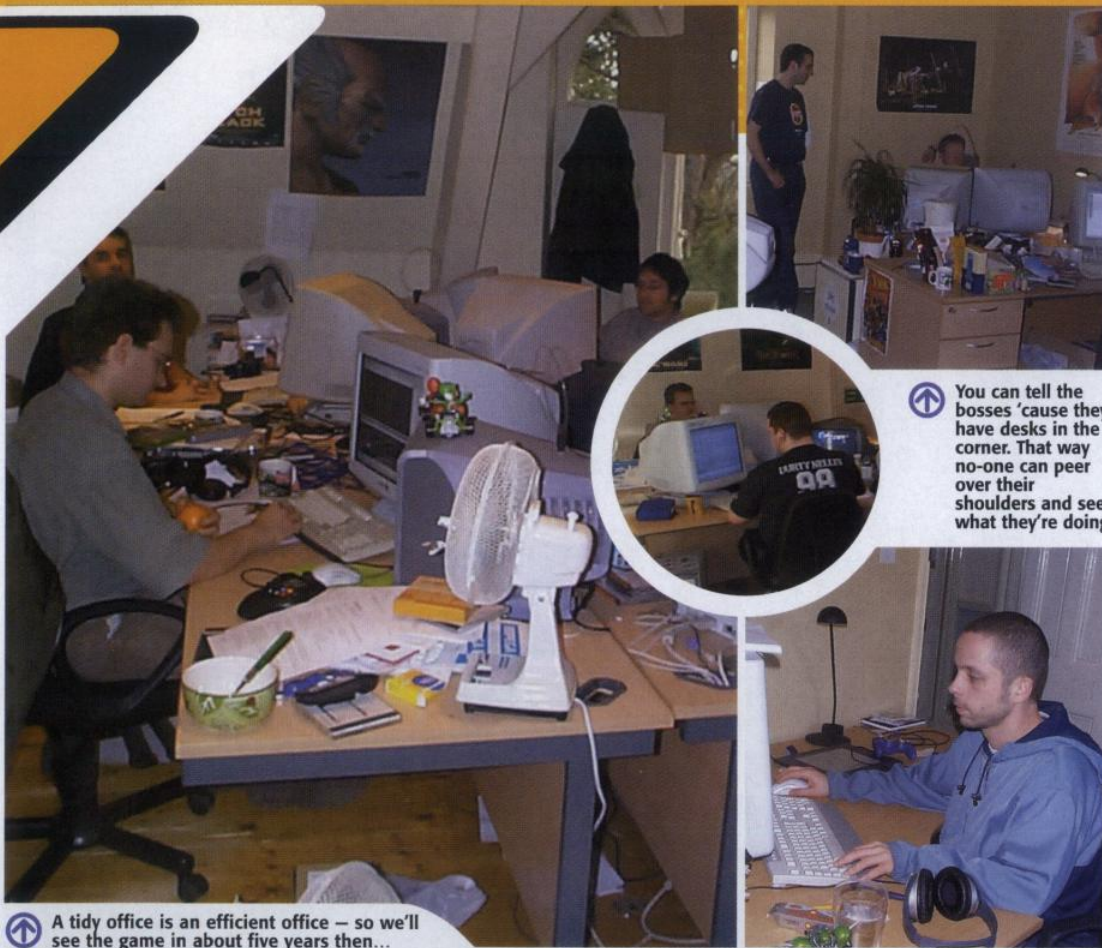
HOT-SHOT X-MEN 2 DEVELOPERS

IN THE
CUBE
WITH...



CRAIG HOUSTEN

POSITION: PRODUCER
COMPANY: GENEPOOL



↑ You can tell the bosses 'cause they have desks in the corner. That way no-one can peer over their shoulders and see what they're doing

↑ A tidy office is an efficient office – so we'll see the game in about five years then...



producer Craig Houston taking his first day off in six months in order to celebrate his son's birthday. This could, of course, all be an elaborate ruse intended to make us feel guilty and score the game higher – but we doubt it. Despite the ludicrous amount of stress that these guys must be going through (and it's the same for any developer, we're sure), the studio still appears relaxed, organised and stress free. Maybe it's the surroundings. The fact that sunlight comes streaming in through the windows, along with birdsong and the smell of pine trees, must go some way to chilling them out.

All of the members that we spoke to are well into the subject matter – they've been living and breathing the Marvel licence for the best part of a year now, and many of them were into it way before that. We can't think of a better team for the job, and their dedication is evident in the quality of the game. Activision's previous attempts at the *X-Men* licence may have been average at best, but then those games had nothing to do with Genepool. All things considered, Genepool's first title deserves to be great. Maybe then they can take a holiday and slip back into the suburbs...

CUBE



CUBE: How did you get into the videogames industry?

CH: From the early days of home computers, I was fascinated by working with computer graphics – initially purely as a hobby. That led to me working as a freelance artist in 1986, before joining Software Creations in 1988. Apart from a couple of years writing comic book scripts, I've never looked back!

CUBE: What are your top three games of all time?

CH: Tough call, but it would probably have to be *Zelda*, *Mario* and *Tomb Raider*. Predictable, I know... sorry!

CUBE: What other videogames have you been involved with in the past?

CH: *Wolverine's Revenge* is my first title as a producer. But as an artist I worked on a whole slew of forgettable NES and SNES games, and a few flight simulators in my time at Digital Image Design.

CUBE: Can you list the games and platforms that Genepool has worked on?

CH: So far, *Wolverine's Revenge* for PS2, GameCube and Xbox.

CUBE: Can you tell us a bit about the company, where its members came from, and what your guidelines for making games are?

CH: The core of the company has worked together for quite a few years on titles such as *Star Trek – Invasion* (for Activision) and *Colony Wars 1* and *2* (for Psygnosis). Other people were then recruited as we began work on *Wolverine*. With the wealth of experience we had among that core team, we were able to find like minded people reasonably easily.

As for 'guidelines for making games,' it essentially comes down to the fact that you can have the best ideas in the world, but without a talented team, it'll come to nothing. We've always taken that view, and would rather work harder with a smaller number of people, than just 'fill spaces,' which is sadly the way many developers work. As a result, we have many people within the company who have the talent and versatility to turn their hands to whatever needs doing!

CUBE: What would you like to plug at the moment?

CH: *X2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE* of course! The movie's gonna be good too!

CUBE: Is this your first GameCube title? How have you found working with the machine?

CH: This is indeed our first GameCube title. Overall, it's a really nice machine. The Nintendo libraries provide you with many of the tools and systems that are needed to get things up and running very quickly, so as a result, we've not had too many headaches!

CUBE WIN! WIN! WIN!

COMPETITION

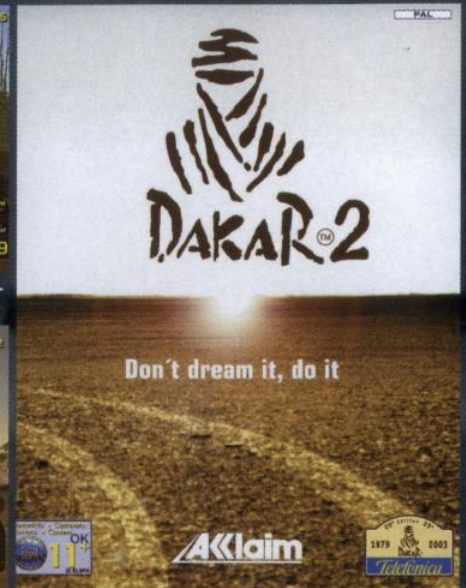


Get ready for the wheel thing

⬆ Don't go downhill too fast or you could easily lose your undercarriage



⬆ Got the wheels, got the gear – let's off road!



I'M SPINNING AROUND

COMPETITION!

Any gamer worth their salt will know that the only way to play a racing game is with a top of the range steering wheel. Forget D-pads, forget analogue sticks – this is the way it should be done. With this in mind, we've decided that everybody who enters this competition and wins a copy of *Dakar 2* also gets a Logitech steering wheel! We really are too good to you...

If you think that the question is a little tough, maybe you should cast your minds back to issue 17. We're sure that Chandra let slip the answer somewhere...

Send your answer, along with your name, address and postcode, to:

TIME TO WASH UP

The question you have to answer is straightforward enough:

Q) IF YOU STACKED UP ALL THE WASHERS IN THE SUBARU IMPREZA 555, APPROXIMATELY HOW HIGH WOULD THE PILE BE?

- A) TWO FEET
- B) TWO METRES
- C) TWO FOR A POUND

I'M SPINNING AROUND, ACCLAIM COMPO, CUBE, PARAGON PUBLISHING, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET, BH1 2JS



The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or any companies related to this competition may not enter. The closing date for entries is 8 May 2003. Proof of sending entries is not proof of receipt.

15+

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3. Internet Porn - They've been caught surfing hardcore!
4. STD Clinic - they've caught a dose!
5. It's the Inland Revenue - we'd like a word, please!
6. Drugs Survey - do they know more than they should?
7. Model Idol - they're selected for the first round!
8. Win a Million on TV - they're the guaranteed winner!
9. Shock US Radio Show - and they're live on air!
10. Sewage Plant - we're building one next door.

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2. Page 3 stunner stuck in a lift.
3. You have been selected for a new game show.
4. The Inland Revenue wanna word!
5. The phone engineer.
6. Your new wife has landed.
7. My daughter's pregnant!

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CUBE



ISSUE EIGHTEEN

DIRECTORY

There's a world outside outside your window, and it's a world of dread and fear. That's why we like to stay inside with our consoles and other appliances, all toasty. Just look at all the games you could be playing!



Ikaruga aims for the title of best 2D shooter ever



Rally Championship was unlucky to arrive in the same month as *Dakar 2*



ADVENTURE	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
LEGEND OF ZELDA	Nintendo	In-house	1	X	X	12	15	PAL	9.7
METROID PRIME	Nintendo	Retro Studios	1	✓	Issue 18	2	17	PAL	9.6
STARFOX ADVENTURES	Nintendo	Rare	1	X	Issue 12	3	12	NTSC	9.4
SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE	Nintendo	In-house	1	X	Issue 11	15	10	NTSC	9.4
ETERNAL DARKNESS	Nintendo	Silicon Knights	1	X	X	15	12	PAL	9.3
RESIDENT EVIL	Capcom	In-house	1	X	Issue 11	8+	10	PAL	9.2
RESIDENT EVIL ZERO	Capcom	In-house	1	X	X	3	16	PAL	9.0
SONIC MEGA COLLECTION	Sega	In-house	1-2	X	X	2	15	PAL	8.0
BOMBERMAN GENERATION	Majesco	Hudson Soft	1-4	X	X	3	8	NTSC	8.0
REIGN OF FIRE	Bam!	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	13	PAL	8.0
LUIGI'S MANSION	Nintendo	In-house	1	X	Issue 1	3	6	PAL	7.8
BLOOD OMEN 2	EIDOS	Crystal Dynamics	1	X	X	1	15	PAL	7.7
SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE	SEGA	Sonic Team	1-2	✓	X	6+	6	PAL	7.6
DOSHIN THE GIANT	Nintendo	In-house	1	X	X	40	12	PAL	7.4
HARRY POTTER: COS	EA	Eurocom	1	X	X	4	14	PAL	7.0
STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER	Activision	LucasArts	1	X	X	3	15	PAL	6.9
STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS	Activision	LucasArts	1-4	X	X	3	13	PAL	6.7
BATMAN VENGEANCE	Ubi Soft	In-house	1	X	X	2	6	PAL	6.2
SUMMONER: A GODDESS REBORN	THQ	Volition 1	1	X	X	5	17	PAL	6.0
SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE	Activision	Treyarch	1	X	X	2	7	PAL	6.0
DISNEY'S MAGICAL MIRROR	Nintendo	Capcom	1	✓	X	3	11	PAL	5.9
MINORITY REPORT	Activision	Treyarch	1-2	X	X	4	15	PAL	5.0
JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST	Activision	LucasArts	1	X	X	6	14	PAL	4.7
GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY	Midway	In-house	1-4	X	X	4	10	PAL	4.4
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS	Kemco	In-house	1	X	X	1	6	PAL	3.0

RPG	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS	SEGA	Overworks	1	X	X	8	16	PAL	9.0
ANIMAL CROSSING	Nintendo	In-house	1-4	✓	X	59	12	NTSC	8.5
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE	Infogrames	Sonic Team	1-4	X	X	3	16	PAL	7.5
LOST KINGDOMS	Activision	From Software	1	X	X	2	8	PAL	7.0

EVERY GAME REVIEWED IN CUBE, GATHERED RIGHT HERE

BEAT-'EM-UP

	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
KINNIKU MAN 2	Bandai	AKI	1-4	X	X	2	16	NTSC	8.9
MORTAL KOMBAT: DA	Midway	In-house	1-2	X	X	1	15	PAL	8.6
SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE	Nintendo	NCL	1-4	X	Issue 6	11	6	PAL	8.3
ROCKY	Rage	Steel Monkeys	1-2	X	X	2	12	PAL	8.3
CAPCOM VS SNK 2: EO	Capcom	In-house	1-2	X	Issue 10	2	9	PAL	8.2
LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS	EA	In-house	1	X	X	2	16	PAL	7.7
BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY	Activision	Eighting	1-2	X	X	3	6	PAL	7.0
BATTLE HOUSHIN	Koei	In-house	1	✓	X	6	7	NTSC	7.0
UFC THROWDOWN	Ubi Soft	Crave	1-4	X	X	5	11	PAL	6.4
X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION	Activision	Exact Ent	1	X	X	3	15	PAL	5.6
BARBARIAN	Virgin	Saffire	1-4	X	X	3	11	PAL	4.3
GODZILLA: DAMM	Infogrames	Pipeworks Studios	1-4	X	X	4	13	PAL	4.0

PARTY/PUZZLE

	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
SUPER MONKEY BALL 2	SEGA	Amusement Vision	1-4	X	X	2	16	PAL	9.1
PIKMIN	Nintendo	In-house	1	X	Issue 7/8	19	7	PAL	9.0
SUPER MONKEY BALL	SEGA	Amusement Vision	1-4	X	X	5	6	PAL	9.0
MARIO PARTY 4	Nintendo	Hudson	1-4	X	X	2	13	PAL	9.0
MR DRILLER DRILL LAND	Namco	In-house	1-2	✓	X	12	17	NTSC	8.8
WORMS BLAST	Ubi Soft	Team 17	1-2	X	X	3	7	PAL	7.8
NINTENDO PUZZLE COLLECTION	Nintendo	In-house	1-4	✓	X	6	17	NTSC	7.0
ZOOCUBE	Acclaim	Coyote	1-4	X	X	2	9	PAL	7.0
ONE PIECE TREASURE BATTLE	Bandai	In-house	1-4	X	X	4	15	NTSC	5.8
PAC-MAN FEVER	Namco	In-house	1-4	X	X	10	12	PAL	5.7
EGGO MANIA	Kemko	Hot Gen Studios	1-4	X	X	2	11	PAL	5.2
TETRIS WORLDS	THQ	Randicall Ent	1-4	X	X	4	11	PAL	4.7

RACING

	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
DAKAR 2	Acclaim	In-house	1-2	✓	X	10	17	PAL	9.0
WAVERACE: BLUE STORM	Nintendo	NSTC	1-4	X	Issue 5	3	6	PAL	8.9
BURNOUT	Acclaim	Criterion Games	1-2	X	X	6	6	PAL	8.4
XG3: EXTREME G RACING	Acclaim	In-house	1-4	X	X	3	6	PAL	8.2
ATV 2	Acclaim	Climax	1-2	X	X	9	16	PAL	8.1
F1 2002	EA	In-house	1-2	X	X	7	9	PAL	7.6
SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE	EA	Radical Ent.	1-2	X	X	5	6	PAL	7.5
CRAZY TAXI	Acclaim	In-house	1	X	X	4	6	PAL	7.3
SMUGGLER'S RUN: WARZONES	Take-Two	Rockstar	1-4	X	X	6	12	PAL	7.1
MX SUPERFLY	THQ	Pacific Coast	1-2	X	X	8	11	PAL	7.1
DRIVEN	Bam! Ent.	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	6	PAL	7.0
RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP	SCi	Warthog	1-4	X	X	2	17	PAL	6.8
PRO RALLY	Ubi Soft	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	13	PAL	5.9
NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2	EA	In-house	1-2	X	X	2	12	PAL	5.3
MICRO MACHINES	Infogrames	Sheffield House	1-4	X	X	3	16	PAL	5.2
SUPERCROSS WORLD	Acclaim	In-house	1-4	X	X	9	9	PAL	4.6
18WHEELER AM-PRO TRUCKER	Acclaim	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	8	PAL	4.4
CEL DAMAGE	EA	In-house	1-2	X	X	2	6	PAL	4.3
SMASHING DRIVE	Namco	Point Of View	1-2	X	X	3	5	PAL	3.8
WRECKLESS: YAKUZA MISSIONS	Activision	Broadsword	1-2	X	X	22	15	PAL	2.5

PLATFORM

	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC	Ubi Soft	In-house	1	X	X	12	16	PAL	8.1
DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK	Ubi Soft	In-house	1	X	X	6	6	PAL	6.2
PAC-MAN WORLD 2	Namco	In-house	1	X	X	16	5	NTSC	6.1
CRASH BANDICOOT	Eurocom	Vivendi	1	X	X	4	13	PAL	5.6
TAZ WANTED	Infogrames	Blitz Games	1-2	X	X	4	11	PAL	5.6
SCOOBY DOO!	THQ	Heavy Iron Studios	1-2	X	X	5	13	PAL	5.2

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Gary looks quietly confident at the selection stage



A crouching jab to open up the defence...



... straight into an energy sapping fireball



Follow up with an uppercut



... into a super dragon punch for the finish.

So now you know what to do next time someone looks at your pint funny!

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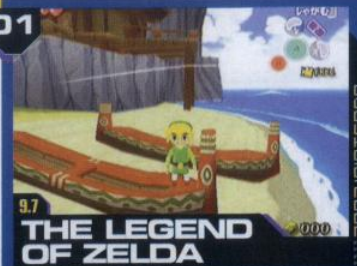
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PLATFORM	CMTD	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
DR MUTO		Midway	In-house	1	X	X	5	17	PAL	5.0
DISNEY'S TARZAN FREERIDE		Disney Int.	Ubi Soft	1	X	X	8	6	PAL	5.0
TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER		EA	Crome Studios	1	X	X	1	13	PAL	4.8
PAC-MAN WORLD 2		Namco	In-house	1	X	X	8	16	PAL	4.2

SHOOT-'EM-UP	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
TIMESPLITTERS 2	Eidos	Free Radical	1-4	X	Issue 12	6+	11	PAL	9.5
STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER	Activision	Factor 5	1	X	Issue 2/3	3	6	PAL	9.1
IKARUGA	Atari	Treasure	1-2	X	X	4	17	PAL	9.0
MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE	EA	In-house	1-4	X	Issue 15	4	14	PAL	8.6
DIE HARD: VENDETTA	Vivendi	Bits Studios	1	X	X	6	13	PAL	8.2
TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES	Virgin	Digital Integration	1	X	X	7	10	PAL	6.9
ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY	TDK	Mediactive	1-2	X	X	1	13	NTSC	8.0
NIGHTFIRE	EA	In-house	1-4	X	X	2	14	PAL	7.9
FIREBLADE	Midway	Avalanche	1	X	X	1	16	PAL	6.5
AGENT UNDER FIRE	EA	In-house	1-4	X	Issue 9	3	7	PAL	6.4
TUROK EVOLUTION	Acclaim	In-house	1	X	X	1	11	PAL	6.1
SPYHUNTER	Midway	Point Of View	1-2	X	X	6	7	PAL	5.9
MEN IN BLACK II: ALIEN ESCAPE	Infogrames	Melbourne House	1	X	X	3	16	PAL	4.2
DEFENDER	Midway	In-house	1-2	X	X	4	17	PAL	4.0

SPORTS	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	PLAYERS	GBA LINK-UP	GUIDE	MEMORY USED	ISSUE	REVIEW	CUBE RATING
KONAMI	Activision	In-house	1-4	X	X	98	17	NTSC	9.2
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4	Activision	Neversoft	1-2	X	X	5	13	PAL	9.2
AGGRESSIVE INLINE	Acclaim	Z-Axis	1-4	X	Issue 10	57	10	PAL	9.1
NBA 2K3	Infogrames	SEGA	1-4	X	X	251	17	PAL	9.0
SEGA SOCCER SLAM	SEGA	Black Box Games	1-4	X	X	8	11	PAL	9.0
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003	EA	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	14	PAL	9.0
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	Activision	Neversoft	1-2	X	Issue 4	6	6	PAL	8.6
NHL HITZ 20-03	Midway	Black Box Games	1-4	X	X	8+	11	NTSC	8.6
NHL HITZ 2003	EA	In-house	1-4	X	X	30	14	PAL	8.4
NHL HITZ 2002	Midway	Black Box Games	1-4	X	X	5	6	PAL	8.4
NBA STREET	EA	NUFX	1-2	X	X	10	6	NTSC	8.4
VIRTUA STRIKER 3 VER. 2002	SEGA	Amusement Vision	1-2	X	Issue 10	2+	8	PAL	8.4
ISS2	Konami	Major A	1-4	X	X	9	6	PAL	8.2
FIFA FOOTBALL 2003	EA	EA	1-4	X	X	29	13	PAL	8.2
MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2	Activision	Rainbow Studios	1-2	X	X	3+	11	PAL	8.2
ACE GOLF	Eidos	Telenet Japan	1-4	X	X	3	12	PAL	8.1
BEACH SPIKERS	Sega	AM2	1-4	X	X	3	10	PAL	8.0
SSX TRICKY	EA	EA BIG	1-2	X	X	8	7	PAL	8.0
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2003	EA	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	14	PAL	7.9
KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER	Activision	Treyarch	1-2	X	X	3+	11	PAL	7.6
DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2	Acclaim	Z-Axis	1-2	X	X	4	6	PAL	7.4
FREESTYLE	EA	Hypnos Ent	1-2	X	X	8	12	PAL	7.4
2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	EA	In-house	1-4	X	X	29	6	PAL	7.2
NBA COURTSIDE 2002	Nintendo	Left Field	1-4	X	X	7	8	PAL	6.8
WRESTLEMANIA WWE X8	THQ	Yukes	1-4	X	X	12	12	PAL	6.7
DARK SUMMIT	THQ	Radical	1-2	X	X	4	8	PAL	6.2
NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2002	Acclaim	In-house	1-8	X	X	4+	4	PAL	6.1
ESPN INT. WINTER SPORTS '02	Konami	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	6	PAL	6.0
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	Acclaim	In-house	1-4	X	X	3	7	PAL	4.7
DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING	Konami	In-house	1	X	X	3	12	PAL	4.6
BMX XXX	Acclaim	Z-Axis	1-2	X	X	57	14	PAL	4.5
BIG AIR FREESTYLE	Uni Soft	In-house	1-2	X	X	3	14	PAL	4.2
WTA PRO TENNIS TOUR	Konami	Konami	1-4	X	X	4	12	PAL	4.5
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2	Acclaim	In-house	1-4	X	X	3	15	PAL	4.0

01



9.7 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

02



9.6 METROID PRIME

03



9.5 TIMESPLITTERS 2

04



9.4 STARFOX ADVENTURES

05



9.4 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

06



9.2 WINNING ELEVEN 6 FE

07



9.2 ETERNAL DARKNESS

08



9.2 RESIDENT EVIL

09



9.2 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

10



9.1 SUPER MONKEY BALL

total conversion

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picture messages

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- If you want to send the picture message to a friend, just add their number after the name and also if you like, a message at the very end (max 120 characters).
- Eg. **DO CPIC 480001 07081234567 Wanna c me 2nite at your place @ 8...**

animated screen savers sms# 87050

WAP
users

1. Send an SMS, eg. **DO CSAVER 380001** to the short number **87050**.
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3. Save the bookmark: "Options" and "Save"
4. Open your WAP connection by choosing "Options" and "Go to" --- After connecting to the service ---
5. Save the saver by: "Options", "View picture", "Options" and "Save picture"
6. You can activate the saver from your "Profiles" Personalise selection.

polyphonic ring tone

sms# 87050

WAP
users

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Hottest

stand out from the rest!

#	TONE / ARTIST	CODE
1	NOT GONNA GET US - T.A.T.U	182286
2	LOSE YOURSELF - Eminem	182268
3	DANGER! HIGH VOLTAGE - Electric Six	182286
4	SUPERMARIO - Nintendo	180507
5	JENNY FROM THE BLOCK - Jennifer Lopez	182269
6	JACKASS - Theme	181308
7	SCIENTIST - Coldplay	182259
8	I'M WITH YOU - Avril Lavigne	182283
9	NO ONE KNOWS - Queens of the Stoneage	182284
10	WHAT'S YOUR FLAVA - Craig David	182270
11	All the Things She Said - T.A.T.U	182287
12	HALO - Xbox	182107
13	THE LOGICAL SONG (RAMP) - Scooter	182119
14	DIE ANOTHER DAY - Madonna	182238
15	STAR WARS - Theme	180249
16	FEEL - Robbie Williams	182253
17	THE KETCHUP SONG - Las Ketchup	182124
18	JET SET RADIO - Xbox	182103
19	TERMINATOR - Theme	180522
20	METAL GEAR - Nintendo	182056
21	SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT - Nirvana	180988
22	LORD OF THE RINGS - Theme	182120
23	ROCKY (Gonna Fly Now) - Theme	180311
24	20th CENTURY FOX - Fanfare!	182113
25	KNIGHT RIDER - Theme	180171
26	ONE - Metallica	180906
27	HERE TO STAY - Korn	181319
28	BY THE WAY - Red Hot Chili Peppers	182109
29	MORTAL KOMBAT - pc	182117
30	RAP SUPERSTAR - Cypress Hill	180092
31	COMMAND & CONQUER - pc	181143
32	CASTLES IN THE SKY - Ian van Dahl	180339
33	BAD BOYS - Inner Circle	180399
34	OBJECTION - Shakira	182192
35	FOOLS GOLD - Stone Roses	182254
36	INSOMNIA - Faithless	180324
37	DADDY DJ - Daddy DJ	180773
38	WISH I DIDN'T MISS YOU - Angie Stone	182288
39	PINK PANTHER THEME	180166
40	DIGITAL LOVE - Daft Punk	180679

top-40 Official Fun4me chart



Heavy/metal

1	18 AND LIFE - Skidrow	182315
2	CRAWLING - Linkin Park	180689
3	PARANOID - Black Sabbath	180693
4	NOTHING ELSE MATTERS - Metallica	182229
5	NUMBER OF THE BEAST - Iron Maiden	180716
6	THUNDERSTRUCK - AC/DC	180095
7	IN TOO DEEP - Sum 41	181150
8	DREAMER - Ozzy Osbourne	182115
9	HELLS BELLS - AC/DC	182129
10	IN THE END - Linkin Park	181111

games top 10 lock 'n' load!

1	SUPERMARIO SUNSHINE - Gamecube	182211
2	HITMAN 2 - Theme 1	182170
3	BUBBLE BOBBLE - C64	180371
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DANCE/HIP HOP party zone!

1	W***STA - 50 Cent	182323
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10	WITHOUT ME - Eminem	182103

POP/ROCK rock me enjoy!

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10	SUSPICIOUS MINDS - Elvis	181062

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7	PSYCHO	181052
8	BOB THE BUILDER	180120
9	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	180684
10	FRIENDS	180038

6110, 6150, 6210, 6310, 6410, 7110, 7650, 8110, 8210, 8310, 8810, 8910, 9000, 9110, 9210.

Polyphonic top 10 new nokia 9510 & 9650!

1	CAN'T STOP - Red Hot Chili Peppers	580310
2	CLEANIN OUT MY CLOSET - Eminem	580022
3	LOSE YOURSELF - Eminem	580280
4	DILEMMA - Nelly	580237
5	ALWAYS...BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE	580001
6	STAR WARS - Theme	580008
7	GANGSTA'S PARADISE - Coolio	580005
8	SUPERMARIO SUNSHINE - Nintendo	580148
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3		480808
4		481052
5		480856
6		480673
7		480717
8		480845
9		481054
10		480820

Can also be used as background motives on series: 3310, 3330, 3410, 3510, 5210 and 5510.

Picture messages

	480754		480712		480748		481070		481105		480760		480838		480743
	480754		480712		480748		481061		481069		480746		480769		480860

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Logos top 20

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Next Month... Next Month... Next Month... Next Month...

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P.N. 03

➔ Vanessa gets her wires crossed

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SOUL CALIBUR II

➔ The eternal tale of swords resurfaces

Okay, so we haven't had a version of *Virtua Fighter*, *Tekken* or *Dead Or Alive*, but now we have the best version of the greatest 3D beat-'em-up on the planet. We know it's going to be good – the question is how good...

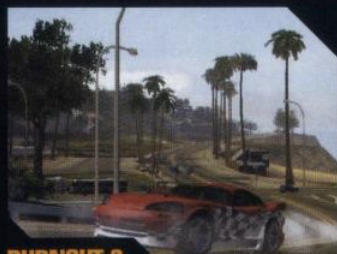
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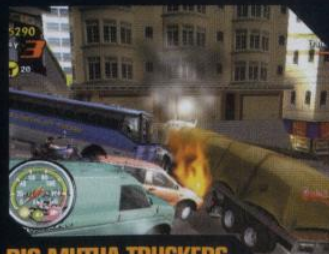
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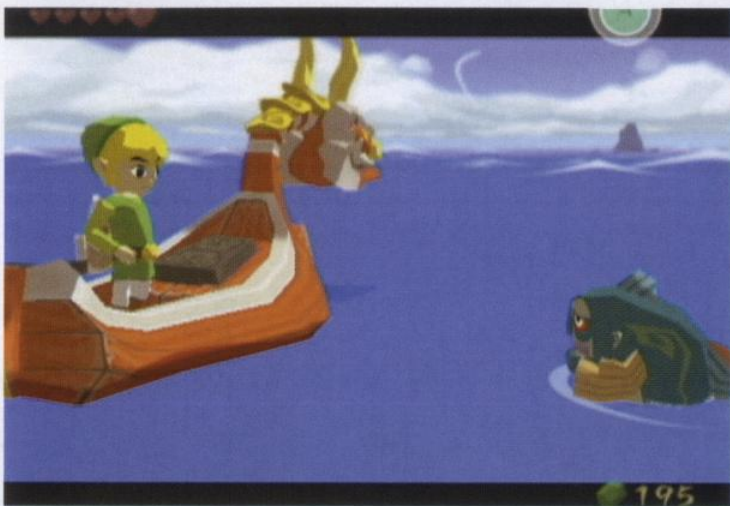
GIFTPIA

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☉ Three times the fun as Link hits Europe

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INTERVIEWS

☉ STUDIO EYE



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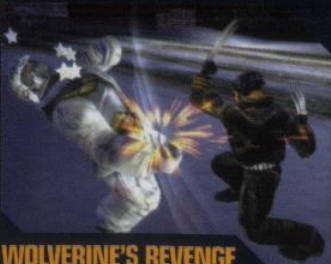
SOLUTIONS

☉ PROBLEM SOLVED

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However averse you are to using solutions, everyone will have to refer to this. Link's new adventure is so crammed full of secrets that you'd be crazy not to have Part 1 of our massive guide at your fingertips.

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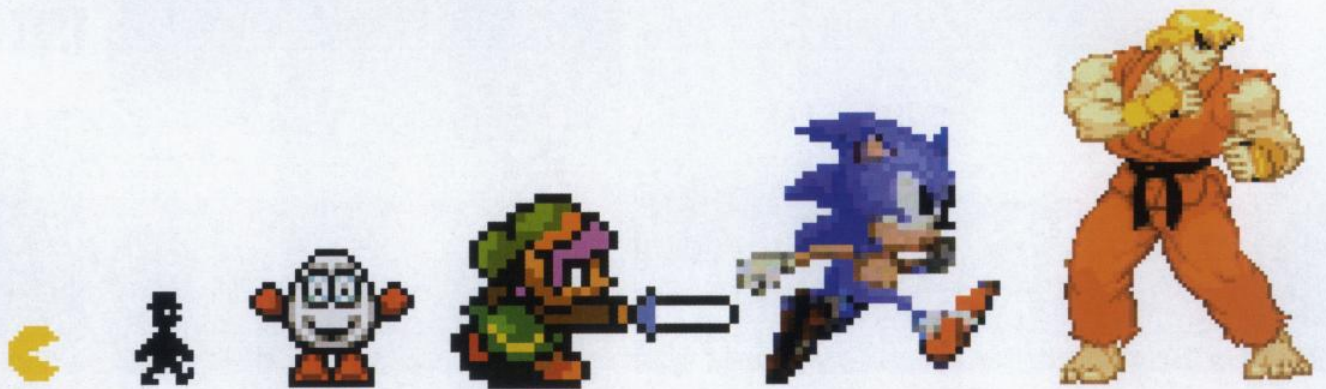
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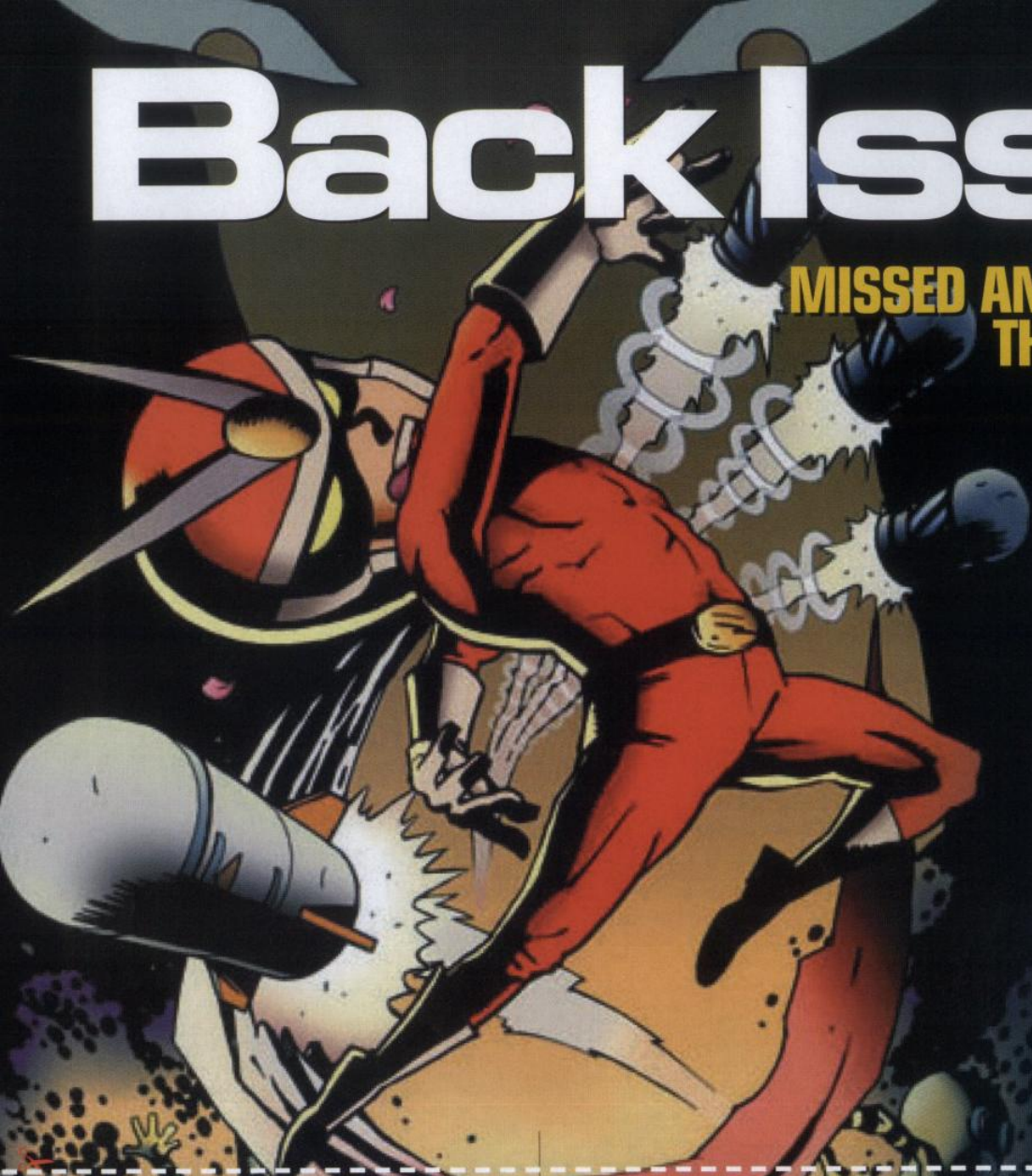
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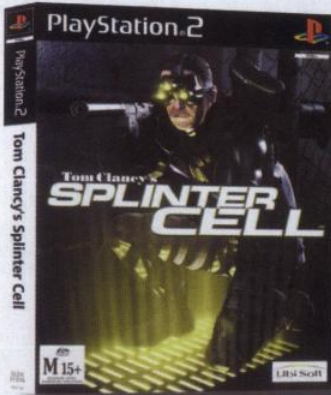
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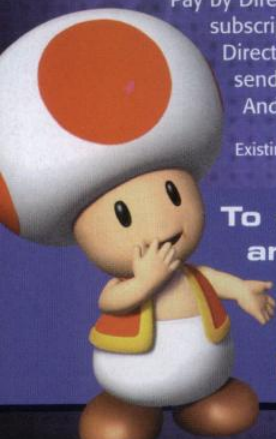
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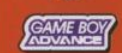
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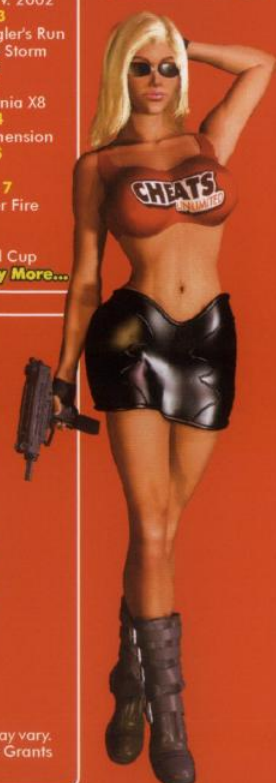
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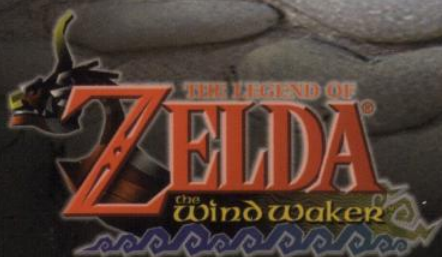


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