

The videogame magazine

Xmas 1999
Issue 14



Amaze

PlayStation Nintendo 64 **Game Boy** PC **Dreamcast**

YOU'LL BE BUSTING FOR A SLASH!

SOUL CALIBUR

THE BEST DREAMCAST GAME YET!
REVIEWED, TIPPED AND MORE

132
pages of

- Crazy Taxi
- Medal Of Honor
- Bond Girls
- Tekken Tag
- Internet Cafés
- Crash Team Racing
- Movies
- Music & More!

XMAS CRACKERS

The gear of the year: Santa's sack spilled for your pleasure

DONKEY KONG 64

It's up there with Zelda 64. Can five apes revive Nintendo's fortunes?

FIFA 2000

The beautiful game returns

59
NEW GAMES
REVIEWED
INSIDE!



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PLUS! GRAN TURISMO 2 8-PAGE SPECIAL

INCLUDING: **SWISS TONI** ON WHY PLAYING GT2 IS LIKE MAKING LOVE TO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN...

No.3

THE GAME BOY COLOR GUIDE TO



Nintendo, the makers of Game Boy Color have no responsibility for any accident(s) caused whilst playing.

A FEW MINUTES SPENT FAMILIARISING YOURSELF WITH THE TIPS IN THIS HANDY GUIDE WILL MEAN YOU CAN ENJOY LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF GAMES WITHOUT COMING TO HARM.

If you can make it here, you can make it anywhere!
But you'll probably just die.

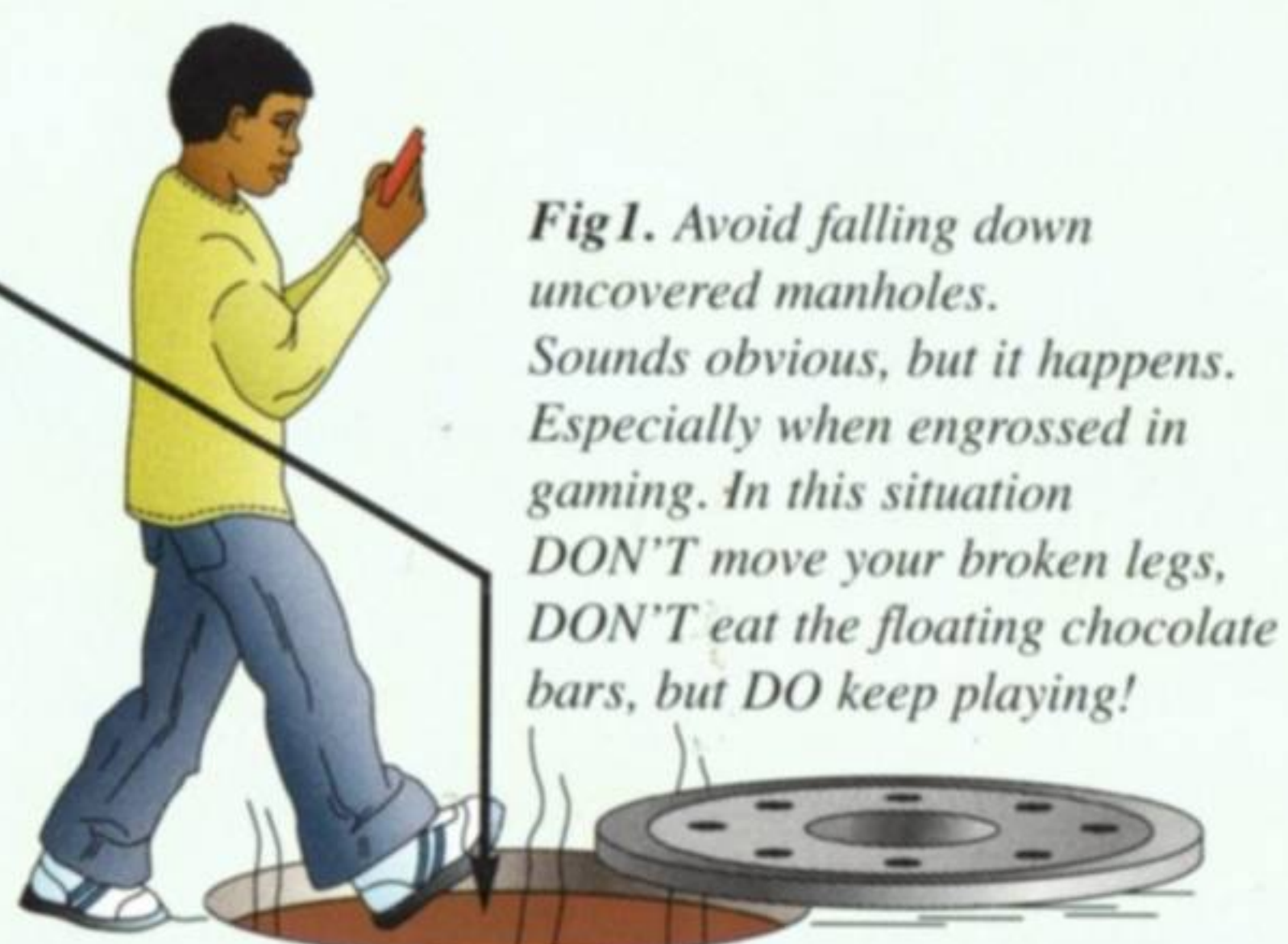


Fig1. Avoid falling down uncovered manholes. Sounds obvious, but it happens. Especially when engrossed in gaming. In this situation DON'T move your broken legs, DON'T eat the floating chocolate bars, but DO keep playing!



REMEMBER: A SMART PLAYER IS A SAFE PLAYER.

YOU MAY THINK YOU'RE STREETWISE, BUT ONE FALSE STEP AND BAM! YOU'RE A CHALK OUTLINE.



Fig2. 93.2%* of suicides occur in the city. ruined, down-on-his-luck businessman probably won't even succeed in finding something hard to and on. Game Over. you and lard-butt.

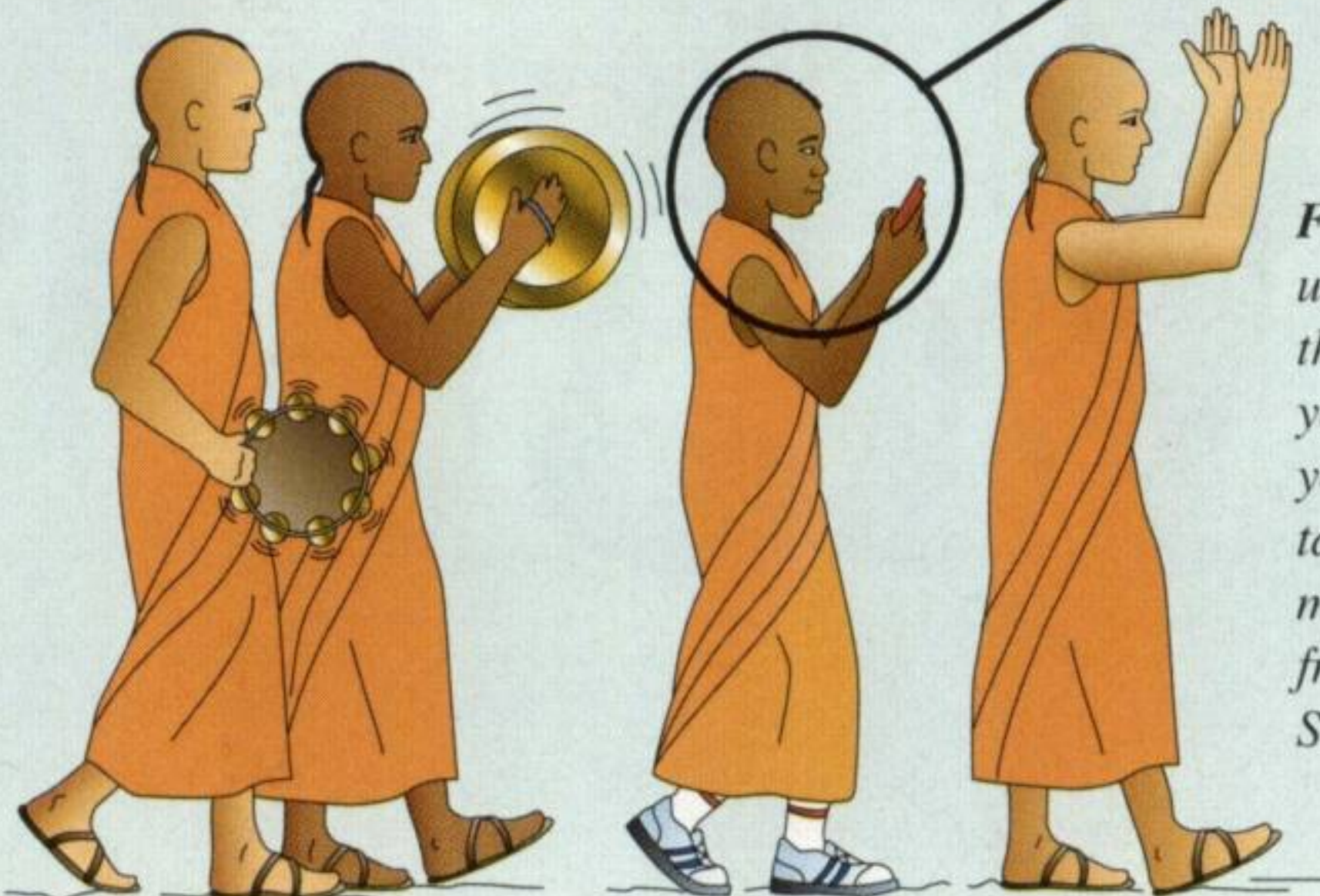


Fig3. Cults recruit unsuspecting people in the city. Once they have you they will brainwash you and pierce you and take all your money and make you drink blood from sacrificial goats. Steer well clear.



Available in six different colour casings.

GAME BOY COLOR
FEEL EVERYTHING. EVERYWHERE.

Source: Department of Emotional and Abnormal Disorders (DEAD).



This month *The first flirtation.*

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Soul Calibur!

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A Review

The Ultimate Game Buyer's Guide

68 New Dreamcast Games

New releases: *Soul Calibur*, *Soul Fighter*, *Snow Surfers*, *Sega Bass Fishing*, *F-1 World Grand Prix*, *Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing*



■ *Sega Bass Fishing*

74 New PC Games



New releases: *Theme Park World*, *The Nomad Soul*, *Championship Manager Season 99/00*, *Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings*, *Nocturne*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Men In Black*, *Wargasm*, *Rage of Mages 2*, *Creatures Adventures*, *Forestia*, *Links LS 2000*, *NBA Basketball*, *Armoured Fist 3*, *Sega Rally 2*, *Nascar 3*, *Planescape: Torment*

88 New PlayStation Games

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■ *Wu-Tang: Taste The Pain*

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The videogame magazine

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“My Beautiful Café”

A bijou bar where you can blast your mates' heads off before supping a half. Bliss.



The Playing Fields, Fitzrovia, London

Despite their weight, tendency to accuse you of “illegal operations” and propensity to download gut-churningly explicit photos of your favourite pop starlet at the precise moment your boss walks past, PCs are great.

Sadly, though, unless you have a cheeky emulator, titles like *Mario Kart*, *Wipeout* and *GoldenEye* – considered by many to be the finest on any platform – can't be played on these lightning fast machines. But there are some compensations, like the opportunity to front up to 16 of your mates in a networked game of *Quake 2* or *Unreal Tournament*. The problem is finding enough linked PCs, and that's where The Playing Fields comes in: a custom designed bar-cum-multi-player-mecca. Ideal.

Slot Check

- Place: **The Playing Fields, Whitfield Street, London W1**
- Nearest Tube: **Warren Street**
- Size: **2,500 square feet**
- Entertainment: **20 600Mz Athlon PCs all linked over Fast Ethernet; more than 50 games, including *Unreal Tournament*, *Quake 2* and *Alien vs Predator*; fully licensed bar selling wines, beers, spirits and house cocktails *Quake Juice*, *Total Annihilation*.**
- Price: **Games cost £6 an hour, charged by the minute. An all day pass costs £30. Happy hour (at bar) 6-7pm, buy one, get one free. Membership costs £15 and includes three hours of play time and other reductions.**
- Telephone: **0171 388 0004**
- Opening hours: **Noon to 11pm, seven days a week, apart from Christmas Day and New Year's Day.**
- Web site: **<http://www.theplayingfields.co.uk>**

PHOTOGRAPHY: JUDE EDGINGTON

Mike 36, Zimbabwe

Yoswer. See you're playing *Midtown Madness*. Any cop?

[Pulling tie from shoulder] "Fab. The multi-player mode's the best thing since dodgems."

What do you think of the café/gamesplaying concept of *The Playing Fields*?

"It's a great idea actually. I'm an accountant, and I normally come down with a few of my work mates to play *Quake 2*." [Raising eyebrows] "It's a pity we're not allowed to play at work, really. I haven't even got the Internet at work, anymore. Everyone was just using it to play those silly games."

Do you think that all this new technology helps make work a bit of a skive?

"Huh?"
Um, you know, so you can look like you're busy when

you're actually e-mailing your friends or looking at rude pictures? That's what we do.

"You could if you wanted. But nowadays they keep a check on what you send. They're cracking down hard on people like you, you know."

Nah they're not. So what's your favourite game here?

[Gesturing with head] "I normally play the bar football, actually."

What? Table football? Brilliant. Even with all this technology, you still prefer the old-skool games?

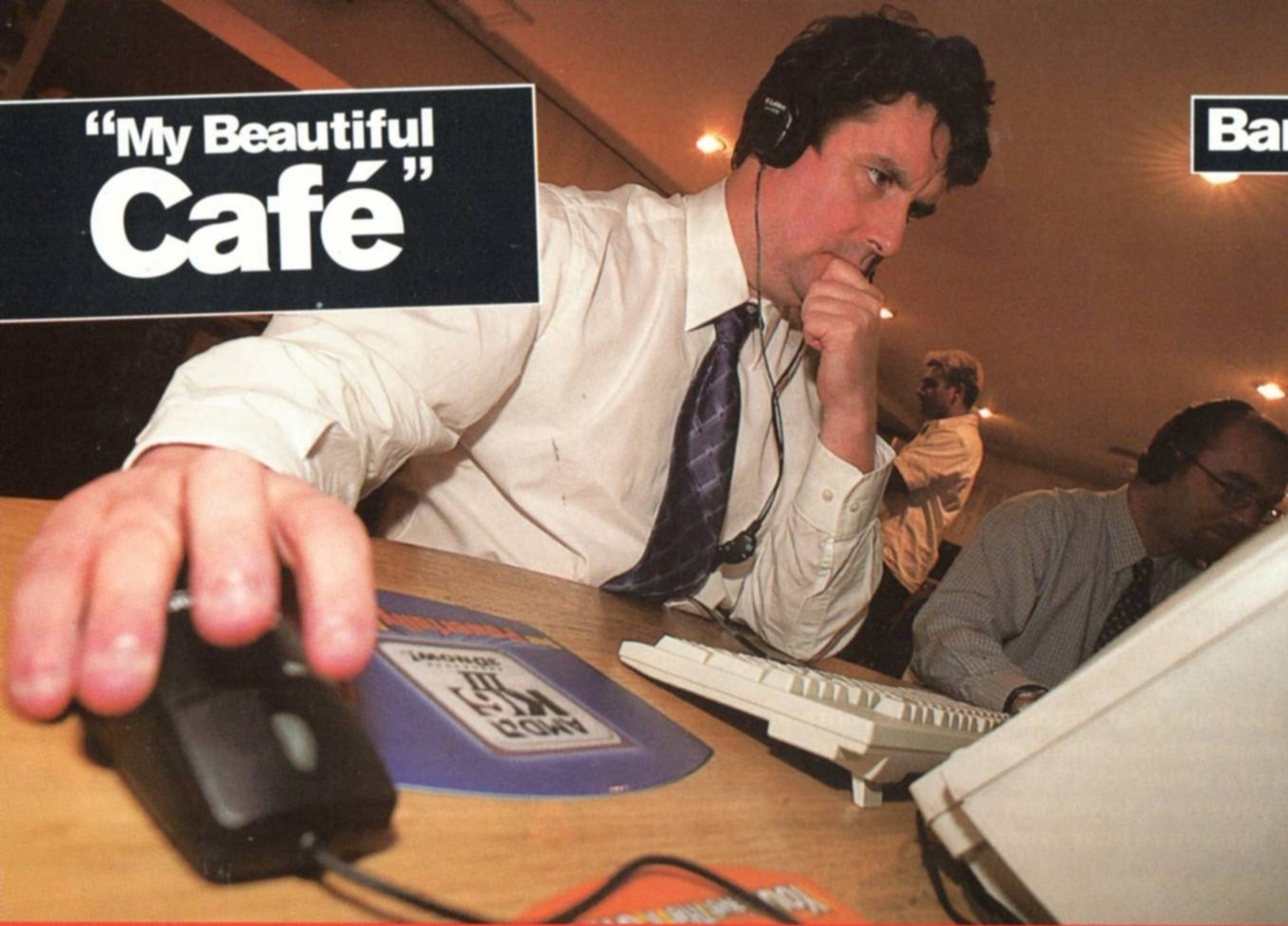
"Well, I like videogames as well, you know."
So football, videogames and accountancy all join together?

"Somehow, yes."
Nice one. All right. Nice to talk to you.



"Multi-player
Midtown Madness
is the **best thing**
since dodgems."

"My Beautiful Café"




Barry Over 21, Wandsworth

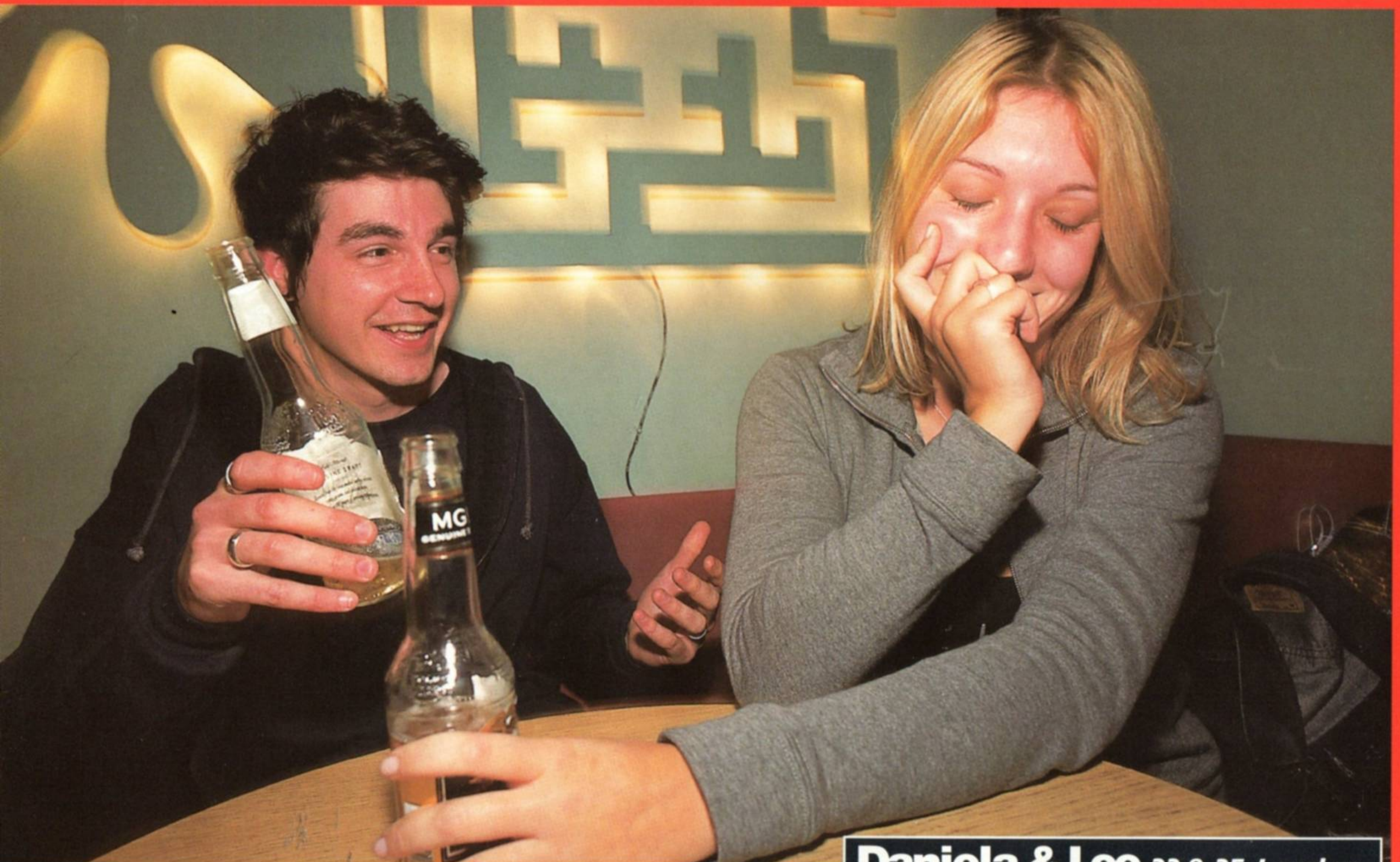
Hello. Do you come here every lunchtime, then? "Pretty much." [Gesturing to mates] "We've become obsessed. We started off coming once a week to play *Total Annihilation*. Now we come down practically every day."

So what do you do for a living? "We work on program development"

Can't you play games at work, then? "No. We'd get sacked."

Really? That sounds a bit harsh. "It's not that bad, 'cos we can go back in the afternoon and drive our boss mad talking about who won."

Do you play games at home? "Indeedy. I've got a PlayStation, N64 and PC. I can't decide whether to get a Dreamcast. I've got all these vouchers for Virgin Megastore which I got for sitting exams. It's either that or splash out on *Age of Empires* and *Wipeout*." 



Daniela & Lee 22 & 25, London

Hello. Er. Are you two going out? [Lee speaks] "No. I've got another girlfriend." [Daniela turns on him] "What's that? You've got another girlfriend?"

Uh-oh. We've opened a whole can of worms here. [Lee speaks] "That's why I have to resort to games – to get away from women. I'm saving up for a PlayStation2."

The idea that you can still play your old games is good. We might have a go on *Quake 2* in a minute. I've played it at work."

Where do you work? "On The Discovery Channel. It's well worth watching, especially if you're a gamesplayer."


Really? "Well, I was just giving The Discovery Channel a plug."

[Harshly] Listen. We've got editorial control here. We probably won't even mention the Discovery Channel now.

[Daniela speaks] "I work for Animal Planet, which is exclusively about animals. Animal drama, lots of Lassie, that sort of thing..."

Aren't we supposed to be talking about videogames?

"I'm good at those crap Olympic games where you have to bash the buttons, like you used to get on the Spectrum. To be honest, I think *Jet Set Willy* is the best game ever. I've still got my Speccy. I was playing it the other month."

You're still playing your Spectrum in 1999? Fantastic. See you later. 



“Alien vs Predator looks fantastically scary but it’s so hard.”

Hello. What do you reckon of The Playing Fields, then? “It’s a much better idea than an Internet café. Well, the idea’s different, really, because it focuses on the games. I like it – it’s like an arcade designed for adults.”

Have you been here before? What sort of people do you normally get? “It’s mixed, really. Suits at lunch time, groups of lads in the evening, students all day long. Don’t forget that this place is a normal bar, too, so there are plenty of regular non-gamesplaying punters as well.”

Which are your favourite games? “Well, I know most people love *Quake 2* but I prefer the more arcadey ones like *Worms*. I keep trying to get into *Alien vs Predator* because it looks fantastically scary, but it’s so hard.” [Shivers] “I don’t like the way you can hear them coming for you, though. That’s just too scary.”

Ummm. Do you play videogames at home as well? “I’ve just got a pocket Neo Geo, actually. I just love *Puzzle Bobble*. I play it all the time on the move. That golf game’s good too...”

Isn’t it just? Okay, thank you muchly for the chat. See you later. Bye.



“My Beautiful
Café”

“What’s that girl called?
Lara Croft?
I like her!”

Natasha & Cocoa *Neveryoumind & ten, Newcastle*

[To Natasha] Hello. What are you doing here? “I’m a hairdresser. I work next door. I’m on my break, so I decided to pop in for a sit down and a coffee.”
Eh? But aren’t you drinking



beer? “Shhhhhhhhhhhhh.”
[Absent-mindedly stroking dog] So do you play the games here, then? “Not really. You can say so if you like. My boyfriend has a PlayStation. What’s that girl called? Lara Croft? I like her.”
[Examining hands] Er, what’s up with your dog? “What do you mean, what’s up with her?”
Is it supposed to look like that?
Which end is which? “She’s a Hungarian Puli. Her hair goes like that naturally. Her eyes are very sensitive, so her fringe helps block out the sunlight. And the rest of her hair insulates her against the heat.”
Fair enough. Has she got a boyfriend? “Not at the moment. She has in the past, but she’s young, free and single at the moment.”
The best way to be, we reckon. Cheerio, then.
[Cocoa speaks] “Woof.”

Your beautiful arcade

■ Jeez. You should have touched that dog. It was like stroking a mop. Anyway, with the new millennium approaching the big question remains: can *Arcade* continue to get out there, meet the people and take the pulse of public gaming? Let’s hope so. But where to go? It’s your call. Write in with suggestions, but make sure they’re not just shaggy dog stories.

A Write to us

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LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE™



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IN-GAME ANNOUNCEMENT BY ★ MICHAEL BUFFER ★ THE VOICE OF CHAMPIONS™



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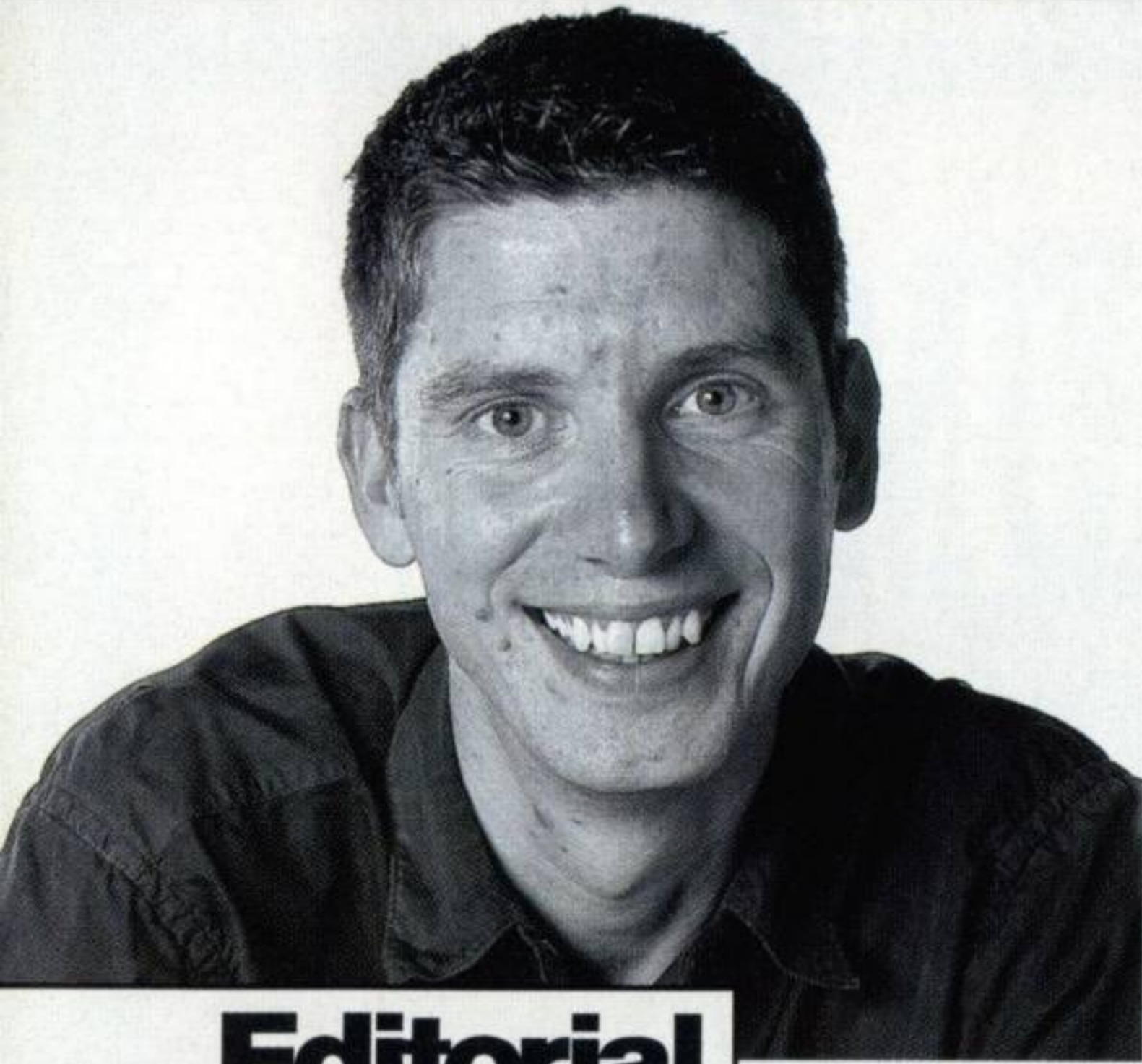


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Editorial

T'is the season...

You know that the season commonly known as "the one to be jolly in" has well and truly arrived when, with just a few ed's intro paragraphs needed to close the Xmas issue, the whole team buggers off to the boozier mid-afternoon for a "year 2000 planning meeting... honest... catch us up boss... Kronenberg?"

And why not, as always this is the busiest and most important month of the year for them there videogames and us who plays 'em. All the big guns unleash their killer games for a share of your and your loved ones' all important Xmas lolly: *Soul Calibur*, *FIFA 2000*, *Age Of Empires II*, *Donkey Kong 64* to name but, well, four, are all gagging to amuse as you enter the inevitable turkey-stuffed, sherry-ridden, Xmas afternoon hell. And as tradition dictates there are Xmas casualties. *GT2* has slipped to February and we've got the story behind this seemingly suicidal festive PlayStation move.

Enough to stuff any normal games mag you'd think. But this ain't no ordinary games mag. Rather than merely settle for reviews and tips of all the big titles, *Arcade's* tireless hacks have scoured Internet cafés for the inside story, chatted up the new Bond girl, chosen motors with Swiss Toni, rounded up the best games, movies, books, CDs and gubbins of the year for the ultimate Xmas list and gone behind the scenes with Spank (yes he's a monkey) on the latest BBC videogame show.

Booze awaits so enjoy the issue, I'm sure (sorry, here it comes) yule love it. And much as I don't want to go all Columbo on you, just one more thing – merry Xmas.

Sean Atkins
Editor

It's your letters

Why bottle it all up when you can put pen to paper and share your problems with the world?

Letter of the month

The kids aren't all right

I'm 14 and have just finished reading your feature on children and games (issue#12) and found many of your points extremely ill-thought out.

You talk to 11-year-olds (eight and nine-year-olds, actually – Ed) about games such as *Grand Theft Auto* and they say that "it's funny" or "there's nothing wrong with it". You comment on this by admitting that games like *Kingpin* should not be given to children, but because kids have heard of *GTA* and are hungry for experience you appear to imply that this game is somehow all right?!

I know these games are meant to be out of my range too, and I feel I am responsible enough to play them, but I'm sure adults would disagree – because they are older and (hopefully) wiser. I thought I knew what was best when I was 11, but I know now that I didn't. When I'm 20 I'm sure I'll think the same about myself now and so on.

Games with violence and with an overall target of killing, stealing and other crimes are not right for a lot of adults let alone children – that is what the rating system is for. Kids may say it is okay and some adults may say it's okay, but it games can be as affect impressionable minds the same way as horror films – no matter what the impressionable minds believe.

Mark Bradbury (and his impressionable mind)

Oh Mark. Your whole premise for writing appears to be based on a comment we have somehow "implied". The point of the feature was to give the kids a voice and not to intervene with our own judgements. We attempted not to imply anything beyond what the kids were telling us, except to raise a few questions. The influence of violent videogames on children is a constant, ongoing discussion which we couldn't hope to summarise in 132 pages, let alone a paragraph. If, however, you think it's regrettable that eight-year-olds are knowledgeable about Grand Theft Auto, it's not a determinedly adult mag like Arcade you ought to be blaming.

Yanks are better shots

The debate about violence in videogames affecting young people and making them go out and shoot people in their school/church is crap. In my view it's just a question of economics. An M-16 costs six hundred dollars or

more, so say the US government impose VAT of 16/20% they can earn \$100, but a game costing \$40 will net them a whopping \$7, so it's not economically viable to ban guns instead of games. But the best way of illustrating that guns rather than games are at the heart of the problem is that America is the only country were it happens at all. Or maybe it's just that Americans are better shots.
Leo McLaughlin, via e-mail

Curious argument, but we do tend to agree that just because a nutter has played a couple of games and indulges in a gun frenzy it's not because of the games. Maybe Tony the tiger on his morning Frosties made the nutter do it, or Mariah Carey on the radio maybe. The problem with nutters is that they're nutters.

Cat-herine out of bag

How can you seriously claim that the woman on your contributors list (the one who named and sponsored "Sonic the Baby Hedgehog") in issue #12 was named Catherine Lane-Simms, when she's clearly the tasty police chick from *Silent Hill*?

Silent Bill, via-e-mail

Hmm, you may have a point – sort of.

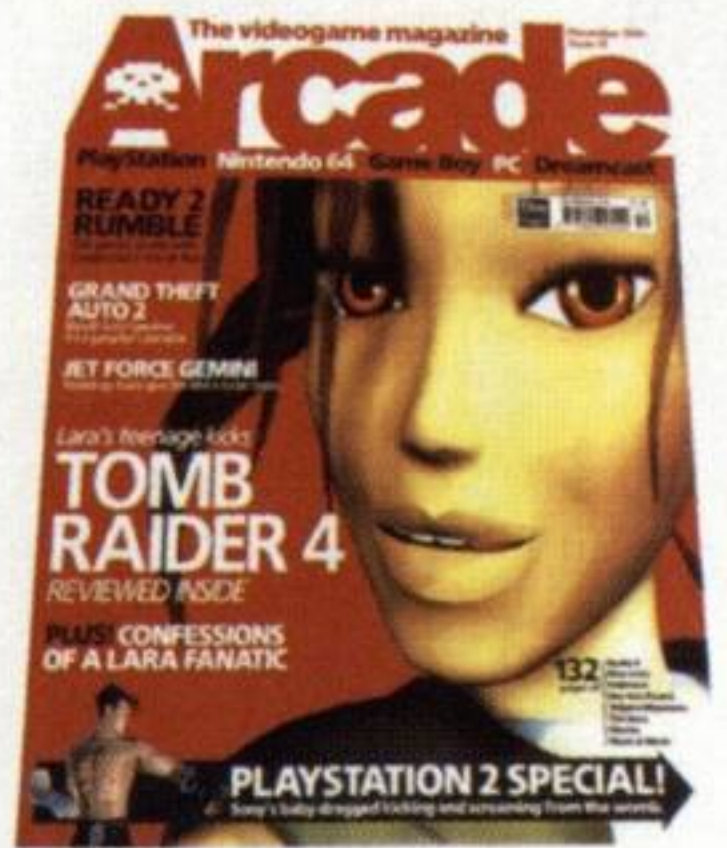


Monkey features

Finally! A magazine that doesn't go with the flow but stands up for the truth! I can think of no better words than "chillingly atmospheric", "spookily vivid" and "depressing enough to make you sling up a noose" to describe *The Curse of Monkey Island*, a game that most magazines regarded as a comedy adventure.

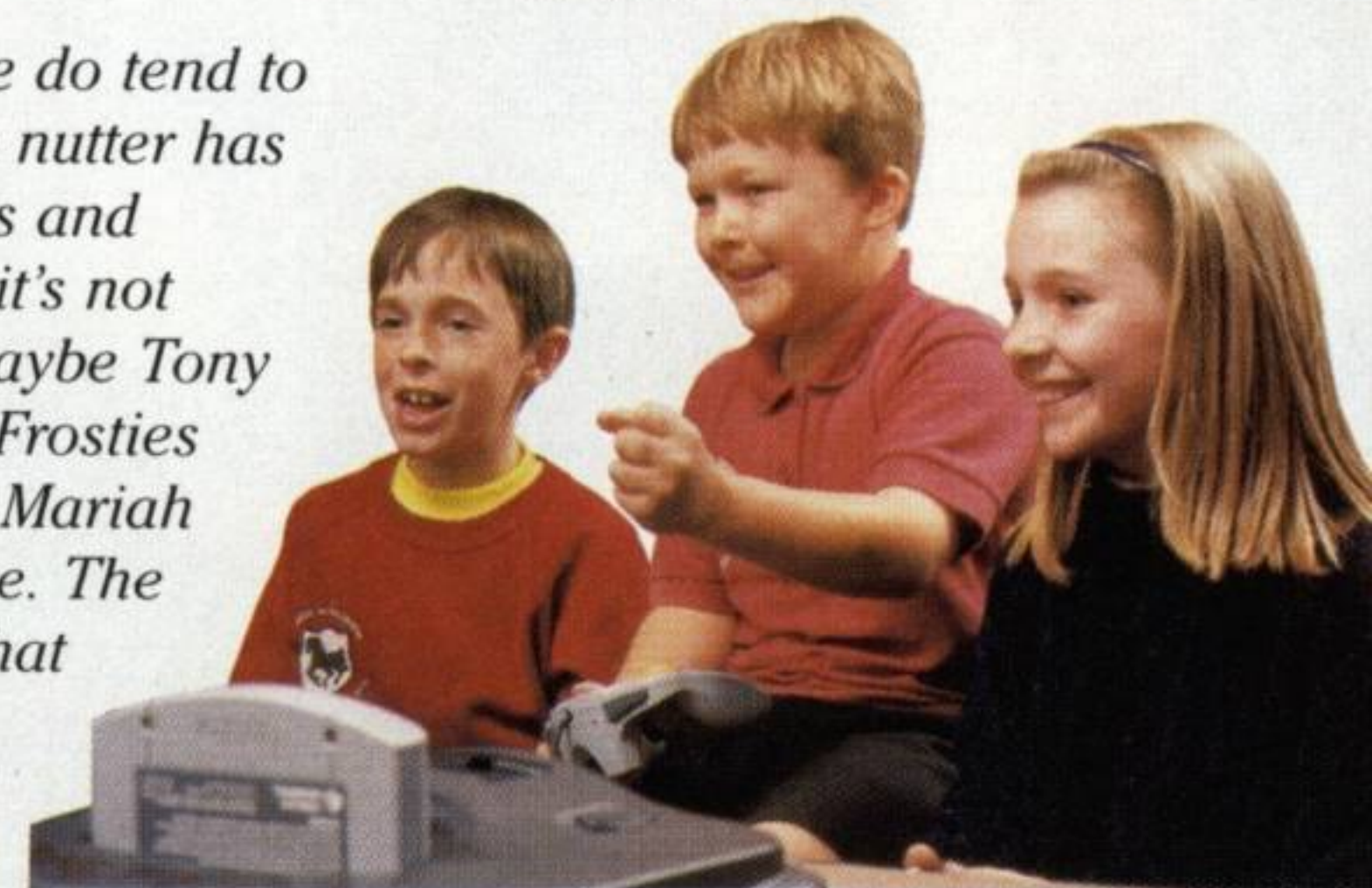
However, I have to admit that you are pushing the phrase "a few illogical puzzles" to its outer limits when you apply it to the game.

Iwan Lamble, via e-mail



Lara's back again and PlayStation2 is finally unveiled – start saving.

Kids these days: as featured in the last issue.



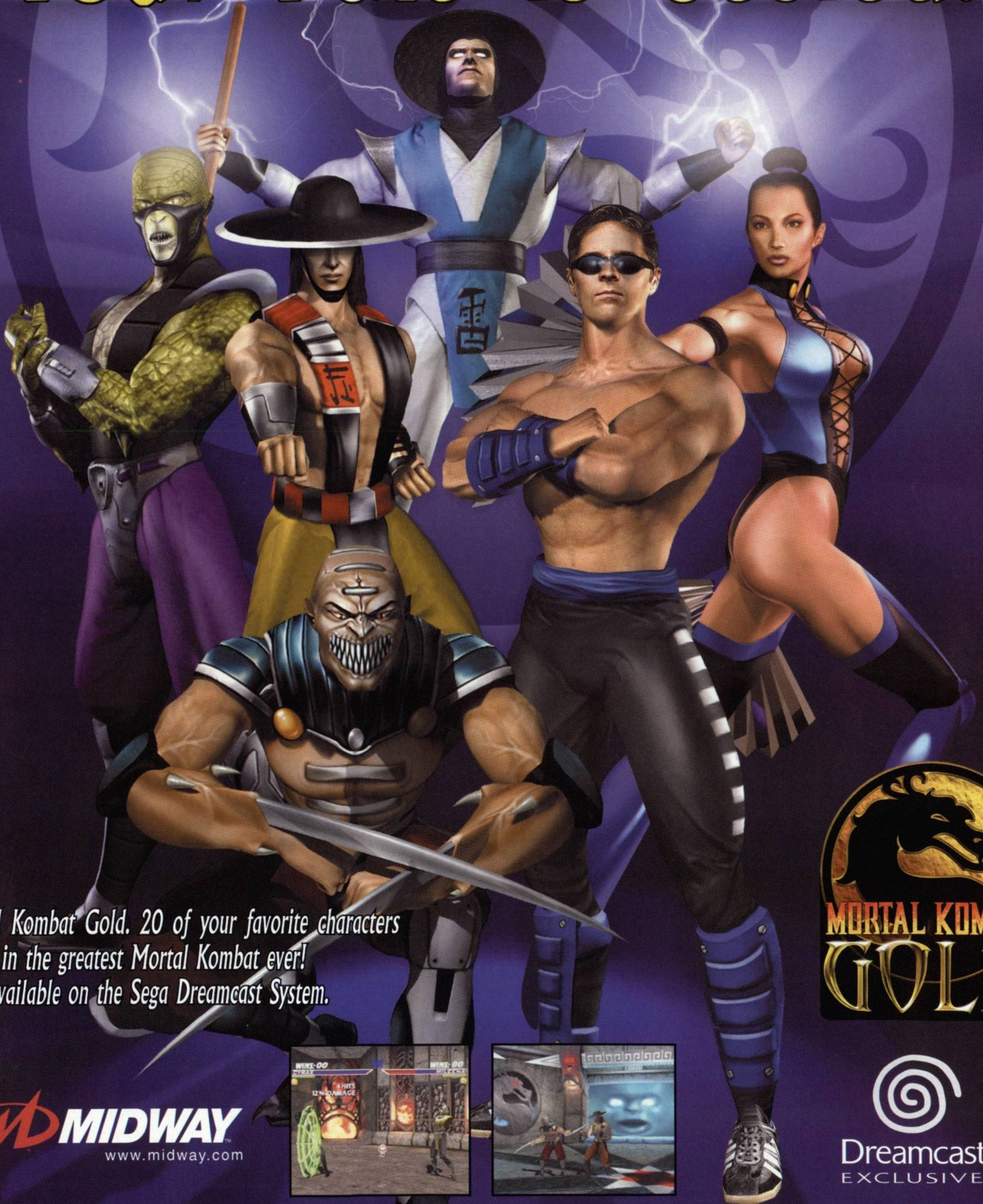
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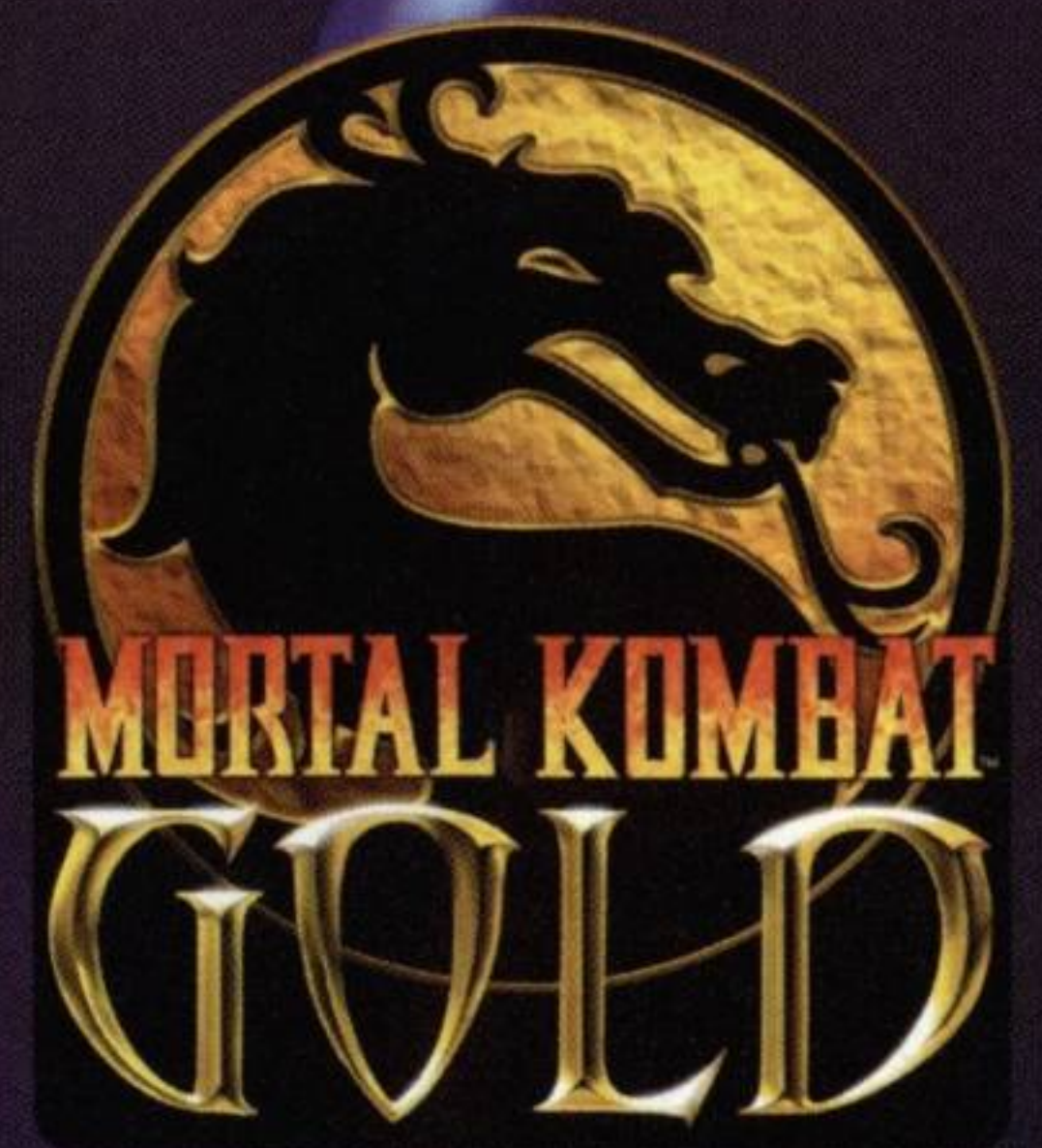
You too can be as happy and irresistible as The Lovely Lisa™ with an Arcade T-Shirt, the prize for letter of the month. She puts out, you know.



The Battle Continues. Your Fate is Sealed.



Mortal Kombat Gold. 20 of your favorite characters return in the greatest Mortal Kombat ever! Only available on the Sega Dreamcast System.



On the side

Why am I going bald?
Marc Harrison,
 York

It is the way of the world, slaphead.

Last month's *Tomb Raider - Last Revelation* review not only mentions how much better the PC version is but also the need for a good joypad. Could you recommend one as I've had several ones that don't work very well!
Richard Barnard,
 via e-mail

Yep. Check out the PC round-up on page 104.

I'm utterly sick of all this PlayStation2 hype. It's still a year away! Please stop!
Elliot Falk,
 London

Certainly not. Did you know that the PlayStation2 now has 250 launch games?

Could the Virtual Fox be a nude feature?
Mark Ibson,
 Brighton

What do you think this magazine is? Actually, on second thoughts...

To many an undiscovered gem - that's what we're here for. But come on, what about that diamond ring/water level malarkey? It's often obscure.

The price isn't right

I was reading your Timewarp article on *Deus EX Machina*. Being too young to remember the Spectrum I imagine it must have been quite good because as you said yourselves it was £15. This price was quite a step up from £7, so the game had to be good to sell. I have no problem with the idea that good games go up in value, and with time game prices have gone up anyway. Now you think to yourself paying £50 for say *Zelda 64* might be considered good value. But having to pay the same price for some crap like *Superman 64* is terrible. Game prices will probably keep going up, but it's so stupid to think, a good game cost a little more about ten years ago, and now it doesn't matter how good or bad it is - it's still £50! It is a disgrace!

Barry Smith, Norwich

Calm down, games aren't all £50. PC and PS games are usually £30. Yes if games were priced according to quality it would be easy to choose and you wouldn't need mags like this! Hang on a minute... me and my big mouth.

The Dreamcast is white

When I used to think of Sega, I thought of good, decent coin-ops and very good games. Now, I don't know what I think. The Saturn was a waste of time. They already had ground to make up after the terrible Mega CD. Now they have to impress to stay alive.

The Dreamcast may lift Sega's chances, but I'm not sure. The shape is terrible, and it's white? I've tried it once and I think I will stay with my PlayStation until the PS2 comes out. I never ever want to play on it ever again. It's wrong.

James Frost, via e-mail

By all means wait if you fancy it, but otherwise it is your biased comments that are wrong (apart from the colour which, admittedly, is a bit pump).

PlayStation2 disappoints

Oh man! What are Sony up to? The PS2 looks ridiculous, only two joypad ports, no vmu, no modem and talk of a new emotion engine in 2002! Sony had better sort it!

Jamie Cage, Dundee

Opinion appears to be split. Anyone else hate the PlayStation2. More next month.


Fun bags for Terry

Terry Niblett - wow! Loved the lippy and the legs. After reading how infatuated with Lara he is, I thought I would send you guys a piccy of me as Lara to pass onto him.

I can understand his infatuation. Not only is she intelligent and sexy but she isn't a tart or an airhead (which makes a change) and as my boyfriend would say, she has a serious set of fun bags on her.

Claire Dennafor, Milton Keynes

Terry Niblett caused quite a stir last issue with his cross-dressing, Lara-obsessive ways. The mailbag bulged with a 50/50 love him, hate him split. Should he appear again? Let us know.

We passed your pics Terry's way Claire and when he called us up he'd worked himself up into a right old lather - until the existence of your boyfriend (who, we imagine, is clearly no stranger to the concept of serious fun bags) was revealed. Stop teasing Niblett! 



■ Spot the difference.

What about this?

■ Let us know what you reckon to: The *Gran Turismo 2* delay? Or what about *Soul Calibur*? Is it the best beat-'em-up ever? And should Terry Niblett return? Write in and let us know what you think.

Contributors

Delicious hand-picked hacks dish out some tasty treats.



Sam Richards

■ Bath City supporter Sam is currently celebrating the club's unbeaten run of games in the Doc Marten's league.

Often seen strutting the office mouthing Will Smith lyrics and cursing lack of PlayStation *Quake 2* deathmatch skills. Sam's reputation as an international playboy has been recognised with a special section in Spanish videogame magazine *Juegos - La columna de Sam Richards*.

■ **Fave game:** *Soul Calibur*.



Swiss Toni

■ Swiss Toni is a successful and dynamic personality with a thriving car business and a succession of beautiful

and compliant ladies. Well, at least that's what it says in his company's brochure entitled: "A guide to having the ride of your life with Swiss Toni". He kindly agreed to take time away from his hairdresser to answer *Arcade's* probing and in-depth questions about *Gran Turismo 2*.

■ **Fave game:** *The Game of Love*.



Ben East

■ *PlayStation Power* editor Ben "The Beast" East has a penchant for East Anglia's own Norwich City.

Unfortunately his passion for the beautiful game doesn't transfer to the football pitch as his own squad were roundly thrashed a few weeks ago. Ben has recently moved to the busy, thriving metropolis of Swindon, where he can spend more time with the love of his life - trains.

■ **Fave game:** *Medal of Honor*.

The Videogame Magazine Arcade Issue 13

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Next Generation
 This month's nicknames for Alvin:
Cornish Casanova
Nasty Pasty
The Master

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BAFTA

The world of games: we talk and the pages



■ Left: Rare's Stamper brothers celebrate with Lord Puttnam. Right: Lara's creators Toby Gard and Paul Douglas.



BAFTA

BAFTAs honour Lara

Lara's creators bag top award and Zelda scoops four.

The second Interactive Entertainment Awards, held at London's swanky

Royal Lancaster Hotel, saw BAFTA hand out 15 of its famous statuettes – nine of them to games companies. Nintendo's *Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* was the biggest winner, running off with four awards. Toby Gard and Paul Douglas, the original creators of Lara Croft, were given the prestigious

Berners-Lee award for Best Personal Contribution To The UK Interactive Industry, while Rare bagged the Best UK Developer gong for the

second year running. *Driver*, *Wipeout 3* and *Grand Theft Auto: London 1969* were also honoured.

The awards ceremony was attended by a number of games industry big cheeses, along with countless corporate money-chasers, a small battalion of hardened blaggers and, of course, *Arcade* competition winner Johnny Abbot. After hearty endorsements for the interactive industry from junior minister Michael Wills MP, and the ever-ebullient Lord Puttnam, it was time for *Gaytime* TV presenter and hostess for the night, Rhona Cameron, to set the evening rolling with a fine series of crude jokes.

First up were the awards for Web sites and CD-ROMS (*Arcade* was particularly pleased

to see statuettes going to The Birdguides Web site and *Noddy Let's Get Ready For School* CD-ROM).

From the moment when the judges announced *The Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* as winner of the Best Game award, it was obvious that this was going to be a busy night for representatives of Nintendo UK. They subsequently went back to the stage to pick up the Most Innovative Game, Best Computer Programming, and Best Interactivity awards on behalf of Link et al.

It was a good night too for Toby Gard and Paul

bestowed upon the pair the award for Best Personal Contribution To The UK Interactive Industry as the champagne flowed.

It was déjà-vu time for Rare's Stamper brothers as they trooped on stage to collect the Best UK Developer statuette for the second year running. The pair managed this despite not actually releasing any games in the period between this year's and last year's ceremonies, but presumably the potential shown by titles like



■ *Arcade*'s Sam Richards with compo winner Johnny Abbot: they liggid so you didn't have to.

Rhona Cameron started the evening with a fine series of crude jokes.

Douglas. The original creators of Lara Croft designed the world-famous character for Core but left soon after the release of the original *Tomb Raider* to set up their own development house, Confounding Factor. BAFTA

Jet Force Gemini, *Donkey Kong 64* and *Perfect Dark* was enough to convince the judges that all the other UK coders are still lagging behind Rare and fighting it out for second place.





NINTENDO NIGHTMARE



■ Is special edition hardware enough to reverse the N64's fortunes?

N64 R.I.P.?

Worrying times for not-so-Super Mario and chums.

Rare's latest masterpiece *Donkey Kong 64* is finally here, but has Nintendo slipped on a banana skin of its own making? Hardware sales for the company's flagship N64 have taken a sharp dive in recent weeks, prompting speculation that the console's lifespan is coming to an end.

PlayStation is still the runaway leader, keeping its place as the king of the living room. The Dreamcast is doing well for a new machine costing nearly three times as much as the PSX, with the now-cheaper N64

languishing in last place in the weekly console sales chart.

Nintendo is unveiling a range of colourful iMac-styled N64s in an attempt to boost sales, but the industry is concerned that it's too little too late. Console Games Buyer, Doug Bone at HMV believes that, "although the N64 has three or four incredible titles on release this Christmas, there is little excitement on the street for the machine. The problem is that due to the loyal Nintendo customer base, everyone who wants the console already has one".

A wider problem is N64 software sales. Although stores

can still make decent returns on titles there hasn't been an N64-only game in the Top 20 sales chart for months. *Jet Force Gemini* and *Donkey Kong 64* should make a difference, but at £60 for the latter, Nintendo isn't doing itself any favours – new Dreamcast games are £20 less.

But it's not all doom and gloom for the Japanese games giant. The Game Boy is selling more than ever, due to the release of the color edition and the worldwide success of the phenomenon. The N64 still has the new *Zelda* game and *GoldenEye*-beater *Perfect Dark* to launch next year, plus there's

Weekly UK console sales – w/e 13 Nov

■ PlayStation	53,000
■ Game Boy	34,000
■ Dreamcast	10,500
■ N64	5,200

the next-generation Dolphin console combined with the great Shigeru Miyamoto to look forward to. Nintendo is bruised but not beaten – which can only be good news for gamers.



The Winners

- Best Game**
■ *The Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* (Nintendo)
- Most Innovative Game**
■ *The Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* (Nintendo)
- Best Moving Images**
■ *Driver (Reflections)*
- Best Sound**
■ *Grand Theft Auto: London 1969* (Rockstar)
- Best Interactivity**
■ *The Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* (Nintendo)
- Best Design**
■ *Wipeout 3* (Psygnosis)
- Best Computer Programming**
■ *The Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* (Nintendo)
- Best UK Developer**
■ Rare
- Tim Berners-Lee Award For Best Personal Contribution To The UK Interactive Industry**
■ Toby Gard & Paul Douglas



GT DELAY

No Christmas for Gran Turismo 2

Arcade talks to Sony head honcho Chris Deering.

■ Sony has announced a delay to the release of the much-anticipated *Gran Turismo 2*. The company says the game just isn't finished to a high enough standard. As for when punters will now be able to get their driving gloves on the game, all Sony is willing to reveal is that it should be ready to fill the shelves "early in 2000".

Arcade went right to the top to find out what's going on, speaking directly to Sony Europe chief Chris Deering. He said: "GT2 is quite probably

the most ambitious simulation ever created for PlayStation." "The team working on the game are zealots and perfectionists. They are the driving force behind the creativity, and insist on everything being just right. It is disappointing that the game will not be in the shops before Christmas.

"Hundreds of thousands of fans already have it on their Christmas lists. Nonetheless, as with most great games, quality comes first. We are convinced

that GT2 will achieve its sales objectives, and more, early in 2000, when there will be millions more PlayStation users and a lot of Christmas gift money available to purchase." So there you have it. You know what to spend that Christmas money on now.

Arcade's Gran Turismo 2 feature starts on page 52.



The world of videogames: we take you round the globe in six pages

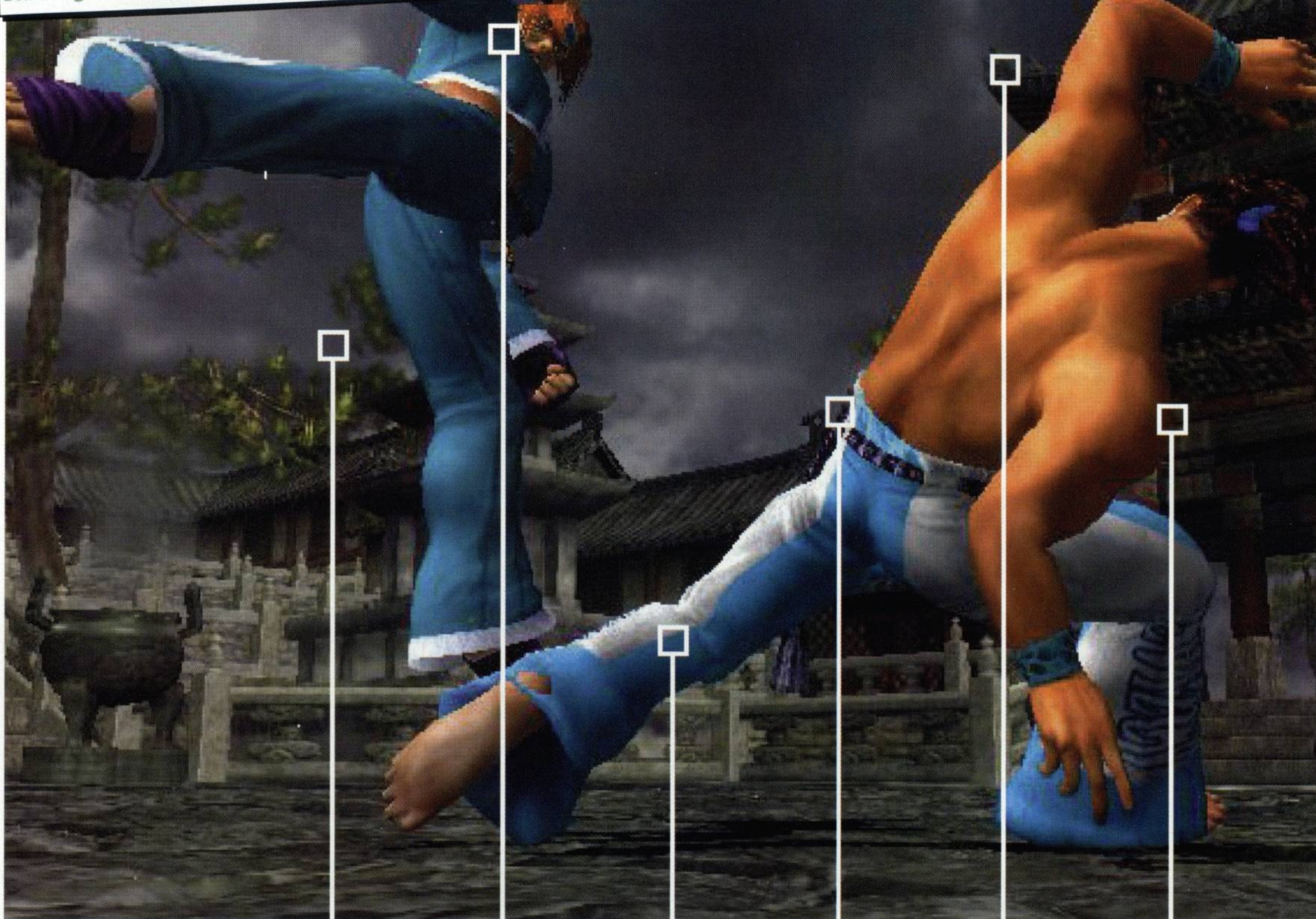


"Gagging for it!"

Sneaking a crafty peek at games that'll whet your whistle.

Tekken Tag Tournament

Stunning beat-'em-up for Sony's baby.



Namco has set the standard for fighting games with *Soul Calibur* on the Dreamcast. But is the company's crowning glory yet to enter the gaming ring?

Tekken Tag Tournament

- Format: PlayStation2
- Developer: Namco
- Publisher: SCEI
- Release date: 4 March 2000

Environ-mental

■ PlayStation2 has enough processing power to enable lip-smacking environmental effects such as shimmering pools of water, jets of fire, falling leaves and gently moving blades of grass. Lovely.

Nifty Moves

■ The Dual Shock2 controller will allow 256 levels of velocity data. This means you'll be able to judge how hard you hit your opponent by how much pressure you apply to the buttons.

Characters

■ *Tekken Tag* has an incredible attention to detail on the rendering of the characters, including flappy flares, textured skin, moving hair and smooth, fluid animation. Oh yes.

Tag Fun

■ If you've never played the coin-op, gameplay is quite similar to *Tekken 3*, but with the ability to tag another team member if you're getting your face stoved in. Like wrestling but better.

Backgrounds

■ A unique feature will be the ability of the game to have spectators watching the fights. A recent demo had more than 20 characters cheering, jeering and gesticulating at the two fighters.

Fight!

■ PS2 is set for a 4 March 2000 release in Japan and *Tekken Tag* is lined up as one of the main launch titles. Namco is right there in the front line for the battle of the next-generation consoles.

MUNCH BETTER

Oddysee to return in 3D

PlayStation2 version of *Oddysee* promises significant revamp.

■ *Munch's Oddysee* is the third instalment in the *Oddworld* quintet of games. It follows on from *Abe's Oddysee* but shuns the 2D puzzle-based platform style for an altogether different approach.

Munch's Oddysee will be in real-time 3D and will focus on the world of *Oddworld* itself, the relationship between the inhabitants and the story of Munch. All of the game's characters will have individual life-

cycle patterns. An ambitious project, but the sort that's likely to become more common with the advent of PlayStation 2.

Who is Munch? Well, Munch, like Abe, is an accidental hero. He's "at the bottom of the food chain and slipping fast". As the last of his species, the Gabbits, his lungs are in huge demand. Gabbits, you see, make ideal donors for Glukkons when they get lung cancer. A lot of Glukkons get cancer.

Munch's Oddysee also sees the welcome return for the loveable Abe. His fate is intertwined with Munch's and you get to control both characters. You also have control over the inhabitants of *Oddworld* in a similar way to the original game. Here, though, you will be able to command entire armies to do your bidding.

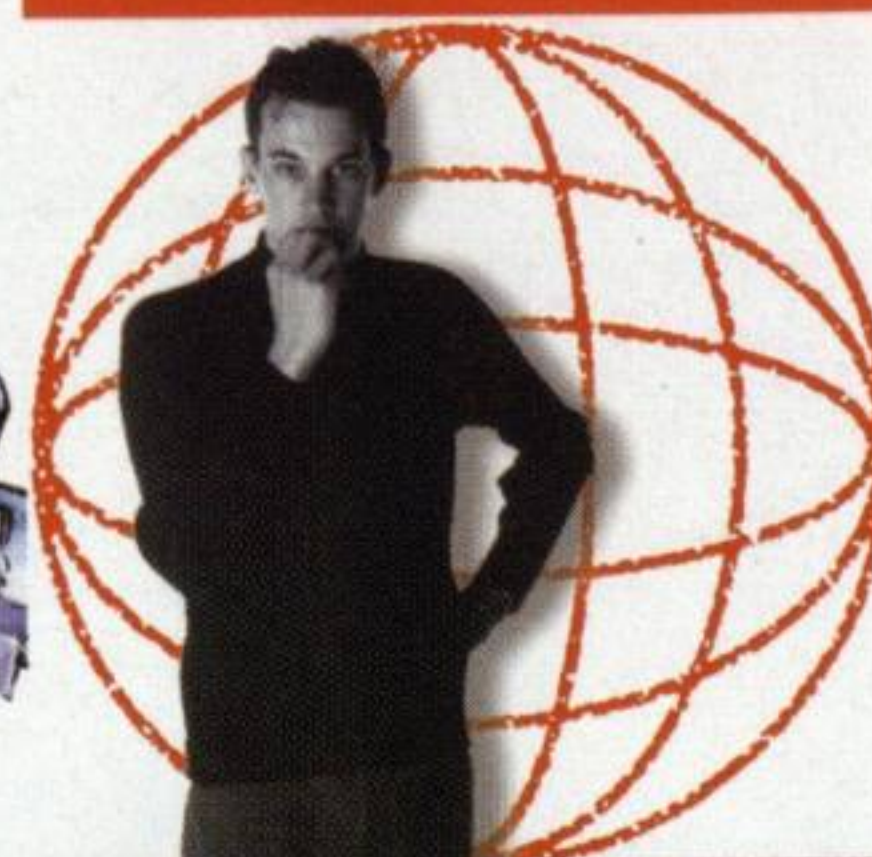
Think of *Munch's Oddysee* as less a game and more of a place. It sounds absolutely fascinating.



■ *The Matrix* and *Metal Gear Solid*: entertainment crossover.



Sam Richards' World of Games



Pac Man better than Scrabble: official

Amongst a deluge of meaningless and vacuous "best of the century" awards, *Arcade* noticed an honour bestowed on *Pac Man* by the Twin Galaxies Intergalactic Scoreboard, an organisation which tracks record game scores. The exploits of Namco's little yellow fella was not only deemed the best videogame of the century, but the best game full stop, ahead of chess, jigsaw puzzles, Monopoly and Scrabble. "I am throwing down the gauntlet and proclaiming that videogames affected the 20th Century more than any other single mode of entertainment," said Walter Day of Twin Galaxies, possibly revealing himself to be the only person on the judging panel. Meanwhile, *Arcade* handed out the prestigious honour of Best Magazine Of The Millennium to a worthy winner – the all-conquering *Arcade*.

Dreamcast DVD

Seems Sega is gearing up for the imminent fight against PlayStation2. Rumours suggest the company is very close to announcing its DVD add-on which will allow you to play DVD movies and DVD-ROM games via your Dreamcast. The device will most likely plug into the modem expansion port. No release date has been set, but Sega will bust a gut to get it out before the release of PlayStation2, which boasts DVD compatibility straight out of the box.

Blurry picture

A new recipient of the Dreamcast is Blur's loquacious bassist Alex James – apparently big mates with Sega Europe big cheese Jean François Cecillon – who has been ranting on about the console in his monthly *Q* magazine column. "There's no doubt it's good," he proclaims as his girlfriend giggles over *Ready To Rumble*, "but the technology has improved quicker than the ideas, so it's all old games with a new lick of paint. *Jurassic Park* syndrome. All fart, no shit." Fair point.

KEANU CHAMELEON

The Matrix set for 2002

No developer yet for film tie-in.

Film licences have always equalled big money for developers – even if the game in question ended up bearing about as much resemblance to the film as Chris Evans does to a charming man with blonde hair, perfect eyesight and a buff bod.

But spiralling games' budgets mean that there's no point in companies belting out a duffer just so it coincides with a film's cinema release. Take *The Matrix*, for example. It's not due out on PlayStation2 until 2002. In a recent

on-line chat, the film's creators – brothers Andy and Larry Wachowski – said: "If things work out the way we want them to the videogame will be released when the next movie comes out."

The brothers plan to shoot two film sequels back-to-back. The stars of the original – Lawrence Fishburne (Morpheus), Keanu Reeves (Neon) and Carrie Anne Moss (Trinity) – are all lined up to reprise their roles.

Meanwhile, no developer has been confirmed for the videogame. The brothers have

chatted with Hideo Kojima, of *Metal Gear Solid* fame, but it looks like this could have been a case of two talented parties appreciating each other's work. Ironically, Kojima is now embroiled in approving pitches for the *Metal Gear Solid* movie.

Talks have also been held with Shiny Entertainment. "The brothers love playing games and they know what they want to do," said Shiny President Dave Perry. "I was actually offered the chance to make a *The Matrix* game about two years ago, but I

was too busy with *Messiah*. I'd love to make it if the opportunity was still available."

Spencer Lamm, the content supervisor of www.WhatIsTheMatrix.com and editor of *The Matrix* comics, confirms the Wachowskis want to do it right. He said: "Whatever they do, they're going to put more effort into making this than a typical movie tie-in. They play games themselves, they know where the technology is at, and recognise that games are a law unto themselves." **A**

Get Witch quick

Gathering Of Developers to do Blair Witch Project.

■ Another one of the year's big films was recently put out to videogame tender with Gathering Of Developers emerging victorious from the ensuing scrum.

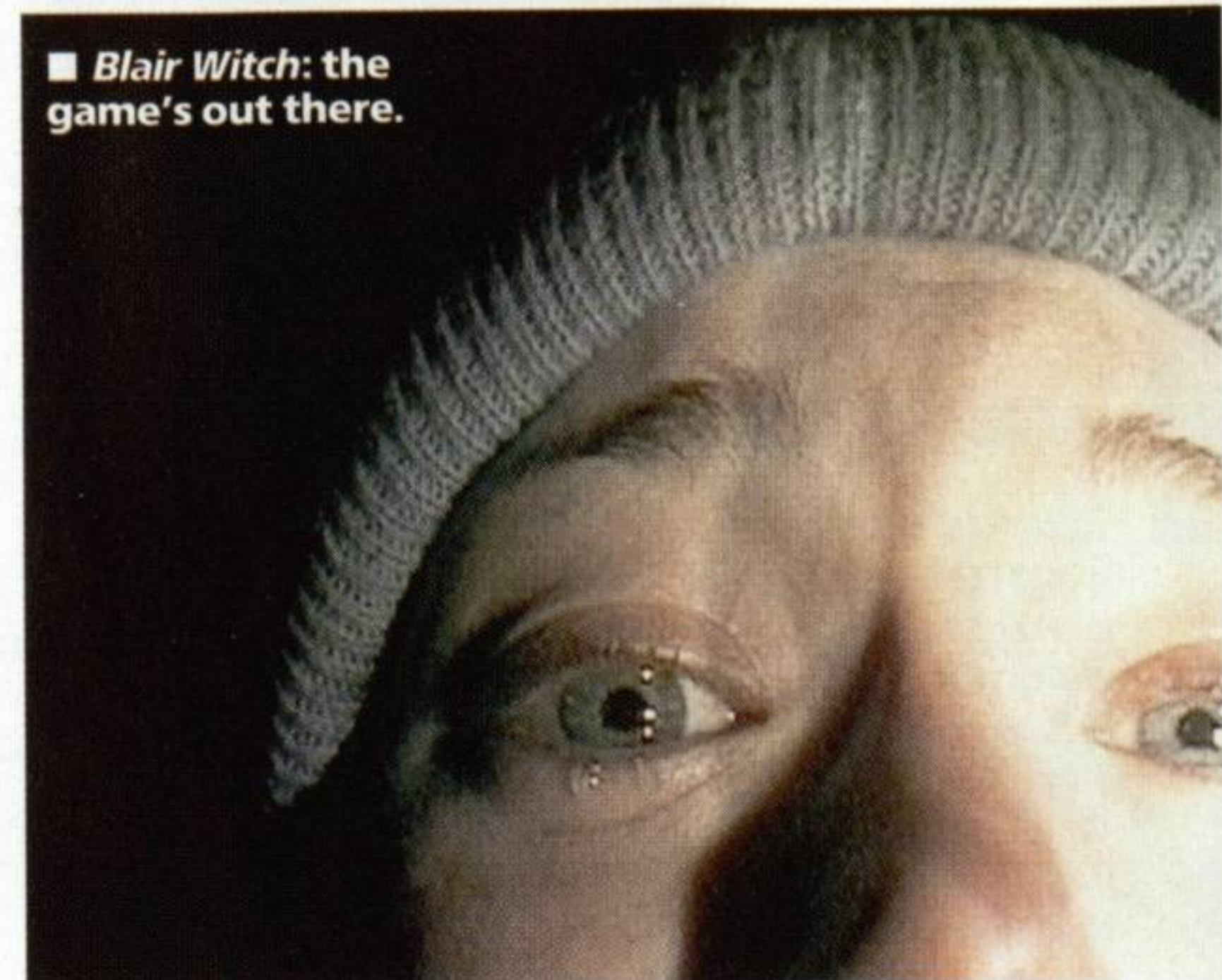
The umbrella company, which covers top US development teams including 3D

Realms, Epic Megagames and Ritual Entertainment, is set to publish multiple *Blair Witch Project* games across a range of formats. Quite how it can adapt a film which largely consists of three students fanning about the woods while pursued

by an unseen menace is anyone's guess.

It seems most likely that the developers will use the Blair Witch legend (outlined on the *Blair Witch* Web site) as a basis for a tense horror adventure using Terminal Reality's *Nocturne* engine.

■ *Blair Witch*: the game's out there.



MEGA DRIVE

Dreaming of Gran Turismo

Sega to get a *Gran Turismo* of its own.



■ With Sega's reputation for driving games the announcement that it is developing its very own *Gran Turismo* game, aptly titled *Sega GT*, has set many mouths a watering.

Unlike almost every previous Sega driving game, *Sega GT* will be developed specifically for Dreamcast and is rumoured to use all the Dreamcast's power. Sega has some of its finest game minds working on what should be a serious challenger to Sony's *Gran Turismo* games and in particular *Gran Turismo 2000*, scheduled as a launch title for PS2.

The emphasis with *Sega GT* has been put on creating a realistic yet highly playable racing game. There will be more than 200 cars in the

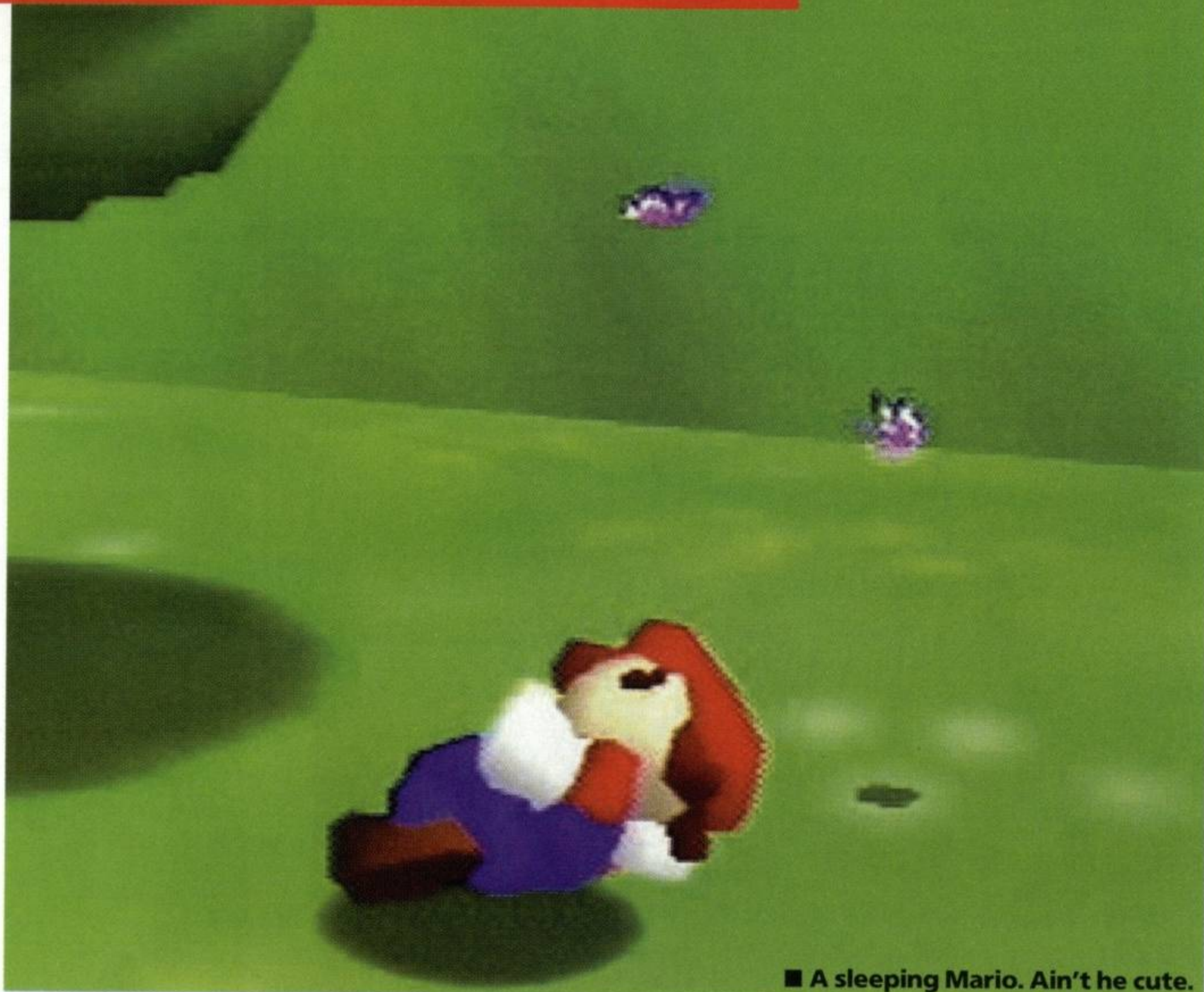
game from ten manufacturers including Toyota, Porsche and Ferrari. You'll be able to purchase cars, tune them up and give them a paint job.

Sega GT is expected to be released in Japan next spring, and should make its way to European shores some time in the summer.



■ Dreamcast GT on its way.

The world of videogames: we take you round the globe in six pages



■ A sleeping Mario. Ain't he cute.

ARTY FARTY

Life imitates art

Videogames the subject of London show.

Can you tell what it is yet? Well, probably, because artist Miltos Manetas's new exhibition will have a familiar feel for gamers. New York-based Miltos has tossed aside paint and canvas and decided instead to give the public what it wants: repetitive loops of popular videogames played on monitors and projected onto the wall.

The conceptual twist in the exhibition, called After Video Games, comes in the sections of the games he has chosen to loop.

Mario sleeps perpetually under a tree. Lara Croft is bombarded by poisonous darts and repeatedly falls dead into the snow. Abe walks under a lightning trap and is electrocuted, yes, you guessed it, over and over again.

"I believe that the job of the viewer is a passive one," explains Miltos. "There is no interactivity but frustration that you cannot save the situation."

"Art should be the opposite of videogames, in the same way that they are the opposite of life: a frozen condition, suspended in between the real and impossible."

After Video Games is a step on from Miltos's more traditional painting-based exhibitions, which

featured joysticks, tangles of leads, and subjects playing games.

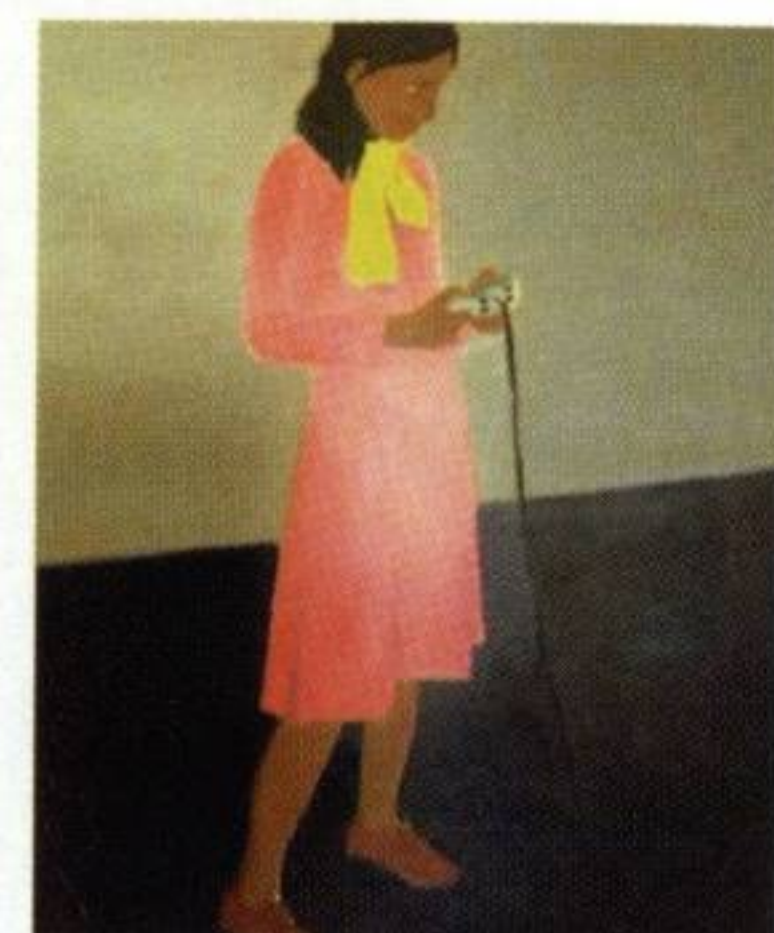
"I'd like to influence people who do not fulfil exactly the art-student profile," he says. "It must be something like cubism for a screen-age."

Right you are Miltos, but is it art, and, more importantly, do we care? But then again, if a man with a beard and a wobble board, or a man whose best friend is a small Plasticine man can make a career out of art, there's hope for everyone.

After Video Games has just finished a run at The Lux Centre in London. For more information check out Miltos's website: <http://www.manetas.com>. **A**

Art? A child could do that

Videogames as a metaphor for life, or something.



Orient excess

It could only happen in Japan.



Seaman's second coming.

■ Arcade's favourite game character, Seaman, is currently enjoying huge Japanese success. The eponymous game starring the hideous, slowly-evolving, boy/fish hybrid freak is still in the top ten at the time of writing, and among the most successful Dreamcast games to date. To capitalise, Vivarium are releasing a special add-on, whose title translates as *Another Method Of Telling*



■ *Is this the face of love?*

Desire. It's a voice/e-mail communication device for sending spoken messages to your loved one over the net, although

it's highly likely that one sighting of fishboy and his vain cry of "don't panic!" will scare off your beau forever.

INCOMING

Six games hiding round the corner and calling your Mum easy.

3 months



International Track & Field 2

■ PlayStation
■ Konami
■ February 2000
Prepare to melt your joypads, the supreme button waggler returns with even more disciplines.

6 months



Half-Life Opposing Force

■ PC
■ Gearbox
■ Spring 2000
The first fully-sanctioned Half-Life add-on. You play a special-ops soldier heading back into Black Mesa.



Chu Chu Rocket

■ Dreamcast
■ Sega
■ Spring 2000
An insane four-player puzzler where space mice leg it from a cat called Cap Cap. Think Bomberman meets Lemmings.

1 year



Resident Evil: Gun Survivor

■ PlayStation
■ Capcom
■ Summer 2000
A lightgun RE is going to look like House Of The Dead, but Capcom says free roaming will distinguish it.



Chase The Express

■ PlayStation
■ Sony
■ Summer 2000
Metal Gear meets Stop The Train in an action adventure with espionage on the Paris to St Petersburg express.



Duke Nukem Forever

■ PC
■ 3D Realms
■ Late 2000
Evidence of stirring in the Duke Nukem camp suggests this long-awaited shooter is nearing completion.



■ Run Russia? Czar-tastic.



Sam Richards' World of Games



Crime Does Pay

According to US business paper *Games Business*, software piracy has reached epidemic proportions, most notably in Asia. Its report gives a top ten list of piracy-racked countries in 1998. Top of the pile is Vietnam where 97 of every 100 units of software sold are bootleg copies. In second and third places are China and Oman with 95% and 93% bootleg rates respectively. Electronic Arts says it loses \$440 million each and every year to piracy.

Is That A Hedgehog In Your Pocket...?

Sonic's Neo Geo Pocket Color excursion, *Sonic's Pocket Adventure* will definitely be released in the UK in February. The multi-faceted game will be link cable compatible and include race modes where you can compete against anyone else with a machine and a copy of the game. Time attack modes will allow for turn-based competitive play. Arcade will have screenshots and the full story next month.

The Web Gets Wise

Dreamcast owners will be cheered to hear about a series of Web sites run specifically for those who access the Web through their TVs. Special Reserve's Web sites boast more readable text, better ease of movement throughout the site for those without keyboards and plenty of game-specific features. The sites can be accessed on <http://tvres.com>, <http://ukgamestv.com> and <http://specialreservetv.com>.

The Sequelizer

Latest news on game sequels in the works: Neversoft is already busy coding *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2*, presumably for PlayStation2; Capcom plans to bring *Dino Crisis 2* to PlayStation2; Boat racer *Hydro Thunder* (soon to be ported to N64 and PlayStation) will get a coin-op sequel and a Dreamcast conversion, perhaps as early as winter 2000; and Infogrames Germany will produce *Outcast 2* for PC and PlayStation2 in 2001.

RUSSIAN ROULETTE

Draw back the Iron Curtain

New game promises one million individual in-game characters.

You've seen *Enemy of The State*, right? Apart from convincing you that everything from losing your car keys to the recent odd behaviour of your girlfriend is probably part of a sinister Government plot, the other great thing was the cutting edge of satellite surveillance it displayed. Not only can it pick out individual people, but also see what type of sandwich he's eating and zoom right up his nose to check for bogies.

In videogames, this has been the all the rage since ever since true 3D engines came onto the scene. Except, of course, you don't have the whole world at your disposal, just a limited play area. Which is what makes *Republic* all the more phenomenal.

Republic, you see, is a simulation of the whole of Russia in real-time 3D. And the entire country is zoom-in-able, even, it's claimed, individual balconies, railings and screws.

"I call it fabric and fibre," explains *Republic's* lead designer,



Demis Hassabis. "We have this hugely detailed fabric but you can take a microscope to any part and see the fibres."

What's more, *Republic* is going to feature one million citizens. Yes. One million. "And we're not talking about automatons," continues Hassabis.

"We are going to have a million individual living, breathing people with their own daily routines, beliefs and loyalties.

"If you leave the game alone, they will happily go to work, get promoted, collect their kids from school and go to the pub."

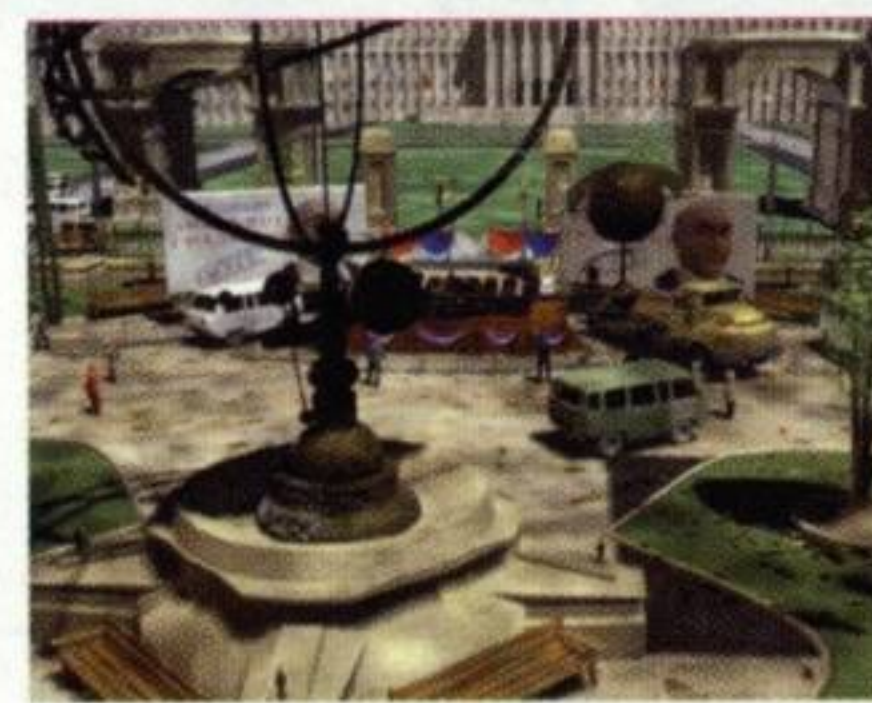
Hassabis helped co-found Lionhead Studios when Peter Molyneux left Bullfrog, but split at the end of last year to set up his own studio. *Republic* is his first game, a mixture of *Populous*, *Sim City*, *Black and White* – basically the powerstruggle-'em-up to end,



well, powerstruggle-'em-ups for good. Quite how it will actually play is slightly less clear, but Hassabis gives some indication.

He says: "At the start of the game you have one key character, your Peter Mandelson figure. Beyond that you have to recruit new characters to allow you to order additional actions."

And when you've got an entire eastern European country to manage, you're going to need all the help you can get. Just ask Mr Yeltsin.



■ *Republic*: The whole of modern-day Russia simulated in real-time 3D.

Smack my pitch up

You're having a laugh, mate. Arcade takes a look at the games on the market and thinks: anything they can do, we can do better.

No 181: UnCrazy Taxi

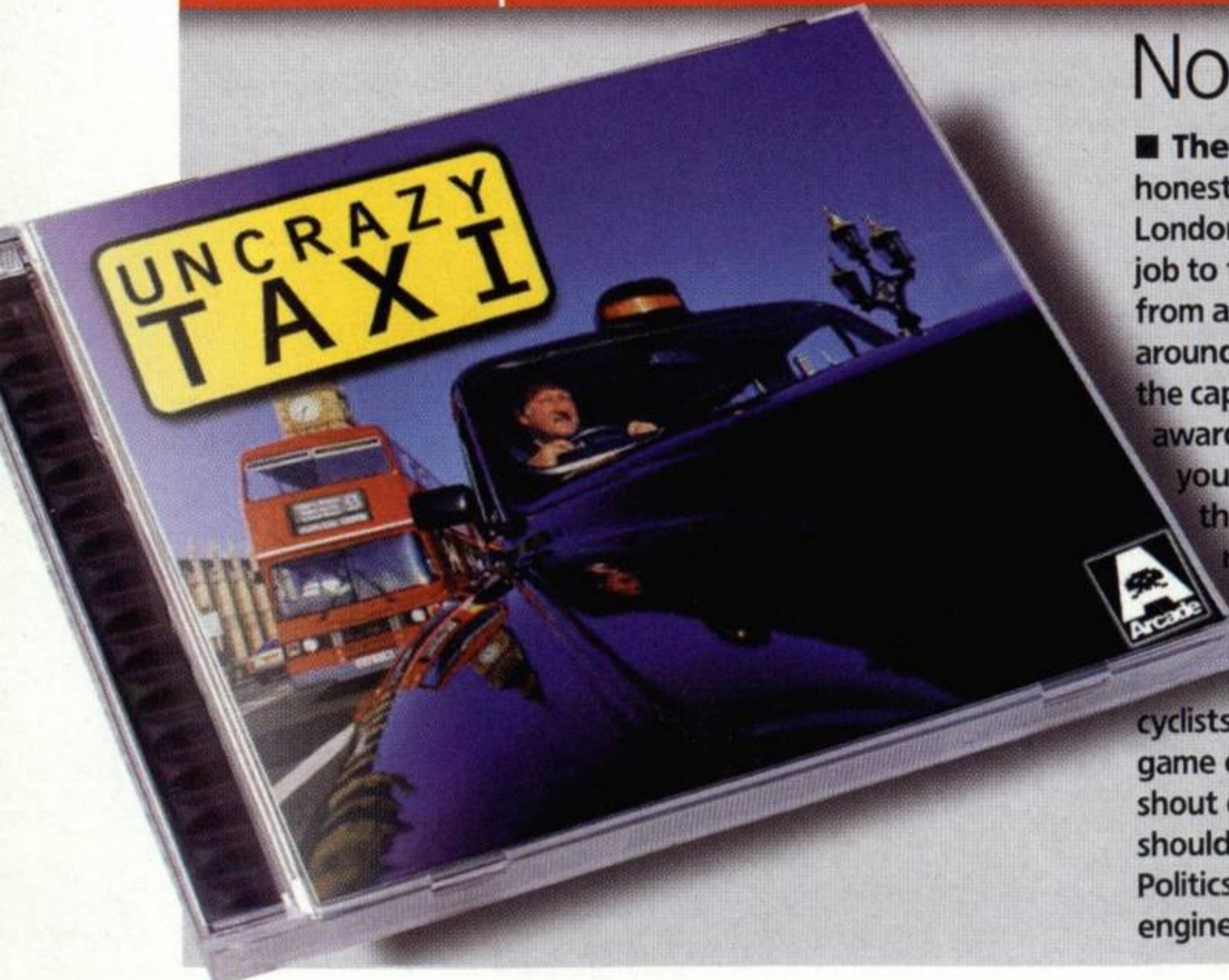
■ **The pitch:** As an honest, salt-of-the-earth London cabbie, it's your job to ferry passengers from all walks of life around the streets of the capital. Points are awarded not only for your ability to find the longest possible route between A and B, abuse other drivers and cut up cyclists but on the in-game conversation you shout over your shoulder while driving. Politics, the size of your engine, the arse on that,

the youth of today – *UnCrazy Taxi* offers literally thousands of topics for you to broach. Plus, can you drop off your late night passengers to their required destination of "home" before they yak all over your back seats?

■ **The response:** It's an interesting pitch for a game, certainly. Naturally, I assume, bonus points would be awarded for successfully giving change of a tenner when you were actually handed a £20

note, name checking who you had in the back of your cab the other week, and throwing in the odd, but casual, racist comment.

■ Pete Devery, Powerhouse PR



GAME ON

SPECIAL REPORT



ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON

NEWS ANALYSIS

Words by | Rich Pelley

Must see TV? Not for gamers

Arcade wonders why television hasn't yet got a handle on contemporary gaming culture.

The gap between videogames player and developer has traditionally been bridged by the videogame magazine. Unlike music, which you can sample for free on radio, television and at record stores, videogames live an almost exclusively buy-before-you-try world. Renting is an option and some of the games chains have demonstration pods, but if you want to know whether a title is any cop before you part with your hard-earned readies, checking out your favourite monthly periodical remains your best bet by far.

But what of telly? A picture may paint a thousand words, but a moving image of a game paints a million. Given this, and television's voracious appetite for all things approaching mainstream youth cool, the lack of a videogames programme on at a decent time and channel is all the more curious.

But it looks like there may be hope. A new videogame show, *Bleeding Thumbs*, is due to hit BBC2 at the prime time of 6pm

early next year. But why has it taken so long?

"The problem is really one of a generation gap," says BBC North producer John Riley. "The commissioning editors tend to come just the wrong side of the videogaming generation, and they still see videogames as a fringe thing for kids. If someone has never played a videogame, it's very hard to explain to them why they are so good."

This, perhaps, is a problem that stems from the rapid improvement in game graphics. If the last time you saw a videogame was on the Spectrum, reconciling that with current youth culture would be tricky. However, back in the old days there was one man who saw things differently: Fred "Chocabloc" Harris. Buffoonish Fred fronted the *BBC Micro* programmes from 1983 to 1986. Together with Ian Macnought-Davies of *The Computer Programme* and a post *Blue Peter* Lesley Judd – on hand to give the pubescent audience something more than games to think about – he appeared in *Micro Live*, *Making*

The Most of The Micro and *Micro File*. However, the *Micro* programmes were heavily biased towards the BBC machine and sat in the bracket between educational and informative.

Many was the hour young frustrated gamers sat waiting for a glimpse of *Rocket Raid* or *Frak* while Fred fiddled with a useless speech synthesizer that made Metal Mickey sound like Prince Charles. Channel 4's *Me and My Micro* – to which Fred flitted in 1985 – was better – focusing on typing in huge listings into your Spectrum or Electron. But there was plenty of dross around: remember *Anything We Can Do*, *4 Computer Buffs*, *Magic Micro Mission* or *Video And Chips*? Very few people do.

Bleeding Thumbs, though, is a prime time show entirely about videogames which boasts a decent budget. It is aimed at 20-30-year-olds, and is presented by an interactive monkey called Spank. But how will the programme work?

"You can really go two ways," explains Riley. "Very low budget, like *Bits* or the cable shows, or

very glossy and glitz like *Gamesmaster*. Somewhere in the middle wouldn't really work.

"With *Bleeding Thumbs* we're going for the polished look. Up until recently games haven't really looked very good.

"Take *Gamesmaster*. The sets were so lavish that it was almost a let down when the cameras cut to the jarred 16-bit graphics. But now the problem of a programme maker is to make the programme look as good as the games."

The two ways Riley refers to neatly categorise the two types of videogame programmes to reach TV since the console explosion of the early '90s. *Gamesmaster* serves as the current yardstick, and was the first high-budget programme to bring videogames to the masses. Patrick Moore dished out the tips and insults, while Dominik Diamond was drafted in as presumably the only person to fit the description "must be more annoying than Terry Christian".

Gamesmaster lasted for seven series in all, right up until 1998. The sets became more lavish (relocating to a prison, Heaven

"The problem is one of a generation gap... it can be hard to explain how good videogames are."

and Hell), the assistants wore less (Mermaids and Angels), and *Press Gang's* Dexter Fletcher took over for a series before heading for *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* fame. The kids loved it, as did CITV's *Bad Influence* – the *Blue Peter* meets *Tiswas* of videogame shows – which was hosted by Edd the Duck's partner in crime, Andy Crane and Violet Berlin, who now writes for Teletext games page *Digitiser*. Cheat codes came courtesy of a sweaty fat man. Games were reviewed by the kids themselves. And no-one got round to taping the clever "info-burst" as the programme credits kicked in.

But with the dawn of satellite TV, so videogames became an

easy target for producing a TV show on a shoestring budget. Sky One entered the fray with *Games World*, another *Gamesmaster* clone which aired before breakfast, featured former *Arcade* editor Neil West and referred to contestants as "videators". Its replacement, *Game Over*, is a better bet and is still running with a rock bottom production budget.

Like *One Man and his Dog*, a problem that the lion's share of videogames shows have come up against has been a horrible schedule slot. Which makes *Bleeding Thumbs'* 6pm position all the more important. The most mainstream programme which currently features videogames is *Movies, Games & Videos*. Its I'll-

just-get-up-and-then-I'll-start-the-day Saturday lunchtime appearance is ideal, but the game coverage is patronising and read directly off the press release. Plus, if you ever met staggeringly irritating commentator Steve Priestley, you know the police would have to be called to pull you off. You may get ITV's *Gamers* instead (depending where you live) which delivers hard and fast: cue game details; cut to game; cut to review; cut to pre-recorded feature; ad break. The knowledge and passion is there. But where's the personality?

Enter *Bits*. Dedicated and heartfelt or a late night, toss-up of which gal you'd most like to, er, most like, *Bits* is the perfect example of videogames magazine come to life, and unashamedly flaunts its no-budget credentials.

"Our initial worries when we were first commissioned," explains *Bits* director/producer Aldo Talumbo, "was that you can watch gameplay on telly, but does it make good telly? We didn't jump straight in. It took five to six

months of planning to find the best way to make it interesting."

But does the programme have mass appeal? At 1.30am?

"4-later is a special part of Channel Four," continues Talumbo. "The problem is that although videogames live on the cutting edge of pop culture, they are still treated slightly out of the mainstream. But things are changing at a rate of knots. I think that PlayStation2 will bring consoles into the mainstream."

Oddly, hardcore gamers seem to prefer ITV's equally late-night *Cybernet*, which mixes games with the Internet and assorted gadgetry, shunning any on-screen presenter for the dreaded voice-over man. Luckily, though, it's not Steve Priestley.

A pilot of *Bleeding Thumbs* has already been filmed. Monkey aside, could this be the much-needed adult prime-time videogame show gamers have craved for so long? Will videogames finally be presented on television with some style? Here's hoping.



HOW THEY MEASURE UP

TV: drug of the nation

Your guide to getting googly-eyed on the box.

Micro Live

- **Channel:** BBC2
- **Time:** early evening
- **Run:** 1983-6
- **Presenters:** Fred Harris, Ian Macnought-Davies, Lesley Judd
- **Format:** educational but stuffy
- **Era:** BBC Micro, Dragon 32
- **Typical content:** news, speech synthesisers and a crap BBC Buggy which always broke down
- **Typical quote:** "Power mowers are thoroughly tough, though."

Me and My Micro

- **Channel:** Channel 4
- **Time:** early evening
- **Run:** 1985
- **Presenters:** Fred Harris
- **Format:** chummy, amateurish and enthusiastic
- **Era:** Electron, Commodore 64, Spectrum
- **Typical content:** *Monsterzap* in BASIC.
- **Typical quote:** "I don't know about you, but I find the idea of wandering through pages and pages of computer code absolutely horrifying."
- **Where are they now?** Fred was last seen on Forces TV, a TV service specifically for those brave souls in the Armed Forces.

Gamesmaster

- **Channel:** Channel 4
- **Time:** 6.00pm
- **Run:** 1991 – 1998
- **Presenters:** Dominik Diamond, Dexter Fletcher, Patrick Moore
- **Format:** *TFI Friday* meets *Crackerjack*
- **Era:** MegaDrive and SNES to PlayStation and N64.

- **Typical content:** games challenges, ropey celebrities
- **Typical quote:** "Let's hear it for Shane Ritchie."
- **Where are they now?** Dominik Diamond was last seen presenting lacklustre late-night Channel 5 sports programme *Live and Dangerous*.

Bad Influence

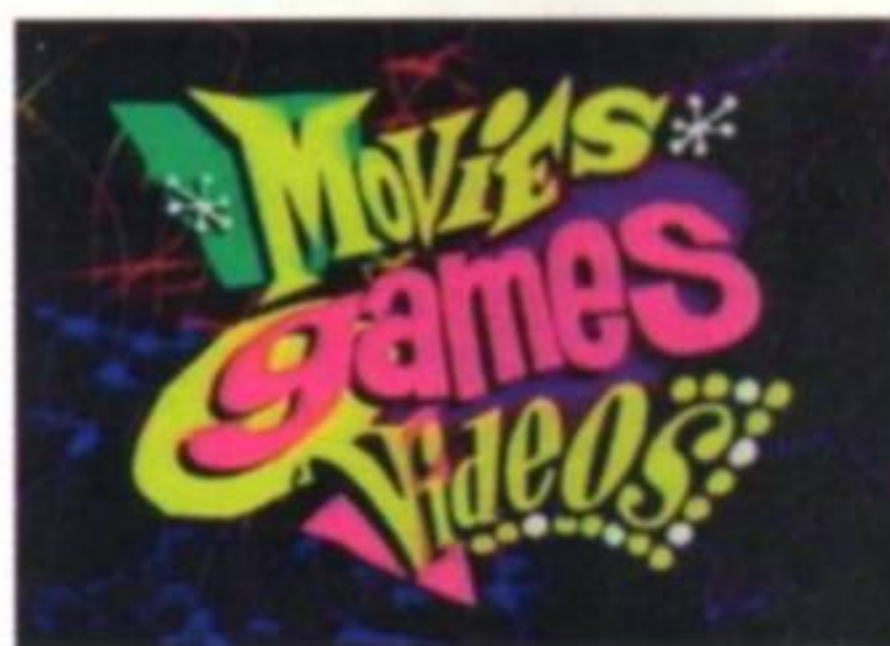
- **Channel:** CITV
- **Time:** 4.30ish.
- **Run:** 1992-1994
- **Presenters:** Andy Crane, Violet Berlin
- **Format:** Bouncy and colourful
- **Era:** MegaDrive, SNES, Jaguar, 3D0.
- **Typical content:** features, tips, reviews, and "info-burst" at the end for you to record and pause.
- **Typical quote:** "This is much better than being in The Broom Cupboard, isn't it."
- **Where are they now?** Andy Crane is on digital quiz-show channel Challenge TV, Violet Berlin writes for *Digitiser* on Teletext.

Games World

- **Channel:** Sky One
- **Time:** 7.30am
- **Run:** 1995-1998
- **Presenters:** Andy Collins, Neil West, Dave Perry
- **Format:** as *Gamesmaster*
- **Era:** Megadrive, SNES
- **Typical content:** Games Challenges
- **Typical quote:** "How's my hair/bandana looking?"
- **Where are they now?** Neil West went on to edit *Arcade* and now works in America. Dave Perry still wears a ridiculous bandana.



■ Fred "Chocabloc" Harris keeps it real, for the kids.

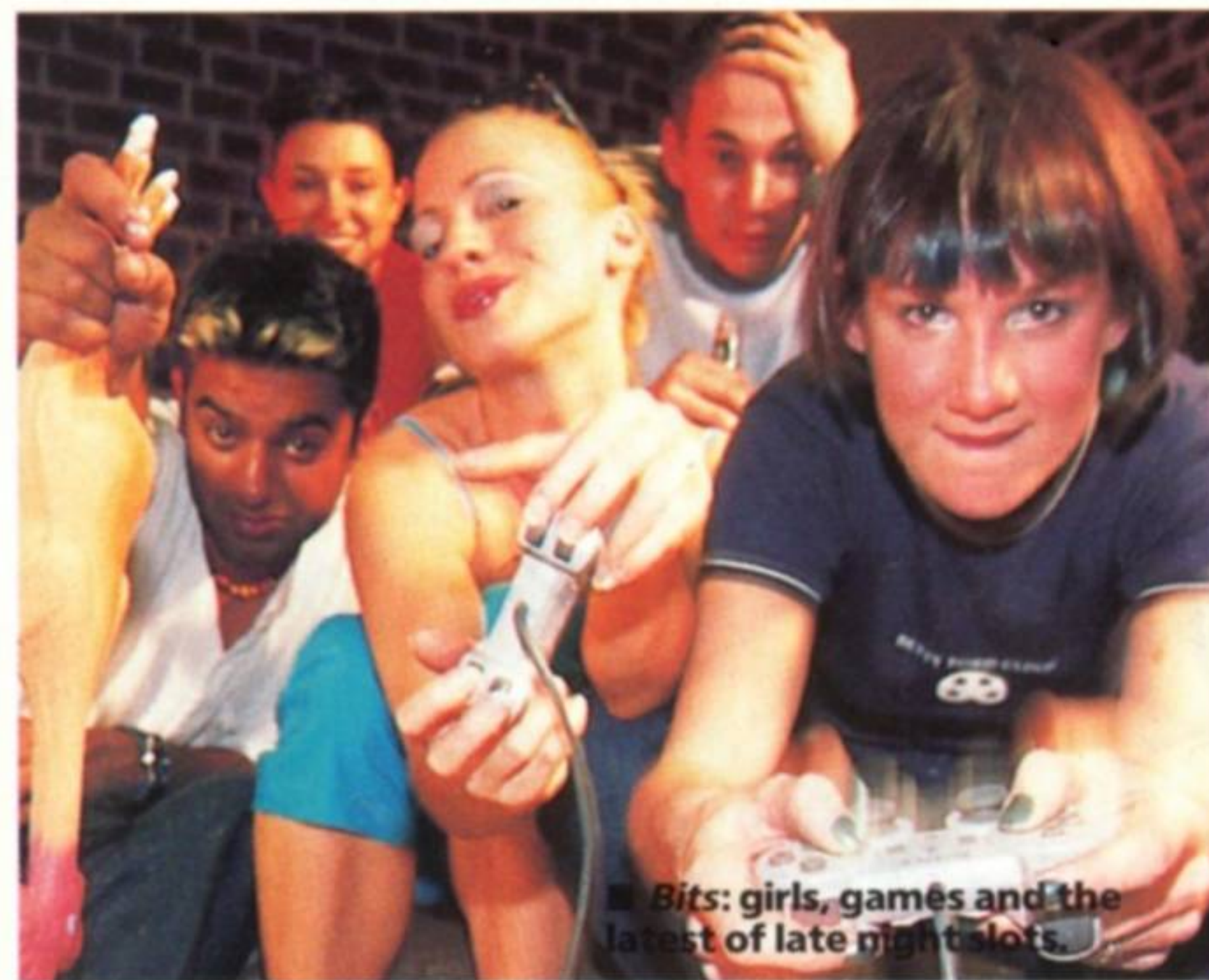


Game Over

- **Channel:** Sky TV's dot TV.
- **Time:** 7.30 analogue – repeated
- **Run:** 1996 – present
- **Presenters:** Andy Collins, Tom Edwards, Rosie Laydon, Mo Imran
- **Format:** news and features-based multi-format magazine programme
- **Era:** PlayStation, N64, Game Boy
- **Typical content:** news, previews, reviews by games journalists
- **Typical quote:** "Here's another exclusive from our Japanese correspondent."

Gamers

- **Channel:** Rapture TV, ITV
- **Time:** (Some regions) After Ant and Dec
- **Run:** 1998 – present
- **Presenters:** Jake Humphrey, Matt Cuttle
- **Format:** *Fully Booked* for wide-awake gamers
- **Era:** PC, N64, PlayStation, Dreamcast



■ Bits: girls, games and the latest of late night slots.

- **Typical content:** reviews, Internet sites, gadgets
- **Typical quote:** "Coming up after the break..."

Movies, Games & Videos

- **Channel:** ITV
- **Time:** Traditionally after *The Chart Show*
- **Run:** still running
- **Presenters:** Steve Priestley
- **Format:** Movies, games and video clips, with award-winningly annoying commentary
- **Era:** PlayStation, PC, N64
- **Typical content:** Latest movie, game and, er, video releases
- **Typical quote:** "Hi. [Deep nasal inhale] Steve Priestly here with another edition of *Movies, Games & Videos*." [A nation simultaneously grits its teeth].

Bits

- **Channel:** Channel 4
- **Time:** Into the small hours of 4-later programming

- **Run:** Mid 1999 to present
- **Presenters:** Emily Newton Dunn, Aleks Krotoski, other Emily
- **Format:** gals with games
- **Era:** PlayStation, Dreamcast, N64, PC
- **Typical content:** voiced-over reviews, location links, tips, competitions and titillation
- **Typical quote:** "And for all your guys with breast fixations out there..."

Bleeding Thumbs

- **Channel:** BBC2
- **Time:** 6pm
- **Run:** Early 2000
- **Presenters:** Spanky the Monkey, other TBC
- **Format:** videogames meet lifestyle show
- **Era:** Dreamcast, PlayStation, N64, PC
- **Typical content:** reviews, news, lifestyle features
- **Typical quote:** "Isn't that right, Spank?"

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COMING SOON



Those busy little programming monkeys out there in gameland have come up with some spanky titles for Arcade to preview this month. From living out your cabbie fantasies to taking the deathmatch to the next level, gaming goodies are set to rain from the skies over the coming months. Lucky? You bet you are.

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PC

Terrifyingly freeform gaming as you take on nasty ETs in space.

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Race insane little folks around domestic tracks in glorious 3D.

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Dreamcast

Speed around the streets of London, San Fran and Tokyo.

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Dreamcast

Put the wind up your fares in this arcade-perfect conversion.

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PC

The German developers aren't too shy, shy about this adventure.

P30 Quake 3: Arena

PC/Dreamcast

Multi-player mayhem revisited by the crazy id kids. Shoot to kill.

■ **The Real Neverending Story: original.**



■ **Indoors, outdoors, the Halo engine can do it all. It's a real world, you know.**



BEST BIT SO FAR

Three in a jeep

Although the single-player game looks superb, the multi-player is where *Halo* really shines. Bungie says there will be number of customisable play modes. But the game engine is so advanced it allows you do almost anything. Here, for example, three players can get in a jeep: one driving, one riding shotgun and one wielding the huge cannon mounted on the back. The idea is for you to build up specialities and work with other players as part of a team.



SPRING 2000

Format: **PC** | Developer: **Bungie Software** | Publisher: **Take 2** | Players: **TBA** | On sale in UK: **Spring 2000**

HALO

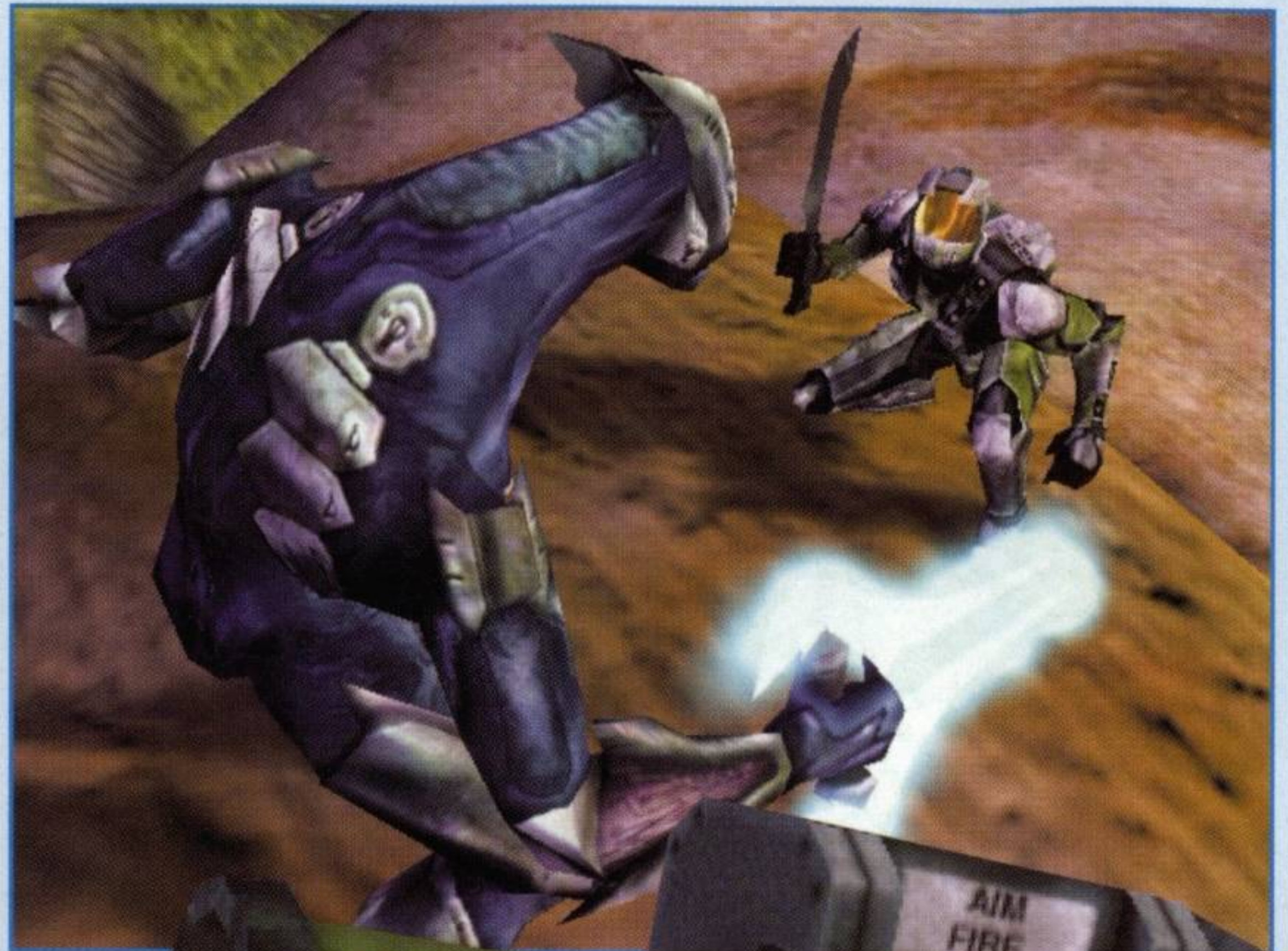
A game that takes you closer to God.

Picture a gameworld that's an accurate model of this one, with the same laws of physics, weather systems and so on. Introduce an aliens vs humans story with some kick-ass weapons, jeeps, tanks and spaceships. Now give yourself the freedom to do anything you want and what you have is *Halo*.

In what could rank as the most compelling, exciting and revolutionary videogame experience ever, an alien race has chased your



■ **Yes, those shell casings are affected by gravity. And yes, that is too much detail.**



■ **Flying and driving. You can do both.**



fleet halfway across the galaxy and it's time for you to make a stand. The action takes place on a ring-like planet, nicknamed the Halo by Earth forces. This is the final showdown and guess what? It's you against the world.

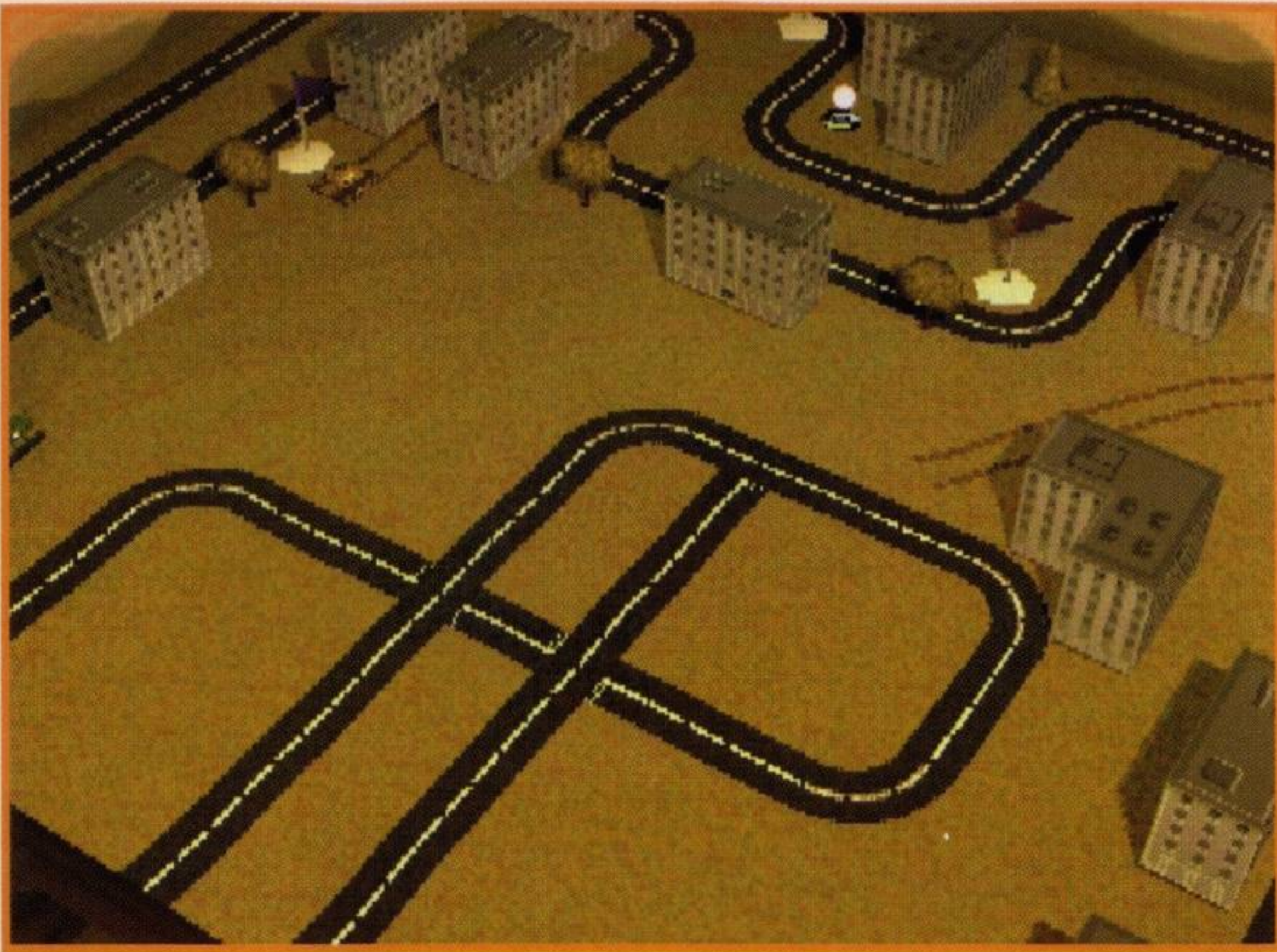
All manner of weapons will be available: pistols, shotguns, sniper rifles, rocket launchers, mortars. And then there are the alien weapons. Stealing these will definitely be to your advantage – they're far more powerful than the Earth equivalents. You will also, if you're clever enough, get your hands on the other alien technology.

Halo is objective-based: you get a mission brief at the beginning of each area. While the objectives are clear, it will be up to you how you go about them. Equipment

is put at your disposal – tanks, jeeps, other troops – and you decide how to use them. You could organise a crack team to pick off the enemy with sniper rifles. Or get a load of tanks and drive in through the front door. Or steal an alien spacecraft and bomb the base into submission. It'll be your call. And if you find something more important to destroy then you can do that. The key to *Halo's* appeal is that it will present you with a scenario and a number of options, and leaves the rest to you.

Although *Halo* has only been confirmed for PC, Bungie is definitely looking at next generation consoles, and the company has signed-on as a PlayStation2 and Dolphin developer. All that and *Halo* – which looks like being one of the games of 2000.





■ Unlike the *Micro Machines* games, *Micro Maniacs* is real 3D, as the above track shows.

■ Gimp masks and PJs have never looked so damn cool.



■ Oooh. Looks like *Zool* on the Amiga. Well, a bit.

■ Run, strange little maniac creature, run.



BEST BIT SO FAR

Novelty schmovelty

■ The moment *Micro Maniacs* loads up and you find yourself choosing from – not cars – but people, your brain does a double-take, like when you look at that picture which is either a vase or two faces. The individual characters – *Maniacs*, sorry – develop their competitive and defensive skills as they gain race experience. Why? Well, Dr Minimiser, the *Maniacs*' creator, wanted to find the strongest, fittest, most competitive and quick-thinking of his creations. Anyone for evolution?



SPRING 2000

Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **Codemasters** | Publisher: **Codemasters** | Players: **1-4**
On sale in UK: **Spring 2000**

MICRO MANIACS

Micro Machines, but with a twist bigger than the end of *The Sixth Sense*.

For some time the modern world has had a fascination on a par with Gary Glitter's for all things small. But whereas the '80s turned up *Shrinky Dinks* and *Mini Pops*, the best small thing about the '90s has been the phenomenally successful *Micro Machines* series.

Even if you have been eking out a solitary existence of the soul in a cave on a desert island for the past decade, you've probably still enjoyed zooming miniature virtual *Dinky* toys over breakfast tables, bathrooms, gardens and the most unlikely

set of over-sized tracks imaginable at some point or another.

The formula didn't change much over the series of *Micro Machines* games – heck, with one so good, what would be the point of fiddling with more than the cars and tracks? So when news broke at the beginning of last April about the new *Micro Machines* games, many people actually thought it was an April Fool's Joke.

"The new *Micro Machines* game," ran the speculation, "will be called *Micro Maniacs*." Fair enough so far, thought a nation. "*Micro Maniacs* will retain *Micro Machines*' key value of being the ultimate party-play multi-player racing game." Better

had. "But instead of miniature motor vehicles, you now race little people instead."

Yeah, right. Spaghetti grows on trees, and they've bred a new breed of chicken that lays yolkless eggs.

But – it's true. The little people are in fact inch-high biped life forms – the *Maniacs* in question. How come they're only an inch high? Well, they're the results of private genetic experiments conducted by the chemically-fuelled alter ego of progressive cloning scientist Dr Minimiser, to create the ultimate, defensive, competitive life form. Of course.

So, instead of racing cars, you race little biddy people. But otherwise, things remain

pretty much as tried and tested. The tracks are still constructed out of everyday objects with the usual *Gulliver's Travels* effects: milk cartons are transformed into towering skyscrapers, barbecues become acres of sizzling lava and kitchen sinks seem as deep and wide as oceans.

The build of *Micro Maniacs* also promises to be true 3D. Although *Micro Machines* was built of polygon graphics, the actual playing space remained predominantly two dimensional. But, taking a leaf out of the PC real-time 3D first-person shooters book, the world of *Maniacs* will be true 3D, allowing for more interaction with the scenery.

Where *Micro Maniacs*, like *Micro Machines* before it, will come into its own is the multi-player mode, and with added scenery interaction, pick-up weapons (as seen in *Micro Machines V3*) and people-instead-of-cars-novelty value, *Maniacs* won't disappoint. The only thing you can do now, though, is wait.



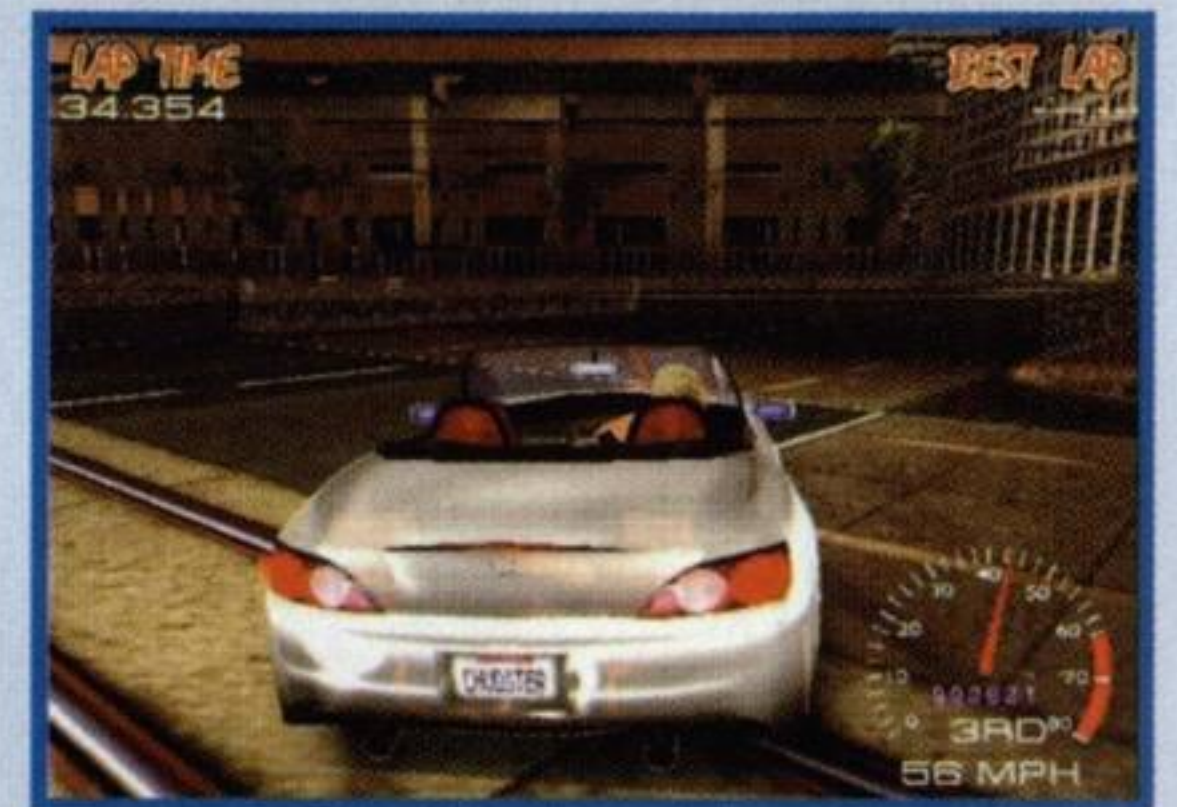
GAME ON

COMING SOON

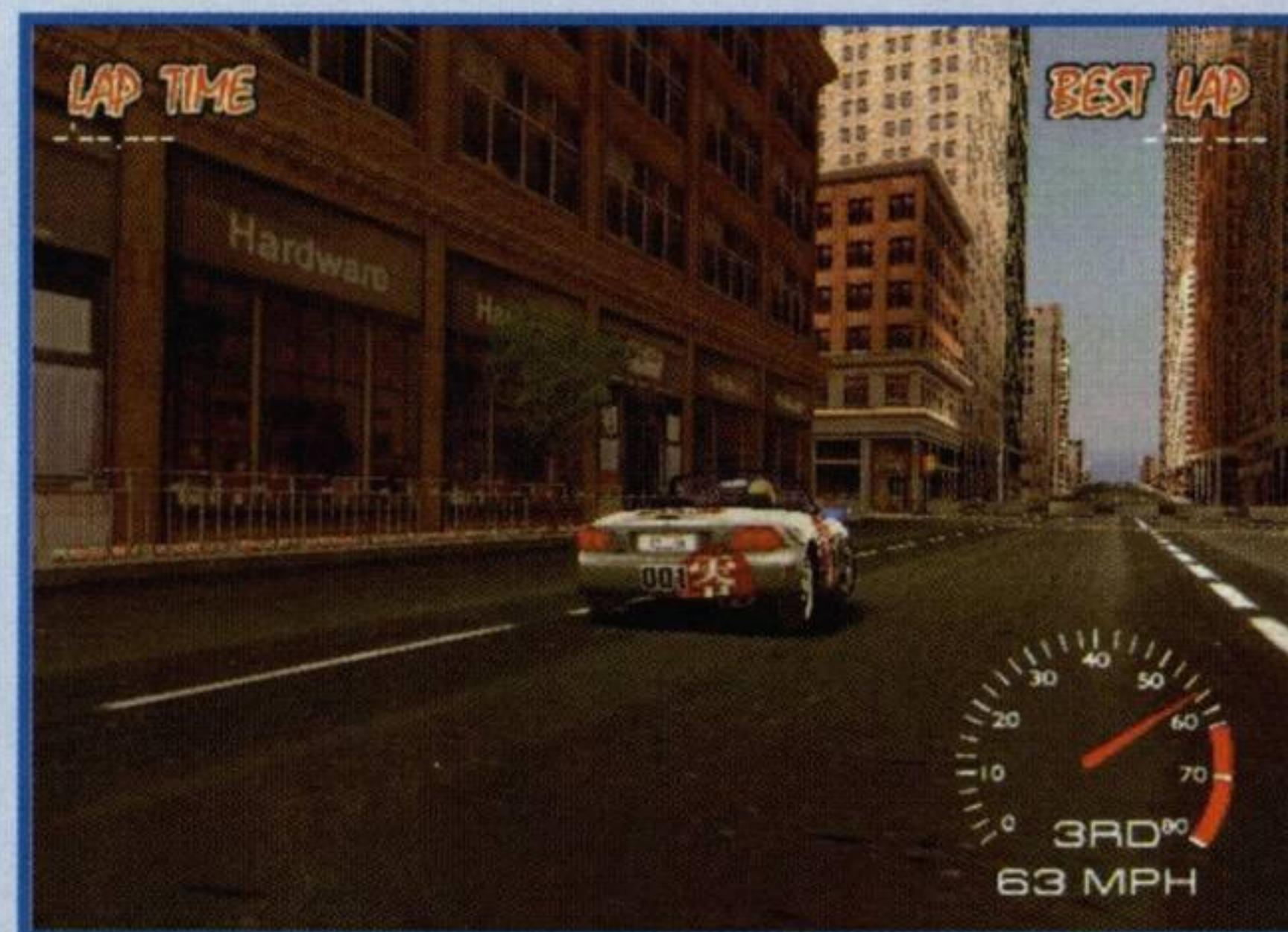


■ (Left) Spectacular replays are your reward at the climax of a race.

■ (Right) You can personalise your plates. Oh so cool.



TBA



■ (Left) Traffic is a little sparse in downtown San Francisco. It won't be like this in the final game.

■ (Left) Racing at 150 mph through traffic will prove a gut-churning experience.

Format: **Dreamcast** | Developer: **Bizarre Creations** | Publisher: **Sega** | Players: **TBA** | On sale in UK: **TBA**

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

Cityscape racing

Will *Metropolis Street Racer* prove to be the Dreamcast's *Gran Turismo*? It has cars. Check. It has street racing. Check. The cars have incredibly realistic handling. Check. If you look on the surface, then yes it would seem that *Metropolis Street Racer* could do for the Dreamcast what *Gran Turismo* did for PlayStation. But surely the team responsible for *Formula 1* on PlayStation must have a bit more up their sleeves than a *GT* clone...

Metropolis Street Racer is based on the concept of racing in living, breathing cities.

The three cities featured are London, San Francisco and Tokyo and the team has spent oodles of time taking source photos and videotape of their chosen fantasy racetracks. Each city has a number of courses based on well-known areas – London has a track that will take you through Piccadilly Circus and down on past Trafalgar Square. San Francisco will make good use of landmarks such as Nob Hill and Tokyo will take you through the famous Akihabara district.

With so much work going into the research, you would expect the game to look stunning, and it does. More than 30,000 photos have been used directly to create the in-game textures, which are incredibly detailed for a racing game. The

cars are just as impressive, each using a whopping 1,600 polygons. The game also features dynamic weather effects that change during the race. Obviously snow, rain and wind will all affect the driving experience and your driving. The best thing though, is that it all runs at a silky-smooth frame rate. Lovely.

The attention to detail is almost scary. The suspension on each wheel of each car has been modelled accurately. As a result, the cars react very closely to their real-life counterparts, shifting around, exactly as you would expect them to.

While there aren't the same number of cars to drive as there are in *GT*, *Metropolis Street Racer* still has a fair few to get into. Some 13 car manufacturers have signed up

BEST BIT SO FAR

I've been there!

What sets *Metropolis Street Racer* apart from the rest is the fantastic courses. Based on real cities, the tracks have been painstakingly reproduced and are incredibly accurate. Thousands of photos and video footage have been used to create the courses. See if you can recognise this area of London.



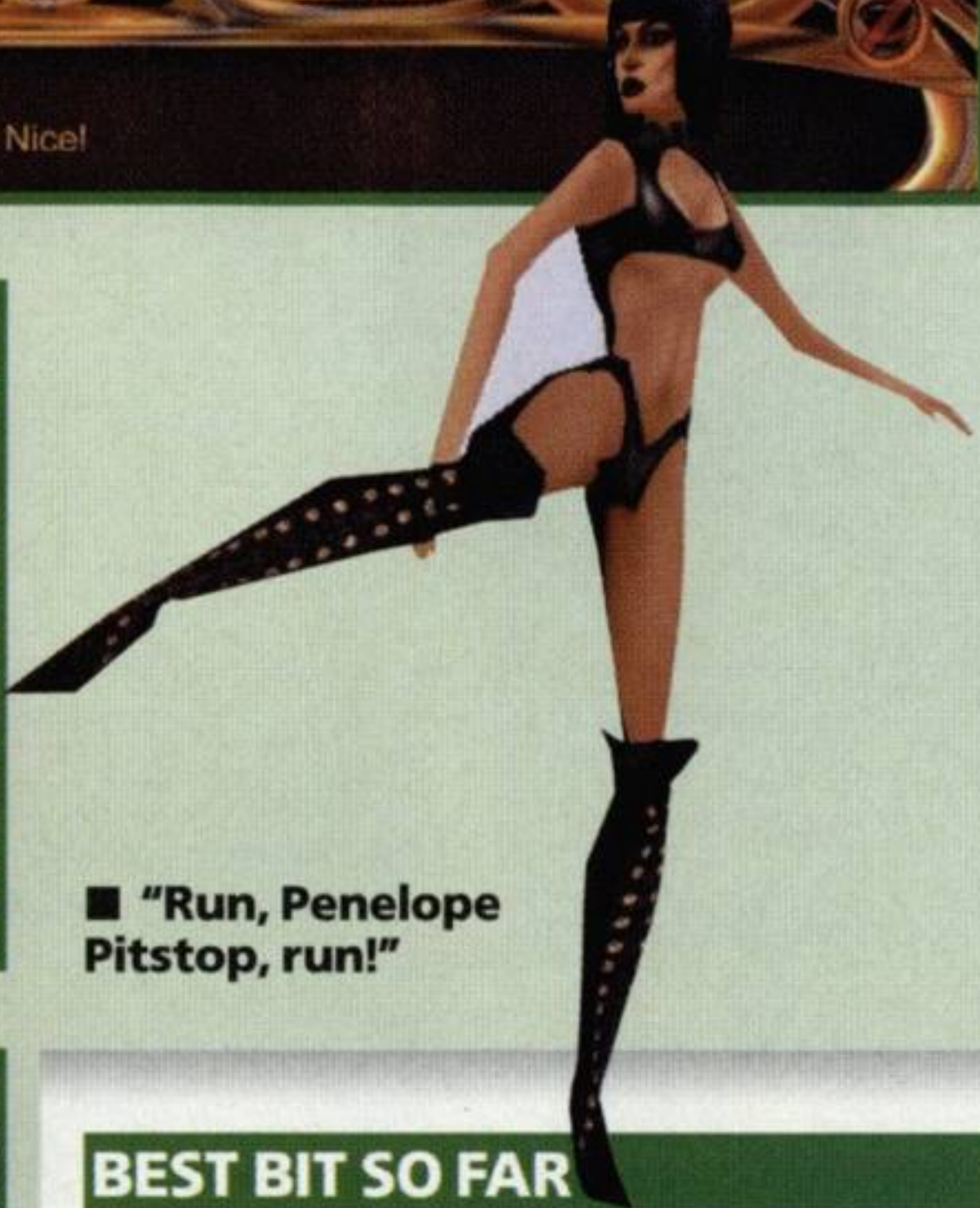
so far, and the developer hopes the final number will rise to 20.

Metropolis Street Racer will be the high-quality racer that the Dreamcast needs – it is a serious challenger to *Gran Turismo 2*. As far as the feel of driving goes, the atmosphere of *Metropolis Street Racer* is on a par with Sony's masterpiece but benefits from the power of Dreamcast visuals. Should be a driving treat.





■ Beware of the scariest characters in the game – blue-haired Goths.



■ "Run, Penelope Pitstop, run!"



BEST BIT SO FAR

Happy Talk

■ A lot of effort has been put into *The Real Neverending Story's* "emotion-based dialogue system", which asks you to consider how you feel rather than just presenting a series of standard dialogue responses, as in the *Monkey Island* games. So, for example, when Azura encounters a huge guard he may think, "What a fat bastard", but if you choose that option he'll actually say "Hello, how are you?". Polite.



APRIL 2000

Format: **PC** | Developer: **Discreet Monsters** | Publisher: **TBA** | Players: **1**
On sale in UK: **April 2000**

NEVERENDING STORY

Epic adventuring in a fairy tale world.

The *Neverending Story* has a bit of an image problem in this country, what with that children's film and that crap song and that haircut. However, German developer Discreet Monsters may be able to persuade you to review this successful franchise with this ambitious 3D action adventure.

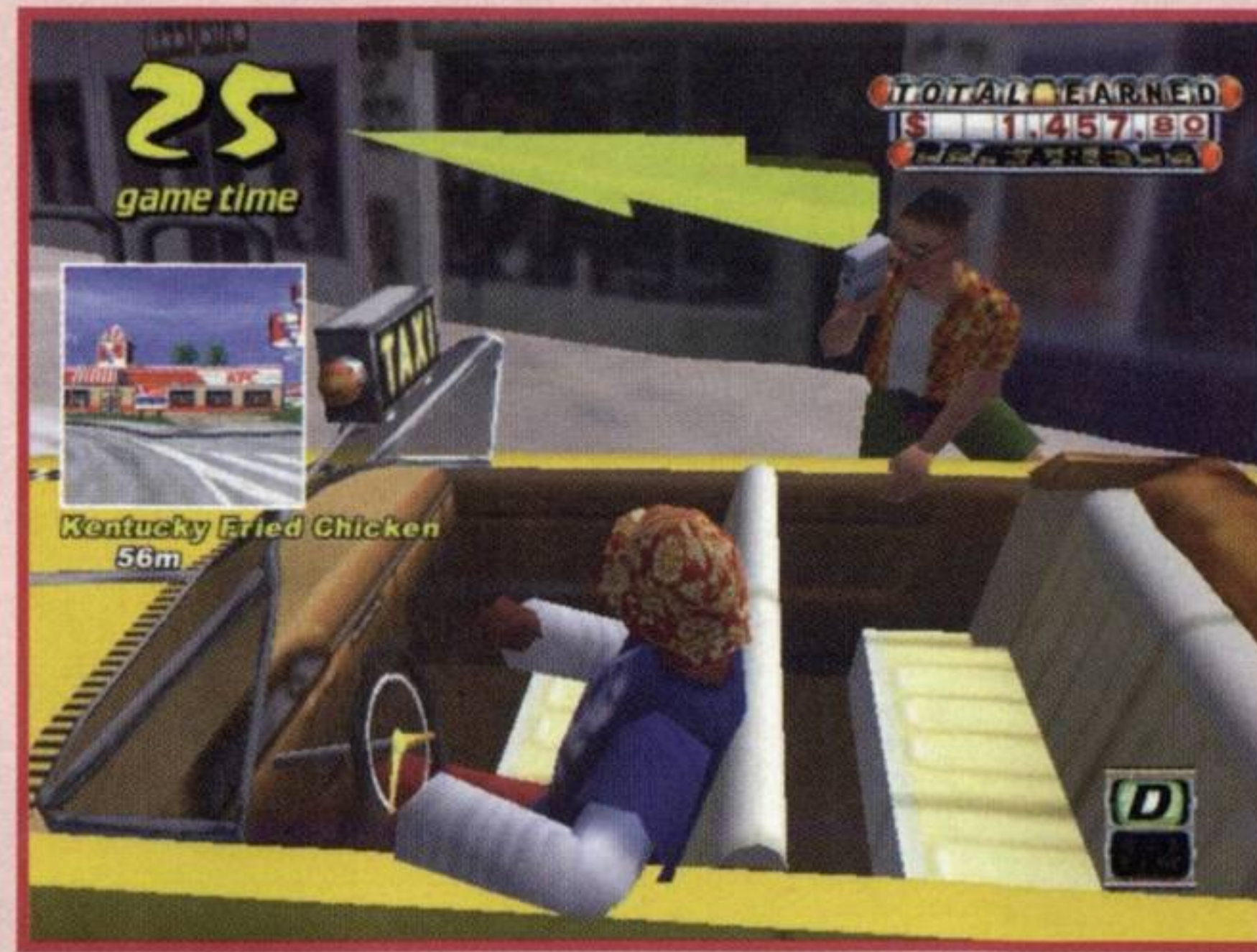
The 75-strong *The Real Neverending Story* team has spent two years and about £2.5 million on the huge story-driven game.

Set in the land of Fantasia, your weirdy-beardy character, Azura, has to interact with more than 100 different species of characters, fight battles and solve puzzles

in order to save the world from a terrifying force called the Nothing. The game allows for an enormous amount of freedom, so you could embark on a diverting little sub-quest until real-time events eventually pull you back in the direction of the main story.

Fantasia has been brought to life using a graphics engine which has been built from scratch. As well as walking through gorgeous indoor settings, you can move seamlessly into lush polygonal outdoor environments with drifting clouds, real-time weather effects and landslides

The game is still a way from completion, but its innovative gameplay should lance the dragon of '80s ridicule for good, which would be a happy ending. **A**



■ "Take me to KFC" – whatever happened to "Follow that car"?

■ (Right) Getting to grips with fly-drive is vital.



■ (Below) Head on with a Mack truck will slow you down. A lot.



BEST BIT SO FAR

The "Crazy Slide"

The cabs in *Crazy Taxi* are great fun to drive – they are very responsive and liable to go up on two wheels with the slightest clip of the curb. There are a number of special moves that you can pull off, from power slides to doughnuts, but the best is definitely the Crazy Slide. With careful application of the gears and the right timing you can spin your cab around and pick up a passenger in one movement. Satisfying.



SPRING 2000

Format: **Dreamcast** | Developer: **Sega/AM3** | Publisher: **Sega** | Players: **TBA**
On sale in UK: **Spring 2000**

CRAZY TAXI

Hackney carriages go mental in San Fran.

Grumbling about the weather, moaning about England's latest defeat in the footie and claiming to know how to solve the world's problems are not things that make a good videogame. So the idea of a game based around taxi driving may not seem appealing at first. But that's before you realise that it's a Sega driving game, with the emphasis definitely on the crazy.

You won't have much chance for idle chit-chat in *Crazy Taxi*. Unlike real taxi drivers, your objective will be to get your passengers from A to B in the quickest time

possible. This will mean concentrating on driving as quickly as possible, taking short cuts down back alleys and through parks and avoiding the pedestrians who have the cheek to walk on the pavements, when that's the ideal place for you to drive. As in life, the bottom line with this game is cash – in this topsy-turvy world you get more money for getting your passenger to his destination quicker.

The action is all set to take place in a city based on San Francisco – it's all steep hills and jumps and this makes it perfect for outrageous crashes and stunts. And as the cars look like handling in a suitably responsive manner, this should make *Crazy Taxi* a joy to play. Tip, guv? **A**

GAME ON

COMING SOON



■ (Above) "Hey, Macarena!"



■ (Above) Big feet, big tool.



■ (Below) The Lightning Gun in devastating action.



DECEMBER 1999

Format: **PC** | Developer: **id Software** | Publisher: **Activision** | Players: **TBA** | On sale in UK: **December**

QUAKE 3: ARENA

Get ready to rumble – the king of first-person shooters returns.

Quake 3: Arena is without doubt the most eagerly awaited PC game of the year. With the last two games becoming a phenomenon on the Internet and with the emergence of *Half-Life* and *Unreal Tournament*, expectations are high for the return of the original deathmatch game.

Unlike the last two instalments of *Quake*, the entire single-player game is based around deathmatch. You will take part in a tournament of deathmatches against computer controlled bots. Your objective is simple: to rise to the top of

the killing machine pile and be crowned king of the Quake Arena.

The intelligence of the bots is one of the most important features of the game. id has attempted make them act as humanly as possible. The lower level bots make mistakes such as falling into lava, but the best bots will play like the people who spend all their entire life playing *Quake* on the Net. In other words, rock hard.

The main focus in *Quake 3: Arena* will be the multi-player mode. Despite id Software's ambitious attempt to simulate real opponents, there's nothing quite like the intelligence, or unpredictability, of a human player. In multi-player, *Quake 3* promises to be an even more intense

experience than previous outings. The emphasis is definitely on fast, adrenaline-pumping action – there will be no sneaking around, taking people out with sniper rifles in this game.

The team games will be a great showcase for the artificial intelligence. You will be able to take control of a team of computer bots and issue them with orders, which they will follow to the letter. You can tell your bots to stay and patrol certain areas of the level, follow you around providing cover fire or just go on the rampage and destroy anything that they see. This feature will come into its own on capture the flag type games and you'll be able to organise your fighters into squads

BEST BIT SO FAR

Electric Boogaloo

■ Weapons play a big part in *Quake*, and while many return from *Quake 2*, the most welcome is a weapon from the original *Quake* – the Lightning Gun. Terrifically destructive, the Lightning Gun spews out a stream of electricity that will fry a player in seconds. Watch as they fizzle and explode into a hundred bloody chunks. Darkly satisfying.



and co-ordinate attacks on the enemy base with ease. One tactic you could employ is to make a bot the team leader and follow his commands.

The look of *Quake 3: Arena* harks back to the original game – many of the levels take place in medieval castles, although they still retain a futuristic feeling with jump pads and teleports. Much has been made of the game's graphics engine, and from what *Arcade* has seen it won't disappoint. Gorgeous textures, lighting and "real" fog give the game a wonderful atmosphere – it is one of the best-looking PC games ever.

Everything is in place for the most exhilarating Internet game you will have experienced. The question is, though, will there be enough variety in the gameplay to keep you coming back for more? There's little doubt that *Quake 3: Arena* is going to serve up the ultimate deathmatch rush, but with games like *Half-Life* offering more depth and subtlety of gameplay, has *Quake* had its day?

RELEASE SCHEDULE

Timing is everything. Avoid shooting your bolt too early with the oh so handy Arcade guide.

DECEMBER

3rd	Apocalypse: Platinum	Activision	PSX
3rd	Missile Command	Activision	PSX
3rd	Dune 2000	EA	PSX
3rd	Trick N Snowboarder	Konami	PSX
3rd	This Is Football	SCEE	PSX
3rd	Music 2000	Codemasters	PSX
3rd	NFL Blitz 2000	Midway	PSX
3rd	Official Formula 1 Racing	Eidos	PSX
3rd	Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	PSX
3rd	Marvel Vs Capcom	Virgin	DC
3rd	NFL Blitz 2000	Midway	DC
3rd	NFL Quarterback Club 2000	Acclaim	DC
3rd	Resident Evil 2	Virgin	DC
3rd	Worldwide Soccer 2000	Sega	DC
3rd	Worms: Armageddon	Infogrames	DC
3rd	Half-Life: Opposing Force	Sierra	PC
3rd	Battlezone 2	Activision	PC
3rd	Police Quest SWAT 3	Sierra	PC
3rd	Quake 3: Arena	Activision	PC
3rd	Konami Game Boy Collection	Konami	CGB
3rd	Mickey's Toon Racing	Rare	CGB
3rd	Ms Pac Man	Nintendo	CGB
3rd	WWF: Wrestlemania 2000	THQ	CGB
3rd	Pac Man & Pac Panic	Nintendo	CGB
3rd	Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko	Eidos	N64
3rd	Donkey Kong 64	Nintendo	N64
3rd	Fighting Force 64	Eidos	N64
3rd	NBA Jam 2000	Konami	N64
3rd	Turok: Rage Wars	Acclaim	N64
10th	Hell Night	Konami	PSX
10th	Jimmy White's Cueball	Virgin	PSX
10th	Medal of Honor	EA	PSX
10th	NBA Live 2000	EA	PSX
10th	Warpath: Jurassic Park	EA	PSX
10th	Jimmy White's Cueball	Virgin	DC
10th	Fighting Force 2	Eidos	DC
10th	Re-Volt	Acclaim	DC
10th	Sega Bass Fishing	Sega	DC
10th	FIFA 2000	EA	CGB
10th	WCW Mayhem	THQ	N64
10th	Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	N64
10th	Rainbow Six	Take 2	N64
17th	Die Hard Trilogy 2	Activision	PSX
17th	Discworld Noir	GT	PSX
17th	South Park Rally	Acclaim	PC
17th	YODA Stories	THQ	CGB
17th	Episode 1 - Racer	Nintendo	CGB
17th	Resident Evil	Virgin	CGB
17th	Armourines	Acclaim	N64
18th	Tonic Trouble	Ubisoft	PSX
31st	Diablo 2	Sierra	PC
TBA	Earthworm Jim 3D	Rockstar	PSX
TBA	Urban Chaos	Eidos	PSX
TBA	Renegade Racers	Infogrames	PSX
TBA	Urban Chaos	Eidos	PC
TBA	DaiKatana	Eidos	PC
TBA	Messiah	Interplay	PC
TBA	Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko	Eidos	CGB
TBA	Casper	THQ	CGB
TBA	Street Fighter Alpha	Virgin	CGB
TBA	Earthworm Jim 3D	Rockstar	N64

JANUARY

7th	South Park Rally	Acclaim	PSX
7th	Um Jamma Lammy	SCEE	PSX
7th	Plasma Sword	Virgin	DC
7th	Red Dog	Sega	DC
7th	Take That Bullet	Sega	DC
7th	Interstate '82	Activision	PC
7th	Armourines	Acclaim	CGB
7th	Space Invaders	Activision	CGB
14th	Gran Turismo 2	SCEE	PSX
14th	Carmageddon Rally	Sci	PC
14th	Force Commander	Activision	PC
14th	Alice In Wonderland	Nintendo	CGB
14th	Game & Watch Gallery 3	Nintendo	CGB
14th	Paperboy	Midway	N64
14th	Resident Evil 2	Virgin	N64
14th	Asteroids Hyper 64	Activision	N64
14th	Battlezone 64	Activision	N64
14th	40 Winks	GT	N64
21st	NBA 2000	Sega	DC
21st	Virtua Striker 2	Sega	DC
21st	Street Fighter Alpha 3	Virgin	DC
28th	Eagle 1: Harrier Attack	Infogrames	PSX
28th	Caesars Palace 2000	3DO	PSX
28th	Caesars Palace 2000	3DO	DC
28th	Crazy Taxi	Sega	DC
28th	NFL 2000	Sega	DC
28th	Jimmy White's Cueball	Virgin	CGB
28th	South Park Rally	Acclaim	N64
TBA	Beatmania European Edition	Konami	PSX
TBA	Code: Veronica	Eidos	DC
TBA	Ready 2 Rumble	Midway	CGB

FEBRUARY

4th	Fear Factor	Eidos	PSX
4th	X-Men	Activision	PSX
4th	Delta Force 2	Nova Logic	PC
4th	X-Men	Activision	N64
11th	ICC Cricket	EA	PSX
11th	WWF: Smackdown	THQ	PSX
11th	International Track & Field	Konami	CGB
11th	Starcraft 64	Nintendo	N64
18th	Alien Resurrection	Activision	PSX
18th	ISS Pro: Evolution	Konami	PSX
18th	Baldurs Gate	3DO	PSX
18th	Resident Evil 3: Nemesis	Eidos	PSX
18th	International Track & Field 2	Konami	PSX
18th	Alien Resurrection	Activision	PC
18th	Max Payne	Eidos	PC
18th	The Sims	EA	PC
18th	Slave Zero	EA	PC
25th	Road Rash: Unchained	THQ	PSX
25th	Soul Reaver	Eidos	DC
25th	Demolition Racer	Infogrames	PC
TBA	Rayman 2	Ubi Soft	PSX
TBA	Metropolis Street Racer	Sega	DC
TBA	MDK 2	Interplay	DC
TBA	Dark Reign 2	Activision	PC
TBA	Half-Life: Team Fortress 2	Sierra	PC

TBA	Hostile Waters	Rage	PC
TBA	Age of Wonders	GT	PC
TBA	Obi-Wan Kenobi	Activision	PC
TBA	Star Trek - Armada	Activision	PC
TBA	Star Trek - First Contact	Activision	PC
TBA	Star Trek Voyager	Activision	PC
TBA	Freelancer	Activision	PC
TBA	Pokémon Pinball	Nintendo	CGB

MARCH

10th	Mario Artist and Camera	Nintendo	N64
10th	Perfect Dark	Nintendo	N64
17th	Episode 1 - Racer	Activision	DC
TBA	Incoming Forces	Rage	PC
TBA	Vampire: The Masquerade	Activision	PC
TBA	Babylon 5	Sierra	PC
TBA	Pokémon Snap	Nintendo	N64

MAY

5th	Blair Witch Project	Take 2	PSX
5th	Blair Witch Project	Take 2	DC
5th	Blair Witch Project	Take 2	PC
12th	Hidden & Dangerous	Take 2	DC
TBA	Prey	Activision	PC

JUNE

TBA	Black & White	EA	PC
TBA	Pokémon Yellow	Nintendo	CGB

■ RELEASE SCHEDULE IN ASSOCIATION WITH HMV



■ Jump for joy, they're coming.

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WHAT ON EARTH

MESSIAH



SEX, RELIGION, POSSESSION,

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DEATH.



PC
CD
ROM



“I reckon I could
shoot to kill
with the
best of them.”

Maria Grazia Cucinotta

Eyes front | Rich Pelley

She plays Cigar Girl in *The World Is Not Enough*, has spread the word on Tetris in film circles and likes nothing better than to get up to no good in the kitchen [sigh].

There have been, by *Arcade's* count, 56 Bond girls. Some 43 of these have hailed from abroad and 12 have had black hair. But only one raven-haired foreign lovely has tried to off Bond aboard a speedboat on the Thames. The woman in a class of her own? Maria Grazia Cucinotta, of course.

Maria features in new Bond movie *The World Is Not Enough* as Cigar Girl – a soldier hired by chief baddy Renard (Robert Carlyle) to kill Bond before he gets in the way of \$5 million of oil money. Does she succeed? What do you think?

But what of Maria herself? Well, she's from Sicily, she has worked as a model since she the tender age of 16 and her biggest screen break came playing Beatrice Russo in Oscar-nominated tear fest *Il Postino*. But does she like videogames? Please, God...

Er, hello then. Um. [Nervous pause] So, Cigar Girl – anything to do with Monica Lewinsky?

She's a killer. She's the bad one, and she has a simple mission – to kill James Bond. But as everybody knows, it's impossible to kill James Bond. You can only get so close, but you always know he'll find a way to save himself. Why am I called Cigar Girl? I don't know. It's just the name that I found on the script. Right at the beginning I offer James a Cuban cigar.

Er, but don't you die before the opening credits?

Well, yes, I am only in the movie for just a little while.

So aren't you annoyed that if you were a goodie maybe you could have been in the whole film?

No. It's okay. I wouldn't really like to be in the movie for the full 130 minutes, or whatever it is. I think I would bore people. I just tried to do as good a job as I could. I hope people will remember me. I think James Bond films are like legends – almost everyone will see *The World Is*

Not Enough eventually, and they will remember specific things about what they saw. Especially the sequence in the high speed boat, which is the most dramatic part.

Do you get to kiss Pierce?

I only get to kiss him with my gun.

So no snog, eh? Next time, maybe? What's Mr Brosnan like?

I couldn't believe it when I met him because I thought he was this big star. But he was so sweet, so nice and such a real person – a real family man. He is really funny and made me laugh millions of times. He was very understanding and helped me with my lines, which made me a lot more confident.

You say on your Web site that you reply to most of your e-mails from fans. When *Arcade* tried to read your guest book, it said: "Errore 5 nella form. Scusate per qualsiasi inconveniente!" Eh?

I do still reply to my e-mails when I have time. The only problem is when I'm outside Sicily I have problems accessing my e-mail. But when I'm back at home and not working I make a conscious effort to reply. I always answer my e-mails from my friends and family. You know how it is: you sit up talking to people until four in the morning, and then at five in the morning you have to go to a shoot.

Horrible, isn't it? Anyway, there are lots of Sicilian recipes on your site. What's Sicilian food like? Is England missing out on something?

I love to cook. I think for a woman it's important. I've just finished writing a Sicilian cookbook, actually. Is Sicilian food like Italian food? Well, it tends to be more fresh because the ingredients are all natural. I've found some good Italian restaurants in England, but no Sicilian ones.

So [cough] are you a big fan of videogames at all?

The thing is, you generally have to be at home to play PlayStation. When you're travelling a lot like me you have to rely on your Game Boy. [Throwing hands in the air] I play for hours! When you're

Sicilian sizzler



■ Wanna cook Sicilian? Here's Maria's simple but delicious recipe for pasta with tuna fish and tomato. (Serves four)

■ Ingredients:
400g short pasta
1 tin tuna fish in olive oil
300g red San Marzano tomatoes
A few pitted black olives
5 tblsp extra virgin olive oil
Pinch of salt

■ Dice the tomatoes, flake the tuna, place in a bowl and season with the salt. Heat the olive oil in a pan, add the sauce and reduce. Cook the pasta *al dente*, drain, mix well with the tomato and tuna sauce, add the olives and serve. Delicious cold.

on a shoot you have to wait for two or three hours, so I play on my Game Boy to stop getting bored. You remember *Tetris*? I was a champion at that when it came out! I was shooting this movie and I forced the whole set to play. I was the first one to get addicted, but by the end everyone was hooked.

Have you ever played *GoldenEye*?

Er, no I haven't.

You realise when they make *The World Is Not Enough* into a game, you'll be one of the characters you can pick? And kill?

When is it coming out? I'd like to play with that. [Making fingers into gun] I think I've got a bit of a killer streak in me, actually. I reckon I could shoot to kill with the best of them. **A**

■ *The World Is Not Enough* is now on general release.

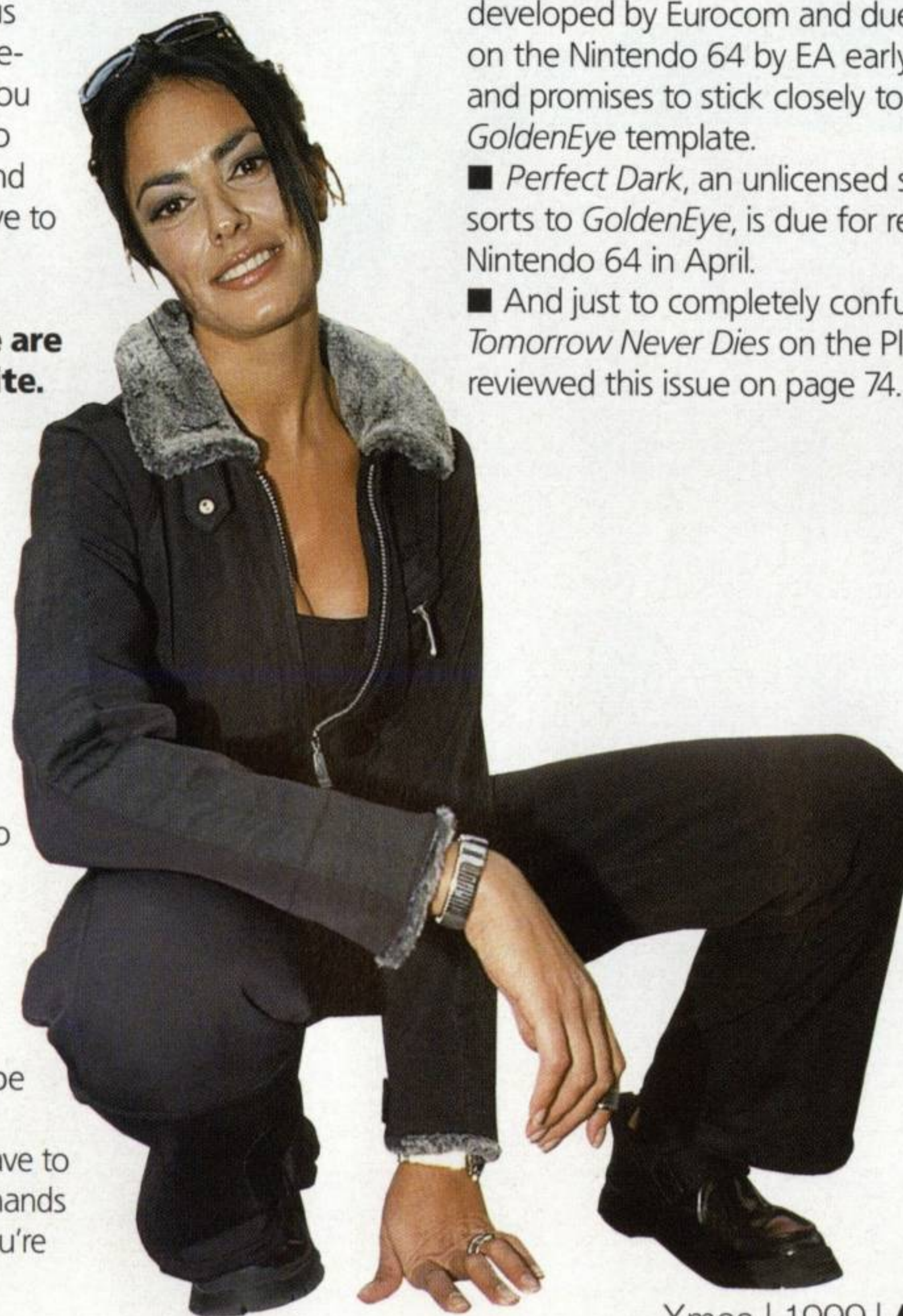
■ You can check out Maria's Web site at <http://geco.it/cucinotta/en/index.htm>, or send her an e-mail at cucinotta@geco.it.

■ *The World Is Not Enough* Web site is at <http://www.bondisback.com>.

■ *The World Is Not Enough* game is being developed by Eurocom and due for release on the Nintendo 64 by EA early next year and promises to stick closely to the *GoldenEye* template.

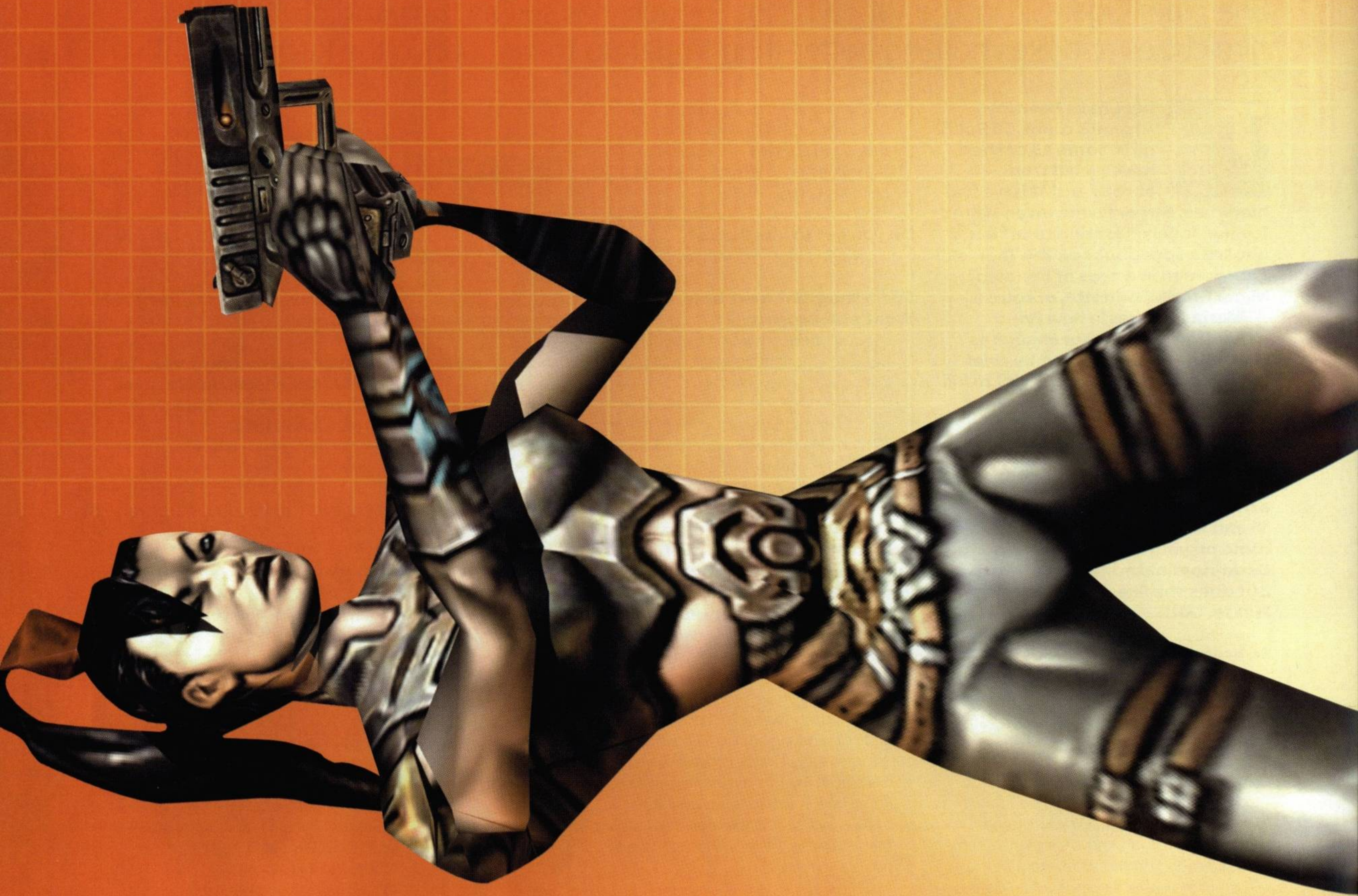
■ *Perfect Dark*, an unlicensed sequel of sorts to *GoldenEye*, is due for release on the Nintendo 64 in April.

■ And just to completely confuse you, *Tomorrow Never Dies* on the PlayStation is reviewed this issue on page 74.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JUDE EDGINTON

■ It's difficult to imagine Princess Anne tooling up in order to defend her family's noble lineage. As you can see, Mikiko Ebihara's a bit different.



Daikatana Mikiko Ebihara

Acting on impulse

Live by the sword, die by the sword. Mikiko is the impulsive and acerbic lady in search of the legendary Daikatana.

As with many videogame legends, the story begins in ancient Japan. Usagi Miyamoto has created the Daikatana - the most powerful and magical sword in existence. He should have realised that inventing a tool of time travel and mass destruction would be kind of a valuable commodity, so Japan's evil ruling tyranny, the Mishimas, attempt to wrest control of the Daikatana. In the struggle all hell breaks loose. Miyamoto and most of the Mishima army are killed, the Daikatana is buried deep underground, and a more benevolent tribe, the Ebiharas, succeed to the throne and rule for centuries.

Well, it's now 2455 and a crack scientific team, which just happens to be led by Miyamoto and Ebihara descendants, rediscovers the Daikatana. Mikiko Ebihara is the daughter of the doctor leading the Daikatana recovery experiment. She is intelligent, headstrong and earthy yet also well aware of her noble descent. Along with Hiro Miyamoto, she's the first volunteer to use the Daikatana's power to make a quick foray back in time.

In another terrible coincidence, a descendent of the shamed Mishima tribe has weaselled his way on to the Daikatana project. Seizing his opportunity for revenge, he also travels back in time to when the Mishimas ruled, and systematically wipes all influence of the Ebiharas and Miyamotos from history. When Hiro and Mikiko return to 2455, Tokyo has been trashed by centuries of greedy Mishima rule - it's a perfect videogame scenario.

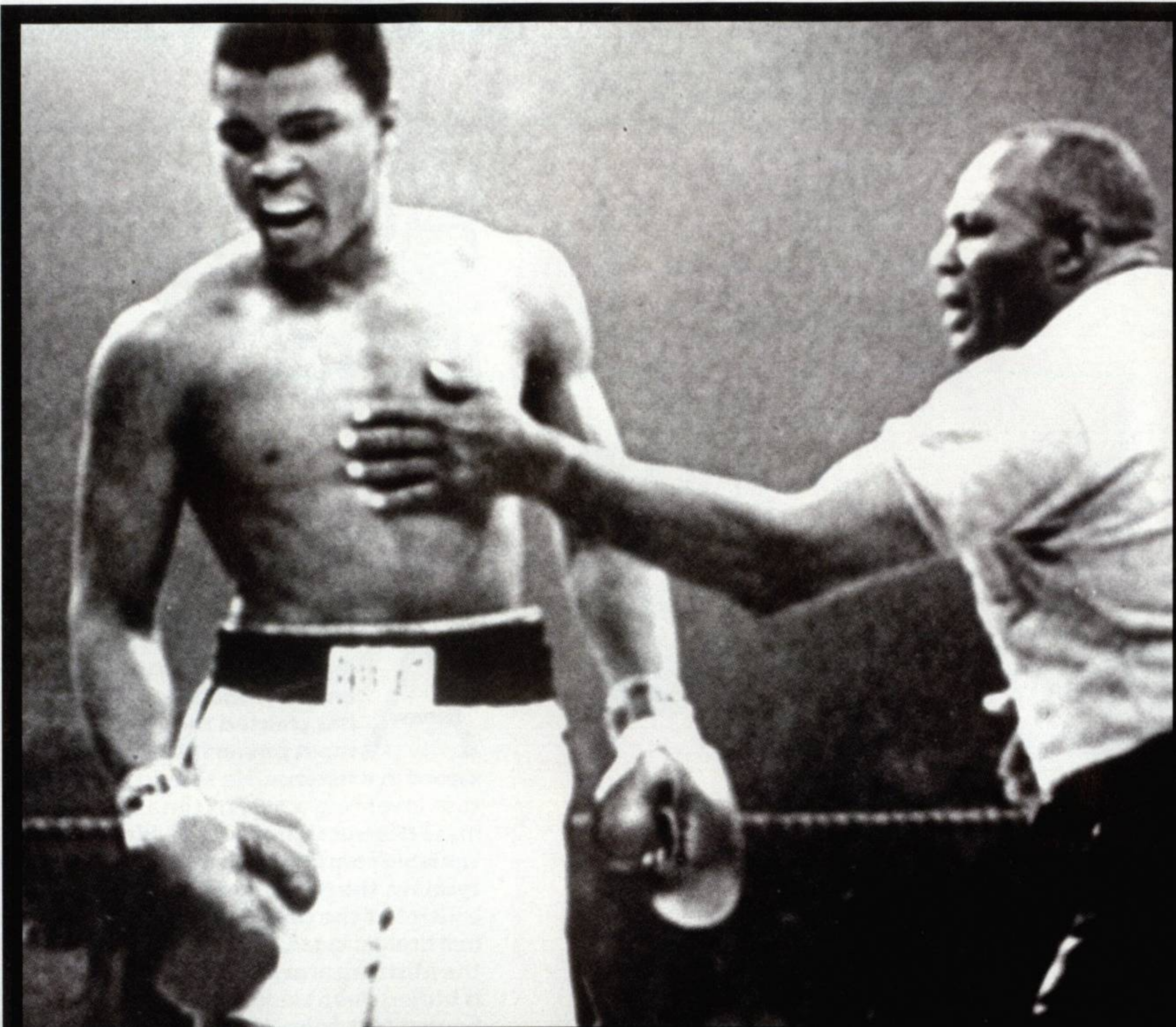
Hiro and Mikiko vow to rescue the Daikatana, now buried deep in the Mishima fortress, and change history once again.

That's Mikiko all over. Able to immediately assess a situation and to decide on a course of action with even greater speed. She's impulsive, perhaps even impetuous, but at least it means that when she's around, things get done. Mikiko sees herself as the natural heir to the Ebihara legacy and the Daikatana incident has robbed her of the opportunity to rule.

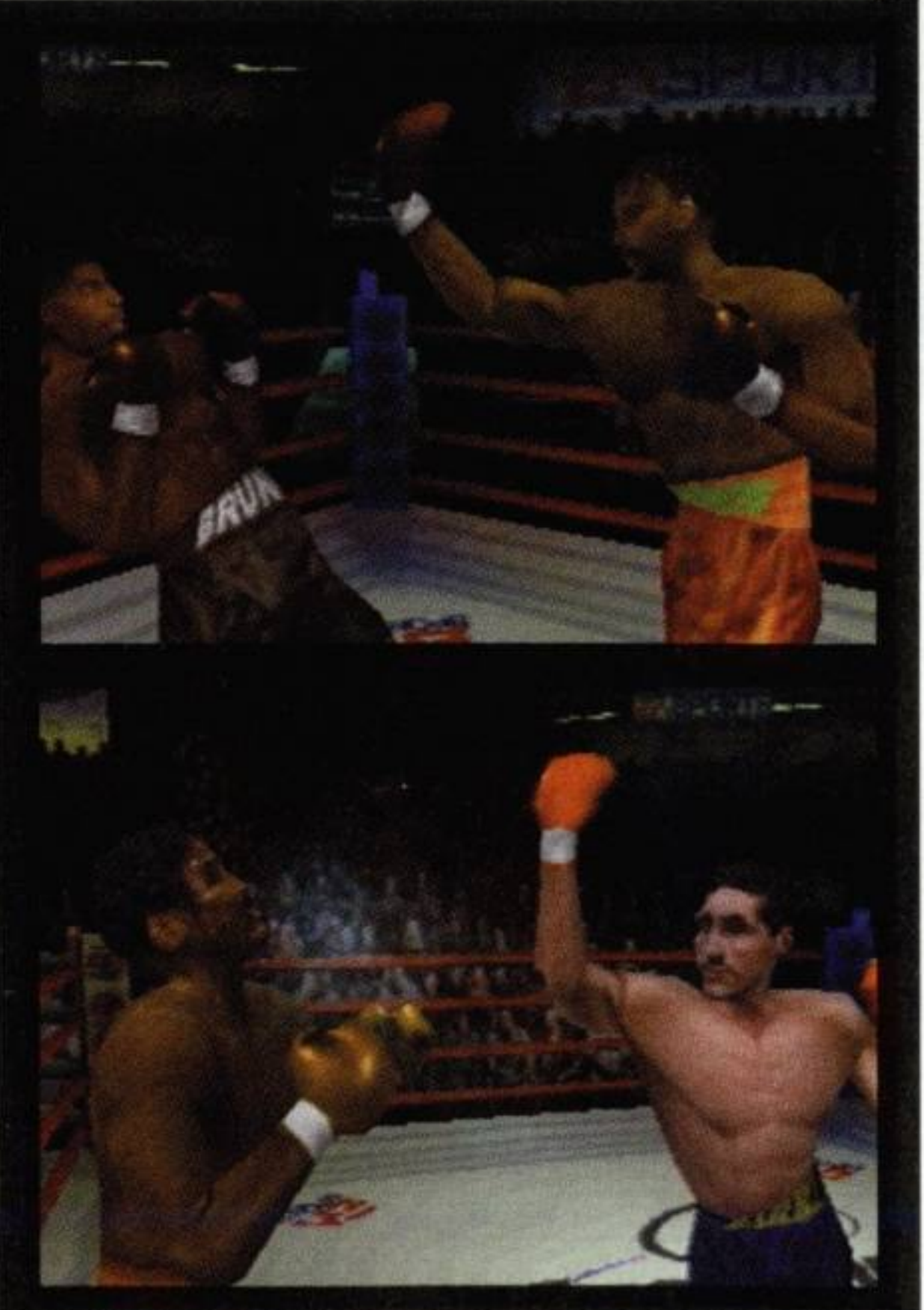
Mikiko isn't the kind of girl who'd coyly accept the offer of a film. Any potential suitor would be the victim of her acerbic tongue. No matter, because when *Daikatana* is finally released by Ion Storm/Eidos for the PC (January is the latest bet), you'll get to play Hiro in the first-person. Here's betting that her weapon skills prove more of a comfort than those fierce good looks.



■ Mikiko Ebihara appears in Ion Storm title *Daikatana*, due for release in January 2000.



GIMME A TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR-ANVIL-TOSSING-FIST CARNIVAL **GIMME** THE HEAVY-INDUSTRY-FOREMAN OF-THE-WRECKING-CREW **GIMME** A WATCH-ME WALTZ-LIKE-A-JACKHAMMER **GIMME** BOXING



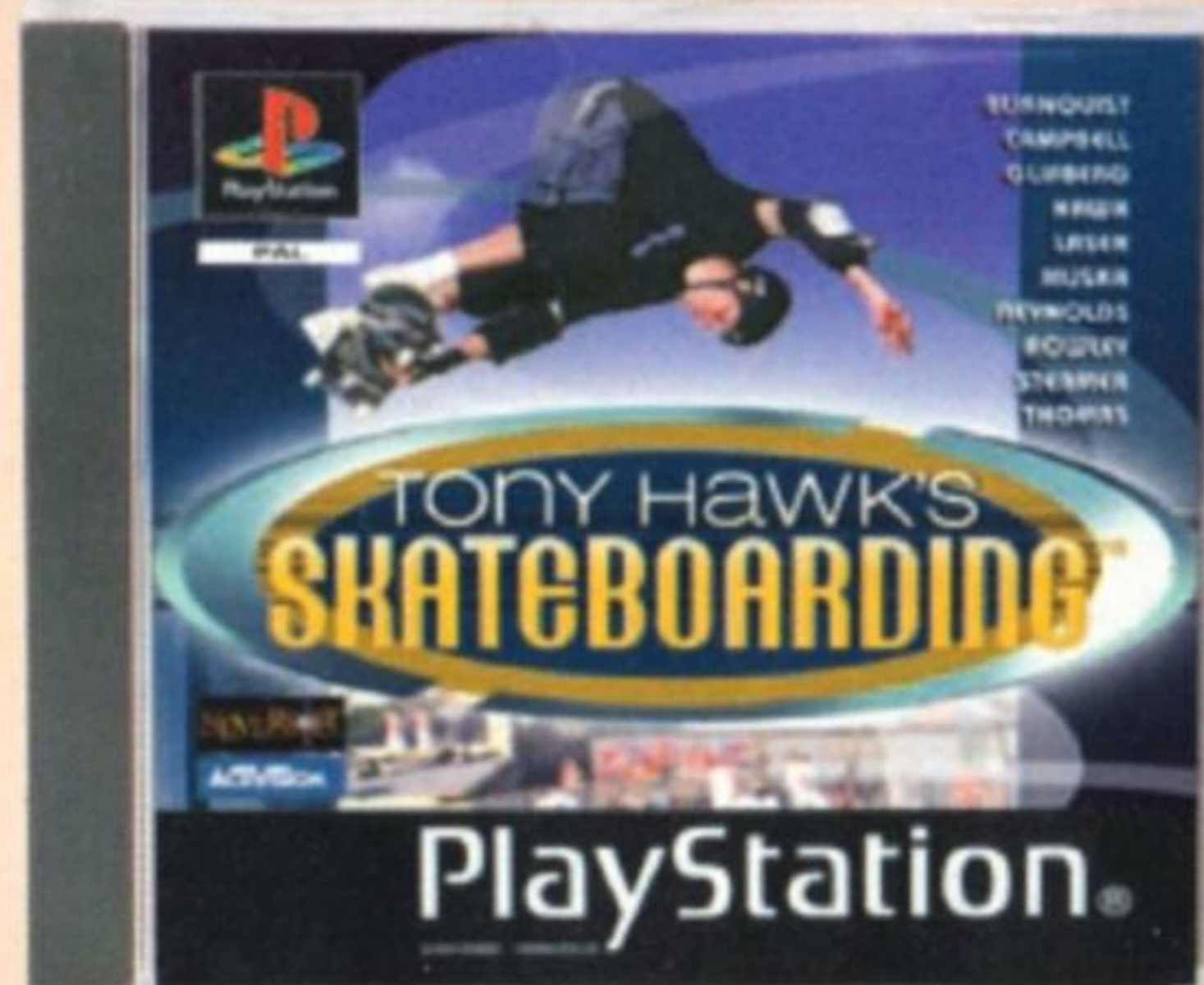
it's in the game.™

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NOW PLAYING IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH

Is there a nagging doubt in your mind that some things are being kept from you? That behind the packaging and hype videogames have many secrets to divulge? If so then read on because the truth is out there and Arcade knows where it is and what it's wearing. The only question is: can you handle it?

P40 TONY HAWKS SKATEBOARDING



■ Tony Hawk is a grown man who likes nothing better than playing about on a skateboard, and he gets paid for it. To find out what that's all about Arcade sat him down and talked shorts, soap and snowboarding.



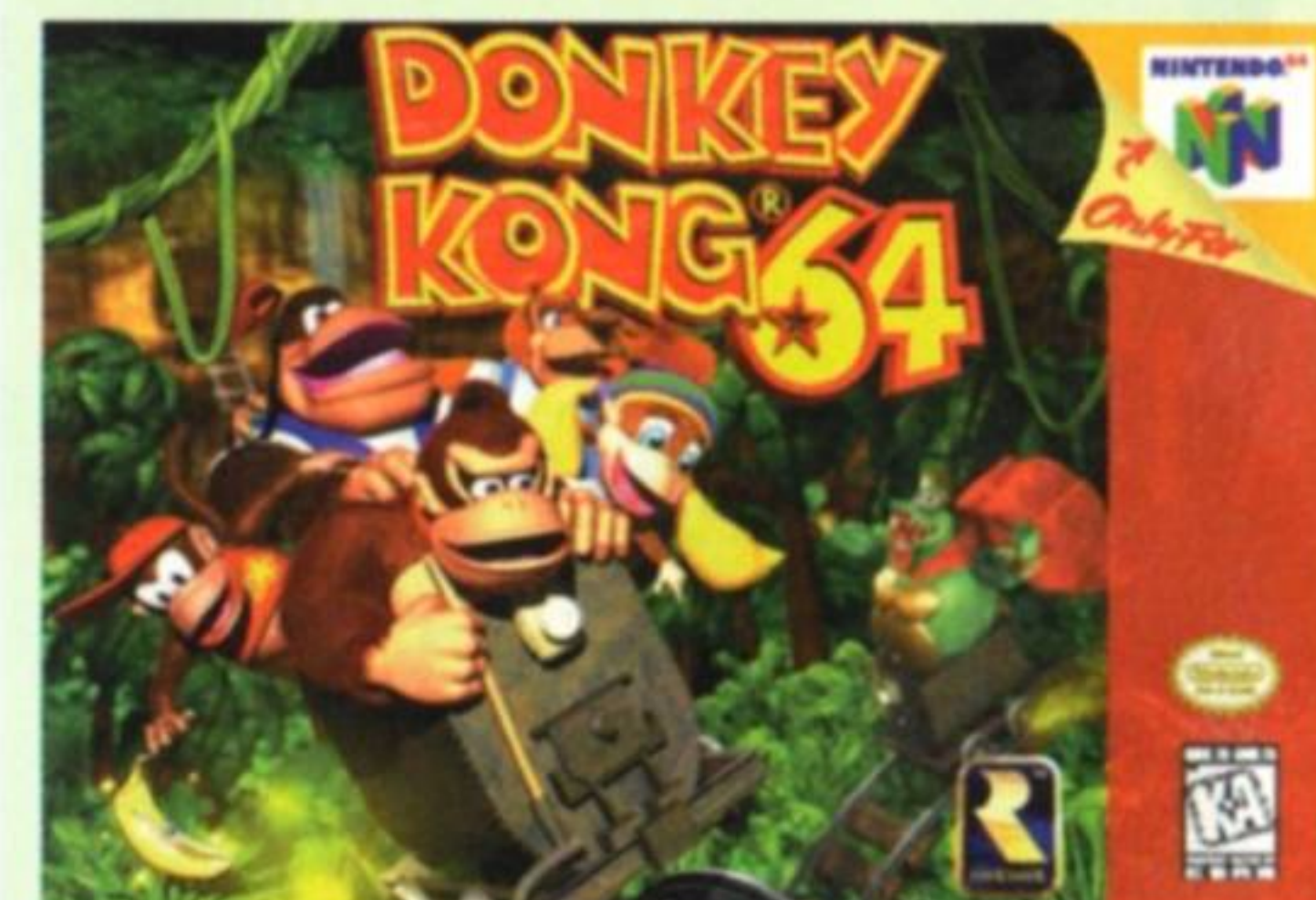
P42 SEGA BASS FISHING



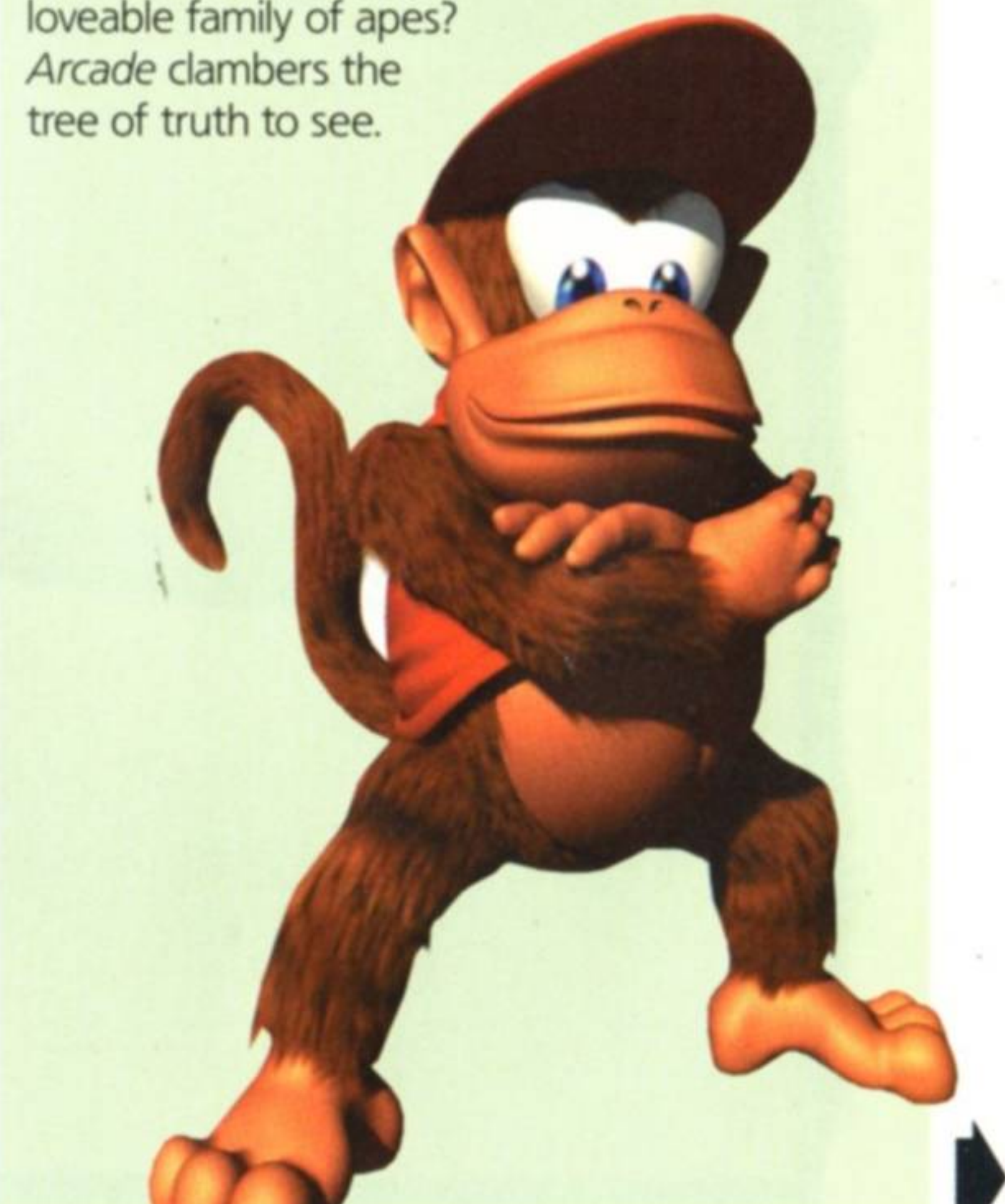
■ Think that *Sega Bass Fishing* is the first console foray into the cutthroat world of fishing? How wrong you are. Lucky for you Arcade is here to point you in the direction of all the hot rod action you could possibly imagine.



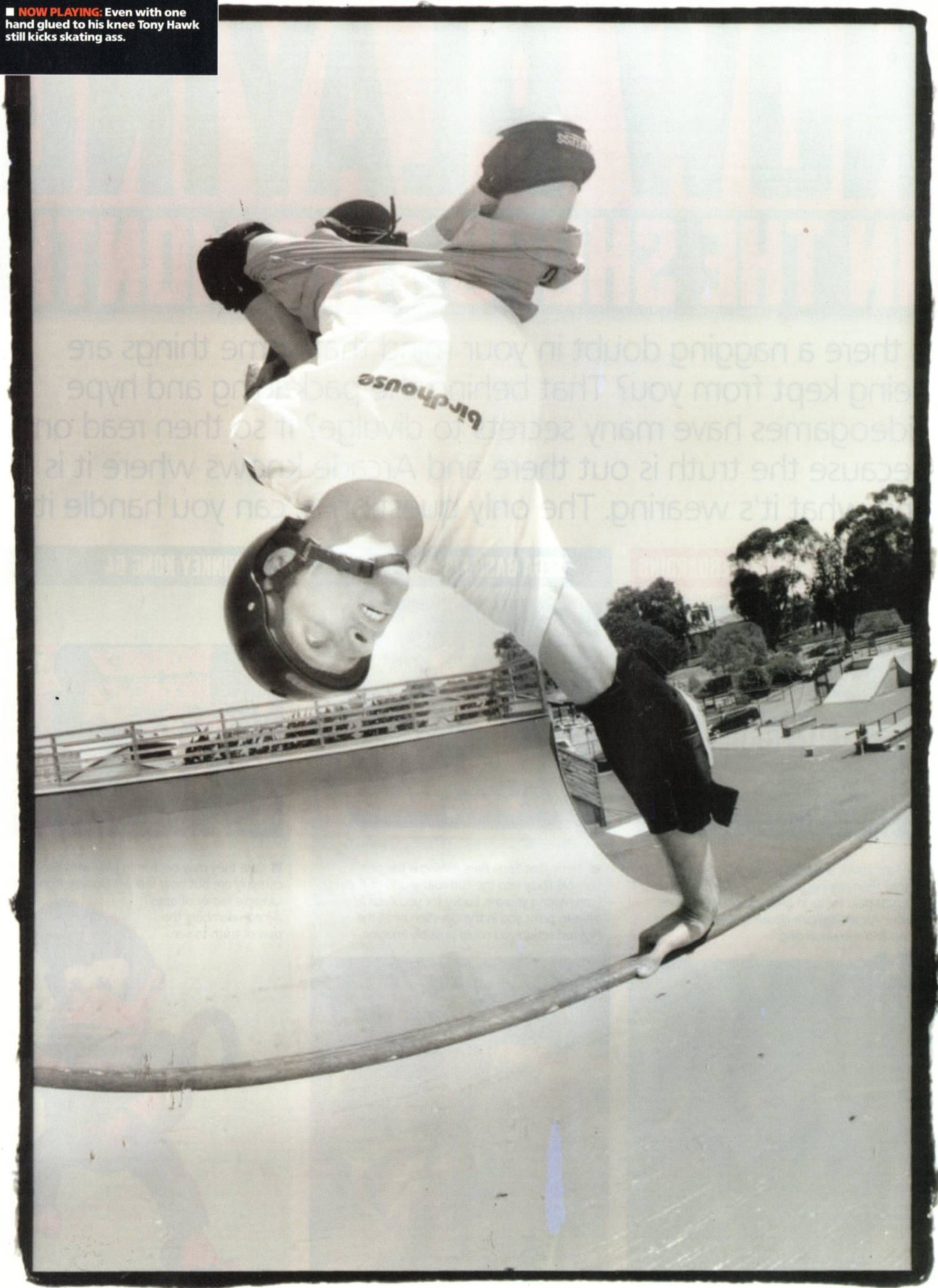
P44 DONKEY KONG 64



■ Cute they may be, fun to play with they most certainly are but how real are *Donkey Kong 64*'s loveable family of apes? Arcade clammers the tree of truth to see.



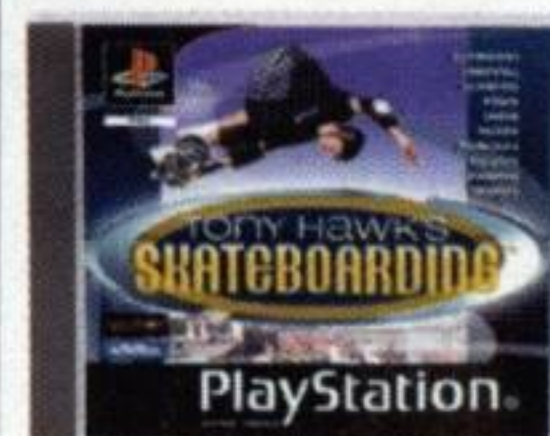
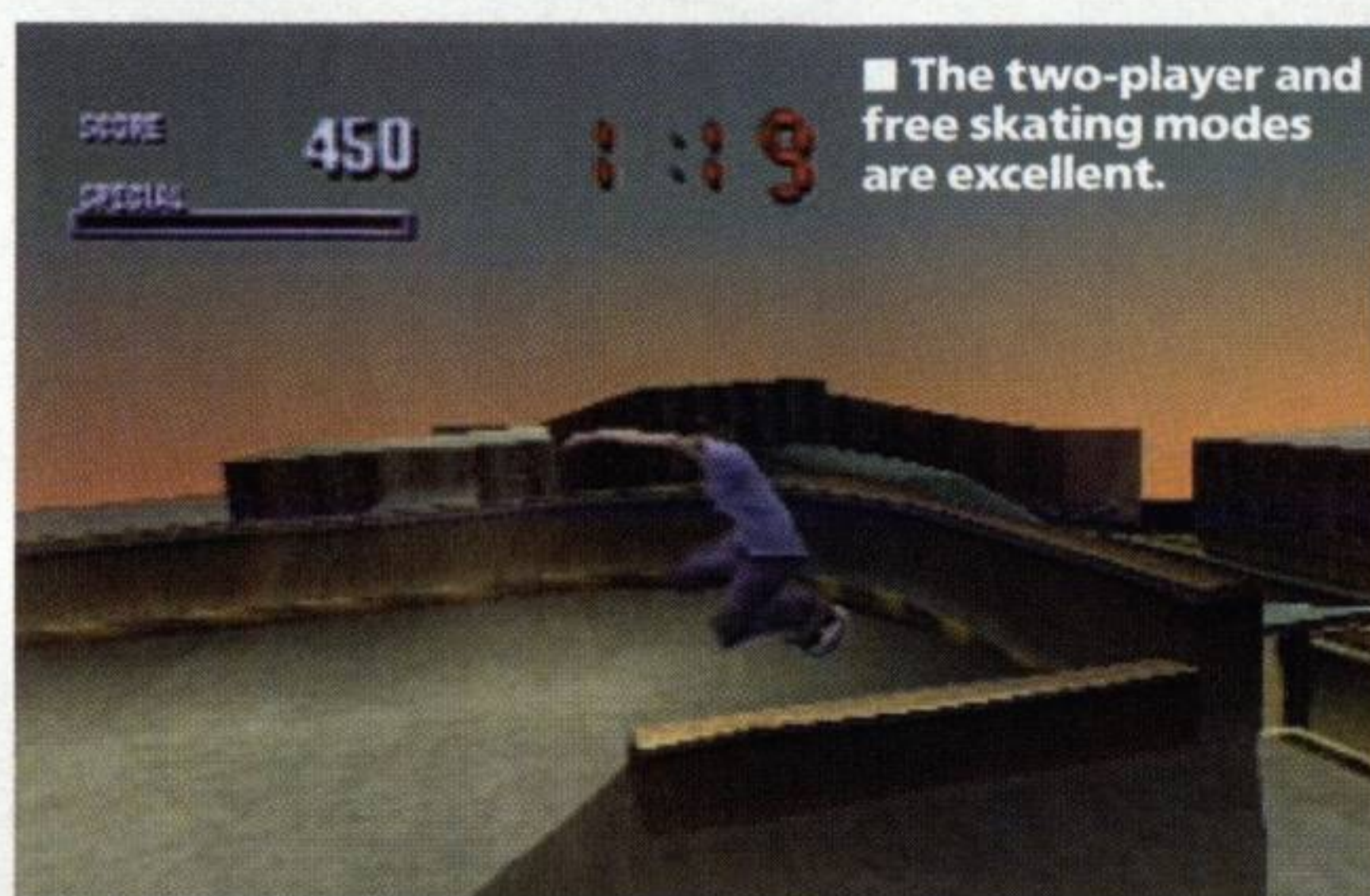
■ **NOW PLAYING:** Even with one hand glued to his knee Tony Hawk still kicks skating ass.



NOW PLAYING
IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **Neversoft** | Publisher: **Activision** | Price: **£40** | Release date: **on sale now** | Players: **1-2** | Score: **★★★**



WHAT'S TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING ALL ABOUT?

■ *Arcade* reviewed *Tony Hawk's* last issue, awarding it three stars out of a possible five. Although the feeling of skating is great and the free skating and two-player modes excellent there is a major snag. To open up new tracks you have to complete the previous one in single-player mode, which has overly harsh time limits and missions. But with the cheats printed below you can forget about the main game and access any level you want for free-skating fun.

HAWKS ALMIGHTY

Tony Hawk talks decks, ramps and rock & roll.

There have been loads of skateboarding games. Tony Hawk is the most famous skateboarder in the world. So how come it has taken so long for him to feature in a skateboarding videogame? And how come Tony, famous for his cut-off shorts, wears long trousers in the game? And, isn't snowboarding supposed to be the new skateboarding?

In fact, how on earth are you supposed to sit down to a quick thrash at Tony Hawk's Skateboarding without your enjoyment being ruined by so many burning questions? How can you empty your mind of everything other than rolling around on a plank on wheels without knowing what The Man Himself actually thinks?

There's only one way to find out. *Arcade* is going to have to bone up on that "rad" skating lingo for a word with Mr Hawk.

Hello, Tony. So, why has it taken so long for there to be a Tony Hawk skating game?

Quite simply, I was never offered the chance to be so heavily involved before. I didn't want to lend my name to something I would have no say in. But with *Tony Hawk's* I was able to play each update while it was in development. That way, I could make suggestions as to what should be included or taken out. I also helped pick all the other riders, which was an important decision.

Are you pleased with it? How much is it like the real thing?

It's the best skating videogame by far. Nothing has come close to being as real. Sometimes I get more excited about landing a new move in the game than I do in real life.

Tell us about the 900°.

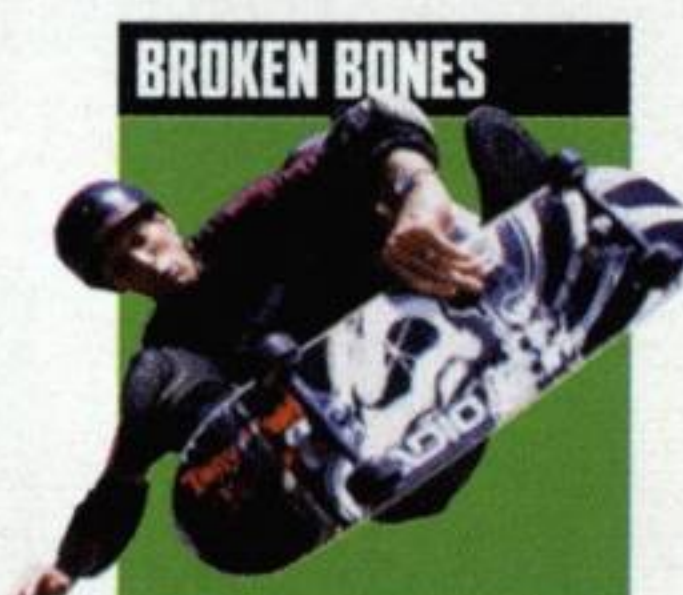
I've been trying it for the last five years, and finally struck one during the X-Games. I was either going to land it that night or wake up in hospital. It was the best moment of my career.

You're famous for your cut-off shorts. But in the game, you're wearing long trousers. Why?

Well, the reason I wear shorts when I skate is because I'm usually wearing kneepads, in order to skate vert. I don't like kneesliding on my pants like the rollerbladers do. The game doesn't require safety gear, for obvious reasons. Believe it or not, I do wear pants quite often, especially when street skating.

That's "pants" in the American sense, presumably. Are you bored of skating yet? Or is it an ever-evolving sport?

It's strange, but it's been a blast. Sometimes my schedule is overwhelming, but I can't think of a better time to be a pro skater. I'm happy to see the new guys pushing the limits. The most obvious change to boarding will be in the materials. The boards will become lighter and be made of more



■ Tony Hawk is – unbelievably – 32, and has been skating for 20 years, 16 of those as a professional. He rides for Birdhouse Skateboards, which he set up after leaving Powell. And his worst injuries? "I broke my elbow last year while shooting a Gap commercial," says Tony. "It was my first official broken bone." And non-skating injury? "I sprained my ankle playing basketball about eight years ago, which put me out of commission for a few weeks."

durable materials and ramps will become more weatherproof.

Is skateboarding still cool?

Was it ever not cool? I'm pretty sure that if it ever wasn't, it is now.

What about snowboarding? Do you think it has managed to overtake skateboarding as the ultimate cool sport?

I don't know what your gauge of coolness is, but snowboarding has more participants because snow is softer than cement. Having said that, I do snowboard myself too.

Have you tried Soap shoes – you know, those ones with plastic set into the sole?

I think they're pretty funny. I can't imagine getting injured by trying to jump onto a rail – that would be too ironic. Whatever floats your boat.

What about ice-skating? And roller-skating? Any good at those?

My wife used to be a competitive ice-skater, so she's gotten me out there a few times.

Does your wife skate too?

Only my six-year-old son, and he skates non-stop.

TONY'S TOP TIPS

Getting bored? Start cheating

■ Fancy some cheats for *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*?

Press pause, hold L1 and press the following:

Infinite Special Bar
⊗, ⊙, ⊙, Down, Up, Right.

Big Head mode
⊙, ⊙, Up, Left, Left.
Stats at 10
⊙, ⊙, Up, Down.
Stats at 13
⊗, ⊙, ⊙, ⊙, Up, Down.
Level select
⊙, Right, Up, ⊙, ⊙, Left, Up, ⊙, ⊙.

■ When you end the level the Level Select options will look unselectable but you can choose them by pressing ⊗. Also, for a longer grind, balance yourself out by pressing in the opposite direction to the one you are leaning. If you are leaning to the left, for example, hold right.

IMAGES: ACTIVISION



■ **NOW PLAYING:** *Sega Bass Fishing* – you may have believed console fishing begins and ends with Sega's new fish-'em-up. How wrong you were. How wrong.



NOW PLAYING
IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH

SEGA BASS FISHING

Format: **Dreamcast** | Publisher: **Sega** | Developer: **Sega** | Price: **£60 (with fishing controller)** | Release date: **on sale now** | Players: **1** | ★★★



■ **1 Fisherman's Bait (PlayStation)**



■ **2 Reel Fishing (PlayStation)**



■ **3 Deep Sea Trophy Fishing (PC)**



■ **4 The Legend of Zelda (N64)**



■ **5 Sonic Adventure (Dreamcast)**



■ **6 Age of Empires (PC)**



WHAT'S SEGA BASS FISHING ALL ABOUT?

■ If you've wandered into an arcade in the past year you may have been tempted by the unusual sight of Get Bass. Well, *Sega Bass Fishing* is a Dreamcast port of the very same game, and is thankfully honed on rapid-fire arcade thrills rather than the mucky tedium of actual fishing. Some crazy pundits have compared *Sega Bass Fishing* to a *Quake* deathmatch with the fish as the enemy, although that's probably the kippers talking. There's a more realistic, championship-based mode available for the serious anglers so the game should appeal to fish fans and devotees of Jap novelty alike.

FISHED YOU IN

Enter the fishy world of videogame angling.

You'd have thought the idea of simulating a pastime which involves staring at a stretch of murky water for hours on end with only a box of maggots for company would be videogame suicide. Yet it isn't only *Sega Bass Fishing* that attempts to turn the ancient and frankly rather humdrum art of rod and line into an adrenaline-pumping fish-'em-up. The waters are heaving out there and if you spread your net wide, you'll find there's an ocean of piscatorial pleasure for you to trawl through.

1 Fisherman's Bait (PlayStation)

The ever-eclectic Konami has succeeded in producing the most accurate fishing game on the PlayStation to date. The lakeside scenery may resemble the Thames Estuary, but the fish themselves are frighteningly realistic and Dual Shock output means you can feel the little fellers clamping their jaws around your (ahem) maggot. Two-player action is mental.

2 Reel Fishing (PlayStation)

Another PlayStation fish-'em-up, this time courtesy of Natsume. Note the clever application of the word "reel" in

the title, designed to mislead the semi-literate into thinking *Reel Fishing* is in fact *real* fishing. A rather crude example of the genre, cursed by the most elusive fish about. You'd get more bites from a dead mosquito.

3 Deep Sea Trophy Fishing (PC)

While most fishing games concern themselves with inland fishing, particularly the pursuit of game bass, US developer Wizardworks seeks to land bigger fish with this PC sim. There are some 22 "big trophy specimens" in the game, including the blue marlin, barracuda and Jaws himself, the great white shark. It features a unique "chumming" option, but, frankly, who wants to know what fishermen get up to on those lonely boats?

4 The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time (N64)

In a game stuffed to the lungs with ace bonus bits, perhaps the most notable mini-game in *Zelda* is the fishing segment. A surprisingly convincing simulation (though everything created by Shigeru Miyamoto is tinged with perfection), *Zelda's* angling aside is practically a full game in its own right. If you get bored with landing tiddlers, you can turn your attentions to the man in the booth who rents out the rods. Unfortunately you won't be able to take out his eye with your hook, but

AND THERE'S MORE



■ Arcade has tried playing *Fisherman's Bait* on the PlayStation using an ordinary joypad, which requires you to rotate the analogue sticks in rough simulation of reeling in your line. Only one activity makes your wrists ache more, and you shouldn't do that in public. Happily, *Sega Bass Fishing* comes bundled with a reel, which allows you to fish like the real thing. It makes you look a tosser, but spare a thought for the poor guy above who had to wear a massive controller around his neck for the duration of the Tokyo Game Show. His humiliation is truly complete.

with a bit of practice you should be able to land his hat.

5 Sonic Adventure (Dreamcast)

Perhaps inspired by the fishing mini-game in *Zelda*, when putting together the definitive next-generation showcase for Sega's spiny mascot in-house developer Sonic Team incorporated a character who goes fishing. Swollen and deformed, cartoon feline Big The Cat (quite literally a *big* cat) is equipped with both reel and rod, which he is able to cast into the watery portions of Sonic's realm in order to catch fish, rings, and other bonuses. Crabs, even.

6 Age Of Empires (PC)

The importance of fishing to the development of civilisations is demonstrated in Microsoft's lovely *Age of Empires*. In order to progress from the Stone Age to the Tool Age, you'll need to send your citizens out fishing. Admittedly it's not much of a sim – you only have to find a suitable stretch of water and direct a villager towards it – but the implications are far grander than trying to catch some bloke's hat for a laugh. **A**

♦♦ Find out what Arcade thought of *Sega Bass Fishing* on **page 72**.

TOP TIPS!

Land yourself a whopper

■ Three new Practice Mode levels can be unlocked if you complete the game in Arcade Mode.

■ Complete Lake Paradise in Consumer Mode and it will unlock the palace level in Practice Mode.

■ Complete Lake Crystal in Consumer Mode and it will unlock the falls level in Practice Mode.

■ Completion of further levels in Consumer Mode will unlock new levels in Arcade Mode.

■ Complete Consumer Mode at "normal" difficulty and you will be rewarded with new clothes for your angler and new boat colours.

■ Complete Consumer Mode at "professional" and you'll get a lure that looks a lot like Sonic.



■ "I've been to Paradise... but I didn't catch jack."

■ **NOW PLAYING:** *Donkey Kong 64* – The fact these monkeys are wearing clothes is the first clue that they aren't true-to-life.



**NOW PLAYING
IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH**

DONKEY KONG 64

Format: **Nintendo 64** | Publisher: **Nintendo/Rare** | Developer: **Rare** | Price: **£60 (including Expansion Pak)** | Release date: **on sale now** | Players: **1-4** | ★★★★★

■ These apes won't be experimented on without putting up a fight.



← **CHUNKY KONG** →

■ A monkey slaps a crocodile with her hair. Not realistic.



CHIMPOSTERS

Are Rare's apes faithful to their clan?

Donkey Kong is back, and this time he's brought his dad. And his sister. In fact, just about every member of the Kong family turns up in *Donkey Kong 64*, and, thanks to the wonders of 64-bit technology, they're the most convincing monkeys ever.

Or are they? Compare the Kong clan to their real-life brethren, and you may be surprised how unmonkey-like La Kongster and his friends really are.

What monkeys get up to...

In DK64: If left alone for a few seconds, begin to put on a spectacular one-ape show incorporating fruit juggling, acrobatics, yelling, and an assortment of attention-seeking gurns to camera.

In real life: If left to their own devices, start fiddling with David Attenborough's camera, first innocently stroking the lens, then violently leaping up and down and tearing the cameraman to bits.

In DK64: Whip out a variety of fruit and vegetable-based projectile weapons and smack other animals

to kingdom come. In Diddy's case weapons are wielded double-handed, as in John Woo's gun-laden flicks.

In real life: Occasionally grab a stray twig in their clumsy, leathery fingers and prod an insect until it bursts. If in zoos, pick up dust and rocks and chuck them around out of boredom and frustration.

In DK64: Upon finding keys and bananas vital to quest, put on a whopping great smile and leap around, shouting "Wahooo!". Bouncy, bubblegum music accompanies jig.

In real life: A raising of the corners of the mouth signifies anger and aggression. Following a big hearty smile, ape will proceed to rip the shit out of you. Sound of snapping bones and blood-curdling screams accompany beating.

In DK64: Live in a variety of lush, themed worlds where humans do not appear to exist. Thus, there is no opportunity to come into contact with mankind and his cruel ways.

In real life: Give Clint Eastwood the finger, defecate in Ross Geller's shoes, acquire superior intelligence and condemn mankind to slavery until Charlton Heston shows up.

AND THERE'S MORE



■ The last *Donkey Kong Country* on the SNES had Diddy playing an N64 (before it had been released), *Banjo-Kazooie* gave brief glimpses of the game's upcoming sequel, so where in *Donkey Kong* can you find reference to Rare's future? Look no further than the hut where Kong starts the adventure. Switch to the first-person view and have a squint around – there, on the wall opposite the ghetto-blasters, is a framed poster of a dolphin. Whatever can that mean?...

In DK64: Can't keep their mouths shut, often grunting and gasping as they climb trees and steps. Chunky Kong has a tendency to shout the name of his sister to avoid being picked for next part of adventure.

In real life: Audible noise usually restricted to "Ooh! Ooh! Aah! Aah!". Comprehensible speech may still occur, however, especially when offered an ad contract: "Do you ride tandem?" and "There's no other tea to beat PG – it's the taste!" are favourite utterances.

In DK64: Dress up in human clothes and dance along to three-minute long rap, with aged monkey on "decks" and guy with faux-American accent rapping his way through unforgivably bad rhyming couplets.

In real life: Befriend self-proclaimed King Of Pop and (presumably) dance along to his piss-poor chart-topping hits featuring "bad" rhyming couplets. May moonwalk from time to time.

In DK64: In jaw-dropping ignorance of karmic circle of life, bash any animal they meet, including innocent buck-toothed beavers, fruit-dropping bees, crocodiles, baby alligators and, er, vikings.

In real life: Search deep in their brethren's fur for fleas to crush. Smash each other to bits after finding a giant black monolith sitting in the middle of the desert. Oh, hang on, that was humankind.

In DK 64: Gobble bananas until enough have been earned to feed a giant hippo wearing a nipple ring, who in turn will open up a giant door leading to a suitably tough end-of-level boss.

In real life: Gobble bananas until they're sick.

♦♦ Tuck in to Arcade's *Donkey Kong* review on **page 92**.



WHAT'S DONKEY KONG 64 ALL ABOUT?

■ *Donkey Kong 64* is the long-awaited Nintendo 64 update of Rare's successful *Donkey Kong Country* series of platformers on the SNES. The originals featured a whole family of Kongs, evil alligators, mincart rides, and monkeys being fired out of barrels. *Donkey Kong 64* features much of the same, but with the inevitable sparkly 3D looks, and a greater emphasis on gameplay: the *Donkey Kong Country* games were often criticised as a triumph of style over substance.

Rare has managed to squeeze some startling visuals into the ape adventure, but at a price: *Donkey Kong 64* requires the Expansion Pak to run. If you've already got one, bad luck: THE, Nintendo's UK distributor, is refusing to sell the game without the Pak.

■ Giant hippos with nipple rings. Thanks, Rare.



TOP TIPS!

Become the king of the swingers

■ Wondering how to activate the original *Donkey Kong* arcade machine in Frantic Factory? Activate the Donkey Pad in the large room containing Warp Pad 1 to make a lever magically appear, then buy Gorilla Grab from Cranky to allow Donkey to give it a good ol' pull.



■ Back when DK was the bad guy.

■ Don't ignore the pads stamped with K Rool's face – the crowns you earn from them are vital to open the door to the game's final showdown. You also need the Nintendo Coin (beat *Donkey Kong* twice) and the Rareware Coin (take Cranky 15 banana medals to Cranky).



■ Beaver bother. No comment.



You're Unreleasable!

The games that, sadly, never made it to release.

Rumours always abound of classic early versions of games that were never released due to licensing problems, troublesome programmers or the fact they were crap. *Arcade* has had a peek at some of the titles left collecting dust on the developer's shelf, and plucked the ten most ill-advised game projects.

1 Sim Coventry

Incredibly detailed management sim where you can have complete control of every aspect of the city. Choose where to have piles of dog muck, grotty shopping centres or even a deserted football stadium.

2 Star Wars: Jar Jar Binks' Adventures

Hilarious tie-in to Lucas's sci-fi spectacular. You control Jar Jar as he goes on a huge adventure, travelling to

Top ten

Top ten ultra-rare Pokémon

- 1 Arsebandito
- 2 Quim
- 3 Rageyhorn
- 4 Pelley
- 5 Happiwank
- 6 Tonyblair
- 7 Caligula
- 8 Bapamango
- 9 Ghostface Killah
- 10 Twat

distant galaxies, falling over, getting his tongue caught in machinery and saying "How rude!" a lot.

3 Kula Shaker World

Difficult puzzle game featuring defunct mystic cobblers-spouting student band Kula Shaker. Try to fit small pieces of records together to come up with just one decent song.

4 M-Police

3D blaster starring London's own Metropolitan Police Force. Board your cruiser, then arrest and intimidate any citizens who aren't white and middle class.

5 Tomb Raider 4: Version 1.0

In a radical departure, Lara was replaced by *Russ Abbot's Madhouse* co-star Bella Emburg in the nude. The new team of programmers were "moved onto other projects" shortly afterwards.

6 Theme Church World

God-sim. You're a parish vicar with a fontful of problem parishioners. Sing hymns, conduct wedding ceremonies and scrub your hassocks.

7 FIFA March '99

Unfortunately this version of the money-spinning licence didn't make it to the shops on time. Was meant to be available in-between *FIFA February '99* and *FIFA April '99*.

8 Mario Party Animal

Take control of the loveable cartoon plumber as he goes on a huge three-day bender. Have fun trashing hotels, hiring strippers for Yoshi's birthday and being sick in Bowser's bath. A riot-cute.

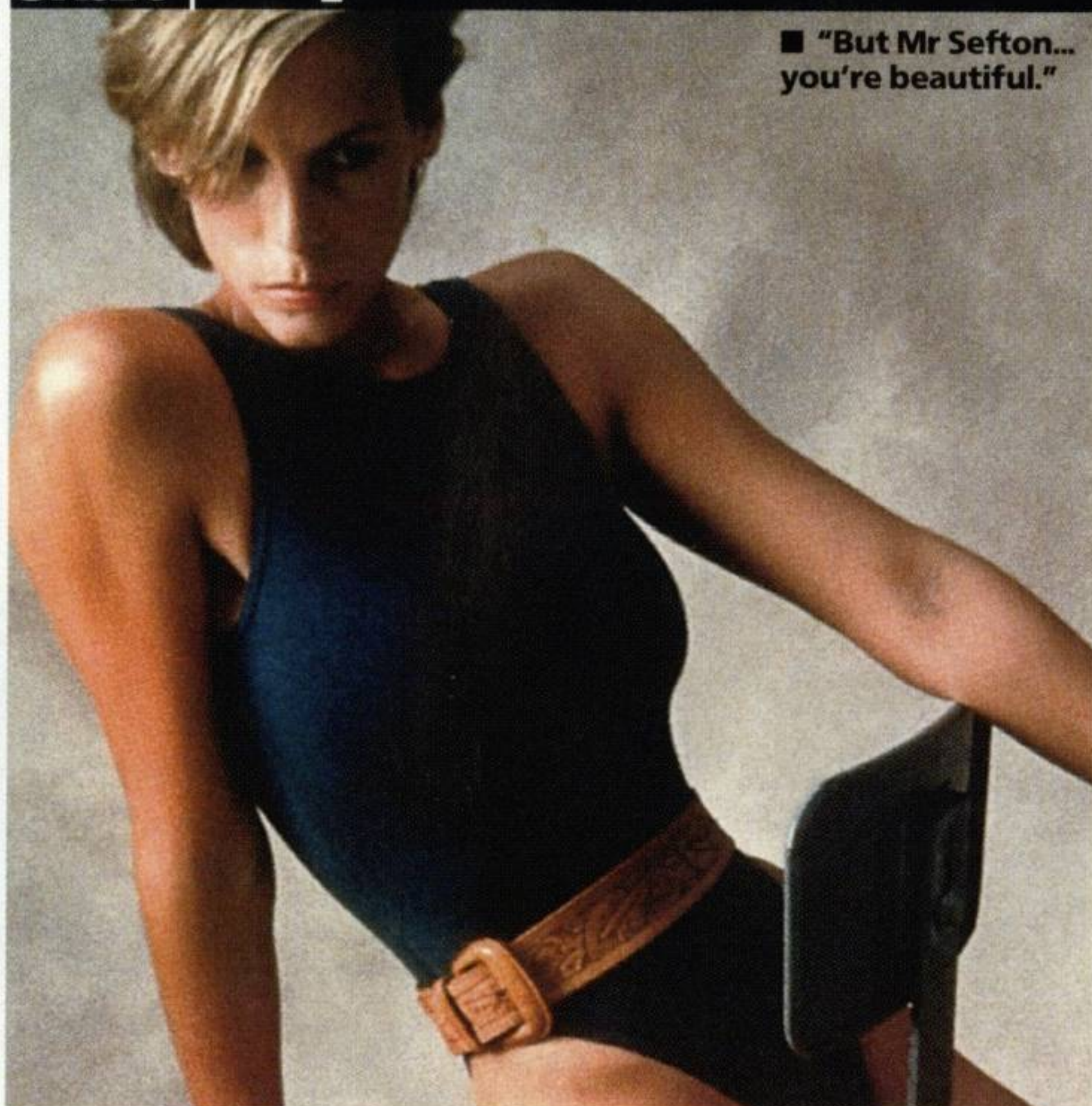
9 Railroad Tycoon: Special Edition

Make as much money as you possibly can for you and your beloved shareholders without putting anything back into the railway infrastructure, training facilities or safety procedures.

10 Daikatana

'Nuff said.

Guest Chart Top ten Jamies



■ "But Mr Sefton... you're beautiful."

There are two Arcade Jamies. What about famous ones?

1 Jamie Theakston

Lanky TV geezer who gets to flirt with Jayne Middlemiss. Was once making hay with Nicole out of the All Saints until she dumped him for showing embarrassing photos of her on *Live & Kicking*. Behave.

2 Jamie Redknapp

Another Jamie with a top celebrity shag. You'd never have thought something originating from Harry Redknapp's loins could bag Louise Nurdling, but there you go. Scored a cracker against Belgium.

3 Jamie Lee Curtis

This Jamie's actually a woman. Ageing totty, mostly famous for screaming in *Halloween*.

4 Jamie Pressly

Also a woman. *Arcade* knows sod all about her, but found some naked pics on the Net which were enough to recommend her to the chart compilers.

5 Jamie And His Magic Torch

Young child accompanied by yokel dog Wordsworth shines said torch on bedroom floor and descends helter skelter into Cuckoo Land. There he meets unicycle-riding Officer Gotcha and a cat called Wellibob, who does everything backwards. Clearly fictional.

6 Jamie Baulch

Spiky peroxide blond who's a bit tasty over 400

metres. Surname sounds like a synonym for vomit, as in "Bugger it, I've baulched all over my brand new strides."

7 Jamie Hewlett

Draws stuff for a living. Invented proto Lara figure Tank Girl.

8 Jaime Sommers

AKA The Bionic Woman. First introduced into dim '70s TV series *The Six Million Dollar Man* as rumpo interest for Steve Austin, until a skydiving accident lead to bionic limb implants of her own. However, Jaime soon discovered that her special powers could also be a terrible burden – she had to endure the horrors of a spin-off serial.

9 Jamie Carragher

The second in Liverpool FC's large, statistically anomalous contingent of Jamies. This is the one who's not very good at football, and has thus far failed to wed an attractive pop diva. Sort it out.

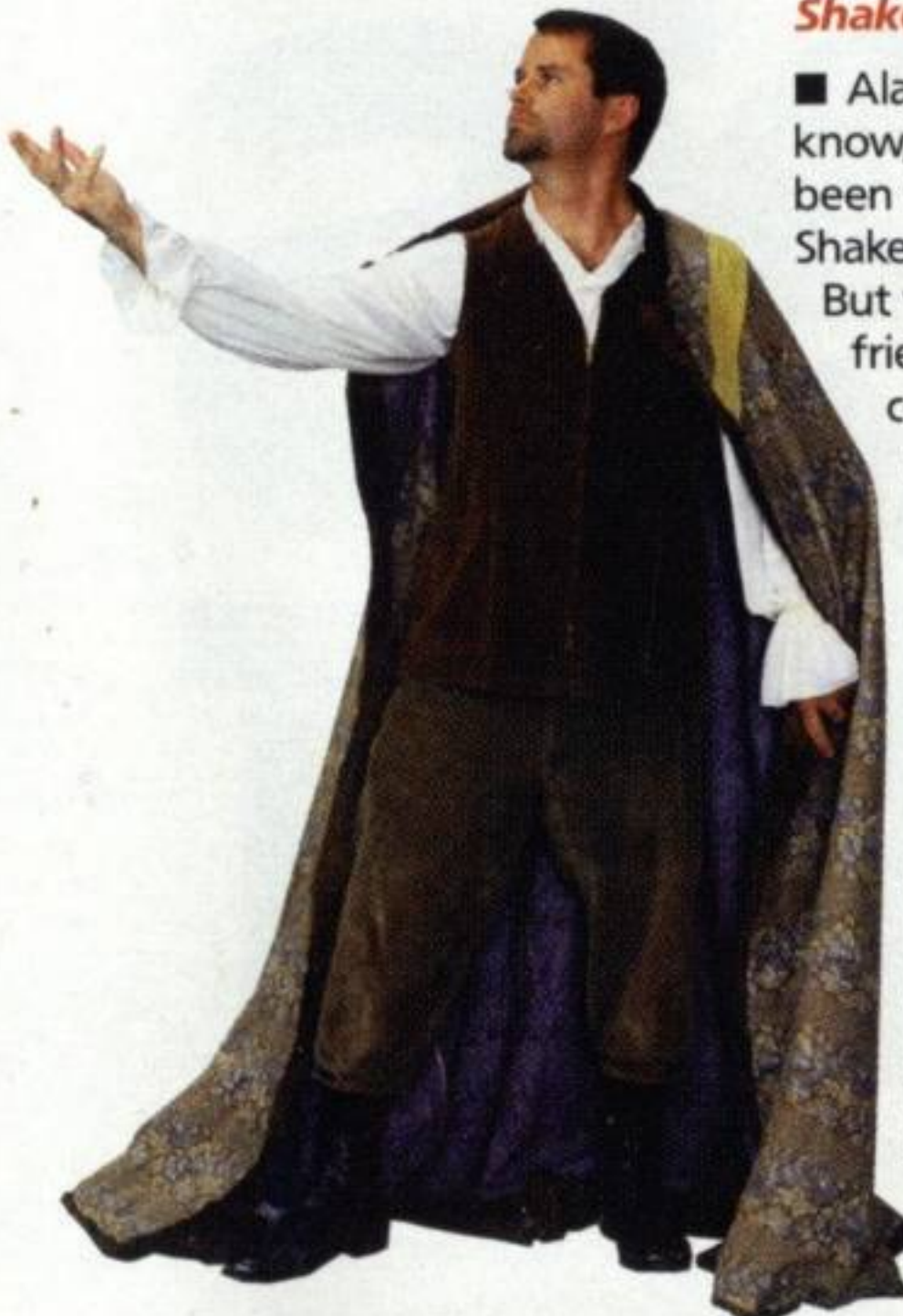
10 Jamie Oliver, The Naked Chef

Upstart TV cook who, to the consternation of housewives and the relief of many others, doesn't actually appear naked. Much like Nigel Kennedy in the way he strives to lend "cred" to an otherwise staid, middle-aged pastime, and also in the way he's more irritating than a chilli-coated contact lens. Cooked at River Café.

CHART ANALYSIS

With the Arcade Shakespearean actor.

■ Alas, poor Yorick. You know, I've never actually been that sure what Shakespeare was on about. But whether you're a friend, Roman or countryman, you can't help but have enjoyed *Final Fantasy VIII*, which is number two. What light through yonder window breaks? Well, it must be *Dino Crisis* at number three, the greatest love story since *Romeo and Juliet*. But perhaps the tragedy is even greater. Or is it? Er, I haven't actually played it, to be honest. But I know it's got dinosaurs in it, just like *Twelfth Night*, darling.



■ "I got thrills, they're multiplying."

Vox pops At the Ski/Snowboard Show, Olympia, London



■ Hello. What are you playing? "MTV Snowboarding." Any cop? "S'all right. It's good that you can board freestyle". Have you ever been snowboarding? "No. I can ski, though." Are you a model? "I used to be, but I didn't like it." Um, are you single? "No. I'm going out with the bassist from Travis." Really? Bet it never rains on you. Bye.

■ Hello. Hang on. You're Normski, aren't you? "Yes." What are you doing here? "Catching the ski show." Can Arcade interview you? "What about?" Er. [Thinks] Um, snowboarding? *Boardstupid?* Do you like videogames? "I've got four PlayStations." Four? "I keep borrowing them and not giving them back." That's not very nice. Bye.

Import zone With Department 1 (0171 916 8440)



■ I, Golem, shall rule the world.

■ Deck the bays with snow and holly. [Bring bring] Hello? "Hello. 'Father' Ted here. Whassat? Oooh. It's been a pretty slow month, actually. The American import of *Marvel vs Capcom* is selling on the Dreamcast. It's pretty quiet on the Japanese front. *Zombie Revenge* and *Virtua Striker 2* are shifting on the PlayStation." Hazard a guess at the Christmas number one? [Ted confers with staff] "It's gonna be a *Pokémon* Christmas, that's for sure." Ted, Arcade raises a small glass of sherry to you. Mince pie, anyone?

Official Top 40

Meet the games that love you.



1 (-) FIFA 2000

■ PSX PC ■ EA Sports
It's got Robbie Williams in it, it's got Robbie Williams on the soundtrack, and it features more football than you can eat. Let this entertain you.

2 (-) Final Fantasy VIII

■ PSX
■ Squaresoft
Loving Angels instead? Then meet the most final of Final Fantasies.



3 (-) Dino Crisis

■ PSX
■ Capcom/Virgin
The biggest dino-fest since *Jurassic Park* this side of the millennium.



4 (-) Age of Empires II

■ PSX ■ Microsoft
Like a fine wine or cheese, *Age of Empires* has only improved with age.



5 (-) House of the Dead 2

■ DC ■ Sega
Bang, bang, you're dead. Only - this time - the things you are killing are already dead. Eh?



6 (1) Star Wars: Phantom Menace

■ PSX PC
■ LucasArts
The biggest pile of pants since Art Ed Alvin last did his washing.



7 (4) Pokémon Blue

■ GB
■ Nintendo
The biggest craze since Cabbage Patch dolls lives on...



8 (3) Pokémon Red

■ GB
■ Nintendo
... in both it's blue and red forms. Coming soon: limited edition yellow.



9 (-) Tarzan Action Game

■ PSX PC GBC
■ Disney/Sony
The game of the cartoon that features a half naked man.



10 (5) Grand Theft Auto 2

■ PSX PC
■ Take 2
It's a steal! The top-down controversial-'em-up makes a comeback.



11 (-) LMA Manager

■ PSX ■ Codemasters

12 (-) Formula 1 '99

■ PSX ■ Sony

13 (-) FA Premier League 2000

■ PSX PC ■ EA

14 (-) WWF Attitude

■ PSX N64 CGB DC ■ Acclaim

15 (10) Colin McRae Rally

■ PSX PC ■ Codemasters

16 (9) Tekken 3

■ PSX ■ Sony (budget)

17 (12) Gran Turismo

■ PSX ■ Sony (budget)

18 (2) Driver

■ PSX PC ■ GT Interactive

19 (-) Mission Impossible

■ PSX N64 ■ Infogrames

20 (-) Worms Armageddon

■ PSX PC ■ Team 17/Hasbro

21 (5) Tony Hawk's Skateboarding

■ PSX ■ Activision

22 (18) Tomb Raider 2

■ PSX PC ■ Eidos

23 (-) Ready To Rumble Boxing

■ DC ■ Sega

24 (1-) MGS: Special Missions

■ PSX ■ Konami

25 (11) Crash Bandicoot 2

■ PSX ■ Sony (budget)

26 (38) Rayman

■ PSX PC ■ UbiSoft

27 (26) Grand Theft Auto

■ PSX PC ■ Take 2

28 (-) Sonic Adventure

■ DC ■ Sony

29 (14) Resident Evil 2

■ PSX ■ Capcom/Virgin

30 (-) Tiberian Sun

■ PC ■ Westwood/EA

31 (24) Final Fantasy VII

■ PSX ■ Square/Sony/Eidos (budget)

32 (-) The Rugrats

■ PSX GB ■ THQ

33 (-) Spyro The Dragon 2

■ PSX ■ Sony

34 (30) Croc

■ PSX PC ■ EA (budget)

35 (-) Quake 2

■ PSX PC N64 ■ Activision

36 (-) UEFA Striker

■ PSX ■ Infogrames

37 (26) Sega Rally 2

■ DC ■ Sega

38 (7) South Park

■ PSX PC N64 ■ Acclaim

39 (19) Abe's Exoddus

■ PSX PC ■ GT Interactive

40 (35) TOCA 2 Touring Cars

■ PSX PC ■ Codemasters

JAPANESE TOP 10



- 1 (-) **Arc The Lad III**
PSX, SCE
- 2 (-) **Super Robot Taisen 64**
N64, Banpresto
- 3 (-) **Revival**
DC, Data East
- 4 (2) **Dragon Quest 1 & 2**
GB, Enix
- 5 (-) **Derby Stallion '99**
PSX, ASCII
- 6 (4) **World Soccer Jikkyou Winning Eleven**
PSX, Konami
- 7 (-) **Professional Baseball Dugout '99**
PSX, DigiCube
- 8 (-) **Jojo's Bizarre Adventure**
PSX, Capcom
- 9 (5) **Dance Dance Revolution 2nd ReMix**
PSX, Konami
- 10 (-) **Monster Collection Kadokawa**
PSX, Shoten

US CONSOLE TOP 10



- 1 (-) **Final Fantasy VIII**
PSX, Square/EA
- 2 (-) **NFL 2K**
DC, Sega
- 3 (4) **Pokémon Blue**
GB, Nintendo
- 4 (3) **Madden NFL 2000**
PSX, Electronic Arts
- 5 (5) **Pokémon Red**
GB, Nintendo
- 6 (-) **Soul Calibur**
DC, Namco
- 7 (-) **Sonic Adventure**
Sega, DC
- 8 (-) **Pokémon Pinball**
GB, Nintendo
- 9 (-) **Ready 2 Rumble Boxing**
DC, Midway
- 10 (-) **Gran Turismo**
PSX, Sony



PHOTOGRAPHY: JUDE EDGINGTON



Arcade's CHRISTMAS LIST

THE BEST OF '99

Toastmaster | Sam Richards

All I want for Christmas is... no, forget the teeth. How about a selection box filled with glorious goodies? Cue Arcade's rundown of the entertainment of '99 to help you complete your pressie wish list. Be good.

December is here. Time to brave inclement weather and unforgiving crowds for the annual Christmas shopping trip. But while you may claim you're busy selecting ideal gifts for loved ones, everyone knows full well you're also deciding on your own must-haves from the wares on offer. *Arcade* is here to make that job easier by presenting you with a rundown of the year's best games, accessories, gadgets, CDs and videos. Box clever and there'll be no need to dodge wintry showers, fat ladies with fatter shopping bags or people dressed up as "friendly" elves.

Come Christmas afternoon, you don't want to be sitting there playing *Hugo's Adventures* with Martine McCutcheon on the stereo. You want to be reading on...

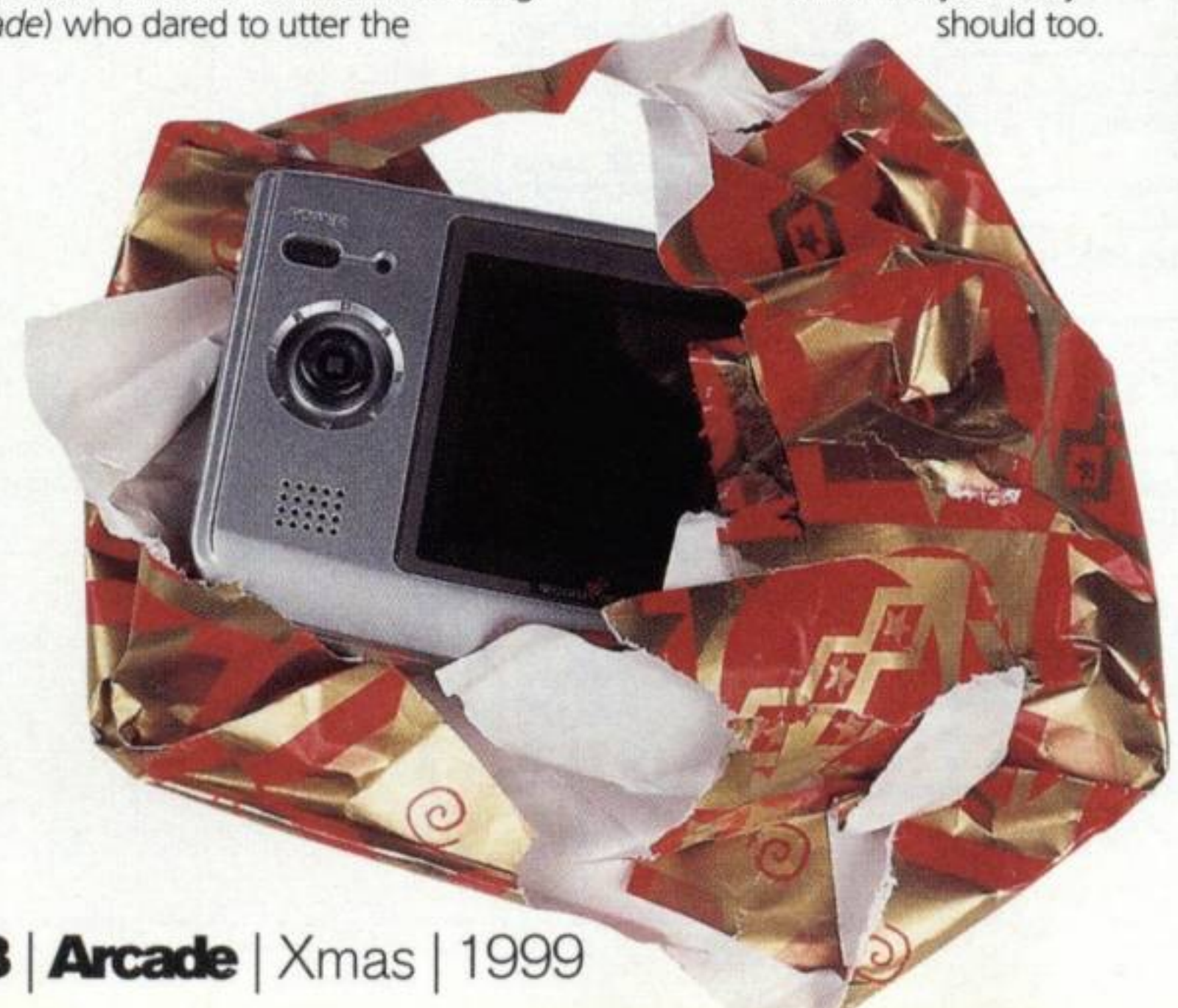
Top pocket of '99

Pint-sized playing pleasure.

Neo Geo Pocket Color

■ Back in March the gaming world was a little underwhelmed by Neo Geo Pocket's black and white incarnation and its limited range of SNK games. Come October, Neo Geo Pocket was back with a colour update, a fantastic selection of games and a host of admirers (including *Arcade*) who dared to utter the

phrase "better than Game Boy". Indeed, Nintendo's handheld has nothing to rival the likes of impeccable golfing game *Neo Turf Master* or the platforming genius of *Metal Slug*. With the likes of Capcom and Taito busy coding games for the Neo Geo, plus imminent compatibility with Dreamcast titles, soon every tube commuter will have one. And you really should too.



Best games machine of '99

The platform that's on track to shake Sony's foundations.

Dreamcast

■ There were critics and cynics, those who carped on about the failure of the Saturn and those who pointed towards the imminent arrival of PlayStation2. But '99 belonged to Dreamcast, and a record 200,000 European converts in the first week of sale agreed that this was the must-have gaming gear of the year.

Sega delivered on its promise of free Internet start-up (if not online gaming) and in two months has already contributed a decent proportion of the year's best software. A quick peek at *Sonic Adventure*, *Ready 2 Rumble*, *TrickStyle* or the awesome *Soul Calibur* is enough to prove that Dreamcast is a cut above the current gaming consoles. N64 owners had very little to

shout about this year and the PlayStation software release schedule is beginning to falter. Which is why *Arcade* suggests you put a Dreamcast at the top of your Christmas list.

Either that, or buy it for your partner, son, Dad or whoever else you will be able to force to share it with you later. Lashing out £199 may seem excessive, but many pundits predict a December price cut intended to get those units shifting – this is the last Christmas before PlayStation2, after all. In the meantime, look out for stores bundling machines with joypads, accessories and games for an all-round deal.



Top 10 PlayStation games of 1999



1 Metal Gear Solid

(Konami/Konami)
Hugely original stealth adventure which came on like a Bruckheimer movie and featured a variety of gripping gameplay challenges most one-dimensional adventures could only dream of.

2 Quake 2

(id/Hammerhead/Activision)

3 Tomb Raider 4

(Core/Eidos)

4 Gran Turismo 2

(Polyphony Digital/Sony)

5 Driver

(Reflections/GT Interactive)

6 Final Fantasy VIII

(SquareSoft/Sony)

7 GTA2

(DMA/Rockstar Games)

8 Wipeout 3

(Psygnosis/Sony)

9 Anna Kournikova's Tennis

(Namco/Sony)

10 Ape Escape

(Sony Japan/Sony)

Top 10 PC games of 1999



1 Unreal Tournament

(Epic Megagames/GT Interactive)
Gorgeously violent first-person-shooter which may have stolen Quake 3: Arena's bloody thunder. The game jettisoned a plot in favour of a deathmatch which you can play over the Net or by yourself.

2 Hidden & Dangerous

(Illusion Softworks/Take 2)

3 Tiberian Sun

(Westwood/Electronic Arts)

4 Tomb Raider 4

(Core/Eidos)

5 Championship Manager 3

(Sports Interactive/Eidos)

6 Dungeon Keeper 2

(Bullfrog/Electronic Arts)

7 Theme Park World

(Bullfrog/Electronic Arts)

8 Midtown Madness

(Angel Studios/Microsoft)

9 Kingpin

(Xatrix/Interplay)

10 Homeworld

(Relic/Sierra)

Top 10 Dreamcast games of 1999



1 Soul Calibur

(Namco/Sega)
Already the recipient of enough journalistic froth to top a king-sized cappuccino, this stomped the beat-'em-up competition into submission. Gorgeous, intricate and magnificent.

2 Power Stone

(Capcom/Eidos)

3 Ready 2 Rumble

(Midway/Midway)

4 Sonic Adventure

(Sega Sonic Team/Sega)

5 TrickStyle

(Criterion/Sega)

6 Sega Rally 2

(Sega/Sega)

7 Hydro Thunder

(Midway/Midway)

8 Sega Bass Fishing

(Sega/Sega)

9 House Of The Dead 2

(Sega/Sega)

10 Virtua Fighter 3tb

(Sega/Sega)

Top 10 Game Boy games of 1999



1 Zelda DX

(Nintendo/Nintendo)
Simply the best reason to own a Game Boy Color, this is RPG heaven for gamers on the go. One you've completed Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time on the Nintendo 64, give this a go.

2 Resident Evil

(Hotgen/Virgin)

3 Tetris DX

(Nintendo/Nintendo)

4 Super Mario Bros DX

(Nintendo/Nintendo)

5 R-Type Delta

(Irem/Nintendo)

6 Pokémon

(Nintendo/Nintendo)

7 Warioland 2 DX

(Nintendo/Nintendo)

8 Harvest Moon

(Victor/Nintendo)

9 Defender/Joust

(Digital Eclipse/Midway)

10 V-Rally

(Infogrames/Infogrames)

Top 10 Nintendo 64 games of 1999



1 Donkey Kong 64

(Rare/Nintendo)
In a bad year for Nintendo devotees, Rare salvaged it at the last with this epic adventure for everyone's favourite simian. Bulging with mini-games, shootouts, races, puzzles and the odd retro classic.

2 Jet Force Gemini

(Rare/Nintendo)

3 Shadowman

(Acclaim Teeside/Acclaim)

4 F1 World Grand Prix 2

(Paradigm/Video System)

5 Quake 2

(id/Raster Productions/Activision)

6 Mario Party

(Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)

7 Rayman 2

(Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)

8 Star Wars Episode 1 Racer

(LucasArts/Activision)

9 Command & Conquer 64

(Westwood/Nintendo)

10 Mario Golf

(Nintendo/Nintendo)

Best PC hardware of '99

Crafty cardage.

GeForce2563D card

■ **(Vidia/Creative Labs)**

■ Not just a 3D accelerator card, they claim, but a 3D annihilator. So while you may be nonplussed by the gib about QuadPipe rendering and anisotropic filtering, the bottom line is that the GeForce256 is the best thing you could possibly put inside your PC. The Evolve demo packaged with it looks stunning.



Best accessories of '99

The bits and pieces that just keep giving.



Equalizer Cheat Code Cartridge

■ **For: Nintendo 64**

■ Available from: **Datel on 01785 810800**

The most comprehensive cheat card on the market, which not only gives you a way out of those sticky gaming situations, but will reveal weird and wonderful things hidden inside a game's code. A PlayStation version is also available.



Password Card

■ **For: PlayStation**

■ Available from: **Gamars on 07050 076155**

Not the most inspiring piece of kit ever designed, but the Password Card is a master of its art. Enabling you to play import games without fiddling with your PlayStation's innards is a superb (if not Sony-sanctioned) application. It also provides a host of cheats. Many companies offer a similar product, but beware – recent PlayStation models don't have a parallel port so are incompatible.

Sidewinder Game Pad Pro

■ **For: PC**

■ Available from: **Microsoft on 0345 002000**

Yet again, Microsoft delivers the goods with a pad that's a lean, mean silver machine. The Game Pad Pro is drop dead gorgeous, easy to install, comfortable to hold and an absolute dream to use. Bill Gates is for life, not just for Christmas.



Top 10 CD's



1 The Flaming Lips

The Soft Bulletin (WEA)
An astonishing psychedelic royal flush of an album which melded sonic experimentation with classic songwriting nous – pop music created with a rare sense of wonder.

2 Death In Vegas

The Contino Sessions (Concrete)

3 Basement Jaxx

Remedy (XL)

4 Beck

Midnite Vultures (Geffen)

5 The Chemical Brothers

Surrender (Virgin)

6 Super Furry Animals

Guerrilla (Creation)

7 Orbital

The Middle Of Nowhere (Ffrr)

8 Blur

13 (Food)

9 Pavement

Terror Twilight (Domino)

10 Quannum

Spectrum (Mo'Wax)

Top 10 videos of 1999



1 The Big Lebowski

(Polygram Video)
■ A brilliant farce in which Jeff Bridges' permanently-dazed "Dude" found himself accidentally entangled with murderous millionaires, pederast bowlers and German nihilist torturers. Mine's a White Russian.

2 The Exorcist

(Warners)

3 The Truman Show

(CIC)

4 Chasing Amy

(Miramax)

5 The Matrix

(Warners)

6 Good Will Hunting

(Buena Vista)

7 Out Of Sight

(CIC)

8 Shakespeare In Love

(Columbia Tristar)

9 Buffalo 66

(Columbia Tristar)

10 Payback

(Warners)

The best books of 1999



Our Dumb Century
by the makers of *The Onion* (Boxtree)

■ Satirical Web site *The Onion* produced in handy book form. Expect spoof newspaper front pages aplenty.

Glamorama
by Bret Easton Ellis (Picador)

■ Choice '99 reading material for sexy young intellectuals, this chews up late-20th century pop culture and spits it out.

The best DVD of 1999



The Matrix
(Warners)

■ This year saw the home DVD explosion and there's little doubt these discs will soon render your videos obsolete. What better movie to showcase the high res visuals than the year's finest cyber-action flick? Plus you get a stupendous selection of additional documentaries and interactive gubbins for your cash.

Selection box

But which to choose? A veritable cornucopia of videogaming treasures for Christmas fun.

What's in the box?

- 1 Donkey Kong 64 for Nintendo 64 £60
- 2 Microsoft Sidewinder Game Pad Pro £35
- 3 The Matrix on DVD £20
- 4 Unreal Tournament for PC £40
- 5 SNK Neo Geo Pocket Color £60
- 6 Philex MPress3 MP3 player £150
- 7 Sega Dreamcast £199
- 8 The Soft Bulletin CD by The Flaming Lips £14
- 9 The Legend Of Zelda: Link's Awakening DX for Game Boy Color £25
- 10 Soul Calibur for Dreamcast £40
- 11 Metal Gear Solid for PlayStation £30

Essential gadgets of '99

Crucial kit for the hardware-happy chappie.



Kaoss pad
(Korg) £265

This is one of the most accessible pieces of electronic musical kit ever created. You can link it to decks, keyboards, samplers, mics or just your own stereo and by simply dragging your finger across the touchpad you can make sounds akin to Fatboy Slim shagging the Aphex Twin. Irrefutably ace, just don't tell Zoe.

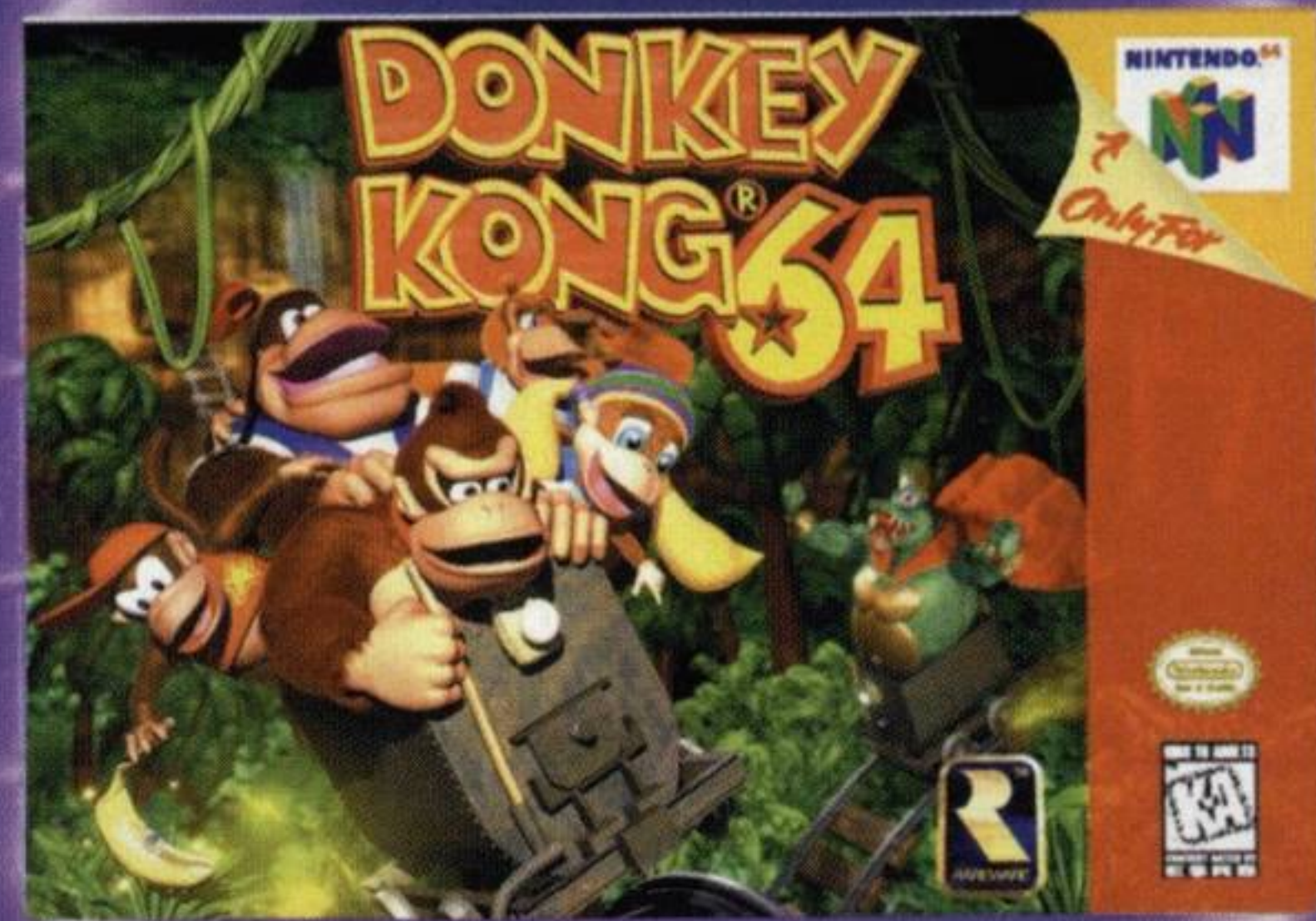
MPress3 Player

(Philex) £150

A year ago only a select few folk knew what the hell MP3 was. Now everyone's plugging these things into their PCs and downloading free music off the Net. It's the future, 'cos Chuck D says so. The MPress3 is the best-looking player to date, includes a built-in mic, and you can record direct from your stereo.

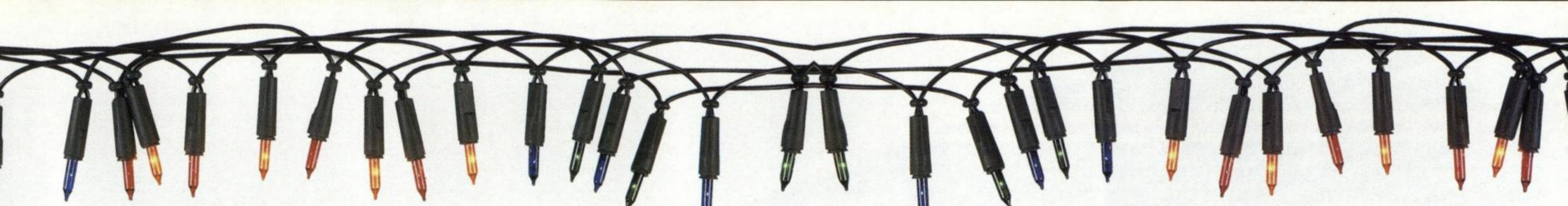


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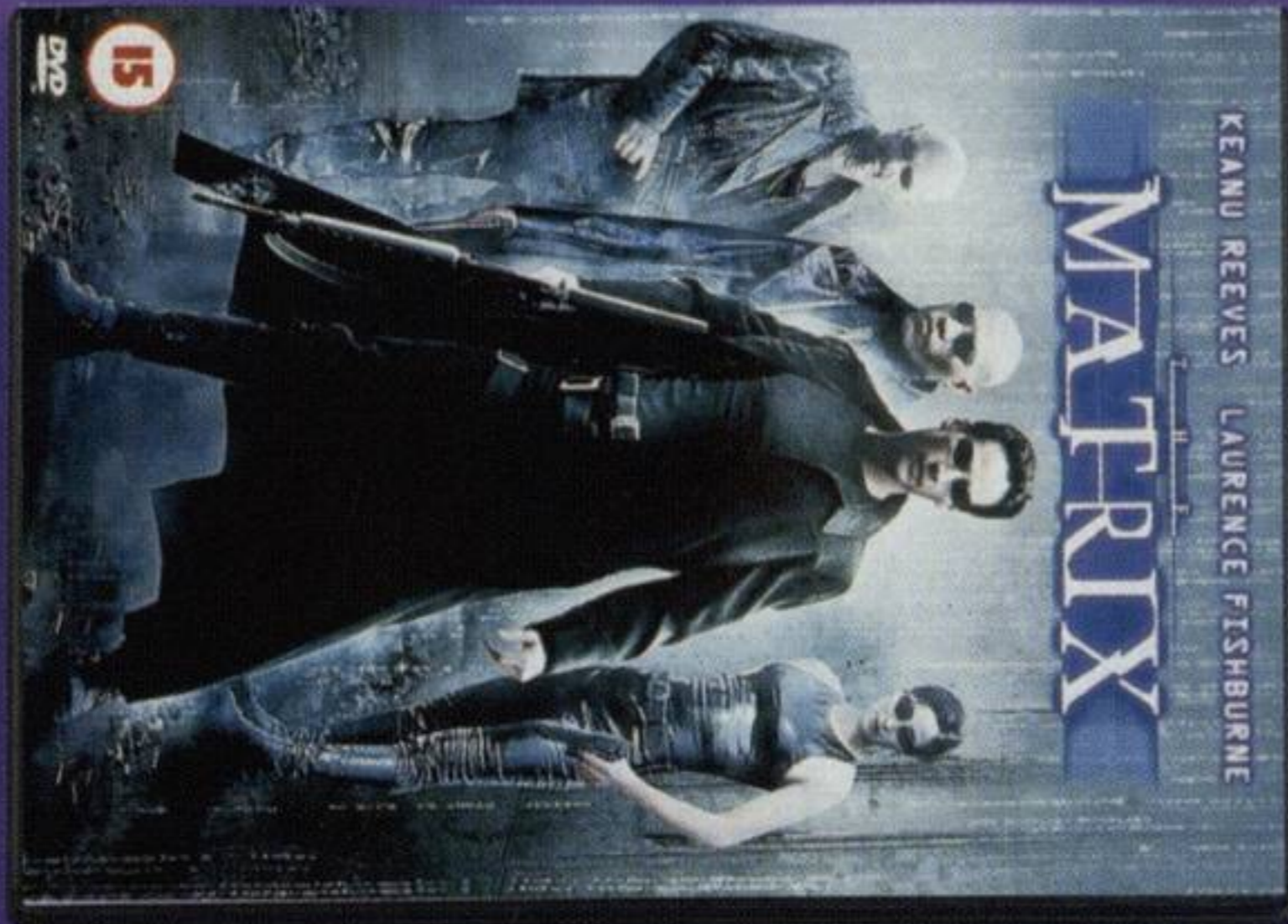


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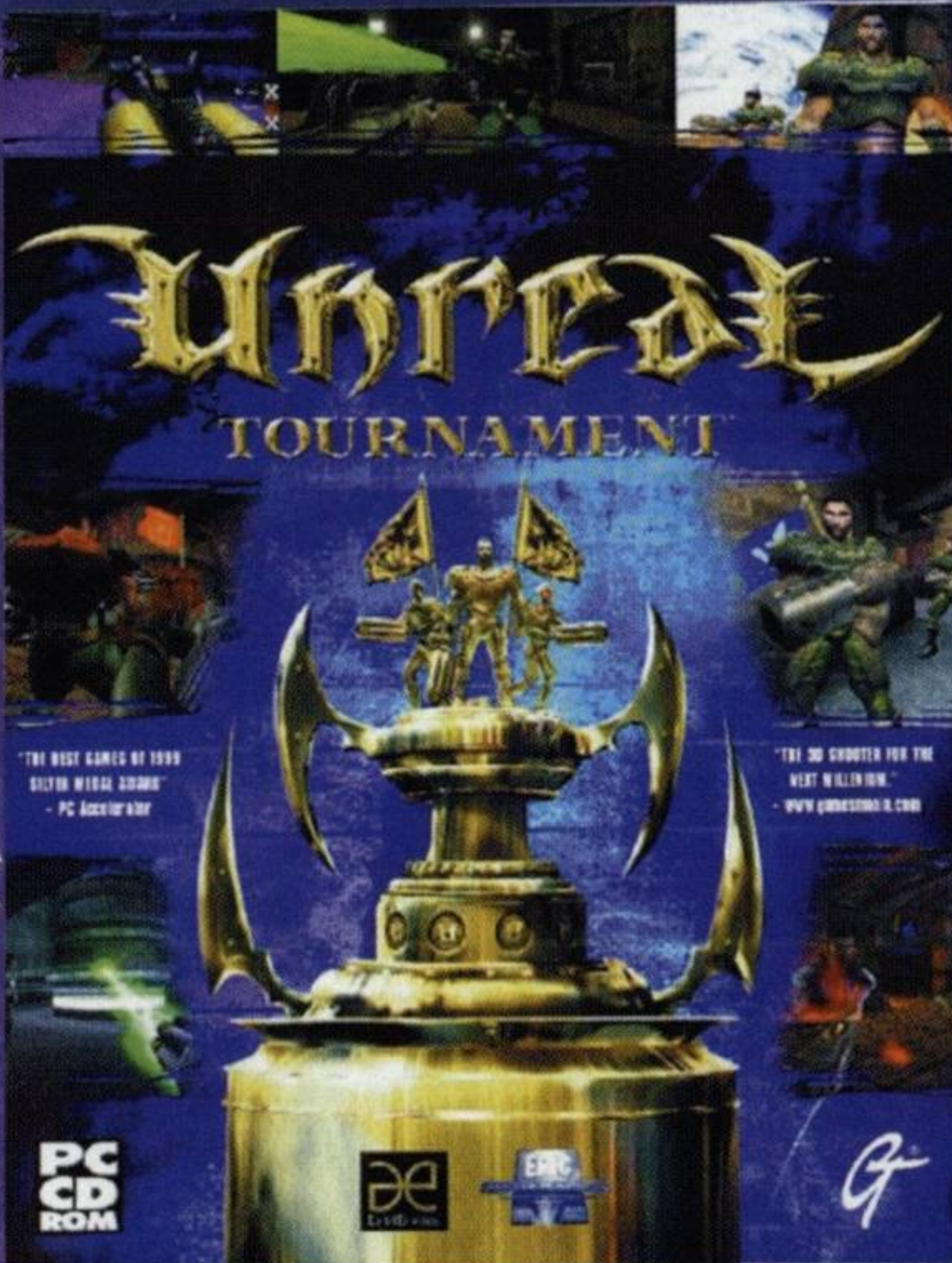
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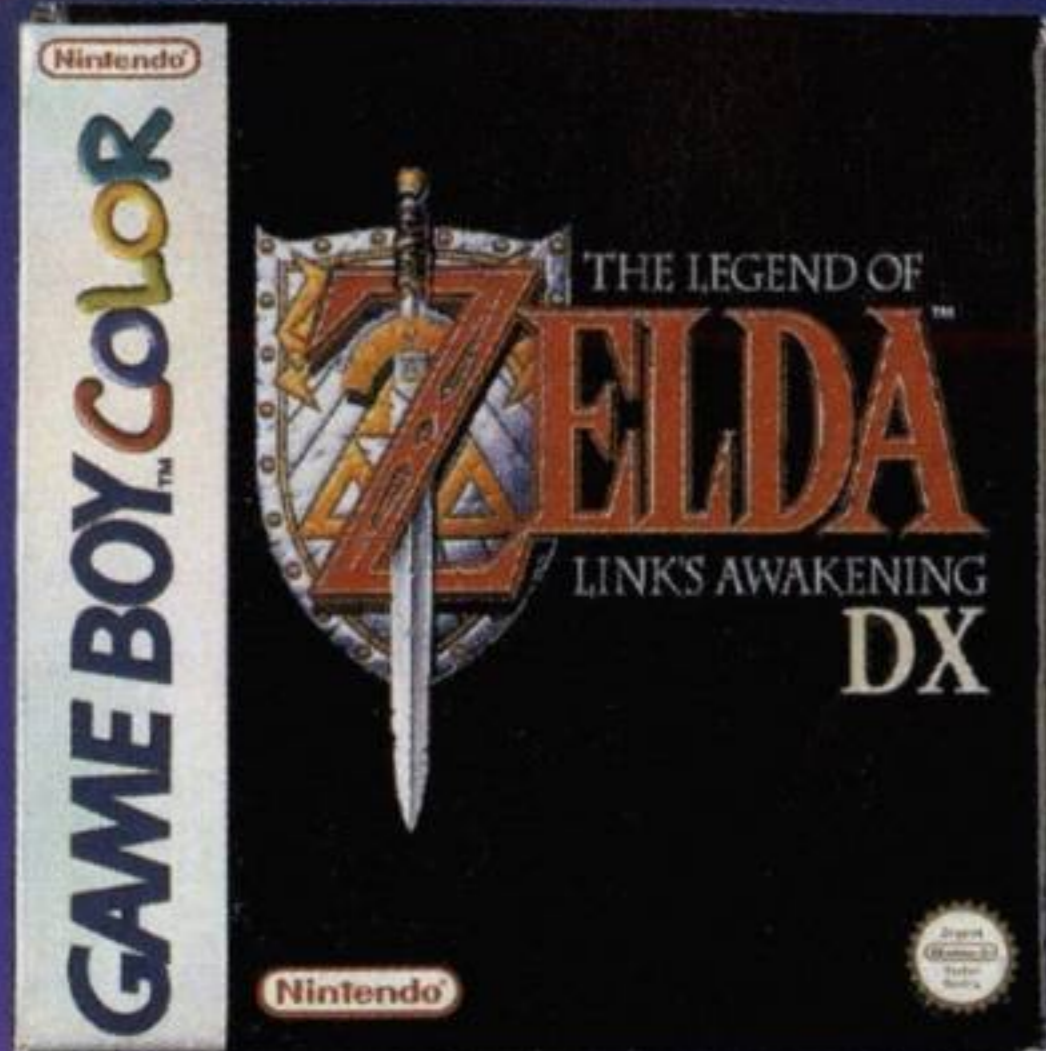
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GRAN TURISMO 2



Little-known development team Polyphony Digital released a driving game back in 1998. That title – Gran Turismo – went on to sell more than six million copies worldwide. Never before had a game come so close to simulating the racing experience. It was hailed as PlayStation perfection, but when you set such gruelling standards, expectations for the sequel are astronomically high.



■ (Above left) Jumping cars! Racing is certainly a lot more dramatic now that cars can leave the road surface.

Polyphony Digital certainly has its work cut out. Indeed, the pressure seems to be telling, as *Gran Turismo 2* will miss its expected December release date and won't be ready until the beginning of next year. Undeterred, *Arcade* talked to Polyphony Digital to get the low down on what will be the best driving game ever.

What made *Gran Turismo* the best racer ever? Something to do with the attention to detail, the expertly tuned learning curve and the variety of gameplay on offer. By letting you own and upgrade cars, *Gran Turismo* soon had you living in a petrol-filled world of fuel injections, spoilers and racing chassis. The tuning of the cars made them yours and before you know it you were sucked in.

Anyone familiar with the original *Gran Turismo* will know that it plays unlike any other racer out there. The handling, the physics and that something in-between you can't quite put your finger on takes the game above the realm of other racers. Well, these features remain intact for the sequel, and have somehow improved.

It seems that the delay to the game will be worthwhile. All the work is going into what matters: the cars. Each of these has been individually modelled, so when Polyphony boasts there are 600 different cars to choose from, it means there are 600 cars that all drive differently – not that they have different paint jobs. Add to this the ability to upgrade and tune, and you have a huge number of possible set-ups. Every element of the engine can be modified, from gear ratios, torque, suspension and brake balance, to axle width, steering, and tyre tread size. The latter stages of the game require you to master this dark art, as tuning is crucial if you're to have a shot at victory.

There are now four different racing modes: GT, Rally, Production and Sports Car racing. Obviously this equates to four different classes of car and four different licences –

but is it four times as much game? Not quite, but the variety on offer is certainly admirable. The biggest news is the inclusion of a Rally mode and, with *GT's* reputation, this could well eclipse the likes of *Colin McRae* and *V-Rally*. There is also a Bonus mode for those of you good enough to earn it: a drag racing track where you race American muscle cars in a straight line.

The ingredients are all present: a realistic racing engine, an *Exchange & Mart's* worth of cars to drive and the kind of customising options that will keep you playing for months. This will be the closest you'll get to the real thing without taking to the track yourself.

Kazunori Yamauchi, producer of Gran Turismo?



■ "In *Gran Turismo*, various constraints prevented us from including all the features we originally wanted to add. In *Gran Turismo 2* we should be able to include many of these features, as well as others we have devised on the basis of feedback from users who have played the game."

■ "The next big improvement is in the all-new courses we are working on. Users will be able to use much more strategic skill and judgement, carefully choosing car performance and features, and tuning and driving styles in order to match different courses (which will also be visually enjoyable for the player)."

■ "We are intending to make a big increase in the number of car models that can be recorded. Users have expressed the desire for an extremely wide range of models to be available in the game, so we are going to make every effort to accommodate their wishes."

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- 58 The expert

TALKING TURISMO 2

The bad news: Gran Turismo 2 is delayed until next year. The good news: it'll be worth the wait. How does Arcade know this? Well, after a prolonged and vicious tabloid-style doorstepping, Sean Kelly, the UK Producer of Gran Turismo 2, told all. Gotcha!



■ Kelly vision: the man behind the European Gran Turismo 2.

So, what's the reason for Gran Turismo 2 being delayed? What surprises will be in store? And can the sequel possibly live up to the expectations of dedicated gamers?

Gran Turismo 2 is shaping up to be the most hyped PlayStation game ever and, truth be told, it's working. Arcade can't wait to get its hands on the final version. But until that day early next year the next best thing is a conversation with a man close to the project: Sean Kelly – the guy responsible for putting the across the European point of view.

Many people have described Gran

Turismo as the perfect driving game. How on earth did you go about improving on it?

That's a tough question. Once we'd finished GT, we had lots of discussions with everyone involved about what we could do differently, or better. Obviously, from a European standpoint, the original had a very Japanese slant in terms of cars, and so we wanted to dramatically increase the representation of the European manufacturers. There are more than 20 European manufacturers in there now, and some brilliant cars. We've also added a historical context – there are lots of older cars and some fantastic classic cars that you'd never get the chance to drive in real life. There are more tracks, and again they've got fantastic design that makes them a real pleasure to learn, and drive. The AI for the other cars is improved, making it more challenging and realistic. And there's the rally mode.

Okay, let's cut to the chase. What was behind your decision to delay

Gran Turismo 2, missing out on the lucrative Christmas release market?

Bottom line, tuning. Better that we release a game 100% right a little later, than 90% right too early. In terms of the number of real cars in Gran Turismo 2, there are around 600, and more than 1,000 if you include the fantasy race models you can drive.

One of the things which has kept people playing Gran Turismo for so long is that it just feels right. You get a huge variety of driving experiences, but they all feel right, and you always want to know "what'll happen if I change this? If I tweak that, can maybe I get a couple of seconds off my times..."

In Gran Turismo we had a couple of hundred cars, and the tuning of the game was done in such a way that people could start at the bottom and feel a real progression as they built up their stable of cars. All the cars were placed very meticulously in balancing where your driving level was likely to be in relation to your finances, in order that





■ The delay will ensure that GT 2 is 100% complete. Sony won't settle for anything less.



you could buy cars that would add to your driving pleasure, but not be so difficult to drive at that stage that you would give up.

With four times as many cars in GT2, and with the rallying thrown in for good measure, you can understand that the gameplay tuning with this many cars is a mammoth task, and one which has to be got right. I'd rather have people frustrated with the delay, rather than disappointed with the game.

Does the delay mean that there will be more features in the game?

There'll be some surprises for people, but the extra time will be spent getting what we've got in there already working as perfect as possible.

Aside from the obvious "getting the game out on time", what has been the biggest challenge in producing Gran Turismo 2?

The biggest challenge is the sheer scale of the product, and the desire to bring

the European release date as close to the Japanese release date as possible while maintaining the quality, so that people aren't kept waiting too long.

Tell us about the rally section. How would you say it compares with games like Colin McRae and V-Rally 2?

The rallying feels absolutely brilliant, and by my reckoning is the most realistic and spectacular rallying experience on PlayStation. That said, *Gran Turismo* is a driving simulation, whilst *Colin McRae*, and *V-Rally*, are rallying simulations. The rallying in *Gran Turismo 2* is an aspect of the driving that you get to experience, but we haven't based the whole game around it, which I think is a big difference. In terms of driving experience, the idea behind *Gran Turismo 2* is to offer much more than just one style.

What about the cars? We understand that there are a lot more European manufacturers in there this time.

Yep, loads of 'em. As I said earlier, Birgit and myself have been talking to various manufacturers for over 18 months now. Pretty much as soon as we'd finished *GT*, Kazunori came up with his wish list of European manufacturers and cars, and we had some of our own that we wanted to get in there.

From then it was a case of trawling round all the car shows in Europe—Geneva, Paris, London, introducing ourselves to the European manufacturers, and getting them interested in working with us.

Did anyone turn you down?

There were some that we couldn't get, for various reasons. Some were tied to exclusive deals with other companies, and one was even in the middle of being bought out by another manufacturer, and consequently wasn't in a position to sign any licensing deals. Hopefully, though, some of these will make an appearance in the future.

Can you race all the cars on all the courses?

Some of the cars are transportable to different environments, but not all. Obviously, as it's a simulation we've kept our roots in reality, and mashing up a brand new Aston on a rally track is not something you would ever contemplate doing in real life, so it isn't something you can do in *Gran Turismo 2*.

"Better that we release it 100% right a little late, than 90% right too early."

Sean Kelly, Producer GT2

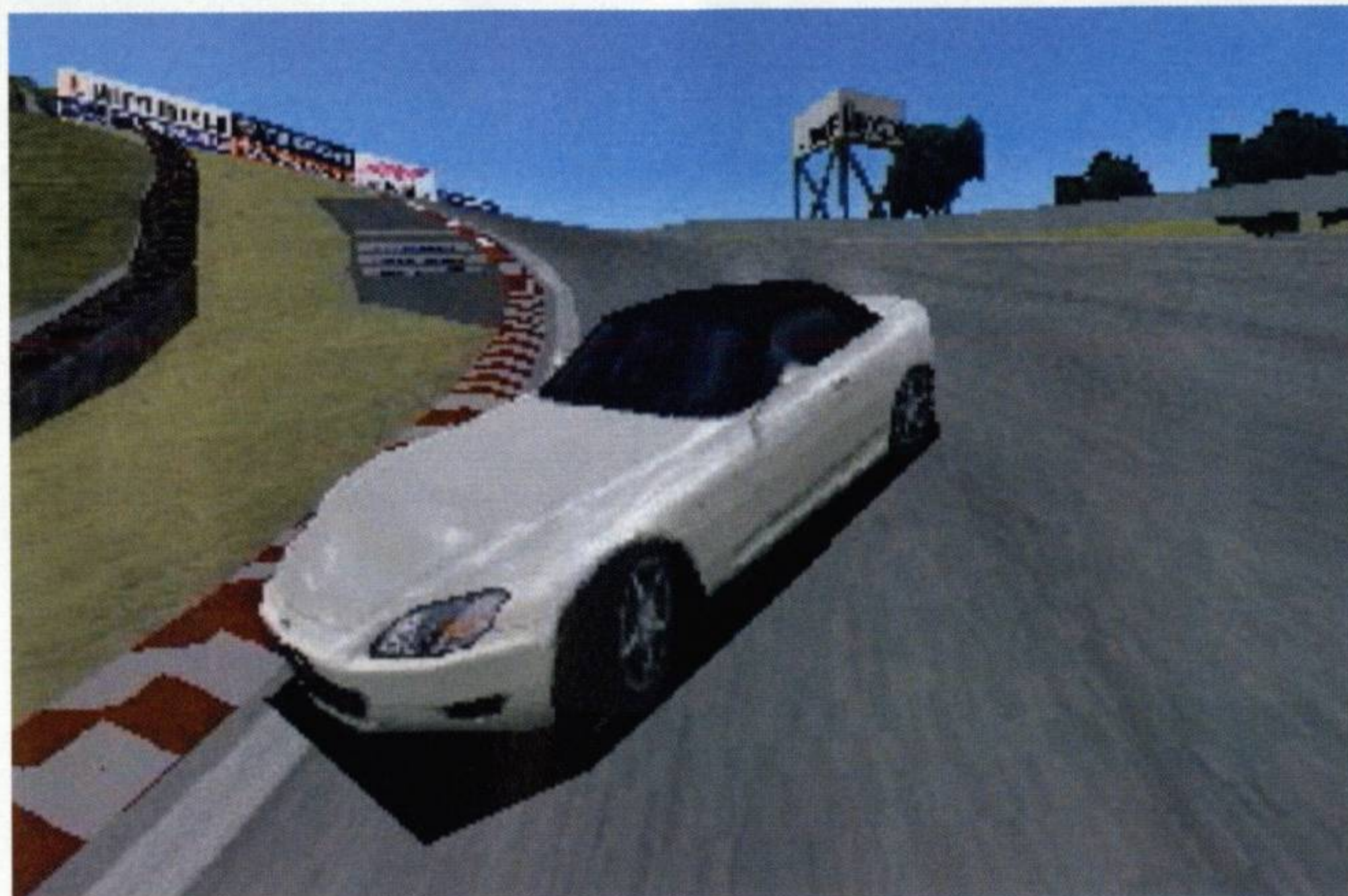
Will you be able to damage your car in this version of Gran Turismo?

You can damage the car, but while it'll influence how the car handles, it's not reflected in the look of the car. With so many manufacturers involved, and a desire to treat every car in exactly the same manner, it was important that we didn't get into a situation where some of the cars in the game could look damaged, but others couldn't. Plus, the PlayStation can only hold so much graphical data. If we had included crumpled polygons and different models in order to show damage, we'd have had to sacrifice the look of the game somewhere else. We think that we've managed to find the best balance between having a car that responds to damage in the handling, but which allows us to treat every car and manufacturer in the same way.

What does the future hold for Polyphony Digital?

A day or two resting once we master *Gran Turismo 2*, I reckon, and then straight on to finishing *Gran Turismo 2000* for PlayStation2.

Sean, thank you for talking to Arcade. Now get back to work!



■ Bright lights, big city. City racing now plays a bigger part in the game – night racing returns with all those lovely shiny cars.



EXCHANGE & MART

THE CAR'S THE STAR

Welcome to the showroom of the Gods. Which will you choose?

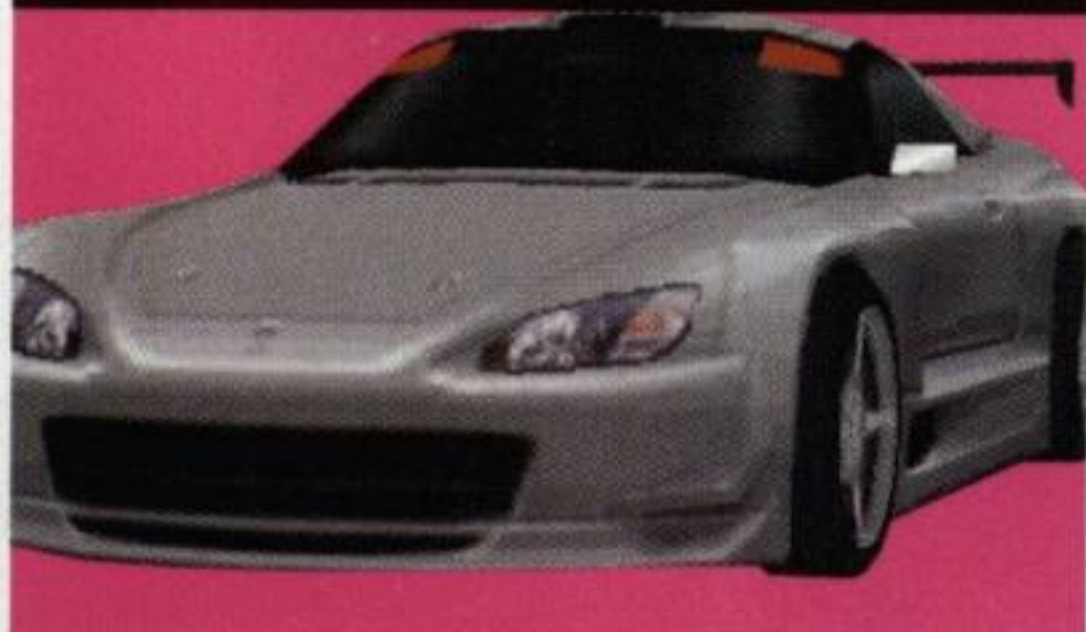
Whether you're looking for a rusty old banger, a customised Ford Escort or a shiny new passion wagon, you'll

find it here in Arcade's very own Exchange & Mart section. This is your guide to the hot hatches, the family saloons and the US muscle cars that you'll find chewing up the Tarmac in *Gran Turismo 2*. The best thing of all is that they're all available to you at a very reasonable price – that of a PlayStation title.

This is a guide to some of the best cars in the game and Arcade's automotive tips for taking the driving honours in *GT 2*. Of course, this is only a small selection of the cars in the game – at the last count it was 594 and climbing. With that number of motors on offer you'll need a guiding light to show you the super cars from the Skodas. This is the essential guide to the cars that put the gran into *Gran Turismo*.



Honda S2000



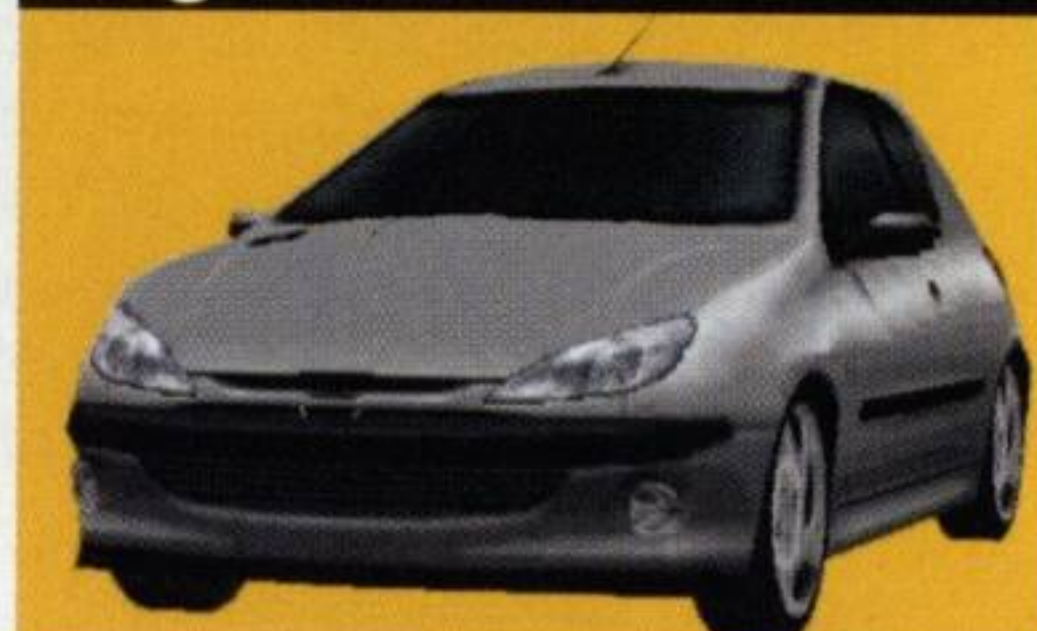
If the S2000 were a film star, it would be Harrison Ford. Under normal circumstances it's docile and well-mannered, happy to amble around and let onlookers admire its chiselled good looks. But push it too far and it becomes an animal. Honda's variable valve timing enables the engine to spin to a dizzying 9,000rpm, providing near unstoppable power.

Mini Cooper



Celebrating its 40th birthday this year, and due to die with the launch of its successor in 2000, the Mini is the nearest thing you can get to a street-legal go-kart. If you can endure the frantic bellowing of its ancient engine and the whine of its Triassic transmission, it'll reward you with pin-sharp steering and grip to rival the most tuned-up Skyline GT-R. Slow, though.

Peugeot 206 GTi



The Peugeot 205 GTi was the car every boy racer wanted. Perfect proportions, a fantastic chassis and a belting 1.9-litre engine conspired to leave Golfs and XR3is standing at the lights. The 206 GTi is the modern alternative. While it is bigger and heavier than its predecessor, another superchassis means it should give the Cyborgs and Demios a run for their money.

Datsun 240Z



The archetypal '70s Japanese sports car, the "Z" boasted owners as diverse as the Bionic Woman and former *Arcade* editor Matt Bielby. Its shark-nosed profile and 2.4-litre six-cylinder engine were what the world wanted at its 1969 launch, and it sold by the freighter-load. It takes a full eight seconds to reach 60mph, tops out at 125mph and has tune-up potential.

Ford Mustang GT



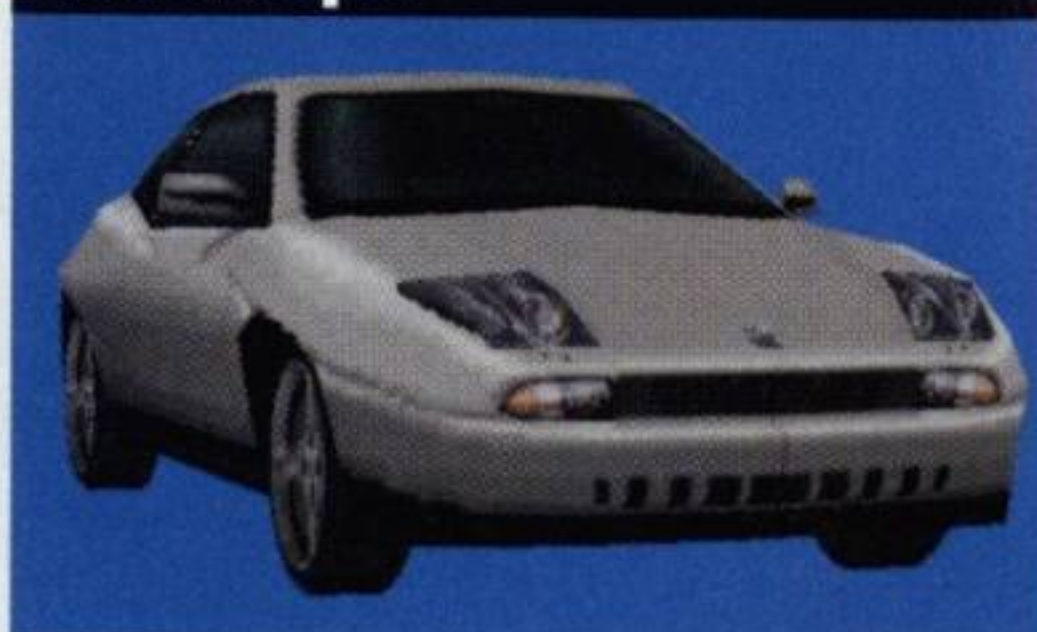
If you lived in America, you could buy a brand new Ford Mustang GT for \$21,000. This equates to about twelve grand – the price of a Ford Fiesta shopper over here. But the Mustang goes faster than a Fiesta. In fact, with a 4.6-litre, 260bhp V8 under the bonnet, it would get your frozen peas home before the frost had so much as melted from the packet.

Subaru Impreza WRC



The Impreza WRC will already be familiar to players of a certain rally game. It's the machine that made Colin McRae world rally champion, and may be the chariot of choice on *GT 2*'s new gravelly stages. You'll be able to "be" Colin, hurling your Scooby sideways round hairpin bends. May face competition from the Mitsubishi Lancer and Lancia Delta Integrale.

Fiat Coupe



From the bulging headlights to the brutal slashes over the wheel arches to the Ferrari-esque tail lights, the Fiat Coupe is at once eye-catching and utterly Italian. Let's hope *GT 2* includes the 20-valve Turbo, which will hit 60mph in a little over six seconds and gallop on to more than 150mph. It's front-wheel-drive and boasts supreme handling.

Nissan R390 GT1



So low it's virtually two-dimensional, the R390 was Nissan's entrant for Le Mans in 1998, taking third, fifth and sixth places. Its top speed is "classified", but *GT 2*'s test track could soon do for that. Untweaked, its twin-turbo V8 engine puts out 550bhp, propelling it to 60mph in under four seconds. Pricy, though – real-life R390s sell for around a million dollars.



Mitsubishi Lancer Evo V



A Japanese law forbids the sale of cars advertised as producing more than 280bhp. So while Mitsubishi will tell you the Evo V puts out exactly 280bhp, you'll soon realise the company is fibbing. The Evo V is arguable the fastest point to point car in the world. With a lightweight body, four-wheel drive and ace grip, it's a formidable heir to the Evo IV of GT.

Toyota Altezza



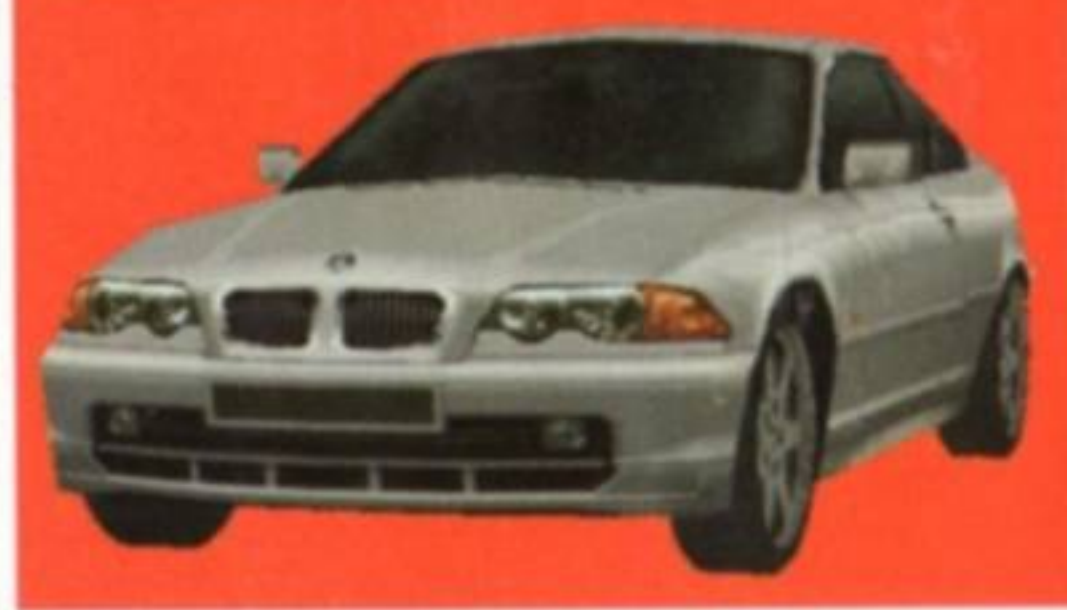
Better known as the Lexus IS200, the Altezza is Toyota's attempt to take on the BMW 3-series. It has made a fine job of it, with a small, rear-wheel-drive saloon that looks great and corners like a set square. Producing just 150bhp, the six-cylinder engine is less poky than others, but maybe Toyota Racing Development can come up with something.

Volkswagen Golf V5



Believe VW's advertising and you'd expect the Golf to be reliable and cheap, and, er, that's it. But the Golf was the machine that gave birth to the label "GTi", stirring up the hatchback world in the early '80s with its sprightly performance. Today the Golf GTi and its V5 brother have grown a bit flabby, but it looks pretty good in black, eh? And it keeps going.

BMW 328i Coupe



Famous for meticulous engineering and not letting you pull out at junctions, the BMW 3-series is the chosen car of thrusting young execs. It looks like GT 2 will feature the "old" version of the Coupe. Just as well – the word on the street is that the '99 model has handling better suited to the M25 than banked corners. Should be great for power slides.

Lotus Elise



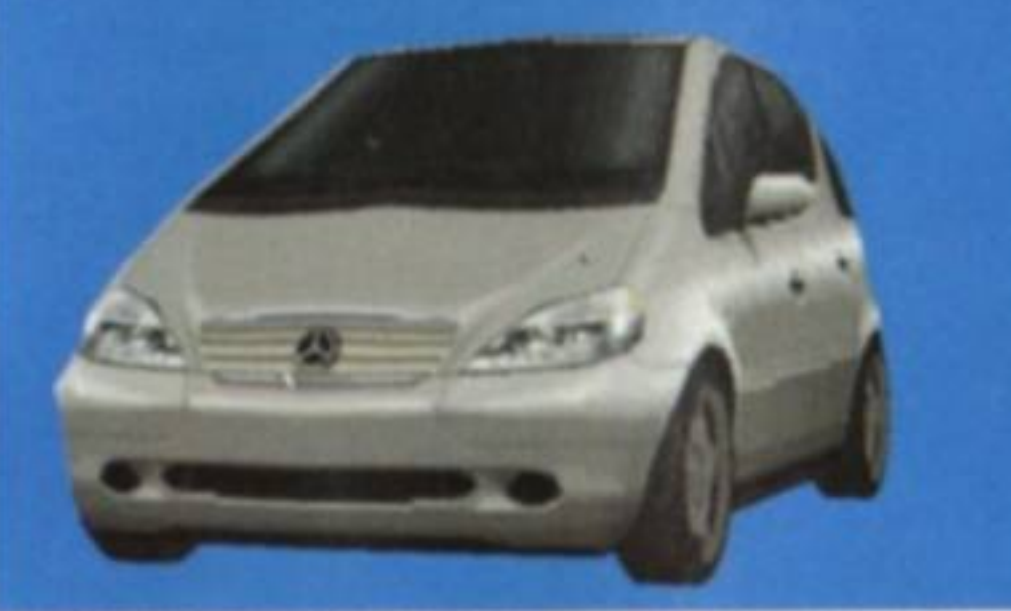
While 118bhp may sound laughable, when you consider the Elise has a plastic body and weighs just 700kg and hits 60mph in six seconds, it begins to sound tempting. Throw in what's probably the best-engineered chassis in the world and you've got a car that's likely to be one of the fastest in the game. The tuning possibilities should be endless, too.

Nissan Skyline GT-R R34



The Nissan Skyline GT-R has more on-board computing power than the USS Enterprise. Every twitch of the steering wheel is monitored by stability programs, traction control systems and fly-by-wire algorithms. The new R34 is slimmer and lighter than GT's R33. But can the Nismo tuning shop get more than 854bhp out of it? Here's hoping.

Mercedes-Benz A-class



Intended to revolutionise the small car market with its engine-under-the-floor design, the A-class gained immediate notoriety upon its launch when it failed a Swedish magazine's "elk test". When asked to swerve around an unexpected Scandinavian hazard, it promptly toppled onto its roof. Some hasty redesign work at Benz HQ sorted the problems.

Volkswagen New Beetle



VW's original "Strength Through Joy" car would have wound up in the gravel on the first bend in GT 2, but the new version should be okay. It was born in 1994 as a motor show design study, and met with such acclaim that VW had no option but to put it into production. Based on the Golf platform, it handles securely and has a two-litre engine.

THE EXPERT'S OPINION

■ COPYRIGHT: BBC WORLDWIDE



“Having a **woman** in **tears** is very much like having a **wounded deer** in your rifle sights.”



Interview by | **Rich Pelley**

SWISS TONI

Expert advice on the best way to go about choosing your mode of transport in Gran Turismo 2 from The Fast Show's car salesman extraordinaire.

Unless your name is Jay Kay or you're a career car thief, choosing which motor to drive today isn't a tough decision. But *Gran Turismo 2* offers you access to hundreds of possible race rides for a mere 30 notes. As a result, *Arcade* has drafted in Swiss Toni – a man with a real feel for the automobile – to help you whittle down the field.

First, thanks for talking to us, Swiss.

No problem.

***Gran Turismo 2* features some 600; everything from Mercedes to Beetles to Minis. What's the best way to choose your car?**

Choosing a car is very much like choosing a woman. Pick the colour and specifications you fancy, check the mileage (and remember what's shown on the clock isn't always the real figure), take her for a test drive to see how she handles, inspect her bottom for hidden rust spots and don't forget to wear a safety belt.

In *Gran Turismo 2*, you can tinker with the specifications of your car to your heart's content. But what are the dangers?

The ladies aren't interested in spoilers, roof racks, or alloy wheels. What really impresses them is a nice stereo. Even more important is what you play on it. The fragrant sex like the smoochy stuff – Andy Williams, Julio Iglesias and Cliff. If she's a young bird, you can't go wrong with that bloody irritating song from *Titanic*. Having a woman in tears is very much like having a wounded deer in your rifle sights – if you can't score a direct hit, you should stick to collecting model soldiers and home improvements.

What car do you drive? Er, you can drive, can't you, Toni?

Working in the motoring industry, I naturally have the pick of the latest, fastest, most sought after cars on the

road. Like a fat Arab sultan in his harem, I have a bevy of gleaming beauties with large bumpers at my disposal. Like a lady with a box of Belgian chocolates I can chose whatever I pop into my mouth. So, just as soon as I get my licence back, I'll be doing just that. Look, that pensioner just stepped out in front of me, it wasn't my fault. My wife had left me, business was bad and I'd been drinking heavily. I'm only telling you this because my counsellor has told me I shouldn't bottle up my emotions.

Errr, anyway. Obviously in your time, you've made love to a beautiful woman in the back of a car. Have you got any tricks of the trade?

The bigger the car the better. I don't mean as big as a mobile home. Mobile homes aren't sexy. There is a maxim – the bigger the car, the bigger your todger. But mobile homes are just ugly, fat, swollen and misshapen, and that's not the message you want to be sending out to the fairer sex.

Got it. What about sports cars?

Sports cars are the best honey traps, but for God's sake don't try to make love in the back of one, they're just not spacious enough. Before you know it you'll have plugged yourself into the cigarette lighter and she'll be using the gear stick for manoeuvres. If you do insist on car-based coitus, then get a Bentley or a stretch limo and book yourself an appointment with an osteopath for the day after.

How about videogames? Do you play them?

Playing a video game is very much like making love to a beautiful woman. Make sure you've made all the right connections, scour the specialist magazines for tips and cheats, grasp your joystick firmly in your hand and shove your cartridge in the slot. And try not to get over excited or it's going to be "game over" before you've even started.

Videogames, especially driving ones, never seem to appeal to the ladies. Is this because women find it so hard to drive?

It's a well-known fact that the majority of road accidents are caused by women. We all know the scenario. You're driving along, minding your own business, then look out the window and see some scantily-clad young lovely displaying her midriff, with a cheeky navel ring winking

Toni's tips on wooing the ladies



■ "Women are like cars, they're enormously complicated pieces of machinery – and reading a manual won't really help. A lot goes on under the bonnet, let me tell you. But as with cars there are simple sets of rules. Make sure there's petrol in her tank, air in her tyres and a good stereo system in the dashboard. Or to put it another way, the ladies like fine wines, Belgian chocolates and the manly smell of a pipe (clean underwear also goes a long way). Our other halves are a gorgeous, endlessly fascinating, mystery. They're the spice of life, they're infuriating and lovely and, at the end of the day, I wouldn't kiss anything else."


at you. And the next thing you know, you've rear-ended the car in front. Women cause enough mischief on the road; thank God they don't cause the same mischief at home when you're aboard your PlayStation.

How about the Internet? Are you ever tempted to surf?

I know what you're referring to here, and those allegations are totally unfounded. Yes, I did take my computer in to be fixed, but where that material on my hard drive came from is a total mystery to me. I reckon I've been framed. I mean you've seen *Enemy of The State*, it's all part of a sinister Government plot.

Well, that's about it. Thanks very much for talking to us, Toni.

Anyway, how's business?

Could you mention that I'm running a 20% discount on all models until Christmas at Swiss Toni's Motors? 

♦♦ Find out why *Gran Turismo 2* is going to be delayed on **page 54**.

More Swiss

Invite Mr Toni into your home.



■ You can catch up with Swiss Toni and all his other chums in a special box set of series three of *The Fast Show*. The set also contains a special collection of never-seen-before sketches, including such gems as *Mid Life Crisis Man*, *Road-Rage Richard*

and *I've Been Up All Night Shagging* (plus 20 more minutes than featured in the recent *The Fast Show* night on BBC2). You can also check out *The Fast Show* Web site at <http://www.comedyzone.beeb.com/fastshow>.

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Homepage for full terms and conditions. Promotion closes 14/01/2000.

1 minute 26.4 seconds = 1 internet beat

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Dreamcast.

Up to 6 billion players

www.dreamcast-europe.com
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I KNOW YOU GOT SOUL

IT'S THE BEST DREAMCAST GAME TO DATE. IT'S THE BEST BEAT-'EM-UP EVER. AND SOUL CALIBUR IS EVEN BEING VAUNTED AS THE BEST VIDEOGAME EVER FULL STOP. ARCADE WELCOMES YOU TO THE STAGE OF HISTORY.

Words by | **Sam Richards**



■ *Soul Calibur* is a game defined by the quality of the little touches. From the stage backgrounds to the light effects as weapons clash, it boasts the kind of graphical perfection most PC titles can only strive for. Namco has put some real affection into this game.



Fighters Destiny

Few would argue that Namco's Soul Blade/Soul Calibur now reigns supreme within the beat-'em-up world, but there have been previous incumbents to the throne.



Tekken

■ Also made by Namco, the company isn't going to be too bothered if *Soul Calibur* steals some of *Tekken's* thunder. Even so, while the worlds inhabited by Sophitia, Mitsurugi and company are far more impressive than the hunting grounds of Paul Phoenix and Eddy Gordo in *Tekken 3*, *Tekken Tag Tournament* is already looking good in the arcades and should be back with a bang on PlayStation2. This is one dynasty that ain't done yet.



Virtua Fighter

■ Since *Soul Calibur* arrived, you could be forgiven for almost forgetting about Sega's in-house Dreamcast beat-'em-up *Virtua Fighter 3tb*: the latest console incarnation of a classic series that fails to add anything new to the genre. The series tends to cater for the beat-'em-up nut, eschewing flashy graphics, moves and effects for solid fight mechanics. Still, *Virtua Fighter 4* will have to pull something special out of the bag to stay with the pack.



Street Fighter

■ Probably the most famous beat-'em-up series ever, Capcom's 2D scrapper can justly lay claim to inventing the modern fighting game. Had it's heyday back in the early '90s with *Street Fighter 2* and later *Super Street Fighter 2* on the SNES. Mixing serious fight mechanics with a cast of bizarre characters, many of the early games are still eminently playable, but the ever-continuing series of 2D sequels are increasingly tailored for a fanatical retro audience.



Mortal Kombat

■ Although the first *Mortal Kombat* game, appearing on SNES and Mega Drive, was a graphical coup featuring rendered fighters for the first time, the series rode on controversy not gameplay. Copious gore ensured publicity, and the rather shoddy fighter went on to spawn three sequels (plus spin-offs), a TV series and two atrocious movies. *Mortal Kombat Gold* made a recent Dreamcast appearance, but surely the dynasty should now be left to rot.

Soul Calibur is a killer. For a quick bash, for true fighting mettle, for clever combos, for two-player jousting, for immersive atmospherics and a typically silly background story, it's the new benchmark in beat-'em-ups. Dreamcast owners are very lucky people, but in an exclusive chat to *Arcade*, the *Soul Calibur* team reveals how the game could have been heading to the PlayStation.

"It was developed for the arcades using System 12, the board compatible with PlayStation," explains team co-ordinator Koh Onda. "However, it was impossible to convert the arcade game to PlayStation because of a lack of memory capacity on the console. When Namco agreed to develop for the Dreamcast, we had the opportunity to convert *Soul Calibur*." Sony's loss was

therefore Sega's gain, and the game was on its way to Dreamcast.

A process not without its problems, since the team was working with new hardware which it was analysing on the spot and so a certain level of "trial and error" tactics came into play.

"We had a lot of trouble in handling the Dreamcast hardware," explains sound engineer Junichi Nakatsuru. "Sometimes it gave no sound, and at other times it didn't function properly." Even so, Namco managed to keep its eyes on the prize.

"If Dreamcast is the hardware with the best specifications possible, we have worked hard to make *Soul Calibur* the best quality software in gaming history," says Onda. A noble aim, and one which has, for the most part, been achieved. So how did the team balance accessibility and longevity?

"Even for the arcade version, easy access, high controllability and

“We wanted Soul Calibur to be easy to understand and fun to play.”

depth of gameplay for the expert were vital concerns,” says game construction guru Hiroaki Yotoryiyama. “A game should look interesting. There should also be many new things to be found during play, rewarding perseverance. But for *Soul Calibur* we wanted it to be easy to understand and fun for anyone playing for the first time.” Something Namco has managed to achieve.

The reason *Soul Calibur* appears such a polished



product is due to the care, attention and love invested by the development team, evident from the way its members talk about the little details.

“There was a strong request from *Soul Edge* fans for another grand story uniting the characters,” says Onda.

“You only get to know a part of it from playing the game but in fact there exists a story with which you may create a novel or movie.”

Kanako Iwasaki was in charge of background model design. “I tried to create a different atmosphere for each stage and design the background to suit the related character. My favourite is the Proving Grounds, because of the twilight lighting effect. Creating the water scenes proved the most challenging task, as we set

out to render the surfaces differently according to water temperature and transparency.”

It’s this kind of attention to detail that lifts *Soul Calibur* above the beat-’em-up competition and informs a truly absorbing experience. So what is the team’s reaction when people say *Soul Calibur* is one of the best games ever?

“I am very glad,” says Yotoryiyama, “but we will not feel complacent and will make further efforts next time.”

“I’m very pleased with the response so far,” adds Iwasaki. “I hope that we will be able to create another good game in the future – please wait and expect it!”

A strong intimation that the *Soul Calibur* team is already making plans for a third game in the beat-’em-up series. The soul still burns. **A**

Meet The Gang



There are 18 fighters in *Soul Calibur* (excluding *Inferno*), but what are they doing here, what’s this *Soul Edge* sword they’re all going on about, why are they trussed up in dodgy medieval garb and why are they smacking the hell out of each other? Arcade has trawled through the game’s sprawling, po-faced legend so you don’t have to, and has come up smiling – the lowdown on the greatest fighting cast ever assembled clutched in its sweaty mitt. The things you do for love.



Astaroth

■ **Who?** A monster created in a Frankenstein-style experiment by the Grand Priest Krumm Mrl Py Eitzk so that he may conquer earth with his evil ways. You will all see my power!

■ **Weapon:** A bloody great big axe called the Klsdf Py Gyst. Of course.

■ **Best move:** Poseidon Tide (down, down/left, left, X). Astaroth sinks his axe into the opponent’s head, swings them round in a circle twice as though he’s throwing the hammer, and then launches them 20 feet into the air. Rest assured they don’t land comfortably.



Cervantes

■ **Who?** Mediterranean droopy-tached pirate Captain Cervantes De Leon, previously the possessor of the *Soul Edge*.

■ **Weapon:** Dual Spanish swords.

■ **Best move:** One of his best is the Geo Da Ray (left, down/left, down, Y), but seeing as both Cervantes and his opponent fly high into the air, be careful where you use it as you could end up landing outside the ring – resulting in instant defeat. More reliable is a mighty sword slash called the Sadistic Mage (left, down/left, down, down+X).



Edge Master

■ **Who?** No-one’s really sure how he came to be master of the Ling Sheng Su temple, how old he is or even if he has a real name. Like all men with white hair, he is inevitably very wise and knows everything.

■ **Weapon:** Any weapon, any time, any place, anyhow. Baby.

■ **Best move:** Takes on the weapon, moves and fighting style of other *Soul Calibur* characters.



Mitsurugi

■ **Who?** Full name Heishiro Mitsurugi, this foolhardy mercenary once demanded a duel against a fighter wielding a rifle. Unsurprisingly, he was shot in the chest.

■ **Weapon:** A type of sword called a Katana (which, fact fans, was one of the original names mooted for the Dreamcast).

■ **Best move:** Mitsurugi doesn’t have too many spectacular moves. However, there’s always the Autumn Thrust (X+B), where he drives his sword into the opponent’s chest and extricates it with his foot.



Nightmare

■ **Who?** Bit of a mysterious chap, this one. He may or may not be Siegfried’s Dad.

■ **Weapon:** The infamous *Soul Edge* itself.

■ **Best move:** The Cannonball Splitter. It’s a bit tricky, but bear with it because it’s not only mighty impressive, it’s also unblockable. First get Nightmare in the Night Lower Stance by pressing right+Y+B, then slide your finger from Y to X. Nightmare somersaults, bringing the full force of his colossal sword to bear on the opponent’s head.



Rock

■ **Who?** Once a simple British antiques dealer called William Nathaniel Adams, he somehow grew an ox’s head. His moves are similar to those of Astaroth but a little easier to execute. Lizard Man abducted his adopted son.

■ **Weapon:** Battle axe

■ **Best move:** For a simple but satisfying attack, try the Canyon Attack by running towards the enemy pressing Y+A. Rock throws the opponent to the floor, leaps into the air and lands with his fat arse square on their throat.



Sueng Mina

■ **Who?** Teenage upstart who ran away from home with a bit of a chip on her shoulder. Ivy’s got it in for her and Hwang’s wishing their paths had never crossed. They’re nothing but trouble, you see.

■ **Weapon:** The ancestral Glaive or Zanbato, which she has named the Scarlet Thunder.

■ **Best move:** The Crushing Long Blade (up/right, X+Y). Mina goes into a pole-vault attack stance before crackling with electricity and bringing a horrendous blow raining down on the opponent.



Siegfried

■ **Who?** Siegfried Schtauffen is a little German geezer living in Venice trying to atone for the rather savage sin of killing his Dad, who many suspect has actually returned in evil form as Nightmare.

■ **Weapon:** The Zweihander (called Requiem), a large sword made from Spanish Steel.

■ **Best move:** Approach the opponent from the right side and press X+A or Y+A to unleash the Unholy Terror. Siegfried impales the enemy on his hefty blade before tossing them over his shoulder.

Soul Mining

Some other soul-related things which are also good.

Northern Soul

■ Men in '70s Wigan donning vests, clutching holdalls full of talc and getting down to obscure singles by forgotten '60s American soul groups. You gotta love it.

David Soul

■ Baby-faced half of flare-friendly '70s TV cop duo who had his Hutch leather coat nicked from the theatre next door to the *Arcade* office a week ago. It weren't us, officer. Honest.

The Godfather Of Soul

■ James Brown – a man often so convulsed by soul he

can't say anything apart from "awwwriighuuuuuh". *Arcade* says: he da man, even if he seems to find it hard to stay out of chokey.

Soul Food

■ A good meal from the Deep South.

Soul Train

■ Ace '70s black music TV show hosted by Don Cornelius sporting one of the finest afro specimens ever seen to man.

Rubber Soul

■ Beatles album when they were getting good and grew their hair over their necks.

Soul Survivor

■ Conversely, this is a Rolling Stones track from *Exile On Main Street*, just before they were about to get bad.

I Know You Got Soul

■ Sit by the radio, hand on the dial, soon – when you hear it, pump up the volume. It's a four-letter word and Rakim's got it.

De La Soul

■ Mase, Posdnous and Trugoy (later simply Dave). Three men who went on about da inner sound y'all, sampled Steely Dan, pretended to come from Mars and changed the face of

hip-hop. Brand new album due to arrive at any time.

Soul II Soul

■ A big man called Jazzie B and some blokes playing them there funky horns.

Sol Campbell

■ Towering Spurs defender making life a misery for all *Arcade*'s Scottish readers. Bring on Euro 2000!

■ **David Soul, sporting the jacket that would one day go walkabout from Bath Theatre Royal.**



PHOTOGRAPHY: KOBAL COLLECTION



Hwang

■ **Who?** Hwang Sung Kyung is an orphan under the tutelage of Sueng Mina's Dad. He's off on a search mission to find the little minx.
 ■ **Weapon:** A Chinese sword which he calls the Blue Thunder.
 ■ **Best move:** The Machine Gun Kick (run towards opponent, press A+Y) is rather satisfying. Hwang grabs the opponent by the throat, kicks them rapidly about the face a few times and then boots into touch.



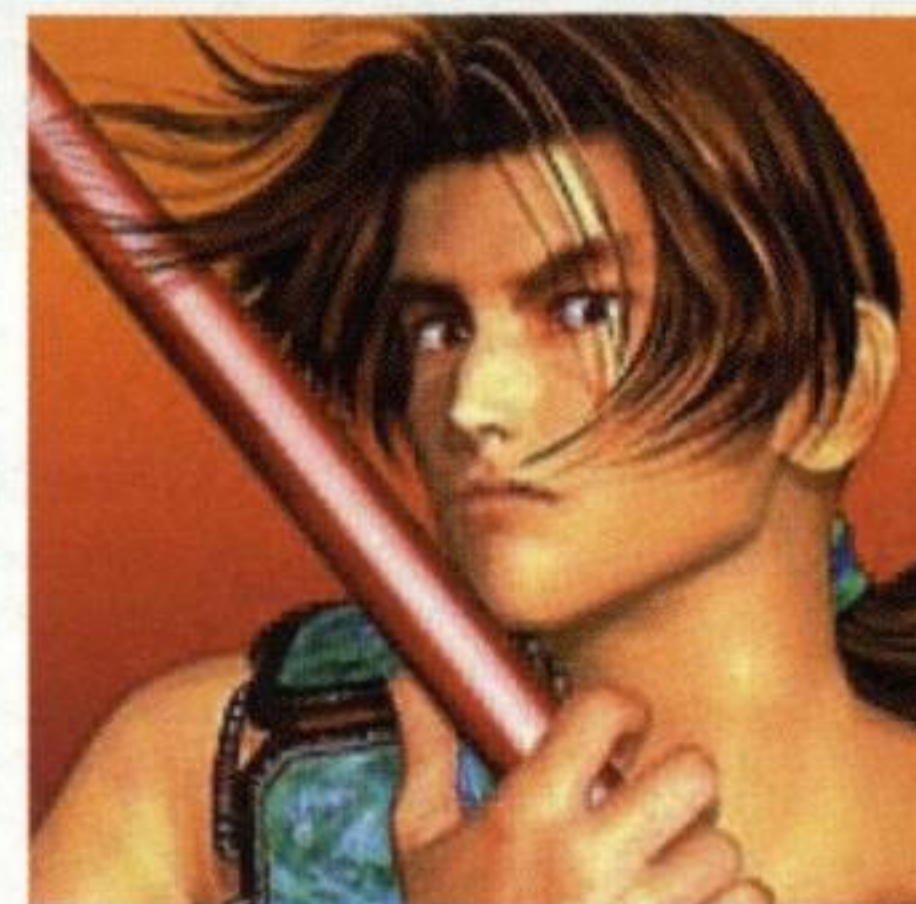
Ivy

■ **Who?** Full name Isabella Valentine, Ivy's the daughter of an English aristocrat who went mad. Determined to find out what drove her father insane, she invents a sword which is also a whip and slips into a catsuit. *Arcade*'s kind of gal.
 ■ **Weapon:** The Snake Sword which can transform into a long-range whip-chain.
 ■ **Best move:** The Embrace Of Lust (run at the opponent's right side and press Y+B). Ivy forces them to their knees, wraps the whip-chain around their neck and pulls. Nasty.



Lizardman

■ **Who?** Formerly a human good guy called Aeon, he was possessed by an evil seed and kidnapped by Astaroth, who turned him into a big lizard. Harsh. Boasts a fighting style very similar to that of Sophitia.
 ■ **Weapon:** A sword and shield.
 ■ **Best move:** The Mezentius Style Reptile Rumble is always a good laugh. Get close to the opponent and press down, down/left, left, Y+B. Lizardman clambers onto the shoulders of his enemy and kicks them in the face before flooring them with a vicious somersault kick.



Kilik

■ **Who?** An orphan found abandoned on the steps of the Ling Sheng Su temple and later adopted by Edge Master.
 ■ **Weapon:** A staff called the Kali-Yuga and a mirror on his shoulder to repel evil. Or do his make-up.
 ■ **Best move:** The Phoenix Pounce – press X+A or Y+A when close behind the opponent. Kilik slams the enemy to the floor, leaps into the air and flings the staff at their body, only for it to return to his hands. Also try the Tricky Bo (Down, Right, X+Y) where Kilik doles out a nasty wedgie.



Maxi

■ **Who?** Bequipped pirate in a pearl jumpsuit. Some say he resembles a young Elvis. More like Alvin Stardust.
 ■ **Weapon:** The nunchaku – a landmark in UK videogames since this weapon has previously been edited out of any game in which it appeared, including *Soul Blade*.
 ■ **Best move:** The key to playing Maxi is to keep him moving rather than hit with spectacular moves, but there's always room for the Branding Nunchaku (right, Y, left) where he spins the controversial weapon in his opponent's face.



Sophitia

■ **Who?** Not so fast boys, the delectable miss Sophitia Alexandra – the baker's daughter – is already well and truly engaged.
 ■ **Weapon:** The sword and shield combination.
 ■ **Best move:** Here's one for the deviants who find this whole business a bit of a sexual turn-on. In the Round Kicker (approach the opponent's left side and press X+A or Y+A), Sophitia clamps her thighs around the enemy's neck before leaping into the air, thighs still holding firm, cracking their neck on landing.



Taki

■ **Who?** She boasts a history so convoluted even Pete Frame would have problems drawing up that particular family tree. The fastest character in the game, though.
 ■ **Weapon:** A short stall called The Ninjatou.
 ■ **Best move:** Press down, down/left, left to bring on Possession. Taki will glow, at which point you can press X+Y to do the Exorcism and a huge blast of electricity will issue forth and floor her opponent.



Voldo

■ **Who?** Look at that gimp mask! The velvet codpiece! The bare arse! The way he thrusts his groin towards the opponent! Learn that he's Italian and is actually 46 years old and it all begins to make sense.
 ■ **Weapon:** Those knives on his hands which he calls Shame & Blame.
 ■ **Best move:** If you want freaky moves, Voldo's the man. Put him in the Mantis Crawl position (down, Y+B), and goes crazy. For a simple, powerful and unblockable hit, go for the Web Weaver (left, X+Y).



Xianghua

■ **Who?** The *Arcade* cover star's sword skills were honed by her mother with a sacred weapon nicked from the Ling Sheng Su temple. She's only 16 so don't get any ideas. Unless you're 16 too, of course. Sweet.
 ■ **Weapon:** Chinese sword the Krita-Yuga.
 ■ **Best move:** The Ma Chiueh (left, left, X+Y). This will probably only work on novice opponents since you hit them once, then recover to charge up with electricity before giving them a high-voltage thrashing.



Yoshimitsu

■ **Who?** He's a mechanised ninja you may also have seen in *Tekken*.
 ■ **Weapon:** The Katana, as also wielded by Mitsurugi.
 ■ **Best move:** Press X+Y to get him pogoing about the place, or approach from behind and press X+A or Y+A for an impressive Tornado Drop. There's also Yoshimitsu's Suicide (right, right, X+Y – and hold those last two buttons). He'll stab himself in the chest, but will seriously injure the opponent at the same time. This usually results in a double knockout.

simplyGAMES www.simplygames.co.uk

Win some decks

Prompt your neighbours to sympathise with Morrissey's view on DJs with a set of spanking new wheels of steel, ones and twos... yes, mighty Technics 1200s. Aiiight?



Booyaka-sha. Music, these days, comes in many shapes and forms. There's CD, cassette, MiniDisc, DVD, MP3 and the Internet to worry about. But many people still believe vinyl to be the ultimate music medium. It's bigger. It's rounder. And – some would say – it still sounds better than whatever new technology can throw into the musical ring.

Where vinyl of course comes into its own is in the crazy world of dance and hip-hop, where it's de rigeur to "scratch" and "cut" your precious discs – heaven knows why. As De La Soul once said, everybody wants to be a DJ. And now Arcade, in association with Simply Games, is giving you that very chance, by offering one lucky reader a pair of decks of his of her own. Unbelievable.

Simply Games, in case you haven't heard of it, is the place to buy your games online. Not only does the company guarantee to beat the price of any UK game or console, it offers free delivery, won't charge you until your goods are safely popped in the post and offer a no quibble, no questions returns policy. The all-important address is www.simplygames.co.uk. You may never need go to the shops again. Except for things other than videogames, of course. Like butter.

In fact, Arcade can't think of a nicer on-line mail order company to accept a pair of Technics from. What makes it

even better is that the decks in question are the ever-famous SL1200s, complete with a mixer, all the leads and connections, and everything you'll need to start DJing in the comfort of your very bedroom. Apart from some records, of course. And some talent. But hey! You can always put your favourite Ministry of Sound CD on and pretend.

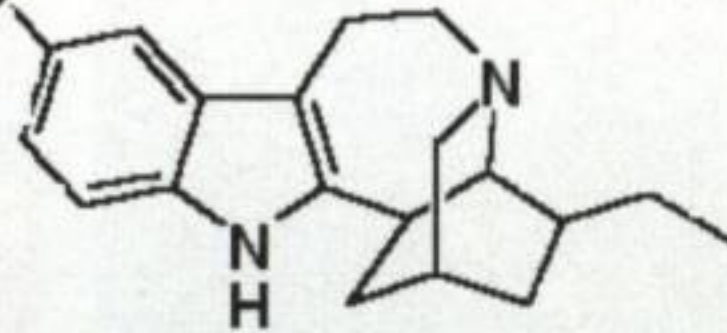
So, if you too believe God is a DJ, simply crank your mind to plus eight, hazard a guess to the following question and send Arcade the results. Nuff respect.

What is the chemical formula of vinyl?

a) $[-CH_2CHCl-]_n$

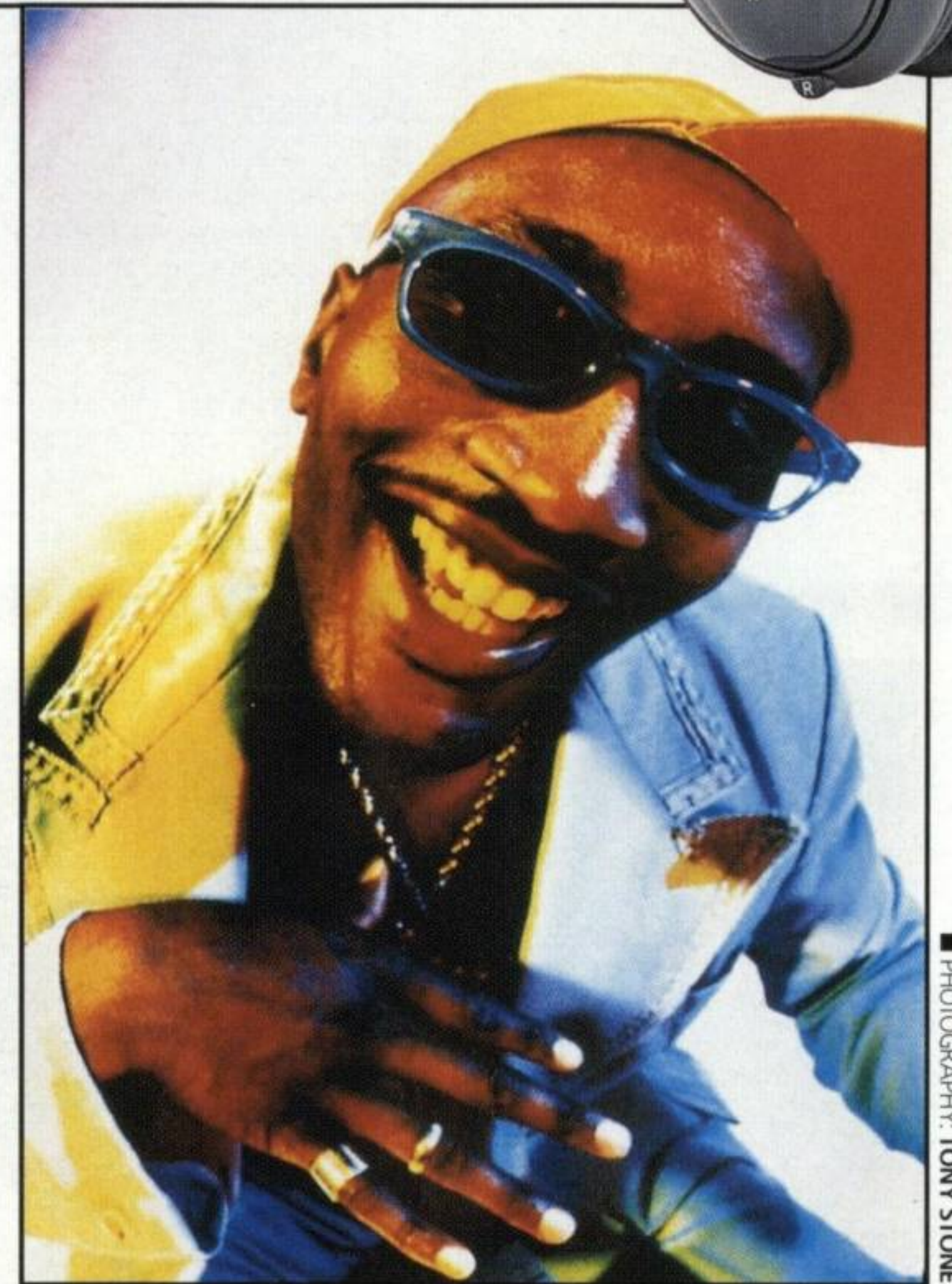
b) $C_6H_{12}O_6$

c) —O—



■ **One time. Send your answer together with your name, age, address and daytime telephone number on a limited edition 12" white label (or a postcard) to:**

Ant and Decks competition
Arcade
29 Monmouth Street
BATH BA1 2DL



PHOTOGRAPHY: TONY STONE



■ **Two turntables and, um, a mixer.**

THE RULES

- 1 No purchase is necessary.
- 2 No Future Publishing or Simply Games employee or their associates may enter this compo.
- 3 The closing date is 28 January 2000.
- 4 The editor's decision is final, you hear?
- 5 There is no cash alternative to the competition prizes.
- 6 Absolutely no correspondence will be entered into regarding any aspect of this competition.
- 7 Individuals may only enter this competition once. And we will spot multiples. Maybe.



A Review

The Ultimate Game Buyer's Guide

PAGE 68

SOUL CALIBUR

THE MUCH-HERALDED BEAT-'EM-UP ARRIVES.



INSIDE...

- FIFA 2000
- Theme Park World
- Donkey Kong 64
- Sega Bass Fishing
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- Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings
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- The Nomad Soul
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- Nocturne
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- Earthworm Jim 3D

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Star ratings

- ***** Simply the best. A game you really must play.
- **** Excellent. Definitely worth your money.
- *** Good stuff. Not a world-beater, but fine within its genre.
- ** Strictly average. We say: don't buy it.
- * Awful. Avoid at all costs.

■ Kilik's staff has a mighty range, but Mitsurugi dodges well for a man in pantaloons.



Arcade
Dreamcast
Game of
the Month

Game info

- Publisher: **Sega**
- Developer: **Namco**
- Price: **£40**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **VM Unit, 60 Htz**

SOUL CALIBUR

KING OF FIGHTERS.

Can you hear them? The sound of all those would-be chop chop masters of the beat-'em-up genre busy building up their calluses ready to reign supreme at *Soul Calibur* on the Dreamcast. You can? Trust *Arcade*: you'll be one of them minutes after taking up weapons and stepping into this particular arena. Next thing you know you'll be lashing out your hard-earned and bringing a smile to your local Sega-seller's face.

After all, really, really good fighting games are about as rare as a fuzz free builder's bum. But they are out there if you look hard enough, and *Soul Calibur* has to be the best character combat game to hit any console, ever.

The deeply skilful *Soul Blade* has returned, fresh from the hills where it has been learning the zen of gaming, with a new name and punching its weight. *Soul Calibur* is unbeatable in every respect, and it's going to be hard not to wax nauseatingly rhapsodic for the length of this review.

Namco, which is now definitive Shogun developer of fighting games, has come up with an absolute corker for the Dreamcast. Instant gratification guaranteed, *Soul Calibur* will appeal to abominable button mashers and dextrously digitated karate kids alike: it's all in the footwork and fingerwork you see.

Each of the 18 characters has a ridiculous number of set moves, including multiple vertical and horizontal kicking, throwing and slashing combinations. Add a couple of unblockables and a system that enables you to use the full stretch of the arena, and you know you've died and gone to beat-'em-up heaven.

Although only three of the four Dreamcast controller buttons are used for attack moves, a vast amount of variety has been drawn from them. And when you add to this the fourth, blocking button, you can nigh-on do what you like. For example, provided you get your timing right you can pull off some blinding counter attacks. However, if you fall

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

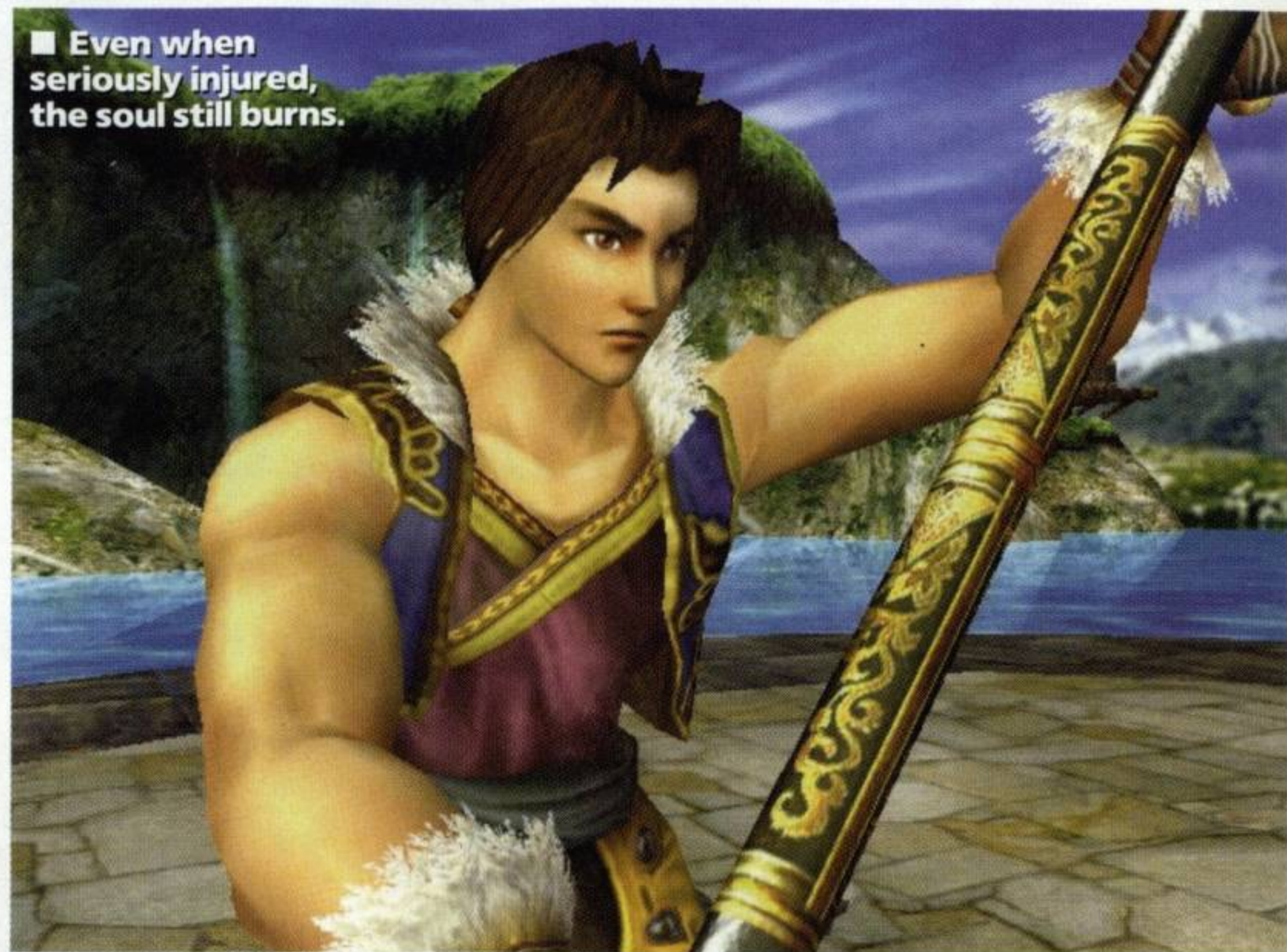
- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| Soul | Hole |
| ■ Every | ■ Limited CPU AI |
| ■ Damn | |
| ■ Thing | |



■ Beat-'em-up as modern ballet, anybody?



■ Even when seriously injured, the soul still burns.



SOUL CALIBUR HAS TO BE THE BEST CHARACTER COMBAT GAME TO HIT ANY CONSOLE, EVER.

any way short of virtuoso class, more often than not these moves will be pure chance. Add to this weapons ranging from steel claws to extendable blades, and you know you're on for a visual feast and the kind of action seen in a Jackie Chan film before it's slo-moed for Western audiences.

Choose your character with care, as the weapons they wield will affect your strategy. Some only have very short range, whilst others can reach out and touch someone from afar. Yoshimitsu is back, more acrobatic than ever and with an unnecessary level of facial mask detail. He's joined by a mix of old *Soul Blade* characters and a few new ones. All are from different times and places as usual, but are united in their quest for the evil sword. The big bad boss is a guy called Inferno who randomly takes on the characteristics and weapons of the other characters. If there's room for improvement in this game, it lies with the CPU AI, which is a little easy to outfox. However, you won't be playing this game solo for too long, as it is the two-player that will assure longevity.

That said, amongst the bog-standard single-player Arcade, Time Attack, Practice and Survival modes, *Soul Calibur* has a seriously involving solo extravaganza that will take considerable time to complete. The Mission Battle mode is set across a three-screen sepia coloured parchment of the 16th century world map. Master Soul Edge returns to take you through the mandatory learning stages, although you'll probably make it through these early stages more by luck than judgement, particularly when you have to attack him with a salvo of unblockable moves.

As you progress, though, you're awarded points for winning that can be exchanged in the gallery for an art card. These not only provide you with original images from



the creation of the game but they also unlock further stages, extra weapons, costume changes and more.

The Mission Battle mode is also a great place to explore all the arenas. These are all beautifully depicted and sometimes even involve interaction with the character – above and beyond pushing for a ring out. These arenas can make life much harder for you. Two that spring immediately to mind are a ring where poison insect ridden sands move beneath your feet and suck you in if you aren't careful, and a windswept mountain top where you forever run the risk of being blown over the edge.

Soul Calibur is an incredibly well thought out beat-'em-up. From the instantly gratifying fighting system that will still have you learning months down the line, to the characters and arenas. Even the traditionally disappointing single-player mode that habitually disappoints in other games is great.

With hair that moves and breasts that don't, this game is graphically stunning as it only could be on the Dreamcast. Silky smooth in its animation, *Soul Calibur* is undoubtedly one of the best multi-players around. You could even say it's a cut above the rest. ★★★★★ **Emily Newton Dunn**

Or you could try...

Virtua Fighter 3tb
Sega ★★
Serviceable and competent hand-to-hand grappling. Nothing special.

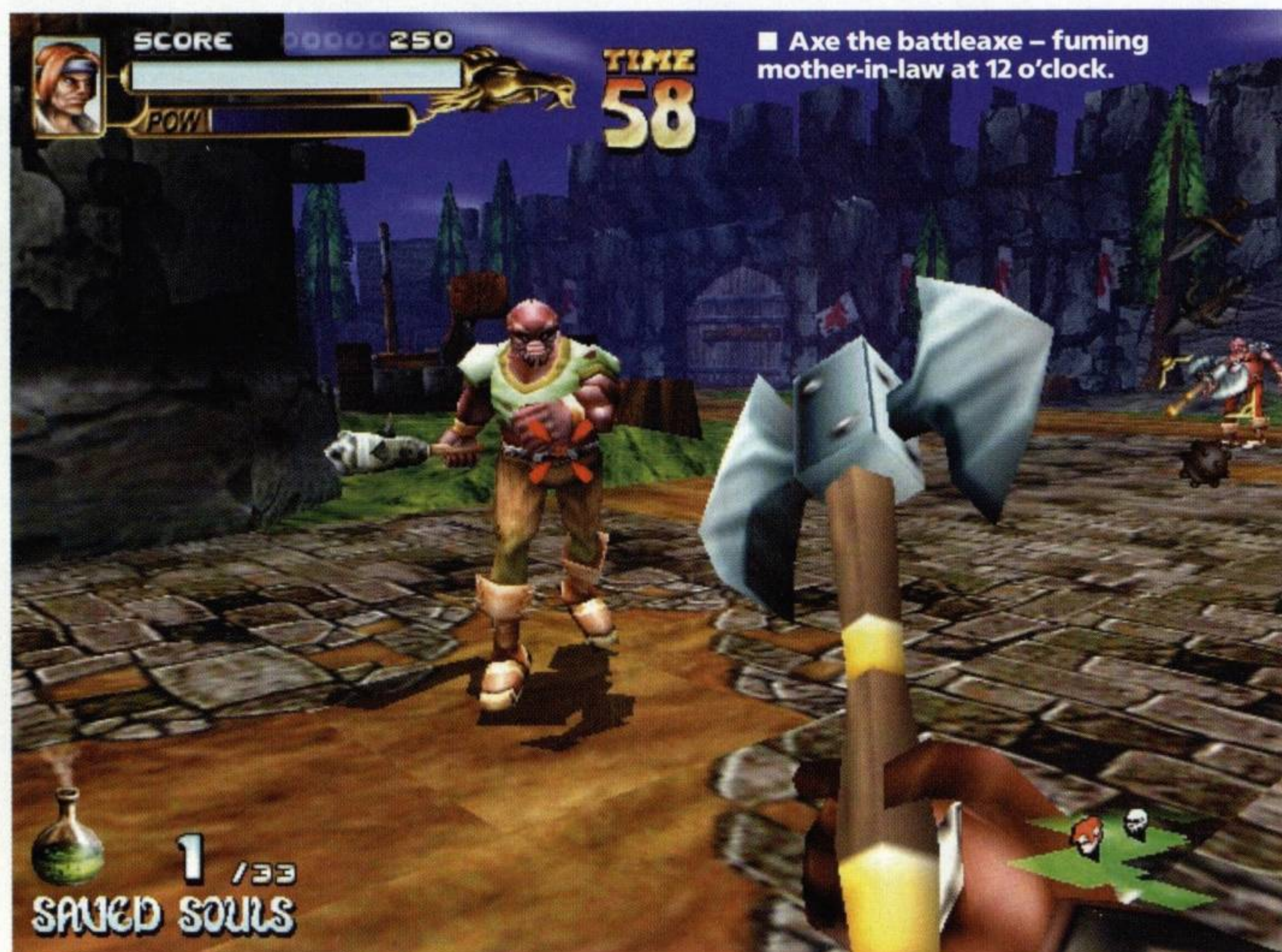
Power Stone
Eidos ★★★★★
Mad-as-a-hatter no-holds-barred fighting madness. A pub brawl on your Dreamcast.



■ That Ivy sure is one feisty basque-tastic London lady.



■ Voldo: shops at S&M.



■ Axe the battleaxe – fuming mother-in-law at 12 o'clock.

■ (Below) pretty graphics and three dimensions can't hide the fact that *Soul Fighter* is just a reworking of the Sega Mega Drive classic, *Golden Axe*.



Game info

- Publisher: Toka
- Developer: Red Orb
- Price: £40
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1
- Extras: VM unit

SOUL FIGHTER

ROAMING THE STREETS AND LOOKING FOR TROUBLE.

The technology may change, but the games stay the same. Having polished off the latest incarnation of *Sonic*, Sega fans can turn their attention to the 1999 version of Mega Drive classic *Golden Axe*, now called *Soul Fighter*.

While the action now takes place in three dimensions, the principle remains the same: walk along, collect power-ups and attack baddies, with the emphasis on the last bit. And although *Soul Fighter* is a long way from perfect, it manages to elicit its fair share of grins.

Having sat through the dreadful intro sequence, which features a king reeling off a dreary tale in a Sean Connery voice, you pick your character. There's Altus, who has ginger hair and a sword. There's Orion, with a beard and a staff. And there's Syomi, a knife-wielding girl.

Then it's on to the game, which looks terrific. Everything has been motion-captured and rendered in super-smooth Dreamcast 3D. The resulting animation is top-notch. Squint and it really does look like a bunch of people attacking each other on your telly. The fighting moves aren't as complex as those of a traditional beat-'em-up, but you can still string together combos or pull off a spinning kick amid a circle of enemies.

To add a little strategy you need to decide when to deploy your sword/staff/knives. Oh, and as you prowl the streets you'll find power-up chests. Generally these contain food but occasionally you'll find a projectile weapon, like a knife or an axe. With one of these

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Punch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Superb animation ■ Splendidly violent ■ Strangely compulsive | <p>Judy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Confusing camera ■ Sluggish controls ■ Gets a bit repetitive |
|--|---|

in the bag, you can switch to first-person in the heat of battle and take out the opposition at long-range.

Which would be great if the controls weren't so deuced hard to get to grips

with. The problems stem from a camera that never seems sure which way to point. As baddies attack it does its best to stay focused on the action, but ends up swinging around drunkenly, à la late-'80s yooof TV. For example, you'll be about to perform a flying kick on a lizard man to your left only to find the camera has swung through 180° and he's on your right. Then you have to wait for your character to finish his motion-captured skid-to-a-halt animation before you can turn round and try again, by which time the lizard man will have pranged you up the arse with his trident. When you're being attacked by three or four characters at once the temptation is to waggle the joystick and stab buttons at random, which isn't so great.

That said, and although *Soul Fighter* goes home with just three of the available five stars, it's one of those games you just don't want to switch off once you've got going. Odd as it may seem, roaming the streets looking for trouble is as much fun as it ever was. ★★★ **Jonathan Davies**

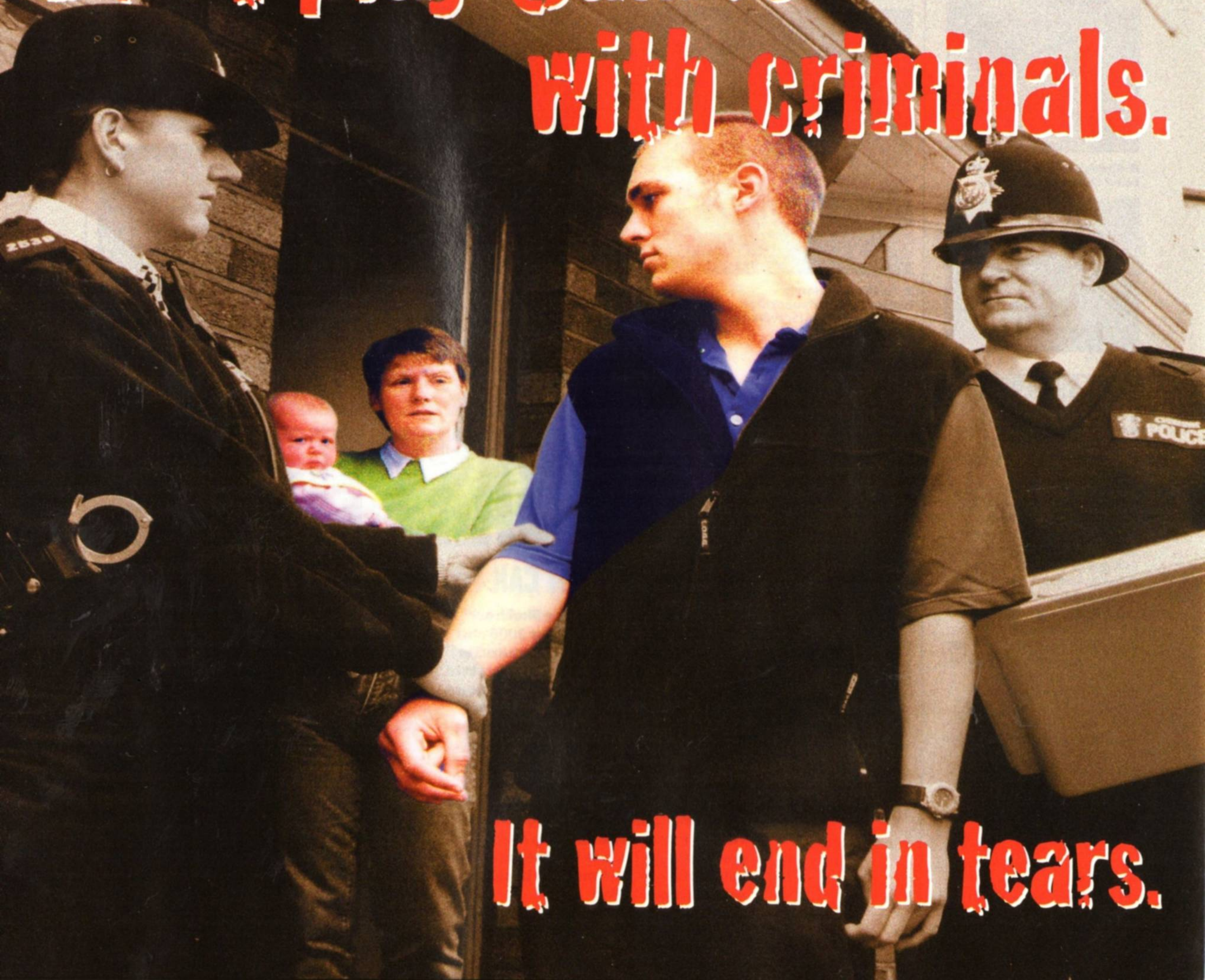
Or you could try...

Soul Calibur
Sega ★★★★★
The best "soul game", and the beat-'em-up of the moment.

Power Stone
Eidos ★★★★★
Less "soul", but a brilliantly inventive way of fighting nevertheless.



Don't play games with criminals.



It will end in tears.

A SMALL sample of recent convictions:

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John Edgar	Wakefield	£400 fine & £120 costs
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Norman Mockford	Surrey	8 Months Prison & 180 hrs Community Service
Anthony Scaccia	Cardiff	£2000 fine & £1585 costs
Mark Hopkins	Newport	£100 fine & £100 costs
Rowan Pastile	Buckingham	5 x £400 fine & 6 x 150 hrs Community Service
PCs Direct	Northampton	3 x £2500 fine
Mark Williams	Aberaeron	£400 fine & £5000 costs

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■ Gameplay is as cold as the snow that you "surf" on.



SNOW SURFERS

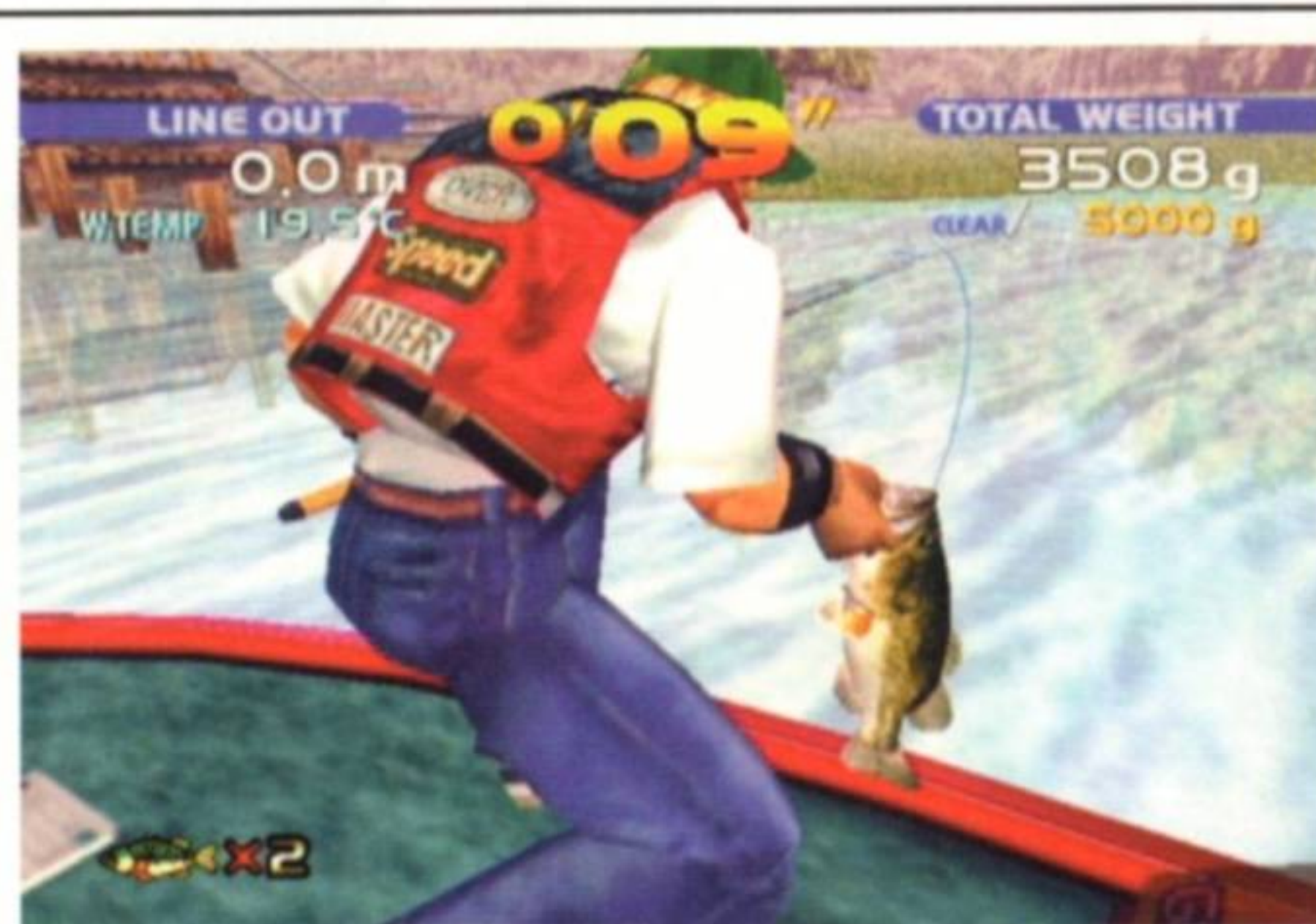
- Publisher: **Sega**
- Developer: **UEP Systems**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **VM unit**

■ Snowboarding racing games always seem like a bad idea, especially when they are by the same people who brought you *Cool Boarders* on PlayStation. Snowboarding isn't about racing and getting fast times, bro – it's about freedom of movement and the rush of performing stunts and tricks. Leave the racing to the cars. The complex premise of *Snow Surfers* is to make your way downhill as quickly as possible, performing stunts as you go to score points. Get enough points and a quick time and you'll qualify for the next course.

The main problem with the game is that it doesn't feel like snowboarding in the slightest. True, the courses are long and varied, but you might as well be hurtling down the side of a mountain on a dustbin lid for all the realism here. And for a Dreamcast game, it's way too slow. Despite your speedo's claims of reaching 70mph, there is little going on around you that would convince you of this fact. The action is too pedestrian and you can quite happily sit back and take in the pretty scenery as you amble your way downhill.

But then *Snow Surfers* isn't about realism. Like its PlayStation cousins it is an attempt to bring the rush from the mountains into your living room, arcade-style. This makes it far too easy to pull off outrageous stunts and tracks are too linear. And the absolute worst part is the "cool" voice over dude – suffice to say that after a few plays the anticipatory dread that fills you when you know he's about to spew forth with another of his dreaded comments will bring tears to your eyes.

Snow Surfers is average. The game modes are unimaginative, the gameplay is stale and the whole package is a snowboarding cliché too far. ★★ **Nick Jones**



■ As the ceaselessly enthusiastic commentator will tell you, "that's average size – good job!"



Game info

- Publisher: **Sega**
- Developer: **Sega**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **£60 (with fishing controller)**
- Players: **1**

SEGA BASS FISHING

BASS – HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Hook, line... and stinker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It's <i>Quake</i> with fish. ■ You get to wield that crazy fishing controller. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Arcade mode is too brief. ■ Original mode gets a teensy bit dull. |
|---|--|

Before discussing the likelihood of *Horseshoe Thrower 2000* and *Crochet Thunder* (as featured in *Smack My Pitch Up*) crashing into the game charts, it's fair to point out that *Sega Bass Fishing* isn't really anything like angling. Naturally, the sad cases in grubby tweed hats you see lining the river bank on Saturday afternoons (and always about ten metres from an industrial effluent pipe) are nothing to aspire to. *Sega Bass Fishing* ingores the stinking maggot fraternity and heads for the lakes in celebration of all-American bass competition fishing.

Even so, bar the lush landscapes and the muck-green windcheaters, *Sega Bass Fishing* is

barely a simulation. If it were true to the sport the majority of your playing time would be spent doing absolutely sod all, with a wet backside. Instead, the Arcade mode bears a distinct similarity to a *Quake* deathmatch. You choose your weapon (or bait), wander around looking for your opponents (the fish) and within seconds you're caught in an in-your-face, one-on-one battle, attempting to force your enemy to eat lead (or whatever fishhooks are made of).

Once the bass has gullibly chomped on your lure, the announcer cries "fish!", a guitar riffs ferociously and the battle is on to reel in the scaly foe without its vigorous protests snapping your line. Cue a fret solo as you clasp the prize catch to your bosom. Landing a "huge" one is a moment of true epiphany.

Arcade mode is for honing your skills and getting used to casting and reeling with the ridiculous fishing controller. The waters are heaving with bass and, with a couple of continues, you'll finish it in about 15 minutes.

Original mode, on the other hand, requires experience, deliberation and something approaching the patience of actual bass fishing. You'll need to know where the big fish congregate in any given environment and which bait will tempt them onto your line. But you soon reach the point where only the strangely expressive faces of the gorgeously-rendered fish keep you, ahem, hooked.

Sadly Sega eschewed the potentially hilarious two-player option leaving *Sega Bass Fishing* as an endearing novelty, ultimately hamstrung by the repetitive nature of the sport. In other words, Sega has made a rod for its own back. Still, you should have seen the one that got away... ★★★ **Sam Richards**



■ Green bodywarmer essential.



■ Fantastic detail, but old cars and crap commentary.



Game info

- Publisher: Video System
- Developer: Paradigm
- Developer: £40
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-2
- Extras: VM unit



F-1 WORLD GRAND PRIX

ONE FOR EDDIE TO PRACTICE ON OVER THE WINTER.

Formula One games have become the console equivalent of those "benchmark" tests performed by PC-owning bearded men. All the games aspire to the same ideal, so in theory, if you fire up the Dreamcast's first Formula One game alongside *F1 '99* on the PlayStation and the N64's *F-1 World GP 2*, you should be able to see exactly which console is best.

The answer? Sega's new machine wins by a mile. It can recreate Formula One cars in never-before-seen detail, down to readable Goodyear and Bridgestone logos on the tyres, intricate suspension struts and accurately proportioned barge boards (even on the Ferraris). The way the tyres pick up gravel and grass when you venture off-road is terrific, and pit-stops are a delight to behold.

The Dreamcast is pretty nifty at scenery, too. Witness grandstands filled with actual rows of cut-out people, not just coloured squares. Marvel at the waving flags, the flashing cameras and the cranes poised to hoist Damon Hill out of harm's way. And applaud the almost complete absence of pop-up, so as you squeal round Becketts you can see tiny cars disappearing off into the distance towards Chapel. The frame-rate suffers occasional palpitations, but for the most part *F-1 World Grand Prix* is velvet smooth and gives a fearsome sensation of speed.

The game also plays admirably, thanks to being based on *F-1 World GP 2* on the N64 and *Official F1 Racing* on the PC. The handling strikes a canny balance between realism and skiddy fun, and the analogue triggers on the Dreamcast controller are ideal for accelerating and braking. The only fly in the ointment is steering that's a little twitchy around the straight-ahead, making it hard to take a graceful line through long, sweeping bends like the famous tunnel at Monaco.

There are just four questions you need to ask yourself before taking a hammer to your piggy bank: can you live with the world's worst commentator, who'll hilariously say "Try driving on the track!" every time you put a wheel on



■ (Left) Check the wingmirror visuals.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Ecclestone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Best ever F1 graphics ■ Handy handling ■ Atmospheric | <p>Eccles cake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Out-of-date teams ■ Unimaginative ■ Hateful commentary |
|---|--|

the grass? Will you be happy with boring crashes that somehow transform 400mph head-on collisions into what feels like a supermarket car park scrape? Do you really want a bunch of dusty old '98 cars and drivers to take up residence on your Dreamcast? And will you stay awake despite the lack of crowd-pleasing gimmicks like the instant replays in *Grand Prix 2* on the PC, or *Official F1 Racing's* helicopter tours of the tracks?

Yes, yes, yes and yes? Then get this, and laugh at last-gen Formula One games. ★★★ **Jonathan Davies**

Or you could try...

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Monaco Grand Prix 2
Ubi Soft ★★
Looks pretty good on the demo disc, if lacking authentic teams.</p> | <p>Sega Rally 2
Sega ★★★★★
Sturdier cars, but not quite the game it could have been.</p> |
|---|---|



■ Night racing without headlights. Not too clever.



SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING

- Publisher: Ubi Soft
- Developer: Ubi Soft
- Developer: £40
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-2
- Extras: VM unit

■ Dreamcast's launch was marred by the lack of a top notch racing game to compete with PlayStation's mighty *Gran Turismo*. Sadly, the release of *Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing* doesn't put things right – it's nothing more than a by-the-numbers arcade racer.

Yes, it's your basic set up – you race through a number of championship courses to be crowned the king of biking and win a special cup. Winning opens up new tracks and new bikes and gives you a warm feeling inside.

Suzuki is an eco-friendly video game – it recycles its courses so that you race them over and over again in a different order for the different championships, the only real difference is a slight upgrade in the racing skills of the computerised opposition.

The racing itself isn't all that bad: it's fast and the bikes handle in a strange, if fun, way by bouncing all over the shop. When you inevitably come off your bike, you are treated to some spectacular leg-shattering crashes. However, it is ultimately frustrating – it's too easy to overtake the computer bikes but then, even if you put a perfect lap in, they'll pass you immediately when you crash. There's no justice. The controls are unforgiving as well with over-steering all too easy with the Dreamcast analogue.

Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing is a lacklustre racing game with little to keep it out of the pit of mediocrity. It's fun to drive for a while but ultimately the frustration will outweigh the good times. ★★ **Nick Jones**



■ The in-game kids have a propensity to vomit – make sure you don't follow suit.



■ A fantastic user-friendly interface accessed via the remote control in the corner will enable you to build parks like this in minutes.

Game info

- Publisher: Electronic Arts
- Developer: Bullfrog
- Price: £30
- Release date: on sale now
- Requires: P200, 32Mb RAM, 300Mb HD-space, 4x CD-ROM drive, video accelerator card.



THEME PARK WORLD

WATCH OUT MICKEY – THIS IS THE HAPPIEST PLACE ON EARTH.

Back in 1994, Bullfrog came out with *Theme Park*, a less-than-serious take on Will Wright's ever-popular *SimCity*. Instead of being mayor, you took over from freeze-dried Uncle Walt and profited from kiddie joy. It worked and more than four million copies were sold.

But after the initial thrills and spills wore off, most gamers put *Theme Park* on the shelf and remembered the happy times. The truth is the fun wore off after a while, usually when the stock market screen came up. It suddenly became 'A' level economics.

Four years on, technology has advanced amusement. Nowadays an excursion to Mickey Mouse Land is replete with full-on interactive adventure. Why should computer simulations be different? If you missed *Theme Park* first time around, the basis of the sequel is very similar. As Herr Director you're responsible for the whole kit and kaboodle. With that comes the universally enjoyable task of being responsible for the layout of the park, the height of the coasters, the foodstuffs on offer and the distribution of joy.

Everything's maintained with a simple point and click interface. If you forget your mouse-wielding talents thanks to copious amounts of substance abuse, there's a wacky little helper on hand to keep you on target. It's his task to remind you of the other aspect of management – upkeep. Thankfully he can be turned off.

You can choose to sell reconstituted fat products next to the 500 foot free-fall ride, but what goes down has a tendency to come back up. Attendance is certain to dwindle if your environs stink, and as a result the park of your dreams will go under. Hire in some cleaners and they'll make good use of their mops and long, pointy grappling hook things. While you're at it, get the handymen in, massage the wallets of some grant-hungry scientists, get a security guard or two and bring forth the entertainers. Thanks to an updated AI system, all of your actions will have an

immediate impact, documented, as in the past, with little icons above the punters' heads which give their verdicts.

There are four new worlds to litter with magnificent constructions of steel and screams, into which you can pack 100 rides and attractions. The themes are pretty standard fare – Wonderland, Outer Space, Halloween and Lost Kingdom – and there are no surprises in the accessory departments. Though Bullfrog is keeping its mouth firmly sealed, here's hoping that the Eastertime expansion pack will have a built-in editor along with extra rides. The dream of *Itchy and Scratchy* world may soon be realised.

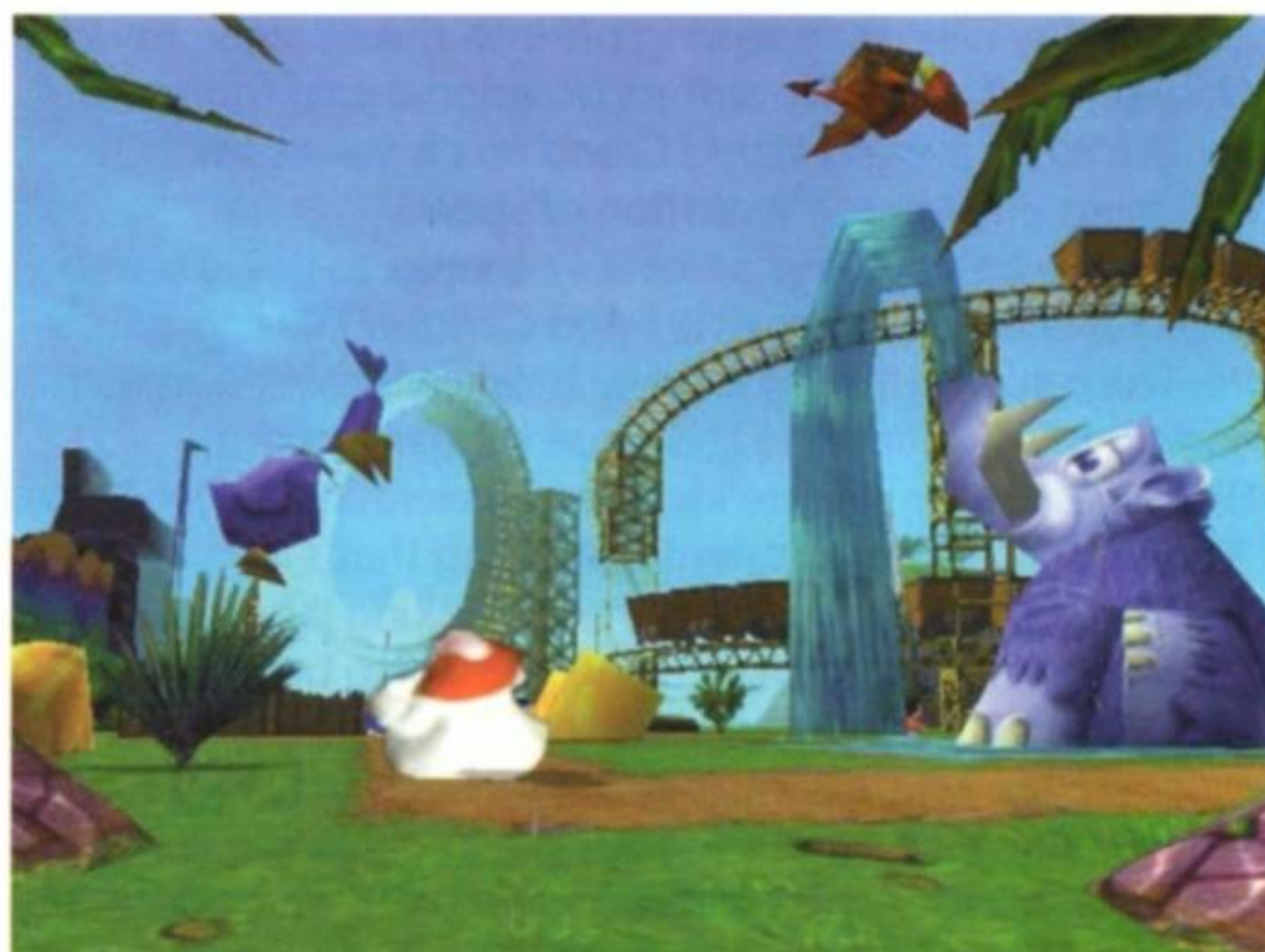
Within seconds of entering the Auto Run mode's sole world you can have little tykes high-tailing it along the paths, demanding food/toilets/balloons/enjoyment. But for the more serious individual, Simulation offers you rewards for goals met with access to new objects and parks. This combination of objectives and rewards gives the game

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

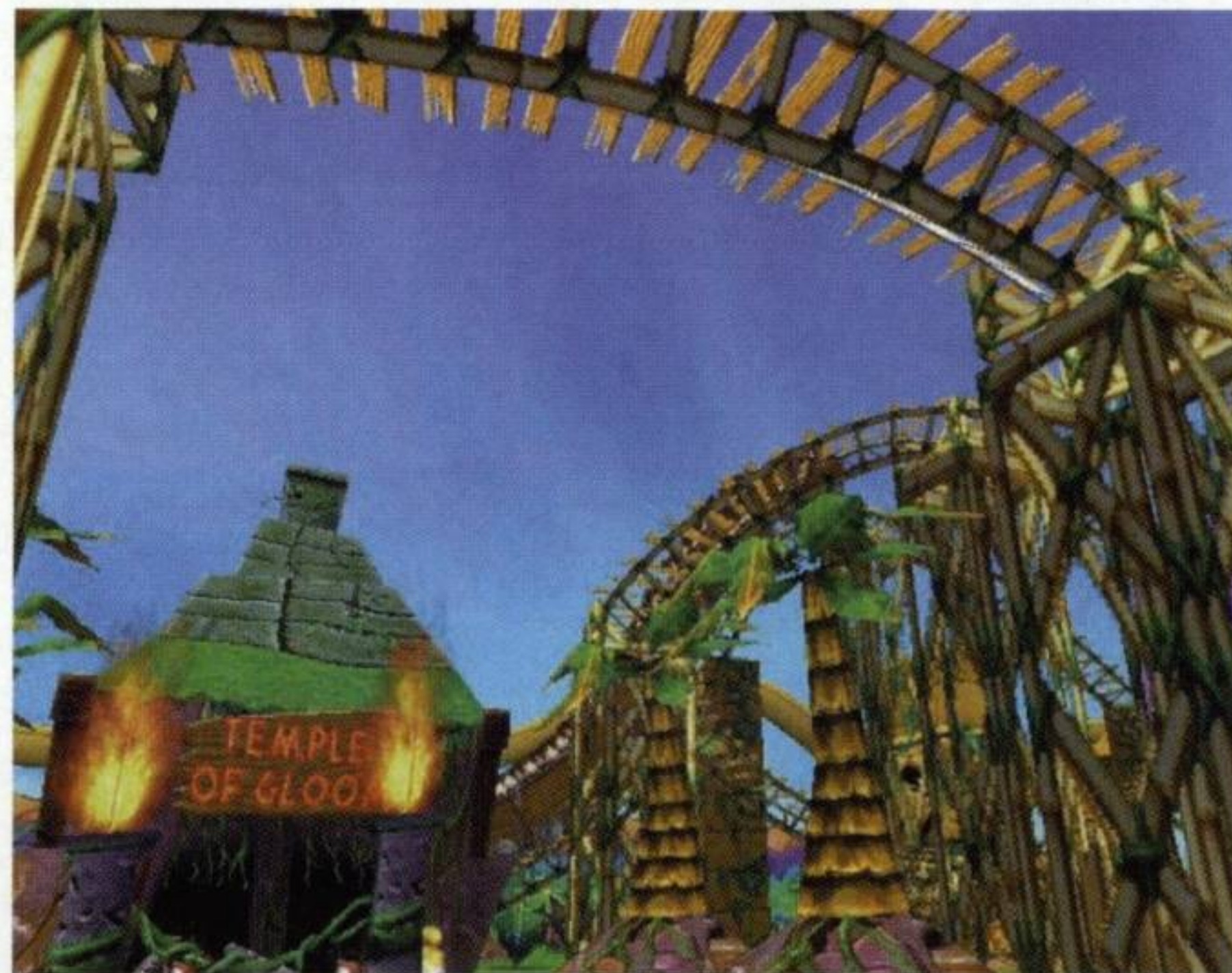
- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Nemesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ride your own coaster ■ Excellent feedback system ■ Simulation with attitude | <p>Tea Cups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not enough accessory variety ■ Hand-holding with staff ■ Balancing the budget |
|--|--|



■ Welcome to the jungle, one of four available themes.



■ Camcorder mode gives you a kid's eye view of the park.



■ (Above) Bouncy castles will only sustain interest for so long. Buy a rollercoaster, you tight bastard.

some well-needed structure lest it bury itself in paperwork and become an exercise in redundancy.

Theme Park World represents a complete revamp of the already excellent *Populous: The Beginning* engine. All the action happens in glorious 3D, and your punters are no longer represented by sprites riding on untouchable structures. Now not only does the overview look great in fully rotatable 360°, but it juts out at terrifying angles, loosening your grip on your lunch at every turn.

Grab the camcorder and the kids and head over to your opus of roller coaster creation. You don't have to wait in the queue, remember, because you're the boss. Keep your eyes peeled, because from this angle you can check out what's going wrong – and right – with the park as a whole.

Sadly, however, there is still too much for you to think about. You spend too much gametime staring at a flat green map and overseeing proceedings, and don't get to do enough quality gawking at the fat kid who's revisiting the deep fried lard you fed him earlier.

Still there's always the visual quality of the game to fall back on. Imagine walking through a Tim Burton animated sequence complete with Danny Elfman-inspired music and you'll get a handle on the *Theme Park World*. Another fun thing to do is to tune into the security cameras or handheld

YOU CAN SELL RECONSTITUTED FAT PRODUCTS... BUT WHAT GOES DOWN TENDS TO COME BACK UP.

camcorder and wander around the park checking out the subtle visual touches Bullfrog has built into the game.

Leaping headlong into the '90's, Internet lines are open to obsessed anoraks looking to enhance their collections of rides, themes and friends. At the official Web site you can post your park, engage in competition for the "Mine Is The Best" title and send along snapshots to mates. You can also go for a virtual day at someone else's dream Alton Towers.

This is a great game for middle managers who want to move up and view twiddling with rides as a more attractive option than practising with spreadsheets. Clever and open-ended enough to keep the mind occupied, but calm enough for a post-office wind down, *Theme Park World* is definitely worth the price of admission. ★★★★★ **Aleks Krotoski**

Or you could try...

Roller Coaster Tycoon
Microprose ★★★★★
Almost stole *Theme Park's* thunder, it's the same general thing but not as pretty.

Pizza Syndicate
Software 2000 ★
Stomach-turning and dull – cooking was never this pointless.

■ In *Theme Park World* you can hear them scream.





■ Stats and menus. The stuff that dreams are made of.



CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER SEASON 99/00

- Publisher: Eidos
- Developer: Sports Interactive
- Price: £25
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-6
- Requires: P166, 32Mb RAM, 250MB HD-space
- Recommended: P233, 32Mb RAM, 500MB HD-space

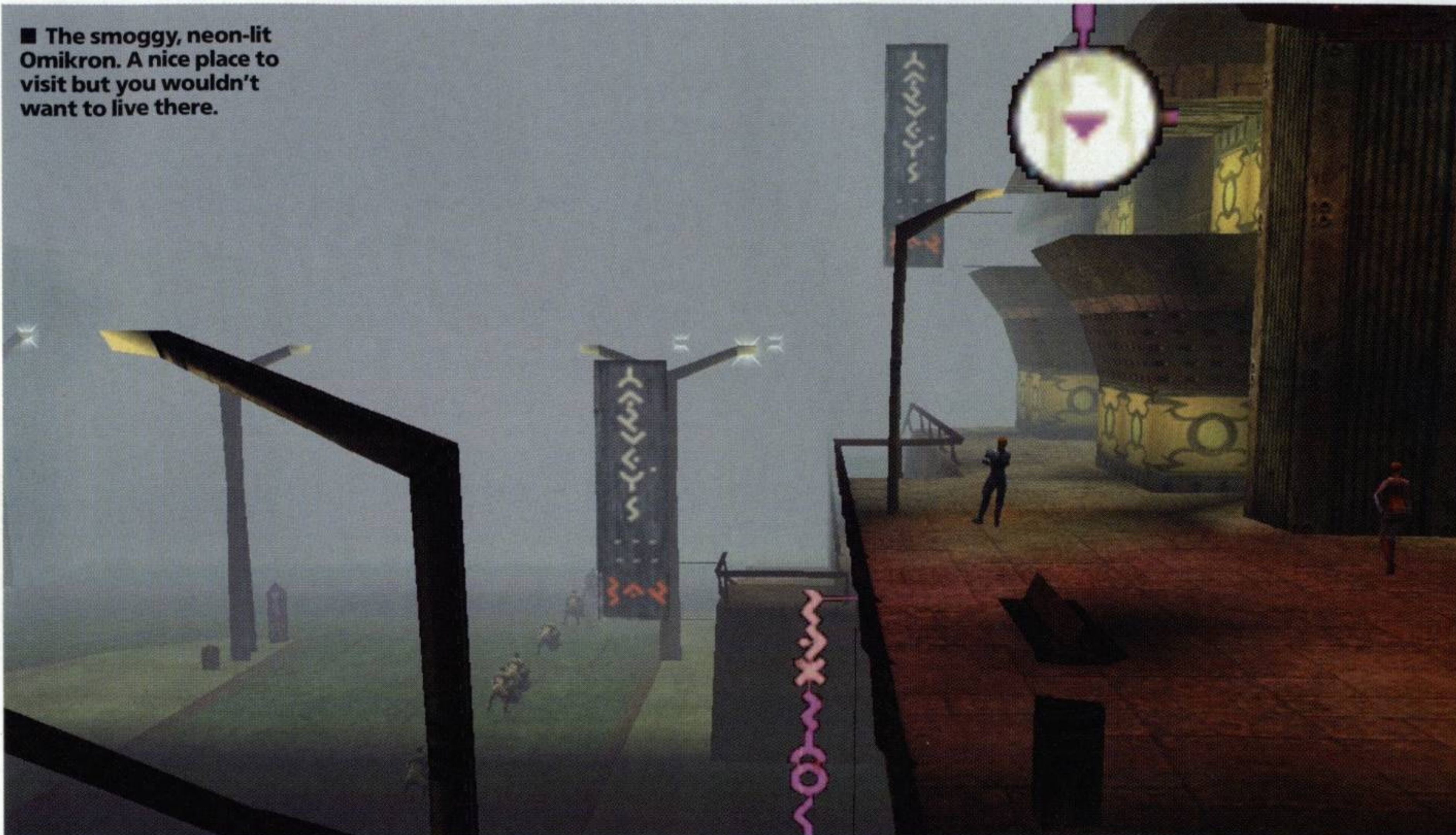
■ *Championship Manager*: the most absorbing PC game of all time or just a glorified spreadsheet? Given that this is a game based on statistics, you can't argue with this one: the last instalment is the fastest-selling PC game of all time, selling a staggering 50,000 copies in its first week on the shelves.

Championship Manager Season 99/00 is a lot more than just a seasonal update, as a number of key areas have been improved. The biggest change is to the scouting system, as your scouts can now look at individual players, give teams a rating, find unsigned youth players and tell you if they think a player is good enough for your team.

There are several other subtle tweaks. Your assistant manager and the board are more involved and you can ask for the stadium capacity to be increased, or request more transfer funds. You can also plead for time to improve your squad – very handy if the chairman gives you the dreaded "vote of confidence". Guiding lowly teams to the top of the footie tree is now harder, and players have more realistic starts, so you won't be able to rely on those bargain players from *Championship Manager 3*. The match engine has been updated and offers better text, a higher chances : goals ratio and referees with a greater bearing on games.

But the core of the game remains and the changes do the impossible: improve on perfection. If you've ever dreamed of taking Bristol Rovers to European Cup glory, then this is the game you've been looking for. *Championship Manager 99/00* is in a league of its own. ★★★★★ **Nick Jones**

■ The smoggy, neon-lit Omikron. A nice place to visit but you wouldn't want to live there.



THE NOMAD SOUL

REINCARNATION, DISORIENTATION AND PRETENSION.

The *Nomad Soul* sets itself up as one of those "this is not a game, this is real" type scenarios. You (via your PC) are transported through time and space to Omikron, a world on the brink of moral meltdown. It's a society built on and controlled by technology: ubiquitous holographic TVs control the thoughts of the citizens and the weathermen don't just predict the weather – they make it.

There is a dark underbelly to this society, a world of seedy strip bars, prostitutes and pornography. Not only is this the world inhabited by a virtual David Bowie, it's where much of *The Nomad Soul* takes place.

You play a police officer with no memory who is suspected of murdering his partner. As you investigate the circumstances of your old buddy's death, you unearth a web of corruption and murder that leads directly to the baddest bad guy of them all, Beelzebub.

The influence for the game's tech-noir look is clear: *Blade Runner* was obviously high on the developer's list of favourite films. Omikron also manages to be the most

convincing city yet seen in a game. Hover cars cruise the skies, people go about their business and the streets are littered with the homeless. While this is impressive to begin

with, the feeling of awe soon wears off and you are left with a standard adventure game: read the clues, find the objects and use them in the correct places.

As you progress through the game you gain the ability to transfer your soul to other bodies. A nice idea, if only if it had much of a purpose. True, there are points in the story when it is essential that you take over the body of other characters but for the most part you end up doing it just for the novelty of being someone else. This enables you to explore the characters' lives a little – doing things like rooting around their flats – but you can't stray too far from the game's main objectives, and that's exactly what sprawling Omikron is crying out for you to do.

It's safe to say *The Nomad Soul* is too ambitious for its own good. Essentially, the game is three genres in one: part adventure, part shoot-'em-up and part 3D fighting game. The only part that really works is the adventure. The fighting is basic and only comes into play when you face a boss character. The first-person shooting sequences are used when you take on criminals, but are badly done.

In the end you get a game that fails to fulfil its immense potential. *The Nomad Soul* is full of ideas that could have really worked, but whether the problem is the technology or the execution of those ideas, it just doesn't hang together. ★★★ **Nick Jones**

Game info

- Publisher: Eidos
- Developer: Quantic Dreams
- Price: £35
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1
- Requires: P166, 32Mb RAM, 500Mb HD-space
- Recommended: P233, 32MB RAM, 1.7Gb HD-space, 3D accelerator card



■ A spaced oddity – Bowie's appearance is all too brief.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Saving grace

- Realistic city environment
- Brilliant facial animation
- Engaging story

Lost souls

- Standard adventure game puzzles
- No empathy with characters
- Gameplay is too ambitious

Or you could try...

Grim Fandango
LUCASARTS ★★★★★
Bring out your dead in this insane adventure classic.

Outcast
Infogrames ★★★★★
Epic ground breaking adventure.

Total Control.

MICROSOFT

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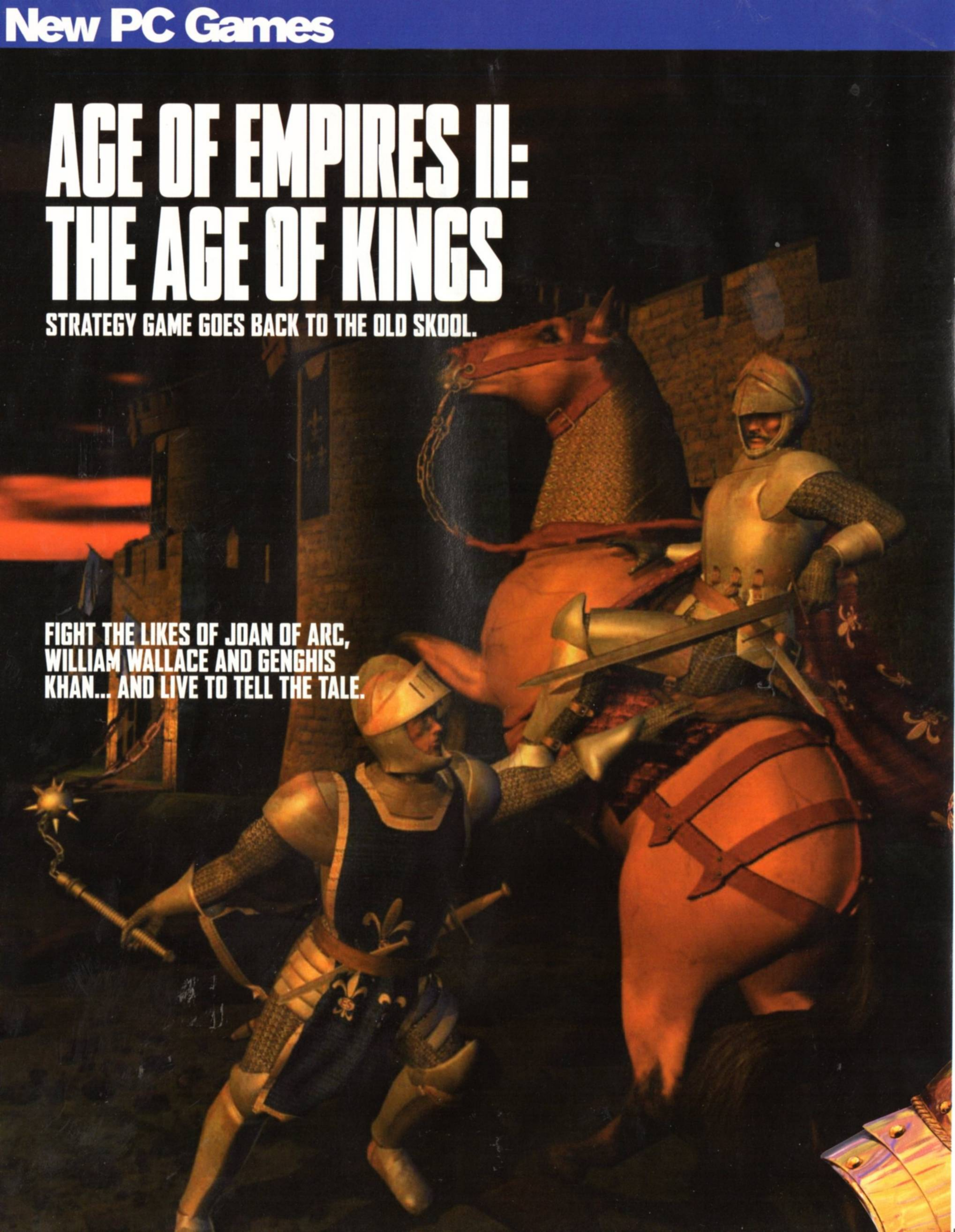
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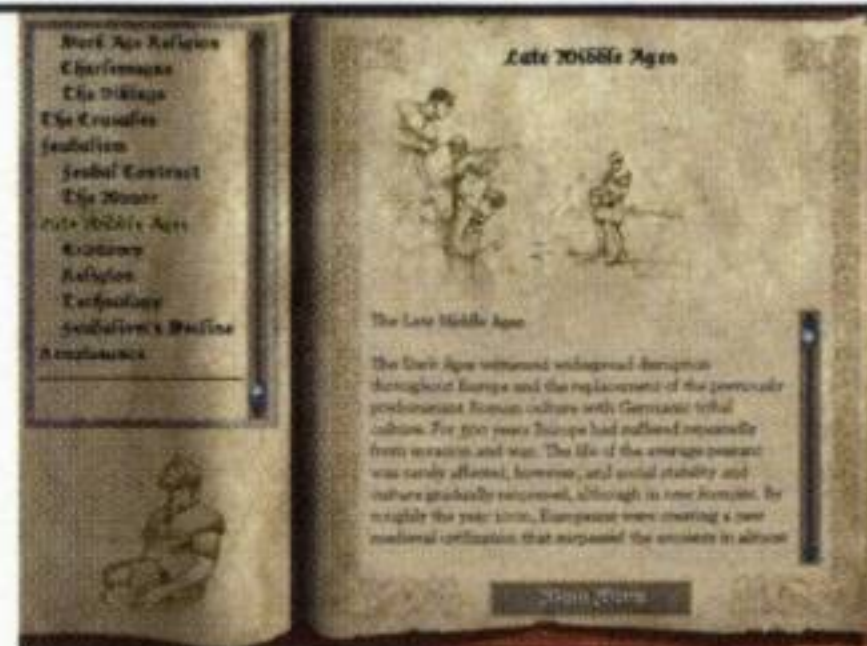
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AGE OF EMPIRES II: THE AGE OF KINGS

STRATEGY GAME GOES BACK TO THE OLD SKOOL.

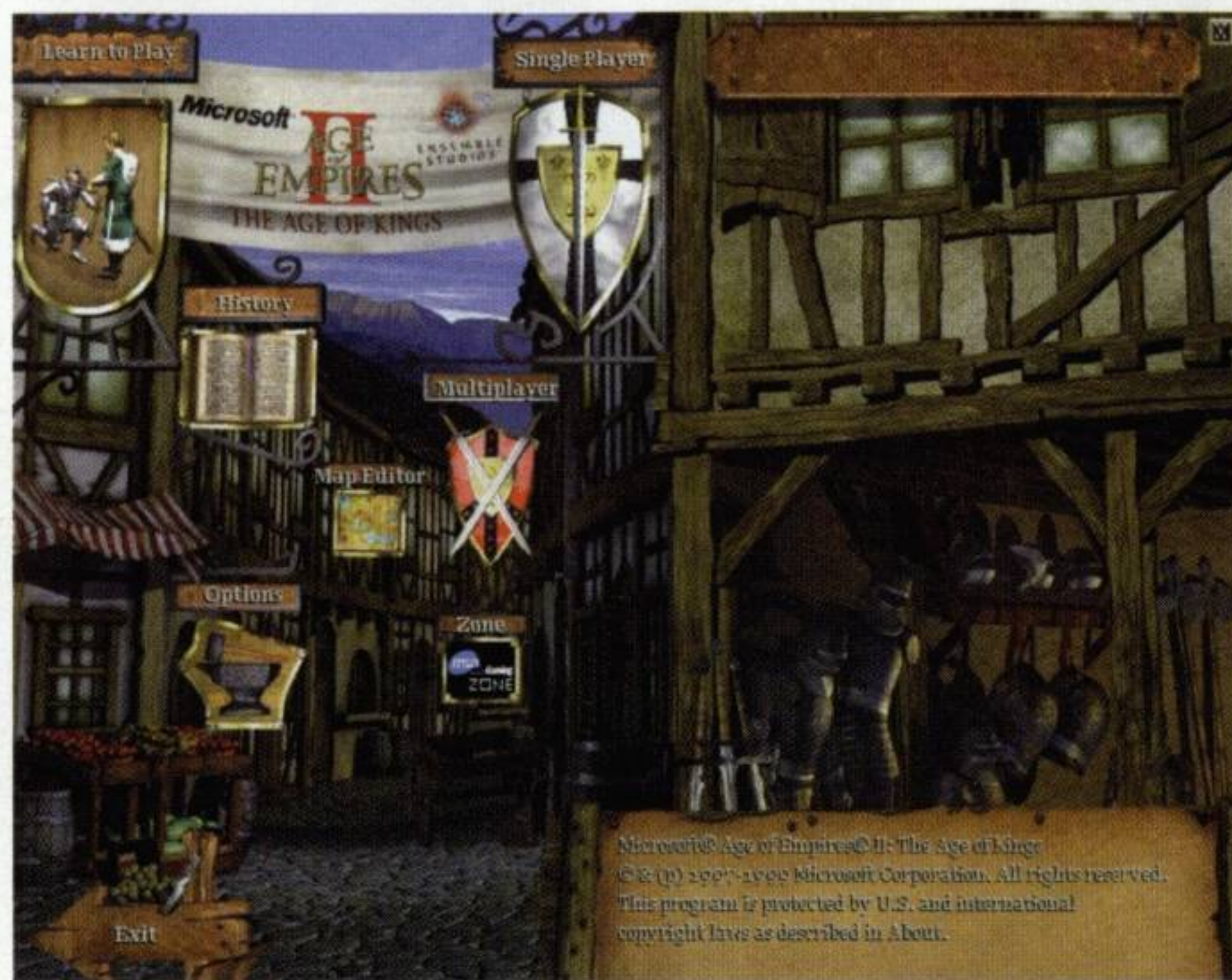
**FIGHT THE LIKES OF JOAN OF ARC,
WILLIAM WALLACE AND GENGHIS
KHAN... AND LIVE TO TELL THE TALE.**





Game info

- Publisher: **Microsoft**
- Developer: **Ensemble**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-8**
- Requires: **P166, 32Mb RAM, 300Mb HD-space**
- Recommended: **P233, 32Mb RAM, 500Mb HD-space**



Education and video games don't exactly go hand in hand. What can you learn while playing *Quake 2*? The speed of the reload on a shotgun? Just like trigonometry, games don't prove all that useful in real life. But *Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings* that is. Not only is this a splendid real-time strategy game, but it also offers you the opportunity to brush up on your history. Kind of.

Age of Empires II is a historical *Command & Conquer*, with a few aspects of *Civilization 2* added for good measure. As a result, there's a good deal more scope here than most real-time strategy games offer – alongside the usual resource gathering, building and fighting you also have to set your minions to work developing all

manner of new technologies. These technologies benefit your people in a number of ways, but boil down to either military or economic advances. The latter enable you to gather resources and build faster, while military upgrades make your units more powerful. Both are important if you're to be top dog.

In terms of your team, you get to choose between 13 different civilisations: Britons, Celts, Turks, Chinese and so on. Each can develop certain technologies, making some more effective at combat while others excel at running the economy. As well as these diverse skills, different civilisations also boast unique fighting units, so your choice of civilisation has a lot of influence.

As a straight battle between civilisations (you can play up to eight-a-side against the computer or online) the gameplay follows a pretty standard *Command & Conquer* formula – find the resources, build your army and go and kill

the other civilisations.

Simple, but extremely fun. The Campaign game puts you in real historical situations with the



■ Charts track advances in technology. If you get this far into the the game, you'll be eligible for a degree in history.

likes of Joan of Arc, William Wallace and Genghis Khan. Here the one-player game is at its best – you are set objectives, take part in some of the most famous battles the world has ever seen and you're pretty much guaranteed of living to tell the tale.

There is something strangely addictive about *Age of Empires II*. It has to have something to do with having the power of life and death over all your little people. You can also play the game in a number of ways – as a deathmatch, as a rolling campaign for world domination or just to build up your civilisation and make a pretty little town.

In a straight comparison with *C&C: Tiberian Sun* it's hard divide the titles. While *Age of Empires II* offers a lot more depth for strategy heads, you have to put a lot of work in to get the maximum enjoyment out of it. A glance at the 150-page manual is proof enough of that. Learning about individual troop classes and military formations will give you an advantage, but this amount of depth can only serve to intimidate first-time gamers. *C&C: Tiberian Sun* is more immediate and its mission-based gameplay and destructive force have to win out. ★★★★★

Nick Jones

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

A Golden Age

- Beautiful, detailed graphics
- Lots to get your teeth into
- Excellent multi-player game

The Dark Ages

- Requires a lot of hard work
- Gameplay can become repetitive
- For lovers of the genre only

Or you could try...

Alpha Centauri
EA ★★★★★
Brilliant futuristic strategy gem.

C&C: Tiberian Sun
EA ★★★★★
Westwood's engrossing and imaginative sequel to the much-loved C&C.

NOCTURNE

GREAT LOOKING TITLE IS STRANGER TO GAMEPLAY.



Console-phobic horror adventure devotees rejoice, as in *Nocturne* PC jockeys get the opportunity to experience that *Silent Hill* feeling without having to stray from the fold.

Here's how it is: you're part of a secret elite team of agents in the Spookhouse division of the US Federal Government. In *The X-Files* fashion, your mission is to book the roaming undead and dispose of them before Johnny Bystander gets wind of the madness.

You play The Stranger, who is a bit of a dark horse with a brusque manner and nice line in threads. You're joined by playable character Doc Holliday, a lithe little lady who packs a mean punch, and NPC's of the living and undead variety.

There are four distinct chapters in the game; each of which have four or five ghoulie-ass kicking levels. A la *Resident Evil* and *Alone in the Dark*, you've got a supply of weaponage to keep you right. There's a pair of .45's which

The Stranger can aim independently. There are also crossbows, potions and the odd severed limb to kill with.

This is the best looking game on the shelves to date. The developer has given the title a fully cinematic feel, from the music to the statically-positioned cameras to the phenomenally realistic movement of The Stranger's coat – but the gameplay is outrageously pants.

The controls are simple to master but the character movement is boxy. Everything in the game is slow – and not just because it requires a behemoth machine, but because the plot is dull, the cut scenes are boring and the monsters ain't scary. More time seems to have been spent animating cloth than creating scary bad guys. If you want a film, go see a movie. *Nocturne* doesn't cut it. ★★ **Aleks Krotoski**

Or you could try...

Resident Evil 2
Virgin ★★★
Classic zombie horror that still causes pant kakking aplenty.

The X-Files
Fox Interactive ★★★
A mountain of video clips stuck together with VirtualCinema glue, but vaguely scary.

Game info

- Publisher: **Gathering of Developers**
- Developer: **Terminal Reality**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**
- Requires: **P233, 64Mb RAM, 3D accelerator card**
- Recommended: **P400, 96 Mb RAM**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

X-Files

- Beautiful graphic novel
- Stunning music
- Ingenious level structure

Box files

- Processor hungry
- Slow-moving plot
- Boring

Also released

Sure shot short reviews from the pen of a hardened videogames warrior.

Words by | **Simon Garner**



HEART OF DARKNESS

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Price: **£13**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ It took Infogrames three years to produce this child-friendly platform game, and in the meantime the 2D genre has slinked out of fashion like a cockroach avoiding sunlight. Fortunately the sinister aura and attention to animated detail in *Heart of Darkness* make the run-jump-shoot trials bearable. The story is kept alive by slick cut-scenes, but the gameplay comes across as old-fashioned. If you're not ten, you won't like it. ★★



MEN IN BLACK

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Price: **£13**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ Donning shades and black suits, Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones added a touch of class to the no-brainer SFX-heavy movie. Sadly this cash-in 3D adventure is nothing more than a tiresome bug-hunt, like *Resident Evil* without the quirky atmosphere. The set-piece locations border on the cinematic, and it's suitably spooky from time to time, but an obvious lack of humour and a glut of graphical glitches mean it's not one to show off your PC. ★



WARGASM

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Price: **£13**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**

■ The comedy name belies an intelligently constructed war sim, which combines first-person 3D combat with tactical unit control. In the future, all war will be conducted in cyberspace and virtual generals like yourself will be able to deploy tanks, helicopters or infantry on artificial landscapes. The visuals are stunning on first sight, but become samey after continued play. Fortunately the missions are always engaging. ★★★



RAGE OF MAGES 2

- Publisher: **Ubi Soft**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**

■ Feeling much like its precursor, this is another real-time *Warcraft* clone spruced up with some role-playing elements. The game is appropriately open-ended and the storyline is well scripted, if hampered by a poor voiceover. The game looks the same as the original, despite numerous new locations, enemies and magic objects. However, it has personality (lacking from many current RPGs) and maintains a good pace. ★★★



CREATURES ADVENTURES

- Publisher: **Mindscape**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ The *Creatures* series sees you breed, raise and train artificial creatures, called Norns, who are to all intents and purposes alive. They're bogged down with science kits and measuring instruments and suffer some physical trauma. Still, someone has decided the kids need a straight Tamagotchi-style version. The result: bigger graphics, a smaller world, a simpler interface and no slapping. It's still fun, but adults will find it tame. ★★★



FORESTIA

- Publisher: **Wavehill**
- Price: **£25**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ Yikes, it's a low-budget *Myst*-for-kids. Despite a handful of puzzles, this colourful point-and-click adventure reeks of edutainment. Elements of it are ingenious – as you meander through the greenery you can photograph wildlife, then consult an on-board dictionary to learn about the wee beastie you've discovered. But the pace is slow and the target audience is seven-year-olds, so gameplay is just a desultory hour's homework. ★



LINKS LS 2000

- Publisher: **Microsoft**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**

■ Getting its yearly outing, the latest version of the classic *Links* series is a golfing gamer's fantasy, but a challenge for the casual PC pitch-and-putter. Oozing options, it's complicated enough to deter newbies. If you're mad keen you'll relish playing the six realistic courses (including three at St Andrews) and going up against living legend Arnold Palmer. Nothing has been missed out, except some instantly accessible fun. ★★★



NBA BASKETBALL

- Publisher: **Activision**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ Having the official NBA licence and the official Fox Sports licence means this hoop sim is the real deal – proper teams, recognisable presentation and fun commentary. Pick-up-and-play controls mean the action is fast and uncomplicated, and a no-nonsense menu system means you'll be playing within moments. It lacks the visual polish of modern football games, but the pace is unfailingly tight. Good, but lacks a certain pizzazz. ★★★



ARMORED FIST 3

- Publisher: **Novalogic**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-32**

■ Just like *AF2*, this M1A2 tank sim benefits from Novalogic's trademark accessibility. Climbing inside a metal box and crushing houses is realistic but easy. Sadly, tanks only trundle at about 40 mph so gameplay is sluggish, and reloading your cannon is a lengthy process. Keeping it special are the well-executed Voxel landscapes in places like Somalia and Georgia, and the excellent multi-player support courtesy of Nova World. ★★★★★



SEGA RALLY 2

- Publisher: **Empire**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**

■ Tackling imaginatively animated international tracks in 18 different cars, Sega's latest isn't short on detail. You can tweak every aspect of your motor, and then enter it in a ten-year championship or an instant arcade challenge. The realism vanishes when it comes to in-game physics. You float around corners like a figure-skater and there's no visible damage when you hit things. Moreover, you never roll – which just isn't convincing. ★★★



NASCAR 3

- Publisher: **Sierra**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-20**

■ Developed by the guys behind *Grand Prix Legends*, this racing sim lacks the thrill provided by that game, mainly because NASCAR tracks are plain ovals. The visuals are acceptable but workmanlike. Car and track details require a decent PC. Handling is tricky but the whole package is professionally executed and motor sport enthusiasts will love it. Massive multi-player support and intelligent use of force feedback are welcome. ★★★



PLANESCAPE: TORMENT

- Publisher: **Virgin**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-6**

■ Another gem from the creators of *Baldur's Gate*, this AD&D adventure uses the same engine and so the visuals are similarly detailed. Playing an undead amnesiac, you explore the mysterious Planescape dimensions and try to re-learn old skills. It's all still hit points and inventory screens (yawn) but the novel approach to character creation and the absurd Gothic setting should captivate even casual RPGers. ★★★★★



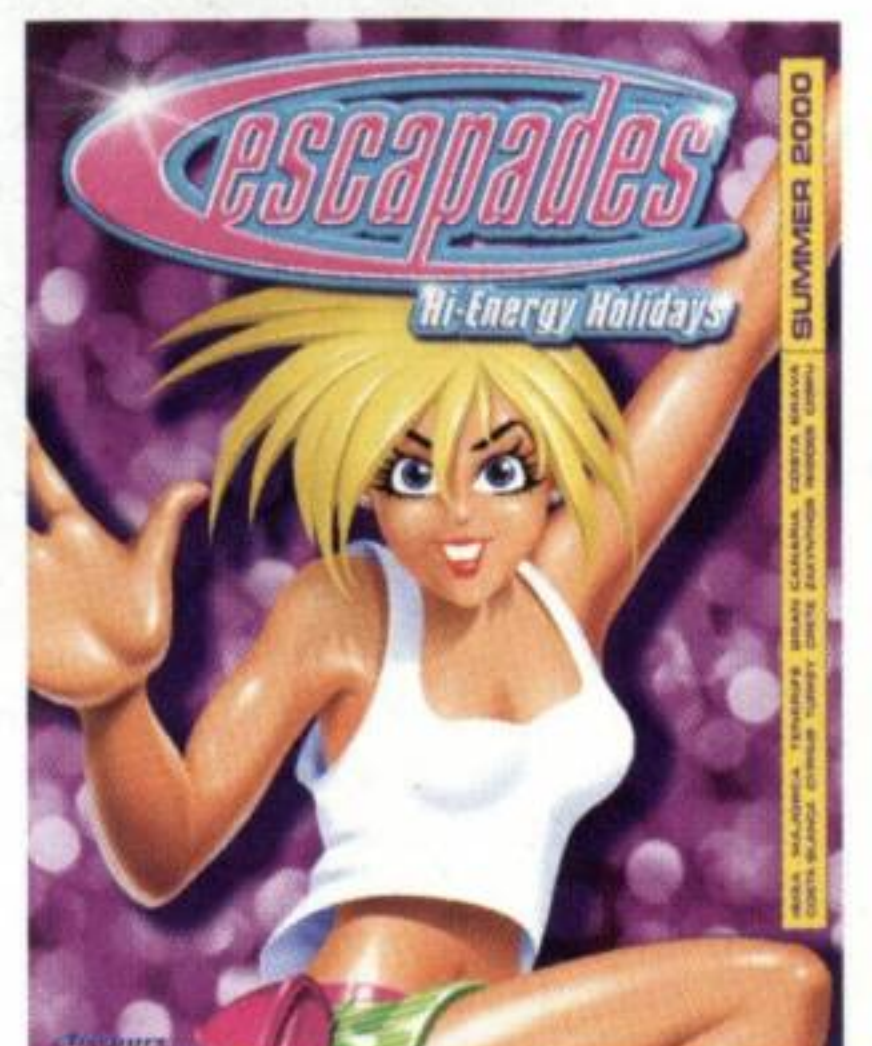
GAME BOYS AND GAME GIRLS.

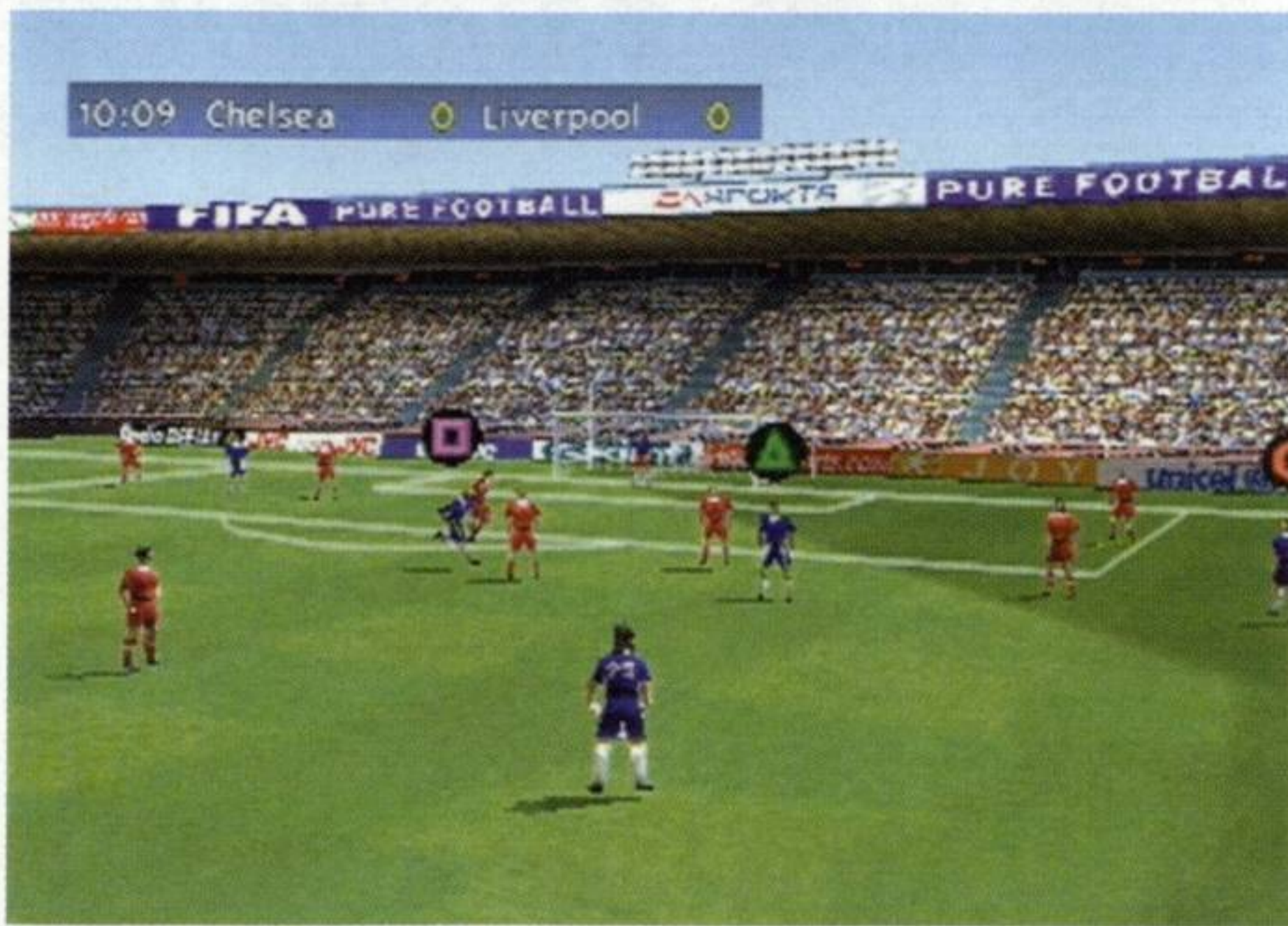
IF IT'S FUN AND GAMES YOU'RE AFTER LET GO OF YOUR JOYSTICK, AND LOAD ONTO AN ESCAPADES HI-ENERGY HOLIDAY.

KICKIN' CLUBS, CHILLED OUT BEACHES, COOL BARS, BEACH PARTIES AND ALL ROUND AWESOME ANTICS. CHOOSE FROM IBIZA, MAJORCA, TENERIFE, GRAN CANARIA, COSTA BRAVA, CYPRUS, TURKEY, CRETE, CORFU, RHODES.

IF YOU'RE GAME IT'S TIME TO PLAY.

CALL 01235 824428 FOR A COPY OF THE ESCAPADES SUMMER BROCHURE QUOTING REF ARC 1.





■ (Above) A new system for taking free-kicks and corners.



■ Eat my goals.

Game info

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **EA Sports**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **multi tap**



FIFA SOCCER 2000

NET PROFITS LOOK SET TO BULGE FOR EA.

There's no denying that the impact of EA's long-running *FIFA Soccer* series has been diluted through familiarity. For the most part it's easy to forget that *FIFA* is the most polished football franchise around, and you can find yourself focusing on one thing: EA has milked the licence until its teats have bled.

Indeed, in the 12 months prior to France '98 EA Sports released no fewer than three different versions of the game. In spite of this, any new *FIFA* game is a surefire number one; as guaranteed to be a best-seller as a glossy pamphlet featuring naked voyeur shots of the Steps girls straddling a mirror.

The break between the last *FIFA* and *FIFA 2000* is longer than is usual for the series, and in that time you'd expect EA to have given its engine a radical overhaul. However, absorb the pre-release publicity and you'd be forgiven for thinking that the only innovation here is the inclusion of a brand new Robbie Williams track. That's a big shame, as *FIFA 2000* is undoubtedly the best in the series so far.

For starters, EA has streamlined the game's front end, so it's easier than ever to get straight in on the action. However, investigate for a while, and you'll find a new season play mode in addition to the usual mix of leagues and tournaments. This enables you to play consecutive seasons and then go on to compete in European competitions, control teams drawn from 15 international leagues and 40 classic line-ups – including the 1966 England World Cup squad, who appear on-screen in suitably muted '60s colours. There's also a

handy new system for free-kicks, throw-ins and corners, giving you four different ways to get it in the mixer.

While all of this is commendable, it's *FIFA*'s control system which will elicit the loudest whoops of unfettered joy. Although the system will feel familiar if you're a veteran of the series, the controls are more intuitive than ever. Play for the duration of a game, and the depth becomes apparent; your own players are no more stupid than the average Premier League star, and the CPU AI is sparkling. What's more, the in-game management options remain and the commentary only becomes annoying and repetitive if you play more than three matches consecutively.

Graphically, *FIFA 2000* is flawlessly animated and sharp. Only when you get close up to the players – during replays and celebratory cinematics – do you realise how blocky and poorly depicted they are. That said, the players look good from a distance – Chelsea's Frank Leboeuf is commendably bald – and it's likely that speed would've



↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Umbros
 ■ Flawless gameplay
 ■ Superb presentation
 ■ Great soundtrack (it's not all Robbie)

Dunlops
 ■ Players are a little blocky.
 ■ Slightly confusing in-game menu system.
 ■ Does anyone really care about transfers?

WERE IT A FOOTBALLER THE FIFA SERIES WOULD BE MARRIED TO A SPICE GIRL AND WEAR A SARONG.

been sacrificed had the polygon count been upped. Suffice to say, with all the atmospheric and stadium detail, this is the PlayStation being pushed to the limit.

It is easy to be snide about *FIFA 2000*; as the most high-profile player on the pitch (were it a footballer, it would be married to a Spice Girl) it makes an easy target for abuse. However, now is the time to stop spraying offensive slogans on its parents' house and admit that *FIFA* finally has a game to compete with the mighty *ISS Pro* series. ★★★★★ **Paul Rose**

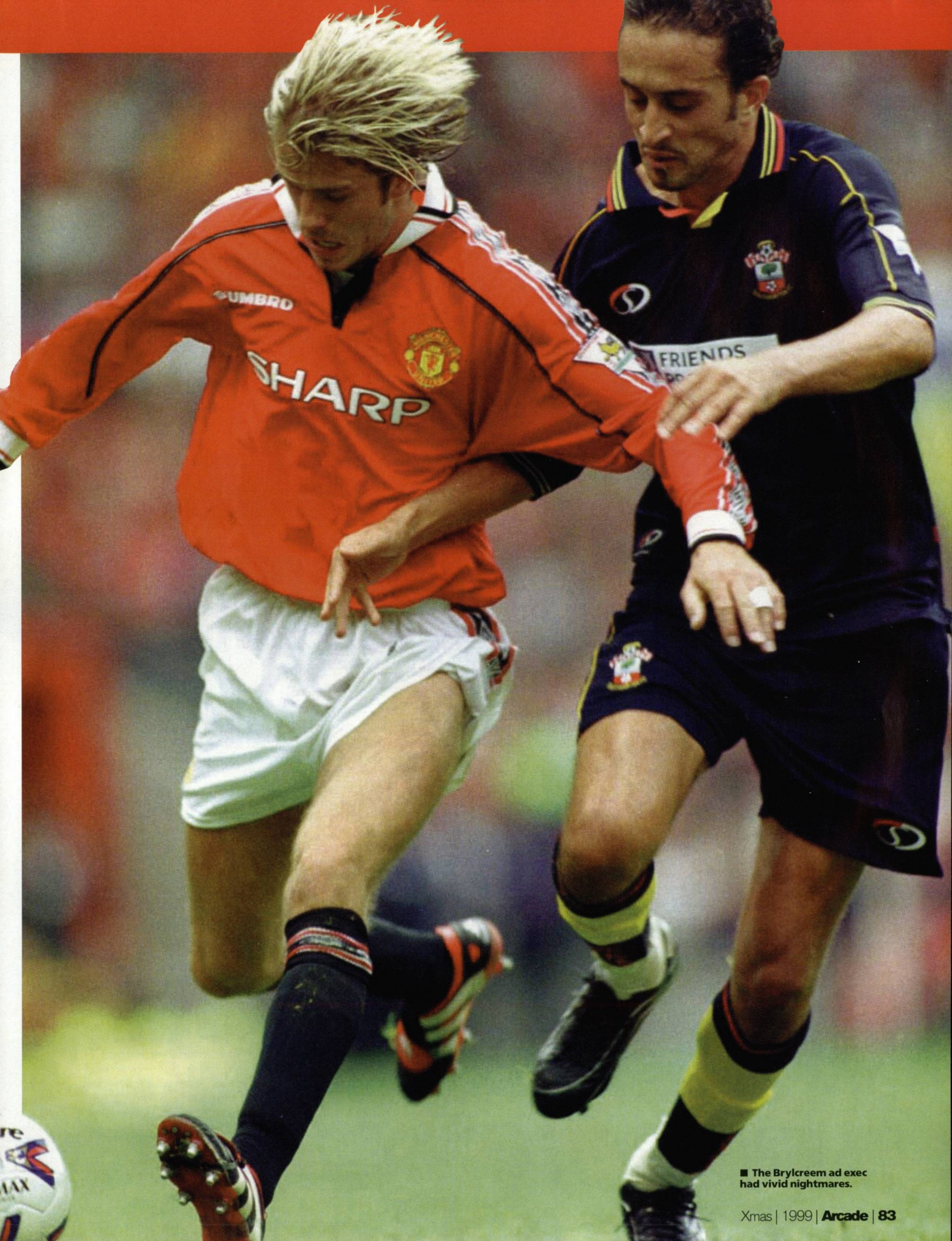
Or you could try...

ISS Pro '98
 Konami ★★★★★
 Football with a friendlier face.

Actua Soccer 3
 Gremlin ★★★★★
 Pleasingly difficult, if poorly animated at times.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ACTION IMAGES

■ Frank Leboeuf: commendably bald



■ The Brylcreem ad exec had vivid nightmares.



■ The ice level, the rally level, the mine-cart level... it all looks strangely familiar and yet *Crash Team Racing* succeeds because it cheekily plagiarises all the best bits from its karting forebears.



Game info

- Publisher: Sony
- Developer: Naughty Dog
- Price: £35
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-4
- Extras: multi tap

CRASH TEAM RACING

SONY IN MARIO KART CONTENDER SHOCKER.



Get this straight from the start: if you're looking for originality, you'd be better off at a Steps concert. *Crash Team Racing* is a blatant rip off of Nintendo's greatest mini car racers: a combination of *Mario Kart* and *Diddy Kong Racing*, dressed up with the marsupial's godawful grin. However, developer Naughty Dog has had the time and technology to refine this title for the PlayStation, and as a result *Crash Team Racing* rocks.

Sony has been gagging for a game as addictive as Nintendo's home grown titles for years. *Speed Freaks* had a crack and came close but fell at the last due to a tooth-grindingly steep learning curve and overly simplistic gameplay – problems *Crash Team Racing* seems to have overcome for the most part.

Crash Team Racing is a simple game: you race to win using speed, cunning and any low down dirty trick available to you. Just as in the games it borrows from, there are short cuts, power-ups and a choice of characters.

Naturally, Crash is one of the best and he's joined by faces from his past including Dr Neo Cortex, Tiny Tiger, Coco Bandicoot, Pura, Polar, Dingodile, N Gin and bonus characters. All of these are as nauseatingly cute as in previous *Crash* platformers, and while this may appeal to your little brother it's likely to put you off your play. Worse, you can't cut the cup giving scenes. This is fine if you're gloating amongst friends, but may lead to serious loony tunes if you play this game on your own for too long.

Naughty Dog has gone to lengths to ensure your rapt attention as a solo racer with a stackful of modes. None of the options are remotely new, and read like an amalgamation of the best features from other racing

games. They include a Time Trial with ghost racer, a single circuit Arcade choice, the Cup round consisting of four cups of four races each and, of course, Adventure mode, which plays like it's straight out of *Diddy Kong Racing*.

Naughty Dog has had time to add some nice touches, like the golden spanners picked up along the way that can be used to upgrade your car. There are also multiple ways of getting a speed boost, including power sliding round corners and getting the most air off jumps for extra zip once back on the ground. The power-ups on *Crash Team Racing* are novel: pick up ten apples, and your weapons will be endowed with super strength.

NAUGHTY DOG HAS HAD THE TIME AND TECHNOLOGY TO REFINE THIS TITLE FOR THE PLAYSTATION.

The damage-doers are well thought out, and for once there's a good balance of offensive and defensive weapons. You definitely have to learn the intricacies of play before you hit the later courses, as although the games begins easily enough you suddenly find yourself on dirt tracks or ice-ridden roads with a surprisingly good physics engine.

Ultimately, this is four-player heaven with the help of a handy multi tap peripheral and a king size telly for the split screen. *Crash Team Racing* is a surprisingly good game but only because it borrows from practically every other game in the genre. ★★★★★

Emily Newton Dunn



↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Smash | Trash |
| ■ Fun | ■ A direct rip off |
| ■ Accessible | ■ Nauseatingly cutesy |
| | ■ No feather, so no flying – boo |

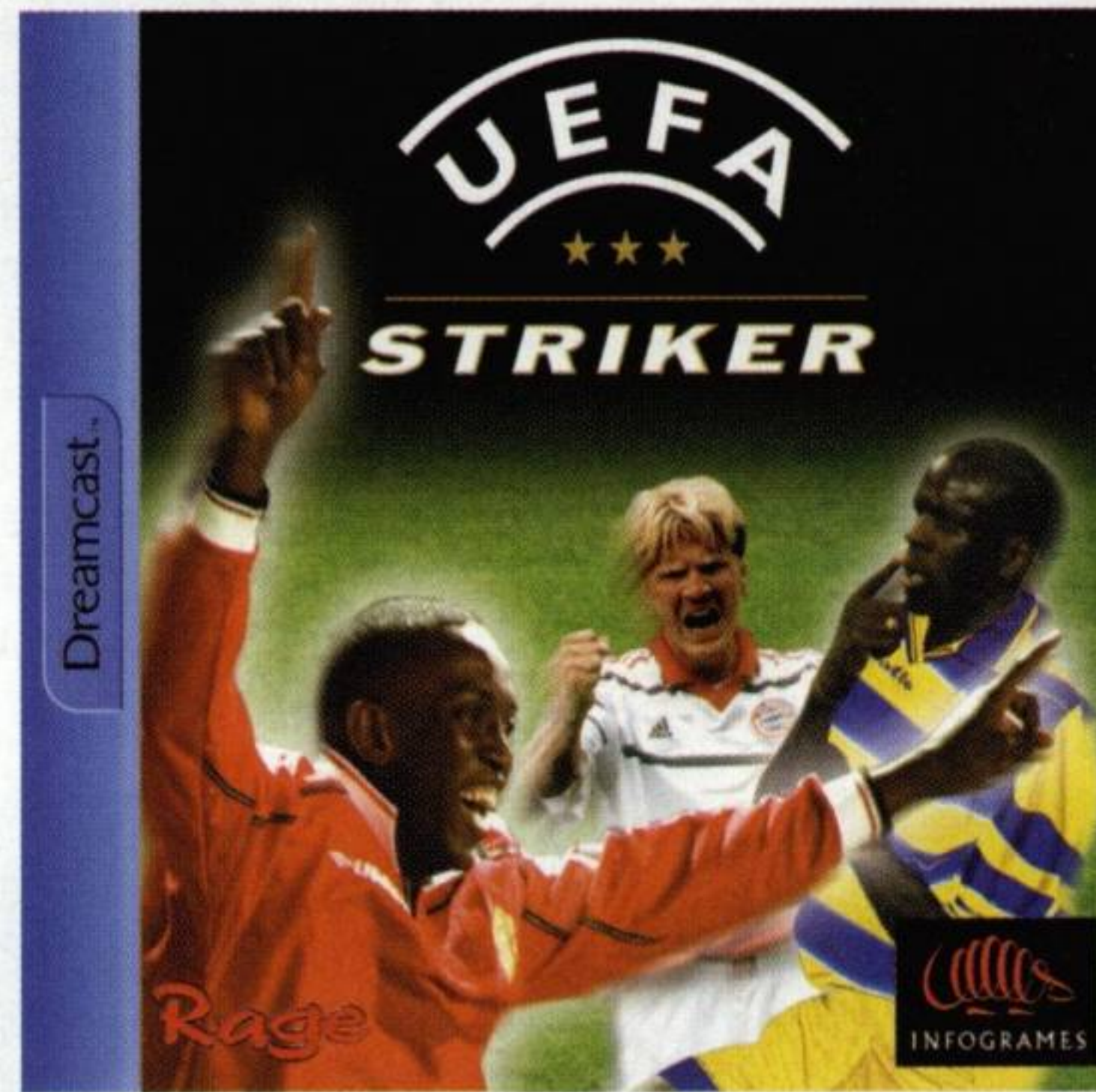
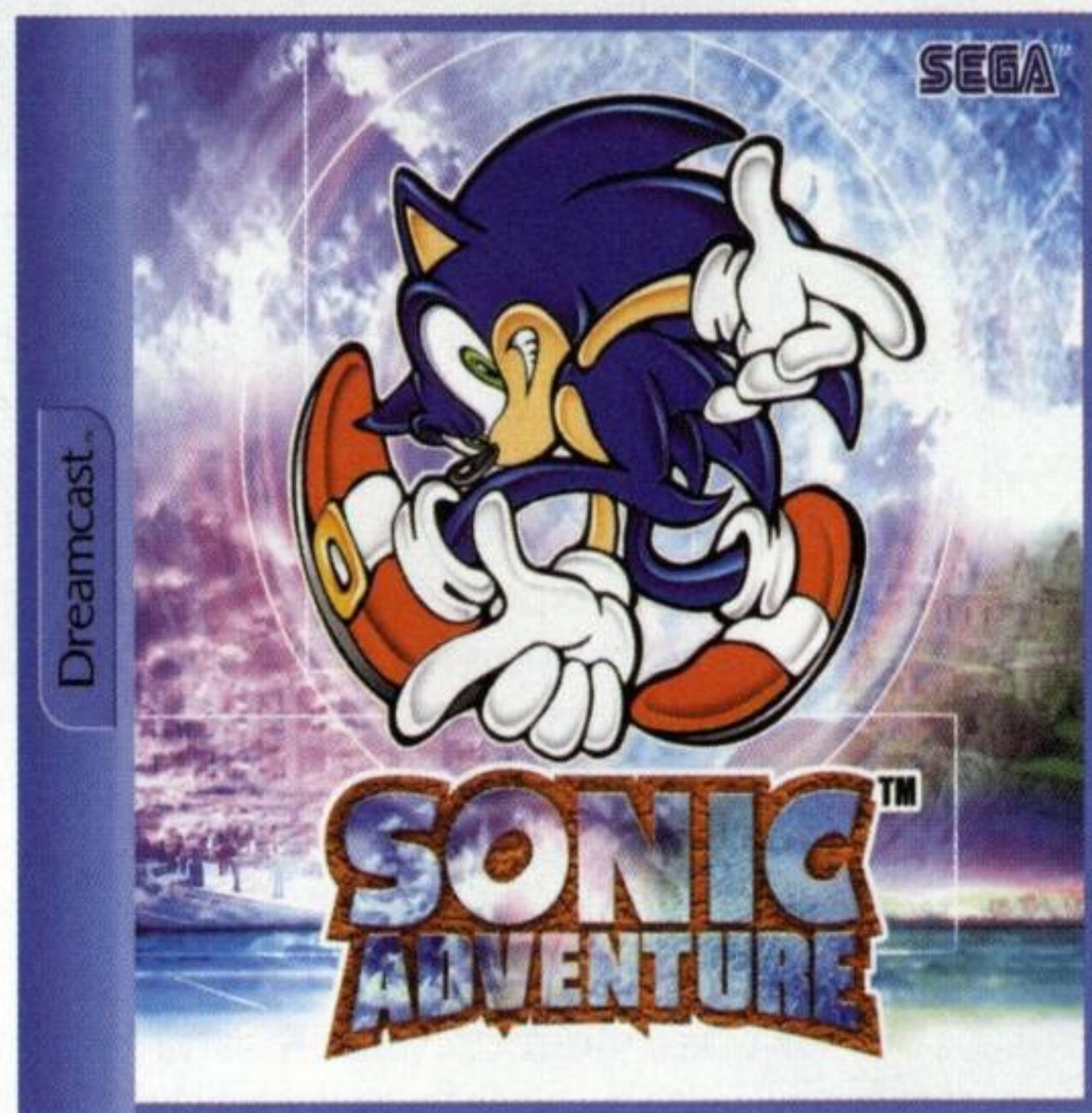
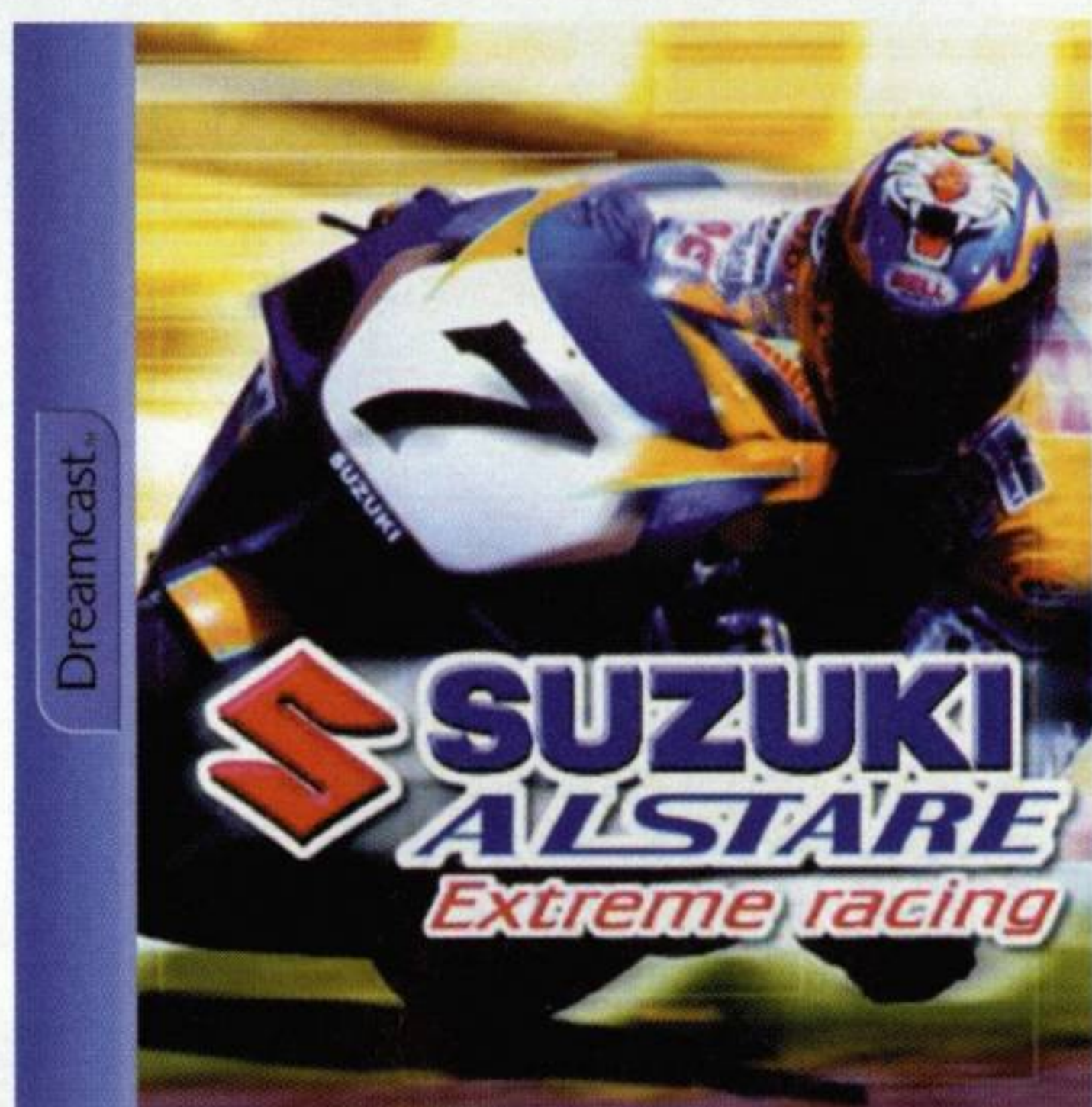
Or you could try...

Speed Freaks
Sony ★★
Wee carts, pretty surrounds and oh-so sketchy gameplay.

Micro Machines 3
Codemasters ★★★★★
Fun, cute and all at a billy bargain price.

2 dreamcast games for £70*

spend £30 and get
money off vouchers worth £100**



dreamcast console £199.99



excessive choice of games

Virgin

megastores

DANGEROUSLY ENTERTAINING



■ Shooting Fritz: Dad's Army was never like this.

Game info

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **Dreamworks Interactive**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **memory card, Dual Shock-compatible**

MEDAL OF HONOR

YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU!

Taking on the Third Reich single-handedly shouldn't really class as a leisure activity. Imagine it – dropped behind enemy lines with just your trusty rifle to save you from the dreaded Herr Flik and his Gestapo lot. No, 'Allo 'Allo this isn't; it's more like *Rambo* in Normandy. Who needs tanks and bombers? You can win the war all by yourself!

You play an Allied forces agent smuggled into France on the eve of D-Day. Your mission is simple: disrupt Nazi operations by infiltrating a number of key installations and blowing stuff up for King and Country.

The first thing that grabs you about *Medal of Honor* is the atmosphere it manages to generate. The soundtrack



■ Gun or grenade, Sir?



■ That'll teach you to invade Poland.



↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Sergeants

- Unique wartime setting
- Inventive gameplay
- Decent multi-player game

Privates

- Tricky controls
- Enemies lack intelligence
- Rough around the edges



■ Bazooka versus pistol – an unfair match in deathmatch.



evokes all those old war films and the sound effects are excellent. In the distance you can hear the report of gunfire and planes regularly buzz over your head. You almost believe that you're in the middle of *Where Eagles Dare*. You half expect David Niven to pop up.

The missions are nicely varied. The first few are just you against the German army, but for the most part they are inventive and the settings make a nice change from all those futuristic shooters. In one of the early missions you have to disguise yourself as a German officer to infiltrate a Nazi base. From here you have to sabotage a train, meet up with resistance and make your escape – all without being detected by the Gestapo. Other missions take you to a V2 rocket installation, aboard a U-boat and eventually into Hitler's bunker deep inside Berlin.

While this is all well and good, the game has a few problems. The German soldiers aren't too bright, and seem content to stand around looking at you. Fortunately this gives you time to sort out your aiming with the over-fiddly controls. Overall the game feels a little rough around the edges: the controls, the graphics and the AI are all a wee bit sketchy. That said, the presentation is top notch, with some excellent wartime footage scene setting movies and there are a lot of good ideas in the game.

Medal of Honor is a good first-person shooter and is certainly one of the best you can find on PlayStation. It doesn't match up to the genius of *Quake 2* but its unique setting and stealth-style puts it easily in second place. There is good deal of game here as well, as there are 27 single-player missions and a decent two-player deathmatch. It's not up to the standard of *GoldenEye*, but it's as close to the Bond title as you'll get on PlayStation and for that reason alone it's worth a look. ★★★

Nick Jones

Or you could try...

Quake 2
Activision ★★★★★
The ultimate PlayStation shoot-'em-up.

Command & Conquer: Red Alert
Virgin ★★★★★
Point and click strategy on a grand scale.



Game info

- Publisher: Eidos
- Developer: Core Design
- Price: £35
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-2
- Extras: memory card, Dual Shock-compatible, analogue

FIGHTING FORCE 2

RETRO SCROLLING BEAT-'EM-UP LOSES THE PLOT.

Welcome to *Fighting Force 2*: hand-to-hand combat and a few weapons in a 3D world. In short: an unashamed attempt to recapture the heyday of the scrolling beat-'em-ups of the '80s. But there's a reason this genre died a long time ago – it was crap.

You play a member of a top secret something or other. You are contracted by someone to infiltrate some bad dudes' base and kick up a fuss. Yadda, yadda, yadda.

Fighting Force 2 is flawed in several ways. Firstly, the enemies are just plain dumb. They don't seem to have any idea of what's going on around them. You can shoot one at a distance and he'll get up, oblivious of the slug you've just put in his arm, and continue what he was doing. And if you do take him out, his friend stood next to him won't even notice. Oh, and your enemies queue up and wait to take their turn to attack you – why don't they descend *en masse*? It's a good thing the brave Tommies of the Second World War weren't this dense, else it would have been Winston with the gun to his head.

Secondly, you have to wait until an enemy picks himself off the floor and pulls himself up to his full height before you can lay into him again. If you shoot him while he's down, nothing happens. While retro games have an established fanbase, this is ridiculous. It's like playing a SNES game, and a bad one at that.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the level design is shocking. Apart from the fact that everything looks so dull and uninspired, the game will often take you on a long pointless trek only for you to be informed that your mission has changed and you should go the other way instead. Nice.

Exasperating isn't the word, and from time to time you can't help but wonder why you're bothering.

It's hard to find redeeming features in a game that can't even manage to do the most

basic things. Some of the weapons are impressive, and you can glean a certain amount of satisfaction from riddling someone full of holes with the high-powered machine gun, but the controls are so confusing that as you fight to select a weapon you'll probably end up throwing it away. Not good. An interesting side to the game is that, should you so desire, you can set about the environment breaking things. This proves an enjoyable distraction and a chance to vent your frustration.

Is this the kind of game that PlayStation fiends will be happy to have next to *Metal Gear Solid* in their collection? No way. While less demanding gamers may look at *Fighting Force 2* as a decent bet, any discerning PlayStation owner will leave this particular title on the shelf and invest the Christmas Club money in Core's other Yuletide release, *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*. ★★

Nick Jones

YOUR ENEMIES QUEUE UP AND WAIT THEIR TURN TO ATTACK YOU – WHY DON'T THEY DESCEND EN MASSE?

Or you could try...

Syphon Filter
SCEE ★★★★★
Accomplished third-person espionage action.

Metal Gear Solid
Konami ★★★★★
You'll adore every minute of this epic game.

■ There are some decent weapons: the sniper rifle and machine gun will cause havoc with enemies' internal organs.



■ If it attacks you, smash it. If it doesn't, smash it up anyway.



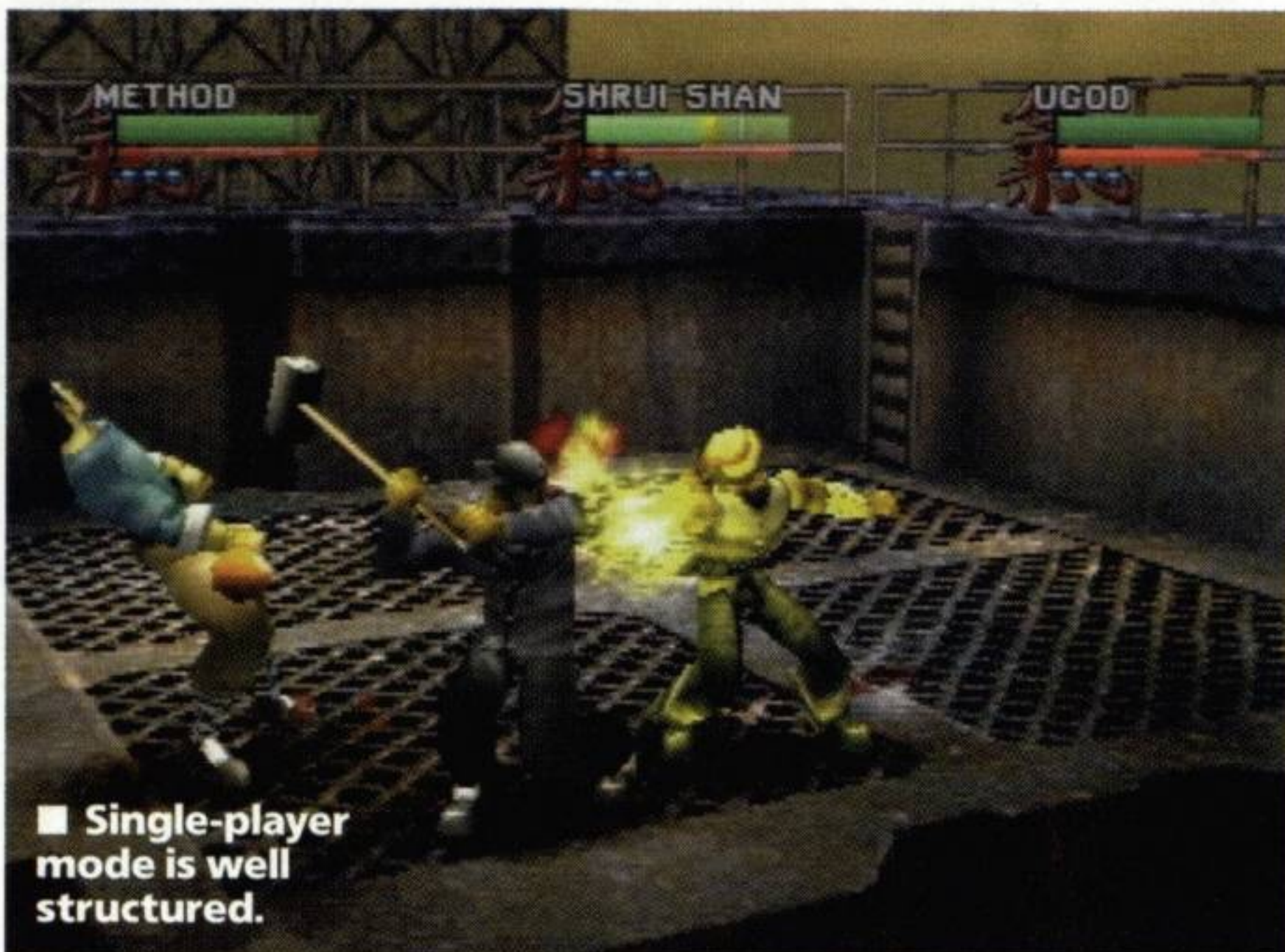
↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Knock out

- You can smash everything
- Funky firepower
- Looks reasonable

Ear bite

- Lamentable AI
- Bad level design
- Obsolete gameplay



■ Single-player mode is well structured.



■ "If you can keep your head while all those around you are losing theirs."



■ Beware the dreaded Wu-Tang groin strain.

Game info

- Publisher: **Activision**
- Developer: **Paradox**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **memory card, multi tap**

WU-TANG: TASTE THE PAIN

THE HARD MEN OF HIP-HOP GET GORY ON THE PLAYSTATION.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Public Enemy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exclusive Wu-Tang tunes ■ Violence and gore galore ■ You get to be a rapper | <p>Vanilla Ice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Poor graphics ■ Non-existent strategy ■ No jump button to aid escapes |
|--|---|

■ Masta Killa on the cut.



Before you start getting too excited about being an Ol' Dirty Bastard f'real, there's just one thing to consider. *Wu Tang: Taste The Pain* is the product of a cast-off beat-'em-up that was never released – the infamous *Thrill Kill* (where, most interestingly, one of the finishing moves was a female fighter having an orgasm). If only *Wu Tang: Taste The Pain* had come up with anything as remotely entertaining. Because, like a depressing amount of big licences these days, strip away that name and you're left with something that really doesn't do the business.

But it can't be denied that the chance to fight as one of the Clan is a neat trick, even if they're probably not as famous (especially over here) as they think they are. Throw in plenty of Bruce Lee-isms, a four-player fighting mode and violence only slightly watered down from the *Thrill Kill* days and there's plenty, initially at least, to get excited about.

The single-player story mode is particularly well thought-out, in which you have to complete special tasks to warrant acceding to the 36 chambers of Wu-Tang legend. Some of these are easy, like pulling off a special move, others (try the ten-hit combo for size) are less so. Complete 35 though, and you'll have unlocked loads of secrets, costumes and weapons before earning the right to fight the final boss, Mong Zhu.

Still sounding good, right? There's a catch. And it's quite a big one too – the fighting itself is absolutely terrible. *Tekken* is much smoother, and vastly superior in every way. Another drawback is that there's no strategy to speak of either. It's just a battle to see who



■ "Bugger, forgot the lino..."

can get the punches away quickest and who gets cornered first. What's worse, once you're in the middle of getting a kicking, there's no way to get out of trouble because of the fatal omission of a jump button.

Wu Tang: Taste The Pain looks bad, too – bad in the Oxford English sense, that is. The purveyors of hardcore hip hop look more like *Trumpton* characters than Staten Island badasses. Tunes-wise the game is better than most soundtracks. But amusingly, seeing as the game just makes you laugh at the Clan rather than take them at all seriously, even the three exclusive songs are mere parodies of what they're really capable of.

And that's the problem with the game. The Wu-Tang were always supposed to be for real, hardcore and in your face. This ill-conceived and shoddily executed licence just makes them look like they're In It For The Money. Or is that Activision's new Supergrass game? ★★ **Ben East**

Or you could try...

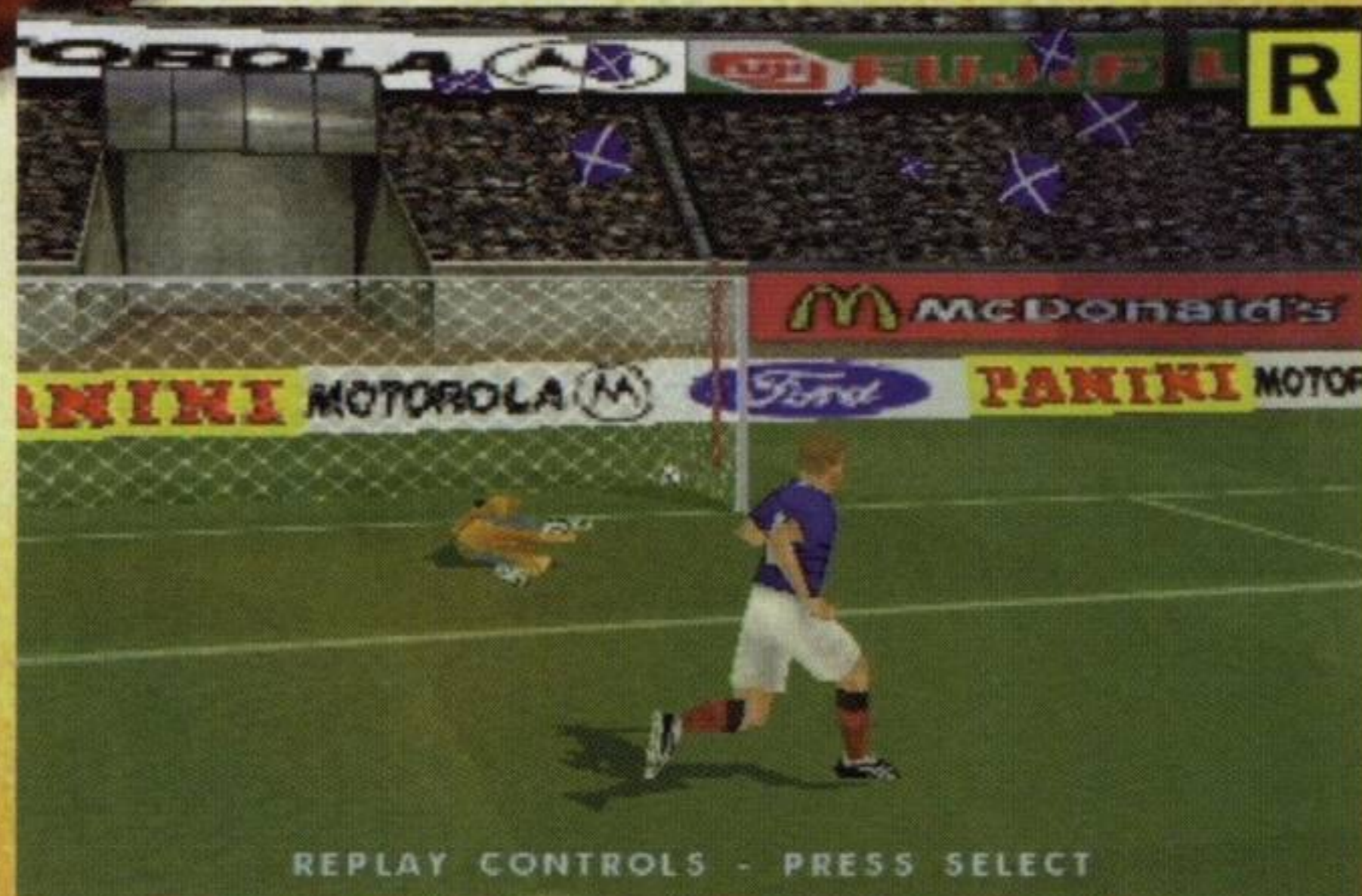
Tekken 3
Namco ★★★★★
Graphically flawless with a wide variety of sub-games, bonuses and hidden characters.

Soul Blade
Platinum ★★★★★
Big weapons fest catering for the all round gamer with some beautifully realised action.



Game info

- Publisher: SCEE
- Developer: SCEE
- Price: £35
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-8
- Extras: memory card, Dual Shock-compatible



REPLAY CONTROLS - PRESS SELECT

■ A rare sight for the novice – unless you're the keeper.



THIS IS FOOTBALL

ITALIAN LEAGUE SKILLS, SUNDAY LEAGUE SPEED.

Setting the new Sony football sim up for a Christmas head-to-head with *FIFA 2000* always looked like being a bad idea. And so it has proved. Despite taking two years to develop, *This is Football* is nothing special and will win few converts from *FIFA*, and fewer still from the massed ranks waiting for *ISS Pro Revolution*.

Stupid name aside – it isn't football – *This is Football* tries very hard to press the button marked "authentic". But, like the pre-Des ITV coverage, it tries too hard.

The main problem is that the game is too slow. Even using speed bursts your players run and chase like Gazza after a night on the curry and ale. It's also too hard to score, needing a finesse and coolness in front of goal that only dedicated gameplaying will deliver. Patience and practice are rewarded, however, so as your skills develop scoring gets easier and you can start doing bicycle kicks and nifty one-twos. The question is how many times can you take being put to the sword by Saudi Arabia before you go off and try something else? But when the skills start to flow and the moves come off then *This is Football* starts to look reasonable.

The game was made in association with world football union, FIFPro, so all the team and player names are there. A lot of time has been spent trying to make them look and act like their real life counterparts. Too much time, perhaps – the developer may have better spent its manhours ripping off the best bits from *FIFA* and *ISS*. But the players do look good and you can even customise them, so if your

favourite player dyes his hair you needn't fret.

Visually *This is Football* is a match for any of its competitors, with good animation, detail and texture, but it's let down by a certain naffness in things like the old-fashioned circle which indicates a selected player and the three-line power bar for shooting. Like *Actua Soccer* before it, *This is Football* proves there is more to a football sim than capturing how a player moves.

There are, however, plenty of excellent options and features, all of which are refreshingly straightforward and simple to use. Being able to save your line-up and tactics is a real time saver, meaning you don't have to, for example, take all the Manchester United players out of the England team every time you start a game. And there is a quick game mode so you can get straight into the action without having to pick teams and set formations.

Even if this title had managed to deliver all that was promised by the developer, *This is Football* would still end up getting bundled over in the Christmas rush by the muscular *FIFA*. But the the game doesn't measure up and deserves its fate. At the end of the day, John, it is too much like watching Italian Football – you appreciate there's a lot of skill on show but still want to get back to the speed and excitement of the Premiership. ★★★

Richard Keith

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

This is football
 ■ Great graphics
 ■ Rewards practice and patience

No it isn't
 ■ Too slow
 ■ Scoring too difficult

Or you could try...

FIFA 2000
 Electronic Arts ★★★★★
 Top seller gets a bit better.

ISS Pro '98
 Konami ★★★★★
 Set the standard, and they're still trying to match it.



■ Go one-on-one with Air Jordan, if that's your thing.



■ Super-slick action.



NBA LIVE 2000

- Publisher: EA Sports
- Developer: EA Sports
- Price: £30
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-2
- Extras: memory card, Dual Shock-compatible

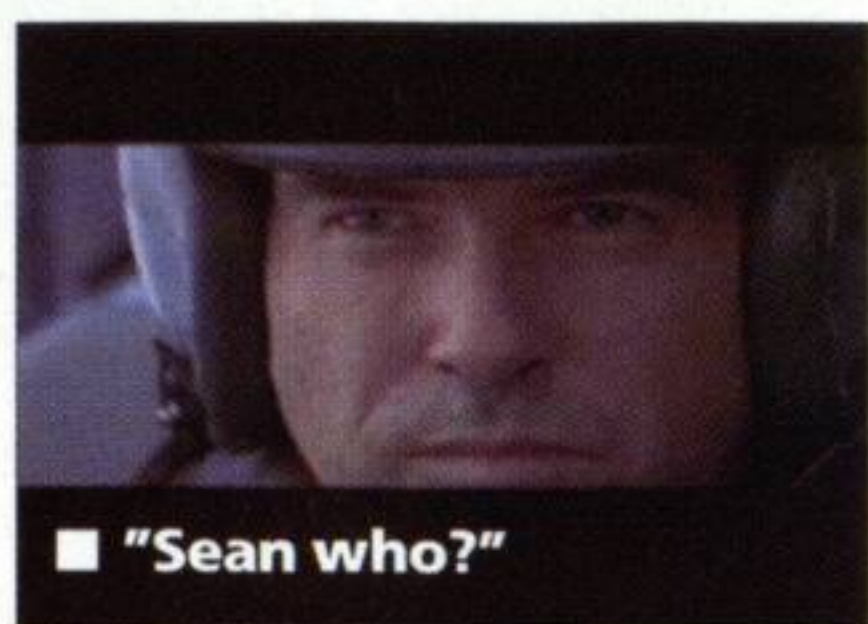
■ Videogame basketball has been around since the days of the Atari VCS, and it's easy to see why. Winning a match by the odd point in 187 always makes for an entertaining game, and all you really need to learn are the buttons for pass, shoot and block.

Of course, *NBA Live 2000* would like to have you think that it's much more than that one-two-three punch. It is in America, obviously, but here the endless tactical options and stats just seem get in the way of the super-slick, graphically excellent action. Another case of EA Sports opening its legs and showing its class, it seems.

The glitz and excitement of the NBA are recreated about as well as it's possible to do, something *Madden NFL*, for all its comprehensiveness, doesn't quite manage for American football. You'll never tire of the cut-scene-style slam dunks and the nature of basketball itself means that even two novices will have a right dong-dong battle.

Extra features such as the three-point compo and Michael Jordan one-on-one enable you to polish your skills in the ten minutes before catching the bus in the morning. The classic teams can be taken through a whole season, which can help settle "who's best" arguments, if you love basketball enough to care. Which is the problem.

Unless you do care about basketball, *NBA Live 2000* is little more than a good laugh. Plus, it's no huge step forward from *NBA Live 99* so only *NBA* nutters need bother playing around with this one. ★★★ **Paul Wilson**

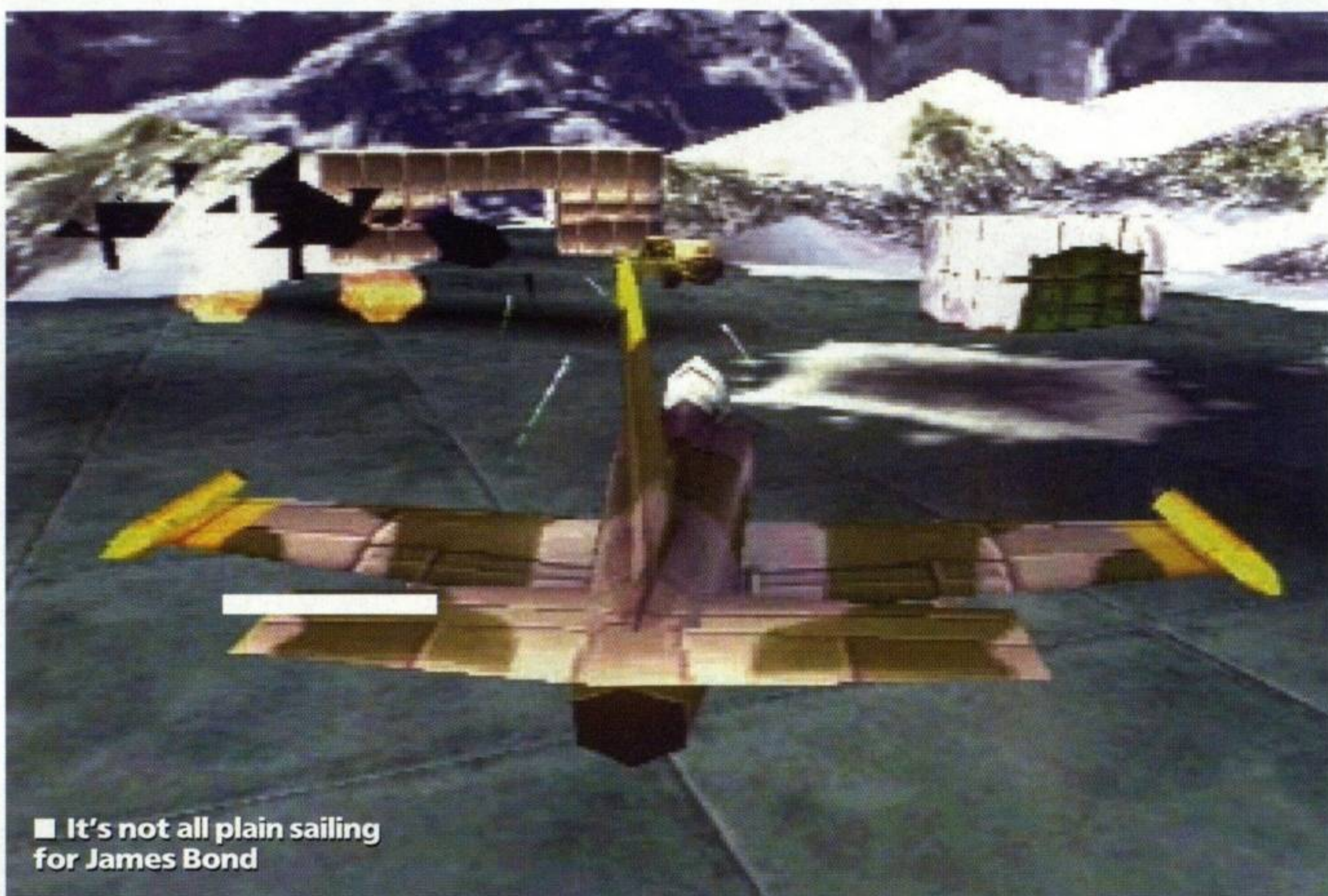


■ "Sean who?"



Game info

- Publisher: EA
- Developer: Black Ops
- Price: £40
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1
- Extras: memory card, Dual Shock-compatible



■ It's not all plain sailing for James Bond

TOMORROW NEVER DIES

BOND MANAGES TO MISS THE MARK.



■ Not GoldenEye.



■ Shooting from distance is just embarrassing

Film tie-ins are often rushed to secure a release date close to the film itself. So with this coming a full two years after the movie, you would expect it to be a wonderfully polished and heart-stoppingly exciting chance to pull on Bond's boots and save the world.

Born of a brief that had developer Black Ops working on a *Greatest Hits of James Bond* until the success of *GoldenEye* on Nintendo 64 (more of that later) meant games of single films were seen as a better option, *Tomorrow Never Dies* is a 12-level, third-person romp. It follows the plot of the film pretty closely, so here too you have to stop Elliot Carver from starting World War III just to sell his daily rag.

Sticking even closer to the Bond legend, the first two levels form a pre-credits sequence that take in the great first bit from the film where 007 infiltrates an arms

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓	
Bond	Bland
■ Good mix of action	■ Collision problems
■ You play James Bond	■ Average, average, average
■ Cracking weapons	■ Not GoldenEye

market and blows it to high heaven with a jet fighter. Then the credits roll, with Sheryl Crow crooning over naked ladies but

with the programmers' names on screen instead of the movie makers'. It's a neat touch, but the only original thing in the game.

Those first two levels also highlight exactly what's good and bad about *Tomorrow Never Dies*. Excellent-sounding weapons and some meaty objectives are spoiled by some shocking collision problems, less-than-taxing action and ropey targeting. See *Medal Of Honor* for a magnificent example of how to shoot people from distance. Try and do it here and it's embarrassing.

But it's not all doom and gloom. There's a mix of running, skiing and driving which nicely breaks up the action and the adaptation is spot-on, even if the mountainside bits are based solely on *The Spy Who Loved Me*. Maybe the *Greatest Hits* would have been a better idea after all.

Even allowing for the limitations of PlayStation when compared to the Nintendo 64, Bond fans with both formats will be disgusted with *Tomorrow Never Dies* when *GoldenEye* still ranks as one of the best games of any kind anywhere. For everyone else this is an underwhelming, deeply deeply average experience. Go see the new film and then play *Metal Gear* or *Syphon Filter* when you get back. ★★ **Paul Wilson**

Or you could try...

Metal Gear Solid
Konami ★★★★★
'Nuff said.

Syphon Filter
Sony ★★★★★
Save the world in compulsive, exciting style.



■ Fatboy Slim-action for PlayStation techno-heads.



MUSIC 2000

HUGE CHOONS AND BANGIN' BEATS FOR THE PLAYSTATION MASSIVE.

Techno! Techno! Techno! Techno! – once the clarion call of cash-in pop dance puppets 2 Unlimited as they lodged themselves in the chart U-bend, refusing to budge for most of the early '90s. The technology to make such a hit would've cost a small fortune, but now with the aid of just a PlayStation and *Music 2000* you can write and produce your own dance records and music videos.

The package (you can't really call it a game) is an update of last year's *Music* and includes a host of new features, including a fantastic sampler which enables you to take snippets of sound from any CD and sequence them in a track. You can sample between ten and 40 seconds of sounds, depending on which sample rate you use, and the quality is superb.

If you find making your own sounds a bit daunting at first, *Music 2000* provides a whole library of samples to put in your tracks, which vary between extremely usable drum loops and basslines to cheesy sounding guitars and piano riffs. Using the sequencer is quite fiddly sometimes and may be quite confusing to gamers who've never confronted a program such as *Cubase*, but after a few hours you should be able to make simple bangin' tunes.

Once you've finished a track, you can set to work putting together your own video for it using a large

selection of different images and shapes, or let the program do it for you by selecting the auto-generator. This creates a mesmerising show of colourful visuals that change and pulsate in time to the music – which must rate as a perfect chill-out toy, especially as the program can generate videos for your own CDs.

Also included is a feature called "Music Jam", where you and three friends can load in a selection of loops and sounds to create your own live "jam" which can be recorded and played back – if you're feeling brave. It's a very hit-and-miss affair, but great fun and genuinely exciting when you create a series of build-ups and breaks.

Music 2000 is an amazing package for the money when you consider that in effect, you're getting a sequencer, sampler, music jam and video generator for a hundredth of the price of a small bedroom studio. You could argue that the package is sometimes awkward to use and confusing for beginners, but that would be to pick holes in a great piece of software. With a bit of practice, you – yes, you – could even be the next 2 Unlimited. ★★★★★ **Jamie Sefton**

Game info

- Publisher: **Codemasters**
- Developer: **Jester Interactive**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **memory card, mouse**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Sasha</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unbelievable value ■ Great results ■ Includes Leftfield and Grooverider tracks | <p>DLT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fiddly interface ■ Not for beginners |
|--|---|

IT'S GENUINELY EXCITING WHEN YOU CREATE A SERIES OF BUILD-UPS AND BREAKS... SUPERB.

Also released

They just keep coming.

Words by **Ben East**



40 WINKS

- Publisher: **GT Interactive**
- Developer: **Eurocom**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ The key word here is Mario, and while the antics of your cutesy character in his quest to rescue all 40 Winks may not be of the level of Nintendo's classic, this is a more than acceptable kiddie romp by PlayStation standards. Although it's extremely playable 40 Winks lacks that little something to make it stunning, or indeed, a rival to *Ape Escape*. ★★★



CHAMPIONSHIP MOTOCROSS FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

- Publisher: **THQ**
- Developer: **Funcom**
- Price: **£30**
- Release: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ While *Gran Turismo* may have four-wheeled racing sown up on PlayStation, a similar motorbike game is still a pipedream. Still, *Championship Motocross* has a pretty decent go – the handling is realistic and the tracks are excellent. In fact, it does enough to be the best motorbike sim around. Sadly, that's not saying much. ★★★



PGA EUROPEAN TOUR GOLF

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Developer: **Infogrames**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ The first golf game from the old Actua stable following Gremlin's recent sell-off to Infogrames, and hopefully the last. The graphics are shockingly low-res and the actual golf is painfully unrealistic. The fairways are like greens, and the greens are, yep, like fairways. Compared to *Mario Golf*, this is embarrassing. ★



FORMULA ONE 99

- Publisher: **Sony**
- Developer: **Psygnosis**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ Seems like Sony does care after all. After the truly dreadful *F1 '98*, which undid the great work of its two predecessors with style, the Formula One circus is back, and it really is better than ever. All the proper cars, tracks and names are here, and the only thing that holds this back from being a five-star classic is the absence of a decent two-player mode. ★★★★★



JADE COCOON

- Publisher: **Crave**
- Developer: **Genki**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ *Final Fantasy*-lite, if you will, but *Jade Cocoon* is a pleasing enough RPG for gamers who don't really like RPGs. Much easier to get into and quicker to get going than Square's epics, this is standard save-the-world-from-evil-spirits stuff with the added bonus of a two-player battle mode where you can download the characters you've built up. Refreshing. ★★★



FOX BASKETBALL

- Publisher: **Activision**
- Developer: **Fox Sports**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ Fox Sports is aiming fair and square at EA Sports' domination of anything a) American and b) sporting, and it's doing pretty well. This one looks absolutely fantastic and gives the EA crew a run for its money in the presentation department too. Nevertheless, it really isn't anything groundbreaking, or even different. A missed opportunity. ★★★

New Nintendo 64 Games

Arcade
Nintendo 64
Game of
the Month



■ Hey, hey, they're the monkeys.

Game info

- Publisher: Nintendo/Rare
- Developer: Rare
- Price: £60 (with Expansion Pak)
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-4
- Extras: Expansion Pak (required), Rumble Pak

DONKEY KONG 64

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>King Kong</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positively packed full of stuff to do ■ Spot-on controls ■ Expansion Pak intelligently used | <p>Bubbles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Occasional graphical slowdown ■ Iffy camera ■ Could have done with monkey tennis sub-game |
|---|---|

A MONKEY IS FOR LIFE, NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS.

As the great Noddy Holder justly exclaimed: "It's Chriiiiiistmaaaaas!" – which means it's time for the Yuletide Nintendo 64 blockbuster. After *Diddy Kong Racing* in 1997, and last year's gob-smackingly brilliant *Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* comes this, the 64-bit update of Rare's successful series of SNES *Donkey Kong Country* games. And it doesn't disappoint, being as packed full of tasty morsels and eye-gorging goodies as the traditional Christmas Day roast.

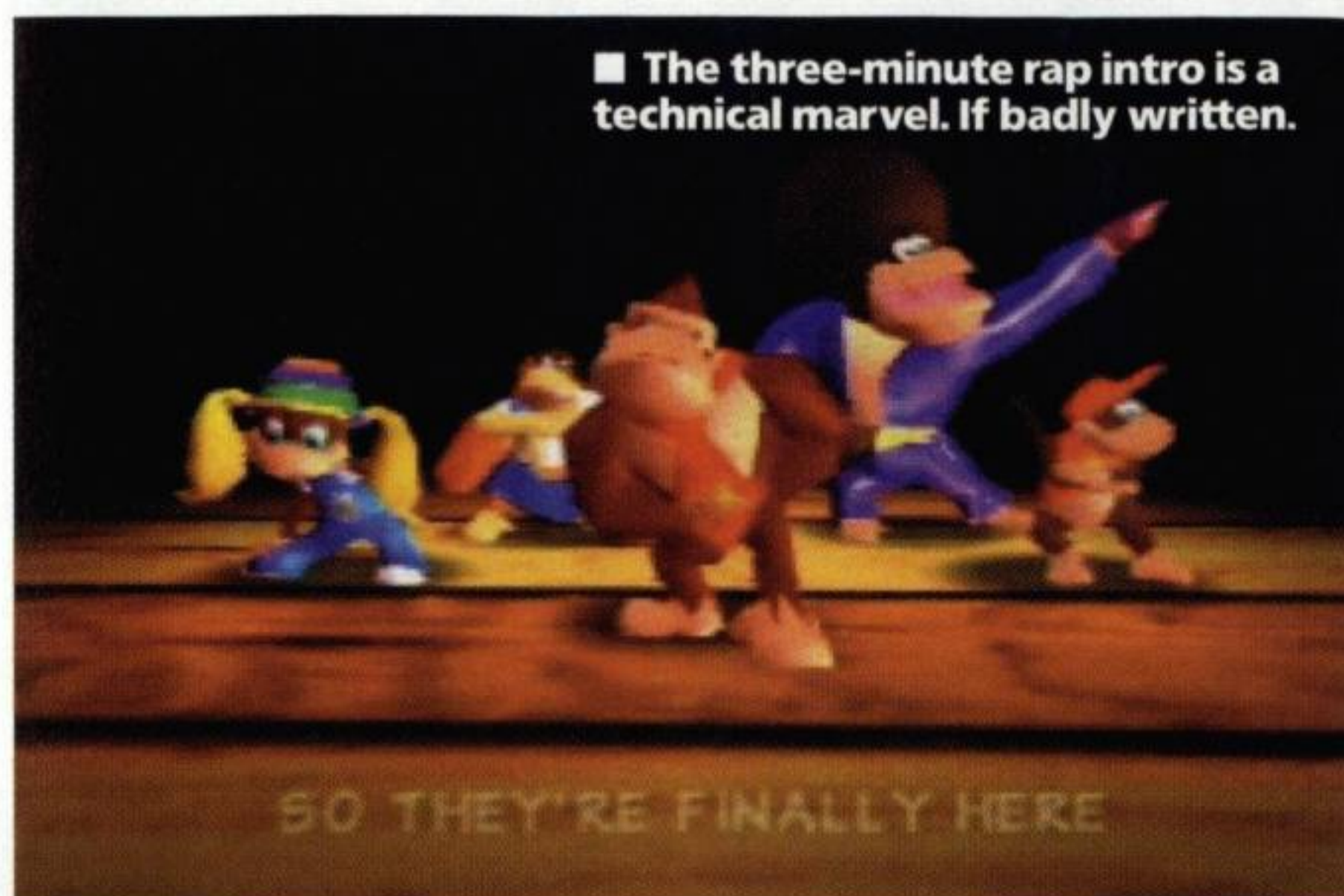
Regular visitors to Rare's museum of games will immediately recognise elements of the Twycross coder's last platformer, *Banjo-Kazooie*. The worlds are similarly

themed (desert, water, and – yes! – sparkly ice world), the controls and camera borrow heavily from the bear and bird, and, with five separate members of the Kong family at the mercy of your fingers, there are echoes of the twin central characters of *Banjo-Kazooie*.

But *Donkey Kong 64* is much more than a clone of *Banjo-Kazooie*. For one thing, the game is absolutely massive. On their quest for golden bananas, each of the five apes has five puzzles to solve per level, often involving a platformy agility test and a short mini-game. Multiply that by five for each character, then multiply by eight for the number of levels, and you're looking at 200 different things to do. The tasks are hugely varied: expect to swat flies,



■ Miyamoto's first game is hidden deep within *DK64*.



■ The three-minute rap intro is a technical marvel. If badly written.



■ Undulating lakes, climbable trees – welcome to DK world.

protect rabbits from walking TNT barrels, ride in minecarts and race beetles through ice castles. And be sure to put aside at least 40 hours of your time to do it all.

It's clear throughout the game that Rare takes immense pride in its work. While other developers fashion platformers that no doubt have Miyamoto tutting into his tea, the creator of *Donkey Kong 64* has polished everything until it gleams. Who else would build two complete retro classics into their game – *Donkey Kong* and *Jetpac* – just for the hell of it? Where else would you find a collection of weapons which are easier to use than those in most shoot-'em-ups? What other developer would think to use the Expansion Pak, not for needless hi-res graphics but for stunning lighting effects that see rooms bathed in the shifting glow of fireballs, sparkly lights and swinging lightbulbs?

The visuals are incredibly impressive. There's a disappointing amount of "fade-in" as objects approach from the distance, but the payoff comes with sprawling environments that stretch way off into the horizon, and detailed scenery that gives every area its own distinctive, atmospheric feel. Monstrous toadstools, giant lighthouses, glittering ice igloos and imposing haunted castles are just some of the eye candy on display. The animation, too, is superb – savour the attention to detail as a robot Kremling performs his hilariously over-the-top death routine, or Diddy whips out his John Woo-style double peanut guns with an excited "yippee!"

Mostly, though, it's the sheer size of *Donkey Kong 64* that will stagger you. Rare allows you to explore each world at will, but doesn't reveal everything a level has to offer until you've solved a few puzzles. As soon as you do, new doors will open, hidden switches will be unveiled and extra abilities will enable you to reach previously inaccessible areas. In Frantic Factory, the pulling of one lever causes a skyscraper-sized piece of machinery to shudder into life, creating a whole new area from a hitherto static piece of scenery. Rare displays more imagination and talent in one room than most developers manage in entire games.

Only one flaw prevents the hasty polishing off of *Donkey Kong 64*, and that's you. There's the occasional moment where the game is unnecessarily unfair – the irritating rockfalls of the Crystal Caverns level, the intensely tricky (though not as rude as it sounds) beaver baiting – but otherwise every switch to be found, chasm to be cleared and croc to be bopped is a challenge, not a chore. Granted, a fair few moments are disappointingly simple, but – as the old saying goes – the first 100 golden bananas are always the easiest. You'll be lured back to *Donkey*

Kong's perfectly-crafted world until you've seen and collected everything, a task Rare has ensured will take time, patience and several smashed TV screens.

THE GAME IS ABSOLUTELY HUGE, BE SURE TO PUT ASIDE AT LEAST 40 HOURS OF YOUR TIME TO DO IT ALL.

However, there is a major problem: the price. *Donkey Kong 64* will retail at a gut-wrenching £60, thanks to the bundled-in Expansion Pak that's required to run the game. If you already own a Pak, you have every right to be miffed as you'll be forced to fork out for another, but *Donkey Kong 64* is one of those (ahem) rare titles that's attractive at any price. The exquisite platforming is worth the 60 notes alone – the enjoyable multi-player and wealth of bonuses and secrets are the icing on the Chrimbo cake.

"So, here it is, Merry Christmas," sang Noddy. "Everybody's having fun." Don't make the wispy-haired crooner wrong – grab *Donkey Kong 64* and make this a Christmas to remember. ★★★★★ **Mark Green**

Or you could try...

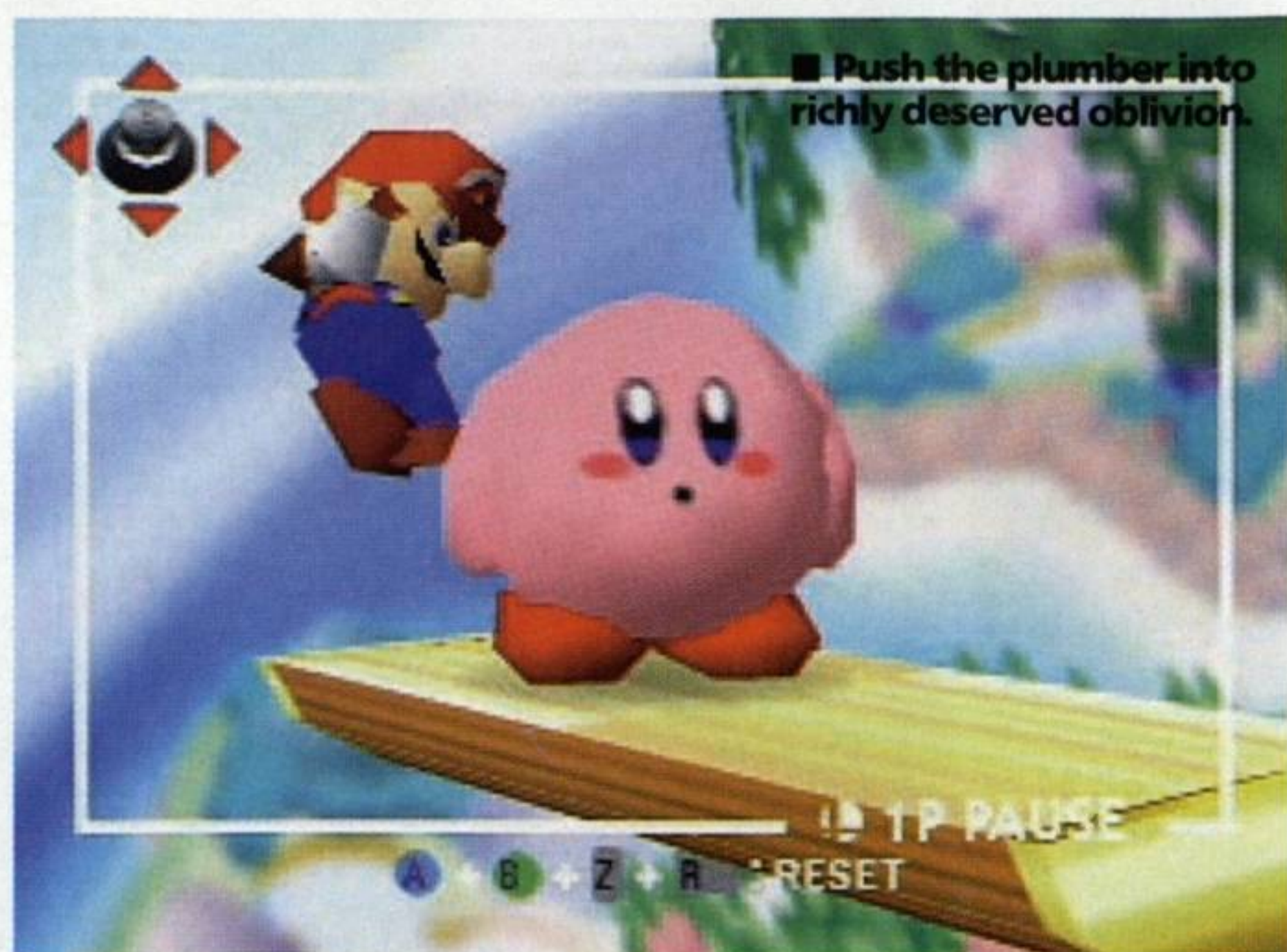
Banjo-Kazooie
Rare ★★★★★
Now Rare's second-best platformer, but still top-notch fare.

Super Mario 64
Nintendo ★★★★★
You owe it to yourself to play the world's greatest platformer.



■ You won't just find gurning apes in *DK64* – the assorted monkeys can morph into rhinos and swordfish. This is meant as a puzzle-solving technique, but nutting beavers is much more fun.

New Nintendo 64 Games



Game info

- Publisher: **Nintendo**
- Developer: **HAL**
- Price: **£50**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**

SUPER SMASH BROTHERS

THE NINTENDO FAMILY PICNIC IS A DANGEROUS PLACE TO BE.

Prior to *Super Smash Brothers*, there has never been an opportunity to bust the balls of the Nintendo crowd. But now it seems the company noticed a lack of beat-'em-ups in the N64 line-up and as a result has created its own version of *Celebrity Deathmatch*.

The name of the game is to kick seven shades of sunshine out of 12 classic Nintendo cast members, including Donkey Kong and StarFox, before pushing the computerised combatants off the edge of a cheerful platform, sumo wrestling-style. All the old favourites are on hand to duke it out, from Mario to the first 64-bit appearance of Samus Aran from the *Metroid* series, and each has a host of special moves. Most are easy to kill, but little Pikachu packs the biggest punch. The action is set in nine vom-tastic low-gravity 2D environments, but you are in glorious 3D.

Think *Street Fighter* characters bulked out to *Tekken* proportions, while retaining the same anime feel.

Unlike beat-'em-ups of the serious variety, *Super Smash Brothers* avoids any need for complex combos or beat counting. Instead, success depends on speed,

accuracy and how many plasters you have in the flat. Using a series of twitches and thumb rotations, you advance through the levels kicking, throwing and occasionally screaming.

Upwards movement is controlled with the C-pad and the analogue stick, while attacks are a tricky combination of the A, B and right shoulder buttons in tandem with the stick. And you can pick up objects like crates, swords and the Donkey Kong hammer to bring the pain to your pals.

The single-player game is uninspired. Once you've made your way through the stages and slightly puzzley bonus rounds you return to the beginning and do it all again,

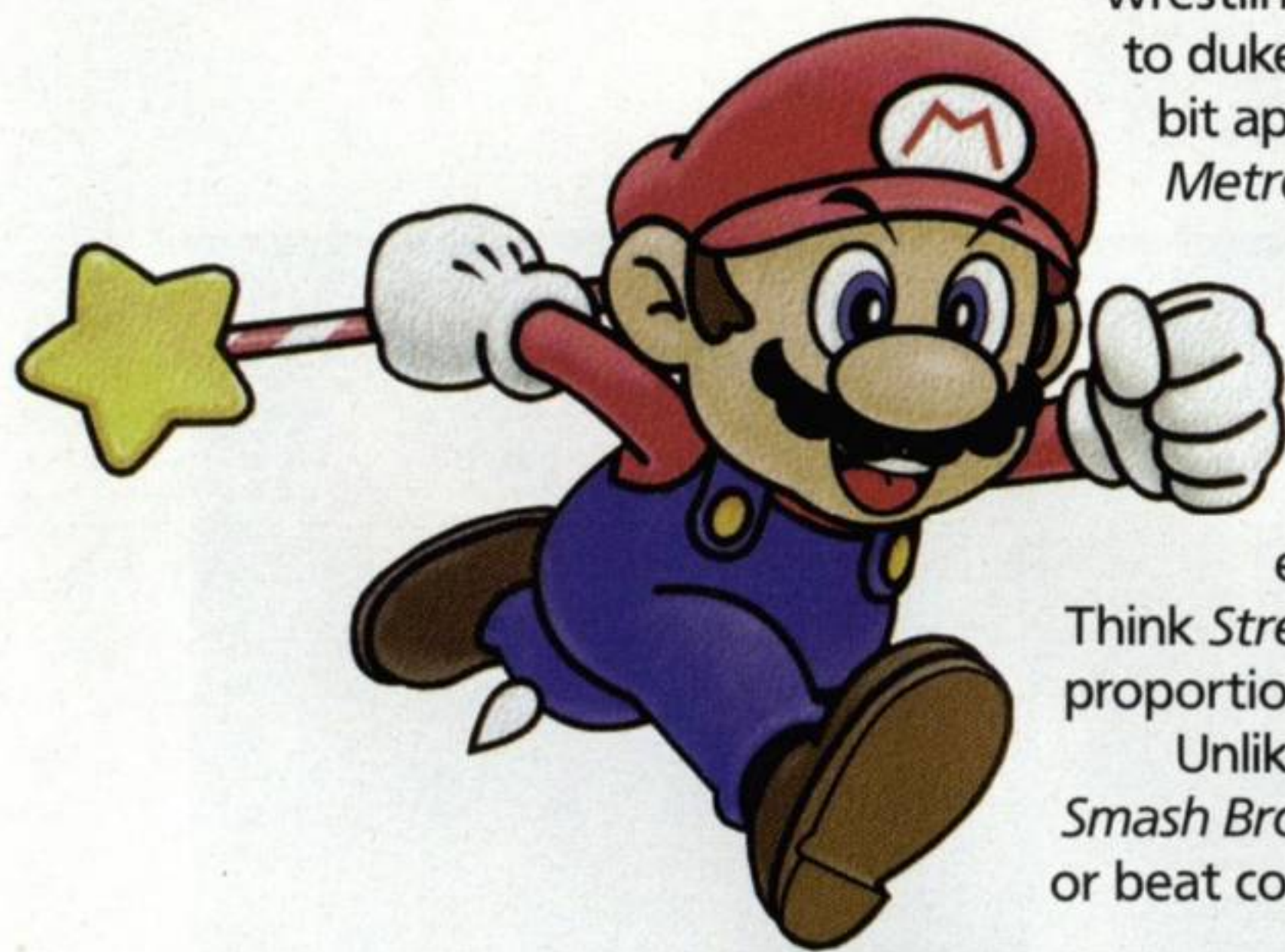
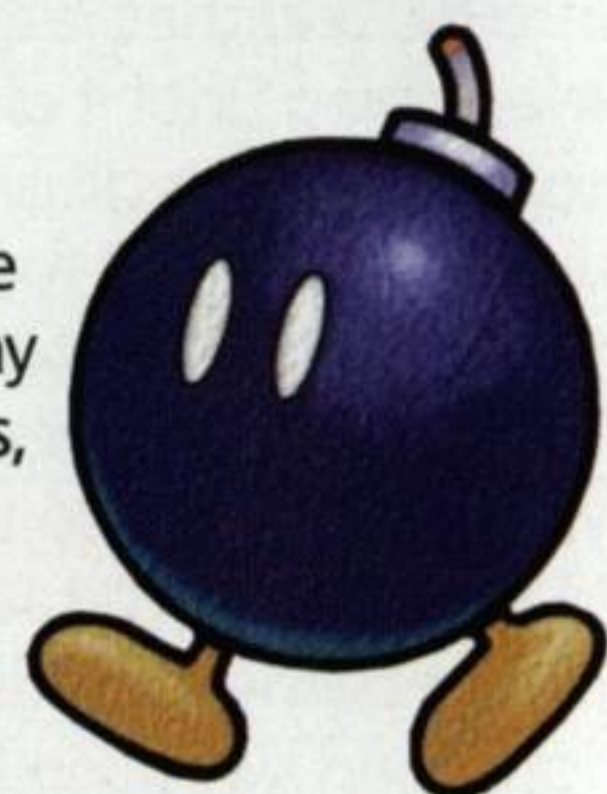
against the same characters, in the same order. The only reason to make your way through is to unlock new hidden friends, but even then you've got to follow the same pattern to play with them.

Multi-player is something of a saving grace for the game, and features a last man standing-style round or a race for most punch outs against the clock. However, with up to four characters on screen at one time, the action becomes fuddled and the distinction between dudes miniscule. The camera takes flight in order to capture the action, so if characters are thrown off in opposite directions mid-bout, you end up controlling a speck. Not easy.

But what really adds to *Super Smash Brothers* are the sound effects. The ringing tones of the Donkey Kong hammer and *Super Mario's* star song instantly transport you back to dark wood-panelled arcade halls filled with men with beards and stale cigarette smoke. To add to the nostalgia factor all the old tunes are back, remixed in a fashion that would make Mr Tong silently nod.

For the old skool arcade freak, this sugar coated, bouncy addition to the Nintendo line-up doesn't make up for the lack of fighters on offer. It's chaos. Build up the callouses and bring out the barf bags, *Super Smash Brothers'* super sweetness will make you hurl. ★★★

Aleks Krotoski



ALL THE OLD FAVOURITES ARE ON HAND TO DUKE IT OUT, FROM MARIO TO SAMUS ARAN OF METROID FAME.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>TKO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ '80s music revival for the arcade set ■ No slowdown, even in four-player ■ Kick the shit out of Pikachu | <p>Cheap shot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No clear control ■ Motion sickness-inducing ■ Crazy camera action |
|---|--|

Or you could try...

Fighters Destiny
Ocean ★★★★★
Probably the finest Nintendo 64 fighter ever. Still easy, though.

Mortal Kombat 4
GT Interactive ★★★★★
Simplistic, fast, laugh-a-minute fighting action. Filled with gore, too.

This month in...

Total Football

**Even FA Cup winners have their heroes.
The game's biggest names pay tribute to their boyhood idols**

HEROES

**Plus: "Don't call me Michael Owen" Marian Pahars speaks
England vs Scotland: Battle Of Britain picture special
"I'll get me training top" – The game's greatest rejects
Neil Ruddock, David Holdsworth, Warren Barton**

**On sale
9th December!**





■ Anytime, anyplace, anywhere... but always sporting big cleavage.



Game info

- Publisher: Titus
- Developer: Titus
- Price: £45
- Release Date: on sale now
- Players: 1-4
- Extras: Memory Pak, Rumble Pak

XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS

SWORDPLAY GALORE AS XENA MAKES THE MOVE TO VIDEOGAMES.

You've seen her clad in skimpy cod-medieval garb, fighting off bulky men with lust in their eyes. But now comes the opportunity to get her strong, sure hands a-wielding your sword, as *Xena Warrior Princess* arrives on the Nintendo 64. Yes, it's rumble time involving all the characters from the Channel 5 show: Xena on Gabrielle, Ephiny on Callisto – whichever sub-lesbian match up twitches your controller. Subtle bliss indeed, but does the action match the pitch?

In true beat-'em-up style, Xena's fighting system is all combos and special moves. What's good here is the number of moves that are easily accessible from the off. You'll be making with the specials before you can say "dialogue coach" and basic combos are easy to use. There are also a good number of more complicated moves available, so there's a fair bit to master. The idea is that Xena is easy to get into but offers a lot more depth for the dedicated player, but the trouble is that the game doesn't go far enough. Aside from the fact that long combos don't make a great fighting game, there are no counters, reversals or multi-parts – the stuff that makes Namco beat-'em-ups the best.

The camera stays in a fixed position and this can lead to confusion with the fighting system. Forward can change to up on the D-pad if your fighter is at the bottom of the screen, which isn't ideal. While this isn't a major problem

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Xena</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Easy to get into ■ Good range of moves ■ Excellent multi-player game | <p>Wiener</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not enough depth ■ Lacks fluidity ■ Dodgy fighting system |
|---|--|

it makes the fights a little more random than they should be, especially when characters are moving around each other at speed. Xena's best feature is the Roster mode, which enables

up to four players to fight each other with teams of up to four characters. It's basically a beefed up team battle mode with masses of fighting and masses of multi-player fun.

All the arenas are fashioned in lovely 3D and are easy on the eye. The settings vary from forests to beaches to marketplaces, which nicely reflects the feel of the TV series. But surely something could have been done to liven them up a little. A few tables to jump on or a river to fall into, perhaps? Ah, the impact of the Dreamcast begins: *Power Stone* and *Soul Calibur* have set the benchmark for fighting games and are what Xena is up against this Christmas, heaving leather brassiere or no.

As far as fighting games go, Xena manages to hold its own, and is up there with the best fighters the Nintendo 64 has to offer. Beat-'em-up experts will balk at the lack of flexibility in the game, but then the title isn't really aimed at them. Xena may be the only serious Nintendo beat-'em-up this Christmas, but it's not much better than Nintendo's blatantly kiddie *Super Smash Brothers*. Won't be rewriting the history books, then. ★★★

Nick Jones

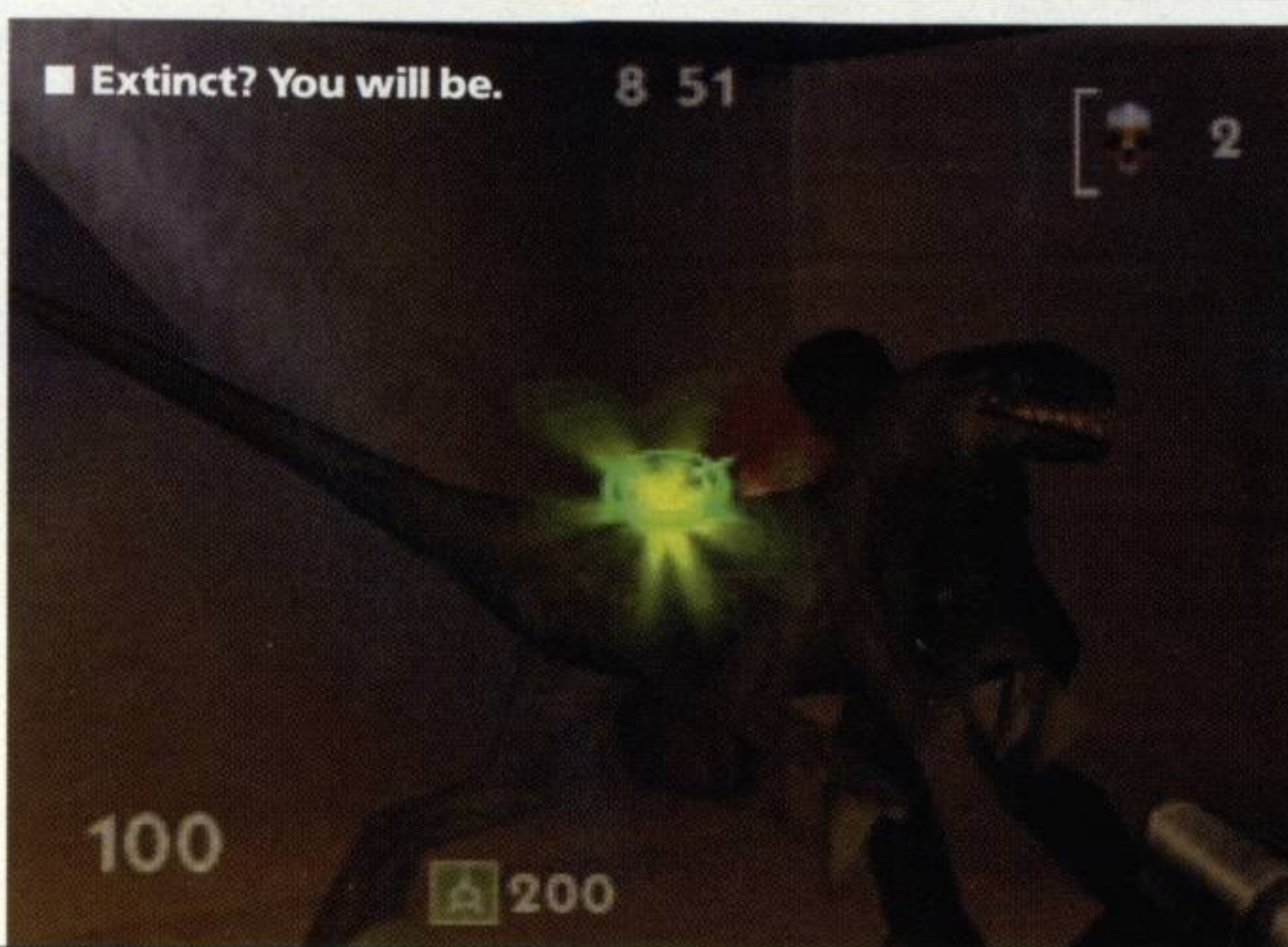
Or you could try...

WCW Vs NOW
THQ ★★★
Lashings of four-player fun in this wrestling game.

Fighters Destiny
Infogrames ★★★
Not quite the Nintendo 64 Tekken, but very nearly.

■ *The Story Of O*, Xena style.





■ Do not travel unless your journey is entirely necessary...

ROADSTERS

- Publisher: **Titus**
- Developer: **Titus**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **Memory Pak**

■ Just as Titus was making a name for itself as the comedy developer of the gaming industry, it goes and pulls *Roadsters* out of the hat – proving there's more to the company than awful games.

With memories of *Superman* still as fresh as a day-old gunshot wound – and almost as painful – when this game arrived in the office reviewers weren't fighting to put it through its paces. More fool them, because *Roadsters* is a surprisingly tidy little racer, with a lot going for it: it's fast, it's good-looking and it offers a decent and enjoyable challenge.

The emphasis in the game – apart from winning races, obviously – is accruing cash from victories and upgrading your car via a well-implemented engine-tinkering section. New cars can also be bought, and, splendidly, *Roadsters* features the fully-licensed Real McCoy. Unfortunately, the cars you start with aren't that fast, and as a result the initial races are slow and dull affairs.

It's only when you've souped-up your motor or bought another that races begin to get fast, furious, and generally exciting. Indeed, once you've reached the Category A cars, *Roadsters* becomes genuinely thrilling, and the ten tracks on offer are recycled with differing weather effects and night racing. The slippy-slidy snow levels, in particular, are fiendish.

Roadsters is an accomplished racer. It's not particularly original, granted, but Titus should be pleased. ★★★★★ **Jes Bickham**

Game info

- Publisher: **Acclaim**
- Developer: **Acclaim**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **Rumble Pak, Memory Pak, Expansion Pak**

TUROK: RAGE WARS

DEATHMATCH-HEAVY GAMING SOLDIERS ON.

After the critical and commercial success of *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* and *Turok 2: Seeds of Evil*, it would take a brave developer to picture the third chapter in the dino-stomping series as a deathmatch-based game. Especially as the *Turok 2* deathmatch was as fun as scooping out your eyes with spoons.

And yet, that's exactly what Acclaim has done. Taking a lead from PC games *Quake 3: Arena* and *Unreal Tournament*, *Turok: Rage Wars* is based on the multi-player.

And guess what? It works. Fantastically well. The single-player game involves an increasingly varied series of bouts against CPU opponents, from straight frag-fests to team games, capture-the-flag, boss battles and even Frag Tag, a tremendous game involving one player as a defenceless monkey. Each of the 17 characters contained within the game can take his, her or its own route through the game, although many of these aren't available until you've unlocked them by playing as other characters.

The game is a little slow to begin with and takes a while to get into, but it soon becomes compulsive stuff. This is thanks to the compact, well-designed levels and, in particular, the CPU opponents (or "bots"). In the main they're terribly clever, although they sometimes like to take a stroll into some red-hot lava. You can even indulge in the multi-player mode proper against up to three of the blighters without wiping the floor with them.

The multi-player game is tremendously good. Not quite up to *GoldenEye* or *Quake 2*, standards, but damn good

stuff all the same. The variety of effective and outlandish weapons are outstanding, the self-explanatory Chestbuster being the most entertaining. Each weapon has a secondary fire function; the shotgun, for example, can be loaded up with six shells for a devastating, but slow-loading, attack. You can only carry five weapons at a time, so you need to pick your guns with tactics and strategy in mind.

Ultimately, this is a fine addition to the *Turok* series, and is a superb first-person shooter in it's own right. A third sequel proper is scheduled for Christmas 2000, but until then this entertaining experiment in multi-player carnage should keep you more than occupied. ★★★★★ **Jes Bickham**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| Dino | Wino |
| ■ Great guns | ■ Slow to start |
| ■ Great multi-player | ■ Can be samey |
| ■ Successful console-based riff on <i>Quake 3</i> | |



■ In a huff? Play *Rage Wars*.



Or you could try...

GoldenEye 007
Rare ★★★★★
Benchmark first-person shooter on the N64. Go on, be Bond.

Quake 64
GT ★★
It's *Quake*, but only two can play.

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EARTHWORM JIM 3D

THE INVERTEBRATE CREEPY CRAWLER IS BACK AND THIS TIME THE LITTLE BLIGHTER'S IN FULL, GLORIOUS 3D.



Game info

- Publisher: **Virgin Interactive**
- Developer: **Vis Interactive**
- Price: **£45**
- Release date: **17 December**
- Players: **1**
- Requires: **P233, 64Mb RAM, 3D accelerator card**
- Recommended: **Memory Pak**

Earthworm Jim and his fantastic white space suit were introduced to the Nintendo back in the early '90s in a side-scrolling 2D adventure. The tail-whipping, gun-toting, head-swinging annelid was so popular that he got another game. It was, inevitably, a smash. Then came the dizzy heights of fame, the television appearances, the fan clubs, the mountains of glistening fertiliser. And then a cow fell on his head. Welcome to the brain of a damaged dendrobaena. Welcome to *Earthworm Jim 3D*.

In this latest installment, you get to control Jimbob as he rolls around inside his own head trying to sort out the mess caused by the plummeting bovine. He has lost his marbles, and through the four themed levels of brain – Happiness, Memory, Fantasy and Fear – he has got to find 'em and pull himself together.

He comes across all sorts of weirdness, including zombie Elvises and giant chickens, which he deals with in his own



■ Earthworm Jim has lost his marbles. A cow fell on his head, you see.



inimitable style by lashing out with his copyrighted tail attack, laser gun and the odd special pick-up like the happy human blaster, using the A and B buttons. He's rejoined by old faithfuls Professor Monkey-for-a-head and Evil the Cat. Everything looks great and the platforms are a hoot, and at first glance the game has Christmas hit written all over it.

But the camera is abominable. It may look great, but baby – you can't see dirt. Moving the pesky worm around isn't the problem. The slightest twitch of the analogue stick has Jim running around in circles, but you can't see where you're going. You spend much of your time getting burned from sources unseen and falling off platforms you didn't know ended. You can adjust the camera using the C-pad, but you never quite manage to find a vantage point where you can view the whole picture. And this is one failing you literally can't overlook.

With the voice of Homer Simpson providing Jim's dulcet tones and a winning combination of humour and challenging platform puzzle-solving adventure, *Earthworm Jim 3D* was expected to do great things for soil-munching kind. Problem is, you don't care how great things are, because you're so busy yelling at the screen after being blindsided by another camera stunt. The inside of a grub is a very frustrating place to be. ★★★ **Aleks Krotoski**



■ Comedy worm, comedy camera.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|---|
| Fishbait <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Looks great ■ Elvis ■ Clever puzzles and extremely funny play | Birdfood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bad cam, bad cam ■ No worm frustration when unattended ■ Bad cam, bad cam |
|---|---|



■ Welcome to The Jimster's mind. Scary.

Or you could try...

Super Mario 64
Nintendo ★★★★★
The epitome of 3D platform game conversions.

Mischief Makers
Nintendo ★★★★★
Old skool insanity craftily woven into a fine 2D platformer.

Also released

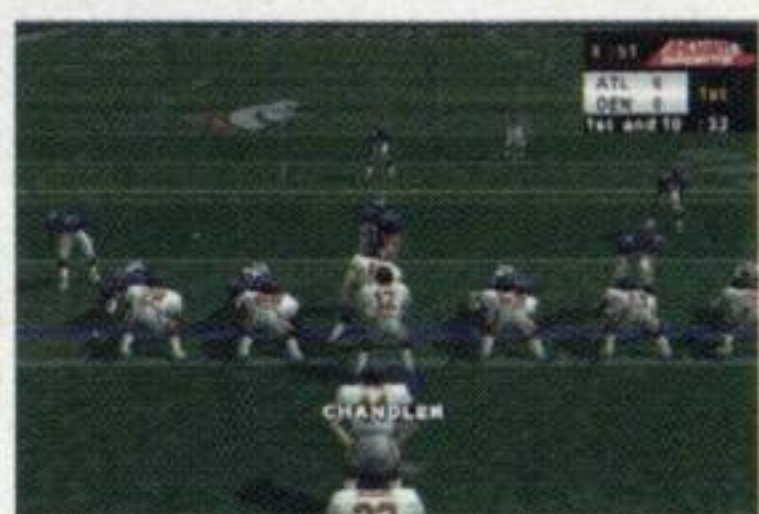
Cheeky cartridges of 64-bit fun.

Words by | **Simon Gamer**



CARMAGEDDON 64

- Publisher: **SCI**
- Developer: **SCI**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **Memory Pak, Rumble Pak**
- This is a serious contender for the worst game on the N64. Driving around killing zombies was always a bad concept for a game, but *Carmageddon* is bogged down still further with poor handling, appalling graphics and opponents who seem to have no idea of what's going on. It lacks any kind of redeeming feature whatsoever. Do not buy under any circumstances. ★



NFL QBC 2000

- Publisher: **Acclaim Sports**
- Developer: **Acclaim Sports**
- Price: **£45**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **Memory Pak, Rumble Pak, Expansion Pak**
- *QBC 2000* features slick television-style presentation married with some superb graphics and gameplay, and so it's a pity gridiron doesn't go down that well in this country. This is the best American Football game out there by a long way, but if touchdowns don't float your boat, this won't either. ★★★



RAINBOW SIX

- Publisher: **Take 2**
- Developer: **Red Storm**
- Price: **£45**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**
- Extras: **Rumble Pak, Memory Pak**
- *Rainbow Six* is based on a Tom Clancy novel, and sees you take control of a team of crack commandos fighting against international terrorism. This is first-person shooting with the emphasis on stealth, strategy and an ever-changing story line. It has good visuals and has moments of genuine tension. It's not as good as *GoldenEye*, though. ★★★



READY 2 RUMBLE

- Publisher: **Midway**
- Developer: **Midway**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **Memory Pak, Rumble Pak**
- Midway's brilliantly amusing boxing game makes its way onto the N64. The Dreamcast version got top marks and so does this. The game features an excellent one-player career mode, but in multi-player it really shines. With its great characters, outrageous animation and unbeatable arcade-style gameplay, *Ready 2 Rumble* is the best boxing game ever, and the best fighter on N64. ★★★★★



THE NEW TETRIS

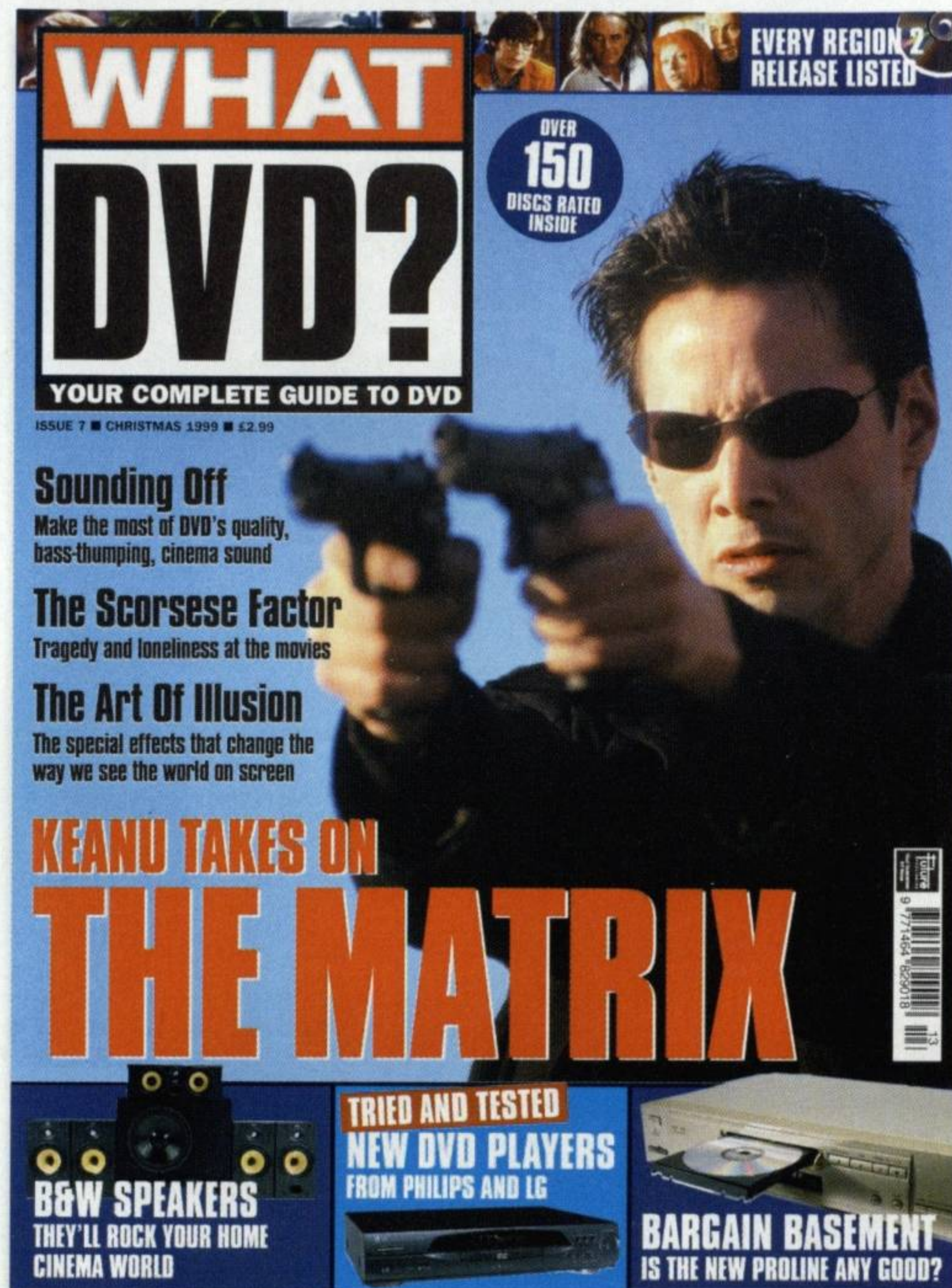
- Publisher: **Nintendo**
- Developer: **Nintendo**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **Memory Pak, Rumble Pak**
- It's hard to identify the new in *The New Tetris*. Admittedly it's on N64 and has pretty graphics, but that's about all. All that seems to have changed is that you get to see three blocks in advance, and when you get a Tetris the blocks jumble up rather than clear. Not really worth £40. The Game Boy Color version is the best version of *Tetris*, so buy that instead. ★



WORMS ARMAGEDDON

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Developer: **Kemco**
- Price: **£45**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **Rumble Pak**
- If you don't know what *Worms* is, the idea is simple yet highly effective: move your worm soldiers around the 2D landscape and kill your opponents with a variety of amusing weapons. Last worm soldiers around the 2D landscape and kill your opponents with a variety of amusing weapons. Played with friends, this is brilliant, totally addictive and sweats a wicked sense of humour. Not essential by any means, but still fun after all these years. ★★★

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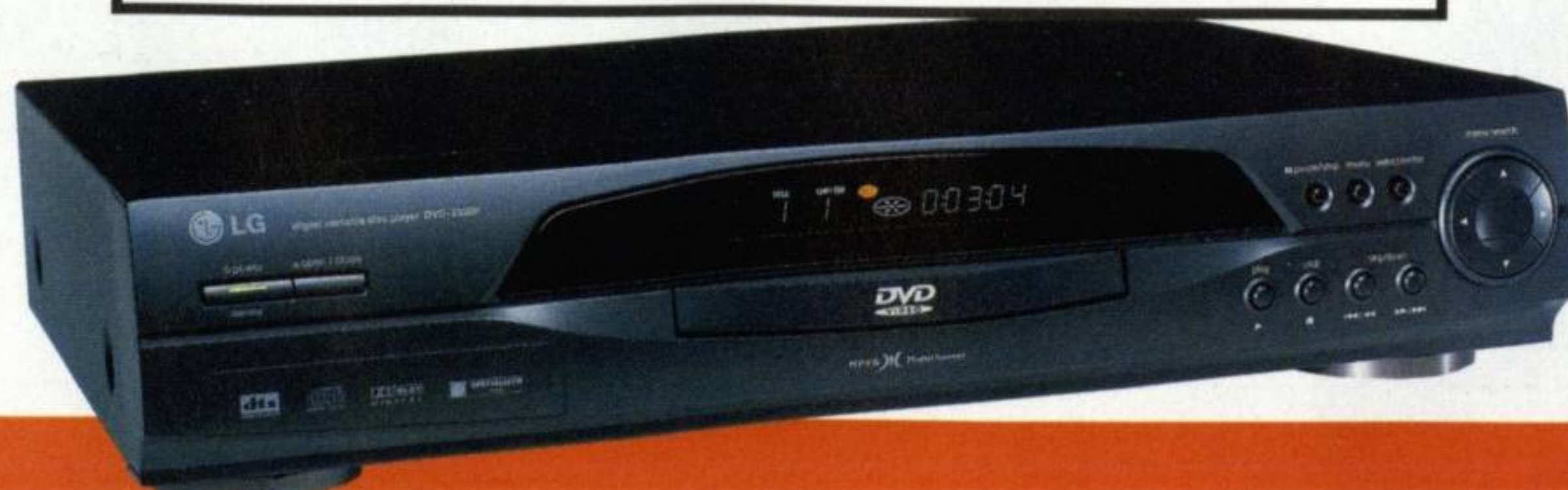
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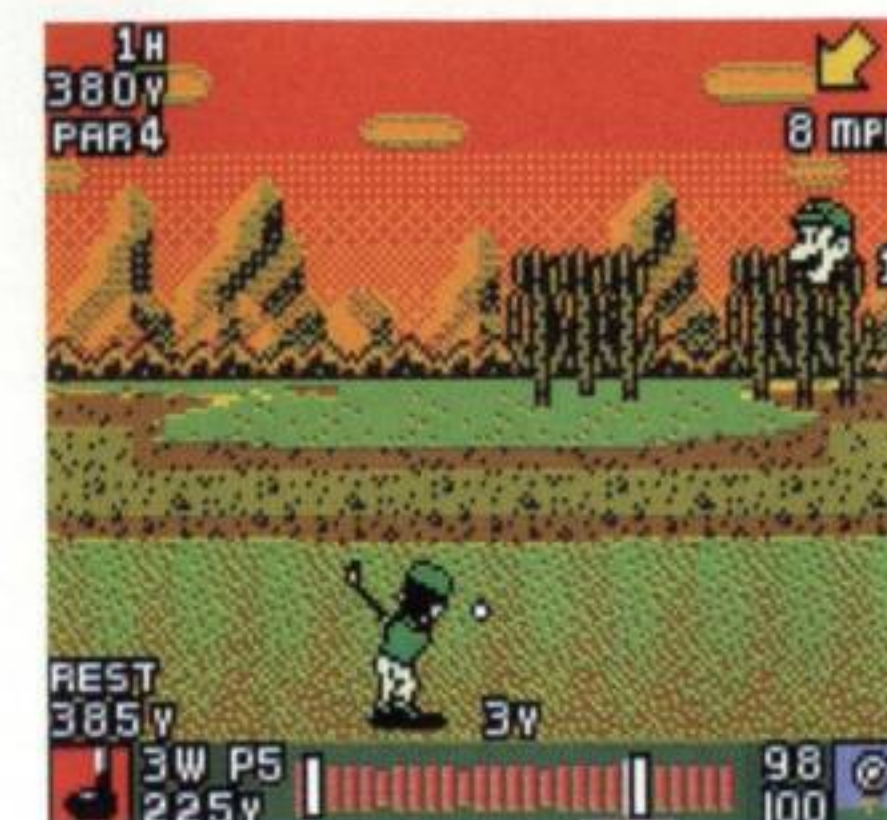
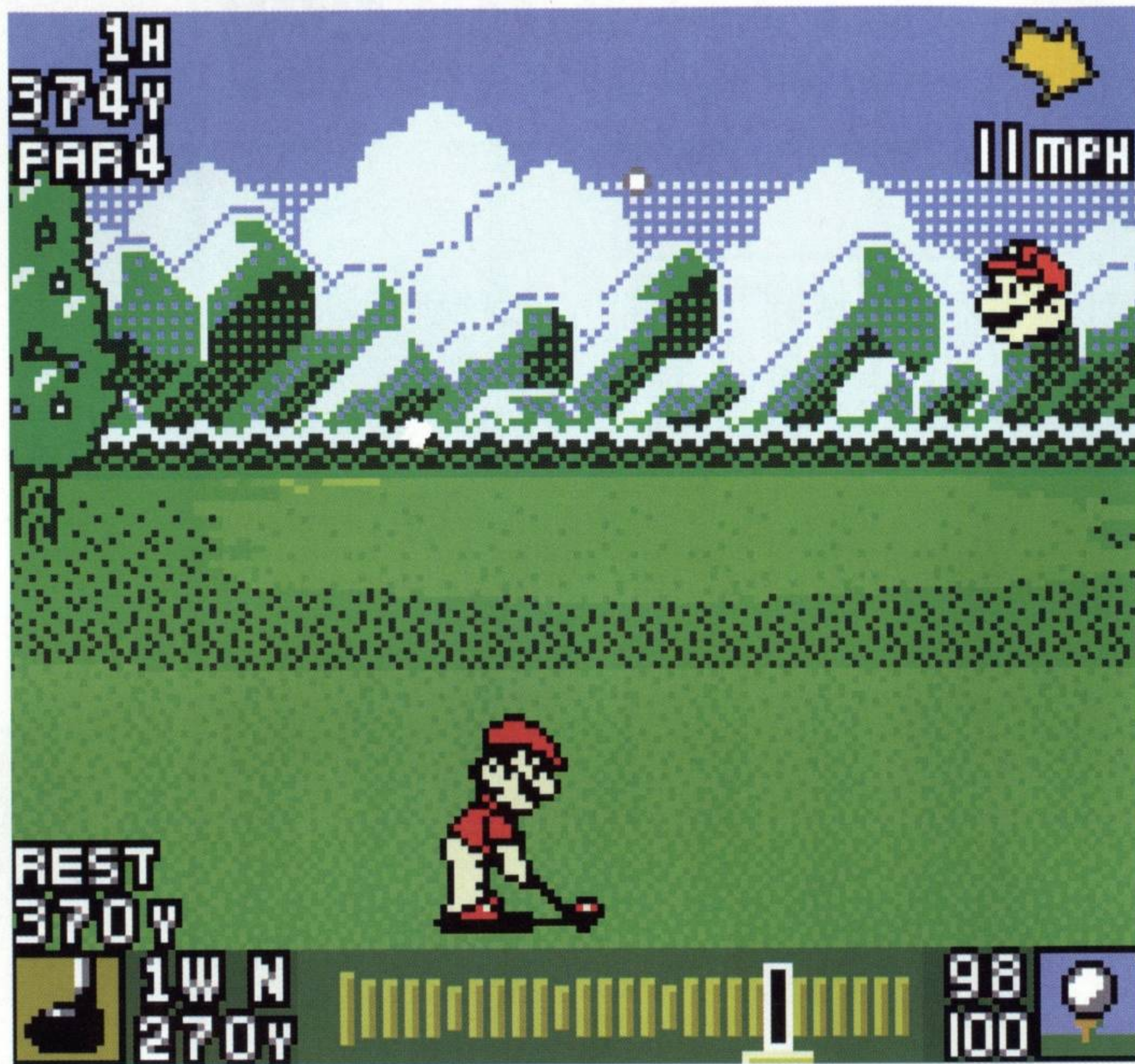


Other Systems

A Game Boy



■ Italian golfers in championship winning form shocker.



Game info

- Publisher: Nintendo
- Developer: Camelot
- Players: 1-2 (with link cable)
- Price: £25
- Release date: on sale now
- Extras: link cable, Transfer Pak

MARIO GOLF



- | ↑ Uppers & Downers ↓ | |
|--|--|
| Hole in one
■ Great graphics
■ Incredibly addictive
■ Mario's in it! | Double bogey
■ It's golf
■ Judging shots is sometimes difficult |

IS MARIO A MEAN MOTHER OF A CADDY DADDY?

Mario sinking a putt on the 18th green seems as incongruous as Mario sitting at the bar sinking a troughfull of lager but the little plumber slips into a pair of plus fours more comfortably than Jimmy Tarbuck slides into a pro-celebrity tournament.

If you're not a fan of clubs and caddies you may think about giving this game a miss, which would be a shame because *Mario Golf* is one of the best titles available for Nintendo's 8-bit wonder. It's a compelling cocktail of golf and RPG elements that sees you improve your skills on the course and wander about the clubhouse chatting to pros about dropping shots on the long holes.

You're given a bunker full of game options including a cup-winning Tournament mode with leaderboard and a Match game where you can take on a club champ, such as Mario himself. The four courses vary between a picturesque seaside affair, countryside, desert and a tropical paradise complete with palm trees.

The graphics are beautifully presented with a 3D view of your golfer in club-swinging action and a top-down look at the ball's

trajectory. Playing is a matter of choosing your club, aiming your shot, taking into account wind direction and thwacking the ball using a meter to judge power and accuracy. It takes a while to get used to, especially on approach shots to the green, but after a few rounds you'll be collecting birdies quicker than that kid out of Kes.

As well as the main action, *Mario Golf* keeps you interested with mini-game challenges, driving ranges, characters to unlock and a Story mode which follows the progress of your career. There's a fantastic Replay mode that has you review your best shots, a golfing dictionary to uncover the secrets of dimples and cleeks, plus a game link-up with the N64 *Mario Golf* for transferring character stats and scorecard stuff.

Never has such a cute little game caused such foul language to be shouted and hurled in the direction of the LCD. *Mario Golf* is an addictive pocket putting Game Boy masterpiece, with the added advantage of no rude, unsporting Americans running onto the course to spoil the fun. Grab your wood and tee off. ★★★★★



Also released

Handheld fun at £25 a pop.

Words by Jonathan Davies

ANTZ

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Developer: **CLCE**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1**
- It must take real guts to start with a delightful, sparkling film like the Woody Allen-voiced *Antz* and turn it into yet another witless Game Boy platform game. The all-star cast, laser-sharp script and dazzling set pieces have been discarded only to be replaced by a single, limply animated, ant who walks as if he inhabits a slippery-slidey ice world and spends most of his time firing indistinct projectiles at unidentifiable baddies. You can build ant-ladders, which is good, but you probably got bored of collecting 100 rings for an extra life in 1989. ★★

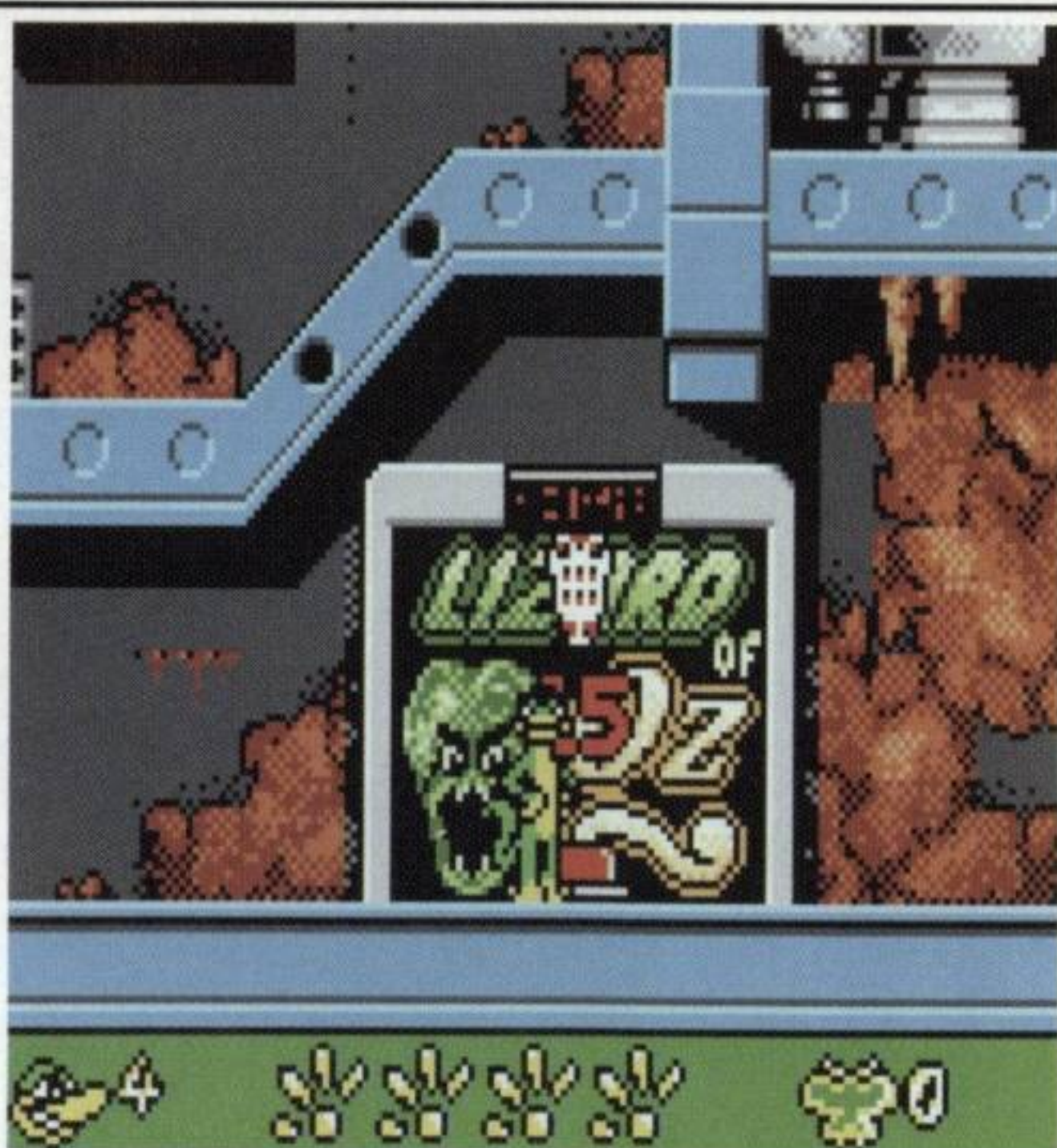


SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING

- Publisher: **Ubi Soft**
- Developer: **Ubi Soft**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1-2 (with link cable)**
- Despite being a straightforward driving game *Suzuki Alstare* still manages to get the pulse racing. With a vanishing point just inches ahead of your speeding bike, you need to focus every ounce of concentration to make sure you're ready to lean over, Barry Sheen-style, as a bend materialises in front of you. Naturally the graphics can't hold a candle to the Dreamcast version but they're not bad and although there are only two bikes (both Suzukis) you can unlock extra tracks by repeatedly winning the championship. ★★★

GEX: DEEP COVER GECKO

- Publisher: **Eidos**
- Developer: **Crystal Dynamics**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1**
- This Game Boy *Gex* is just as forgettable as its predecessor. The running, jumping and collecting things bit is still the same as it ever was. The TV-themed missions are different, however, especially the way *Gex* slips into, for example, a Sherlock Holmes disguise for the Mystery levels. A major problem is that after *Gex* has jumped, if you press B again he'll use his tail to do an extra-high jump. Which would be fine but when virtually every platform is an extra-high jump away you tend to wish he'd do the extra-high jump in the first place. Keep your cash firmly in your pocket. ★★



PAPYRUS

- Publisher: **Ubisoft**
- Developer: **Planet**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1**
- Like the no-brainer Hollywood film *The Mummy*, *Papyrus* is an entertaining, if predictable and lightweight, Egyptian adventure. It's strong point is undoubtedly the splendid use of colour which makes every level a pleasure to explore. But because the hero is burdened by too many frames of animation and takes too long to turn around and run away he is continually being stung by scorpions. While it gets the same score as *Gex* it is marginally more fun, so if you are going to buy one formulaic Game Boy platform game this month make sure it's *Papyrus*. ★★



ARE YOU GAME FOR THIS?

DEADLY DUST AND CHINA DOLLS



Ken and Ryu's quest to find the world's greatest street fighters takes an unexpected detour when Thai martial artists attempt to use Chun Li as bait in a trap for her father. Then Ryu is framed for opium smuggling, and it's up to Ken to find the real culprits before Ryu is sentenced to life in prison. The action never stops in the third volume of STREET FIGHTER II V!



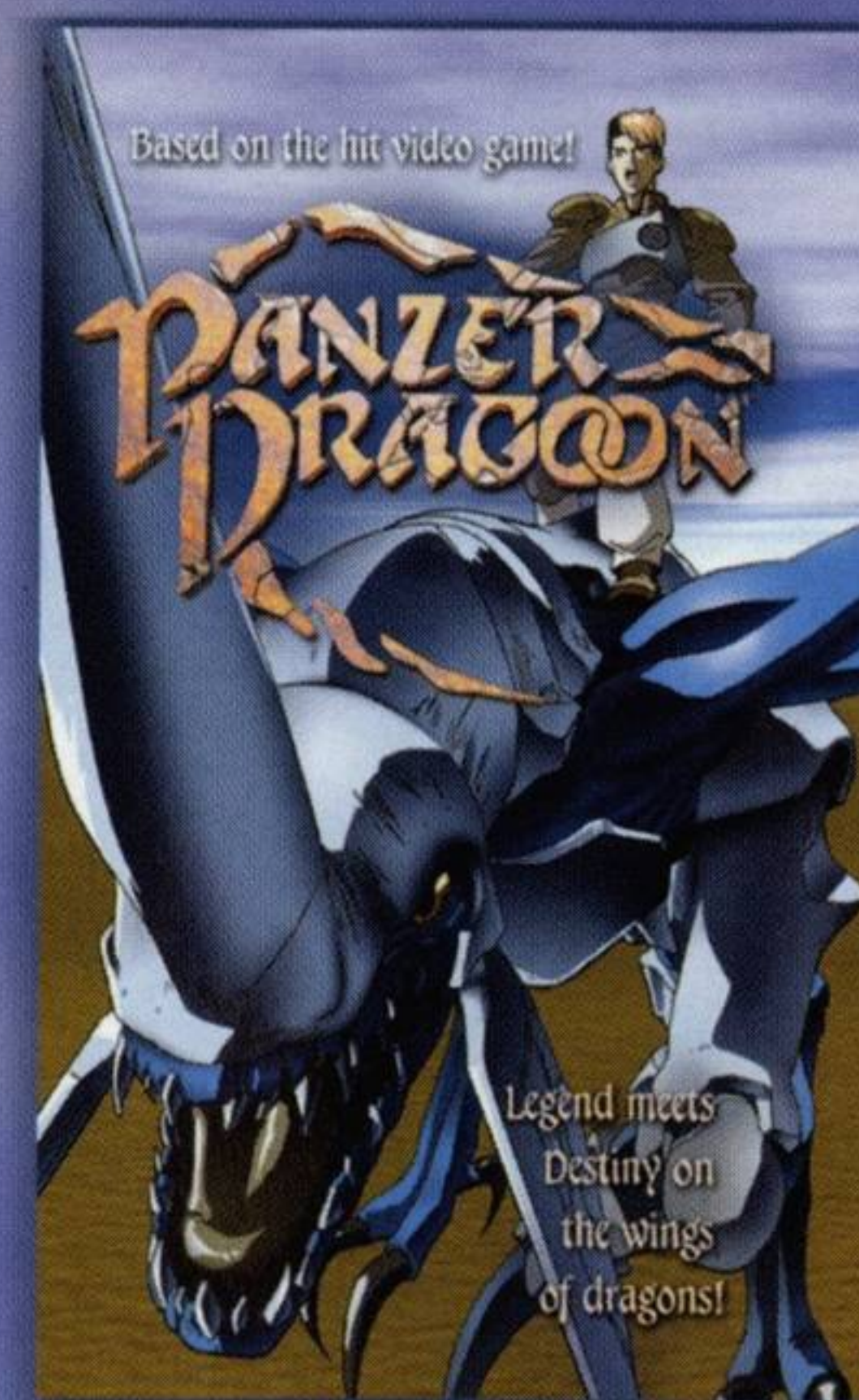
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Neo Geo Pocket

Post-launch carts for the handsome handheld.

Words by Jonathan Davies



CRUSH ROLLER

■ Publisher: **SNK** ■ Developer: **ADK**
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Price: **£25**
 ■ Players: **1-2 (with link cable)**

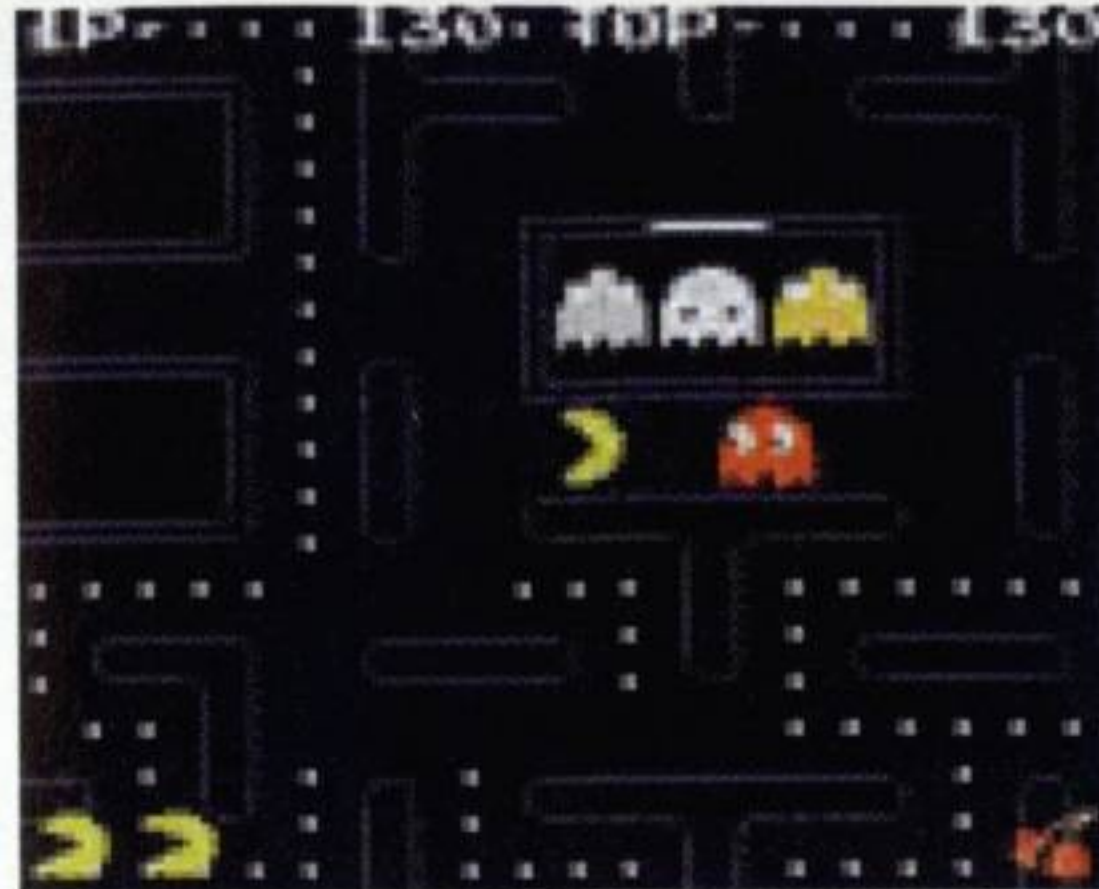
■ The six Neo Geo Pocket games reviewed last month made up probably the strongest console launch line-up ever to walk the earth. Can SNK's minuscule marvel maintain the pace? On the basis of this title it seems that it can't.

It's not that *Crush Roller* is without novelty, however. For example, the manual tells you Pink the Rabbit particularly likes "filthy rich people", while Niwa Niha the Hen has a talent for "information gathering".

But start playing and, well, what does this sound like to you? You're dashing around a maze. Things are chasing you. Bonus items occasionally appear.

In theory this game should be better than *Pac Man*. The mazes change from level to level, for a start, and they're semi-3D, with bridges and underpasses. And the bonus items (including the rabbit and hen) run about and undo your handiwork, rather than just sitting there. And you're painting a road rather than gobbling up boring dots. And there's a two-player link mode where squashing one of the pursuing baddies causes it to appear on your opponent's screen. And the graphics are more colourful.

But it's not *Pac Man* it's merely *Crush Roller*, and £25 seems a lot to pay for it. ★★



PAC-MAN

■ Publisher: **SNK** ■ Developer: **Namco**
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Price: **£25**
 ■ Players: **1**

■ Proclaimed "Game of the Century" at this year's Tokyo Games Show, *Pac Man* needs no introduction.

This is a flawless conversion of the coin-op that includes everything, from the whackawhacks of dot ingestion to the bweeooweeoo of the yellow fellow being vaporised. There's the fruit, the power pills, the warp tunnel, the... er, well, that's it really.

And the truth is, that's all you need for a game of *Pac Man*. In converting its compulsive arcade machine to SNK's handheld, Namco has placed the emphasis on authenticity. There's no tinkering with the original formula at all and no effort to introduce flashier graphics, a story mode, extra power-ups, new maze designs or anything. Perch a pint of beer and a half-smoked cigarette on your Pocket Color and you could almost be playing the coin-op.

But... wait! What's this? An options screen? You can choose between full-screen mode, which compresses everything onto your 2.6-inch TFT display, or scrolling, which accommodates more authentic graphics but, er, scrolls.

Apart from that it's the game of the century, but in your pocket. Dewy-eyed memories of the carefully coiffured early-'80s would be an advantage. ★★★★★



SAMURAI SHOWDOWN 2

■ Publisher: **SNK** ■ Developer: **SNK**
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Price: **£25**
 ■ Players: **1-2 (with link cable)**

■ Like all Neo Geo Pocket game packaging, *Samurai Showdown 2*'s box talks big, promising "a colorful, awesome sword battle". The reality seems disappointingly restrained by comparison, especially viewed beside the excellent *King of Fighters R-2*.

The characters do indeed carry blades, but don't expect clashing Zorro-style swordplay. Instead they simply take it in turns to clobber each other, like in any other beat-'em-up. And while the range of moves available is as complex and subtle as in the best full-sized fighting games, random button-pressers will find themselves through to the end boss in no time.

That said, you get 14 characters to pick from. And once you've selected a character you also get to choose between two modes of play: chivalry or treachery, each with its own set of special moves. This is an excellent idea. And, even better, the moves include such delights as the Ephemeral Bop and the Assured Destruction Swipe.

Samurai Showdown 2 seems well set up to exploit the Neo Geo's link cable, too, with a two-player mode and collectable cards that can be swapped with chums. While this is no disgrace, you'll get even more fun from *King of Fighters*. ★★★



DARK ARMS

■ Publisher: **SNK** ■ Developer: **SNK**
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Price: **£25**
 ■ Players: **1-2 (with link cable)**

■ The packaging could scarcely be more exciting. There's moody *Final Fantasy*-style artwork. There are phrases like: "I crave power, power Lucifer can only imagine." There are screenshots showing a mixture of bloke-running-around and complicated stats. Could this be a grown-up alternative to *Zelda DX* on the Game Boy? A pocket *Final Fantasy VIII*?

In fact it turns out to be a weird sort of role-playing shoot-'em-up. Most of the time you're exploring dungeons while shooting zombies and skeletons. You are, in fact, the Beast Buster, and you're acting at the behest of The Master, an unsavoury looking character who could do with feeding up a bit.

But then the RPG element comes into play. The screens of stats concern the gun your character carries, rather than the man himself. His gun is what gets more powerful as your quest goes on. The Master keeps going on about the importance of "oum" too, but heaven knows what that is. It's all a bit confusing, to be honest, albeit in an intriguing sort of way.

The main thing, though, is that roaming around peppering the undead with lead is an agreeable pastime. *Dark Arms* is no pocket *Final Fantasy* but it's ideal train fare. ★★★

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A Coin-op



■ Simple but effective: Hiryu hacks his way to victory.

STRIDER HIRYU 2

CLASSIC ARCADE PLATFORMER RETURNS.

A decade ago Capcom took the coin-op platformer scene by storm with *Strider*, a game which managed to overcome arcade favourite *Golden Axe* with a mixture of speed, panache and kick-ass intent. So where has the title been all these years?

Admittedly the platform genre is no longer a popular option in the arcades – probably due to the fact that early consoles were swamped with these types of games – but that doesn't excuse Capcom for taking so long to reinvent such a strong and popular title. That said, it's not all Capcom's fault. The company had a similar game in development three years ago, which ran on the Panasonic M2 board. But the M2 was never released and *Strider* has had a long, hard road to make it back to market.

Strider Hiryu 2 sees you take control of Hiryu, the lightsword-toting character of the original, who must fight his way past the evil Light Sword Cybers. The control system includes basic jumps, climbs and dashes – plus the requisite swordplay – and is refreshingly simple.

Graphics-wise, what you get is heady mixture of 3D and 2D, complete with pleasantly interactive playing environments. Capcom has chosen to stick with 2D, retaining the classic feel of *Strider* and incorporating 3D on areas of the backgrounds and the bosses to lend the title some contemporary credibility. Opting to use 3D is also

expected to make the game easier to port, as the amusement cognoscenti in Japan believe classic 2D games "lose their soul" when transferred to consoles.

The action isn't restricted to horizontal scrolling though, and you can head off in a variety of directions – including a mighty jump off the page, which usually sees you land directly in front of a large enemy.

The key problem with *Strider Hiryu 2* is that older gamers will wallow in nostalgia for a while, but will soon crave greater depth – as will anyone new to the game.

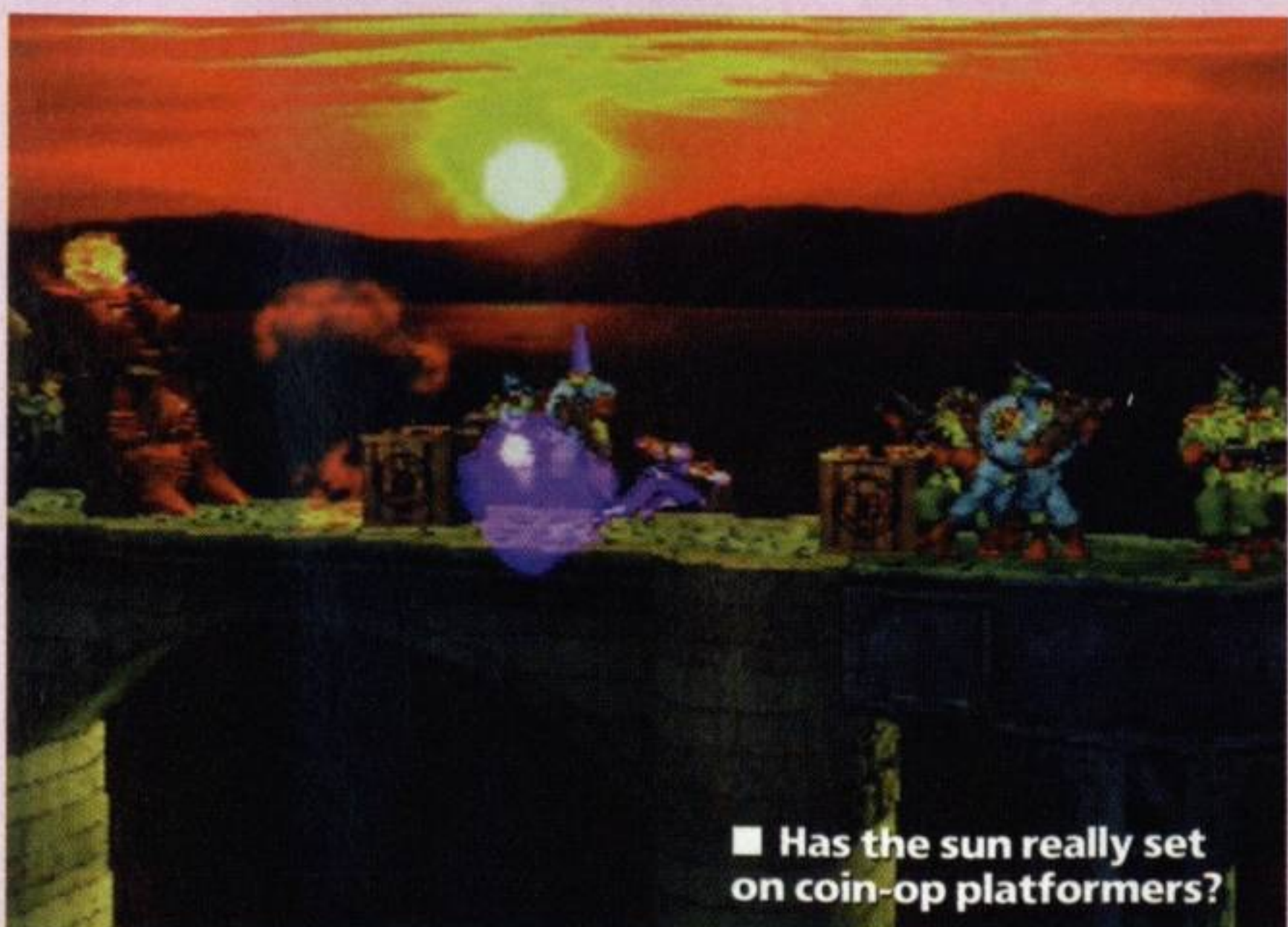
Strider Hiryu 2 should do well in Japan thanks to the phenomenon of videogame "stars" in that part of the world. However, it will struggle elsewhere – despite being good – as '90s gamers aren't accustomed to paying a pound to play a platformer. ★★ **Cam Anderson**

Game info

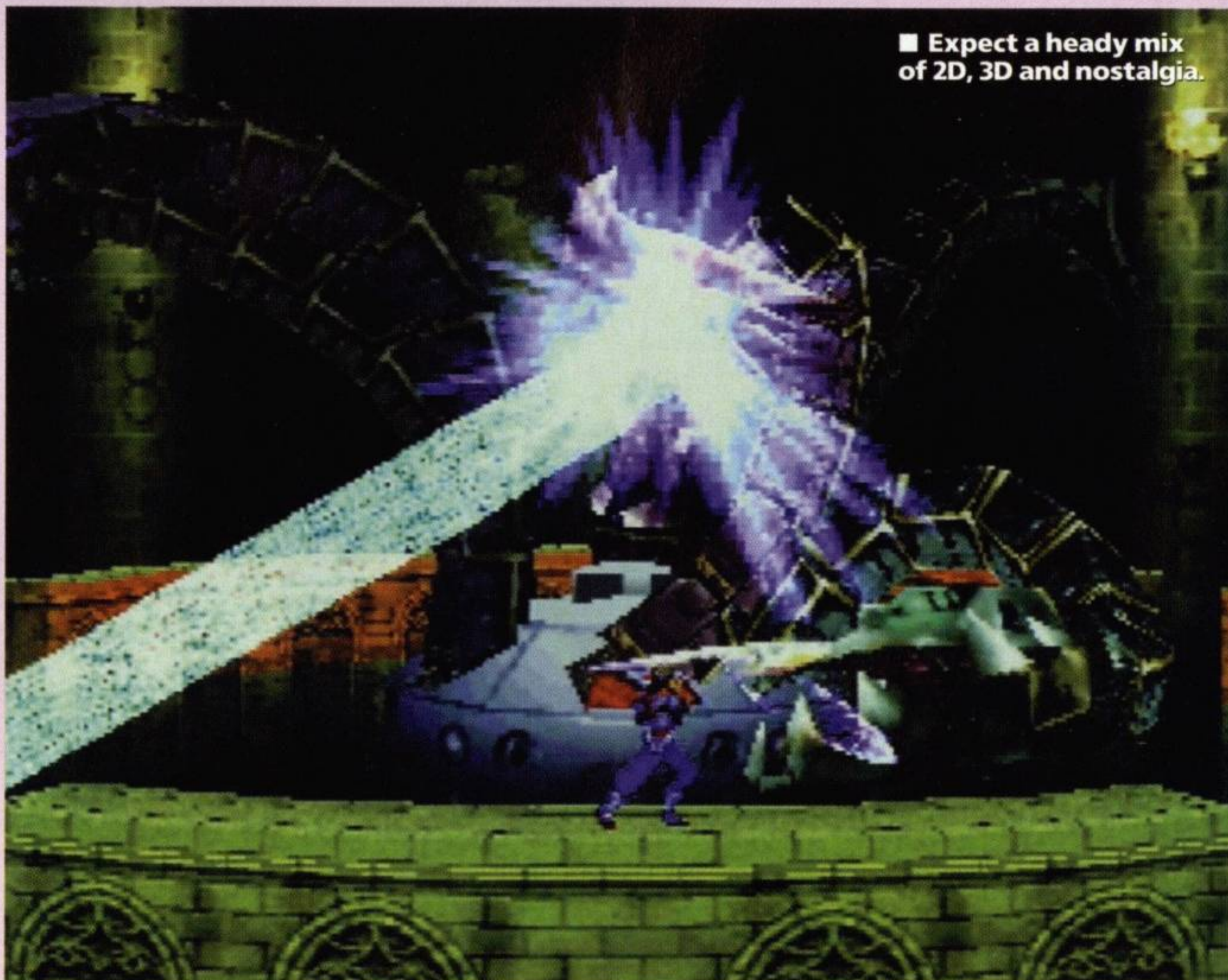
- Publisher: **Capcom**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Release date: **January 2000**
- Players: **1-2**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Sword</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Simple, clear control system ■ Successful update of a classic ■ Hiryu's a star | <p>Snored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Who wants to pay to platform? ■ Lack of depth in the gameplay |
|--|---|



■ Has the sun really set on coin-op platformers?



■ Expect a heady mix of 2D, 3D and nostalgia.

EXCITE
YOUR
PC



Le Mans

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£60**
- Available from: **Fanatec on 01564 779136**

■ At last, a steering wheel that's worth the bother of removing from the box. Le Mans is the latest driving accessory from German manufacturers Fanatec and is built like an outside lav fashioned from sturdy materials.

The solid rubber-coated wheel is easy to install and clamps securely to any desk avoiding "race slippage". Le Mans also comes

with foot pedals and a silver gear stick that has a satisfying click, although it's fixed to the right hand side of the wheel – favouring all those stupid countries where they drive on the wrong side of the road.

In practice the wheel is responsive, a pleasure to use and because of the hefty quality of the manufacturing you can really wrench it left and right during a race without any worries that you'll knacker it. A criticism would be that it's expensive, but you're definitely getting a quality wheel for the money. Le Mans is the Formula One of PC steering wheels. ★★★★★



A Our Choice

Sidewinder Game Pad Pro

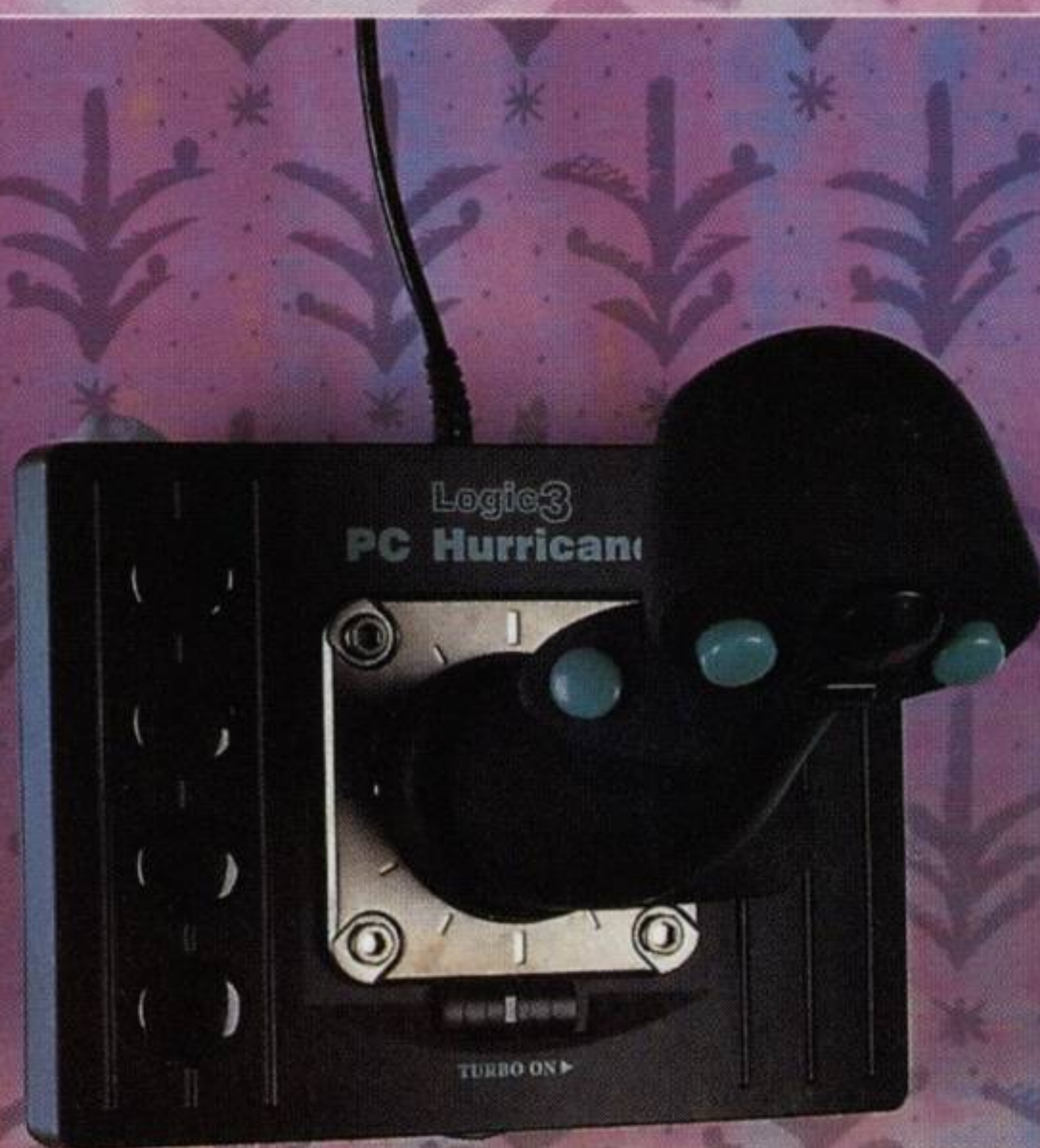
- For: **PC**
- Price: **£35**
- Available from: **Microsoft on 0345 002000**

■ Although an unpopular company, Microsoft makes some of the best quality accessories for the PC, and the Game Pad Pro is one of them. The pad has a superb technic design that wouldn't look out of place in the hands of the robot out of *Metropolis*. It plugs straight into the USB port of the PC and is a breeze to install, coming with a CD and –

for once – instructions that can be deciphered by someone who doesn't already know what they're doing. Revolutionary.

Playing with it is a joy, as the pad feels custom-made and works with a whole catalogue of titles. There are nine buttons to program, including two very handy shoulder buttons and a great D-pad disc that's intuitive to use and very accurate.

Microsoft's Sidewinder Game Pad Pro reeks of quality and is everything a PC pad should be – easy to install, a classy design and fantastic to play. Buy it because Bill Gates really needs your cash. ★★★★★



Hurricane

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£25**
- Available from: **Logic 3 on 0181 902 2211**

■ The Hurricane joystick is a bulky but welcome addition to the burgeoning Arcade PC accessories warehouse. The stick is well made, comfortable to use and sports a cockpit's worth of programmable buttons and switches, although – inexplicably – there's no throttle control. A gear stick-style rubber sheath has thoughtfully been provided to

prevent dust, dribble or lipstick detracting from its boxy lines.

Installation was a bit of an adventure (read: hair-tearingly horrible). Hurricane seemed determined to outwit any attempts to get it to calibrate properly. After a frustrating hour of trying, a quick call to Logic 3 solved the problem and the games could finally commence.

The joystick worked a treat with a range of games and was smooth and responsive. For 25 notes this joystick is good value, but the lack of a throttle and the fiddly installation spoil an otherwise competent package. ★★★



Wingman Gaming Mouse

- For: **PC/Mac**
- Price: **£30**
- Available from: **Logitech on 0181 308 6582**

■ For playing *Quake 2* and other 3D shooters you need a decent mouse, as there's nothing more frustrating than taking on the Strogg with an immovable lump of fluff-raddled tat.

A solid and reliable choice is Microsoft's Intellimouse, but Logitech has come up with an excellent alternative. The Gaming Mouse is a worthwhile addition to the well-respected

Wingman series of accessories is compatible with both PC and Mac. Installing it is straightforward – plug it into the mouse port, switch on and load in the drivers.

In practice the mouse is very sensitive, works as smoothly as you like with a range of games and, overall, was a vast improvement on the generic IBM mouse the Arcade gaming PC staggered in the door with.

The mouse is a tad expensive and a little chunky, but as professional gamer Jay Severson says on the box, "I like the way it feels in my hand". Do you Jay? What about this? Do you like this? ★★★★★



Premier Pad

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£10**
- Available from: **Wild Things on 02920 755774**

■ The PlayStation Dual Shock controller is a games accessory of simple beauty. Strangely, Wild Things has come up with a pad startlingly similar to the original non-analogue version, with the added bonuses of a D-pad disc and extra buttons. But as far as premiers go, this is more John Major than Maggie Thatcher – it's a pale imitation of its

predecessor, doesn't work as well and you can see right through it.

The "cool, clear design" featured actually sounds a lot better than it looks, as the controller is a bit bland – although red and gold versions are available. Premier worked fine with a range of games, and you program certain buttons with turbo fire.

The D-pad isn't overly responsive and feels plasticky. Overall the pad is okay, but there are cheaper alternatives in the sub-ten quid range, and if you're not prepared to spend a bit extra for quality, you might as well plump for the cheapest. ★★



Destroyer

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£10**
- Available from: **Gravis on 0171 349 2200**

■ Destroyer is a rather violent name for what is essentially a sleek and well-designed joystick. It comes with two main fire buttons, a rotary throttle control and a long lead – always useful.

Installing the stick was simple enough. It seemed to work well with space combat kill-all-the-aliens kind of games. The

Destroyer's large base meant the stick stayed surprisingly stable during mid-game freak outs, instead of skipping around the table like a demented schoolgirl.

The stick can be used in the left or right hand, and there's a clever bit of rubber beneath the top button to keep that trigger-thumb steady.

The Destroyer isn't the most accurate joystick, definitely feels like a budget accessory and probably won't last very long. But for a tenner you can't really complain as it's cheap and does the job. Perfect for a skint space commander. ★★★

**MORE
PLAYSTATION
PADS**



Top Drive Reactor

- For: **PlayStation**
- Price: **£30**
- Available from **Logic 3 on 0181 902 2211**

■ This is probably the most aesthetically-challenged controller *Arcade* has ever seen – a plastic Frankenstein combining a wheel, a pad and a gun.

You're supposed to hold the controller in your left hand like a gun, using the trigger for acceleration while turning the small wheel device. With a little practice

you can take corners at a fair crack, but it's a very hit-and-miss affair, the set-up procedure is tricky and your wrists won't thank you for using it.

Anyway, there is an "active feedback" effect that vibrates and adds resistance to the wheel when you're steering. Thrilling.

Logic 3 clearly intended to reinvent the wheel, but the Reactor just isn't good enough. The wheel is too small and the controller doesn't throw you into the action like a pad or full-size wheel does. Back to the drawing board for the Top Drive team, then. ★★



Airpad Controller

- For: **PlayStation**
- Price: **£25**
- Available from **Joytech on 01525 244 209**

■ The Airpad is one of a new crop of motion-sensitive controllers that seem to be increasing in number by the hour. The idea is that instead of using boring old buttons, you move and tilt the actual pad to control the action on screen.

Looks-wise, the pad is a large flying saucer affair on to which you can clip different designs. There's even a Web site

where you can create your own custom covers – akin to the lovely *Arcade* example above [sigh].

However, Airpad works better with some genres of games than others. It loves speedy racers, but don't expect it to turn you into a *Quake 2* genius overnight.

It's fun for a while, but the Airpad suffers from the same problems as all twisty-turny controllers: it's fiddly to program a doesn't make playing games any easier. Also, if you discount the motion control aspect, the D-pad is quite small and unresponsive. A case of a lot of style, but not nearly enough content to justify making the effort. ★★

PHOTOGRAPHY: LOUISE BROOM

Film of the month



■ *Fight Club*: Ed's about to vent his dark side. Brutal.

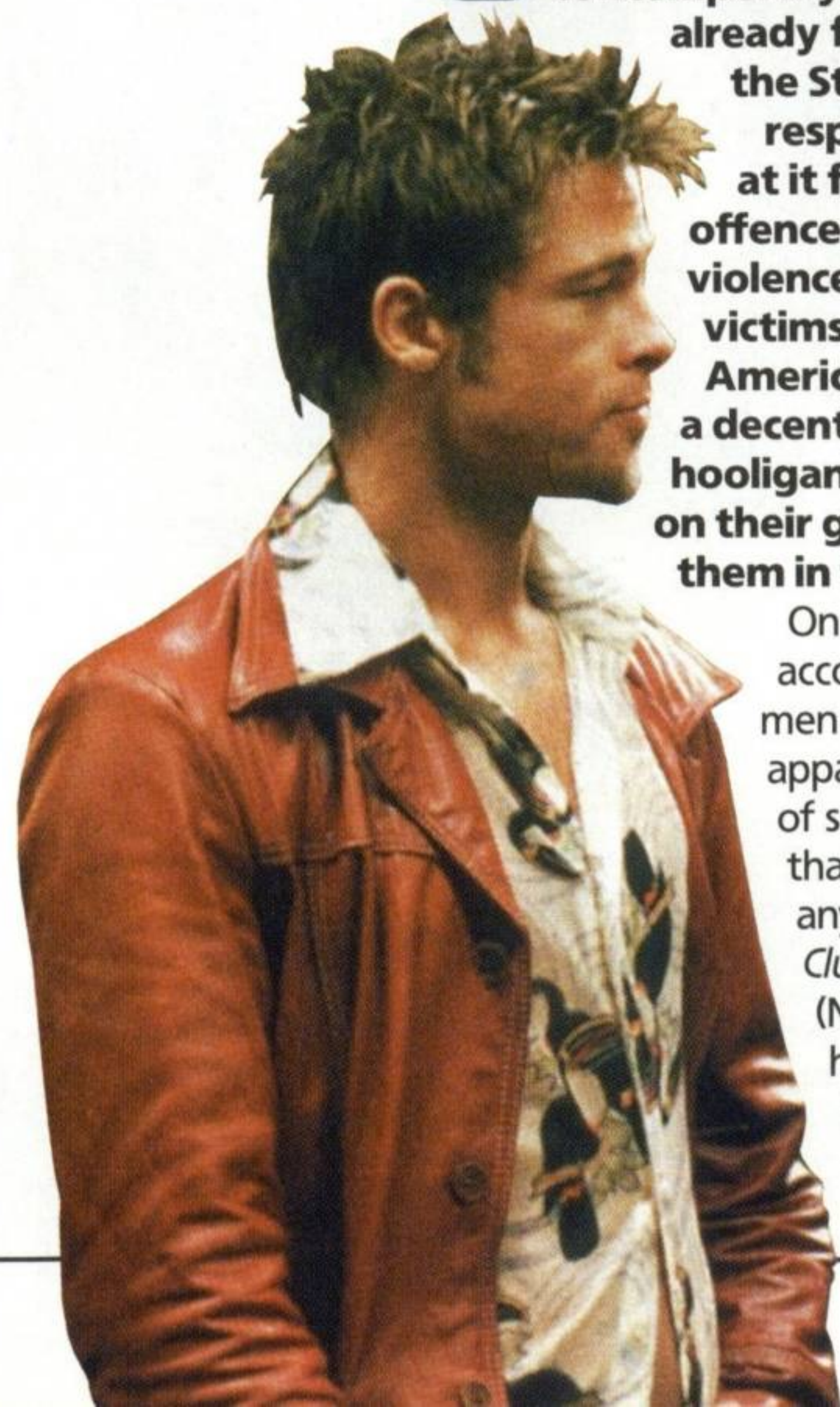
Film info

■ Director: **David Fincher**
 ■ Starring: **Edward Norton, Brad Pitt, Helena Bonham Carter, Meatloaf**
 ■ UK release: **out now**

FIGHT CLUB

The inner battle dissected in style.

Opening with a distressed synapse fizzing in a vortexed brain and concluding with a skyscraping bang, David Fincher's extraordinary thrash through contemporary America has already fanned fires across the States, with responsibility levelled at it for a range of civil offences from inciting violence to mocking cancer victims. Clearly, whitebread Americans wouldn't know a decent act of cultural hooliganism if it jumped on their giblets and punched them in the face.



On paper – and certainly according to the marketing men who settled on an apparently innocuous bar of soap to flog a movie that refuses to settle into any pigeonholes – *Fight Club* focuses on narrator (Norton), who confronts his angst, insomnia and inability to feel by setting up a bareknuckle boxing

club in the basement of a biker bar with amateur terrorist Tyler Durden (Pitt). Word spreads, and KO clubs spring up across America while their "clientele" rapidly mutate into an organised gang of anti-consumer anarchists.

That's the pitch, but as the movie sprints through its allotted two-and-a-half hours, it soon becomes obvious that the thrilling, unpredictable *Fight Club* is further energised by the sheer kinetic buzz of its own agenda. Anti-slackerism, fascism, the Oklahoma bombing, the death of consumerism, the media image-making machine... all the issues that pump at the very heart of America (including some America would prefer to ignore) are pinched, trashed and southpawed by Fincher, whose subversive techniques are emphasised by a streak of pitch-black humour running throughout the film.

As for the performances, Pitt and Norton are outstanding while Helena Bonham Carter is nothing short of a revelation. Her strung-out, vampish and wildly erratic character holds the key to the film, and yet Bonham Carter manages to handle the role with a breathtaking lightness of touch.

Crackling with visual style, shuddering with merciless humour and burning with designer nihilism, *Fight Club* is nothing short of the American *Trainspotting*. Essential viewing for frustrated wage slaves. ★★★★★

GUEST HOUSE PARADISO

■ Director: **Adrian Edmondson**
 ■ Starring: **Adrian Edmondson, Rik Mayall, Vincent Cassel**
 ■ UK release: **10 December**

■ What with Harry Enfield's *Kevin & Perry* flick and Ben Elton's *Maybe Baby* currently shooting, you'd be forgiven for thinking there's a British comedy movie renaissance going on. So it's fingers and arses crossed that Enfield and Elton's efforts are a damn sight funnier than the slowly leaking septic tank that is *Guest House Paradiso*.

The plot – and to be frank this scat-brained mess doesn't deserve the description – revolves around skanky hotel owners Eddie and Richie frantically trying to slip it to film-star-in-hiding Gina Carbonara while avoiding the attentions of her psychotic boyfriend. So as frying pans twang, nipples sting and snot spumes, it sounds like *Bottom*. It looks like *Bottom*. Sadly, it also stinks like one. Fact is, in their translation from cathode to celluloid and with no story to push them anywhere, Richie and Eddie have lost whatever redeeming lovable loser features they originally had and come across here as nothing more than one-dimensional grotesques.

When the slapstick gags do hit the mark, they emerge as way too spiteful to be funny or, as in the case of the toxic snot bomb finale, they're desperately juvenile. At least Cannon and Ball can breathe a sigh of relief; it looks like *The Boys In Blue* can no longer claim the worst British comedy ever made crown. ★

THE ASTRONAUT'S WIFE

■ Director: **Rand Ravich**
 ■ Starring: **Johnny Depp, Charlize Theron, Nick Cassavetes, Clea Duvall**
 ■ UK release: **out now**

■ As expected for a film which has allegedly been gathering dust in the studio for almost a year, *The Astronaut's Wife* is a tired, confused and sterile affair. Johnny Depp is the astronaut in question, who disappears off the radar for two minutes during a NASA mission. On his return, the Texan *Boy's Own* hero appears to have undergone a character transformation and becomes a hard-faced weirdo, suddenly fond of rough sex and furious social climbing in the big city.

Depp's eerie and distant portrayal of Spencer Armacost is one of the movie's few redeeming features, but the central plot device which defines his character is so blatant it hurts. Charlize Theron plays Spencer's

wife and naturally begins to suspect something is a little awry. With Spencer so protective of their newly-conceived twins and Theron moping about listlessly sporting her Mia Farrow crop, *The Astronaut's Wife* doesn't just scream *Rosemary's Baby* but skywrites it in mile-high letters from the tail of the shuttle.

Unfortunately, this film is consistently too clumsy to provide suspense and the action moves at a painfully slow pace until disrupted by a hysterical ending. Questions are left tantalisingly unanswered, but in retrospect you wonder if this is the intention or simply an example of plain directorial carelessness. ★★

MYSTERY MEN

■ Director: **Kinka Usher**
 ■ Starring: **Ben Stiller, Hank Azaria, William H Macy, Janeane Garofolo's**
 ■ UK released: **10 December**

Like every other overused fictional convention of recent times, the superhero has had to go ironic in order to survive. Bob Burden's *Dark Horse* comic book features a troupe of wannabes who attempt in vain to bust villains with a pathetic array of special powers.



■ *Mystery Men*: puny powers.

■ *Guest House Paradiso*: dies on its arse.

Mystery Men gives his strip the full hyperactive Hollywood treatment courtesy of former TV commercial director Kinka Usher.

In the typically retro-futuristic environs of Champion City, Ben Stiller's Mr Furious, Hank Azaria's Blue Raja and William H Macy's The Shoveler attempt to recruit a JLA-style crew. Unfortunately, with

only such puny powers as the ability to throw spoons or stare a little bit menacingly at potential foes to fall back on, the crew find their efforts continuously upstaged by Greg Kinnear's Captain Amazing, whose major talents lie in PR and corporate sponsorship.

The storyline is virtually non-existent, but when the characters include superheroes as extravagantly ludicrous as The Bowler, who wields her father's severed head encased in a bowling ball as some bizarre form of vengeance, entertainment of a kind is guaranteed. ★★★

RANDOM HEARTS

■ Director: **Sydney Pollack**
 ■ Starring: **Harrison Ford, Kristin Scott Thomas**
 ■ UK Release: **out now**

■ The paucity of quality films in the pre-Christmas line-up is

emphasised by this piss-weak Harrison Ford vehicle. Naturally the man is keen to add something other to his legacy than Indiana Jones and Han Solo, but nobody's going to cherish his roles in a bunch of crap romantic leads – first in *Six Days Seven Nights* and now as tormented cop Dutch Van Den Broeck.

Kristin Scott Thomas stars alongside Ford as naïve Republican congresswoman Kay Chandler. The pair separately discover that their respective spouses have been conducting a secret affair when the cheating couple are killed together in a plane crash. You'll guess before the film starts that the central premise revolves around Dutch and Kay getting it together, but given their clashing personalities and their wildly differing reaction to their losses, the union is at best awkward and at worst stupidly implausible.

Random Hearts is a love story with a denouement which is thoroughly flagged from the off, but the route towards this is quietly ridiculous, not to mention thoroughly boring. ★

Videos to rent



■ *Water Boy*: Sheffield Wednesday at home.

HAPPINESS

■ **Entertainment in Video**
 ■ Don't let anyone tell you this is a comedy. The closest *Happiness* gets to laughs is a cruel sense of irony which pursues its characters throughout and never lets up. Loneliness, sexual frustration and perversion in middle America is the order of the day, and by painting every character as irredeemably fucked, you could say director Todd Solondz is being gratuitous. Which he is. *Happiness* utilises the same methods as any great slasher flick – it's repulsive but compulsive. ★★★

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

■ **Mermaids**
 ■ You'll remember Robert Benigni as the crazy-haired little Italian who went nuts at the Oscars. Here's the chance to see why he stole the best actor award from under the noses of more established competition. *Life Is Beautiful* stars Benigni as a loveable clown in wartime Italy who is bundled off to the concentration camps. Attempting to shield the horrific ordeal from his young son, he pretends the experience is all just a big game.

This proves barely believable and the juxtaposition of subject matter is questionable, but for Benigni's performance alone the film is a must-see. ★★★

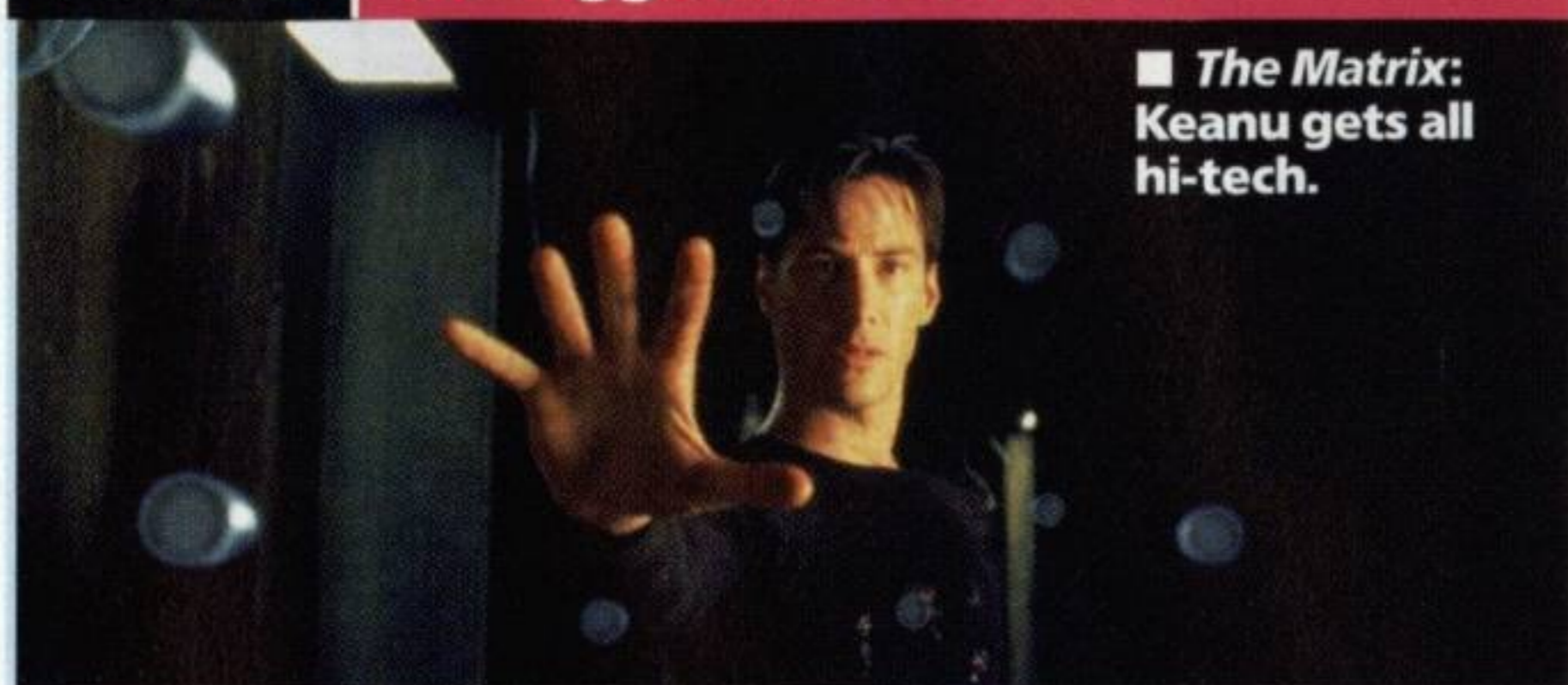
THE WATERBOY

■ **Touchstone**
 ■ Bobby Boucher is a stuttering social misfit, bullied by his mother and ridiculed by all who encounter his water-tending antics until a curious talent for American football emerges unexpectedly. The \$20 million Adam Sandler pitches this particular dumb-arsed fella firmly in the Dustin Hoffman camp (somewhere between *Tootsie* and *Rainman*) which is neither annoying or particularly clever (think Ricky Butcher with sporting skills).

Unlike most "dumb" comedies of late, *The Waterboy* follows a set of characters on a journey to become better people, a dull structure formalised by every last '80s bratpack movie. You can't help crying out for things to get, well, more offensive in a Farrelly brothers style. Amusement is provided by Bobby exclaiming "I saw her boobies" and a mutton-chopped yokel who can't pronounce a single consonant, but this should have been much, much sicker. ★★

DVD

The biggest new releases.



■ *The Matrix*: Keanu gets all hi-tech.

THE MATRIX

■ **Warners**
 ■ This movie proves what many have suspected for years – the world isn't real and humans live in a complex computer simulation known as the matrix. Only the chosen one can save humankind with the help of mucho retina-pounding graphical

trickery. Your man with the enigmatic frown? Yep, it's Reevesee. Against all odds Keanu manages to remain inoffensive, only occasionally slipping into *Bill & Ted* mode. *The Matrix* is top fun, it's stylish, it redefines the sci-fi genre and it sets the scene nicely for a money-spinning trilogy, Just try to

ignore the last three seconds. Go on. ■ **Extras:** Documentaries on the making of the film and its special effects, interviews with Keanu Reeves and other stars, investigation of the film's original concept and DVD-ROM features including storyboards, screenplays and a trivia quiz. ★★★

Videos to buy

LAST NIGHT

■ **Film Four**
 ■ There are six hours until the end of the world, but instead of following the heroic and explosive adventures of astronauts sent to destroy the oncoming meteor, *Last Night* focuses on the rituals of ordinary people in Toronto. Craig is determined to live out his sexual fantasies before armageddon hour, Patrick wants to spend it by himself, and Sandra wants to get home to fulfil a suicide pact with her husband. This is an unusual, touching and funny antidote to the usual portentous doom movies and if you somehow find yourself



■ *Last Night*: the end.

at a loose end on Millennium Eve, *Last Night* should be on your VCR. ★★★

ALI G, INNIT

■ **Channel 4 Video**
 ■ The comedy trend of the '90s has definitely been for spoofing self-important celebrities. Chris Morris and Dennis Pennis were the trailblazers, but '99 belonged to Sasha

Baron Cohen, who spent the year pretending to be down with the West Staines massive.

This video compiles Ali G's many interviews and asking the BBFC if you can say the words "flange" and "punani" in a PG film. Fans of the *11 O'Clock Show* will have seen most of these clips already but newcomers should buy before the dupes get wise. ★★★

Book of the month

■ The Mullet: hairstyle of the rich and shameless.



THE MULLET

Hirsute you sir.

Spiky on top, short at the sides, don't touch the back. So runs the mantra of mullet-heads worldwide as they proudly flout hairdressing convention. *The Mullet* is the first tome to thoroughly document and celebrate this commanding coiffure, which the authors suggest symbolises an owner in control of both sides of their character: "The Mullet is both Ego (the neat top) and Id (the flowing back)." Take that, skinheads.

It's difficult to trace the etymology of the term "mullet" but popular opinion suggests the word took its current meaning after the hairstyle's heyday in the mid-'80s. Hoskyns and Larson give due credit to the Beastie Boys and their seminal 1994 treatise on the mullet published in *Grand Royal* magazine, in addition to the track "Mullet Head" which appeared on the B-side of "Sure Shot" (Adam Yauch was himself once a practitioner of the form – just check the inside sleeve of *Licence To Ill*).

Although the authors find evidence of the mullet throughout history from the ancient Egyptians through the middle ages

to Gainsborough's paintings, the modern mullet can be traced to David Bowie's infamous Ziggy cut of the early '70s. The style flourished through the glam era until, by the '80s, everybody seemed to have identified it as fashion solution supreme.

The short-top-long-back look appeared in many guises. Mel Gibson's sleek Hollywood mullet, Limahl's spiky peroxide pop mullet, Barry White's shiny black mullet and the ubiquitous footie mullet. A flick through your Mexico '86 album will reveal some gems, from Waddle's typically English interpretation to the slick Latino *muleto*, as worn by Mexico's Hugo Sanchez, among many others.

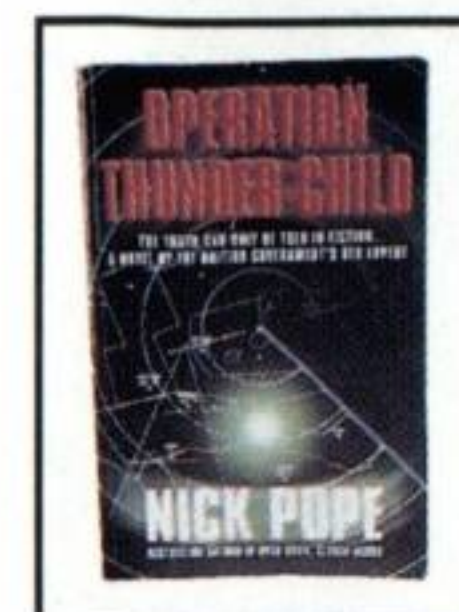
These days the mullet is a dying art, but the spirit still burns in the heart of select communities such as country singers, Yugoslavian ice hockey players, Aussie Rules footballers and men who wear vests and live on trailer parks. The only real celebrity mullet is worn by Jerry Seinfeld, but even he is castigated by the authors for lacking the full courage of his hirsute convictions. Still, within these pages one of the most misunderstood haircuts ever gets the respect it deserves. ★★★★★

Book Info

■ Authors: **Barney Hoskyns & Mark Larson**
 ■ Publisher: **Bloomsbury**
 ■ Price: **£10**
 ■ ISBN: **0-7475-4424-7**

OPERATION THUNDER CHILD

■ Author: **Nick Pope**
 ■ Publisher: **Simon & Schuster**
 ■ Price: **£10**
 ■ ISBN: **0-684-85160-1**



■ Forget Roswell. Forget Area 51. When the aliens do come, CNN and Sky News will be burning up our very own A11 to report on "first contact" made in... Norfolk. Really. But despite the comedy value of such an occurrence – "you're not from round these parts, boy" – Nick Pope manages to weave an unsettling and plausible novel based around his experiences as a Government UFO expert. Set in the not too distant future, there are sightings of a triangular shaped craft, alien abductions are made public and RAF jets are shot down over the North Sea. Pope's experience of how the military and government machines work in times of crisis make for a fascinating Robert Harris-style thriller. Only his rather blatant pitch for the *Operation Thunder Child* movie via a sequel-inviting ending prevents Pope's debut from being truly out there. ★★★★★

BATMAN: THE COMPLETE HISTORY

■ Author: **Les Daniels**
 ■ Publisher: **Titan Books**
 ■ Price: **£25**
 ■ ISBN: **1-84023-113-0**



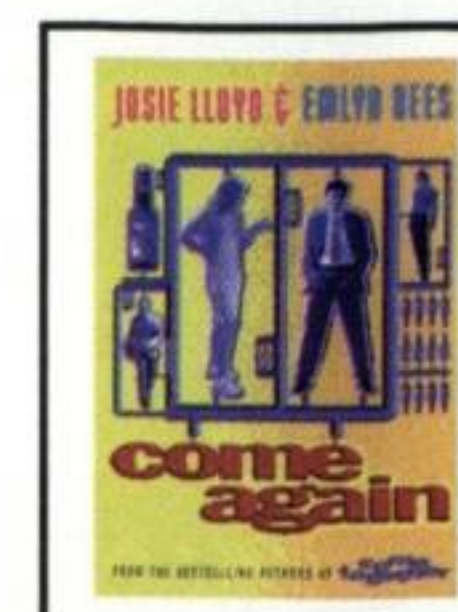
■ Batman is 60, but the caped crusader wears his age well. Current talk in Hollywood is of a fifth Batman movie with Keanu Reeves as the lead, so it seems the character endures.

Born on Bob Kane's drawing board in the '30s, Batman was at first a fairly derivative amalgam of stock detective/hero themes (wronged man seeking vengeance, alter-ego, mask and cape), but a distinct personality began to emerge as the *Detective Comics* strip rapidly matured.

Unlike close contemporary Superman, Batman has no special powers, just strength, nous and an inventory of gadgets. The genius creation of Robin, Alfred the butler and a charismatic cast of villains paved the way for the camp '60s TV series but Batman's dark underside won through for his subsequent movie career. This tome traces the story with the benefit of original comic strip reproductions and reams of fascinating trivia. ★★★★★

COME AGAIN

■ Authors: **Josie Lloyd & Emlyn Rees**
 ■ Publisher: **William Heinemann**
 ■ Price: **£10**
 ■ ISBN: **0-43488-1953**

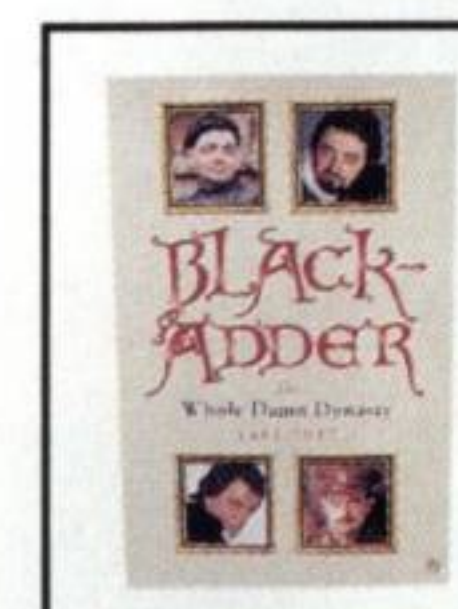


■ When any book has the sentence, "Rot, I snort" just ten pages in, the alarm bells start ringing. And they don't stop throughout this tawdry trawl through the lives of a group of lovesick London professionals with too much money to spend. Lloyd and Rees's unusual joint-authoring skills were first noted in the best-selling *Come Together*. Alternate chapters are written from the perspective of different characters, but in *Come Again* the writing isn't so tight.

The story is tiresome too: a bunch of boring rigger buggers realising that they're tired of meaningless shagging and what they really want is commitment. Add some dire attempts at cultural references – have you ever heard PlayStation pads called "paddles"? – and what you've got is something all too familiar in computerland: *The Tired Sequel*. Rot indeed. ★

BLACKADDER: THE WHOLE DAMN DYNASTY

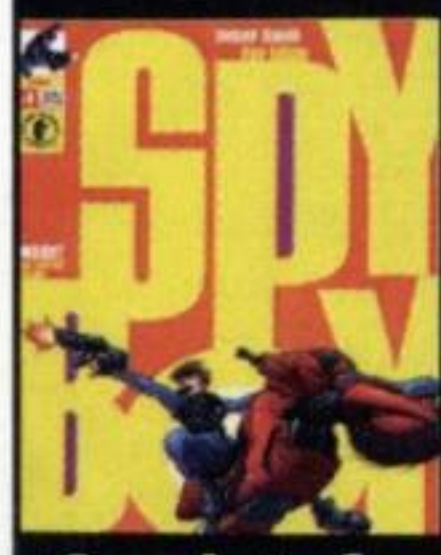
■ Authors: **Curtis/Elton /Atkinson/Lloyd**
 ■ Publisher: **Penguin**
 ■ Price: **£10**
 ■ ISBN: **0-14-028035-9**



■ They had a cunning plan, and over four series *Blackadder* became one of Britain's best loved sitcoms. At least one of the series is repeated every year, which is why it comes as a surprise to note there were only ever six episodes in each. These are the complete scripts and you will no doubt recognise every line, from Percy's experiment to produce pure green to Baldrick's unforgettable dandruff cappuccino.

However, whether this will sell is a hard question. It may prove that only anal retentives will want to actually read through the scripts as opposed to watching them acted by Atkinson and co, since the ability to quote old comedy lines is tantamount to social suicide. Unfortunately, all the extra bits are – in typical TV tie-in book fashion – not very funny. Wait for further telly repeats instead. ★★★★★

Comic of the month



Comic Info

■ Writer: **Peter David**
 ■ Artist: **Pop Mhan**
 ■ Publisher: **Dark Horse Comics**

SPY BOY

■ Fronted by the boldest logo in comics, *Spy Boy* has a lot going for it. A top-notch writer in Peter David, an artist who draws in the trendy Japanese style and a publisher with a reputation for overall quality. So why is *Spy Boy* underwhelming?

Perhaps it's because the set up (bored suburban nobody remembers

they're really a deadly secret agent just as the bad guys pounce) is so familiar from films like *The Long Kiss Goodnight* and *Total Recall*. Perhaps it's because *Spy Boy*'s look is so much like a cross between Robin and one of the bikers from *Akira*. Perhaps it's just that first issues, lumbered with setting everything up,



are rarely as exciting as later issues. There's potential here and enough

snappy dialogue and flashy fight scenes to almost guarantee a hit. ★★ **Matt Bielby**

Music

■ Will Smith: chief.



BEASTIE BOYS

The Sounds Of Science

■ Label: **Grand Royal**



■ It has almost become passé to cite the Beastie Boys as cultural touchstones, but only because virtually everything they've done over the last 15 years has been at the cusp of cool. After the magazines, the clothing lines, the record labels, the Spike Jonze videos and the Tibetan peace concerts it's sometimes easy to forget the music, but *The Sound Of Science* is a forceful reminder.

Not simply a greatest hits but a compilation of band favourites, you get the nascent hardcore fumbles rubbing shoulders with Fatboy Slim remixes, brat-rap favourites, funk instrumentals and even extracts from the unreleased country sessions. Complain about the exclusion of "Hold It Now Hit It" and you're silenced by an amazing original version of "Jimmy James", the hard-to-find "Skills To Pay The Bills" and hilarious asides like "The Biz Vs The Nuge" among 42 tracks of some of the most exciting, funky and funny music of the century. ★★★★★

BLACKALICIOUS

Nia

■ Label: **Mo'Wax**



■ Prolific chaps, this lot. Not only were Chief Xcel and Gift Of Gab key players on Quannum's *Spectrum*, one of the best albums of 1999, they've rapidly followed that sterling performance with an impressive set of their own. Naturally DJ Shadow and other Quannum posse members make appearances, but Blackalicious have a distinct sound defined by eloquent consciousness rapping and lush musical backdrops.

Dabbling in afro-funk, electro and jazz, Blackalicious have created a hip-hop album with a global feel, as opposed to the claustrophobic ghetto manifestos penned by most of their contemporaries. Yet the promise of a genre-defining great is ruined by the fact they are unable to keep a lid on it. A full 45 minutes of *Nia* would have been astonishing, but after 70 plus things get tiresome. It appears Blackalicious would have benefited from being just a little less prolific. ★★★

VARIOUS ARTISTS

FIFA 2000 The Album

■ Label: **Virgin**



■ In the land of spuriously-themed compilation albums, the videogame soundtrack album is king, and *FIFA 2000* is its crowning glory.

Whereas the *Wipeout* albums may have boasted tracks not featured in the games, at least the music all tallied with the futuristic driving concept. *FIFA 2000 The Album* plays host to a whopping 38 tracks, the vast majority of which don't feature in the game, or even have anything to do with football.

You get, of course, Robbie Williams doing "It's Only Us" and "Let Me Entertain You" (how quickly he forgets *Actua Soccer 3*) and previous *FIFA* front-enders "Tubthumping" and "The Rockefeller Skank". Beyond that it's a free-for-all involving decidedly non-exclusive tunes from Supergrass, Morcheeba, Alice Deejay, Gomez, The New Radicals, Placebo and The Jungle Brothers among many others, suggesting the compilers have sat so heavily on such a large fence there are stakes protruding from their mouths. An album for people who aren't quite sure whether or not they like music. ★★

WILL SMITH

Willennium

■ Label: **Columbia**



■ Statesman, role-model, visionary auteur and all-round modern-day hero Will Smith (aka

The Fresh Prince) was recently voted the greatest man ever. What a guy. So it's a shame he believes his status in hip-hop's hall of fame will be assured by brazenly rapping over yet another bunch of other people's records.

Will 2K may well be inspired nonsense, and the reunion of DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince on "Pump It Up" is undoubtedly ace, but on the whole this is weak, family-friendly rap fluff.

Will does possess a smart turn of phrase which, however pathetic his sentiment, is bound to raise a smile. "Soft? More like Microsoft," he counters to a perceived barb, invoking that godhead of the hip-hop community, Bill Gates. Will's also got "enough awards to start a Grammy chessboard." That's at least one, then. Whatever you think of the big-eared loon, he's already assured his place as first superstar of the next millennium... or should that read the next Will-ennium? ★★

Album of the month



■ Beck: the new Prince?

BECK

Sex laws are there to broken.



Album Info

■ Beck
■ **Midnite Vultures**
■ Label: **Geffen**

Over the years Beck has revealed several things about himself, notably that he's a loser (baby), he's got a devil's haircut in his mind, and he's livin' with one foot in the grave. This time he has a different message. Beck wants to get jiggy with it.

From declaring that he wants to "defy the logic of all sex laws" to crooning "touch my ass if you're qualified" to the sublime moment on "Peaches & Cream" when he insists "we're on the good ship menage et toi", Beck injects proceedings with a distinctly carnal flavour. Sure, this gawky, baby-faced white boy often sounds a tad ridiculous in the lothario role, but Beck is deliberately evoking an age before pop stars all looked like footballers, when sporting outrageous highlights and singing in a lurid falsetto was what got the ladies excited.

Specifically, this is early '80s. More specifically it's the Prince era. But since the Artist Formerly Known As has neglected to heed his own legacy over the past few years, Beck is entitled to plunder.

Even so, *Midnite Vultures* is far too soulful to be kitsch, too musically provocative to be retrogressive and too damn odd to be a simple homage. Second-guessing Beck isn't a good idea, but he has confounded expectations by producing the best pop album of the year. Let him be your chaperone. ★★★★★

Millennium jukebox

The tunes acting as a soothing balm for our Quake 2 injuries.

HANDSOME BOY MODELING SCHOOL

So... How's Your Girl?
■ Superb genre-spazzing beats 'n' tunes extravaganza. Prince Paul produces this, so it's fly.

WILL SMITH

Will 2K
■ Whatever the year 2G is, sounds like a laugh. We're right there, kickin' back with Big Will.

AIM

Cold Water Music
■ Lush, instrumental, downbeat grooves that convincingly plead trip-hop's not dead.

THE CHARLATANS

Good Witch, Bad Witch
■ Stand out track from last month's recommended LP - Burgess spends some time alone in the woods.

BECK

Midnite Vultures
■ It's here, and it's hip-shakingly marvellous. Loved up and getting right on down.

XFADE MAGAZINE

Master Mix Volume 3
■ Hard trance action mixed live by Pablo Gargano. Dynamite-start your working day with this *XFade* magazine freebie.

■ "You're not from round here, are you?"



ALIEN VOICE MASK

It came from counter space.

Not only is this a great toy, but it could double as a life-saving device. What you get for your £15 is a strap-on mask in the shape of an alien's head and an electronic voice-changing gizmo. Simply slip the mask over your head, turn on the voice scrambler and – hey presto – one scary-voiced visitor from outer space.

Cue hours spent wandering about croaking "take me to your leader" and "ET

phone home" and "please help me, I can't get this bloody mask off". Hours of fun at Christmas get-togethers, fancy dress balls or – if you're feeling particularly sadistic – the fag end of an all-nighter.

It's not all just fun and games, though. Buy one of these and you'll be all set to go undercover when the Greys arrive next year and set about their plan of turning Earth into an intergalactic prison colony-cum-24 hour feeding station. They're coming, you know... they're coming. ★★★

Game info

- Price: £15
- Available from: **The Gadget Shop (0800 783 8343)**
- Release date: **on sale now**

Organiser info

- Price: £100
- Available from: **Sharp on 0161 205 2333**
- Release date: **on sale now**



ZQ-700PC ELECTRONIC ORGANISER

Cross my palm with silver.

There are all kinds of handheld computing devices on the market at the moment, from little budget Filofax-replacement things to fully-fledged pocket-sized PCs. The problem is that the former do little more than store phone numbers and the latter will set you more than settling up after dinner with Vanessa.

Enter Sharp's ZQ-700PC, an attempt at a mid-price offering that offers greater functionality than an electronic organiser but costs less than a palmtop PC. For your cash you get an attractive flip-top organiser with a conveniently large keyboard and a respectable 1.5Mb of RAM. Pre-loaded programs include calendar, scheduler, expenses tracker, contact list, database, memo pad, calculator and a conversion application. Another plus is that you can link the ZQ-700PC to a PC and synchronise information with your organiser software (such as *Claris Organizer*).

On the downside, the ZQ-700PC feels a bit lightweight, but then what do you expect for the price? It looks good, offers a surprising range of functions and, all told, it's ideal for those who want to get electronically organised but don't have the spare cash for the likes of the Palm V. Well worth a look. ★★★★★

Submarine info

- Price: tbc
- Available from: **Daewoo on 0118 925 2500**
- Release date: **January 2000**

SUBMARINE ACD-510 GHETTOBLASTER

Sinking to new depths.

■ Design concept ahoj.

A cunning piece of marketing, this. "What can we do with this new ghettoblaster, then?" said the boffins at Daewoo. "How can we make sure it grabs the public's attention?" They could have gone for all kinds of angles. They could have sold the ACD-510 on its funky styling, compact dimensions and sturdy build quality. Or they

could have mentioned it has a CD player, AM/FM/LW radio tuner and an in-built cassette recorder. At a pinch, they could have made a song and dance the one-touch recording function, which makes recording CDs an absolute breeze.

But then, inspiration struck. "I know," said Daewoo boffin number one. "Yellow Submarine by The Beatles is being re-

released later this year, isn't it: the movie coming out on DVD for the first time and the digitally-remastered soundtrack coming out on CD, too? So why don't we play on the kind of porthole-y looks of the front of the machine, paint it yellow and call it the Submarine?"

"Great idea number one", said Daewoo boffin number two. "Pass the chillum." ★★★



MEMORY MAN

Tired of lugging around those heavy tapes, CDs and MiniDiscs? Longing to look techno-savvy and smooth? Russell Deeks of *T3* magazine can help.

A Our choice

MPRESS3

- Price: **£150**
- Available from: **Philex on 0208 202 1919**
- Release date: **on sale now**

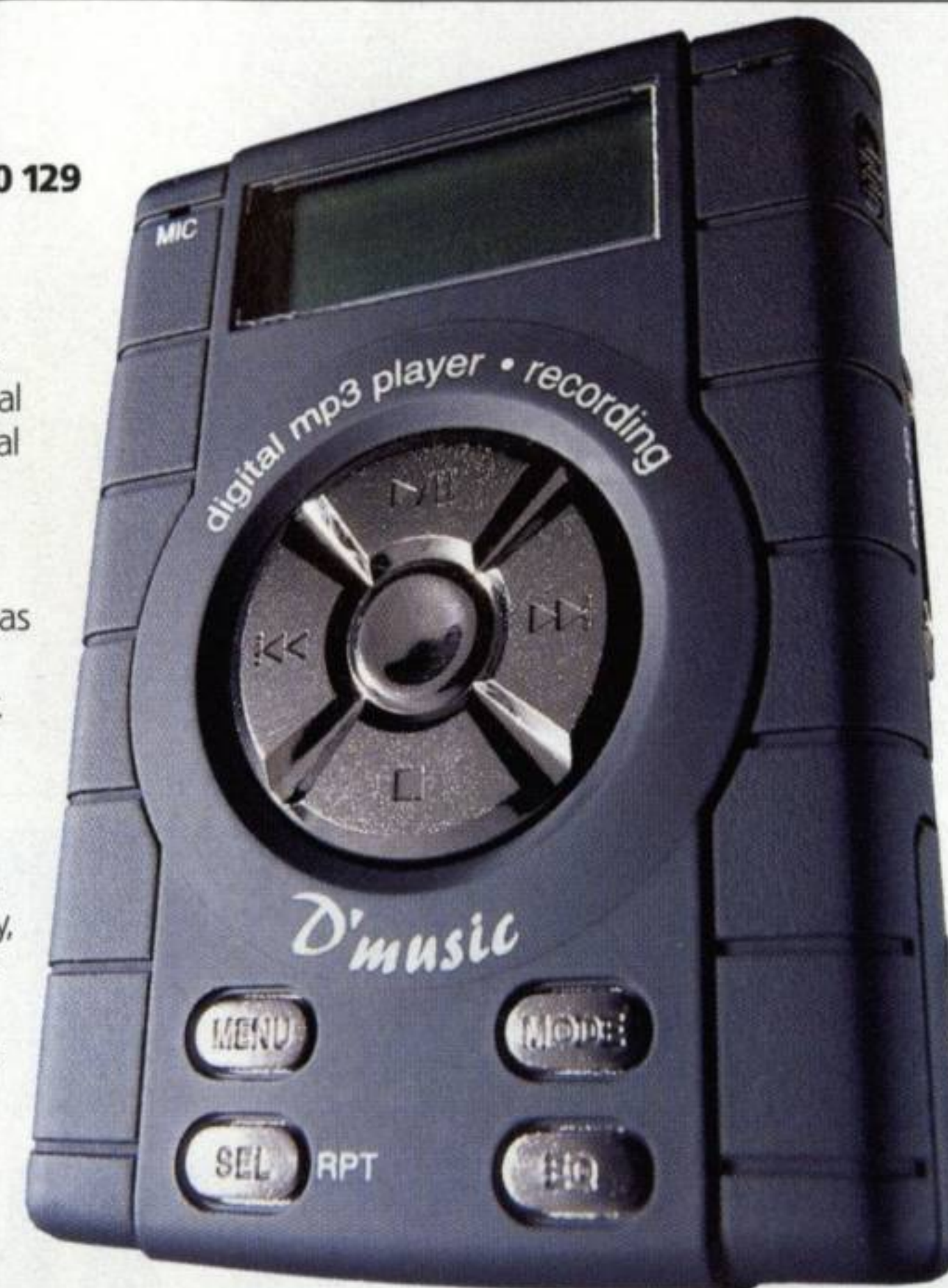
■ This is probably the most stylish MP3 player to date. It's all cute 'n' curvy, and if you look closely, you'll see that the navy blue front panel has a circuit board design etched into it. The MPress3 feels nice and solid in the hand, too. It has four playback modes (including repeat and random) and a choice of five DSP modes (read: preset EQ settings). You also get a voice recording function thanks to a built-in microphone. In terms of sound quality, the MPress3 is on a par with its rivals and – best of all – you can record direct from your stereo via an audio line-in. Tracks can be stored in either the built-in 32Mb memory or on SmartMedia flash memory cards, and can be downloaded from your PC via the supplied serial cable. ★★★★★



D'MUSIC

- Price: **£112**
- Available from: **DAB on 0870 129 3010**
- Release date: **on sale now**

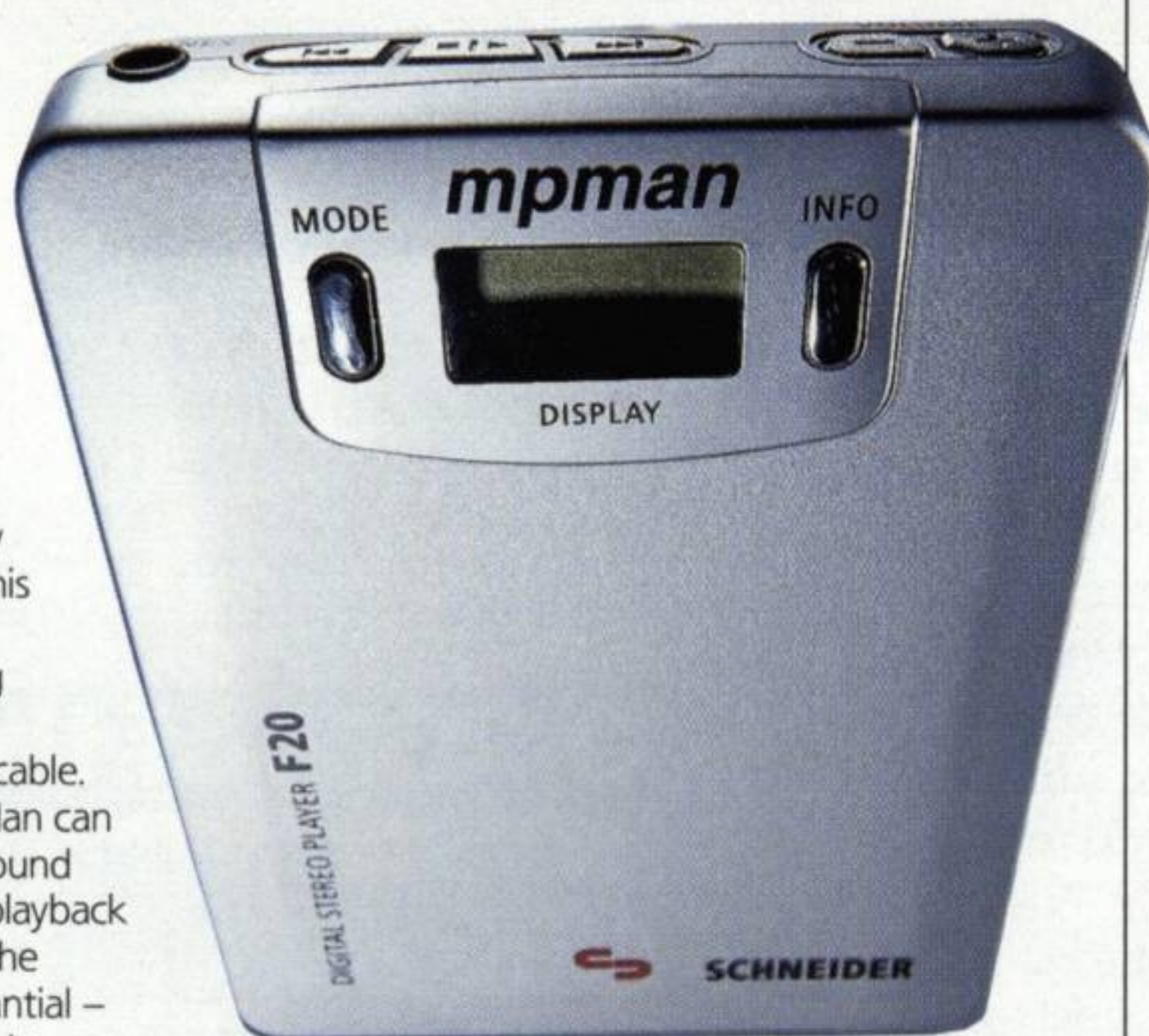
■ Kinky it may be, but the black rubber styling of this baby is a real turn on – it's the perfect personal audio player for fetishists everywhere. The D'Music is absolutely tiny as well, ramming home the one advantage MP3 has over MiniDisc – as, in terms of audio quality, MiniDisc is superior. That said, being so diddy means that the D'Music is fiddlier than most to operate thanks to miniscule buttons. Features-wise, you get 32Mb of built-in memory, SmartMedia flash memory cards for extra storage, four playback modes and five DSP modes, plus a built-in mic for voice recording. ★★★



MPMAN F20

- Price: **£150**
- Available from: **Schneider on 0161 374 0101**
- Release date: **on sale now**

■ The original MPMAN, made by some obscure Taiwanese company, was the first portable MP3 player in the world. You may recall reading about it in the first issue of *Arcade*. Well, German company Schneider has licensed the technology for use in this upgraded model. As per the original there is 32Mb of memory on board, but you can upgrade this using SmartMedia flash memory cards. Gone is the clunky docking station for link-ups with your PC, replaced by a simple connecting cable. With three DSP modes, the MPMAN can more than hold its own on the sound quality front, and there are four playback modes. In terms of build quality, the MPMAN F20 feels nice and substantial – perhaps too substantial compared to some of the newer, smaller players. ★★★★★



RIO PMP300

- Price: **£130**
- Available from: **Diamond on 01189 444400**
- Release date: **on sale now**

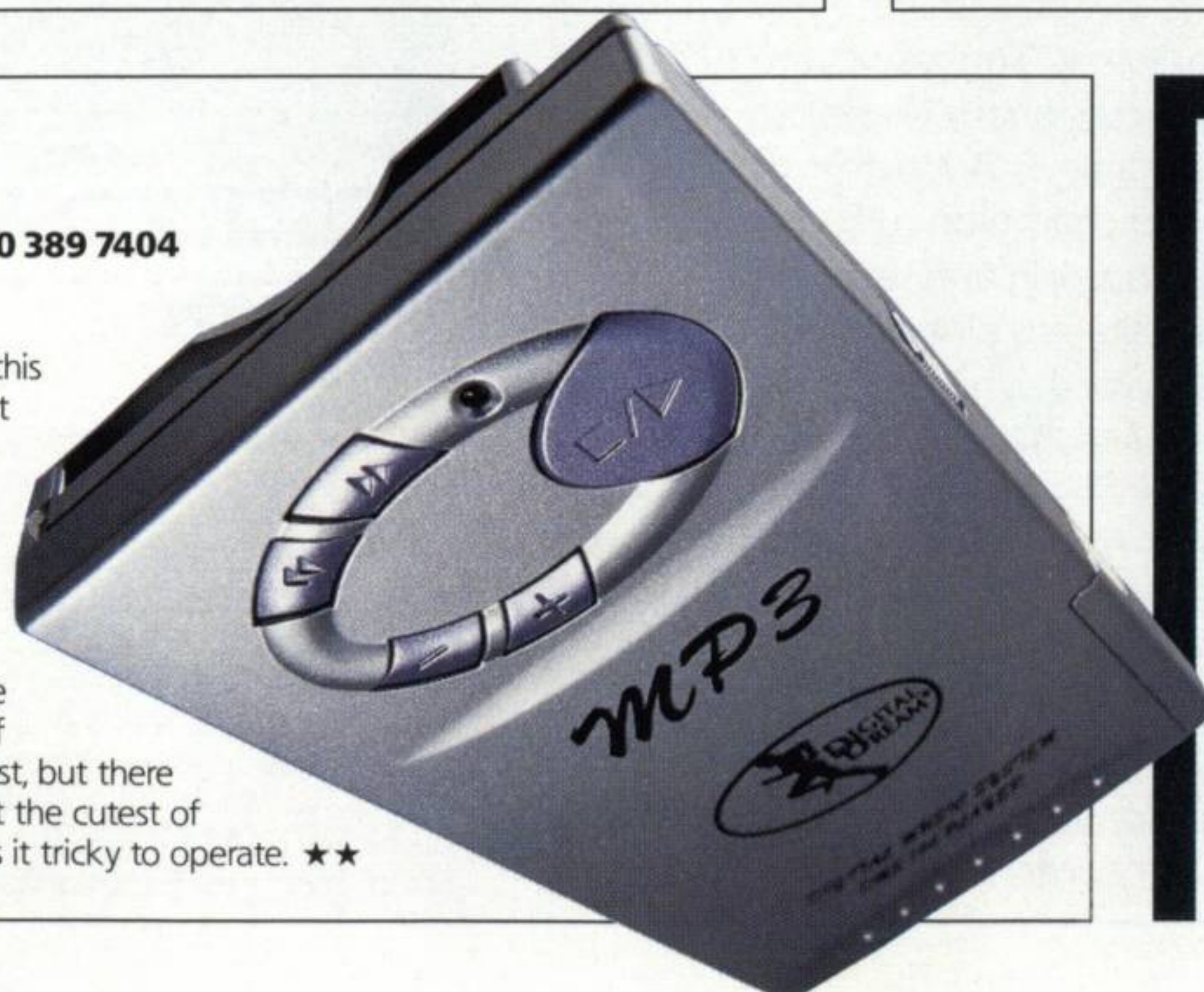
■ The Rio was the first MP3 player to gain mass attention, and as a result they just can't make 'em fast enough. It's an adequate player, it sounds pretty good and you get four playback and four DSP modes to toy with. It's a pity, then, that the Rio looks so average. You get the impression that very little time was spent in the design stages, and the rubber buttons give it a rather cheap, plastic feel. Still, it comes packed with all the bits you need to get you going (except a Smart Media card, should you wish to expand on the built-in 32Mb memory). It does the job it's supposed to and paved the way for the other players here. ★★★



DMS-100

- Price: **£50**
- Available from: **Digital Dream on 0800 389 7404**
- Release date: **on sale now**

■ A word of warning: the £50 price tag of this player doesn't include the cost of a Compact Flash card on which to store your MP3 files, or of the parallel port adaptor you'll need to link it up to your PC. So unless you've got these already, the whole package weighs in at £110. That makes it cheaper than the other players here, and the added bonus is that Compact Flash cards are cheaper than Smart Media cards. In terms of sounds, the DMS-100 is on a par with the rest, but there are no fancy playback or DSP modes. It's not the cutest of players, either, and the lack of an LCD makes it tricky to operate. ★★



MP3... WHAT'S THAT?

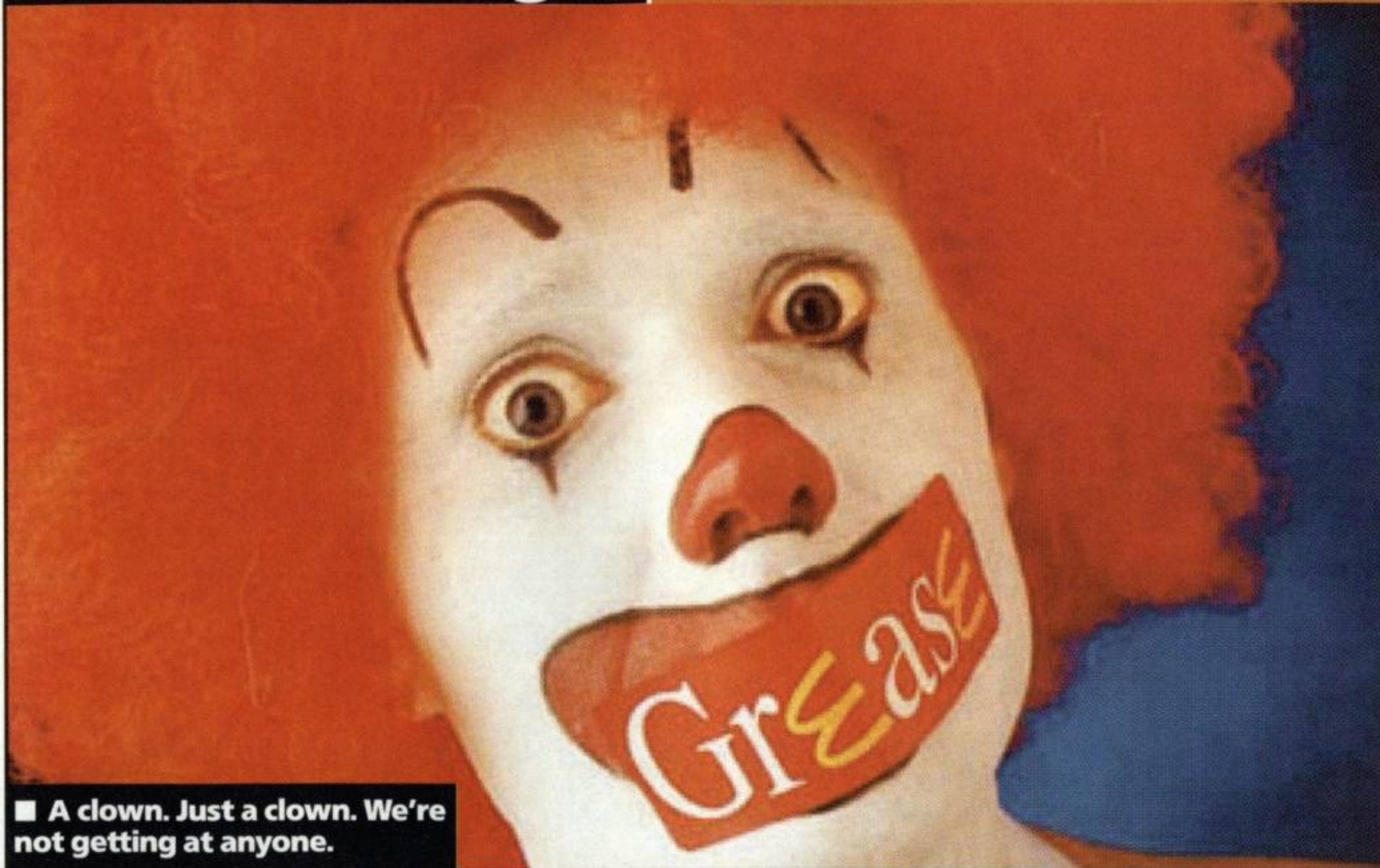
■ MP3 is a form of digital data compression that enables you to squeeze sound files into a tenth of the space they'd normally occupy, without any loss of quality. With a portable MP3 player, or by burning the data onto a CD, you can listen to your downloaded tunes on the move without having to strap a PC to your back. Getting the stuff off the Net is easy – just download your chosen tune to your computer from one of the many sites with MP3 files and then drag the file to the player.

The technology for MP3 – Moving Pictures Experts Group

Audio Layer III – was developed in the '80s but it is only now, with portable players arriving in the shops, that the world has decided to take note. It works by compressing files and throwing away those bits that you can't hear, in much the same way JPEG picture files work.

There are thousands of files, some legal, some not, on the Net. Try www.mp3.com or www.goodnoise.com for some legal music, although the latter charges. You should be able to get CD-quality sound, but only if you pick the right files (look for 128-Kbps upwards).

Download laughs



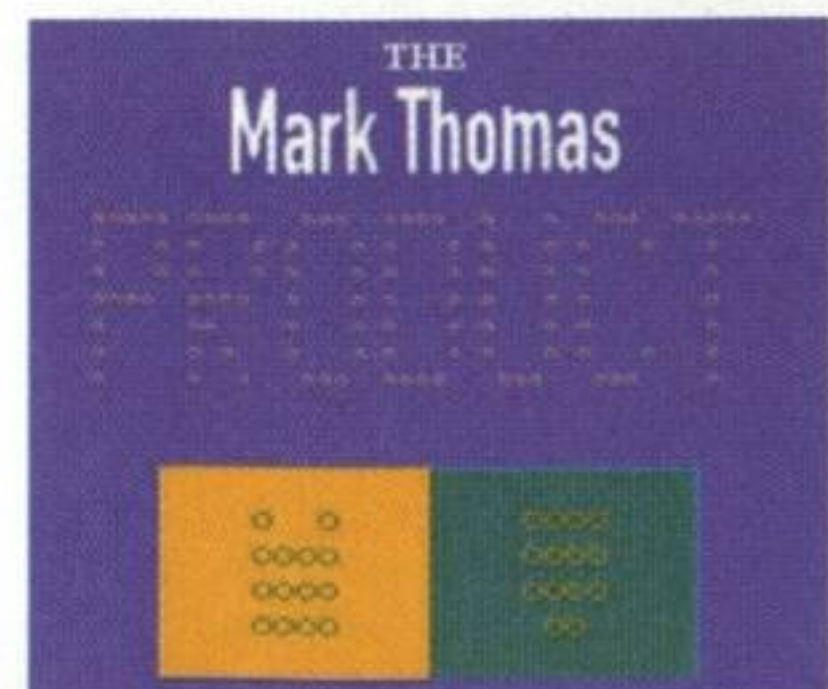
■ A clown. Just a clown. We're not getting at anyone.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT ON THE NET, CAN YOU?

Come and have a gander at the naughty things that those online japesters and pranksters get up to.



■ More Adbusters silliness. Makes you think, though. Doesn't it, doesn't it?



■ Mark Thomas: The funniest man in Britain? No. But he's pretty damn close.



OldManMurray: Got a guestbook? Keep an eye out for a hit and run.

So, you loved the last episode of *The Mark Thomas Product* (<http://www.fnord.demon.co.uk/markt.html>). You found it especially funny when grumpy MP Stephen Byers was called from the stage and hung up before saying anything. Pranks? Love 'em. Anything that pushes the boundaries of taste? Yes please.

In that case, how do you fancy torturing Jar-Jar Binks? Oh yes. *Arcade* bemoaned the lack of ways in which to pay back the irritating Gungan for bringing *Episode One* down to playground level. Naturally, those crazy people on the Internet have rectified this dismal situation, most notably with the Jar-Jar Torture Engine (<http://www.hecklers.com/jarjartorture/jarjartorture.html>). Well done, sirs.

Prefer to pick on real people? Try Old Man Murray on for size (<http://www.oldmanmurray.com/>), where you'll hit gold on every click. The best japes are to be found in the hit and run guestbooks where readers invade someone else's guestbook for 48 hours every week. The results are often hilarious, sometimes ugly, and occasionally hilariously ugly.

Less insane, and more acceptable, is Adbusters (<http://www.adbusters.org/>), the world champion culture-jamming site. Subversive? Extremely. Head along and secede from the consumer society forever; the fake ads alone (of which there are many) make the visit worthwhile.

But returning to things in a Mark Thomas mould, if you visit *The Smoking Gun* (<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/>), you'll find an archive of strange, funny and sometimes scary official documents. Attractions include a genuine Tommy Lee charge sheet (with mug shots) and an FBI report about a raid on an Internet fraudster who, when busted, tried to conceal his crime by stuffing his sofa with \$55,000.

There'll almost certainly be something weirder by the time you visit. But then, that's the Internet for you.

The match box

Hits the road

Driver

Search



■ Garbage in, garbage out. But feed a sensible

gaming term into a search engine and you get garbage anyway.

The Driver-Harris Company
<http://ns.gold-link.com/laviniae/>

■ Need some wire? The Driver-Harris Company is "engaged in the business of manufacturing and marketing non-ferrous metal products, principally insulated electrical wire and cable".



■ Maximum Minnie Driver: apt, in a strange way.

Maximum Minnie Driver
<http://doveraldo.free.servers.com/>

■ Does she actually drive a Mini? The only decent Minnie Driver fact is that she once appeared in an episode of *Knowing Me, Knowing You (With Alan Partridge)* as transsexual agony aunt, Daniella Forrest.

Taxi Driver
<http://members.tripod.com/Taxier/index.htm>

■ You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me? [repeat to fade]

Driver Detective
<http://www.drivershq.com/dd/dd.html>

■ Is your PC up to date? Ah, but are you sure? Do you have all the latest drivers for your bits and bobs? Go here and find out. Your PC would probably thank you for it. If it could talk.

Auto Gary Driver
<http://www.auto-gary-driver.com/>

■ Want a Canadian car, truck or RV? Oh, go on. Say yes, or this won't work. So, want a Canadian car, truck or RV? Yes? You're in luck, this chap will export one for you! Cheers, Gary.



■ Would you let someone called Rusty get their hands on your racing car?

Rusty Wallace
<http://millerlite.8m.com/>

■ Doubtless you've been scanning through this looking for the Rusty Wallace entry. Well, here he is. Enjoy. Look, he's a NASCAR driver, all right? He goes round oval tracks very fast.

EC Driver and Associates
<http://www.ecdriver.com/>

■ No doubt the day will come when you'll need to buy a bridge. Yes, a real bridge. Maybe you'll inherit a river or something. Anyway, these clever chaps will design it for you.

Driver
<http://driver.gtgames.com/>

■ All right, here it is. All the info you'll ever want about *Driver*: the game, as well as links to lots of *Driver* fan sites. Get down and get funky, if you must.

CD-ROM of the month



■ Make it all the way to TOTP for just £30.

TOP OF THE POPS MIX FACTORY 2

■ Publisher: **BBC Multimedia**
■ Developer: **PXD Software**
■ Price: **£30**
■ Release date: **on sale now**
■ Requires: **P166, 32Mb RAM**

■ Having witnessed an average episode of *Top of the Pops* you may get the sneaking suspicion that any monkey with a PC and a faint sense of rhythm could get into the charts. But of course that's not quite true.

For, with a little help from BBC Multimedia's latest software, you won't need a single iota of musical talent to get a track on the finest pop show ever.

This second instalment of the *Top of the Pops Mix Factory* combines a super-friendly music generation package with a nifty video editor and a sizeable helping of TOTP pizzazz. The music making side of things, known as Hit Mix, is a 12-track, 1,600-sample drag and drop affair that should be familiar to fans of the *Dance eJay* range, as it's by the same developers. Vision Mix applies a similar philosophy to video production, combining stylish background images with simple animation to provide some near-professional results.

What you create should be good enough to feature on TOTP. Which is what happens next as you order your top tracks, hurl in a few links described by Gail Porter (no pictures) and sit back and relax as your personal pick of the pops is broadcast full-screen. ★★★

Next month

The videogame magazine

Arcade

WORLD

2000

PREVIEW SPECIAL!

The games you'll be playing, PlayStation2, future gaming in the Millennium Dome, X-Box, Game Boy Advance, Dolphin and stacks more. The unmissable guide to the next millennium (well, the first year of it).

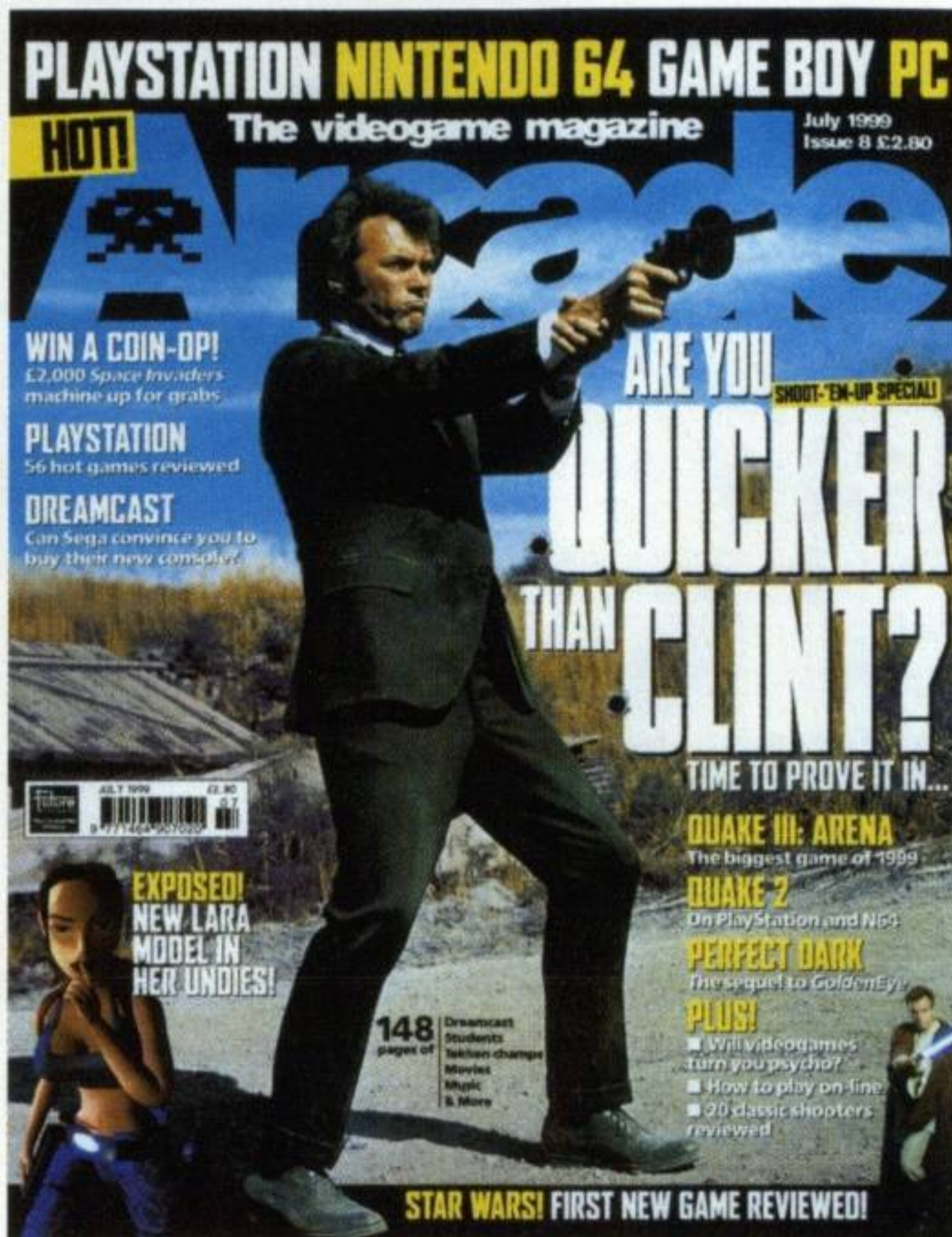
Arcade 15 on sale Thursday 30 December 1999. Get it before the world ends

Arcade

Back issues

The past is another country: they do things differently there. Find out what LP Hartley was banging on about by getting a back issue of *Arcade*. It's all in there, you know.

Issue 8 July



■ 3D shooter special, the new Lara unveiled, win a *Space Invaders* coin-op.

Issue 9 August



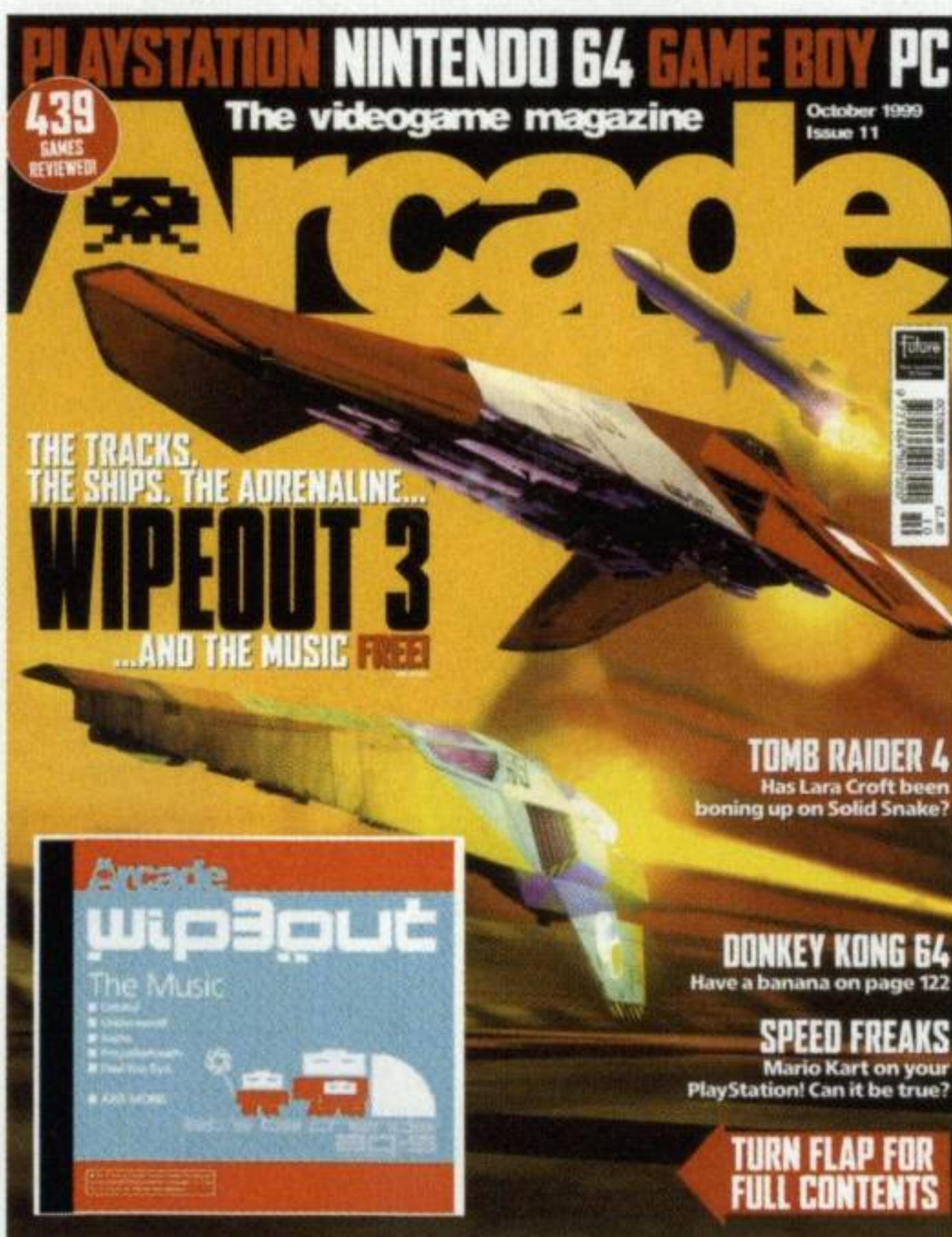
■ *Star Wars* special, games night with WWF wrestlers and sexy girls at E3.

Issue 10 September



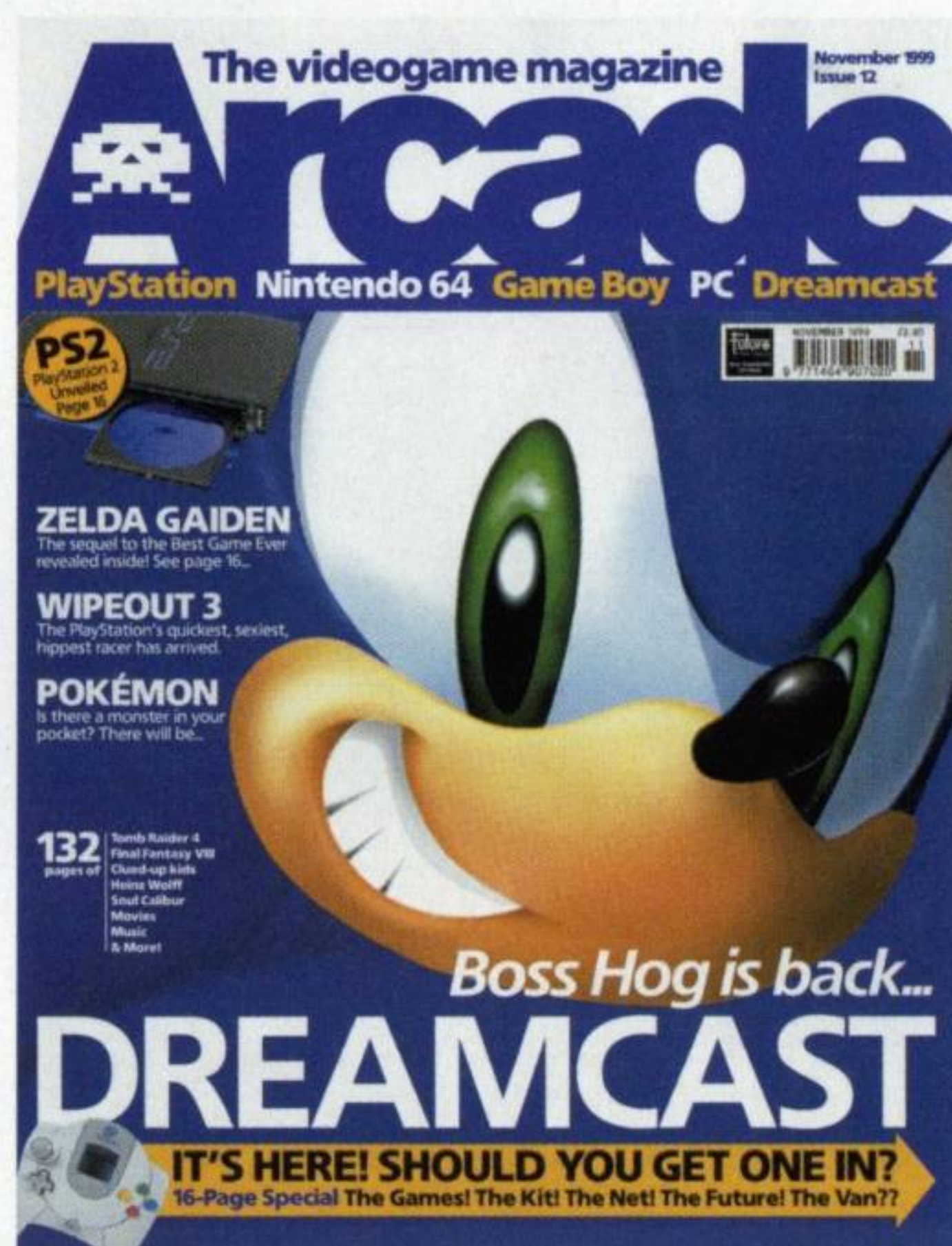
■ Future of Gaming special, Game Boys in the park and Roger Mellie on rude words in *Kingpin*.

Issue 11 October



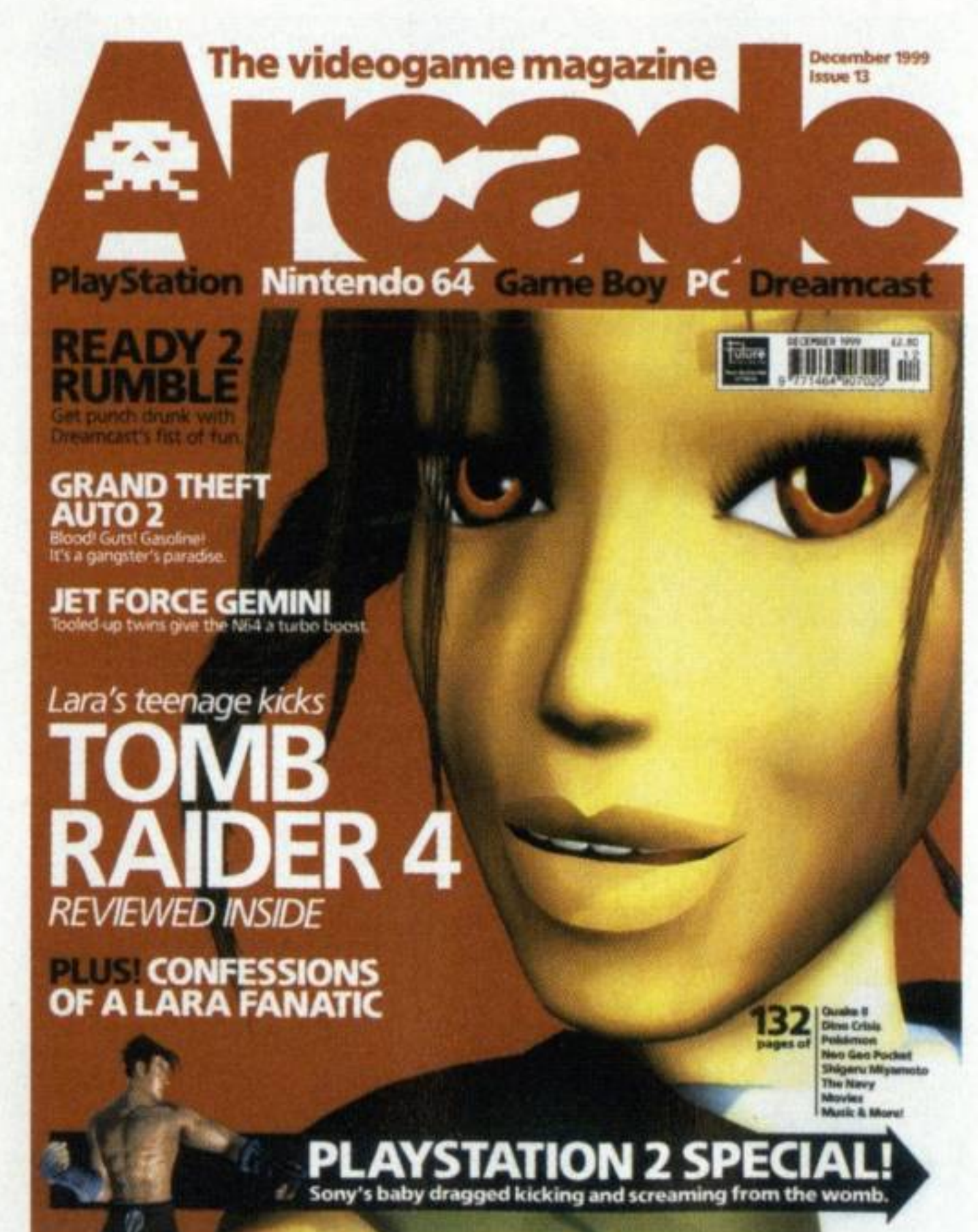
■ Free *Wipeout 3* music CD, the BITS girls and The Great Football Game Debate continues.

Issue 12 November



■ Sega's new system sussed out, clued-up kids and a look at the Christmas games deluge.

Issue 13 December



■ Tomb Raider 4 reviewed, war sims get real and PlayStation 2 revealed in all its glory.

A Back issues

If you fancy getting hold of a back issue, all you need to do is tick the relevant box on this coupon and fill out the details. Make sure you've remembered to put the wedge and the coupon in the envelope, and send the whole lot to: **Arcade Back Issues, Future Publishing, FREEPOST BS4900, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6BR.** Overseas readers should send the form to: **Future Publishing Ltd, Cary Court, Somerton, Somerset, England TA11 6TB.** However, if you long for human contact, call the hotline on 01458 271126.

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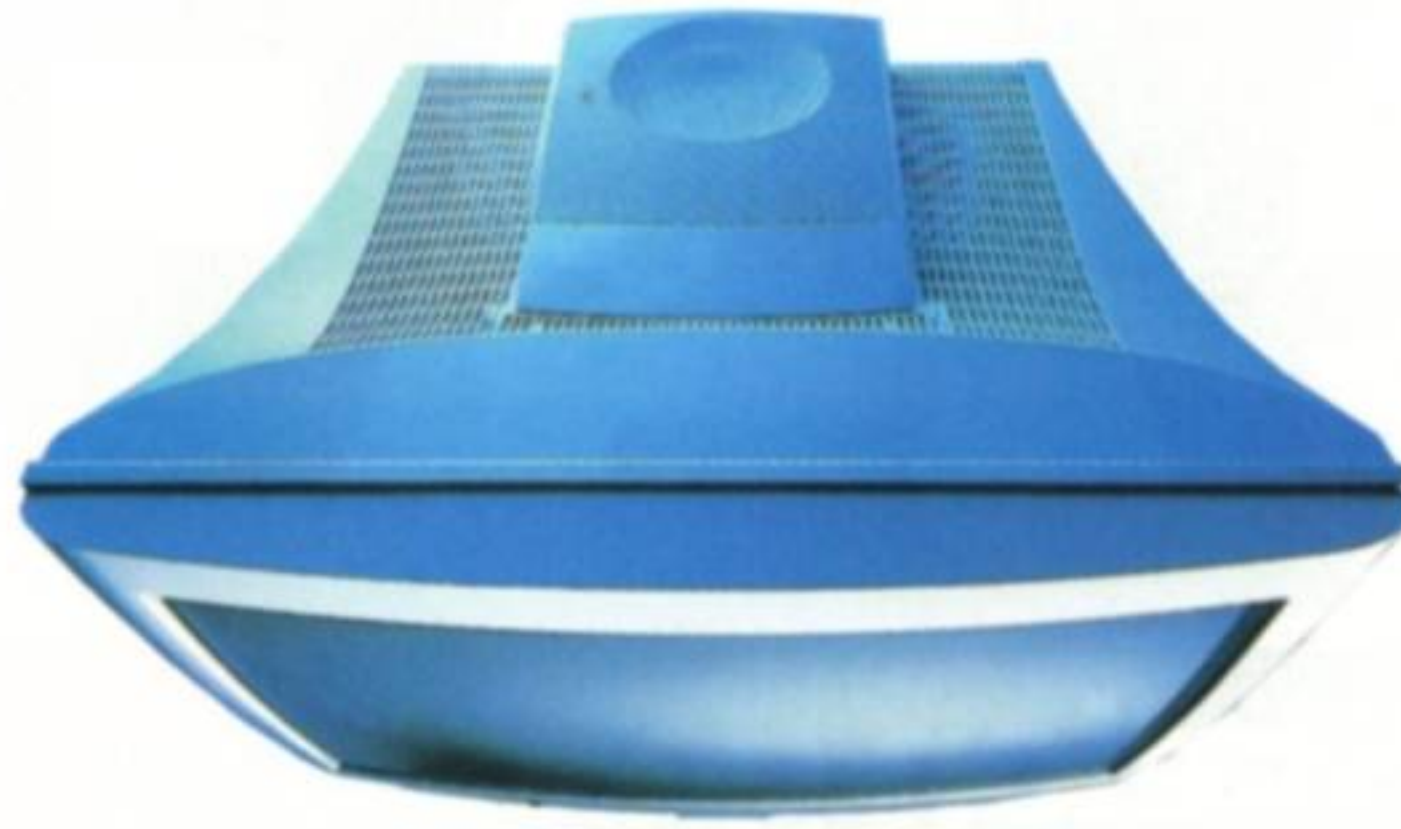
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Hotline 01458 271126

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 Surname _____
 Address _____
 Postcode _____ Country _____
 Signature _____ Date _____

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New



New

T3 TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY TODAY

43 PAGES OF REVIEWS
Feast your eyes on this month's sleekest, sexiest, shiniest gear

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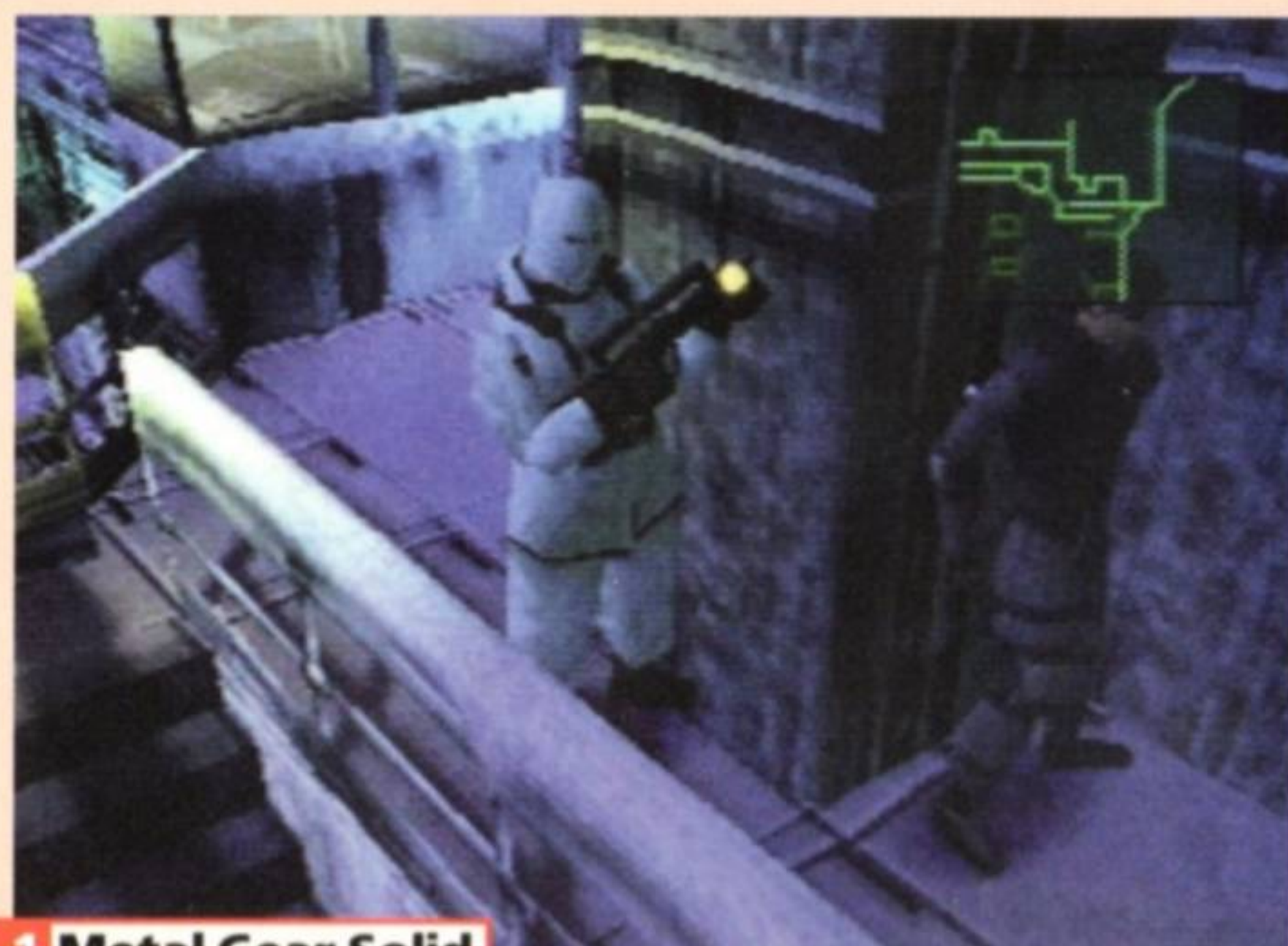
TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY TODAY **T3**

The A-List

Edited by | Jamie Sefton

Arcade's Top 20 PlayStation games

■ New year, new millennium, new PlayStation... but these bad boys still cut it.



1 Metal Gear Solid

■ Sneaker ■ Konami ■ £40

Infiltrate a shadowy enemy installation *Metal Gear Solid* is brilliant – sneak around and avoid detection rather than blasting everything in sight. Despite the end screen coming around after only a few hours, you'll adore every single minute of play. ★★★★★

2 Quake 2

■ Shooter ■ Activision ■ £40

Magnificently violent first-person shooter A PlayStation conversion of id's classic shouldn't have been possible, but Hammerhead has pulled it off – big style. The one player game is immersing and scary while the multi-player options are unsurpassed. Gaming heaven in hell. ★★★★★



3 Gran Turismo

■ Racer ■ SCE ■ £20

Probably the best racer in the world Take one measure of outrageously good graphics, another of near-perfect handling, a couple of pinches of immediacy of play and limitless levels of depth, and you've got an unmissable pleasure pie. Ridiculously realistic, replays you'll want to watch annoyingly often – it's like taking all your favourite cars for a test drive! Another PlayStation classic that defined a genre. ★★★★★



4 Tekken 3

■ Fighter ■ Namco ■ £35

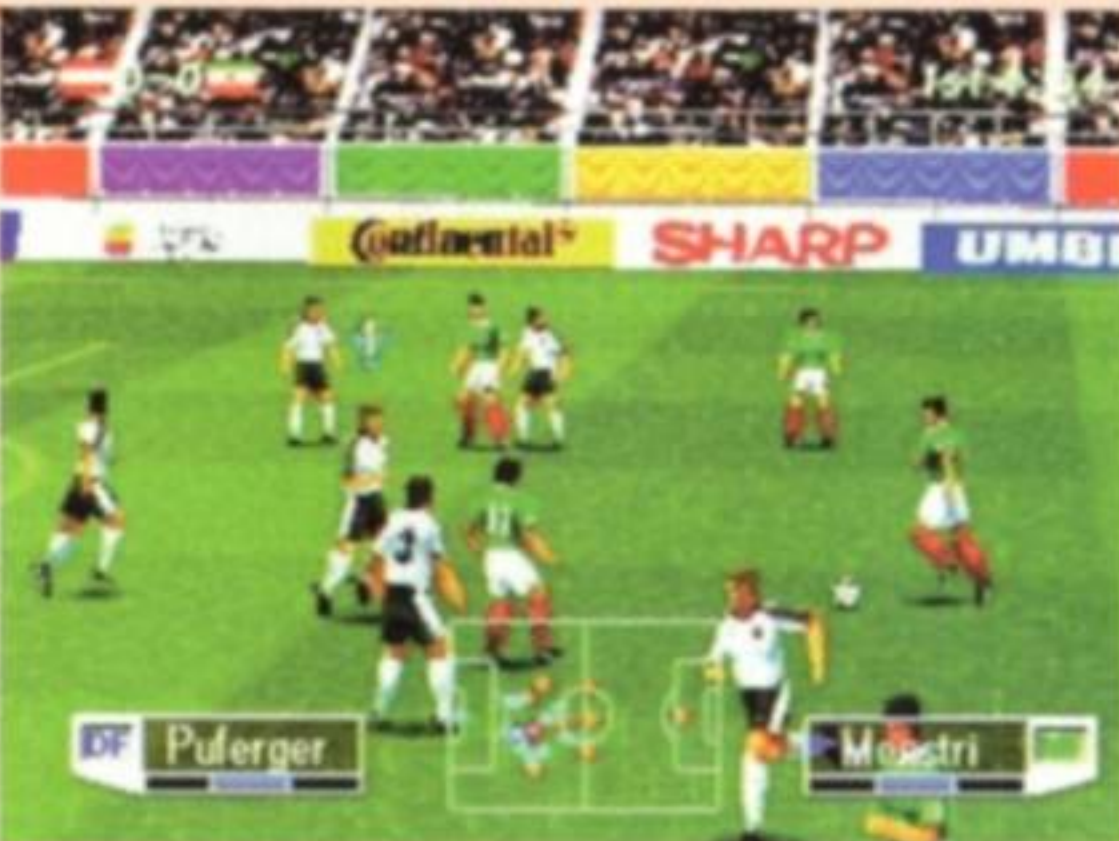
Adept slapping Major improvement to the prequels in almost every way: graphically flawless and the new moves add something for both newcomers and veterans alike. A wide variety of sub-games, bonuses and hidden characters, as well as a frightening difficulty level, means there's so much to do that it's almost the *Mario* of fighting games. But without the cute stuff, obviously. ★★★★★



5 ISS Pro '98

■ Sports ■ Konami ■ £40

Frighteningly addictive footy sim Certainly the best football game on PlayStation and arguably on any system. With silky play, perfect motion-capture, scores of teams, comedy player names and the most intuitive control system this side of a light switch; you'll lose years and a few friends the second you first switch it on – which is what quality gaming is all about, surely. ★★★★★



6 Tomb Raider

■ Adventure ■ Eidos ■ £20

Baps entertainment The original and, now that it's a Platinum-tastic £20, still the best of Lara's tomb ransacking antics. The second outing didn't add enough to the franchise, the third game smelt slightly of a rush job and the fourth, while ace, is just too damn pricey compared to this. Lovely. ★★★★★



7 Resident Evil 2

■ Horror Adventure ■ Capcom ■ £35

Sequel to the original gore-fest The ability to control two characters is gimmicky, and the puzzles are similar to the first incarnation, but *RE2* is better than the original in all other respects. It will scare your skin off – a polished and very creepy package. ★★★★★



8 Driver

■ Racer ■ GT Interactive ■ £40

Stunning-looking '70s car-chase sim Rocket through real American cities, evading the Filth and causing upset for pedestrians. The missions don't vary much, but as a driving 'toy', *Driver's* unbeaten. Smashing through piles of boxes is thrilling, and the replay editor makes for added fun. ★★★★★



9 Wipeout 3

■ Racer ■ Psygnosis ■ £35

The future of racing As if the year 2097 wasn't far enough in the future, the Psygnosis boys have set this one in 2116. Every element has been improved and rather than attempt to reinvent the wheel/hover device, the inspiration here is a refreshingly playable back-to-basics approach. ★★★★★



10 Final Fantasy VIII

■ RPG ■ SCE ■ £35

Latest and best installment of Square's epic RPG series A finely crafted sci-fi story with brilliantly detailed characters, involved gameplay and utterly astounding cut scenes that make *Toy Story* look like *South Park*. Bid fond farewell to your free time. ★★★★★



11 Anna Kournikova Tennis

■ Sports ■ SCE ■ £35

Quirky racquet-play Cute polygonal pros battle it out in a game that's a little more serious than previous *Smash Court Tennis* titles. Sublime controls and an addictive multi-player feature. In fact, this is by far the best tennis game you can buy – so there. ★★★★★



12 Silent Hill

■ Horror Adventure ■ Konami ■ £40

Chillingly atmospheric scare-'em-up A seamless *Resident Evil* done. Grimy, decrepit, littered with hanging corpses and depressing enough to make you string up a noose – all in splendid 3D. Only flawed by a few too many illogical puzzles. ★★★★★



13 Ridge Racer 4

■ Racer ■ Namco ■ £35

Super-fast racing Thrills come from the breathtaking speed at which the eight gorgeous tracks rush past and the brilliance of the two-player mode. Master the powerside and you'll unlock 320 unique cars. If you're after realism, though, *Gran Turismo* is for you. ★★★★★



14 Colin McRae Rally

■ Racer ■ Codemasters ■ £20

Life-like rural driving sim A departure from the usual racing game, as your rally car rattles around countryside tracks with time and damage your only opponents. The variety of terrain and responsive controls give real driving feedback. And it's a bloody bargain at £20. ★★★★★



15 MicroMachines V3

■ Racer ■ Codemasters ■ £20

Tiny cars race around your living room The old top-down 2D game souped-up into pseudo-3D, and it's a beauty. There are 30 innovative courses, based on kitchen tables and school desks, coupled with a perfect overhead camera, plenty of amusingly behaved vehicles and a multi-player game that's ace. ★★★★★



16 Everybody's Golf

■ Sports ■ SCE ■ £35

Cartoon-style stick-and-ball antics Simplistic looks, but complex gameplay, with an arcade slant that injects a welcome burst of speed and a host of hidden extras. Great if you don't take golf serious – and why should you? ★★★★★



17 Ape Escape

■ Platformer ■ SCE ■ £35

Satisfying simian search Catching panicky monkeys with nets refreshes the platforming genre, while the coin collecting sub-quest and bonus games ramp up replayability. The true 3D world looks lovely, the controls are perfect and it's fun and challenging too. ★★★★★



18 LMA Manager

■ Sport ■ Codemasters ■ £40

Finely-tuned footballing excellence Finally, a football manager game on a console that's worth its weight in balls. A great interface, nifty transfer system and the real names of the players create a cracking management sim that even Ruud Gullit could master. Premier League stuff. ★★★★★



19 Brian Lara Cricket

■ Sports ■ Codemasters ■ £40

Leather-on-willow simulator This cricket sim is so realistic that you know it's your fault when you're losing. It's painfully hard, but surprisingly playable and very well-crafted, with the commentary and graphics in particular standing out as a cut above the rest. ★★★★★



20 Crash Bandicoot 3

■ Platformer ■ SCE ■ £35

Maniacal pseudo-3D antics Control a mad marsupial as he runs headlong into the screen, collecting apples and avoiding the bad guys. The best of the three aided greatly by groovy new 3D levels. Still not a *Mario*-beater though. ★★★★★



TOP 5 PLAYSTATION GAMES TO SCARE YOUR LITTLE BROTHER SHITLESS



- 1 Resident Evil 2**
Capcom
"Mum and dad are zombies, you know..."
- 2 Silent Hill**
Konami
Get a quick game in before beddy-byes. Sweet dreams.
- 3 Quake 2**
Activision
Enjoy some gentle two-player deathmatch tomfoolery.
- 4 Dino Crisis**
Virgin
Explain how the game features footage of real dinosaurs.
- 5 The Crow: City of Angels**
Acclaim
No! Anything but that! Aagh!

Come stroll with Arcade through the videogaming countryside. Note the rolling hills, the lush pastures and the complete and utter absence of any rural poverty whatsoever. Isn't it pretty? Let's go kill something.



Arcade's Top 20 PC games



1 Half-Life

■ Shooter ■ Sierra ■ £35
Stunningly atmospheric first-person shooter Built with a truly terrifyingly believable environment and logic puzzles, and incorporating mind-bogglingly intelligent bad guys and a decent amount of gorgeous all-out alien-blasting. ★★★★★

2 Quake 2

■ Shooter ■ Activision ■ £20
Seminal first-person baddie-beater More of one of the finest games in the world. Quake 2 is best played over a network and offers bigger and better (although not cleverer) monsters, massive guns, improved level designs and a customisable game engine. The deathmatch-based sequel, Quake 3: Arena, is imminent, so you may want to wait for that. ★★★★★



3 Curse of Monkey Island

■ Adventure ■ LucasArts ■ £40
Fantastic point-and-click adventure Genuinely amusing and with clever puzzles, The Curse of Monkey Island scores well for its controls, which make exploring and examining as easy as possible. Great to look at and to listen to, if a tad frustrating and illogical, but mostly top notch throughout. ★★★★★



4 Unreal Tournament

■ Shooter ■ GT Interactive ■ £40
A pre-Quake deathmatch revolution Gorgeous, quick, frantic, brilliant. Tremendous AI bots, plenty of big guns, loads of options – everything. But be warned, a hefty PC is required to do the masterpiece any kind of justice at all. ★★★★★



5 Tiberian Sun

■ Strategy ■ EA ■ £40
Engrossing and imaginative strategy game Just like its predecessors, Command & Conquer and Red Alert, the emphasis in Tiberian Sun is on total warfare. You're constantly teetering on the brink of disaster – make the wrong strategic choices and your army will get its arse kicked, but plan well and victory will be yours... eventually. ★★★★★



6 TOCA 2

■ Racer ■ Codemasters ■ £35
Heavily realistic revs Even with 15 cars jostling for position in front of you, TOCA 2 Touring Cars always looks stunning. The realistic handling makes free-wheeling over the varied courses a pleasure, and the added support races supply extra value-for-money. ★★★★★



7 Grim Fandango

■ Adventure ■ LucasArts ■ £35
You look like Death warmed up The style, presentation and content of this odd, amusing adventure leave it towering above everything else. The puzzles are obscure, but you'll forgive it, thanks to neat touches, absorbing plot and downright loveliness. ★★★★★



8 Championship Manager 3

■ Sports ■ Eidos ■ £30
Out-coach Hoddle Sixteen global leagues, 35,000 players and fine detail make this the definitive management title. There's a sensible control system, your decisions affect every match and the interface works a treat. A comprehensive tactics editor too. ★★★★★



9 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation

■ Puzzle ■ Eidos ■ £40
Four-play with Lara Latest in the incredibly successful franchise sees our heroine take on all manner of nasties in ancient Egypt. Won't stretch your hardware but has oodles of gameplay and puzzles galore. ★★★★★



10 Dungeon Keeper 2

■ Strategy ■ EA ■ £35
Prepare to unleash the beast within This strategy masterpiece bubbles and seethes with a pitch-black humorous atmosphere. And it's non-repetitive! If you're going to open one intellectual bottle this year, Dungeon Keeper 2 is really the one to savour. ★★★★★



11 Sim City 3000

■ Strategy/God ■ EA ■ £35
City-'em-up Initially disappointing, but lurking underneath the familiar features are some far more intuitive controls, and the joy of seeing your creation grow. There are none of the battles you'll see in so many strategy titles, but Sim City is still old-fashioned fun. ★★★★★



12 Alien Vs Predator

■ Shoot-'em-up ■ EA ■ £40
She's a bitch, he's invisible and they're expendable So much more than a Quake clone. Atmospheric, gorgeous, truly frightening, bloody hard. Play as a marine and your motion tracker will beep in constant panic – worth the asking price alone. ★★★★★



13 Midtown Madness

■ Racer ■ Microsoft ■ £35
Fender-bending racer with terrific traffic You can't run people over but this incredibly realistic driving game has great challenges, amazing graphical detail and cars, cars, cars. Crash some vehicles and enjoy a little bit of a road-rage frenzy. ★★★★★



14 Flight Simulator '98

■ Flight sim ■ Microsoft ■ £40
Ultra-realistic aeroplane antics Not for the casual gamer, including, as it does, a load of knobs to control. It's supposed to be a true flying experience, so the controls are difficult to use, however some of the graphics aren't very realistic. There's a difficult-to-control helicopter included too. ★★★★★



15 Final Fantasy VII

■ RPG ■ Eidos ■ £20
PlayStation's best RPG arrives on PC A great story, lavish graphics and brilliant selection of spells. It's a little confusing, rarely enabling you to see your opponents before you get into a fight, but put this down to Japanese quirkiness and you're on to a winner. ★★★★★



16 Worms: Armageddon

■ Party ■ Hasbro ■ £30
Twisty-turny slap-'em-up Destroy your opponent's pink 'uns with an arsenal of both serious and comedic weapons. As with earlier incarnations, this loses much in single-player, but flawless controls and eye-popping visuals create a multi-player gem. ★★★★★



17 Kingpin

■ Shoot-'em-up ■ Interplay ■ £30
Pop a cap in you momma's ass, bitch An ultra-violent, ultra swearsy, retro-futuristic gangster romp. In fact it's funning great, you cusk! Single-player is totally immersive and you feel proud to finally be playing a proper "grown-up" game which, in fact, is utterly childish. ★★★★★



18 Homeworld

■ Strategy/Shoot-'em-up ■ Sierra ■ £35
Compelling space combat and management game Takes the best elements of real-time strategy games and shoot-'em-ups, with jaw-dropping space battles, spooky music and scary baddies. One of the defining PC games of '99. ★★★★★



19 Delta Force

■ Strategy/God ■ EA ■ £40
Gung-ho army squad action Realistic simulation of battles, this time with a mission-based structure. Although it is possible to embark on a crazed killing spree, true pleasure comes from indulging in the tricky tasks proper. ★★★★★



20 GTA2

■ Action ■ Rockstar games ■ £40
Carjacking, gun-toting sequel of the controversial action game Be a mean mutha in this inner-city joyriding extravaganza where crime does pay. Wonderful dark humour, great car handling, funky music and hugely inventive. A worthy update of a classic title. ★★★★★



■ You got game? No? Then you need game. Here game. Is good, no?

TOP 5 PC GAMES IF YOU WANT TO REALLY KNACKER YOUR PC



- 1 FIFA '99**
EA Sports
Load the game, then kick your monitor around the room. Gooaa!
- 2 Colin McRae**
Codemasters
Jam a steering wheel stolen from a neighbour's car into your PC. Instant controller!
- 3 Street Fighter Alpha 2**
Virgin
Bash the keys deftly with your fists.
- 4 Half-Life**
Sierra
Kill the aliens by shooting them – with a real gun.
- 5 Windows '98**
Microsoft
Bugger it completely.

The A-List

Arcade's Top 20 Nintendo 64 games

■ Good old Nintendo. Like Old Yella, while you may smell a bit these days, Arcade still loves you. So many beautiful memories. Fetch!



1 The Legend of Zelda

Best game in the world and that's a fact Traditional Zelda hallmarks wrapped up in a beautifully realised 3D world. The wandering about, talking, fighting and cut-scenes have been fine-tuned until they're perfect. Worthy of all the hype thanks entirely to the sheer genius of Shigeru Miyamoto. Maybe Sony should poach him. ★★★★★

2 Super Mario 64

■ Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £30
The king of 3D platformers A masterpiece, with huge levels, sublime controls and immersive gameplay. The game that invented a genre. As with all Miyamoto games, it slowly sucks you in and refuses to let go, and its full-on 3D graphics still impress. ★★★★★



3 GoldenEye

■ Shooter ■ Nintendo ■ £30
Stealthy first-person shooter A believable and immersive 3D world, with 20 challenging missions taking you from gorgeous snow-covered wasteland to grubby men's toilets. One of the best multi-players that money can buy, too. Which is nice. ★★★★★



4 Mario Kart

■ Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £30
Cute characters go to the races The original comedy racer returns. The single-player game is a lonely experience, but the time trial adds longevity and the multi-player game is arguably the greatest on any platform. So addictive it could be classed as a legal drug! ★★★★★



5 Jet Force Gemini

■ Shoot-'em up ■ Rare ■ £40
Twin trouble Rare finally returns with a fantastic 3D shoot-'em up that's big, balsy and heart-thumpingly exciting. A great soundtrack and some of the best visuals on the N64 make it an instant classic. ★★★★★



6 Shadowman

■ Shooter ■ Acclaim ■ £40
Chock full of serial killers and all manner of dark grisliness A tidy, atmospheric next generation Quake with a decent plot and lashings of voodoo spookiness. Incredibly big, intelligent, rewarding, challenging and thoroughly deserving of your time. Classic stuff indeed. ★★★★★



7 Turok 2

■ Shooter ■ Acclaim ■ £40
Dino hunting This looks stunning, and the game itself is helped by impossibly large guns and an end to the precision jumping nonsense that marred the original. The tasks may appear familiar if you're a Doom fan, though, and it's occasionally too difficult. ★★★★★



8 F1 World Grand Prix 2

■ Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40
Damon Hill simulator Looking as good as real-life, with all the real cars, drivers, stats and other nonsense. Whether you're an arcade racer or a true F1 fan, there's something here for you, with a two-player option to round it all off nicely. ★★★★★



9 ISS '98

■ Sports ■ Konami ■ £40
Tremendous goal-fest The N64's best footy sim and arguably the best on any system. Oh so intuitive controls, silky smooth animation and very nearly as addictive in multi-player as the mighty Mario Kart. You will lose months of your life. ★★★★★



10 1080° Snowboarding

■ Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40
Snow-based racing A brilliant range of modes, plenty of tricks, and loads of boards and courses for you to have a crack at. You get beautiful controls, brilliant replays and challenging racing. A gorgeous, technically superb, super quick experience. ★★★★★



11 Banjo Kazooie

■ Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £40
Bizarre bear-bird crossover Beautiful levels that beg you to explore, a genuine challenge with plenty of variety, and the first Rare game not to feature an eye-wincing amount of cute. Almost knocks Mario from his perch. Praise indeed. ★★★★★



12 Lylat Wars

■ Shooter ■ Nintendo ■ £30
On-rails 3D space blast Loosely based on Starwing on the SNES, and intended to be an immersive, movie-like experience, with cut-scenes that ape films like Independence Day. It's too easy, but it's still addictive, well-crafted and frantic. Pure blasting action. ★★★★★



13 Pilotwings 64

■ Flyer ■ Nintendo ■ £30
Fly about a bit and cry at the difficulty of it all Along with Mario 64, this is the game that launched the N64. It boasts beautiful, realistic scenery and some of the hardest tasks this side of Mensa. Basically, it's a truly unique flying experience. ★★★★★



14 Quake 2

■ Shooter ■ Activision ■ £50
Travel to Stroggos, massacre its people Non-stop action, plenty of secrets and a more than worthy sequel. Unfortunately the single-player lifespan is poor. But, in deathmatch terms, GoldenEye may have the brains, but Quake 2 has the brawn. ★★★★★



15 Wave Race 64

■ Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £30
How jet-ski games should be done Water-based frolics that are second to none, even compared to coin-op titles at a thousand times the price. The tracks are beautiful, and the controls are as responsive and intuitive as you'd expect from Nintendo. ★★★★★



16 Diddy Kong Racing

■ Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40
Super cute Mario Kart wannabe More satisfying and challenging than Mario Kart in single-player, but doesn't match the "bastard! Just one more go then" factor in multi-player. And the characters are so sickly sweet that your gums may melt. ★★★★★



17 F-Zero X

■ Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £30
Quick-as-you-like space-age racer The fastest, smoothest racer ever, thanks to its lack of graphical detail. The controls are sublime, the handling fantastic and the tracks horrifically difficult. But somehow there just isn't that usual Nintendo spark. ★★★★★



18 Body Harvest

■ Shooter ■ Gremlin ■ £20
Bug-blasting B-movie invasion Lots of aliens, loads of weapons and vehicles, and five varied levels. The graphics are ropey, and the character dialogue terrible, but the mix of RPG and intense, panicky alien shooting works well. ★★★★★



19 Mario Party

■ Party ■ Nintendo ■ £40
Bring your own controller A traditional board game featuring all your favourite Nintendo characters and a plethora of original and enjoyable multi-player sub-games. Not good for solo gamers, but a laugh a minute with a bunch of friends. ★★★★★

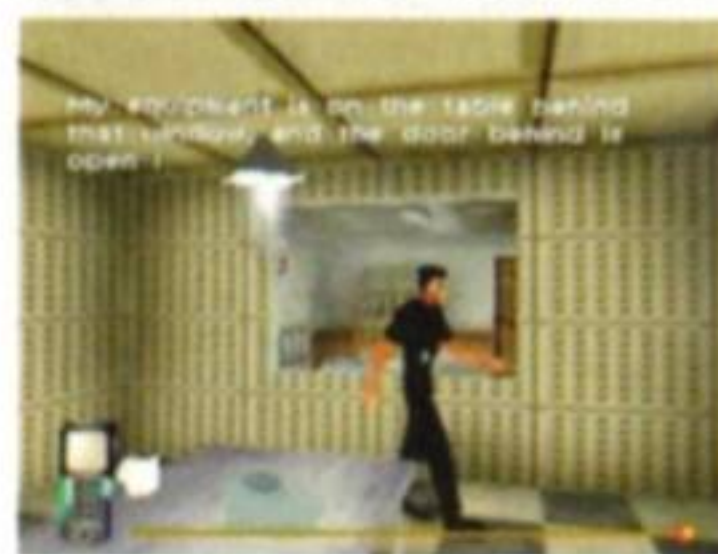


20 Star Wars Episode 1: Racer

■ Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40
Force-based pod racing Great scenery, cool racing craft and – most importantly – speed. And a Star Wars licence, of course. The option to upgrade the pod is cool, and the similarity to Wipeout isn't a bad thing. No weapons, though, and too short. ★★★★★



TOP 5 NINTENDO 64 GAMES IF YOU'RE LOST IN THE MIDDLE OF A JUNGLE WITH NO FOOD OR WATER



1 SCARS

Ubi Soft
Emotional ones will be left if you survive.

2 Beetle Adventure Racing

EA
Play the real thing with some huge, scary, biting insects.

3 The X-Files

Fox Interactive
Play a game featuring people in a tighter spot than you.

4 Banjo-Kazooie

Nintendo
Grab a lion and a parrot to improvise a new character.

5 Mission: Impossible

Infogrames
Yep. You're shafted.

Arcade's Top 5 Dreamcast games



1 Power Stone

■ Beat-'em-up ■ Capcom ■ £40

The beat-'em-up bar brawl Welcome to the game where you can throw chairs, vases and tables at your opponent; the aim – quite simply – being to knock the gemstones out of them. Spring around the spaces like a new-born lamb. You looking at me? ★★★★★

2 Ready 2 Rumble

■ Beat-'em-up ■ Sega ■ £40

Funky fighting. Gobsmaacking arcade-style boxing game with a ringful of hilarious characters and fabulous graphics. Massive fun in two-player mode, this is the true heavyweight champ of console pugilism. A knockout. ★★★★★

3 Sonic Adventure

■ 3D platformer ■ Sega ■ £40

Hedgehog heaven on Sega's new platform Steer spanky new Sonic around a wonderful new world, meeting up with his old friends Tails the Fox, Knuckles the, um, echidna, and a rather sexy squirrel named Amy. It all makes perfect sense once you get going. ★★★★★

4 TrickStyle

■ Racer ■ Acclaim ■ £40

Speedy tricks outside the red light district Welcome to the place where your *Back To The Future 2* dreams become reality, and play as a racer, a stunter or a bully on the mean streets of the 23rd century. A *Wipeout* wannabe that hits the spot. ★★★★★

5 Hydro Thunder

■ Racer ■ Midway ■ £40

A splash-happy speedboat stunner. Nothing new in the gameplay stakes, but a large collection of speedboats and geographical locations make this an enjoyable ride. Sets a benchmark in terms of presentation and flashy visuals. Lovely. ★★★★★

6 House of the Dead 2

■ Shooter ■ Sega ■ £55,

including gun

Bloodthirsty zombie shoot-'em-up. A faithful conversion of the arcade coin-op. Shoot your way through a hideous, bloody army of the undead without having your flesh filched. The most fun you can have with a light gun. ★★★

7 UEFA Striker

■ Sports ■ Infogrames ■ £40

Dreamcast finally has balls. The first footy offering on Sega's console looks Premier league but plays a bit Nationwide Division One. Lovely graphics and a wealth of options should keep Dreamcast owners satisfied, but only just. ★★★

8 Sega Rally 2

■ Racer ■ Sega ■ £40

Buckle up and live out your rallying fantasies Take to the tracks in the best looking racing sim you've ever seen. Once you've recovered from the hit of the graphics, take part in the Ten Year Championships to prove your mettle with the pros. ★★★★★

9 Virtua Fighter 3tb

■ Beat-'em-up ■ Sega ■ £40

Stalwart scrapper back to break you into 128-bits Duke it out toe-to-toe in this fine looking fighter that makes up for what it lacks in subtlety with old skool appeal. Fight on rooftops and get the drop on foe in the subway. Simple but effective. ★★★

10 Speed Devils

■ Racer ■ Ubi Soft ■ £40

Horny driving delights. Ubi Soft's fantasy-orientated racer has some silly personalities, entertaining tracks and betting options that every crooked match-fixing driving enthusiast will enjoy. Disappointing two-player mode, though. ★★

■ Dreamcast? S'all right, s'pose. One for free? Take your arm off, mate.

Arcade's Top 10 Game Boy games



1 Zelda DX

■ RPG ■ Nintendo ■ £25

Puzzle-solving with your fave elf An involving plot, beautiful graphics, and a story where the emphasis is on engaging the player in the same way as *FFVII*. It's incredibly difficult, with a vast range of interesting challenges. A good one for the beach. ★★★★★

2 Tetris DX

■ Puzzler ■ Nintendo ■ £20

Brick drop return shock! The graphics, sounds and modes might have changed, but this is still the same old *Tetris*, known world-wide as the most addictive version of the Russian puzzler. It's *Tetris!* Quite simply, get it in. ★★★★★

3 Super Mario Bros Deluxe

■ Platformer ■ Nintendo

■ £25 Seminal Mario platformer

Uncomplicated, hugely enjoyable platform brilliance, transferred to our portable friend after 14 years. Running, jumping and gobbling mushrooms has never been so much fun, and there's a shedful of extras! ★★★★★

4 R-Type Delta

■ Shooter ■ Nintendo ■ £25

The daddy of side-scrolling shooters Arcade perfect, if inevitably small, conversions of *R-Type*, *R-Type II* and a groovy remix of the two all one irresistible cart. Bloody hard too. ★★★★★

5 Super Mario Land

■ Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £15

The pipe man cometh One of the GB's original releases, *Super Mario* still excels in most areas, despite having reached a very elderly nine-years-old. The graphics are simple, but the subtlety of control and excellent level designs are top. ★★★★★

6 Tennis

■ Sports ■ Nintendo ■ £15

Racquet fun Despite its simplicity, *Tennis* is one of the most enjoyable such sims on any platform. With an addictive two-player option, a hard-to-beat computer opponent and some very intuitive controls, this is a great game. ★★★★★

7 Warioland 2 DX

■ Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £25

Mazza's arch enemy returns Features a novel "can't die" aspect and insists on you collecting all of the coins from each level, creating fist-clenching difficulty in the process. Top quality and fiendishly challenging. ★★★★★

8 Defender/Joust

■ Retro ■ Midway ■ £25

Old coin-ops for your pleasure A double helping of retro arcade fare: a splendid side-scrolling shooter and a rather good fire-button-free flap-'em-up played on ostrich mounts. Oh the joy of holding old coin-ops in your palm. ★★★★★

9 Harvest Moon

■ Racer ■ GT Interactive ■ £20

Down on the farm... Clear your land, till the soil, plant some seeds – there aren't many farming sims out there, but *Harvest Moon* proves that they should be more popular than Lara. The detail is astonishing. There's so much stuff to do! ★★★★★

10 V-Rally

■ Racer ■ Infogrames ■ £25

Tip-top portable racetracks Eventful tracks, intelligent opposition and splendid scenery in this accomplished GB racer. With four cars, 20 tracks spread over 10 countries, and plenty of play modes – this'll last ya for ages. ★★★★★

■ Ah, my pretty. So small, and yet so worldly wise. Want me to push your buttons?

TOP 5 DREAMCAST GAMES ANNOYINGLY STILL UNAVAILABLE: PART THREE



1 Zombie Revenge
Sega
Splatter zombies in this *Res Evil*-style beat-'em up.

2 Floigan Brothers
Sega
Cartoon jinks with *Laurel and Hardy* inspired junk dealers.

3 Virtua Striker 2: v2000
Sega
Eagerly awaited conversion of the superior football coin-op.

4 Godzilla Generations
General Entertainment
Monster, monster. Stomp all over buildings and stuff.

5 Castlevania Resurrection
Konami
Latest installment of the ghost, mummy and serpent-sporting franchise.

TOP 5 GAME BOY GAMES TO PLAY IN PRISON



1 WWF Attitude
Acclaim
Scare off Mr. Big with your wrestling mastery.

2 Pokémon Blue
Nintendo
Trade your Pokémon with other prisoners for batteries.

3 Grand Theft Auto
Take 2
Reminisce about the good ol' days on the outside.

4 Zelda DX
Nintendo
You'll have plenty of free time on your hands.


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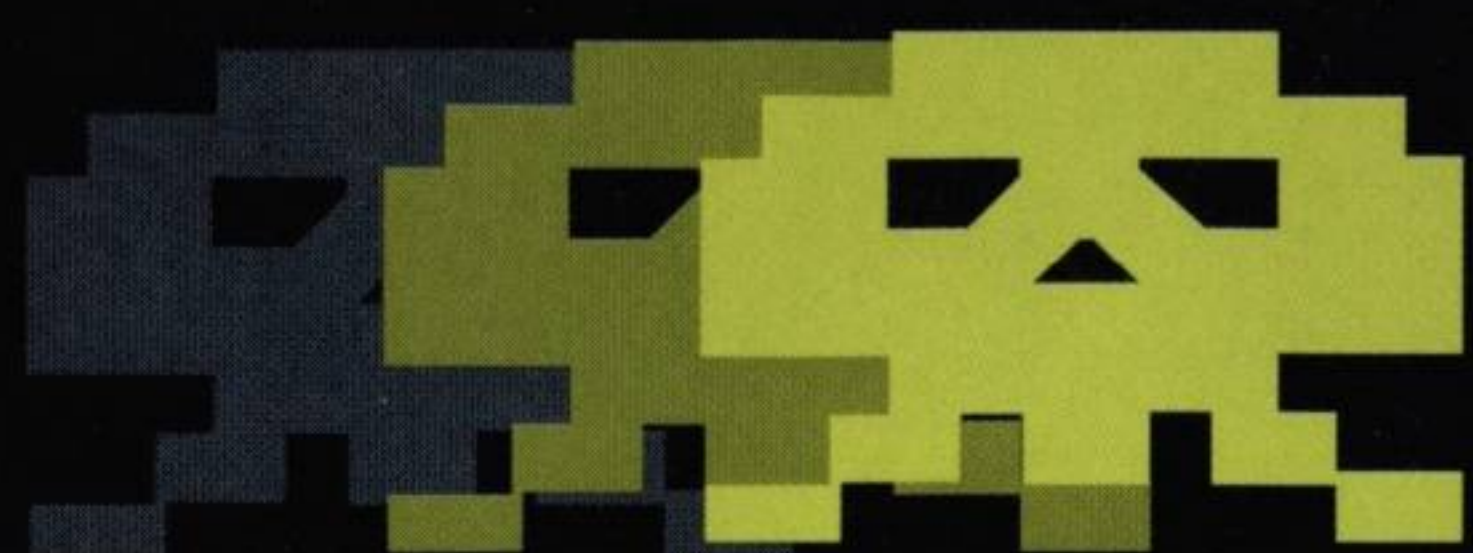


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KICK ASS

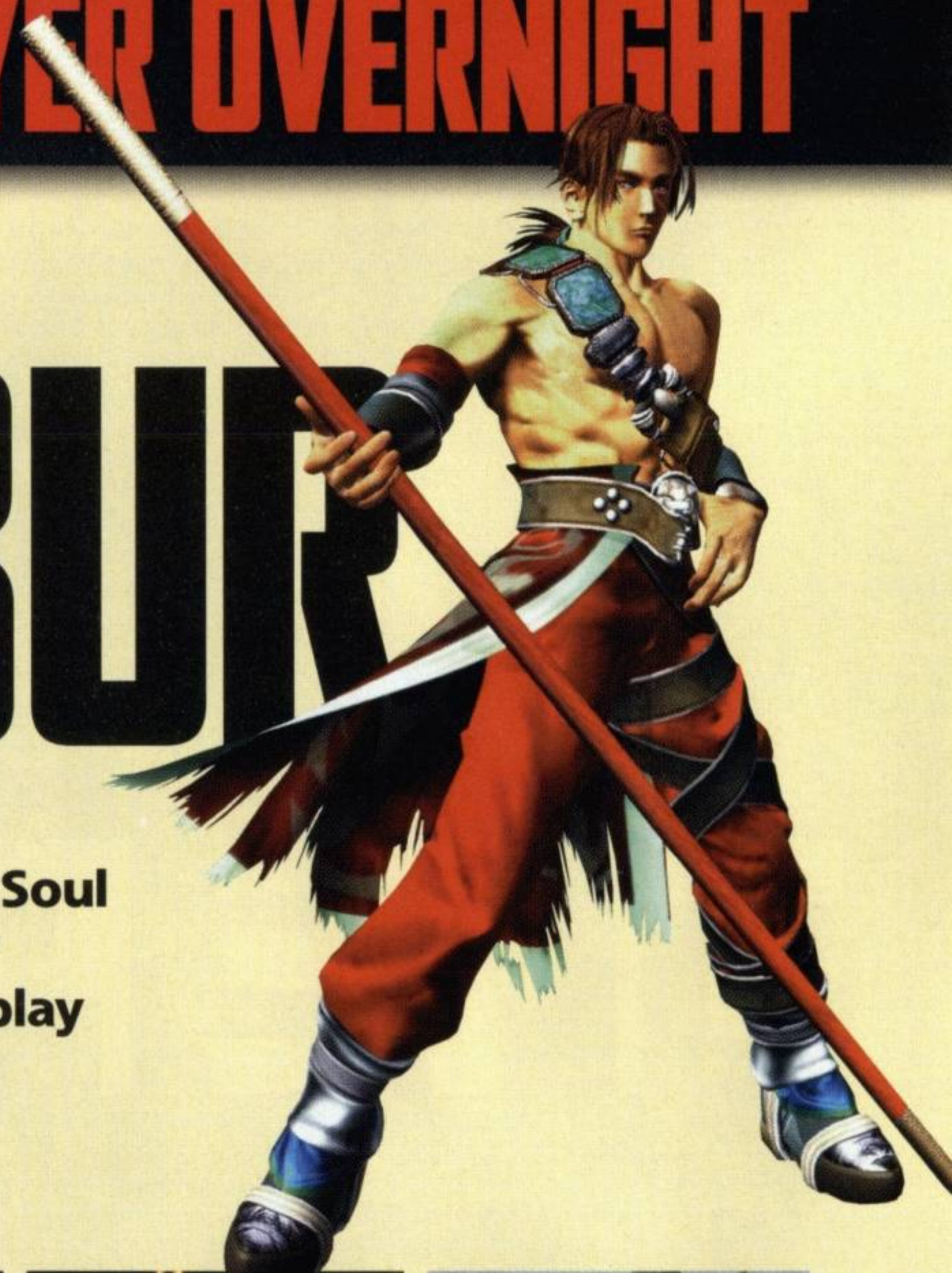
BECOME A DEMON GAME PLAYER OVERNIGHT

HOW TO WIELD YOUR BIG WEAPON IN...

SOUL CALIBUR

Format: **Dreamcast** | Publisher: **Sega** | Price: **£40** | Players: **1-2** | ★★★★★

Unfortunately, Arcade's plan for a photo shoot involving David Soul in a Vauxhall Calibra didn't happen for this month's Soul Calibur feature. Never mind, as here's a glittering array of sharp swordplay secrets to amaze and delight lucky Dreamcast owners.



TEN TOP SOUL CALIBUR TIPS



1 Use the block

For the inexperienced beat-'em-up player, the A block button is seldom used as it doesn't pull off any fly-through-the-air-and-stab-your-opponent-three-times-in-the-eye moves. It's a dull but essential part of the fighter's armoury, as you can repel sustained attacks then burst forth with a terrifying counter-attack à la Manchester United.



2 Move closer

Keeping your distance and hacking away is okay for the battle-weary warrior, but you can wreak havoc if you get in close and press X + A. There are four different special moves depending on from which side you attack your unlucky adversary. Arcade advises coming in from behind.



3 Kickin'

Standard sword slashing actually does less damage in a fight than you'd imagine. Use a few kick moves in your attacks using the B button to add an unpredictable edge to your fighting style. High kicks cause the most damage.



4 Out of the ring!

Soul Calibur differs from *Tekken* in that it has a defined battle arena or "ring". This can be used to your advantage, as you can go all out to bash your opponent off the edge, thus winning you the round – especially useful if you're getting a right royal kicking and need a quick fix.



5 Soul and Spirit charges

Pressing the Right Trigger or X + Y + B starts "charging" your fighting power. Your character will then glow green and be in Soul Charge mode, but this doesn't improve your hit power much. A better option is to begin charging up, then cancel it by pressing A. You'll glow yellow and certain moves will be unblockable.



6 Multiple attacks

With your adversary spinning helplessly in the air, enjoy a bit of juggling by inflicting multiple hits. You can also hit them when they're lying dazed on the floor like the vicious cad that you are.



PLAYSTATION

- P125** Tony Hawk's Skateboarding
- P126** Actua Soccer 3
- P126** Circuit Breakers
- P126** Forsaken
- P127** G-Police: Weapons of Justice

NINTENDO 64

- P124** Jet Force Gemini
- P126** Super Mario 64
- P126** Banjo-Kazooie

DREAMCAST

- P122** Soul Calibur
- P125** Ready 2 Rumble
- P127** Power Stone

PC

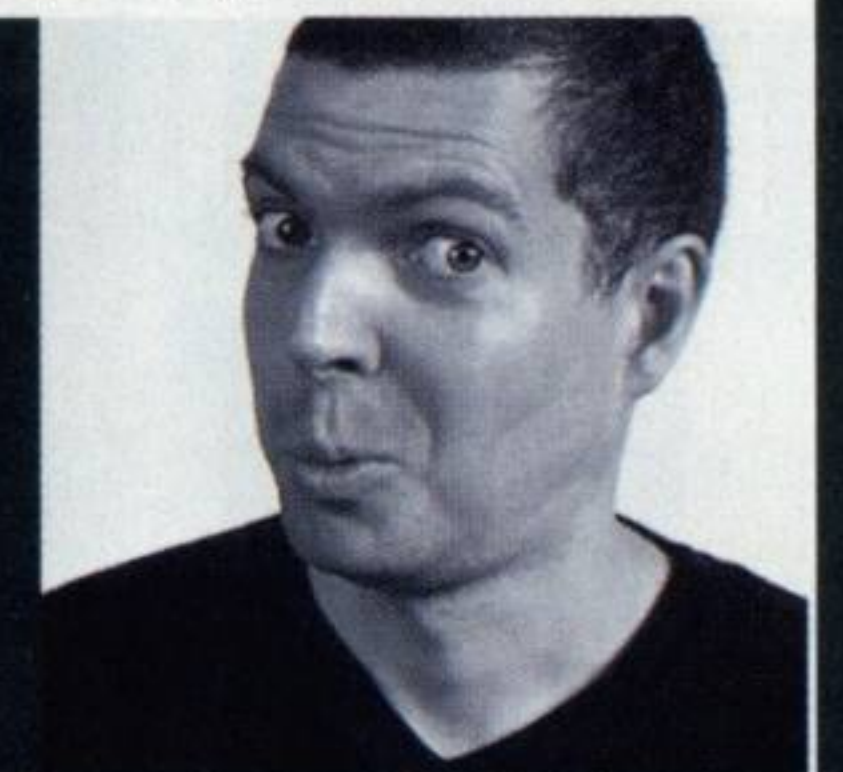
- P126** Doom II: Hell on Earth
- P126** Gangsters
- P126** Rainbow 6: Rogue Spear

COLOR GAME BOY

- P126** Montezuma's Revenge

WELCOME

■ Christmas is-a-coming and the geeks are getting fat. Yep, they certainly are. Fat from staying in and beating all those wonderful games out there with *Arcade's* deeply in-depth tips and cheats. Hopefully Santa will cough up the cash to buy you a Dreamcast and magnificent *Soul*



Calibur game, so here's a selection of hints to ease your gaming pain. Put up your feet, have a sip of sherry and tuck into these sweet and sticky Christmas treats. Yum.

15 GAMES TIPPED THIS MONTH



■ A new beat-'em-up console champion is crowned.



MORE HINTS

■ It's not all fight, fight, fight, you know. There's more to *Soul Calibur* than mastering how to inflict pain and avoiding its licks.

Secret levels and characters

Beat the game in Arcade mode with every character and you'll unlock a different character or stage in this order: Hwang, Yoshimitsu, Lizardman, Water Labyrinth stage, Siegfried, City of Water stage, Rock, The Colosseum stage, Seung Mina and Cervantes. Win with the new characters and you'll unlock Edge Master.

For Inferno you have to unlock all the characters, stages and bonuses in Arcade and Mission mode and get all the pictures in Mission mode. After this, return to Arcade mode, select Xianghua in her third outfit and beat the game.

Alternative outfits

For a different character look, press Y at the character selection screen. When different costumes are unlocked, pressing Y + A will access the third outfit.

Extra weapons

Unlock Edge Master and complete all the mission battles. Then hold L when selecting a fighter on the character selection screen in order to get your deal-

dealing hands on the extra weapons.

Metal mode

Earn the Metal mode option via the mission battles, then select any character while holding R for a *Terminator 2*-style metal coating.

New title screen

Beat the game as Inferno and a gorgeous new screen will await you. Beauty.



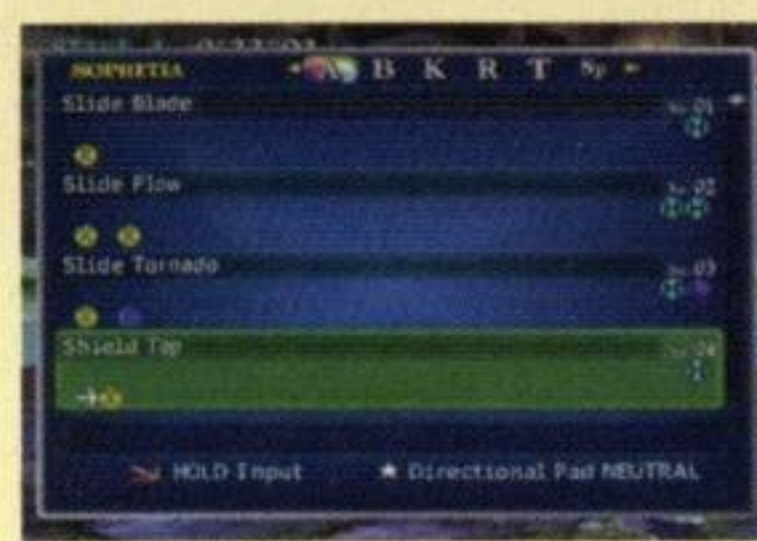
7 Eight-way movement

This game certainly isn't *Street Fighter* so don't forget you can move your character in wonderful 3D. Use this tactic to avoid attacks and confuse your enemy – especially slow-moving characters like Rock.



8 Play to your strengths

If you've chosen a quick, sleeky character such as Hwang, weave about and get in as many quick hits as you can. Slow characters like Nightmare need time to inflict damaging moves, so time your attacks.



9 Learn your character's moves

Knowledge is power. Bring the Command List up on screen by pressing Start in game mode. All the moves, attacks and defences will be listed for your perusal. Try them out in Practice mode and surprise opponents.



10 Slide, slide, slide!

If your opponent is defiantly blocking your moves and you've run out of ideas, run towards them and press B. They'll end up splayed on the floor, begging for a series of lethal hacks to the head.



HOW TO HANDLE THE TERRIBLE TWINS IN... JET FORCE GEMINI

Unleash the full potential of Rare's latest masterpiece.



■ You've been assured *Jet Force Gemini* is the greatest thing since, well, the last Rare game, but somehow things aren't falling into place. Here's where *Arcade* gives you a running start.

Cheats

■ Once unlocked, cheats are available in the options menu and can be switched on or off.

Rainbow blood
Jet Force kids
Ants into pants

Collect 100 ant heads
Collect 200 ant heads
Collect 300 ant heads

Multi-player

■ To unlock the multi-player modes, including the racing games and target ranges, you need to touch the secret totem pole. To find the totem all you need to do is the following:

Tunnels Stage: Play as Vela at the Rith Essa Waterfalls.

King of the Hill: Play as any character at the Cerulean Holding Room

Rith Essa Mine Stage: You need the jetpacks and any character at Walkway Station for this totem.

Space Station Stage: Play as any character at the Space Station Basement.

■ Access the following multi-player modes by winning races and beating the existing high scores:

Goldwood Target Range: As Floyd, get gold on the Goldwood Floyd mission.

Rith Essa Target Range: As Floyd, get gold on the Eschebone Floyd mission.

Jeff and Barry Arcade Racing 1: Located at the Ichor arcade. Finish first as any character.

Jeff and Barry Arcade Racing 2: Located at the Ichor arcade. Finish first as any character.

Greenwood Village Race Track: Located at the Ichor arcade. Playing as any character, break the records on both the Jeff and Barry arcade machines.

Mizar 3D Racer: Located at Mizar's Palace. Finish first as any character.

Gameplay tips

■ A slice of good, old-fashioned gaming insider dealing for your perusal.

Arm your favourite weapon: If you're running low, or have run out of ammo for the pistol, shotgun or machine gun, select the weapon you wish to refill. When you collect weapons from dead enemies, you will automatically be given ammo for the weapon you currently have selected.

Twisted fire starter: Secret flamethrower ammo is found by shooting the Tribals carrying lanterns. Once they drop their lantern, pick it up and use it as ammo.

Less bover with your hover: Use the C Down button to hover in place when using the jetpack – it only uses half the fuel. Also use the jetpack to break your fall from a high place.

Kill the fish: Lob some cluster bombs or grenades into a pond for a bit of fishing, psycho-style.



HOW TO PUNCH YOUR WEIGHT IN... READY 2 RUMBLE

A ringful of cheats to help you pack a bigger punch.

■ To activate these cheats choose New Game in Championship mode and enter the following codes as a gym name.

RUMBLE POWER Unlocks Bronze class and Kemo Claw.

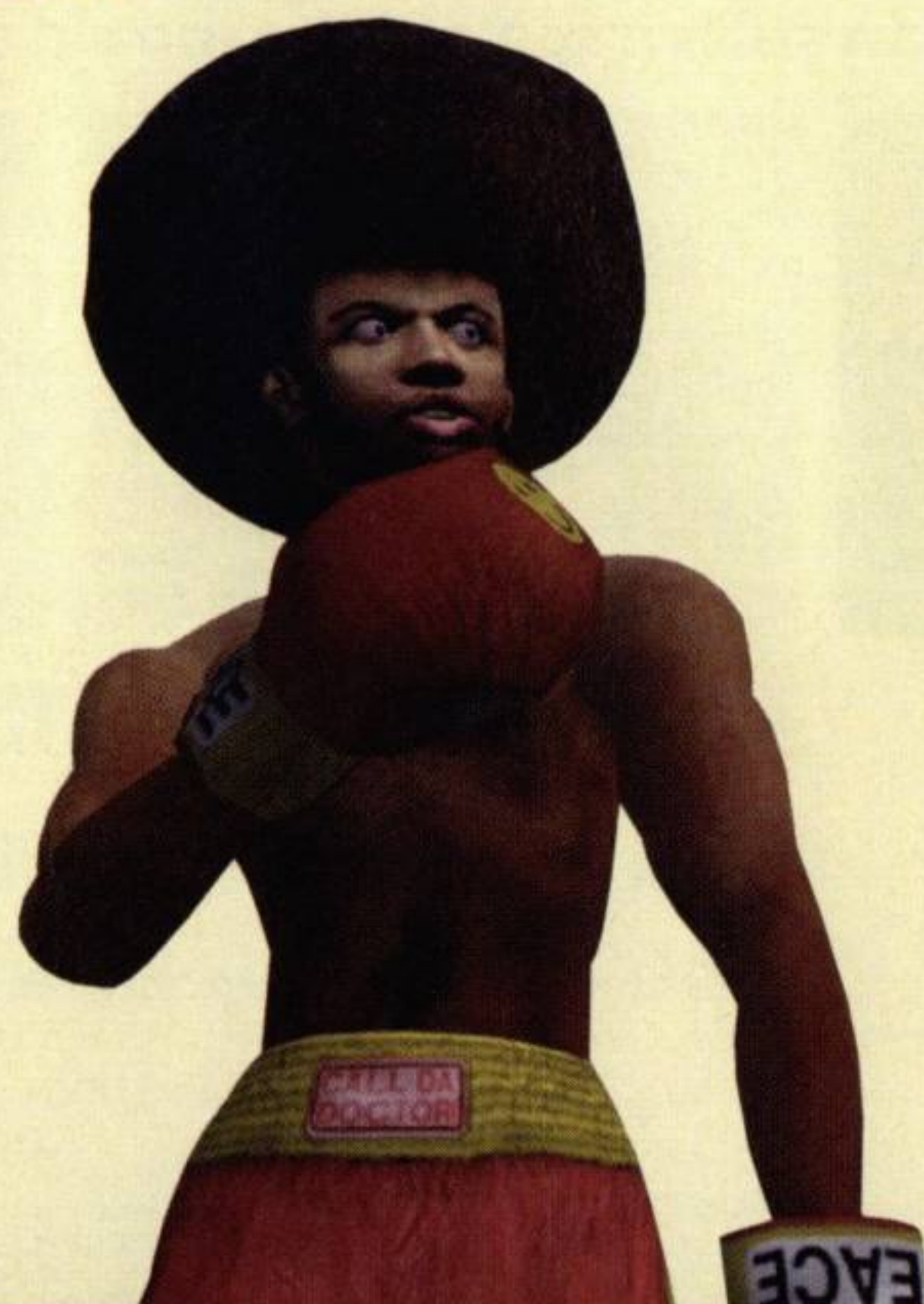
POD 5 Unlocks Championship class and Damien Black.

RUMBLE RUMBLE Unlocks Silver class and Bruce Blade.

MOSMA! Unlocks Gold class and Nat Daddy. To fight in different arenas, select two players in Arcade mode, then hold the following buttons while selecting a boxer:

- L** Fight in combo ring
- X + L + R** Fight under the stars
- R** Fight in a Pay-Per-View ring
- L + R** Fight in the gym

Bored of your boxer's briefs? For different costumes for your fighter press **X + Y** at the character selection screen. Finally, this tip is one to remember when playing your mates (don't tell them). To replenish energy, knock your opponent down, then move the analogue stick through 360°.



PLAYSTATION

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

Brush up on your four-wheeled plank action.

■ To access these special moves, your skater's special meter must be flashing yellow.

Tony Hawk

- Kickflip McTwist Right, Right, ⊙
- 540° Board Varial Left, Left, ⊙
- 360° flip Down, Right, ⊙
- The 900° Right, Down, ⊙

Geoff Rowley

- Backflip Down, Up, ⊙
- Double Hardflip Right, Down, ⊙
- Darkslide Left, Right, ⊙

Bob Burnquist

- Backflip Up, Down, ⊙
- One Footed Grind Right, Right, ⊙
- Burntwist Left, Up, ⊙

Bucky Lasek

- Kickflip McTwist Right, Right, ⊙
- Fingerflip Airwalk Left, Right, ⊙
- Variial Heelflip Judo Down, Up, ⊙

Chad Muska

- Front Flip Down, Up, ⊙
- One Foot Thumpin Right, Down, ⊙
- 360° Shove-it Rewind Right, Right, ⊙

Kareem Kambell

- Front Flip Down, Up, ⊙
- Casper Slide Up, Down, ⊙
- Kickflip Underflip Left, Right, ⊙

Andrew Reynolds

- Backflip Down, Up, ⊙
- Heelflip Bluntslide Down, Down, ⊙
- Triple Kickflip Left, Left, ⊙

Rune Glifberg

- Kickflip McTwist Right, Right, ⊙
- Christ Air Left, Right, ⊙
- Triple Kickflip Up, Down, ⊙

Jamie Thomas

- Front Flip Up, Down, ⊙
- One Foot Nosegrind Up, Up, ⊙
- 540° Flip Left, Down, ⊙

Elissa Steamer

- Backflip Up, Down, ⊙
- Onefoot Nosegrind Left, Left, ⊙
- 540° Flip Left, Down, ⊙

Officer Dick

- Yeehaw Front Flip Down, Up, ⊙
- Assume the Position Left, Left, ⊙
- Neckbreak Grind Left, Right, ⊙



CLASSIC TIPS

You may have pushed them to the back of the cupboard long ago and they're starting to smell bad, but you can still scrape off the mould and tuck into these gaming treats. Delicious.



PLAYSTATION

ACTUA SOCCER 3

■ To get access to these wild and crazy bonus teams, enter these codes on the Team Creation screen

- BREMNERS BOOT**
Leeds United All-Stars team – the best hidden bonus in a
- PREM CLUBS**
Unlocks 24 more bonus teams.
- TFF TEAMS**
To unlock 24 funny teams.
- SEXY FOOTBALL**
Alan Shearer's fantasy team.
- OZONE LAYER**
Green House Test team.
- TOP HATS**
Big head mode.



PLAYSTATION

FORSAKEN

■ To get access to the cheat options, highlight the Options selection and press left, right, left, right, then enter the Options screen.



NINTENDO 64

SUPER MARIO 64

■ Want to visit your big-conked green dinosaur chum Yoshi?

Well, all you have to do is collect all 120 stars, then go to the castle gardens. A grid near the fish pond should now open, revealing a cannon. Climb in, shoot yourself onto the roof of the castle and Yoshi will be there to give you 99 lives and a special triple-jump move. Top bloke.



NINTENDO 64

BANJO-KAZOOIE

■ Along with *Super Mario 64* this top platformer has just been re-released for less dosh. Here are a few cheats to help any budding bears/birds. To access them, enter CHEAT on the sandcastle floor in Treasure Trove Cove, then type the following:

- GIVETHEBEARLOTSOFAIR**
Infinite air
- BANJOBEGSFORPLENTYOFEGGS**
Infinite eggs
- AGOLDENGLOWTOPROTECTBANJO**
Infinite gold feathers
- NOWYOUCANFLYHIGHINTHESKY**
Infinite red feathers
- DONTBEADUMBOGOSEEMUMBO**
Infinite mumbo tokens



PC

DOOM II: HELL ON EARTH

■ Type in these codes while playing to beat up the little devils.

- IDDQD**
God mode
- IDBEHOLDx**
Gain temporary ability. x can be:
I=invisibility R=radiation suit
S=berserk A=auto map
V=invulnerability
- IDFA**
All weapons and ammo
- IDKFA**
All weapons, ammo and keys
- IDCLIP**
Walk through walls
- IDCLEVxx**
Warp to level xx (01-32)
- IDMUSxx**
Change background music to track xx
- IDMYPOS**
Display location
- IDDT**
View complete map
- IDCHOPPERS**
Get a chainsaw



PLAYSTATION

CIRCUIT BREAKERS

■ Squeeze another few hours out of this ageing racer.

Access to all the tracks in one-player mode: Start a race and then pause the action. Choose Options/Sound then go to FX and press L1 + L2.

For jumping bean cars: In multi-player mode, as soon as the "3,2,1 Go" countdown starts, press @ + Left.

Racing at night: Press L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 when you're about to start racing on a track.

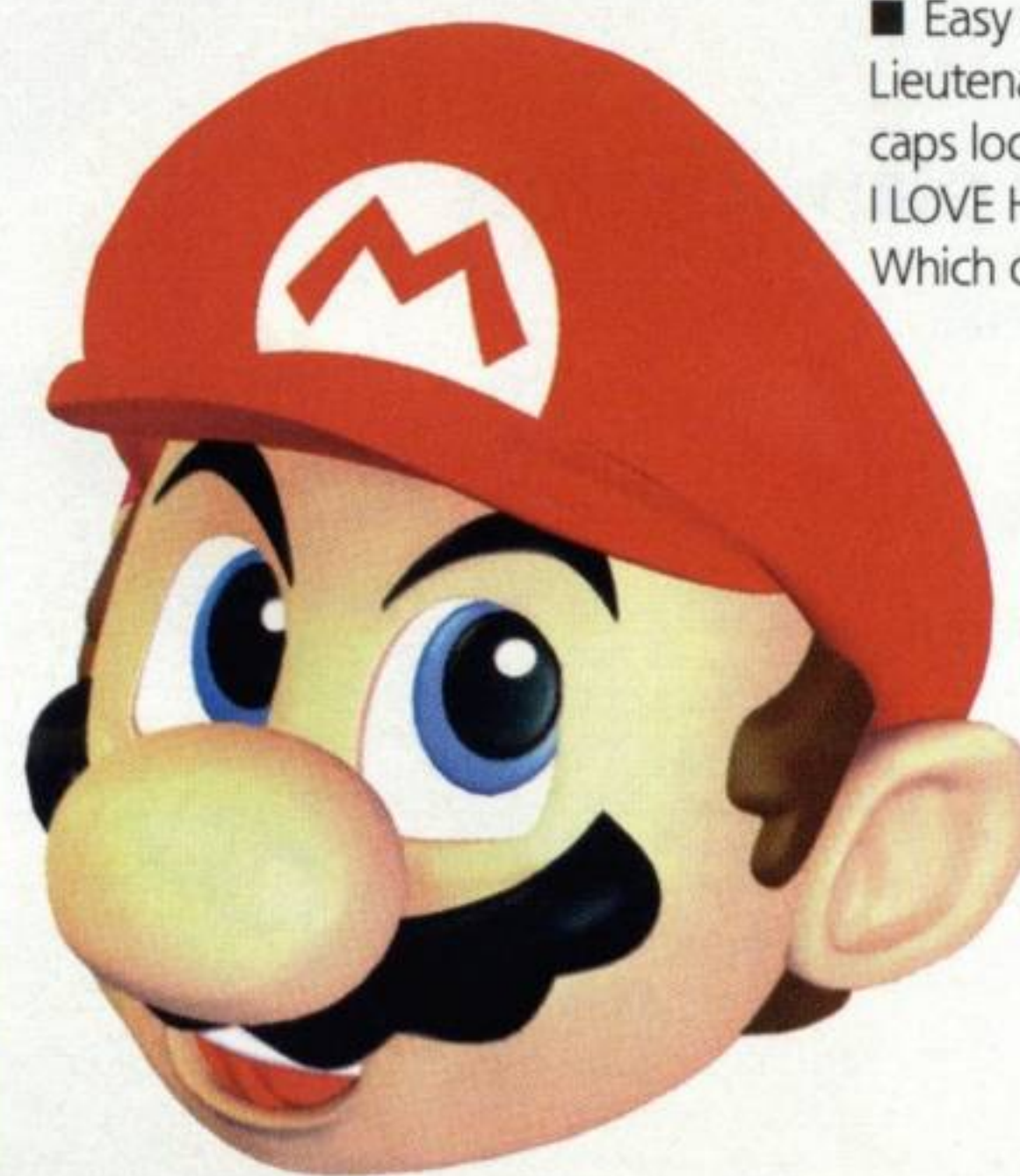
Upside-down tracks: Press L1 + R1 + @ + Down when you're about to start a track.



PC

GANGSTERS

■ Easy money: While in the Lieutenant section, turn caps lock on, then type I LOVE HANSON. Which of course, you do.



PC

RAINBOW SIX: ROGUE SPEAR



■ For Cheat mode, press Enter during gameplay to display the communication window. Then, enter one of the following codes:

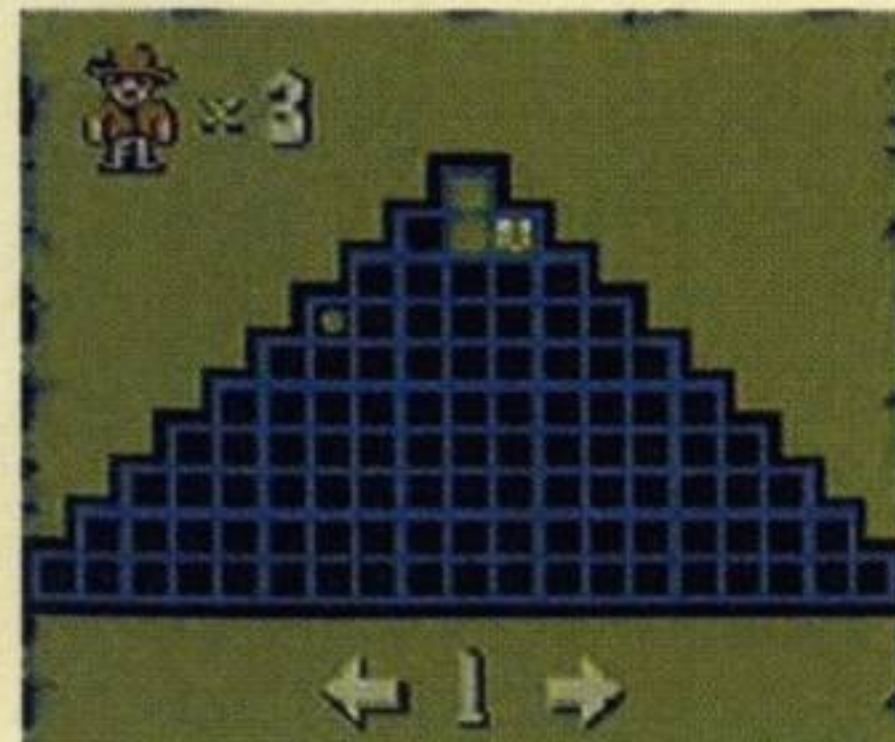
- teamshadow
Team invisible mode
- theshadowknows
Invisible mode
- silentbutdeadly
Fart mode
- monocle
Monocle mode
- turnpunchkick
2D players
- 1-900
Heavy breathing
- clodhopper
Clodhopper mode
- meganonnin
Mega head mode
- bianoqqin
Big head mode
- 5fingerdiscount
Refill inventory
- explore
Victory conditions
- nobrainer
Disable AI
- stumpy
Stumpy mode
- teamgod
Team god mode
- avatargod
Avatar god mode



GAMEBOY

MONTEZUMA'S RETURN

- **Infinite lives**
Enter the password ELEPHANT.
- **Walk through locked doors**
Enter the password SUNSHINE.



GAMEPLAY CHALLENGE

Getting a little tired of your favourite games? *Arcade* presents you with a quartet of tricky challenges that'll soon have you gnashing your teeth and spitting invective at the former objects of your affection. Fickle.



DREAMCAST

SOUL CALIBUR

■ Challenge: **Kickin' Voldo**

■ It's time for Voldo to kick ass. In Options on the Main menu, set the difficulty to Ultra Hard. Now see if you can fight through to the end on Arcade mode with the character of Voldo using only the A and B buttons. A is mostly defensive while B is used for kick moves. You'll really have to time your attacks to have any chance of winning. Use A and B together in close proximity to your opponent to produce a clever leaping/spinning special move. Get those legs moving.



NINTENDO 64

GOLDENEYE 007

■ Challenge: **007-stone weakling**

■ Be the weakest James Bond since Timothy Dalton. On the first level try and get through to the end and bungee off the dam without using any weapons at all, including your fists. You'll have to run, duck and weave your way past the guards, who will shoot you without mercy. Watch out for the truck – you'll have to slink about in the shadows and use it as cover until it gets to the security gate. Difficult, but not mission impossible.



PLAYSTATION

QUAKE 2

■ Challenge: **Beautiful BFG**

■ Everyone knows of the blood-rush you get when you're in possession of *Quake's* lethal weapon, the BFG. For this challenge you need to be able to play the game in multi-player mode, with a group of violence-seeking friends. Set the frag limit to unlimited and choose The Shaft. Head for the shaft itself in the centre and float up to the top red level where you'll see half a ladder. Jump onto it and climb up to the little platform that conceals the BFG. Collect the super-weapon and try to disintegrate as many poor souls as you possibly can, using only the BFG. Not easy.



PC

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON

■ Challenge: **Raze Mos Eisley**

■ Take your frustrations out on the innocent city-dwellers of Mos Eisley – you never know, you might take out Jar Jar Binks. Choose the Ambush at Mos Eisley level and the X-Wing fighter. Forget about the mission and head for the hive of scum and villainy where your first task is to try and destroy the landspeeders that belt around the town at high speeds. Once you've blasted them into small pieces, take out the people, buildings and anything else that happens to get in your sights. Obliterate the whole town before the mission ends and Darth will be well chuffed.

PLAYSTATION

G-POLICE: WEAPONS OF JUSTICE



■ Enter these codes on the Password screen to get through to the later stages of the game.

Level 2	OCTOPI
Level 3	BRAINS
Level 4	FINGER
Level 5	BANANA
Level 6	JUNGLE
Level 7	VOODOO
Level 8	SQUEAK
Level 9	DUNDEE
Level 10	TEAPOT
Level 11	BUTTER
Level 12	INDIGO
Level 13	STROUD
Level 14	ELIXIR
Level 15	LIQUID
Level 16	STAPLE
Level 17	SHIRTS
Level 18	APPLES
Level 19	GADGET
Level 20	TANUKI
Level 21	SALADS
Level 22	DUFFCO
Level 23	PHONES
Level 24	ASSERT
Level 25	OXYGEN
Level 26	JOYPAD
Level 27	ACTIVE
Level 28	MENACE
Level 29	WINDOW
Level 30	AGENDA

DREAMCAST

POWER STONE

■ Fulfil these tasks to extend the life of this top beat-'em-up.



Extra Options menu:

Beat Arcade mode with any of the characters on any difficulty setting you fancy.

Play as the Boss Characters: Beat the game playing as every last man Jack of the characters.

Virtua Battle mode: Unlock Valgas as a playable character and this mode will become available on page five in the Power Stone Collection.

Dual Virtua Battle mode: Complete the game as Valgas to unlock this mode then check out page six in the Power Stone Collection.

Alternate Costumes: Press B while you are on the Character Selection screen.

Bonus Items: Unlock the heavy chain gun, ray gun, shield and extending pole by completing the game using four different characters.

CLOCKING OFF

Arcade has now armed you with all you will ever need. Go forth, videogaming children, into the brave new neon world and slay the mighty computer-generated demons. You can do it! You will succeed! It has been foreseen! Erm... yes. There'll be more super tips and cheats next month. Ta ta for now.

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Christmas 1993



Frontier: Elite II

Space? Rubbish. Time's where it's at. Rewind to six years ago today...

So, you're the pre-Phantom Menace George Lucas. In the years since the last Star Wars film, you've watched the trilogy's fanbase expand into a global phenomenon. And now you've decided to write a new film. Not just any film, but a film that has the hopes and expectations of literally millions of people to live up to.

Frightened? That's exactly how David Braben felt in 1991, as he began writing a sequel to *Elite*, a BBC game he had co-written with Ian Bell a decade earlier. *Elite* stunned gamers with its epic mix of inter-galactic trading and space shoot-outs, all wrapped up in ground-breaking wireframe 3D visuals. Described by one magazine as "Not so much a game, more a way of life," *Elite* quickly established itself as an all-time classic.

"I felt a great deal of pressure and responsibility," remembers David. "*Elite* was a hard act to follow, and I think everyone had an idea of what it should be. Expectations were sky-high."

All the more surprising, then, that when *Frontier: Elite II* finally arrived on the Amiga in late '93, it just about lived up to those expectations.



Frontier: Elite II

- Publisher: Gametek
- Developer: David Braben
- Genre: Space trading
- System: Amiga, ST, CD32, PC
- Players: 1
- Score: 90%

Amiga Format
"Frontier sucks you in and keeps you hostage. It's a monster."

While sticking to the winning *Elite* formula – give the player a star map, a ship to explore it with and the freedom to do whatever they wanted – *Frontier* also improved upon it, with filled 3D graphics and missions that built upon the (surprisingly involving) trading of the original. Dogfights, bounty hunting, mining for ore, even donating to charity were all possible in *Frontier*, and all in a gargantuan, star-filled universe that was painstakingly modelled on the real thing.

"I was uncomfortable at the minute size of the planets and stars in the original *Elite*," recalls David. "I wanted to make everything in *Frontier* as realistic as possible. But that proved a headache."

The humble Amiga and ST strained under the weight of the maths required to shift an authentic solar system. Faults were inevitable: the ship's autopilot, for example, often got its head in a spin, leading to head-on collisions or endless looping of a planet. Such faults, though, were forgivable considering that David was one of the first to

attempt such a realistic simulation of space.

"I discussed some of the issues with the Cambridge University Astronomy Department," David reveals. "My theory was that stable planets could form around certain stars, but most people disagreed. Now it turns out it can happen, and one day I hope to point the Hubble Space Telescope at Alpha Centauri and find a stable planet."

Frontier's model of the universe also threw up a curious tidbit: "It shows that one habitable world per star system could exist in our universe," says David. "That's a lot of worlds!"

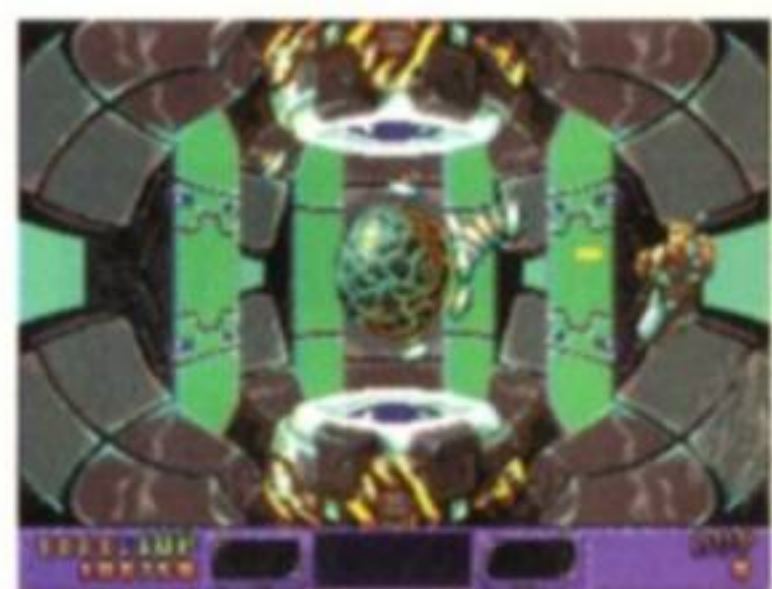
David wasn't happy at the lack of game testing ("Gametek's test department was a joke,"

"Elite was a hard act to follow... I felt a great deal of pressure and responsibility."

he claims), but *Frontier* was warmly received. Reviewers and gamers alike were gobsmacked by the sight of planets, suns, colossal spacestations and groups of ships passing before their eyes, and despite its release late in '93, *Frontier* became the best-selling game of the year.

A further sequel, *First Encounters*, followed, and David is now working on *Elite IV* with his Frontier Developments team. Once again, David is in George Lucas' shoes, with expectations higher than ever. But you can trust David not to make a mistake of Jar-Jar Binks proportions. **A**

Games of the month Welcome to your '93 Christmas list.



Uridium II

System: Amiga
Publisher: Hewson
■ Andrew Braybrook's sequel to his fondly-remembered C64 original. *Uridium II* was basically the same speedy, side-scrolling shoot-'em-up, with improved visuals and an odd "Destroy The Core" sub-game. It had a pleasingly retro feel, but in 1993, the straight shooting felt unsubstantial.
■ Amiga Format: 94%



Super Empire Strikes Back

System: SNES
Publisher: LucasArts
■ The backlash against tediously formulaic side-scrolling platformers was well into its stride by the time this film tie-in arrived. The into-the-screen snowspeeder sections were impressive, but its familiarity (run, jump, hit, meet boss) was galling.
■ Edge: 6/10



Dune

System: Mega CD
Publisher: Virgin
■ One of the few decent games for Sega's doomed Megadrive add-on, *Dune* (based on the film of the same name) was a *Monkey Island*-style adventure with strategy elements, and plenty of the real-time speech and full-motion video for which CD-ROM games were becoming notorious.
■ Edge: 8/10



FIFA International Soccer

System: Megadrive
Publisher: EA
■ Before football games dived into 3D, EA and Sensible Software battled it out on the digital pitch. *FIFA's* pretty isometric visuals and steady pace gave the gloriously chaotic *Sensible Soccer* a run for its money, and the four-player mode was unrivalled.
■ Edge: 8/10



Myst

System: PC/Mac
Publisher: Broderbund
■ One of the most successful videogames ever made, though God knows why. Set in the pages of a fantastical book, *Myst* required you to point-and-click at pre-rendered locations to get a number of boring things to happen. Rubbish.
■ Edge: 6/10



TFX

System: PC/Amiga
Publisher: Ocean
■ A futuristic flight sim, ages in the making, which suffered from a sparse collection of three aircraft, and a number of game-scuppering bugs in the Amiga version. Its visuals were ground-breaking for the time, though – the fully-3D cockpit, in particular, was a revelation to many.
■ Edge: 8/10

Cannon ball

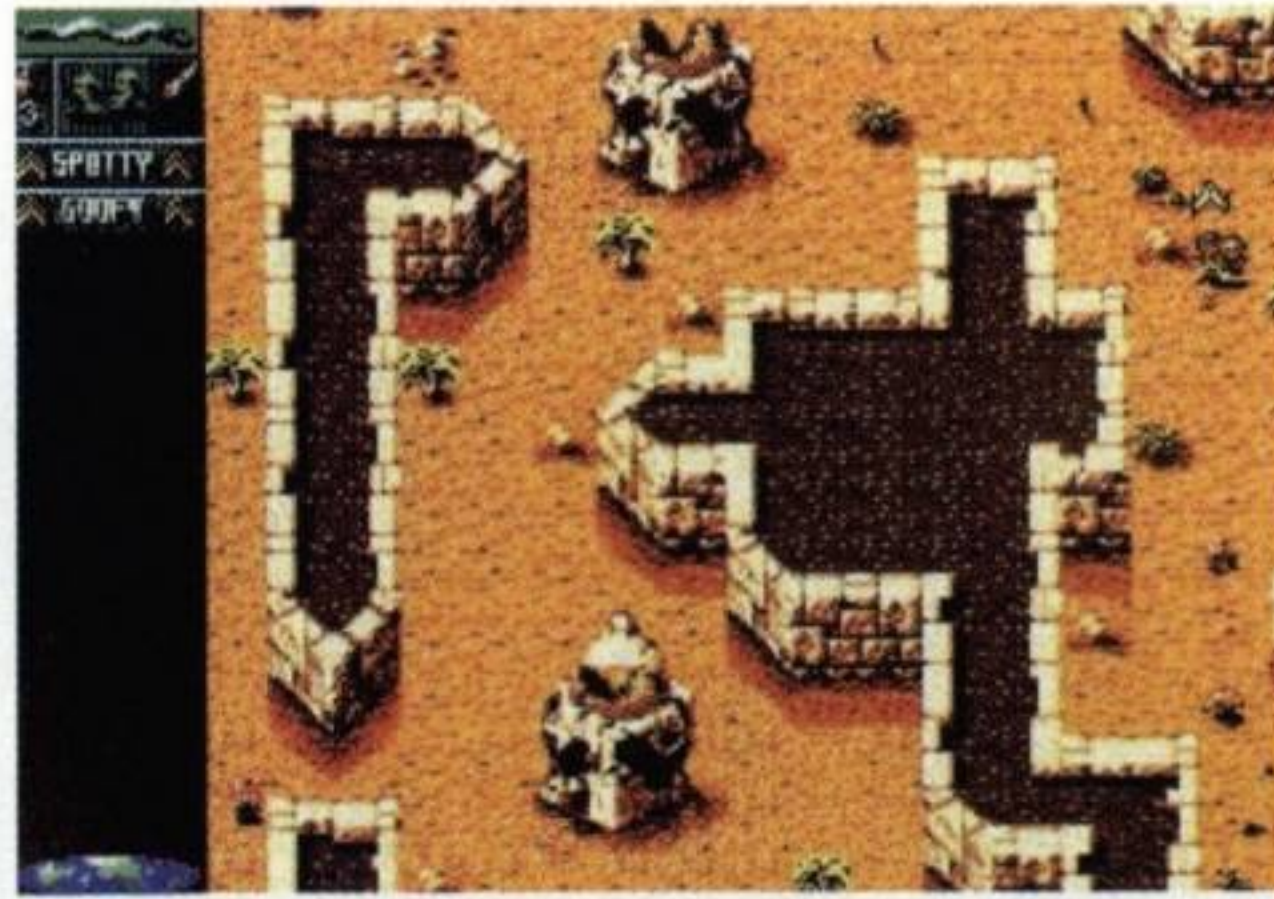
Advertising campaign puts war sim in the line of fire.

When Sensible Software presented its publisher with the company's most recent game, *Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll*, it was a case of people shutting their eyes until it went away. It wasn't the first time the British coder had attracted controversy. *Cannon Fodder*, released on the Amiga in December '93 managed to upset as many people as it delighted.

In hindsight, it's difficult to see what all the fuss was about. *Cannon Fodder* was a scaled-down, almost cuddly interpretation of the real-time strategy game, a fledgling genre at the time. You took control of up to six soldiers on a top-down map, guiding them and their machine-guns past enemy troops, tanks, helicopters and callously-laid mantraps. There was gunfire, there were explosions, there was blood, but no more than gamers had grown used to from years of violent shoot-'em-ups.

The trouble began when publisher Virgin began advertising the game with a lone red poppy. The national media began to take an interest, WWII veterans were quick to denounce Sensible for "glorifying war", and magazines began to get nervous about carrying the ads. The climbdown came soon after: the final adverts swapped the poppy for a tooled-up soldier.

Naturally, the last laugh was had by Sensible – the company had benefited from invaluable free




■ **Damn those drunken rampart designers.**

publicity for *Cannon Fodder*. As it turned out, the game deserved the attention: it was a gloriously enjoyable (and bloody difficult) romp, requiring a strategic mind to avoid running headlong into a group of bazooka-wielding bad guys. Well-designed mouse controls helped make manoeuvring, arranging and recovering your troops easy, and horrible hours spent trying to progress beyond the bomb-chucking helicopter were placated by joyous moments such as flattening the enemy with a tank or blowing soldiers sky-high with a missile launcher.

Most surprisingly, *Cannon Fodder* was often laugh-out-loud funny. The sight of tiny, porky soldiers skidding along the ground in their death throes, accompanied by a pitiful yell, was unexpectedly amusing and Sensible packed in plenty of bleakly comic moments (shooting seals, putting wounded soldiers out of their twitching misery) to help you laugh through the bloodshed.

Sensible's game was often categorised alongside other original, off-the-wall games such as *Lemmings* and *Worms*, and quickly established a cult following similar to its puzzly counterparts. Versions for most machines followed (including one for Atari's doomed Jaguar), and a number of sequels appeared, including a one-off Christmas Special cover-mounted on an Amiga magazine. The British Legion can't have been pleased, but then they probably gave up fighting when the trickle of real-time strategy titles quickly became something of a flood.

Since the *Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll* incident, Sensible has been fairly quiet. Still, keep your eye on the front page of the *Daily Mail* for any fresh developments... 



■ **See? It's just like real war.**

Gaming round-up

Hey, what's happenin'?



■ **Ridge Racer: on its way to PlayStation.**

On the 3DGE

Specifications of Sony and Sega's new machines begin to trickle through. Sony's console, codenamed PS-X, promised a specialised 3DGE chip for whipping polygons around the screen, while Sega's Saturn was described as "very hot" by a programmer. Both planned to use CDs rather than the traditional cartridge, and both promised big racing launch titles – *Ridge Racer* for PS-X, and *Virtua Racing* for Saturn.

Reality bites

Nintendo remained curiously quiet about its Project Reality console. A co-production with Silicon Graphics Inc, the silence surrounding the 64-bit machine led some to believe that Nintendo and SGI had split, leaving the machine floundering in development hell. It was released, after two name changes – from Ultra 64 to the familiar Nintendo 64.

Trip falls

Sales of Trip Hawkins' CD-based 3DO machine, just launched in the USA, were disappointing. At the same time, Atari's Jaguar was also struggling. Atari angled to sign top development names, but could only land Gremlin Graphics, which planned a sequel to second-rate Mario-wannabe *Zool*. Despite some impressive titles – including *Tempest 2000* – the Jaguar soon joined 3DO in console heaven.

Sega loses Core

Edge interviewed a pre-*Tomb Raider* Core Design, which was experiencing success with *Thunderhawk*, one of the few decent games on Sega's Mega CD. "Core Design works closer with Sega than anybody else in this country," said Marketing Chief Richard Barclay. Core then took Lara Croft to PlayStation and PC, scrapping *Tomb Raider* on the Saturn. How times change...

TOP TEN AMIGA CHART

- 1 **Frontier: Elite II**, Gametek
- 2 **Hired Guns**, Psygnosis
- 3 **Championship Manager '93**, Domark
- 4 **Premier Manager 2**, Gremlin Graphics
- 5 **Space Hulk**, EA
- 6 **Premier Manager**, Gremlin Graphics
- 7 **Sensible Soccer '92/'93**, Renegade
- 8 **Graham Taylor Soccer Challenge**, Buzz
- 9 **Goal!**, Virgin
- 10 **Project X, Team 17**

TOP TEN SNES CHART

- 1 **Mario All Stars**, Nintendo
- 2 **Street Fighter II Turbo**, Capcom
- 3 **Mortal Kombat**, Acclaim
- 4 **Striker**, Elite
- 5 **Mario Kart**, Nintendo
- 6 **Super Kick Off**, Imagineer
- 7 **Kevin Keegan's Player Manager**, Imagineer
- 8 **Super Star Wars**, JVC
- 9 **Krusty's Super Fun House**, Acclaim
- 10 **Starwing**, Nintendo

WORLD NEWS HEADLINES

EC or EU?

■ The hotch-potch collection of countries known as the European Community changed its name to the European Union, as the hotly-debated Maastricht Treaty came into

being. Plenty of Europe-based troubles were well on their way.

Peace process

■ John Major introduced the Downing Street Declaration, which outlined the changes and talks

needed to bring about peace in Northern Ireland. This declaration would later provide the foundation for the Labour Party's attempts to end the troubles.

GATT agreement

■ In Geneva, Switzerland, a conclusion was reached in the Uruguay Round of negotiations on GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). Some 117 nations participated in the talks, which ran since 1986.

Take That topped

Phenomenally successful boy band Take That were kept off the Christmas number one spot by a man in a fat, pink, rubbery costume who made Noel Edmonds rich.

MUSIC CHARTS

Christmas 1993

- 1 **Mr Blobby**, Mr Blobby
- 2 **Babe**, Take That
- 3 **Twist And Shout**, Chaka Demus And Pliers
- 4 **For Whom The Bell Tolls**, Bee Gees
- 5 **It's Alright**, East 17

FILM CHARTS

Top films of 1993

- 1 **Jurassic Park**
- 2 **The Bodyguard**
- 3 **Home Alone 2**
- 4 **The Fugitive**
- 5 **Indecent Proposal**



■ **"Like a puppet on a string..."**

The videogame magazine

Arcade

Amiga ST SNES Megadrive PC

FRONTIER
Not so much a game...

Cannon Fodder
War is good for something.

FIFA Sensible Soccer
beater?

SUPER EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

The Force Ain't Strong In This One...

■ **In a fashion dimension far, far away.**

Out of this world

Remembered by | **Jamie Sefton**

Blast into the stratosphere with Jetpac, the Spectrum game that changed everything.



Back in the swirling mists of time, when men were men and videogames were strictly for kids, top boffin and celebrity slaphead Clive Sinclair ruled the gaming world with the ZX Spectrum. Owners of the chunky Commodore 64 barked and shouted about the quality of their machine, but Speccy users would just ignore these strange, scruffily bearded figures and turn back to their rubbery keyboards with glee.

In 1983 the term "arcade quality" conjured up little more than a vision of blocky 16-colour sprites jerkily making their way across the screen, but it was still nigh-on impossible to achieve anything near that level of graphics on home computers.

Until *Jetpac* came along, that is. Smooth graphics! Striking multi-coloured laser blasts, just like in *Defender*! Fantastic beeps! *Jetpac* was everything you had ever wished for in a game – and it was on the lowly 16K ZX

Spectrum. Overnight, the game raised the standard of what was expected of a top title and waved two fingers at all the other titles on the market. Right from when you saw the impressive full-colour, hi-res intro screen, you knew this was the beginning of something special.

Jetpac was made by a strange-sounding company called Ultimate Play The Game. Speccy owners would hear a lot more about the company in the course of the next few years as it released massive titles such as *Atic Atac*, *Sabre Wulf* and *Knight Lore*. Over the course of time, Ultimate would eventually become Rare – the Nintendo-backed company that has produced a raft of high-quality games including *Donkey Kong Country* for the SNES and the stunning *GoldenEye 007* for the N64.

The premise of *Jetpac* is beautifully simple. You control Jetman – possibly the cutest spaceman ever – who has to fill up his rocket with fuel so he can blast off to another planet. In your path are a number of intergalactic objects including comets, furry aliens and, erm, bubbles, which Jetman can shoot with his nifty ray gun. On top of this you can collect jewels and other bonus items to increase your score.

Once you have enough fuel, your ship starts to flash violently. Your next task is to make your way back to your craft, strap

Wanna play?

■ *Jetpac* can be played by rooting about in a cupboard or car boot sale for a ZX Spectrum and cassette copy of the game, but if you're a bad person, you could download one of the many Speccy emulators from the Net along with a snapshot of *Jetpac*. Shame! Alternatively you could buy an N64 and a copy of Rare's superb *Donkey Kong 64*, which has a secret version of the game hidden away in its monkey goodness.

yourself in and head for the next planet. But this is where it gets tricky, because to do this you have to drop down from the higher platforms into the lower half of the screen and clamber into your ship. Spacey life-forms are usually swarming about with the specific aim of crashing into you, reducing brave Jetman to mush amid an explosion of farts – which were presumably meant to sound a little more aggressive, but the Spectrum's sound effects weren't that advanced.

Oh, but the sweet moment when you finally get into the rocket and blast off. Yeees! You kiss the planet goodbye and rise gracefully into the stratosphere, re-living that childhood dream of being an astronaut and flying your very own rocket into the depths of space. The feeling doesn't last long however, as Jetman's ship soon starts to descend into another world of strange, wonderful aliens, a fresh batch of platforms and another round of fuel collection. But for a brief moment you feel like Neil Armstrong taking his giant leap for mankind. **A**

For a brief moment you feel like Neil Armstrong taking his giant leap for mankind.

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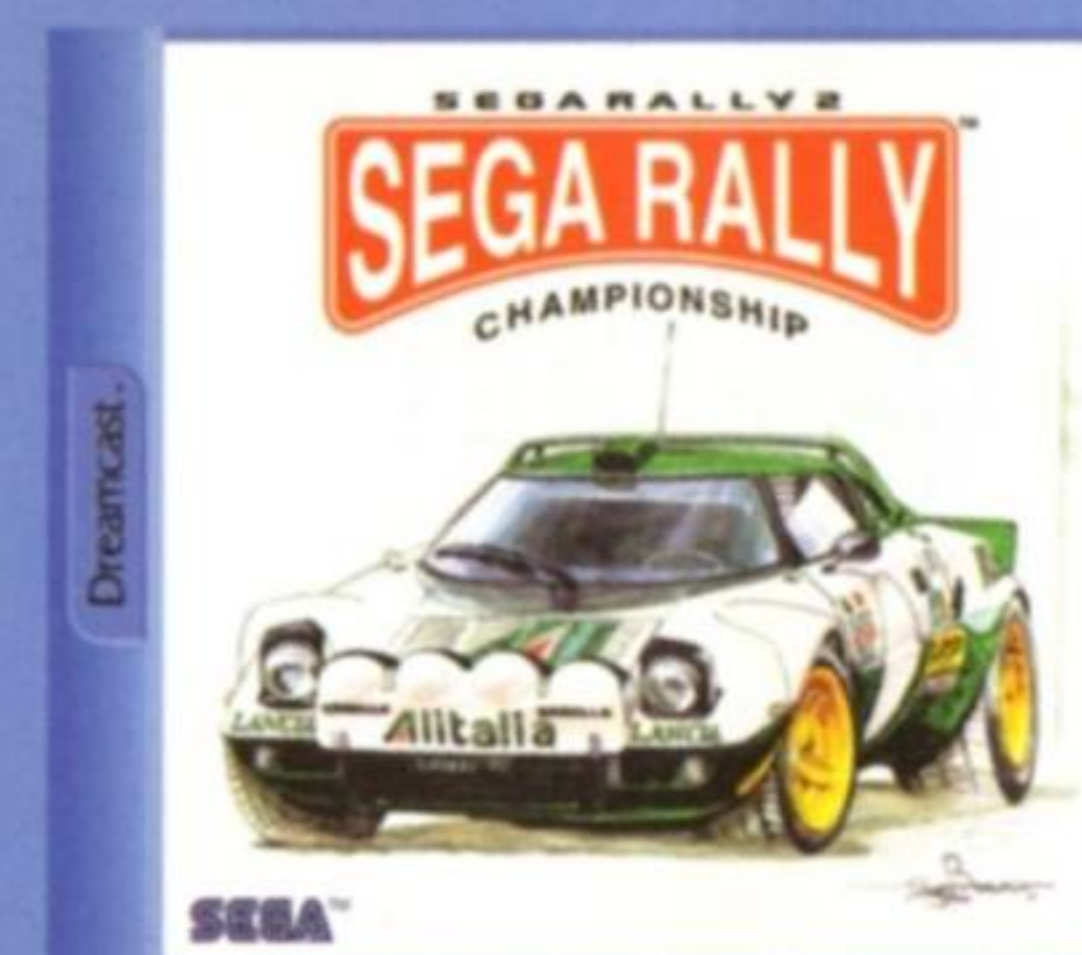
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