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September 1999  
Issue 10



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**43** new games reviewed  
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V-Rally 2  
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Quake II

**THE FUTURE OF VIDEOGAMES: PLAYSTATION 2, DREAMCAST, NINTENDO'S "PROJECT DOLPHIN"  
PLUS: 30 GAMES THAT WILL CHANGE THE WORLD!**



A satellite-style photograph of Earth, showing the Americas. The landmasses are rendered in various colors: North America is primarily green and yellow, while South America is mostly brown and tan. The oceans are a deep blue, and there are white cloud patterns scattered across the globe. The title "The playing field" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font in the upper left quadrant of the image.

# The playing field



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Dreamcast™





54



**This month** | Packed with videogame loveliness

**18 On-line gaming in the UK**

Get yourself connected this autumn with a PC or Dreamcast.

**20 My Beautiful Park**

Featuring three old dears, a Game Boy camera, and a squirrel.

**26 Ape Escape**

Monkeying around on your PlayStation.

**28 Kingpin**

Swear your way to victory, with expert advice from the one and only Roger Mellie.

**30 Mario DX**

The greatest game of the summer? This Game Boy classic has taken the videogame world by surprise.

40

**38 THE FUTURE OF VIDEOGAMES**

Not so far away...



**40 Virtual insanity**

Hollywood's vision of videogaming's future.

**42 Dreamcast**

Sega's shot at the title.

**44 PlayStation 2**

The current hot favourite.

**46 Nintendo's "Project Dolphin"**

Mario & Co's secret plans revealed.

**48 The PC**

It just keeps getting better and better.

**50 Apocalypse when?**

The future according to videogames (and it's not pretty).

**52 People hold on**

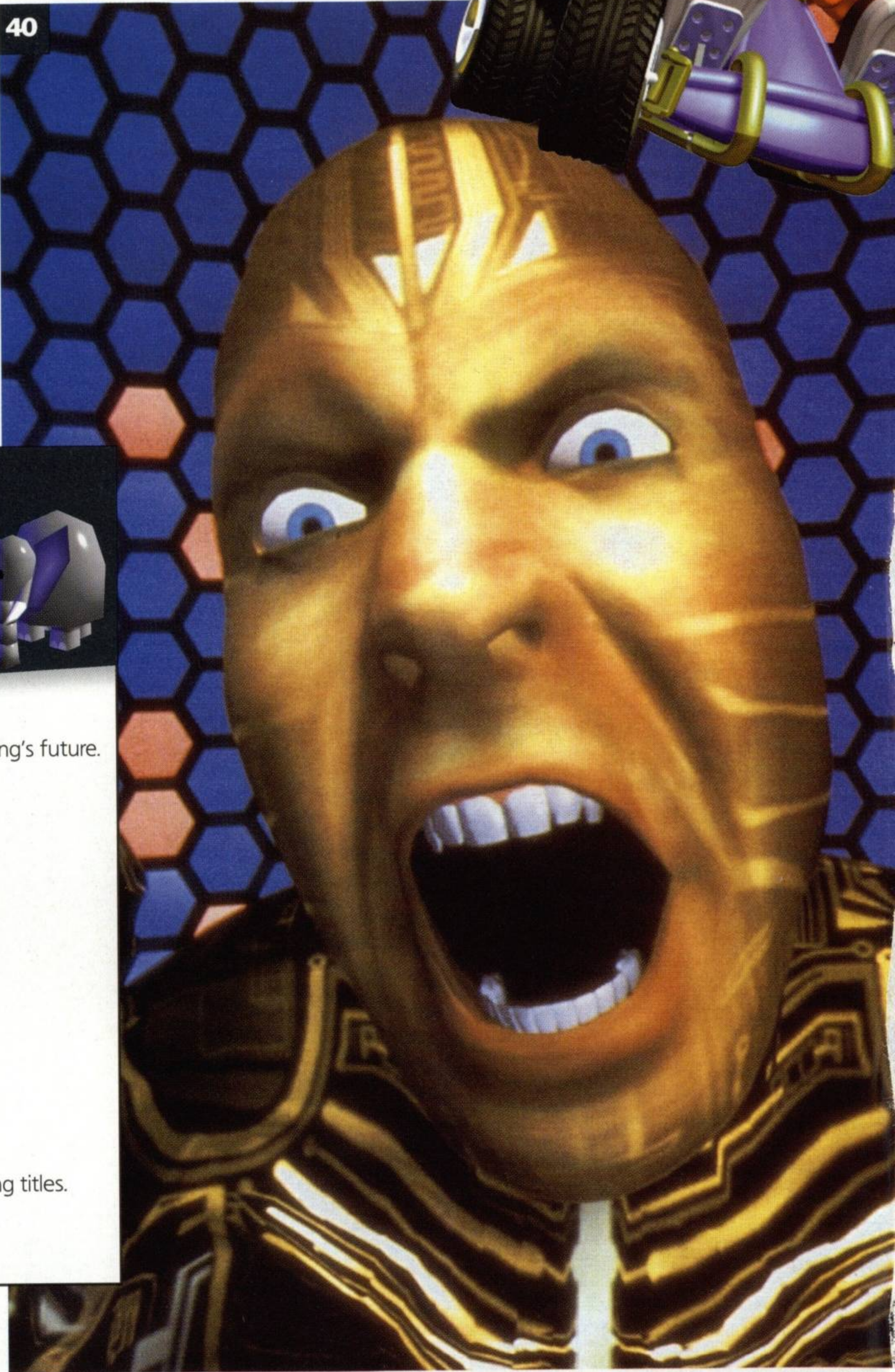
There's plenty of life left in PlayStation and N64.

**54 Games, games, games**

30 world-changing titles.

**60 Expert timing**

The future of games from those who know best.



**Every issue** | We make it the best we can

**6 Rants & Raves**

Letters from you lovely readers.

**12 Game On**

All the videogame news from around the world.

**32 Virtual Fox**

Her name's Regina. And she's lovely.

**34 Games Insider**

Three videogame experts who won't shut up.

**62 Arcade Charts**

What game's number one?

**64 Kick Ass**

How to win. Oh yes.

**108 Back issues**

Missed a copy of *Arcade*? Help is at hand.

**109 The A-list**

Your essential reviews guide to over 350 videogames.

**120 Subscribe!**

Save cash and guarantee your monthly *Arcade* fix.

**122 Coming Soon**

A sneak preview at some of tomorrow's hits.

**128 Timewarp**

What was hot in the world of games in August 1992?

**130 Great Gaming Moment**

With *Super Mario 64*.



42



52



44

PHOTOS: JUSTIN SCOBIE, JUDE EDGINTON, PICTORIAL PRESS



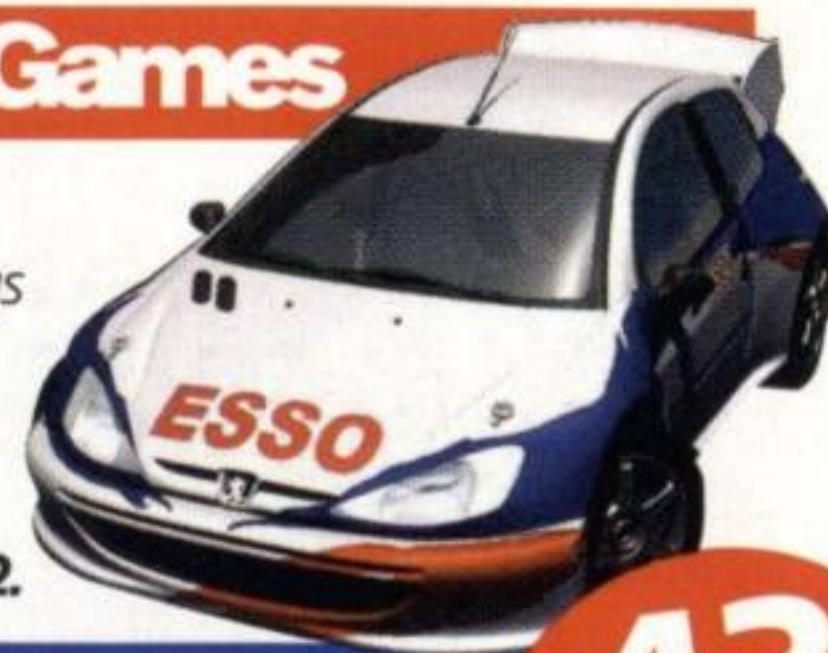


# A Review

## The Ultimate Game Buyer's Guide

### 72 New PlayStation Games

**New releases:** *V-Rally 2*, *Silent Hill*, *Capcom Generations*, *RC Stunt Copter*, *FA Manager*, *Bugs Bunny Lost in Time*, *Chess Master II*.



■ *V-Rally 2*.

### 80 New PC Games



■ *Kingpin*.

**New releases:** *Kingpin*, *Dungeon Keeper*, *Outcast*, *Discworld Noir*, *Breakneck*, *Malkari*, *Eastern Front*, *Fleet Command*, *Tomb Raider II: "Golden Mask"*, *Austin Powers*.  
**Budget releases:** *Balls of Steel*, *Grid Run*, *Theme Park*, *Carmageddon*, *Terracide*, *Conquest Earth*, *Unreal*, *Sega Rally Championship*, *Lego Island*, *Titanic: Adventure Out of Time*, *Powerslide*, *Red Baron 2*.

**43**  
NEW GAMES  
REVIEWED!

### 90 New N64 Games



■ *Quake II*

**New releases:** *Quake 2*, *F1 World GP II*.

### 94 Other Games

**Dreamcast:** *Redline Racer*, *Get Bass*.  
**Coin-op:** *Ferrari F355 Challenge*, *Dynamite Deka 2*.  
**Game Boy Color:** *Legend of The River King*, *Logical*, *Conker's Pocket Tales*, *Pocket Bomberman*, *Pokemon Pinball*, *All-Star Baseball 2000*.

### 98 Videogame Accessories



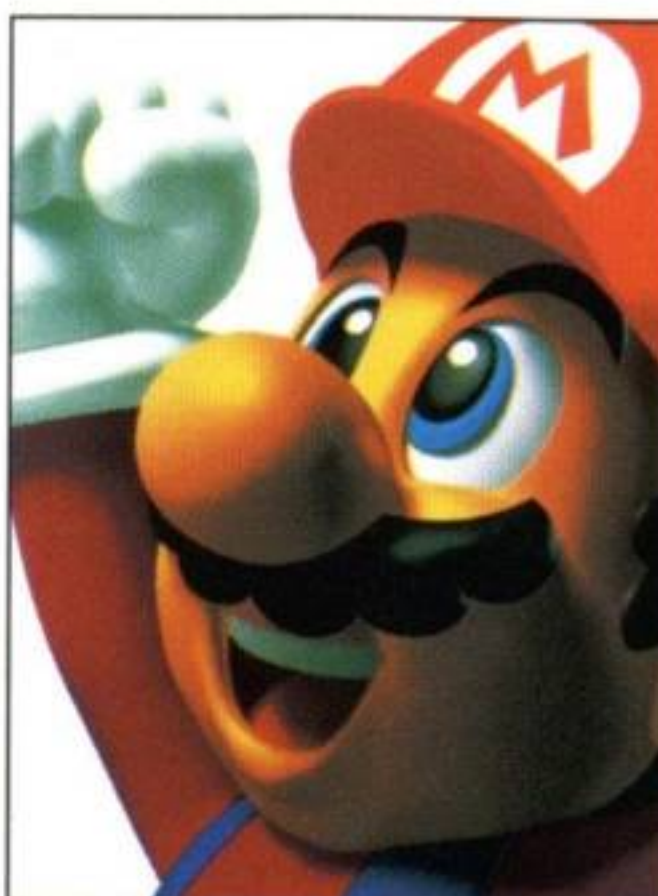
On test this month: PC joysticks and a videogame "action chair" that is – and this is official folks – "utter bollocks".

### 100 Entertainment Extra

- 100 Film
- 101 DVD
- 101 Video
- 102 Books & Comics
- 103 Music
- 104 Games & Gadgets
- 106 Internet



100



## Arcade

The videogame magazine

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Cover: Mario (Nintendo)



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EDITORIAL

# The next big thing



With Neil West, Editor

**A**ll that ever stays the same is change. Sometimes the change is bad (no sooner have you worked out where the Jaffa Cakes are in the supermarket, than they move all the shelves around). But most of the time change is good (like when you ditch that naggy old boiler you were hanging around with and find yourself a nice new girlfriend).

Ahem.

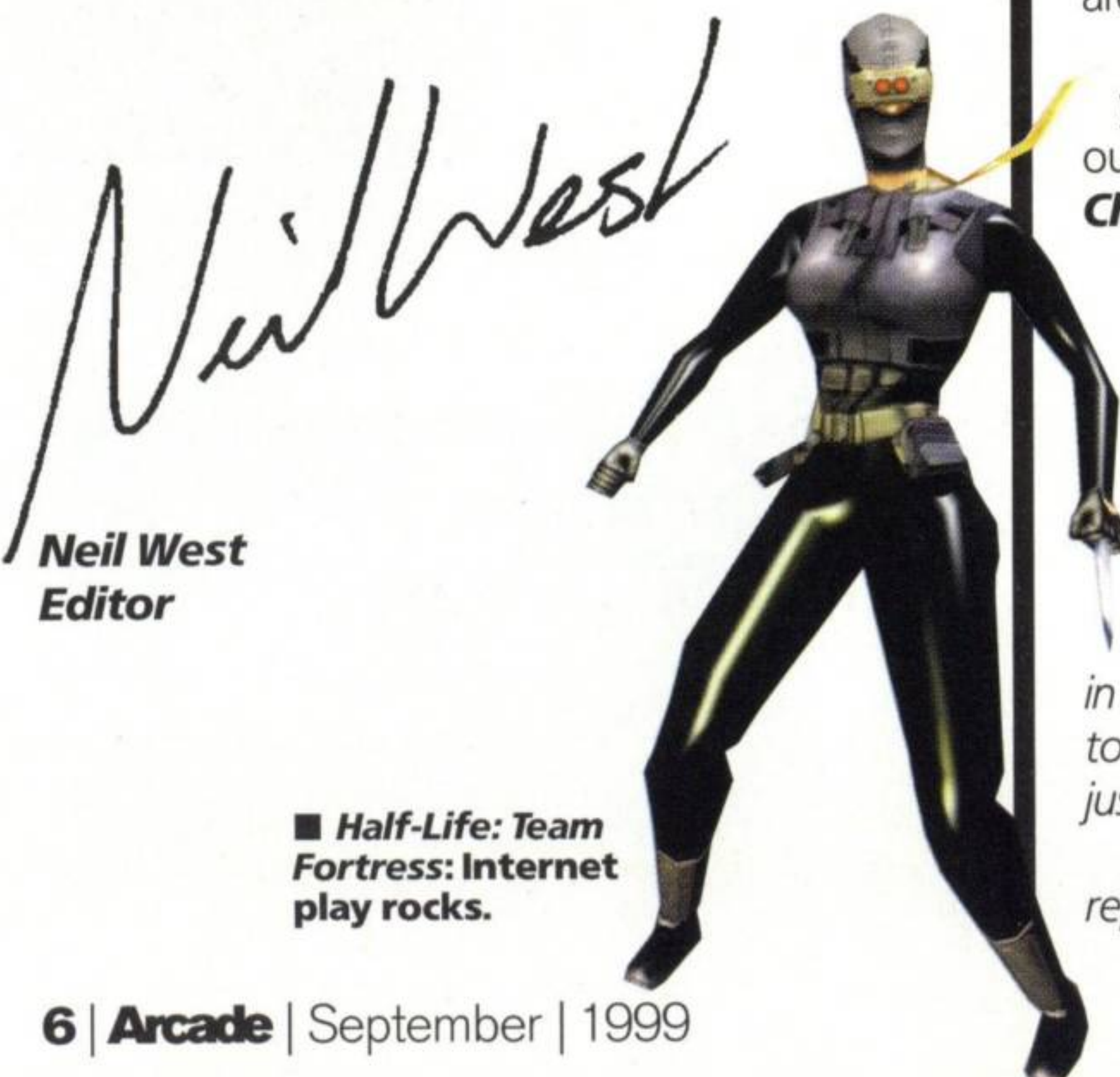
Anyway. One corner of the universe that never stays the same for longer than five minutes is the world of videogames. It seems that no matter how much cash you spend, there's always some hot new console due for release *any minute now* that's better and faster and sexier looking than the one you happen to have plugged into your telly. It's easy to get frustrated in the mistaken belief that you're not on the cutting edge.

Well fear not readers, *Arcade* is at hand. Not only with all the latest information on the new consoles from Sega, Nintendo, and Sony, but also with news that your PlayStation or Nintendo 64 will last you a lot longer than you probably expect. There are many good reasons (eight, to be exact) why today's top games machines will stay at the top of the heap for years to come. Check it out on page 52.

Lastly, while on the subject of change, I'm sad to say that this is my last issue of *Arcade* (I'm off to California to go see about a girl). But before I go I'd just like to say thanks to all the *Arcade* editorial team. I've never had the pleasure of working with such talented people before, and it's been a real honour to have my name in this box at the front of the mag, getting all the credit.

So look forward to a brand new editor next month, and *Arcade* to grow from strength to strength over the coming year.

All that ever stays the same is change...



Neil West Editor

Half-Life: Team Fortress: Internet play rocks.

# Rants & Raves

**What is it about playing videogames that prompts such vociferous letters? Is there something hidden inside GoldenEye and Gran Turismo that prompts angry players to put pen to paper after a specific number of hours playing? It's a mystery, and no mistake.**



LETTER OF THE MONTH

## Sofa, so good

**I**nternet gaming, eh? We're told it's the future. Gamers aren't interested in those boring old one-player modes anymore, they want a competitive experience, struggling against anything up to 32 other players in a desperate battle for supremacy. Single player gaming is all but dead and from now on it's multi-player all the way, right?



Quake III: Arena: a blast on the Net.

What a big pile of lies.

Internet multi-player gaming is not gaming's big future. The reason? It misses the whole purpose of multi-player games – and that's human feedback. What's the point in pulling off a daring overtaking manoeuvre, or a Lee Harvey Oswald-style headshot, if the only reaction you get is a deafening silence and a poorly spelled retort from some anonymous bloke sat 2000 miles away?

I want to hear my opponent's cry of anguish as I beat his character into a soggy mass. I want to see the expression on his face as a comically cheeky gambit pays off. I want to rub it in and tease him until he can't take it any more. In other words, I want him to be sat next to me. 32 players may be eight times more than *GoldenEye* can handle, but I may as well be blasting 32 computer-controlled bots, for all the human involvement it gives me.

Internet gaming may be popular in America, where free local calls and swift cable modems are common, but UK gamers without an ISDN line to their house are nadgered, frankly. The only ping rates and lag times that affect *Tekken 3* are the kind present when you're pissed up on booze. And besides, when you're playing over the Internet, can you accidentally yank someone's joypad out when they're in the lav? No I don't think so. Real life 1, Internet 0. Thank you.

Chris Davies

You argue a good case Chris, and in some ways you're right – beating an anonymous Internet opponent will never feel as good as thrashing a mate sat next to you on a sofa. But there will be times when your mate isn't there. And, as software developers spend more time designing games with multiple players in mind, sooner or later there'll be a 32-player game that's just as compelling as four-player *GoldenEye*. And, as voicelink technology improves, you're now able to shout at vanquished opponents as if they were in the same room. It's only a matter of time until videoconferencing enables you to pull faces, make "gestures" or – indeed – drop your trousers, for that full "I just won, which I think you'll find means that you lost" satisfaction.

We're dead excited about the prospects for on-line gaming. A special report starts on page 18.

### Write to us at Arcade

Deliver the letter, the sooner the better.

Rants & Raves, Arcade, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

E-mail us at: [arcade.mag@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:arcade.mag@futurenet.co.uk)

Look at her. Isn't she adorable? Of course, it's just the T-shirt that does it. Without her splendid *Arcade*-branded togs "The Lovely Lisa™" becomes simply, erm, "Lisa". And if your letter is picked as the month's best, you can become The Lovely You™. We're changing lives, and it's a beautiful thing.





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\*Available end of July 1999.



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(<http://website.lineone.net/~simon.stewart/>),

**Simon Thorp at Viz.**

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And that's it; the last one from Neil, Em, Rob and Mark. Launched it, loved it, legging it. Bye kids... be careful out there.



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## On the side

Ye gods man, 'tis a sad day; I've just purchased a new game for my swish Game Boy Color, only to discover, shock horror, you no longer get the little plastic case for the cartridge! Nintendo, you have deprived me of the tactile pleasure of the aforementioned item. I feel cheated, (and possibly violated).

**Stuart Burnham, via e-mail**

*We feel for you Stuart.*

Could you feature Iris of Iceland again? Please? Pretty please?

**Ben Jones, via e-mail**

*We'd love to, but unfortunately she's gone back to Iceland.*

I read in a tabloid a few weeks ago that the owner of Future Publishing sold the company for £500 million. Is this correct, and if so, what affect will it have on our favourite Future magazines?

**Ronan Casey, via e-mail**

*Future Publishing, the publisher of Arcade, was part of a group of companies floated on the London Stock Exchange in June, and this raised the company a lot of money. A large chunk of which will be spent on Arcade over the following year or so. It's going to be great, just you wait and see...*

## Yellow pages

Oh dear, what have we gone and done to the "A List"? If there's one directory I hate looking through it's the *Yellow Pages* because it's arranged by category instead of alphabetical order and I can never find what I'm looking for. And now guess what? You've gone and turned your "A List" into a *Yellow Pages*. And it's impossible to find anything!

For example is *Tomb Raider III* an adventure game, a platform game, or could it be in the top 20? Is *Lucky Luke* a shoot-'em-up, or a platformer, or what?

Let's revert back to what we all understand and list games in alphabetical order. It's so much easier.

**Steve Dixon, Billingham**

*Nah, it's easier now. When you turn up at a videogame shop, you think, "Right, I want to buy a footy game. But which one?" Now, in our handily alphabetical(hang on)sed A-List, you can compare all the footy games at a glance.*

## Big brains

Well, I must say I enjoyed your Games Night feature on puzzle games. Being a bit of a party games player myself, it's great to see which games are recommended for those of us who like to have a few friends round and shout at them for being annoying.

Which brings me on to my main point - you didn't seem to like *Devil Dice* that much, saying it was best played by simply rolling dice around randomly as quickly as you could. That's an entirely absurd statement, as anyone who has played at the same time as my friend Ali and I will confirm. You can work out where the appropriate faces are, and manoeuvre the blocks to fall just as you like them. Assuming nobody's stolen the other six from the five you had lined up...

But, then again, as you say, this might be because both Ali and I are studying maths at university. Though I doubt it.

**Tim Miller, via e-mail**

*Between us, the Arcade team claims five maths A-levels. But Devil Dice still made our heads hurt.*

## Crap wrestlers

Really enjoyed your wrestling Games Night. I've been waiting to see that Rich Pelley on the receiving end of a headlock for some time, and the fact that it was a wrestler's sweaty armpit he ended up sandwiched under made it all the sweeter.

But what was most amazing was discovering the wrestlers have actually played the game that's based on them. This adds a whole new dimension to videogaming. Playing *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace* will never be the same, as I'll be constantly picturing Ewan MacGregor

sitting in front of his PC, controlling his on-screen counterpart and taking the opportunity to blow Jar-Jar's head off. And whenever I play *FIFA 99*, I'll think about David Seaman with a PlayStation controller in his hand, watching with mouth agape as his son scores his 74th consecutive goal against his digitised Dad.

Actually, it's probably best not to think about celebrities playing games. Firing up my N64 is the only way I get to smack Stone Cold Steve Austin's face into the floor, and the possibility that he could whup me in a two-player *WWF Warzone* deathmatch (and follow it up by breaking every real-life bone in my body), is too much for me to take.

**Brian Pigeon, Lancaster**

*Having yourself appear in a videogame must be quite a strange experience. What if your character's crap? What if someone else is better at "being you" than you are? It's a minefield of potential brain meltdowns.*

## Nintendo slipping?

If Nintendo is so cocky about its stringent quality control measures, what happened to *WipEout 64*? After completing the first three challenges, the game locks up on completion of the second race of challenge four. It also boasts an ingenious "occasional random crash" feature which is also very infuriating. I e-mailed Midways' tech support who replied with "Are you playing the PAL version? That is the only version we have heard this happen on. If this is so you need to contact GT Interactive at [www.gtgames.com](http://www.gtgames.com)".

Not terribly encouraging.

PlayStation has a huge range of titles, three-quarters of which hold little interest, but none of those I have seen have had such serious flaws. Nintendo's standards may have been highly respected, once upon a time, but I wonder if Sony's market domination is forcing Nintendo's fabled QC to lower their sights...

**Byron Marshall, via e-mail**

*Hopefully this is just a freak one-off event. Nintendo realises that the quality of its games are the mainstay of its success, and we're sure that it won't have consciously let any bugged game slip through its quality control. That said, there's no denying that the faults you observe have been pointed out by lots of Arcade readers. For what it's worth, *WipEout 3* on PlayStation is shaping up to be an absolute classic, and will be featured in next month's Arcade, hitting the shelves on 23 August...*

## Ocean Colour Scene

I would just like to congratulate your magazine on being informative, colourful, interesting, and all for the price of a Big Mac. However, I would like to make the following suggestions.

First, please give us more scantily-clad women, as recently they have been lacking in number. Second, slag off other retro bands and don't just concentrate on Ocean Colour Scene. My friend was humorously infuriated when you called Jazz Jackrabbit the gaming equivalent of an OCS album.

**Dan, via e-mail**

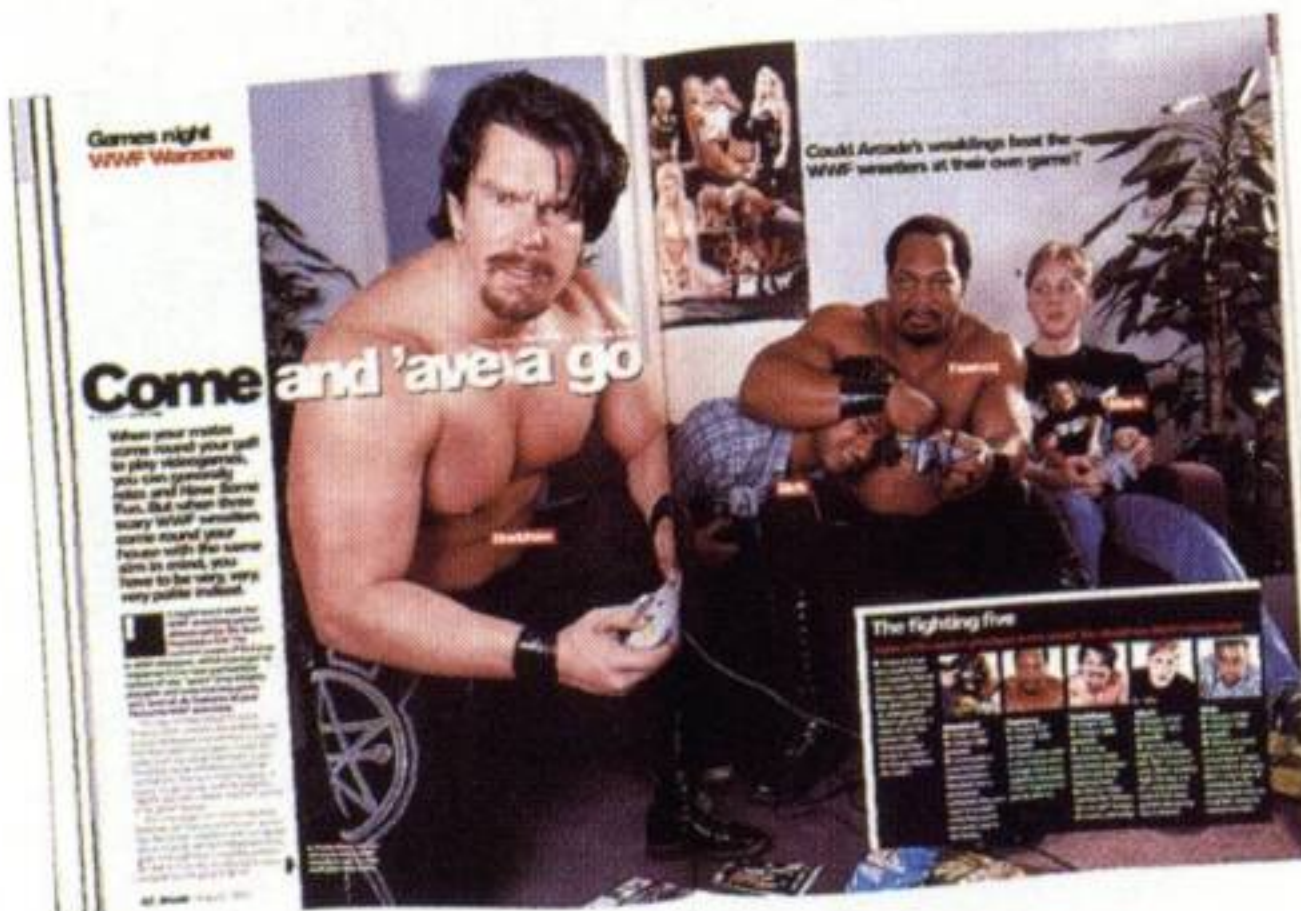
*Your mate got infuriated? Oh, hang on, here he comes now...*

## Infuriated mate

I want to complain about your review of Jazz Jackrabbit in *Arcade 9* - you slagged off one of the best bands the world has ever seen, and I am pished, I want a written apology, you todge!

**Matt, via e-mail**

*Nope. We stand by our judgment. In years to come, our children will listen to our Ocean Colour Scene CDs and say*





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# Rants & Raves<sup>2</sup>

"What were you thinking?" We will squirm with embarrassment and all of a sudden understand how our Dad's felt when we sniggered at all those Lonnie Donnigan records. The same is true of Jazz Jackrabbit.

## Mr Nasty

With such a massive budget at its disposal, you would have thought that Lucas Films could have come up with a more convincing "alien" than the greasypaint-covered Darth Maul. Surely, it could have run to a proper latex mask or something more akin to the awesome black helmet of Darth Vader, a far more convincing baddie guise altogether. And why does he have to have horns: red face, horns – remind you of anyone? I know he's supposed to be on the Dark Side, but purlease!

Maul's crap make-up is even more insulting when you consider the many

other more convincing aliens in the film – properly prepared and modelled with some attempt at originality. Mind you, everyone seems to like him – you had him on your cover last month and so did *Empire!* Thanks for listening to my ranting, I just had to get it off my chest.

**Sam Grant, Plaxtol**

friend bought a full GB dev kit and started working on a few games (platformy things – you know the type). Then one day Neil (the programmer) had a wireframe box rotating around on the GB screen at a not-unreasonable (for the GB at least) 10fps. Excitement ruled for a couple of days – how many boxes could we draw before the frame count dropped?

Well, to cut a longish story short, we could draw enough to do *Elite*.

So we did.

We then took it to ECTS, the "cartridge" was about the size of two external modems on top of each other and twice the weight. But no-one was interested.

So, *Elite* could have been out for the Game Boy four to five years ago, but publishers weren't interested in a title developed by two friends in a bedroom.

Sad old world, innit?

**Doug Holmes, via e-mail**

*That is a sad story, and proof that – no matter how fondly we look back on gaming's past classics – some of them just wouldn't make it in today's market. Elite, with its absence of plot, levels, characters "with attitude" and even a score, is deemed too obscure for 1999's "more demanding" audience. We disagree, but there it is.*

## Fight night

I just thought I'd drop you a line to let you know how videogames saved me from getting into a fight.

I work in the evening as a bouncer in a busy bar, and one night my colleagues and I were standing at the door of the bar discussing the usual rubbish – football, sex, girls, sex, and more girls – when our talk turned to *Metal Gear Solid*.

I was in the middle of telling my workmate about the claymores I had used to battle Vulcan Raven, when a smash was heard coming from the bar. We ran inside to find two men having a Mexican standoff, waiting for the other one to move first. Grabbing one of the guys each, we led them to the door and ejected them.

Now one guy left quite happily, even apologised, and went home. The second, however, decided to stand on our doorstep and question my parentage for half an hour. Deciding that responding to the guy would probably cause a fight, I turned back to my friend and carried on my tale of the battle I had against Vulcan Raven.

All of a sudden the drunk guy, who seconds ago was accusing me of dancing at my parent's wedding, spun towards me with a big grin and said that he was still stuck on Sniper Wolf!

We began to talk, and I explained how to beat her easily the second time using Nikitas, at which he was overjoyed! Probably wanting to race home and try it out, he shook my hand vigorously saying "Thanks mate!", and ran off. All I could do was look at him disappearing into the horizon in amazement.

All I can say folks is, if you are out on the tiles sampling the Dom Perignon, and a cast member from *Planet of The Apes* wants to show you how hospital food tastes, merely mention the fact that you've completed *Zelda DX* on the Game Boy, and can explain to him how to enter Dungeon 8. Thus preventing a hiding, and in the process making some new friends.

**Scott Taylor, Aberdeen**

*You see? Videogames can bring people together. How sweet.*

## CONTRIBUTORS

**With more words crammed into *Arcade* than there are in the entire British Library, we need a bunch of top jourmos and arty peeps to write them down and then make them look pretty.**



## Paul Rose

Paul became a videogame journalist by accident. He was working as a graphic designer for Teletext when he suggested that they produce a games magazine as part of the service and he got the job! As well as writing for *Arcade*, Paul regularly reviews games

for our on-line games magazine *Future Gamer*. Paul says he's a massive *Star Wars* fan – not only does he collect the figures, but he's also built a scale model of Tatooine to put them in. Hero or geek? You be the judge.

**Games of the moment:** Paul's favourite game is *GoldenEye* because "it's the most well-rounded game ever". He's also been playing *Kingpin*, *Quake II* on N64 and *Driver* on PlayStation. He loves most games, especially action ones, but he's not too keen on flight sims.



## Dave Bradley

Dave is the Games Editor of *Arcade*'s sister magazine *PC Format*, whose offices are located about ten metres away from us. Unashamedly shattering all street cred that that illustrious magazine has ever claimed in one fell swoop, we can exclusively reveal that

their favourite office tunes include The Best of The Wurzels. Completely unprovoked, Dave also offered us the amazing revelation that he had never played videogames in the nude, so he must seem "dull and boring" to us. Unsure of the relevance of this comment, we declined to ask him any further questions...

**Games of the moment:** Dave is a *Total Annihilation* nut. He's also a big fan of *Star Wars*, although he's not impressed with *The Phantom Menace* and *Racer*.



## Casper Field

You'll be hearing a lot more from Casper soon, as he's currently putting together the very first issue of *Future Publishing's* new monthly Dreamcast magazine, *DC-UK*, launching on 2 September, a mere three weeks before the UK launch of Sega's new

console. Casper began his journalistic career by running a big student magazine in Manchester. He loved reading *Edge* and got a freelance writing job on the mag – his career "rocketed on" from there.

**Games of the moment:** Casper's all-time favourite videogame is *Super Mario Kart* on the SNES, "Cos it rocks man. It's sharper and faster and leaner than anything around today". Blimey.



## Elly Grandison

Designer Elly was Art Editor of *Future's Cycling Plus* and *MBUK* before she was tempted away by the heady pleasures of a freelance career. A keen mountain biker, Elly is also into Orbital and her mate's band Pressure of Speech. Having regularly

helped out on *Arcade*, she's now tempted to buy a games console, but can't decide between a PlayStation, an N64, or – bizarrely – a Macintosh.

**Games of the moment:** Elly is far too busy socialising to be playing videogames, but she confesses that she's never recovered from her misspent youth playing *MicroMachines* on the PlayStation. And she was completely addicted to an old *Star Wars* handheld game.



At least he's vaguely amusing in the film. Having just seen *The Phantom Menace* and not enjoyed it (Neil was actually spotted looking at his watch, half-way through), it's now just a shame that we don't get to play him in the game. Now that would have been a lot more fun.

## "It's a great feeling"

I've got to hand it to you, you're doing a blinding job on the magazine and long may it continue – personal highlight for me in *Arcade 7* was none other than "The best videogame ads in the world... ever".

Thing is, after seeing a few of my all-time faves in there once again, I've gotta ask, is there anywhere a mere member of the public, such as I, could get hold of the "Command & Conquer", "Previous high scores" and "It's a great feeling" ads?

**Ross Sillifant, Devon**

*You'll have to make do with the versions printed in the mag. We had a hard time tracking down copies ourselves, and there's certainly no-one selling copies. A shame, because some of them are great.*

## Buffing the droid

Well thank you very much for lowering the tone of *Arcade* with your "Strangling Lando: top ten *Star Wars* euphemisms for giving Ronaldo a rub down" bit in the *Star Wars* feature in *Arcade 9*. Just when I thought *Arcade* was maturing nicely into a magazine I could safely leave on the table for my Gran to see. How wrong I was.

The poor old dear asked me "Who's Lando?" and "What's a pink lightsaber?" before I realised what she was reading.

**John Trent, Oxford**

*Oops. Sorry.*

## Game Boy elite

I've just read your wish for a Game Boy version of the classic '80s computer game *Elite*. Well, a few years ago, myself and a

## Arcade exit poll

### Arcade

■ We're determined to make *Arcade* the best we can. To help us, please include answers to the following questions when you write to *Arcade*.

The best bits this issue are:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

I didn't like \_\_\_\_\_



For PlayStation™

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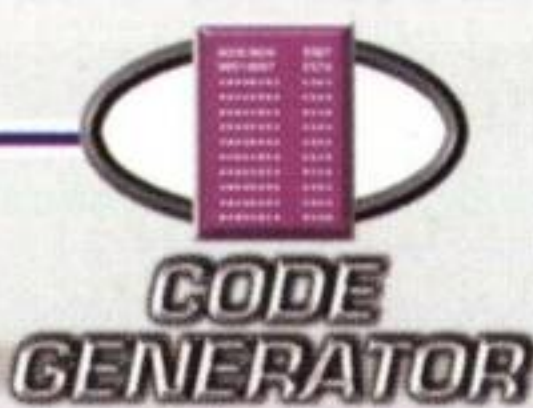
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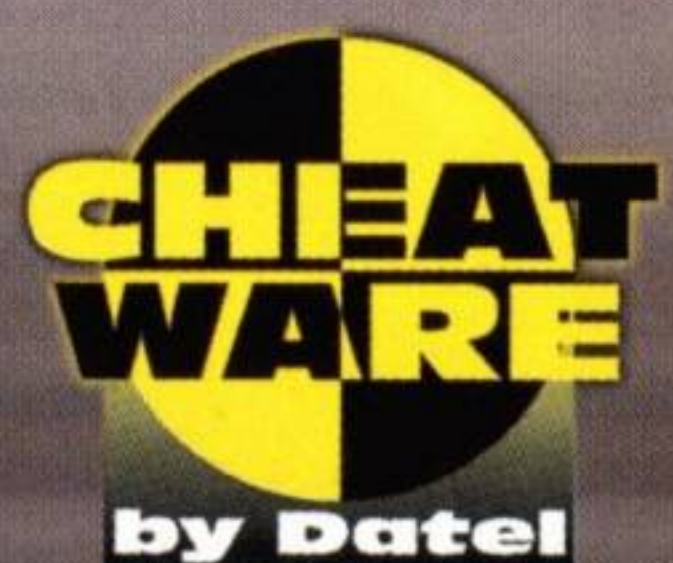
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# GAME ON!

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



■ New PlayStation games for £30? Sony won't let the price war continue.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

## PlayStation price war

Virgin cuts all games to £30 | Punters celebrations may be short-lived

**V**irgin Megastores sent PlayStation owners into raptures earlier this month by slashing the price of all PlayStation games to £29.99 or less. Following news of the move, first revealed when Virgin placed a full-page advert in *Arcade 9*, most major game retailers, including HMV, Electronics Boutique, Game and Dixons swiftly re-priced their own PlayStation range to match Virgin's offer.

Although naturally designed to attract custom, it seems the

move was also intended to send a serious message to Sony – it's the hardware firm's "manufacturing costs" which keep game prices high. "Consumers have got to be given a better reason to buy a full-price game," explained Virgin's games product manager Bart Saunt. "They will not pay £45 for a new release – £29.99 is an acceptable price."

Brad Burton, Marketing Manager of the Pink Planet chain, welcomed the drop in price which saw PlayStation games sales increase by almost 50% overnight. "We're all for games being realistically priced," he commented. "Although £30 is very

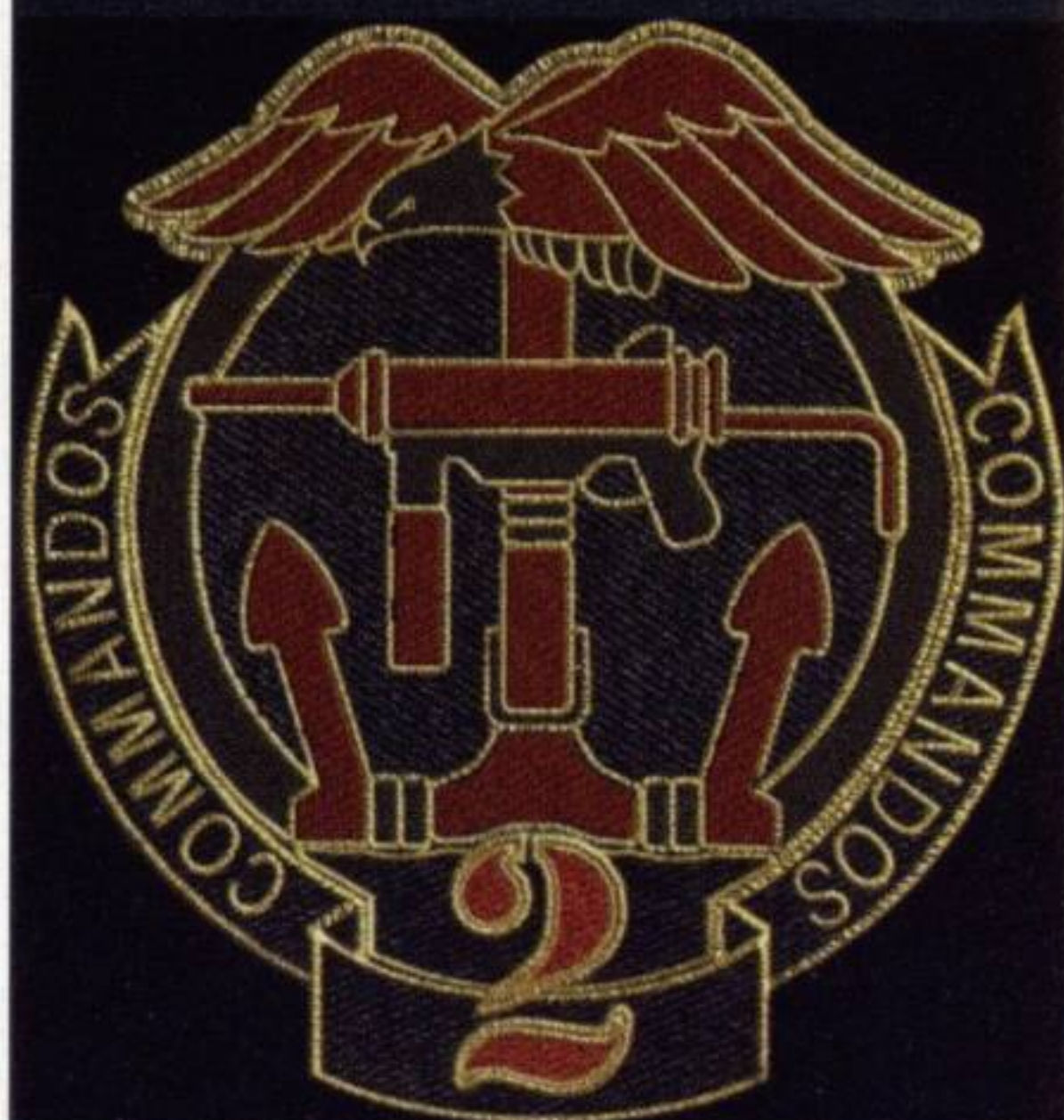
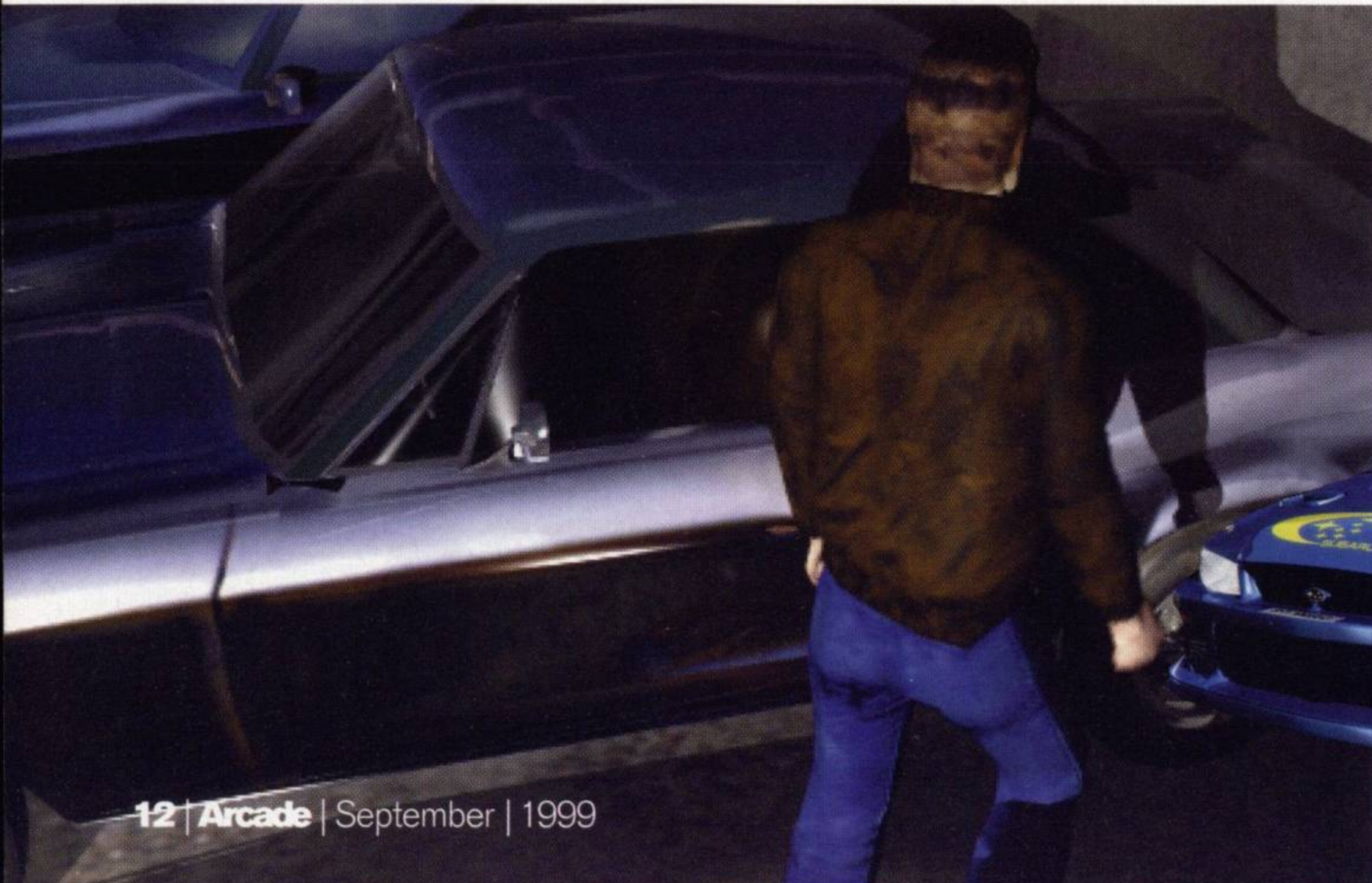
close to the price retailers buy titles for, we'd be confident of an upturn in sales," he continued, hinting that a prolonged period of £30 selling would eventually force Sony's hand. It wasn't all smiles, however – several smaller independent retailers, unable to match Virgin's price cuts, were taken by surprise. The sales boom passed them by and some have spoken of "dirty tactics".

Despite the industry furore that resulted from the drop in price and the joy among the gaming community who were able to purchase new classics such as *Driver* and *V-Rally 2* for under £30, Sony is not for turning. Unable to continue the discount offer without some capitulation from Sony, it seems that retailers will be pricing PlayStation games back up to £40-£45 by the time

**"PlayStation games sales increased by almost 50% overnight."**

you read this. Until anticipation for PlayStation 2 leads to a drop in PlayStation game sales, Sony won't see any reason to reduce the profit it makes from every CD sold. Most likely, that means no sub-£30 new games again for a long while. Shame. **A**

■ *Driver* (left) and *V-Rally 2* (below): both under £30.



■ PHOTO: RICK BUETTNER





■ *Commandos 2* has some of the smoothest, most realistic animations we have ever seen.

NEW GAME

# More Commandos, more action

Evolution takes a step forward | Sequel for *Behind Enemy Lines*

The success of the game *Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines* was a complete surprise (it became the sleeper hit of last year), but success is surely guaranteed for the sequel.

Shown only to a selected group of journalists, Pyro's


second World War II-themed real-time strategy game already looks like building on the attractive, if far too tough, foundations of the original. Many had been expecting a full 3D engine à la *Hidden & Dangerous*, but although *Commandos 2* is clearly a giant

evolutionary step forward, the developer has chosen to stick to its initial winning formula.

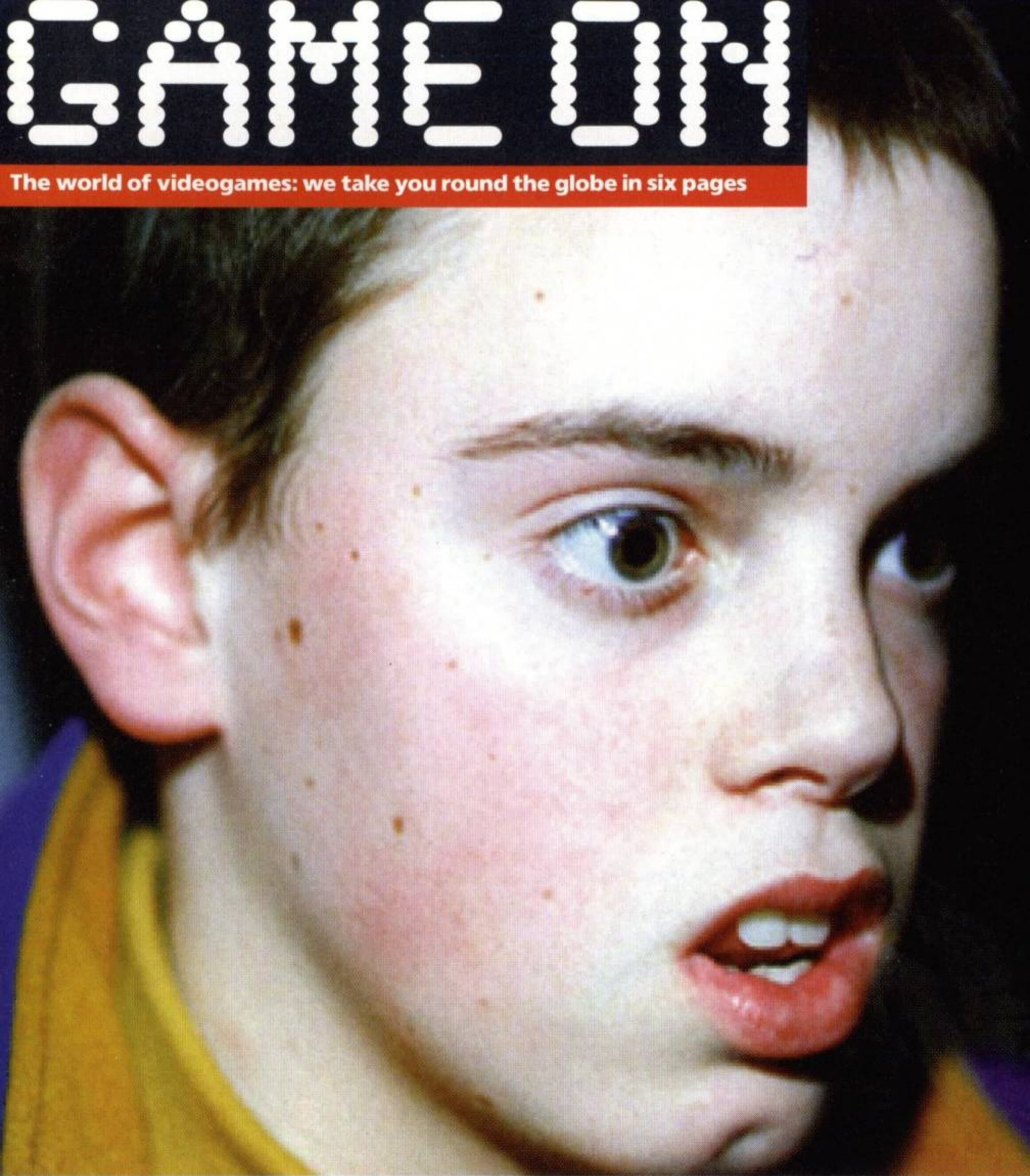
Backgrounds are therefore still static and high-resolution, with your team of four animated soldiers moving fluidly around them. Somehow though, Pyro's motion capture effects

have been used to create some of the most realistic, smooth animations yet seen in a game of this genre.

With much more emphasis on action, you can expect the amount of useable vehicles to rise, an increased amount of buildings to enter, and more

interactivity between characters and backgrounds. The early code we saw showed a soldier running into a German HQ, bounding up the stairs, stealing some plans from a safe, then diving spectacularly through a window into a waiting jeep. Top hole, we reckon. 





■ Not possessed by Satan, just captivated by the spirit of *Street Fighter*.



MY BEAUTIFUL GALLERY

## But is it art?

London gallery turns to games | Faces of arcade players form part of stunning exhibit

**O**f course, we thought of it: taking photos of Joe Public playing games, like we do every month in My Beautiful Arcade. But to

photographers Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin, their pictures run a lot deeper than simply persuading some random games-playing punters to mug furiously into the lens.

Broomberg and Chanarin consider their work to be art, and are exhibiting their photographs of games players enjoying the arcade experience at a prestigious London gallery.

"It's part of a much bigger project focusing on moments when people lose control of their body," explains Broomberg. "We've also taken photos in churches when people are in the middle of praying, and in hospital just as patients are about to go under general anaesthetic." The conclusion obviously being that videogames have the power to draw you into another world where you forget yourself.

Broomberg claims not to play games himself, or to have visited arcades other than to find people to capture on film. "When we hold the exhibition, we aren't

going to distinguish between the situations where the pictures were taken. It's the phenomenon and the emotion that is more important, the moments when the subject isn't composed for the camera." Yet despite Broomberg's lack of gaming experience, he seems to have captured a series of moments which encapsulate the immersive nature of the videogame experience. **A**

■ Broomberg and Chanarin's exhibition is on show at the Photographers' Gallery, 5 Great Newport Street, London WC2, and runs from 6-29 August.

GONZO GAMES

## Sports mad

EA unveils bizarre new range of minority sport titles

In scenes resembling "graveyard shift" programming on Sky Sports 3 crossed with Smack My Pitch Up (see right), EA Sports now presents videogame sledging, videogame figure skating, videogame parachuting and finally videogame Aussie Rules Football. No, really.

The biggest and most sensible of these titles is *Sled Storm*, an

aggressive stunt racer involving motorised ice vehicles. Its 20 August release should provide an unusual alternative to the seemingly endless snowboard sims and skids on the PlayStation.

Michelle Kwan *Championship Figure Skating* is endorsed by the two-time world champion and will appear for the PC in the autumn. Realising that it's hardly a *Quake III* beater, EA is targeting this title at the hitherto untapped female pre-teen market. So will Michelle's spangly leotards provide the necessary inspiration for a new generation of girl gamers? Will they? Eh?

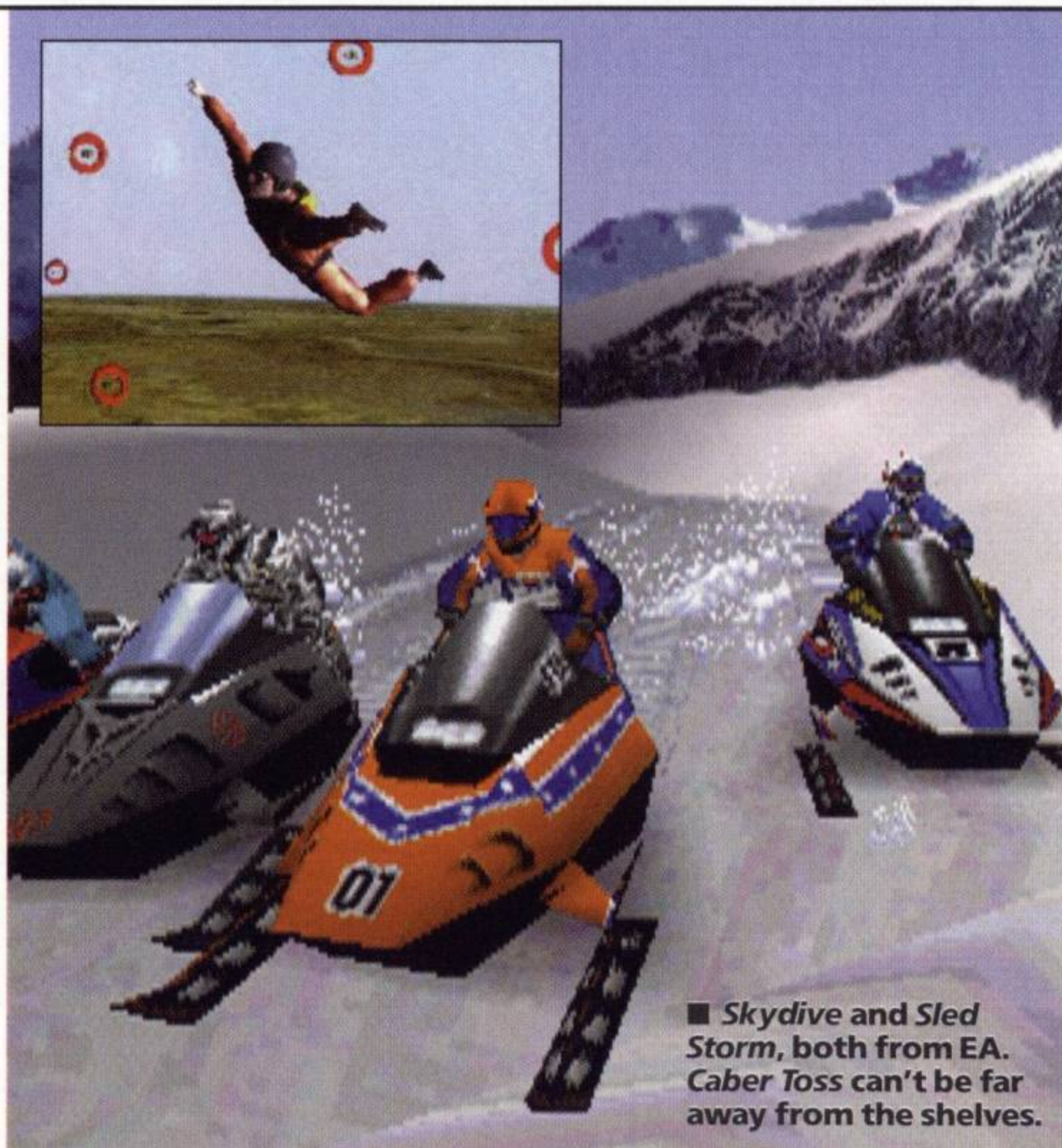
Of course, what the gaming world's really

been crying out for is a parachuting sim. *Skydive* heads up EA's new Gonzo Games extreme sports brand and while simply pressing buttons marked "jump" and "open parachute" may not seem like the height of exciting game action, we're promised lots of wind, weather and landing terrain complications. No release date has been set.

Finally, although the basic idea was recently pilloried in these pages, the nonsensical sport of Aussie Rules Football is to get its very own PlayStation game. Sadly, this title is only for release in Antipodean territories, so we'll miss out on the motion-captured mullets.



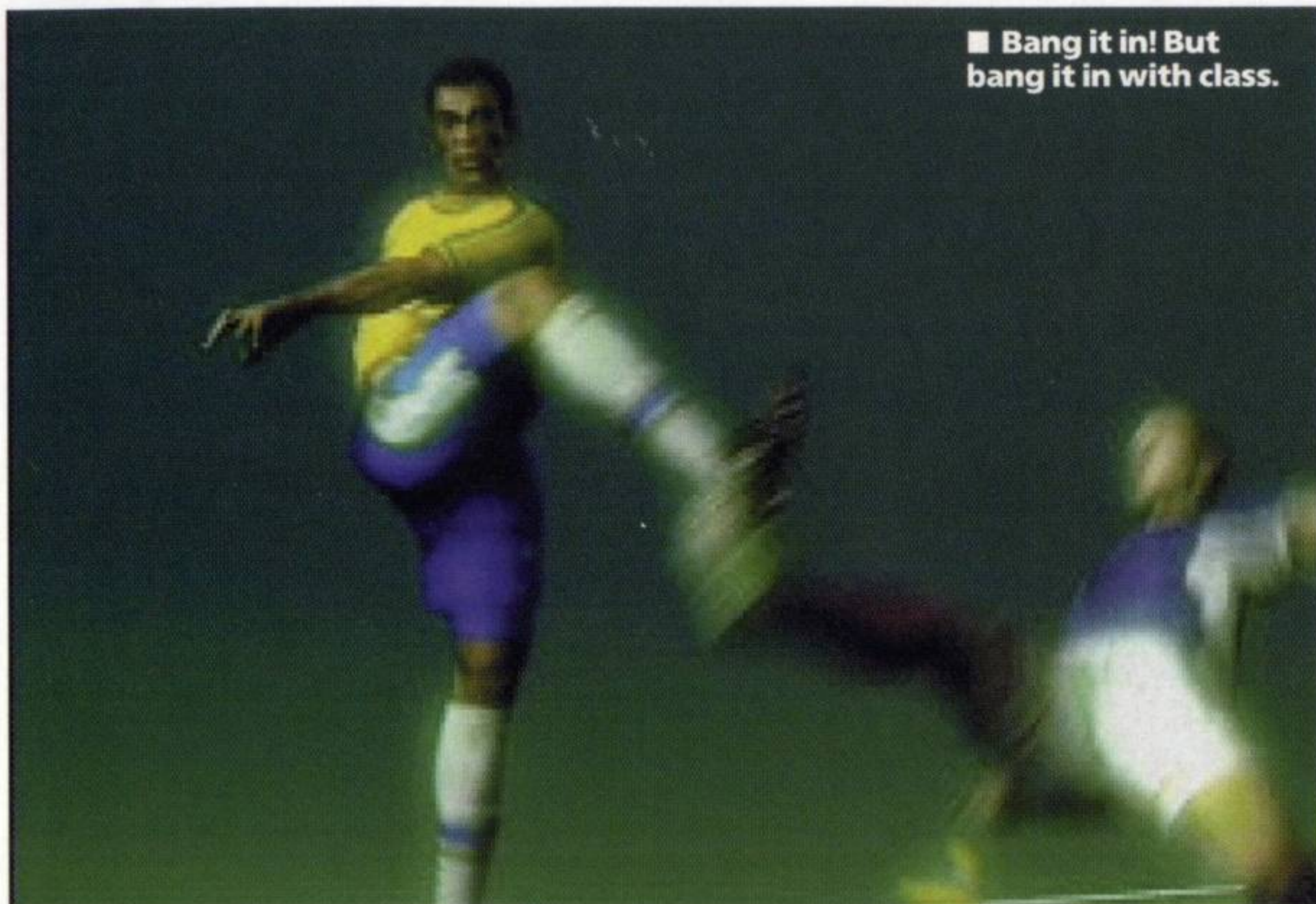
■ Michelle Kwan: skating her way into the hearts of pre-teens everywhere.



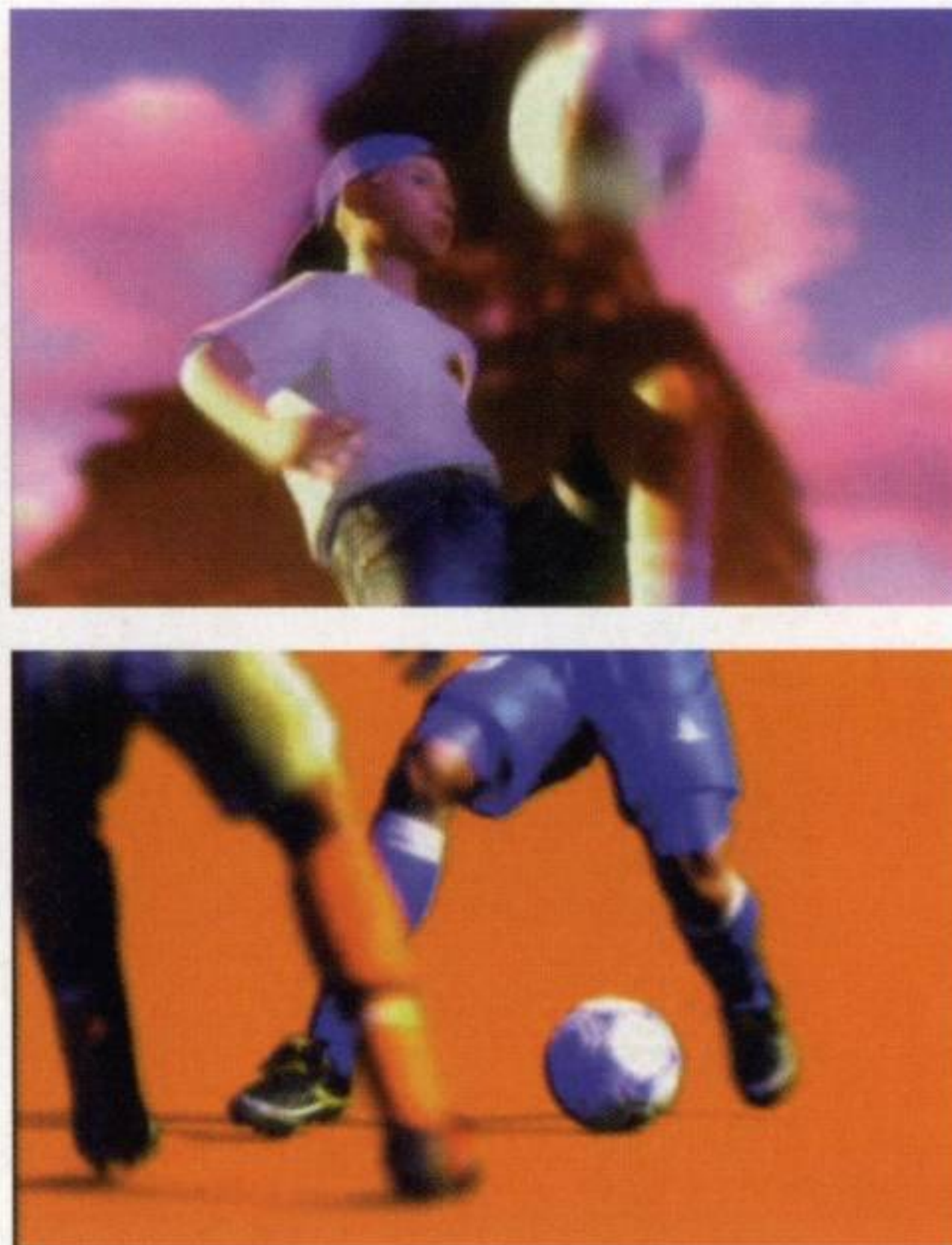
■ *Skydive* and *Sled Storm*, both from EA. *Caber Toss* can't be far away from the shelves.

PHOTO: PICTORIAL PRESS

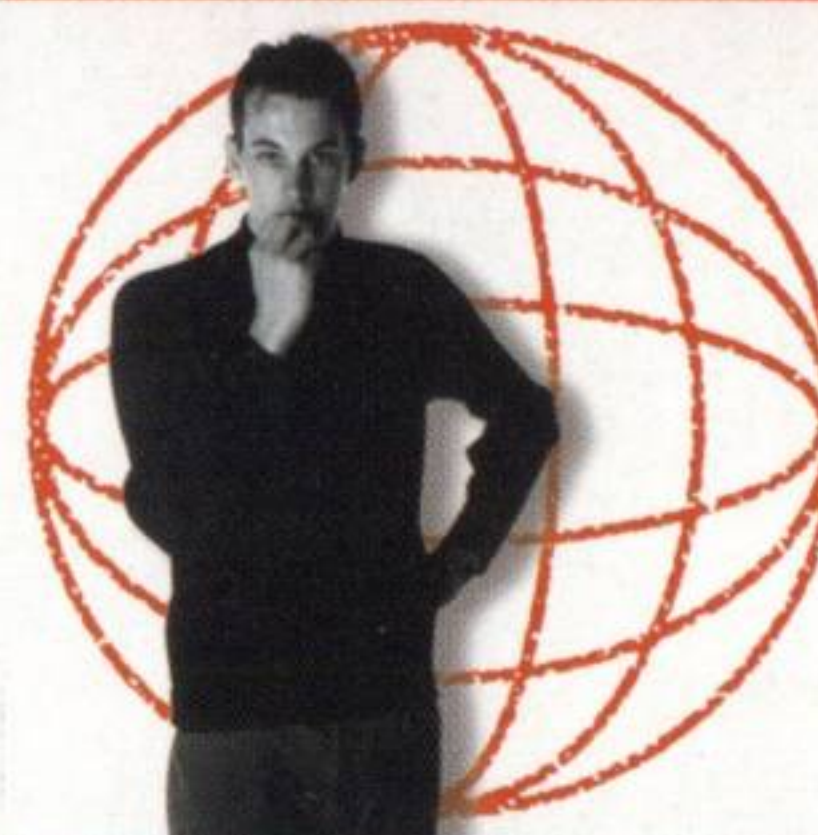




■ Bang it in! But bang it in with class.



## Sam Richards' World of Games



### Mario's Street Cred

Nintendo's very own plumbing 'n' platforming phenomenon is to have a street named after him in the Swedish town of Kungälv. Marios Gata (or Mario's Street) seems little more than a publicity stunt by Nintendo's Scandinavian distributors, but it's nice to believe that somewhere in Sweden there's a row of pink houses where Wario pops round to Daisy's to borrow a cup of sugar.

### Pac-Maniac

The first ever perfect score at *Pac-Man* was achieved this month by Billy Mitchell, a hot sauce manufacturer from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. It took almost six hours for Billy to rack up the huge maximum possible score of 3,333,360 (using just one quarter) at the Funspot Family Fun Center in New Hampshire.

It seems that the race for this "videogaming" holy grail was part of a long-running feud between American and Canadian gamers. Billy Mitchell – clearly a man with too much time on his hands – wore a stars-and-stripes tie for the duration of his world record attempt, which was completed on 4 July, and afterwards compared his achievement to that of moon-man Neil Armstrong.

## KICK OFF

# Talkin' 'bout evolution

New *ISS* title from Konami | The best footy game ever gets better

**T**here's little *Arcade* hasn't already said about the glorious interpretation of the beautiful game that is *ISS Pro '98*. Lucky we have a new addition to the series to wax lyrical about, then. *ISS Evolution* is a clear extension of the *ISS* brand – it bears a rather distinct family resemblance and the welcoming gameplay is immediately in evidence.

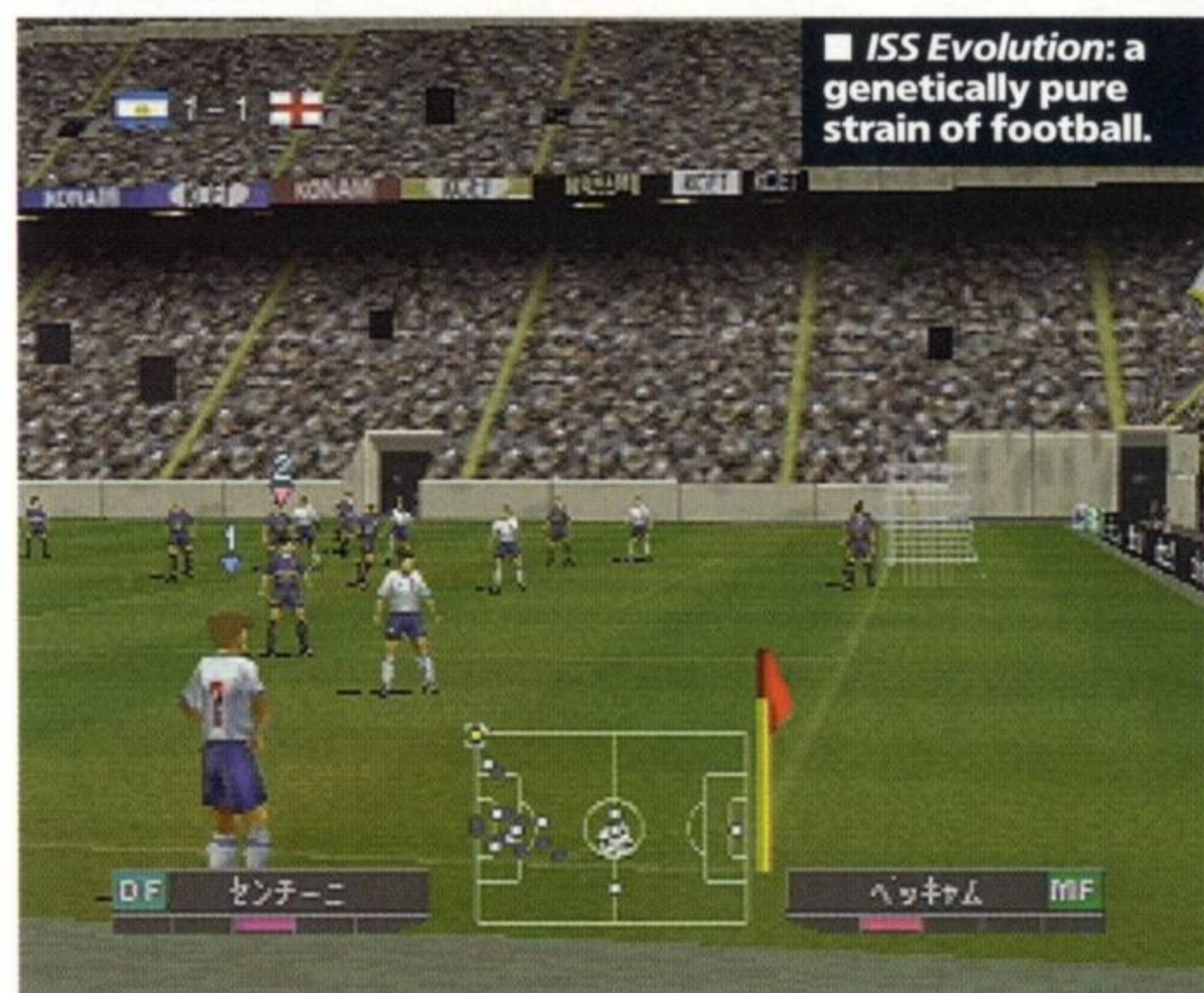
Konami's *ISS Evolution* will be out for the PlayStation in October. The front end has been revised to lend a more professional feel, not that this has any bearing once you take to the field of play where *ISS* has consistently thrashed the

seemingly classier *FIFA* imprint. *ISS Evolution*'s graphics are brighter and clearer than before and the game has moved further away from its arcade-style roots, while retaining the crucial level of pick-up-and-play satisfaction. A key development is the increase in pitch size, making for a more realistic contest as a couple of upfield hoofs won't necessarily put the opposing defence under pressure. Basically, *ISS Evolution* requires you to build accurate passing moves and make full use of the tactical options. Many of the old tricks and "sweet spots" we used to use in *ISS Pro 98* simply didn't fool *Evolution*, so to enjoy it you'll have to learn a fresh, more complex system of play.

Unfortunately we only saw a brief demonstration, but *ISS Evolution* was already displaying a flair and depth above and beyond that of its predecessors.

Konami also revealed that the

development team responsible for the N64 version of *ISS Pro* is working on an update. *ISS Millennium* will be made available for N64 and PlayStation early in the new year.



■ *ISS Evolution*: a genetically pure strain of football.

## *ISS* has consistently thrashed the seemingly classier *FIFA* imprint

### Smack my pitch up

We think of stupid game ideas and developers shamelessly pilfer them from under our noses to make a packet.

## No 49: Escape From Calais

■ **The pitch:** It's a juggernaut racing game with a twist. Your aim is to get from Paris to Dover ahead of your rivals, but this is more than basic speed racing. You must negotiate roadblocks, alluring female hitch-hikers, mad French drivers, illegible road signs, mounds of burning sheep, the temptation to stop for a fry-up and strikes which can be called by your lunatic union boss at any time. In the multi-player mode, stall your opponents by calling

bluff strikes or giving false directions to roadside cafts. ■ **The response:** "Surely you'd have to award bonus points for typical lorry moves such as overtaking a slow moving vehicle in the inside lane of a busy motorway while going up a hill, or forcing vehicles into the outside lane and slowing the traffic to a crawl. What about a replay mode in the style of *Police, Camera, Action* for the most horrific driving

offences? Or even a drink-'em-up if you get stuck in France on a Sunday, unable to drive your lorry? Right, I'm taking this idea and

making a physics engine for PlayStation 2." *Nic Cusworth, Argonaut*



### ODD'S ON

## In Odd we trust

Abe's creators hard at work on two new games

**L**ooney developer Oddworld Inhabitants – responsible for farting green alien, Abe – have revealed details of two new games for the PlayStation 2. The first, *Munch's Oddysee* is an epic adventure following loosely from Abe's *Exodus*. The Oddworld environment has undergone serious redecoration and will appear in jaw-dropping 3D. The interaction between your character (presumably not Abe, but Munch, who we know little about) and the Mudokons is much

more sophisticated and you may have to start learning the language to get the little blighters to do what you want them to. Apart from this we know very little, and the game could well be another two years in production.

The second game, *Hand Of Odd*, will break with Oddworld tradition by tackling the real-time strategy genre. Playing as either a Mudokon chief or a megalomaniac Glukkon tycoon, the opportunity to spread your empire throughout Oddworld should

provide an alternative to the typically more prosaic strategy titles on offer. *Hand Of Odd* is also some way off completion, but more news as we have it.





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



YOU'RE ON IT

## Tekken 3.5 tags along

Choose your Tekken favourites for tag matches.



New Tekken arcade game | Tag swings and misses

If the mere mention of the word "tag" takes you back to Saturday afternoons perched on Granny's knee, watching Big Daddy's sizeable girth bounce its way around a rubber ring, fear not. Due for release in arcades across the country about now is *Tekken Tag Tournament*, in which you'll be selecting a duo of your favourite characters from the *Tekken* series and indulging in some high-five

inspired rough and tumble. All *Tekken 3* dudes appear, alongside a couple of old favourites (Jun and Ganryu) left behind in *Tekken 2*.

Arcade was privy to a sneak preview, discovering the *raison d'être* of the game is to use a handy extra button to signal in alternative characters. If Gun Jack's getting a pounding from King, you can send Law into the fray to finish him off. The ability of the newly-tagged character to finish off a combo which the retiring fighter had begun seems

like a great idea, but the game behaves oddly. Every time we tagged someone in, they just ran on screen, skidded to a stop and set up shop. Activating the novel tag elements properly requires meticulous practice, marking this a game strictly for beat-'em-up experts.

Otherwise underwhelming, it's less likely that *Tekken Tag Tournament* will undergo a PlayStation conversion; we'll just have to wait for PlayStation 2 and the realisation of that stunning demo. **A**

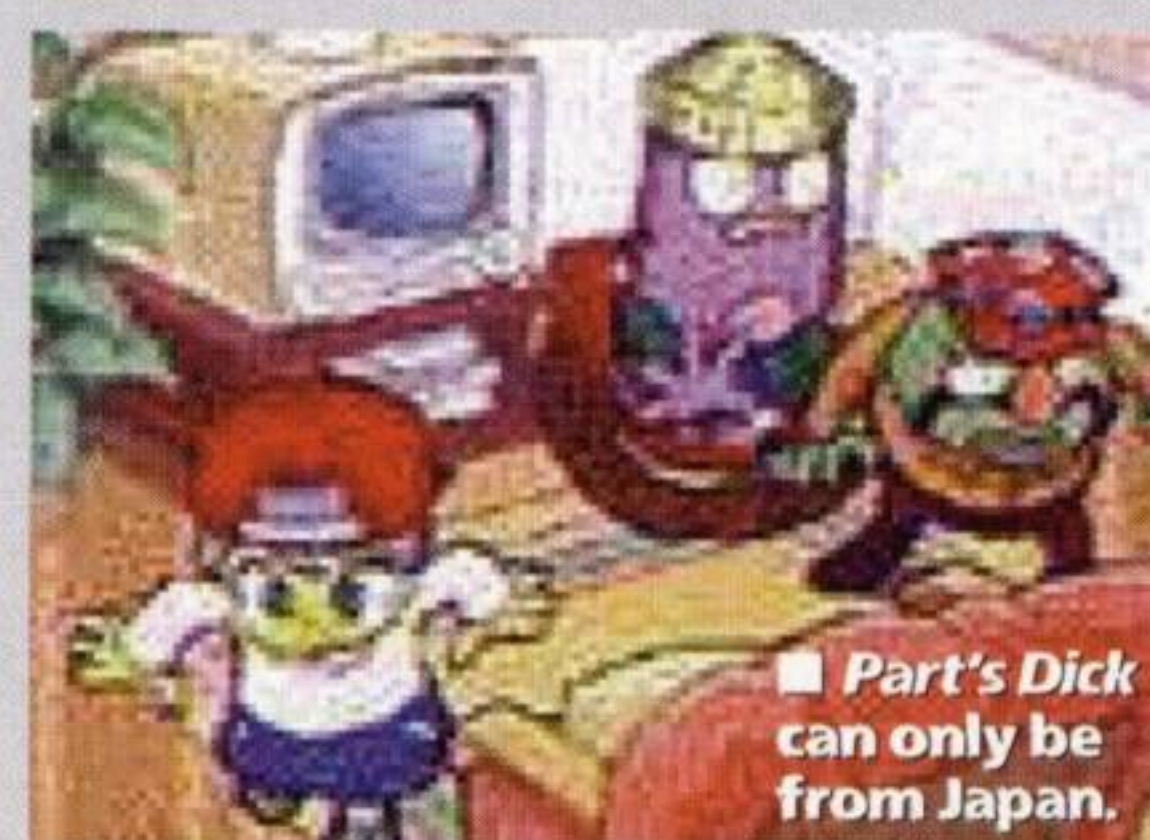
Orient excess

It could only happen in Japan



## Home protection vigilantes

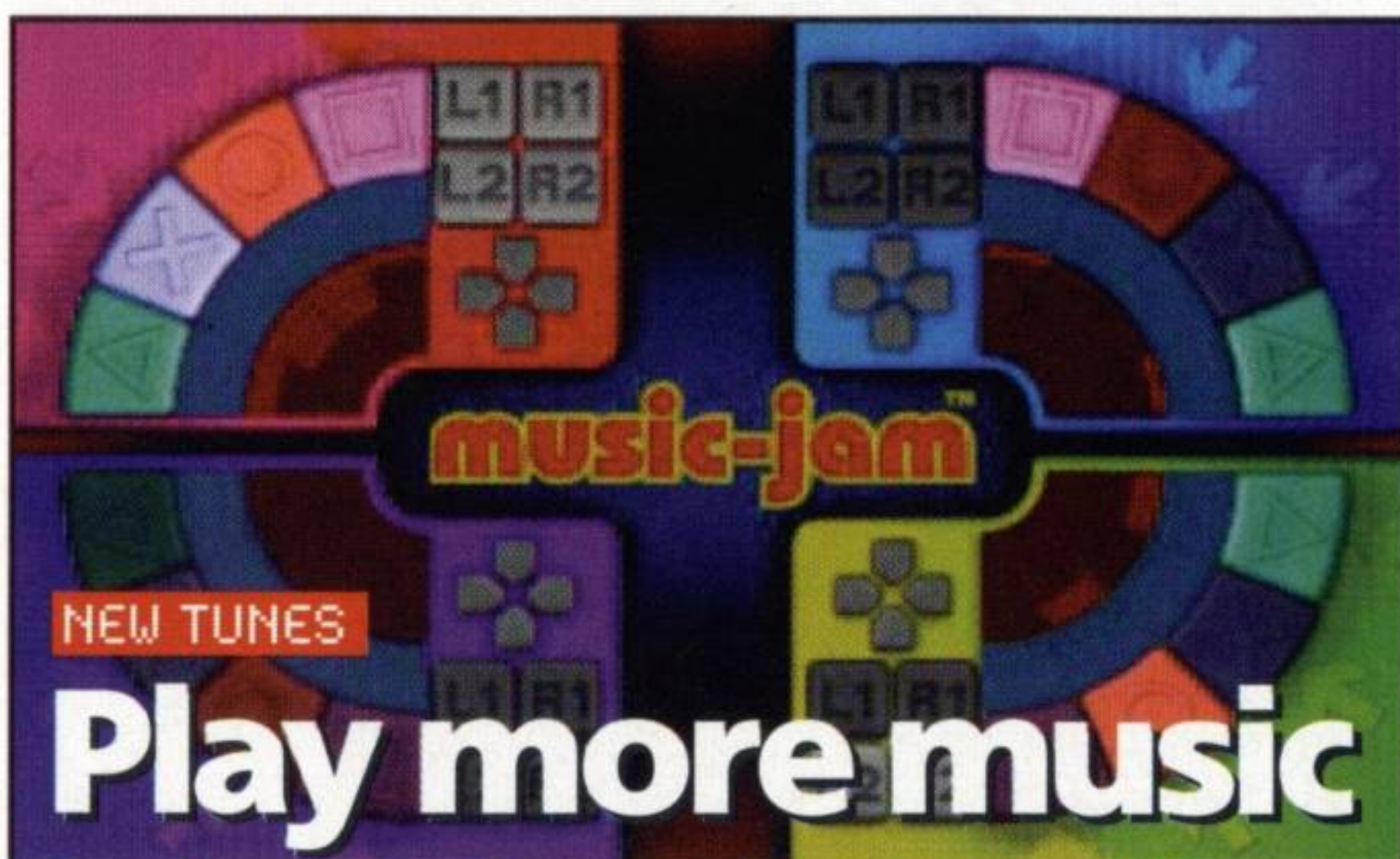
We doubt the Japanese embraced Hollywood superbrat McCauley Culkin as willingly as the West, but his "comedy" movie *Home Alone* seems to have rubbed off on at least one developer over there. The disturbingly-named *Part's Dick*, a new PlayStation game from Banpresto, features a man so sick of having his house burgled that he decides to set traps and pitfalls for the thieves to fall into. He isn't your



Part's Dick can only be from Japan.

average have-a-go hero – the traps include mousetraps, falling bricks, bombs, and rockets. Seems like he's actually less interested in protecting his house than inflicting pain on would-be intruders. In fact, if

the burglars express lack of interest, the house-owner entices them into his domain, and then watches with glee as they're seriously injured. *Part's Dick* – is this the future of Neighbourhood Watch? Scarey stuff.



Jester's novel music creation hit returns via Tokyo

Jester Interactive's *Music* game of last year made music creation possible for the PlayStation, and around the country, PlayStation gamers were becoming the Chemical Brothers for a day.

*Music 2000* is the sequel, boasting a greatly improved interface, cooler samples, an increased choice of genres (branching out into rock and indie styles), multi-player action and a PC version.

Following Judge Jules' endorsement of the original, a list of top

names from the music industry are being approached to provide samples and demo tunes for *Music 2000*.

Emphasis has sensibly been shifted away from the frankly superfluous video creation idea and toward development of the "music jam" – a four-player gaming mode, so *Music 2000* is no longer a solo pursuit. The feasibility of a microphone peripheral is being investigated, to enable you to record your own samples.

The PlayStation "game" will remain an

original, but the PC version of *Music 2000* will obviously have to compete with a large number of more in-depth CD-ROM music packages.

The makers believe that *Music 2000's* novice accessibility and low price point will set it apart from other PC software, while MIDI compatibility will increase its variety for higher end users.

No doubt we'll all be laying down some cracklin' beats when Codemasters finally publishes *Music 2000* in November.

## INCOMING

Six snapshots of work-in-progress from around the gaming globe

3 months



### Theme Park World

PC/PlayStation  
Bullfrog/EA  
Autumn  
The ability to relieve a bunch of hyperactive kids of their pocket money (and their lunch), now on PlayStation. Hurrah!

6 months



### Fear Factor

PlayStation  
Kronos/Eidos  
November  
Stylish manga adventure in the vein of *Res Evil*. Noir setting and mucho gratuitous shooting.



### Ready 2 Rumble Boxing

Dreamcast  
Midway  
Winter  
Hugely entertaining boxing game in which a lardass fool belts a man with an afro. Chortlesome.



### 40 Winks

N64  
Eurocom/GT  
Winter  
Imaginative kiddie platformer attempting to "do a Rare" with similar stylings to *Banjo and Jet Force Gemini*.

1 year



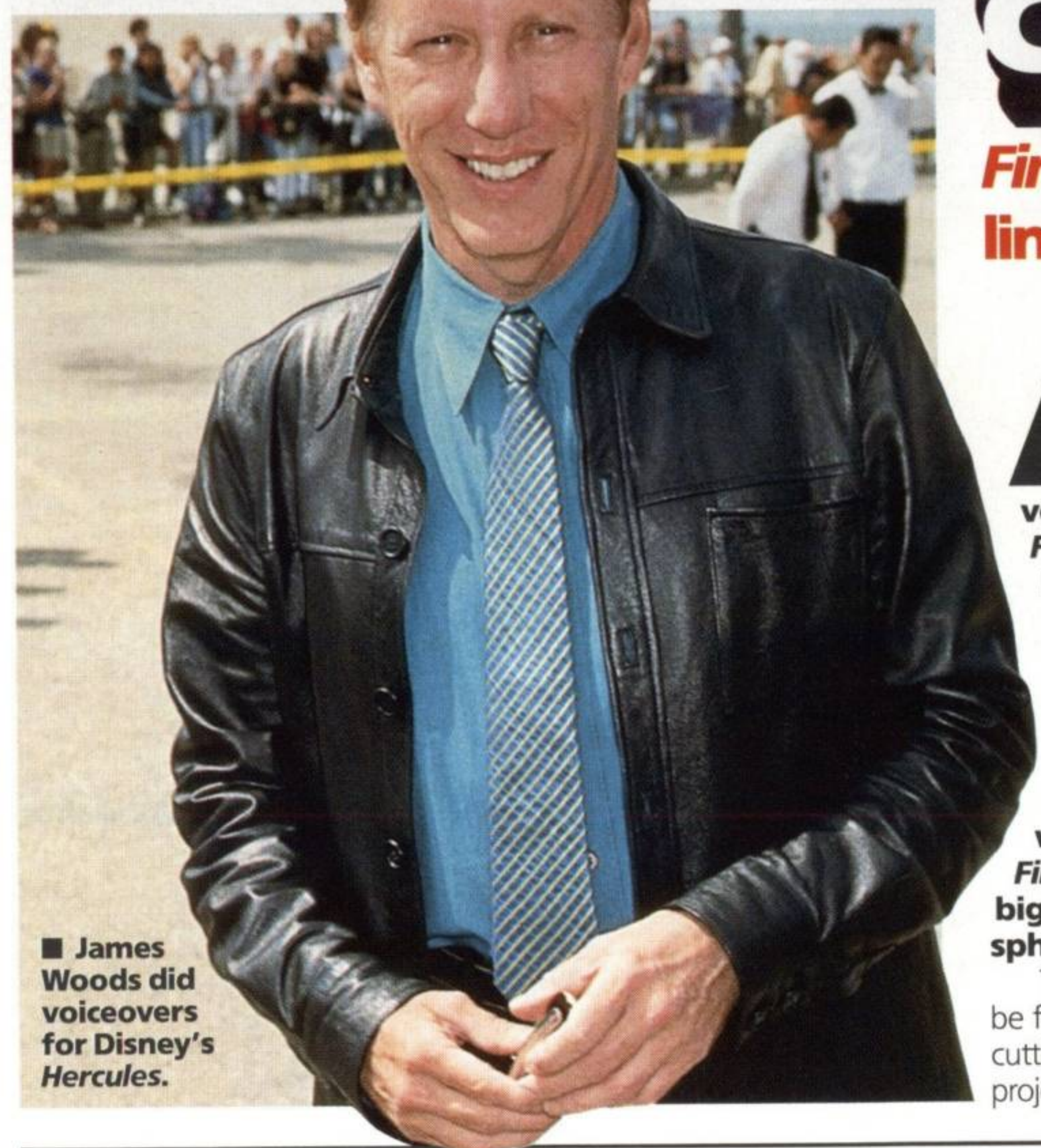
### Team Fortress 2

PC  
Sierra  
Spring 2000  
Half-Life spin off Team Fortress had millions blasting each other to pieces over the Internet. This WWII-themed sequel should be even better.





■ Steve Buscemi: from *Reservoir Dogs* and *Fargo* to *Final Fantasy*.



■ James Woods did voiceovers for Disney's *Hercules*.

■ *Final Fantasy* has pulled in major stars to do the voices for the movie.

MOVIE NEWS

# Fantasy casting

## Final Fantasy the movie | Stars lined up for voice parts

**A** list of major Hollywood stars has been pencilled in for major voice roles in *Final Fantasy: The Movie*. Alec Baldwin, Donald Sutherland, Steve Buscemi and James Woods are just some of the actors expected to contribute. This is confirmation, if any was needed, that the *Final Fantasy* franchise is a big deal, even beyond the sphere of videogames.

The *Final Fantasy* movie will be fully computer animated using cutting edge technology. A joint project between the Japanese

game series developers Square and Columbia Pictures, the film is set in Earth 2065 and its story will bear only a distant relationship to those of the RPG series so far.

*Final Fantasy: The Movie* is scheduled for a major release in 2001 and it's not known as yet whether this will tie-in with the release of a *Final Fantasy* game.

Meanwhile, as the UK still awaits news of a release date for the Japanese top-seller *Final Fantasy VIII*, it seems more than likely that Squaresoft's Honolulu team are already working on *Final Fantasy IX*.

This new game will be among the PlayStation's last big titles before it is finally superseded by Sony's next generation machine.

## Sam Richards' World of Games



### Web of evil

Capcom's *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* will be one of the first Dreamcast titles to utilise the console's on-line capabilities. Once Dreamcast is plugged into the modem, a special Website will be accessible direct from the game menu. Here, players will find new weapons to download, while secret areas and bonus levels will be added at regular intervals.

*Resident Evil: Code Veronica* is due out in the UK before Christmas.

### PC variety

Top Japanese videogame makers Konami recently announced plans to port its best games to the PC in Western markets – *ISS Pro* and *Metal Gear Solid* will be the first examples, with the latter currently sporting a pre-Xmas release date.

Now Namco has followed suit and we can expect *Tekken* and *Ridge Racer* games for the PC sometime in the year 2000. Tremendous.

### Sega gets kitted out

Is no chest safe from Sega's advances? Arsenal gave it a taste for shirt sponsorship and now it has stamped the Dreamcast logo on the kits of Sampdoria (Italy) and St Etienne (France). All we need now is a flagship Dreamcast footy game – we're waiting to discover if Infogrames' *UEFA Striker* is up to the task.

### Crash landing

News is spreading like a bushfire that mischievous marsupial Crash Bandicoot has gone walkabout from his creators at Naughty Dog and has resurfaced in the offices of Eurocom. It seems only yesterday he was born and already he's leaving home.

Whether his alleged new developer can recreate the platforming panache of the first three games or not remains to be seen, but this news does at least suggest that *Crash 4* will be with us before the PlayStation expires. Naughty Dog is still at the helm for *Crash Team Racing*, the *Mario Kart* done out for PlayStation soon.

PHOTOS: PICTORIAL PRESS

## NEW GAME

# You got soul

Adventuring beat-'em-up for PC and DC



**H**ow's this for a yarn: an ambitious French development team (Toka) under the guidance of a brand new publisher (Piggyback) invent a classic arcade-style 3D beat-'em-up and ship it to Tokyo in an

attempt to outsmart the Japanese at their own game. After positive initial feedback, they port it to Dreamcast in time to make it one of the first European titles, and then to PC where it will instantly rectify the dearth of beat-'em-ups for the system.

The game in question is *Soul Fighter* and the key component is fun. It's heavily-influenced by coin-op beat-'em-ups of yore, and although the 3D environments are several generations ahead of the side-scrolling favoured by *Double Dragon* and many others,



■ *Soul Fighter*: playing the Japanese at their own game.

the classic fighting moves and boss encounters are brilliantly implemented.

Graphics are powerful and in-ner-face depicting a colourful cod-medieval world populated by orcs and dragons. Characters

move with the required mix of realism (when performing basic moves) and ludicrous fantasy (when pulling off combos or performing weapon moves). Basically, it seems as though Toka has

achieved the optimum balance between innovation and nostalgia, and between depth and immediacy. PC owners in particular will look forward to getting their hands on *Soul Fighter*.



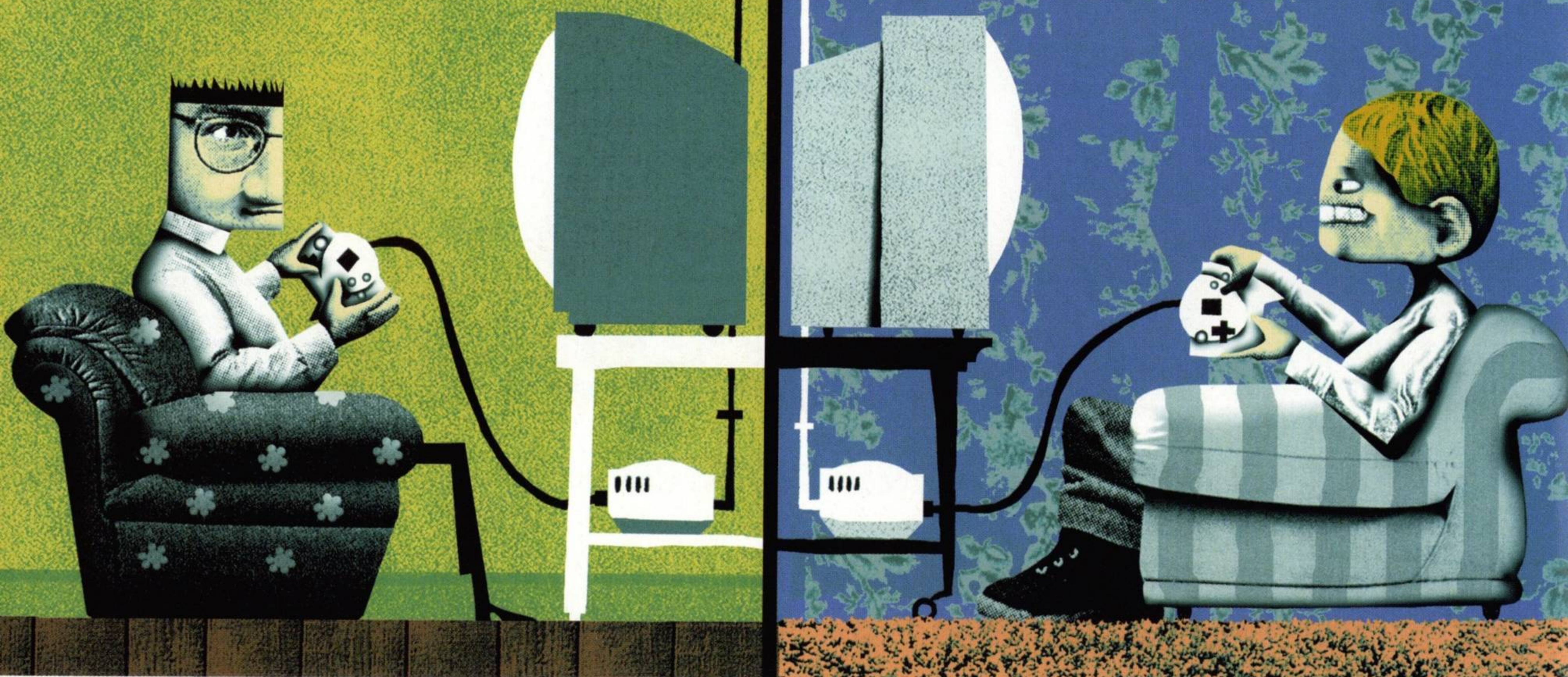


ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON

### NEWS ANALYSIS

# On-line gaming: will you get connected this autumn?

After innumerable false dawns, gaming on the internet will become reality in 1999

By Andy Hutchinson

**H**aving threatened to revolutionise the videogame market for several years, on-line gaming should finally explode this year. There are several interesting developments that look set to add a welcome human touch to your gaming experience, whether it's on the PC or on a console. The days of predictable computerised AI could soon be at an end as you finally get a proper chance to connect to other gamers and test your skills against real opponents.

The reason multi-player gaming has failed to take off in this country – as opposed to the US, where it's massive – is because we have to pay through the nose for our on-line time. In the States, thanks to free local call rates, it's possible to stay logged on to the Internet permanently via a dial-up connection. With a permanent connection to the Internet you can play your favourite games, be they *Half-Life*, *Quake* or *Command & Conquer*, against real opponents all over the world.

Until you've savoured the thrills of multi-player gaming it's hard to understand the attraction. The fact is that playing against a real human

opponent is infinitely preferable to playing against a synthetic human-designed construct, such as the AI sequences used in games like *Metal Gear Solid*. Humans are a million times sneakier and cleverer than even the very best available artificial intelligence, making multi-player gaming the only real test of your gaming skill.

More importantly, however, is the community that multi-player gaming breeds. The clan system,

allied to games such as *Quake* and *Half-Life*, is huge in the PC world, where teams of like-minded gamers do battle against other teams in almost medieval contests of raw twitch, react and cope skills. You may have finished *Quake II* or *Half-Life*, but until you're confident you can hold your head up in a deathmatch then you're no gamer.

Multi-player gaming has been a popular pastime on the PC for a

couple of years, but thanks to BT's draconian pricing policies and the lack of any real alternative to modem connection, it remains an expensive hobby. But not for much longer. BT Internet already offers a free unlimited Net access service at weekends via an 0800 telephone number (as long you subscribe to its £11-a-month access plan); and other companies, such as X-Stream, are starting to offer similar services.

More importantly, this autumn is rumoured to be the time when BT will launch its ADSL service nationally. Currently undergoing trials in the Surrey area, ADSL offers fast permanent access to the Internet, with no dial-up

## Humans are sneakier than even the very best artificial intelligence





■ Expect real opponents in *Quake III* (far left) and *Half-Life* (above, below) to test your gaming prowess to the ultimate limit.

## Until now, on-line gaming has remained an expensive hobby

charges. With download speeds of up to 8Mb, it's well over 100 times faster than the quickest modem, and since you play a flat fee of £30 a month you can play multi-player games as and when you choose. You'll also be able to watch Web casts (video feeds), download games in next-to-no time, and utilise Internet phone applications that enable you to call anywhere in the world for virtually nothing.

This autumn, coincidentally, is when id Software is supposed to release its eagerly-awaited 3D action blaster, *Quake III*. Unlike previous id titles, *Quake III* will be a multi-player-only game, so you can play against either AI-scripted players in an arena based on your machine, or connect to the Internet and try your hand against other gamers. id is spending considerable time and effort making sure that newbies can enjoy the game just as much as *Quake* deathlords, including work to balance various arenas according to the skill level of the gamer in question.

One development that's already taken the multi-player gaming community by storm is the concept of team play. Rather than battling against 24 other individuals, you can now get into teams and battle side against side. The *Team Fortress* conversion for *Quake* started the team-play ball rolling, and now the *Half-Life Team Fortress Conversion*, and team-based titles such as

*Starsiege Tribes* have become massively popular.

In these team games, you can assume different identities, calling upon your particular strengths as a gamer. For instance in *Half-Life TFC* you can assume the role of a spy, an explosives expert, a sniper or even a medic. By helping out your team-mates – often at the cost of your own points – you can ensure that your side eventually wins the day.

The whole team concept will continue to evolve and improve, particularly in the area of team sizes. The largest workable team at the moment is 16 players, giving 32 gamers the opportunity to battle against each other. As

bandwidth improves, and server technology becomes smarter, however, we're likely to see 64, 128, 256 and even 1,000 gamers playing against each other.

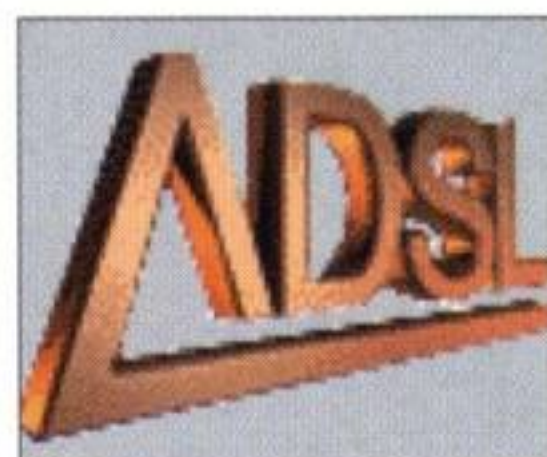
But that's on the PC. Up until now the console manufacturers have done their best to ignore the massive PC multi-player scene, but with the newer consoles on the way, they're finally wising up. Sega has announced that the British Dreamcast will ship with a built-in modem, so you can enjoy on-line battles, as well as download the latest "patches" or improvements for your games.

With Sega blazing the trail for on-line console gaming, Sony and Nintendo will follow. PSX2 will almost certainly come equipped with a modem and Nintendo has indicated that it'll follow suit. Since this is the on-line world, where normal distinctions have no relevance, Dreamcast, Dolphin, PlayStation 2 and PC gamers will

all be able to compete against each other, in one humongous, glorious deathmatch. Then we'll see who the best gamers are.

With so many large events converging towards the end of the year, multi-player gaming should explode. The key console gaming audience can get involved, the PC gamers can enjoy virtually

free unlimited Internet access and the games community is producing ever more brilliant titles to test the playing skills of gameheads to the max. We have seen the future of games, and it's on-line. **A**



### THE FACTS?

## Really? Free Net access at last?

*The rumour mill's churning fast*

■ Nobody's going on the record about it, but we have it from reliable sources (on a "Need To Know" basis) that BT will launch its ADSL service sometime this autumn. ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) is a digital connection to the Internet which has numerous advantages over existing standards. The service transforms ordinary phone lines (also known as "twisted copper pairs") into high-

speed digital lines for ultra-fast Internet access.

Since the standard uses digital coding techniques, it can squeeze up to 99% more capacity out of a phone line without interfering with regular services. That means you could be simultaneously talking on the phone or sending a fax, while playing *Half-Life TFC* against the world.

Speed/bandwidth-wise you can get up 8Mbps downstream (to

the user) and 1Mbps upstream, depending upon line length and loop and line conditions.

The huge advantage, however, is that ADSL is always on, permanently connected to the Net, with no call-up or dialling charges on top of the £30. It's a total winner in every way and it's about time we got something this useful, because it's going to seriously kick Internet use in the UK to life. Roll on autumn.

### SEGA ON-LINE

## Dreamcast's plans for a modem life

*Changing console gaming forever?*



■ It's just typical of Sega to produce something revolutionary and then cripple it. As happy as we are that the company is including a modem with its new console, we can't understand the logic of using a 33K model. 56K modems have been around for over a year and offer more speed for little extra cost. The Dreamcast's integral modem is rumoured to be upgradeable, but why not just start at 56K in the first place?

The modem will connect

to the on-line world via Heat.net, a popular PC multi-player gaming service. You'll be able to connect your console to a special Dreamcast home page, from where you should be able to send and receive e-mail and generally interact with other Dreamcast gamers. Obviously, you can expect plenty of third-party software to appear, too, enabling

such facilities as tele-

conferencing. However, there's not much information about which titles will support multi-player gaming. The only game we've had confirmed is the superb *Sega Rally 2*; where up to eight players can race each other around the graphically sumptuous circuits. We're waiting for a multi-player version of *Get Bass!* in which fishy gamers can admire each other's poles and tackle throughout the year.





# “My Beautiful Lunchtime in The Park”

You’ve got to get out though, haven’t you? This month, we thought we’d see who’s playing videogames *al fresco*.

■ Cheese and tomato sandwiches again? Feed them to the ducks and buy some chips instead, we say.



■ PHOTOGRAPHY: JUDE EDGINTON

THIS MONTH

## St James's Park, London

The technology may be more than ten years old, but Game Boys are still selling like hot cakes. But to who exactly? We thought we'd take a nearly-deserved saunter down to picturesque St James's Park, in London, to see who we could find skiving off with their Game Boy. Half expecting it to be the predictable gaggle of schoolkids, the people we found were far more surprising. Everyone, from businessmen to octogenarians, it seems, is hooked.

### Slot check

- Place: **St James's Park, London**
- Nearest Tube station: **St James's Park (District and Circle lines)**
- History: **Henry VIII acquired the land – previously a marshy bog – at the beginning of the 16th Century to build a deer park. Buckingham Palace was built in 1703 and has housed the Royal Family since 1837.**
- Size: **175,000 sq metres**
- Nearby attractions: **Buckingham Palace, Downing Street, Trafalgar Square**
- Entertainment: **park benches, grass, flowers, trees, series of lakes, café**
- How much: **free entry. Ice creams £1.50, hot dogs £1, deckchairs £1 per sitting**
- Wildlife: **squirrels, pelicans, geese, pigeons and ducks. Quack.**



“You’ve got to keep up with the times, though, haven’t you?”





## Eileen, Gwen & Evelyn Suffolk, 57, 67 & 75



**Hello! [Hands over Game Boy]**

"What's this, then?"

**"A Game Boy."**

"Oooh."

"I still can't work my video."

"Evelyn's got Videoplus."

"Videoplus, yes."

**"What's that?"**

"You have to type the numbers in."

**[Hands over Game Boy camera]**

"Eeeh, isn't it marvellous?"

"Gwen looks like Vera Duckworth."

[Hysterics ensue]

[Mimicking] "Chuck, chuck. Eh, Jack..."

[More hysterics]

"Jack's gone funny in the head."

"I wouldn't miss my 'Street."

"Is he taping us talking?"

"Oooh, he is."

"Cheeky monkey."

"My son's got *Snoopy*."

"*Snoopy*, yes."

"Don't get hooked, Eileen."

**Err, hello?**

"Have you eaten?"

**We... eh? Have we eaten?**

"We brought rolls to save money."

"How much does this *Arcade* of

yours cost, then?"

**£2.80.**

"My word."

"Ice creams cost £1.50."

"S'terrible."

"Where did you get that camera?"

Was it Japan?"

"Look, Evelyn. There's a squirrel."

"Let me get my video camera."

**You've got a video camera?**

"Got to keep with the times."

**You have indeed, ladies.**

"Take care. Wrap up warm."

**Err, we will. Thanks. Bye.**

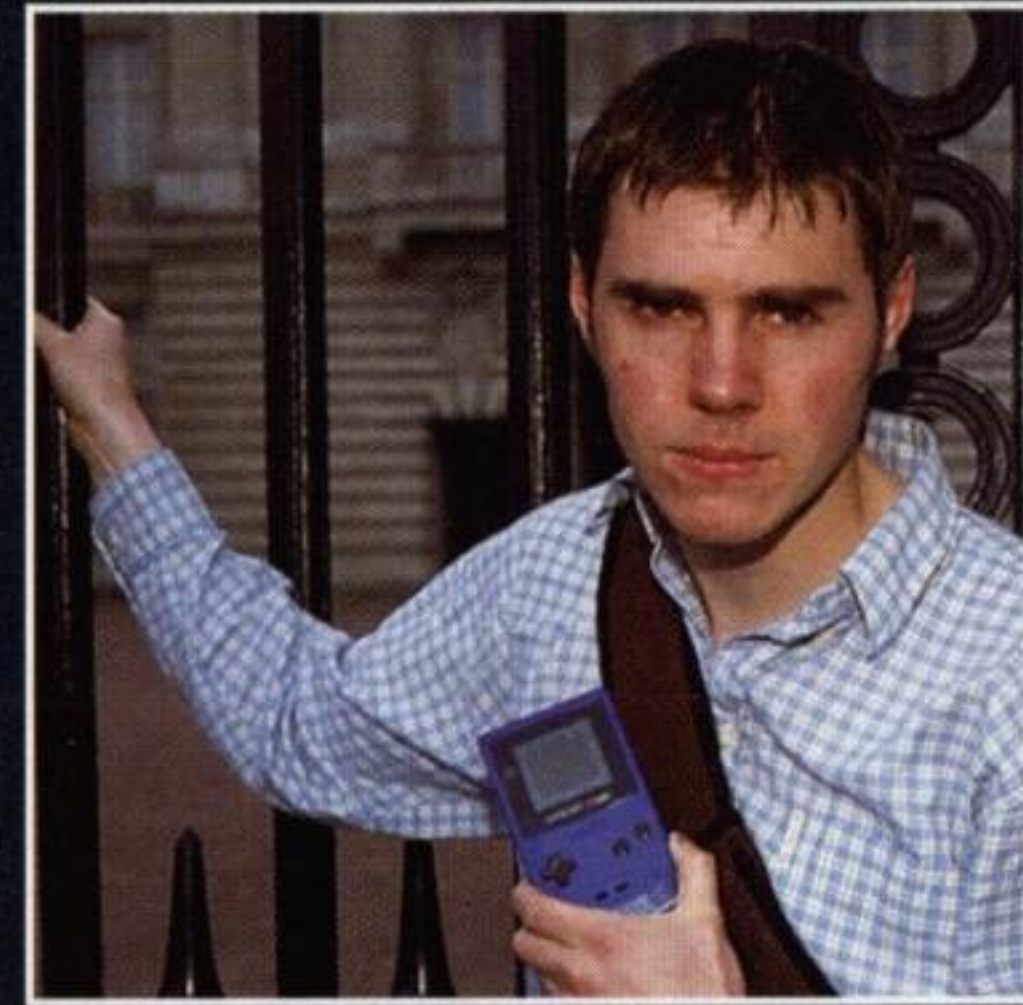




**"My Beautiful Lunch  
in the Park"**



**Phil**  
23, London



**Hello. This is Buckingham Palace, isn't it?**

"Er, yes, that's right."

**Are they Changing The Guards, or something?**

[Adopting *History Today* voice]

"Yes, and the guards don't flinch, even if you taunt them."

**Really? Is the Queen in?**

"Yeah, her flag's flying. It's to deter burglars. That's what she tells me."

**[Incredulously] You're friends with the Queen?**

"We're like that." [Crosses fingers]

**[Suspiciously] Hang on. If you're best buddies, how come you're out here playing Tetris?**

[Pause] "Um, I'm practising. Yeah, that's it. I'm taking Liz and Phil on later this afternoon."

**Er... right. [To photographer] Looks like we've got a right nutter here.**

[Aggressively] "I'm friends with the guards as well you know, mate."

**That's it. We're off. Cheers "mate".**

"Wibble." [Phil returns to *Tetris*]

**Sheesh. Mind you, what do you expect when you trawl the capital's parks talking to strangers?**





**"I'm just going to have one more game on *Frogger*, and then I've got to get back to work."**



## **Amy 22 (on Saturday), London**



**Hello. Nice sarnie?**

[Mouth full] "Mmmmmffffggghhh."

**What've you got?**

"Bacon and cheese." [Spies a duck]

"Here, Ducky. Want some sandwich?"

**Have you ever eaten duck?**

"Only without realising. I had some ravioli the other day and it had duck inside." [Screws up face] "Eeeuuuoo. Ducks are too cute to eat."

**But pigs are fine?**

"Definitely. Bacon rocks." [Takes another bite. Mayonnaise squirts everywhere] "I haven't got mayonnaise on my face, have I?"

**Oh, no. So what do you do, Amy?**

"I work on a magazine called *Art Quarterly*. Want to see it?"

**Okay. Wow! Your magazine is patronised by Her Majesty The Queen.**

"Perhaps you could get her to patronise your magazine."

**Doubt she reads it.**

"Maybe you should aim a bit lower. Someone like..."

**Les Dennis?**

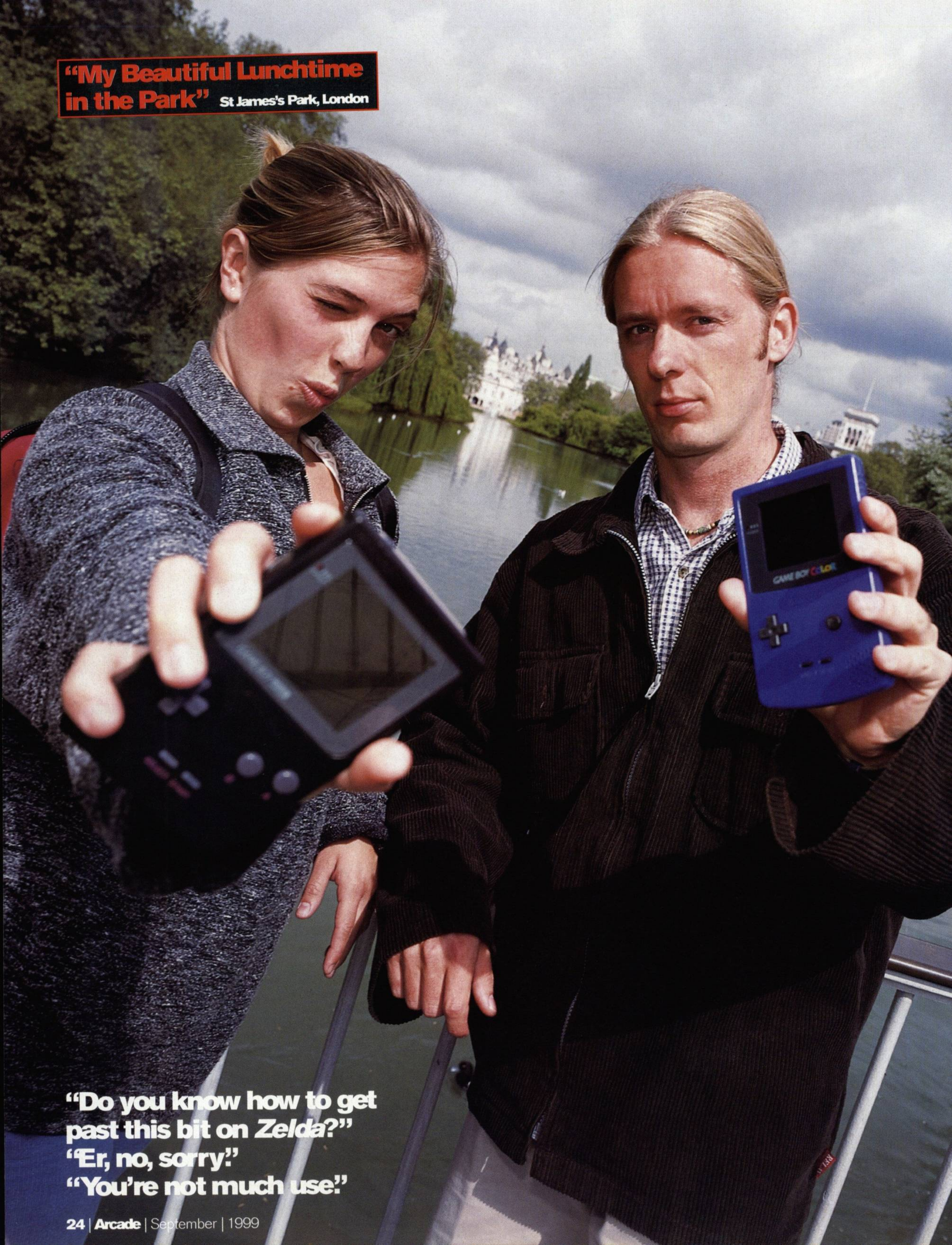
"He's funny. Anyway, I'm just going to have one more game on *Frogger*, and then I've got to get back to work."

**Okay, Amy. Have a nice afternoon. Bye!**





**"My Beautiful Lunchtime  
in the Park"** St James's Park, London

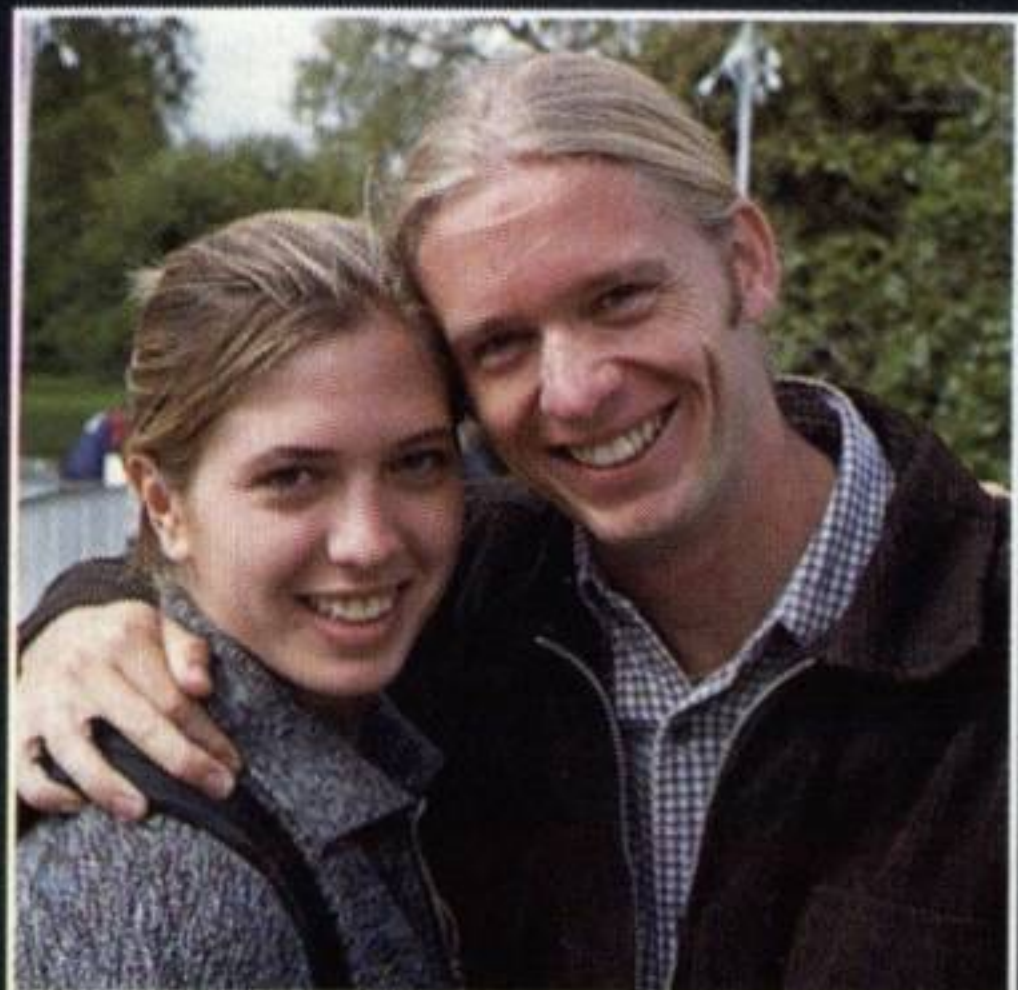


**"Do you know how to get  
past this bit on *Zelda*?"**  
**"Er, no, sorry."**  
**"You're not much use."**



## Nadia & Brendon

South Africa,  
21 & 25



**Hello.**  
"What do you want us to say?"  
**You can say whatever you want. What are you playing on your Game Boy?**  
"Zelda. Do you know how to get past this bit? I'm here."  
**Er, no, sorry.**  
"Well, you're not much use."  
**Sorry. Can we take your photo?**  
"Are you going to scan them in? You won't do anything funny to us, will you?"  
**Yes, we're going to cut off your heads and stick them on to different bodies.**  
"Can I have Pamela Anderson's body, please?"  
[Brendan speaks] "Me too."  
**Err, we'll see what we can do. See ya.**  
"Cheers."



## Simon Birmingham, 31



**Hello. What are you playing?**  
"Donkey Kong, from the Game & Watch Gallery. It brings back some fond memories."  
**What do you do for a living?**  
"I work for Price Waterhouse."  
**So are you up in London for some important business meeting?**  
"Actually, I've just come up for a job interview."  
**Who was it for? How did it go?**  
"It's for *The Economist*. I haven't had it yet. It's in five minutes."  
**Yikes. Have you swotted up?**  
"No. It's cool. Just trying to take my mind off it."

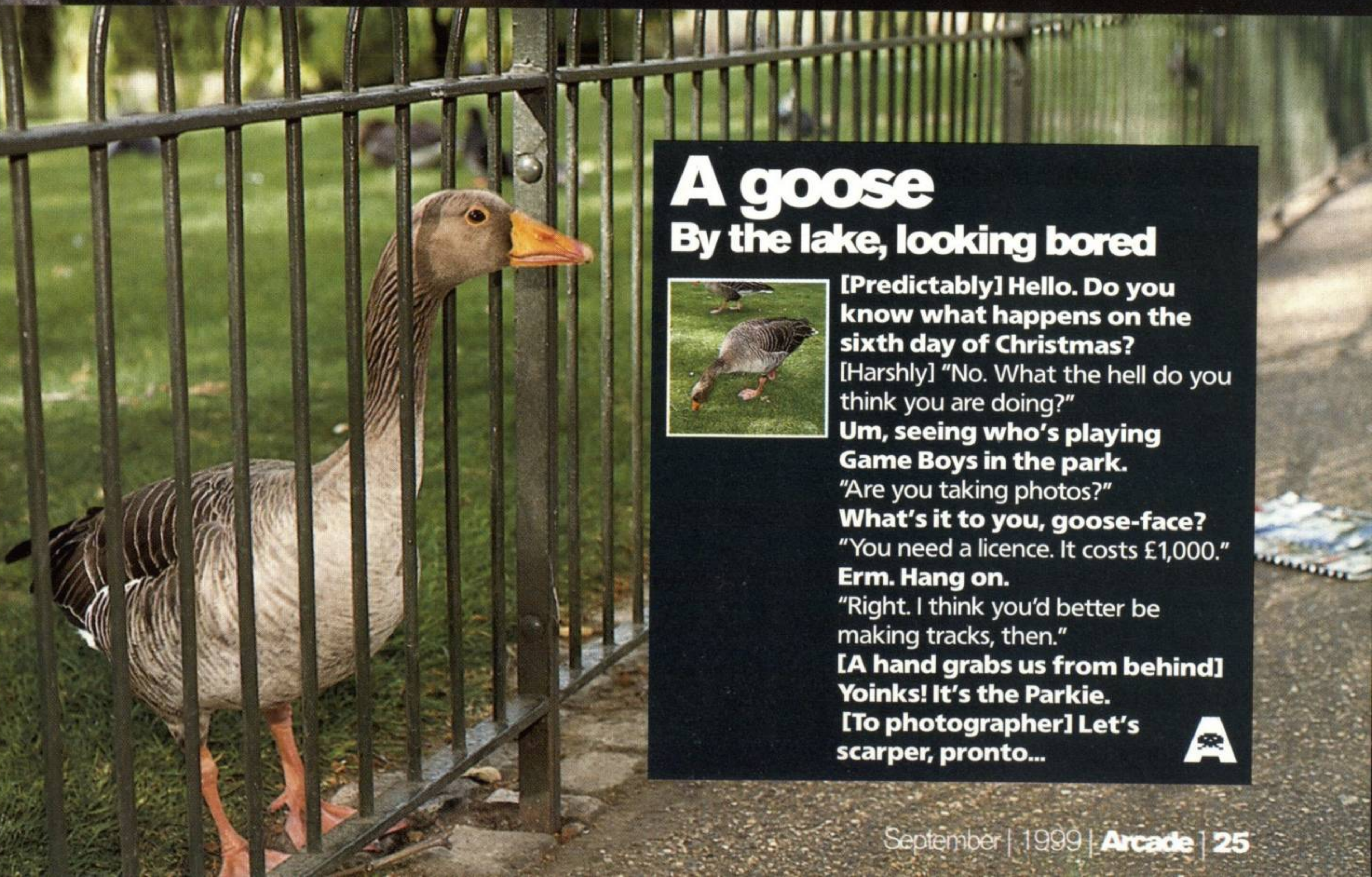
**Game Boys are good for that. What's your favourite games?**  
"Driving games. Oh, and I like quiz machines too. Down the pub."  
**Have you played Telly Addicts? With Noel Edmonds? It's really easy to win a fiver on.**  
"I might have done. Can't remember. I'm usually too drunk. Anyway, I'd better be off."  
**Good luck with the interview. Er, do you know where the police station is? We've dropped our wallet.**  
"Yeah, I'm just headed that way. Follow me."  
**Cheers.**



### Your beautiful arcade...

■ The people don't necessarily have to be beautiful, and it doesn't strictly have to be an arcade. But if you've got a favourite haunt you like to play videogames in, then write in and we might just come round to visit.

Write to us at:  
**My Beautiful Arcade,**  
Arcade, 30 Monmouth  
Street, Bath BA1 2BW  
Fax us on: 01225 732375  
E-mail us at: [arcade.mag@futurenet.co.uk](mailto:arcade.mag@futurenet.co.uk)



## A goose

By the lake, looking bored



[Predictably] **Hello. Do you know what happens on the sixth day of Christmas?**  
[Harshly] "No. What the hell do you think you are doing?"  
**Um, seeing who's playing Game Boys in the park.**  
"Are you taking photos?"  
**What's it to you, goose-face?**  
"You need a licence. It costs £1,000."  
**Erm. Hang on.**  
"Right. I think you'd better be making tracks, then."  
[A hand grabs us from behind] **Yoinks! It's the Parkie.**  
[To photographer] **Let's scarper, pronto...**





■ **NOW PLAYING:** *Super Mario Brothers DX*. He's all dressed up in 3D these days, but there's plenty of fun to be had with a two-dimensional Mario on Game Boy.





**NOW PLAYING**  
IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH

# SUPER MARIO BROS. DX

Format: **Game Boy Color** | Developer: **Nintendo** | Publisher: **Nintendo** | Price: **£25** | Release date: **on sale now** | Players: **1-2** | ★★★★★



## WHAT'S SUPER MARIO BROS DX ALL ABOUT?

In 1982, gaming super-brain Shigeru Miyamoto fashioned a new game for Nintendo's Famicom console, basing it on the hero of his earlier arcade title, *Donkey Kong*. That game was *Super Mario Bros.*, the sheer brilliance of which revived the flagging console market and invented a whole new genre – the side-scrolling platformer. *Super Mario Bros DX* is the astonishingly faithful Game Boy Color version, replicating the platform-jumping, turtle-bopping, coin-collecting gameplay perfectly. And as if that wasn't enough, the cartridge is positively stuffed with secrets, bonus games and hidden extras, all of which help to suck every last delicious drop from the retro gameplay on offer.

## PIPE DREAMS

Ten ways to raise your *Super Mario* stock.

Unsurprisingly for a Nintendo game, *Super Mario Bros DX* is stuffed with secret bits and pieces. Of course, you need to know how to find them – and that's precisely where *Arcade* comes in.

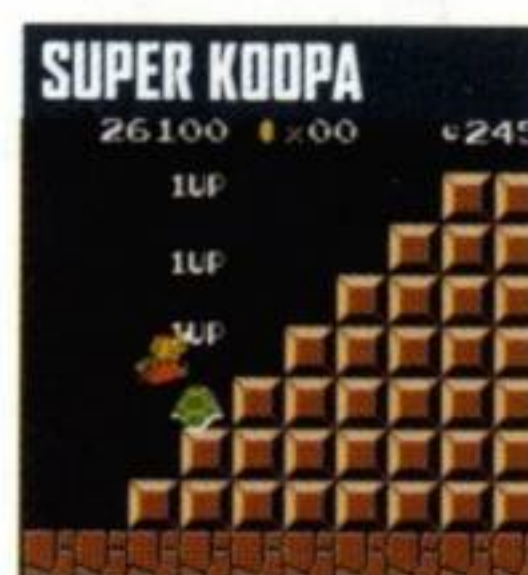
1. Score more than 100,000 in the main game and you'll gain access to the "You vs Boo" sub-game, in which you can race a ghost through eight switch-filled levels.

2. Go one better and achieve a score of 300,000. This opens up a whole new set of super-difficult "Super Players" levels.

3. Go to the Toy Box and repeatedly get your fortune told. Before too long you'll earn a picture of Peach, and an extra five lives to try your luck with in any new game you fancy trying.

4. After you've completed the game, select the question mark in the Toy Box, then click on Peach. You can now compose your own song and picture for when you switch the game on.

We've shown you (above) how many red coins appear before each Yoshi egg. Reveal the flat grey and brown blocks by head-butting them.



If multiple lives interest you, here's a sneaky method. At the end of level 3-1, the Koopas come hopping down the steps. Jump on one of them to kick the shell, but make it a very small jump. If you've timed it right, you'll land and kick the shell back again as it bounces off the step. This cycle will repeat forever, and each time you boot the shell you'll earn an extra life. Hurrah!

5. If you have a secret urge to play as Mario's less popular brother, press Select on the Map screen to adopt Luigi's broccoli-coloured dungarees.

6. If the jellyfish-like bloobers in the underwater levels are proving too much for you, simply walk along the floor – they won't even get near you.

7. Kick the first turtle on level 3-2 and run after it. It'll knock over seven bad guys, giving you heaps of points and an extra life. Now die, restart and repeat for a quick high score.

8. Use Tip 7 (or get an extra life by any method), then save. Now turn the game off and on again. Keep doing this to earn as many lives as you have decided you want.

9. On most levels that have a "roof" of bricks at the top of the screen, you can break through and run along where the scores are displayed. Keep running and you'll find a Warp.

10. There's a secret Warp in level 4-2. Jump up from the first downward staircase to reveal three hidden blocks, then climb up on them and jump to find the beanstalk that leads to the Warp.

### MARIO PARTY TIPS!

## Fill Super Mario's photo album...

**Page 1**  
**Top-left** – fill the green score bar in Challenge mode.  
**Top-right** – win every medal in Challenge mode.  
**Centre** – finish level 8-4 in Original mode.  
**Bottom-left** – finish level 8\*4 in Original mode.  
**Bottom-right** – finish the Super Players mode.

**Page 2**  
**Top-left** – earn a firework display by finishing any stage with 1, 3 or 6 as the final digit on the time counter.

**Top-middle** – find a 1-up mushroom on any level.

**Top-right** – find a hidden beanstalk on any level.  
**Middle-left** – link two Game Boys together and play the Vs mode.  
**Middle** – finish level 8-4 or 8\*4 to rescue the lovely Peach.

**Middle-right** – use the Game Boy's infrared panel to trade scores with a friend.

**Bottom-left** – find all the red coins in Challenge mode.  
**Bottom-middle** – win all the high-score medals in Challenge

mode.  
**Bottom-right** – find all the Yoshi eggs in Challenge mode.

**Page 3**  
You'll get these medals for killing creatures in the main game. Running from left to right and top to bottom, they are: Goomba, Blooper, Lakitu, Cheep-Cheep, Hammer Bros, Bullet Bill, Koopa Troopa, Spiny and Buzzy Beetle.

**Page 4 and 5**  
You can build up these big photos by killing the Bowsers from all eight worlds with fireballs.

**WORLD 1-4** 5 8

**SCORE 13650**

**COINS** ▶ 00000

**SCORE** ▶ 13650/13000

**GAMEPLAY CHALLENGE**

### Block buster

Completing the Challenge mode by beating the red coin and score targets is all well and good, but on how many levels can you collect all the red coins and beat the score target? It's actually impossible to do this on some levels (as diverting

to pick up a red coin will cause you to miss a vital scoring opportunity). But set yourself a target of beating both targets on, say, ten levels, and see how many more you can do without your fingers falling off. As Bowser would say, "Bwa-ha-ha-haaaaa!"



■ **NOW PLAYING:** Kingpin. When a game arrives that's full of swearing, there's only one man who you can turn to for an opinion. Er, you did pay for that beer, didn't you, Roger?



**WARNING**  
THESE  
PREMISES  
ARE  
PATROLLED  
BY  
UNDER PAID  
**OAPs**

FULCHESTER'S NEW  
**BIG shop**  
250,000 SQUARE FEET  
**HYPERMARKET**  
TO BE OPENED **TODAY**  
BY "BOLLOCKS"  
T.V. CELEBRITY  
**ROGER MELLIE**  
(HOST OF 'CELEBRITY PISSFLAPS', 'GOLDEN SHOWER', 'UP YOUR RINGPIECE' and 'BLUE ROGER')



**BIG bargains**

Emus  
Regal



# NOW PLAYING IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH KINGPIN

Format: PC | Developer: Xatrix | Publisher: Interplay | Price: £30 | Release date: on sale now | Players: 1-8 | ★★★★★



## WHAT'S KINGPIN ALL ABOUT?

It's not just the swearing that puts Kingpin on the map – it's the violence, too. But where earlier first-person shooter games like Quake and Half-Life have been set in fantasy science fiction worlds, the violence in Kingpin is very real.

Set in urban downtown America, the atmosphere is a mix of '30s gangster/'90s gangsta styles. You can talk to the characters before you bludgeon them to death. And the violence doesn't stop at simple killing: you can decapitate recently murdered corpses, then dismember them further and further until they are barely recognisable as human remains. Yeeuck.

For more info, see Arcade's review of Kingpin on page 80.

## CELEBRITY SWEARS

Kingpin is the rudest game in the world. Be warned.

The first thing that will strike you when you play Kingpin is the huge amount of swearing it contains. There's a fuck of a lot of it, in fact. It's proper swearing, too, where the "fuck"s and the "piss"es are bandied around without a care in the world.

But is this cause for controversy, or is the language deemed unacceptable a decade ago these days No Big Deal? We decided to consult the country's leading profanity authority, Mr Roger Mellie of Fulchester.

First, thanks for talking to us.

No problem. I was supposed to be doing the voice-overs for a new TV series *Turds from Hell*, but they got fucking Manuel out of *Fawlty Towers* to do it instead, the little tit.

Kingpin is the first game to feature full-on swearing. Have we become desensitised to swearing over the years?

Too fucking right. When I started out in the business, they'd sack you if you so much as said "bollocks" on *Blue Peter*. Nowadays, anything goes. I

heard that Richard Baker called Beethoven a deaf bastard on the last night of the fucking Proms. Nobody batted an eyelid.

Do you play videogames?

Yeah, I love 'em, me. They can't get me off the fruities in the BBC bar. This one time, right, I'd been pumping shrapnel in this bandit all afternoon, and the twat was just about to cough up. Then the director comes in, says I've got to read a newflash about some fucking earthquake in Bongo Bongo land. Moira fucking Stuart waltzes in, lobs two bob in the slot, and cops the whole fucking jackpot. Fifty quid! What a pissar.

In Kingpin you can club innocent bystanders to death, usually for no more than a few dollars. Are you a violent man?

No, I'm all love and peace, me. But sometimes in this business, you've got to stand up for yourself. I remember this one time, I was in the canteen at London Weekend and Melvyn Bragg threw this bag of Monster Munch to Joan Bakewell. It hit me on the shoulder, and I got the red mist. I can't remember much, but Bamber Gascoigne told me I had Melvyn in a headlock and I was trying to bite his

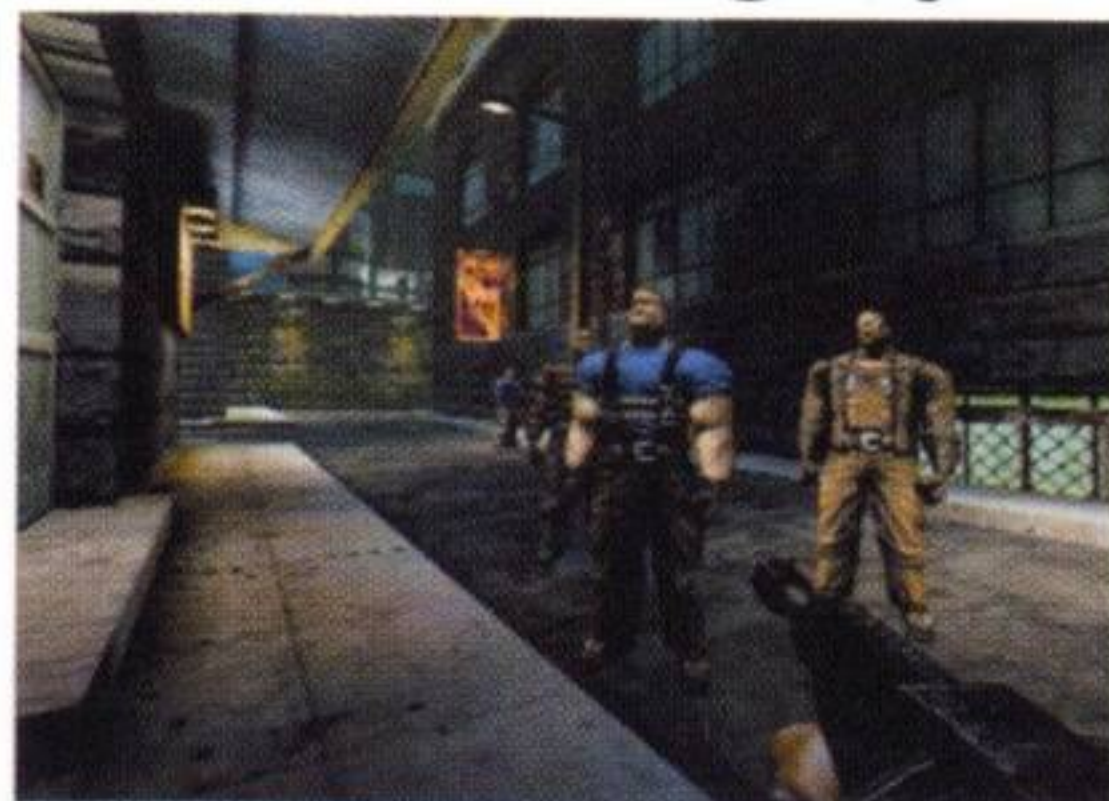
### AND THERE'S MORE



Roger's top five Desert Island swearwords: "Bollocks" is a good all-rounder, which can safely be used in front of vicars, old ladies and small children. "Wank" is another personal fave. I've always had a soft spot for "Cunny-bubble". "Cock-hockle" was the first word I ever said, during my nursery nativity play. And finally, "Scumbastard" – the first word my son Roger junior ever said."

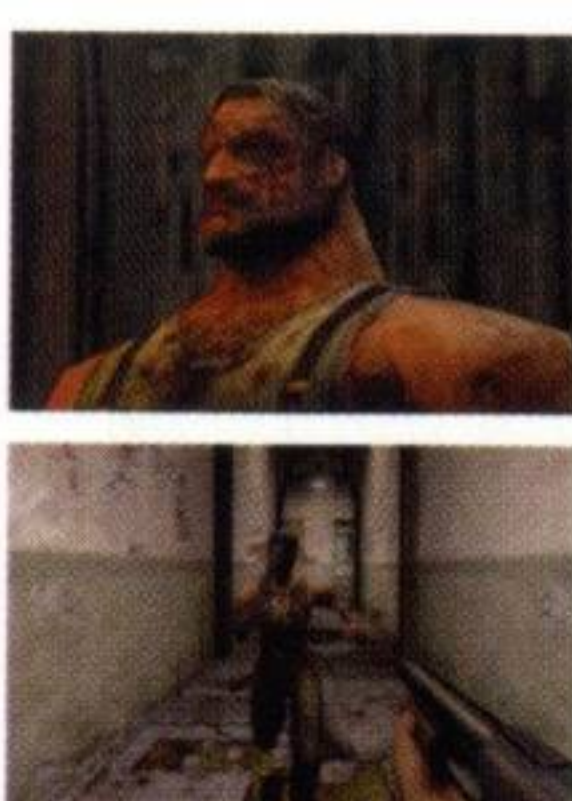
### TOP TIPS

#### Here's how to get you on your way



At the very start of the game, to pass the guards, wait until they huddle over the radio and then you can make a run for the second door on the left. Kill the lone man in the room before he rounds up his mates. Nab the key and head back to the corridor to the left. Head back up the stairs and turn right into

Storeroom A. Drag the box across the room. Smash the air vent. Get the coil and go toward the warehouse entrance. Dash for the pawnshop when the radio starts. Walk past the woman opposite the pawnshop and show your gun to the group of thugs. Kill them, and nab the key. Easy, eh?

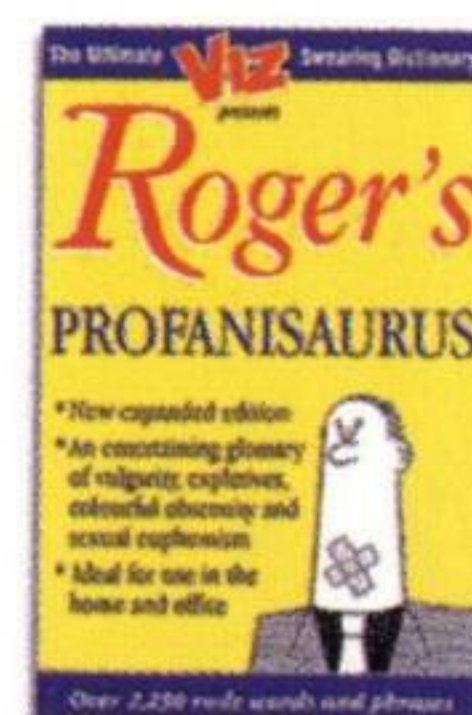


### FURTHER READING

#### More about Mellie...

You can catch up with Roger's latest adventure in *Viz 97*, out at the end of July. There's a brand new free update of *Roger's Profanisaurus* – the definitive swearing dictionary – on the cover of *Viz 98*.

You can also check out *Viz's* Web site at <http://www.viz.co.uk/>, which is quite funny.



MAIN ILLUSTRATION: JOHN BROWN PUBLISHING/HOUSE OF VIZ



■ **NOW PLAYING:** *Ape Escape* –  
"Hey, hey it's the monkeys." And,  
boy, do these simians like  
monkeying around...





Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **Sony Japan** | Publisher: **Sony** | Price: **£39.99** | On sale in UK: **out now** | Players: **1** | ★★★★★



## WHAT'S APE ESCAPE ALL ABOUT?

■ *Ape Escape* manages to take the received formula for three-dimensional platformers – something like *Spyro the Dragon*, for example – and give it a fantastic boot up the arse. The injection of monkeys adds a twist to your bog-standard “get to the end of the level” scenario; the 3D engine is superb, pushing the PlayStation envelope further even than *Gran Turismo*; the analogue-only control method is so clever you wonder why nobody thought of it before; and, above all, you cannot escape *Ape*'s wit, charm and sophistication. Truly a five-star game.

# MONKEY BUSINESS

Anyone for monkey tennis? We'll bring a net.

**J**ust as 1969 gave us the Summer of Love, so 1999 will be remembered as the Summer of PlayStation Weirdness.

From the guitar-playing goats of *Um Jammer Lammy* to the eat-your-villagers horror of *Giants* to the monkey-chasing antics of *Ape Escape*, you have to wonder if someone, somewhere has been taking hallucinogenic drugs.

But in all these examples, it's the careful execution of insanity that elevates the game into something highly playable. And *Ape Escape* is no exception, balancing the best 3D game engine yet with superb level design, high replayability, an ingenious analogue-only control system, a host of fantastic in-game gadgets and – ho, ho – monkeys.

We've seen monkeys in many a game, but you'd be hard-pressed to find any that are more slippery than

*Ape*'s. In fact, your job as Chief Monkey Catcher would be impossible if it weren't for the array of primate-bagging gadgetry at your disposal.

**1. Stun Club** ■ Stainless-steel handle ■ Authentic lightsaber-style beam ■ Swivels 360° ■ Stuns both monkeys and unwanted baddies  
Cat No 546/8734 £29.99

**2. Time Net** ■ Weather-proof ■ Teleports monkeys back through time and space ■ Comfortable, non-slip handle ■ Dimensions of net (H)50, (W)50, (D)80cm  
Cat No 758/7937 £35.99

**3. Monkey Radar** ■ Detects monkeys up to 100 metres ■ Dual control handles ■ Authentic “radar”-style sound effects ■ Comes with free Close-up Monkey Camera ■ Dish rotates 360° with aid of second analogue stick  
Cat No 368/3434 £79.99

## AND THERE'S MORE



■ Although *Ape Escape* is most definitely about capturing monkeys, its replayability is upped considerably by the introduction of coins. Hidden throughout the levels (usually in parts that are unobtainable until you've collected a certain gadget and revisited the level), this currency enables you to access three new and totally independent sub-games: *Monkey Boxing* has to be seen to be believed.

**4. Slingshot** ■ Catapult-style pull-back action with second stick ■ Flips to first-person view for increased accuracy ■ Compatible with normal, explosive and homing ammunition ■ Carbon-fibre body guaranteed snap-proof ■ Elastic guaranteed for life  
Cat No 982/8943 £24.99

**5. Dash Hoop** ■ Spinning the hoop with second stick increases your speed and forms a shield ■ Takes out some baddies when activated ■ Allows for amusing “tiptoe” running antics ■ Fully waterproof  
Cat No 654/8764 £19.99

**6. Sky Flyer** ■ Rotating sky-flying action for an uplifting experience ■ Enables user to jump much higher, and to glide to safety from high drops ■ Operates by repeated spinning of second analogue stick ■ NB: use at own risk  
Cat No 354/1237 £24.99

Also available:  
**Remote-Control Car**  
Cat No 633/3478 £49.99

**Boxing Glove**  
Cat No 236/4674 £19.99



PHOTO: CORBIS/NAZIMA KOWALL



■ The ghost of Elvis lives on.

## APE ESCAPE TIPS!

### So what should you do with a monkey once you've caught one?

*Ape Escape* is all about catching monkeys, but what happens when you've actually caught one? Here are some things to remember:

- The bigger the cage the better.
- If possible create outdoor enclosures with a heated indoor cage.
- Many monkeys show signs of boredom in

captivity, therefore it's important that you change their environment from time to time. Monkeys can spend many hours exploring their home. Try to use a lot of different items in their home. For example, outdoors you could try branches, leaves, trees and bushes, swings, platforms and a pond. Indoors, go with

tyres, coconut shells, mirrors (make sure that you use unbreakable ones, though), ladders and plastic pipes. ■ You must clean the indoor cages at least every week. Droppings and excess food should be removed daily. ■ Some monkeys are known to scent-mark their environment. Don't, therefore, sterilise

the entire cage at once – use a mild disinfectant to clean different parts at different times. ■ It's no use just feeding your monkey peanuts, bananas and PG Tips. The diet of your monkey is particular to which brand of ape you have managed to bag. What's more, a varied diet is very important to avoid boredom and loss of

appetite of your monkey. Here, for example, is what you should feed a gibbon: mangos, apples, chicken or turkey (ensure that it is well-cooked), cooked eggs, wholemeal bread, cheese, nuts, milk and soya beans. ■ Of course, if your monkey's feeling frisky (which – being a monkey, it probably will),

then you might want to think about breeding. For this you will require another monkey of a) the same make, and b) the opposite sex. Here're a few helpful hints: 1. Monkeys can reach sexual maturity at the impressive bum-fluff moustache age of seven. 2. The gestation period of the female monkey is around 200 days.

3. Most births take place at night. The female eats the afterbirth. Within a few hours of birth the little baby monkeys can vocalise and cling to their mother's chests. Follow *Arcade*'s monkey-advice, and you should be able to keep your monkey in captivity for up to 30 years. Happy monkeying around.



# I dream of Regina

Not only does she have firmer thighs than Jeff Goldblum, she can blast the head off a t-rex with her trusty shotgun. We know who we'd rather get prehistoric with.





**Y**ou've got to hand it to the Japanese; they know what they're doing. When it came to creating a lead character for the forthcoming *Dino Crisis*, Capcom could easily have made the mistake of rendering human brass rubbing and all-round movie irritant Jeff Goldblum into polygon form and spent the afternoon down the pub, content in the knowledge that if it worked for *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World*, it should work for the similarly giant lizard-infested *Dino Crisis*.

Thank the Lord Capcom created the flame-haired Regina instead. Strangely, for a post-Lara game girl, she's not so buxom that when entering a new room half of her is still in the previous one. No, instead, think of the kind of lithe class shown by Jill Valentine, the beret-sporting heroine of the original *Resident Evil*, who gamely fought off the living dead with a Berretta and a lovely complexion.

Regina heads up an elite special agent team on a government mission to uncover genetic tinkering on a research base located on Ibis Island. A maverick scientist, Professor Kirk, has abandoned his energy production work to mess about with dino DNA, as you do, and Regina and her team have been sent in to recover the government's cash and see what's going on.

All of which is probably less exciting than Regina herself. Although the usual "Likes: crochet; Hates: rude people" details you normally get with Japanese game characters have yet to be revealed, her in-game performance is already looking wonderful.

There's no *Res Evil*-style aiming and firing required, instead Regina can shoot while running, essential when you clap eyes on the viciously quick dinosaurs stalking her through the game. Get her injured and she'll drip a trail of blood that the t-rex can follow by smell alone.

She also gets to boss around her two team members – Rick and Gail (oddly enough, a bloke). Expect to see plot-furthering cut scenes where Regina orders her underlings to split up and explore in classic B-movie fashion. Whatever *Dino Crisis* throws at her though, and we're betting it's lots and lots of dinosaurs, one thing's certain – Capcom has created another female lead to die for.



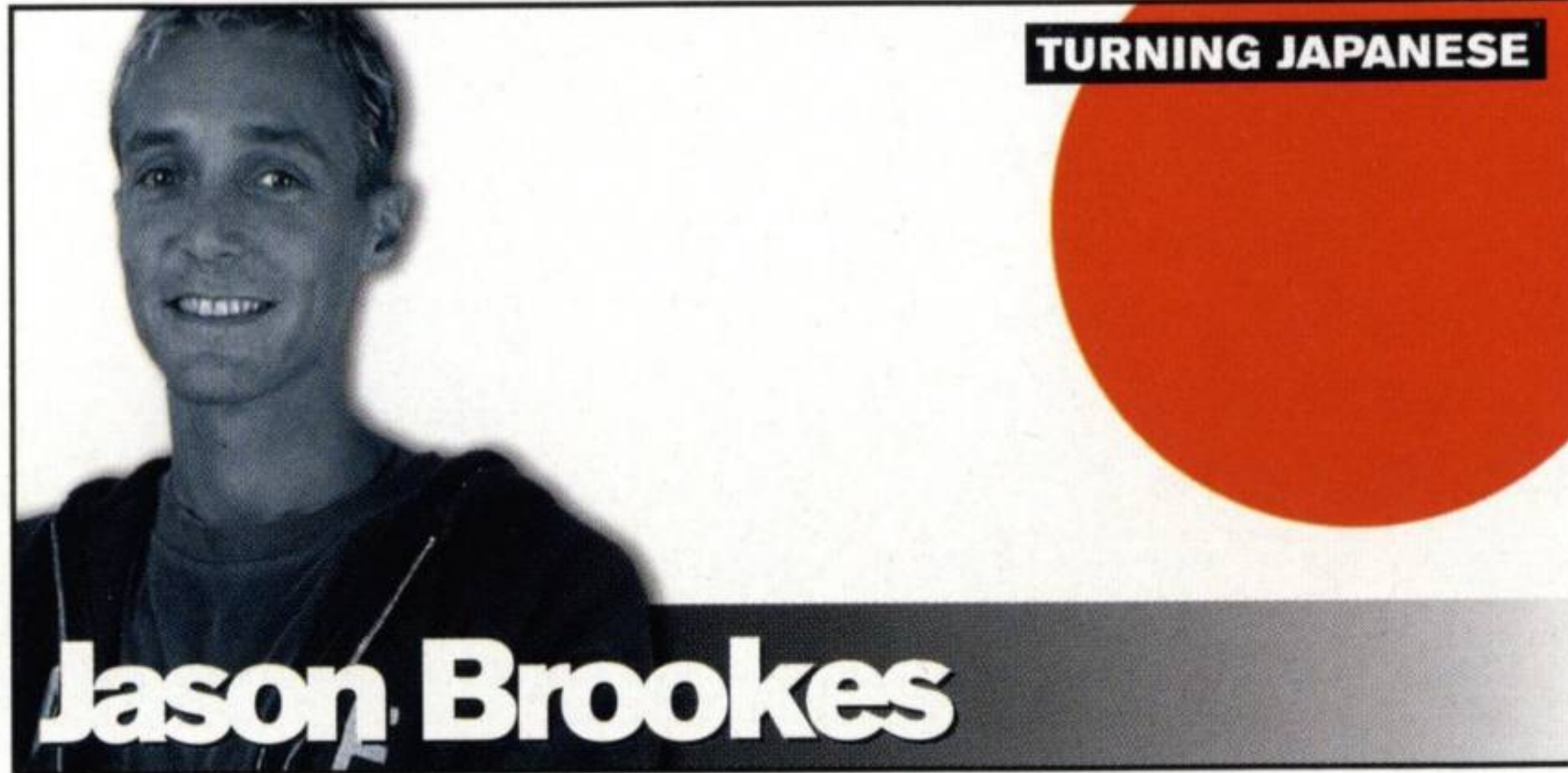
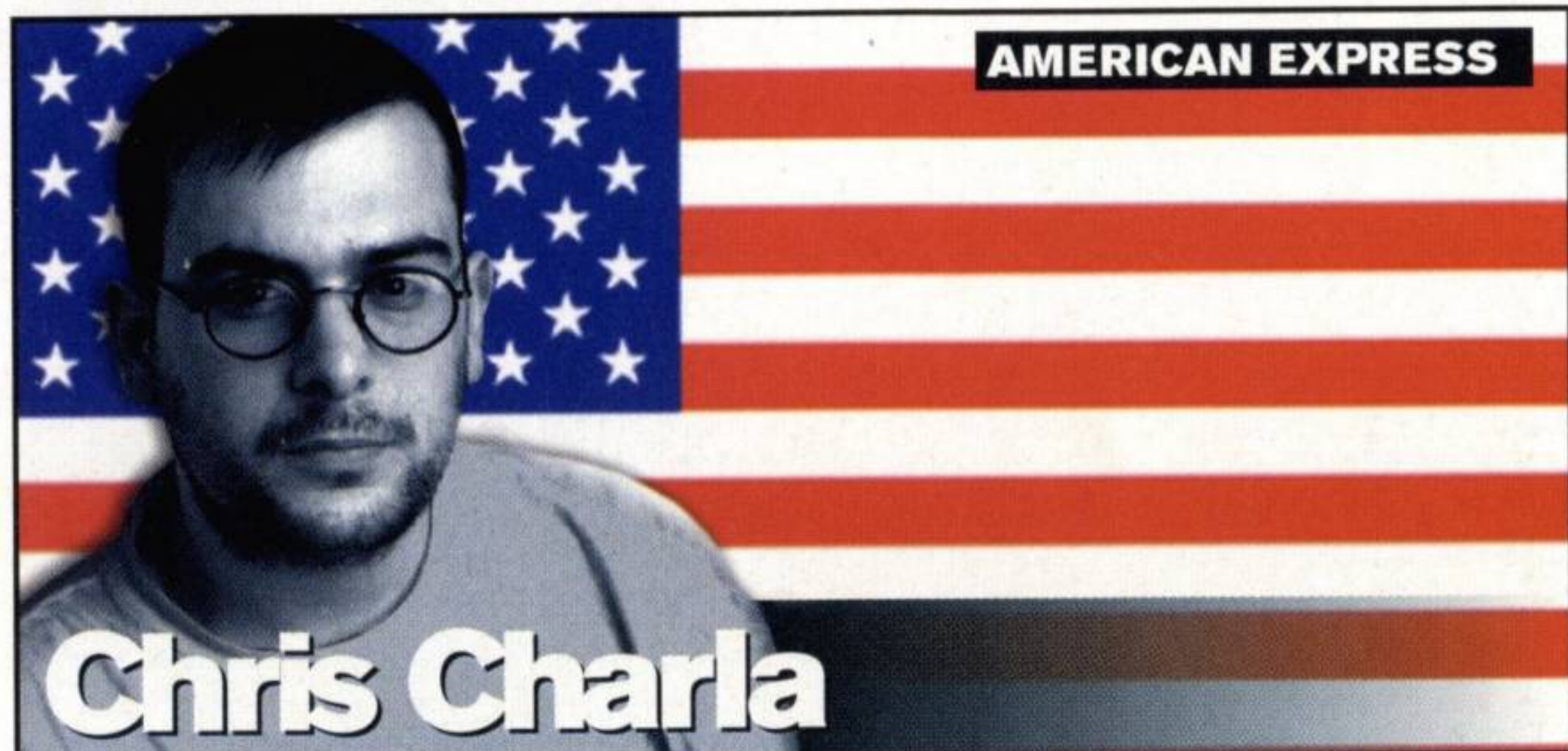
■ Regina stars in Capcom's *Dino Crisis* for the PlayStation. The Japanese game is out now, the UK version is expected in September.





# Games Insider

Three videogaming experts with a lot to say. Perhaps too much. One in America, one in Japan, and one games maker...



## Want blood, guts, gore and gaming excitement? Go fish!

**J**ean-Jacques Rousseau, eh? What a guy. French – and, as every good American knows, duty-bound to hate dollar-toting tourists – but he got a few things right. Like enjoying nature, for example: bounding deer, chirruping birds and – more excitingly – slick-moving fish. Yes, the summer's here and there has been a change in my life; gone is the skateboard and I've buried my garage punk CDs on a vacant lot. I've decided to experience the thrills of **The Great Outdoors**.

Well, The Great Indoors, as it happens, because I have been strangely drawn to the new wave

## Summer's here and there's been a change in my life

of hunt-'em-ups coming out over here. Culling mammals, landing trout and generally running amok like Hemingway on crystal meth has hooked me firmer than a pro fisherman using a AAA lure. After tasting the delights of Sierra Sports *Trophy Bass 3D*, in which you can take to the waters on 15 faithfully reproduced competition lakes in search of the fattest fish imaginable, I found myself behind the wheel of my Buick and headed for the Bass Warehouse.


Now, I've been to England and I know what you people are thinking. Car speaker stacks, boys with bad skin and chain-smoking 12-year-old chicks. Well, bass over here means more than music to roll around in your pimped-up ride to; it also refers to the freshwater fish to catch, and the Bass

Warehouse is where you tool-up ready for the fray. Somewhat inexplicably, it also sells guns.

So, anyway, I can now throw open the windows of my new apartment and thrill to the breeze as it ruffles the stray hairs that peek from under my new John Deere cap, luxuriate in the chafing of heavy denim dungarees on my inner thighs and sit back sporting my sports waistcoat as *Trophy Buck, Field & Stream*, or *Legend of the River King* load.

However, the granpappy of them all has to be *Get Bass*, which is so good you should buy a Dreamcast just to experience the wonder. You may have already seen it in the arcades, featuring cabinets with an amazingly convincing rod controller. Well, Sega has pushed the boat out (sorry) and packaged the game for its new console.

First off, included in your pack is your own personal rumble-rod that you are free to use without shame in your own home. You choose a lure, move your skiff around the waters of Lake Wherever and decide where to cast. You do this by flicking the rod and letting out the line using the attached reel. After hook hits water you've got to keep the bait bobbing and hope the bass bite. And when they do, you'd best be ready. Hook a biggie and your rod starts shaking like a table dancer with the DTs. You've got a job to land the fish without your line breaking. It's raw adrenalin. *Really*.

Seriously, though, I don't think I've ever found such happiness in videogaming, and seeing as this will be the last letter to you from this particular American, it seemed a good idea to go out on a high. At least I know how I'm going to spend my retirement. 

■ Chris is Editor of Next Generation, America's leading videogames magazine.

## Merging fantasy with reality is all in a day's work in Japan.

**J**apan has a curious obsession with western movie stars. It's impossible, for example, to catch the subway in Tokyo without seeing billboards of Charlie Sheen puffing on Parliament ciggies or Jodie Foster drinking vending machine coffee. Arnie loves a certain range of energy drinks, Tom Cruise wears a nice pair of loafers and Harrison Ford is partial to getting mullered on Asaki beer – if you believe the advertisers, that is.

But such feeble product associations are mere small potatoes compared to the all-star Hollywood cast being assembled to breathe life into the big screen

come as a much of a surprise to learn that the film wasn't ecstatically received by US critics.

But at least the *Final Fantasy* movie doesn't require a director to utilise the on-screen talents of the aforementioned actors – their voices will be synched to some convincing facial motion on digital characters. And let's not forget the success of *Toy Story*, *Antz* and *A Bug's Life*, which all prove there's a healthy future in CGI as a replacement for real cameras. Square Soft's Hawaiian operation is undertaking the bulk of the CGI work (with pockets rumoured to be as deep as \$70 million), although the project isn't set to be completed until 2001. Just in time for Square Soft to cash in on the PlayStation 2 version of the game, I'll wager.

Incidentally, Sony's plans for its next generation machine are becoming the source of much heady speculation among the development community in Japan. The latest news is that the company will make a further announcement – expected to be a sighting of the box itself – at the Tokyo Game Show in mid September. Pundits have already speculated that a Japanese street date is likely to be slated for Spring 2000. Some sources are even suggesting that the machine's chips could be ready for manufacture from late summer onwards, hinting that a pre-Christmas arrival may not be such a far-flung possibility. But don't hold your breath. 

■ Jason is a freelance journalist, working from Japan and the USA.

## PSX 2 is likely to be slated for Spring 2000

version of Japanese gaming epic *Final Fantasy*. Donald Sutherland, James Woods, Alec Baldwin, Steve Buscemi and other notable luvvies will provide the voices for Square Soft's game characters in what promises to be an ambitious alliance between the worlds of videogames and movies.

There's a pretty dubious track record in this area so far. It started with Bob Hoskins donning Mario's tache and cap, and then we saw Jean Claude Van Damme making a bigger arse of himself than usual in the laughably bad *Street Fighter: the Movie*. More recently, games designer and programmer Chris Roberts made his Hollywood directorial debut with a big bucks interpretation of his tedious but inexplicably popular PC series, *Wing Commander* – it won't





**Neil Jackson**

## Game Over, man. Game Over!

**W**elcome to the last Backscreen column – and the not-quite-last chapter in the saga of *Star Trek: New Worlds* – the game that killed a company.

Since my recent redundancy from Binary Asylum, the development company behind *Star Trek: New Worlds*, the struggle to get the game finished has continued apace. As feared, my predictions, made in *Arcade 8*, are coming true. Without any tangible proof that our publisher seriously intends to place a second project with us, the individual members of the team started to get a bit twitchy. At the time of writing, there are only two of the eight full-time coders left at the firm.

Now we're not talking about a bunch of school-leavers with half-an-hour's BASIC programming skill and a copy of "Warez-Whacker", we're talking about some of the finest software gurus I've ever met – the same ones who designed and coded half of Microprose's early flight sims – the ones who made Microprose a household name. Some of them constructed and ran whole development departments for the

**"You're nothing, unless you have an agent..."**

likes of Sega. Collectively, all have developed a range of hit titles as long as your arm, for a similarly long list of big-name publishers.

They're responsible chaps who take their love of games, and their careers, seriously. And it stands to reason that if, for months in a row, you're told "hey, you might actually not get paid at the end of this month", you're going to at least *start* looking elsewhere. You can't gamble that you'll finish the month, and make it through on beans and toast until the game goes on sale – not when you've just had twins.

But that's the truth of it – frankly, in this business, it doesn't matter whether you're a long-term "donkey", a quiet backroom, get-it-done-and-shut-up kind of programmer, or a total nobody with no experience. You're nothing, unless you have an agent

to represent you (ie, to hype your profile and take 15%), or you're already a household name. Only then will publishers respect you enough (ie, smell the potential for easy cash). But the backroom boys have been largely ignored, overlooked, and skinned in the 13 years I've been in this business, and it shows no sign of changing.

Meanwhile, back at the coalface, our gallant few remaining coders strive on, alongside those who know, however painful, that they will be leaving soon. And our beloved publisher's US producer-team fly back for another visit and another round of "wow, this game is so cool – is there anything we can do to stop it going under?" The same stupid questions, but now a different answer. This time, it's too late – teams have broken up, skills have gone, knowledge and vision was frittered away, and now no amount of money will magically repair the attrition-damage caused over the last year. Stable doors and horses, anyone?

And, to add insult to injury, our publisher asks, in all seriousness, "now that you've got half an office free (because half your staff have left), can we use it for setting up a temporary test-department to test the game?"

Worse still, and possibly as a direct result of certain informed industry personnel reading this column avidly, and seeking to reduce what might be construed as "unnecessary costs", the US team's hotels were hastily re-organised for this trip. No Hilton this time, instead a less expensive Georgian hotel was chosen – but the twist? Rather than bore their own secretarial staff with the tedious job of organising a new set of rooms, our beloved publisher decides simply to lump the whole job on Binary Asylum's own administrator – she who is currently trying to juggle the day-by-day balance sheet to keep the company alive. Incredible, isn't it? **A**

■ E-mail Neil at [backscreen@techno.demon.co.uk](mailto:backscreen@techno.demon.co.uk)



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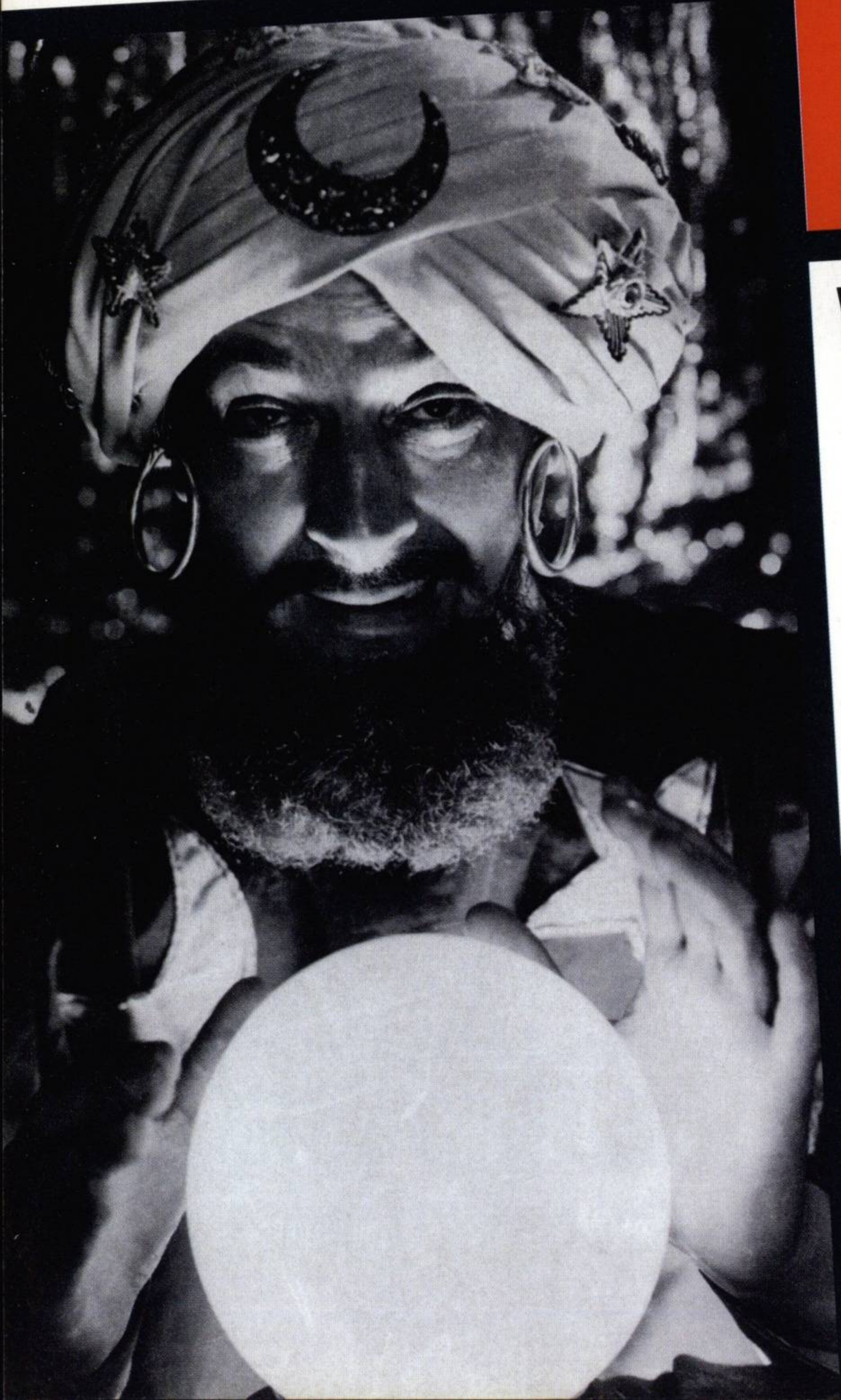


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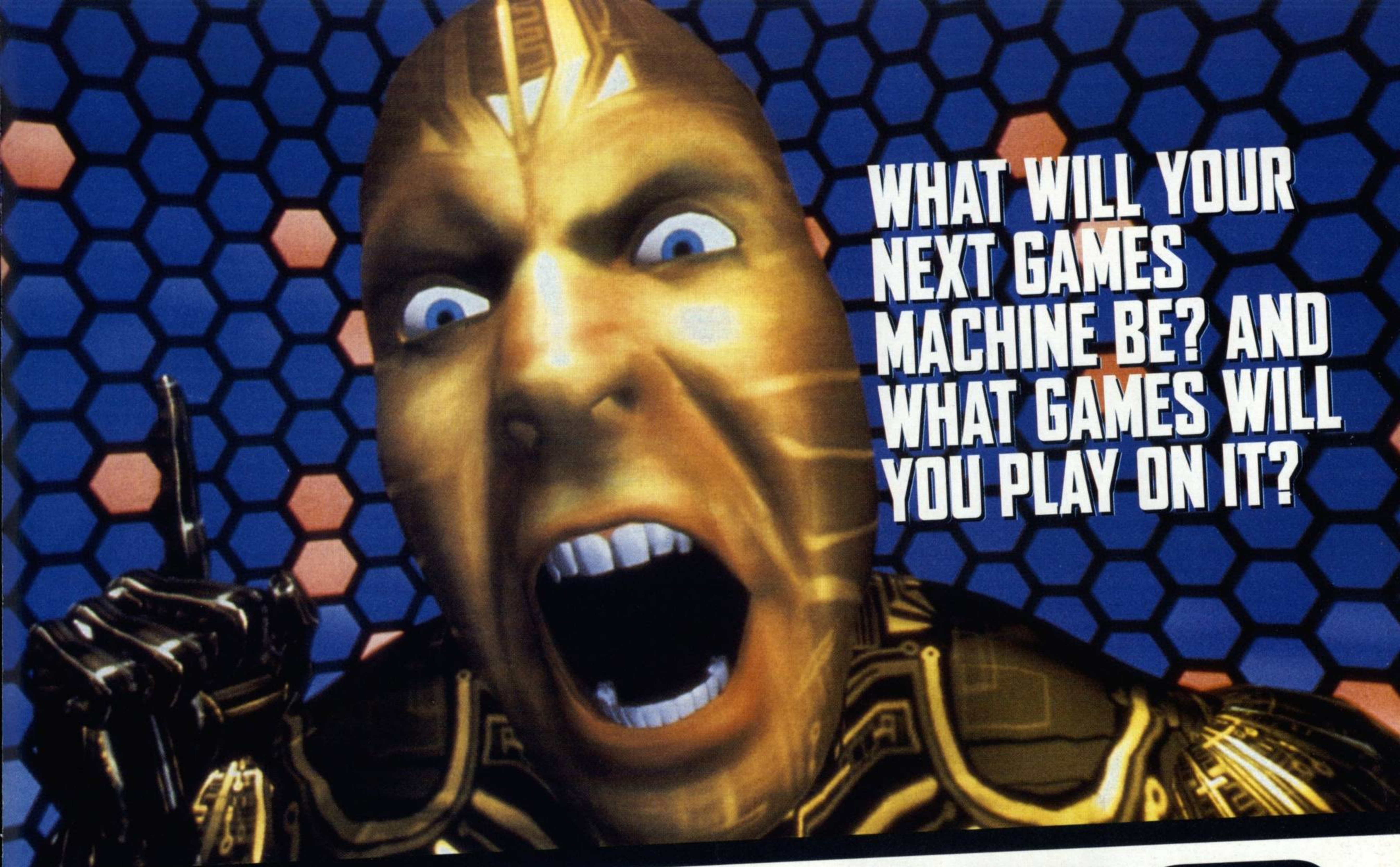
**FUTURE**

**OF**

**WIDE**







**WHAT WILL YOUR  
NEXT GAMES  
MACHINE BE? AND  
WHAT GAMES WILL  
YOU PLAY ON IT?**

# OGAMES

■ PHOTOS: CORBIS/BETTMANN, PICTORIAL PRESS

## **We have seen the future...**

*And it's a videogamer's paradise.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>40 Virtual insanity</b><br>Hollywood's vision of<br>videogaming's future. | <b>50 Apocalypse when?</b><br>The future according to<br>games (and it's not pretty). |
| <b>42 Dreamcast</b><br>Sega's shot at the title.                             | <b>52 People hold on</b><br>There's plenty of life left in<br>PlayStation and N64.    |
| <b>44 PlayStation 2</b><br>The current hot favourite.                        | <b>54 Games, games, games</b><br>30 world-changing titles.                            |
| <b>46 "Project Dolphin"</b><br>Mario & Co.'s secret plans.                   | <b>60 Expert timing</b><br>Our gaming destiny is in<br>their hands.                   |
| <b>48 The PC</b><br>It just keeps getting better.                            |   |





# FUTURE OF VIDEOGAMES ACCORDING TO FILMS



Words | Sam Richards

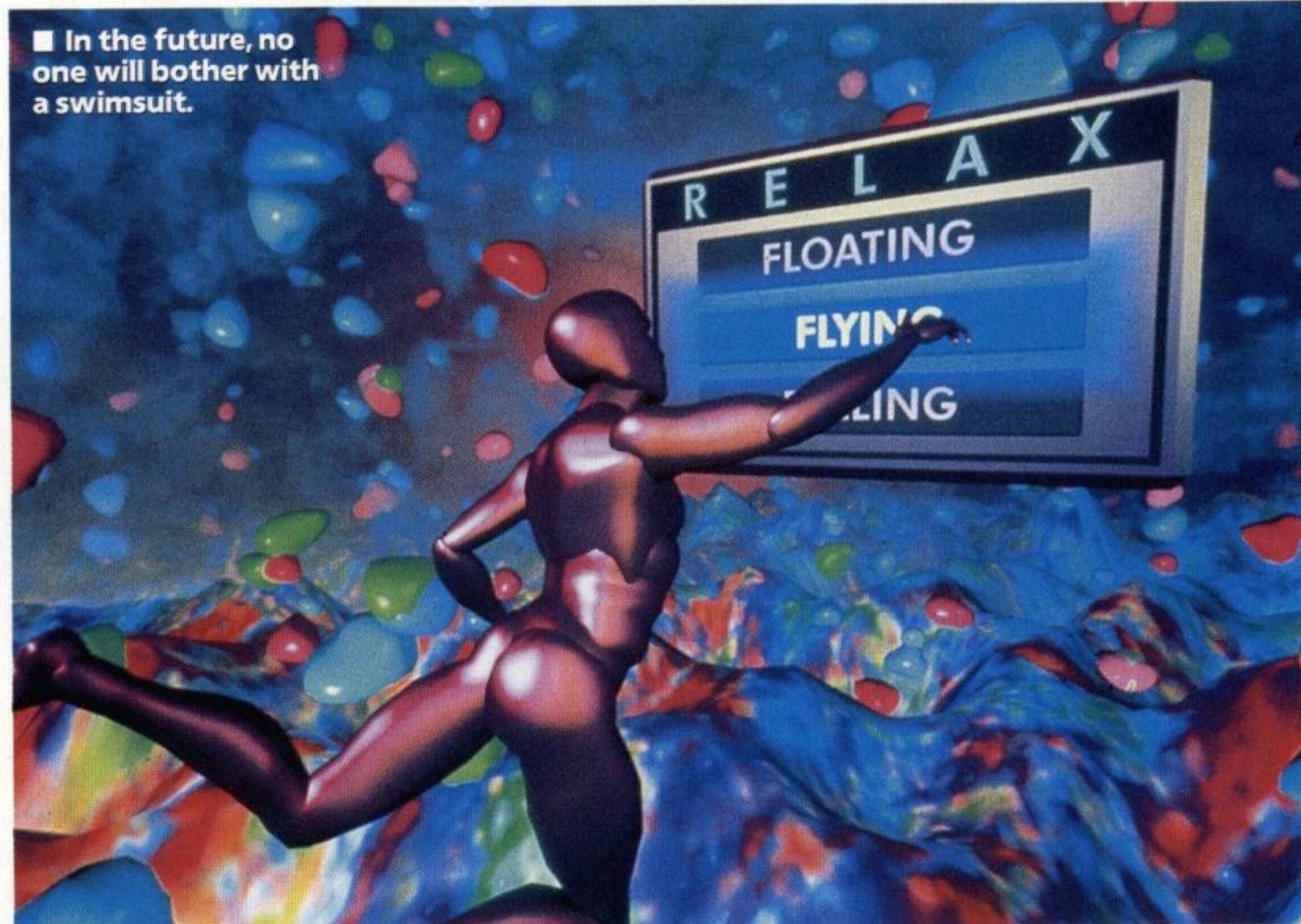
## VIRTUAL INSANITY

How Hollywood's film makers see the future of videogames.

**E**ver since cinema began, ambitious film directors have felt it necessary to regale us with their visions of the future. Occasionally, these visions involve a videogame of some description – or, at the very least, the hero getting to blast a few pixellated aliens while sporting a chrome helmet. Often these futuristic visions are stunning. Usually, however, they're utter rubbish. So here are ten videogame-flavoured films that have seen the future. (We, however, would rather put our faith in Sony).



PHOTOS: CORBIS/HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/EVERETT, MOVIESTORE COLLECTION, KOBAL COLLECTION, PICTORIAL PRESS



■ In the future, no one will bother with a swimsuit.

### The Lawnmower Man (1992)

■ A laughably desperate attempt to embrace the short-lived virtual reality craze, *The Lawnmower Man* claims a place in history as one of the worst films ever. It begins with a chimp in a VR helmet going psycho after being forced to play a game which resembles

*Wolfenstein 3D* (but 2D) and becomes increasingly preposterous. Pierce Brosnan, on a one-man crusade against acting, lies on a floating bed, looking at a landscape of Smarties while making orgasmic noises. He then turns a local "retarded kid" into a genius by showing him

some fractals. "His mind is like a clean, hungry sponge!" exclaims Pierce, contributing to a generally offensive depiction of mental illness. Then he shouts something like "change brainwave parameters" and they all spin around in gyroscopes. "By the turn of the

millennium a technology known as virtual reality will be in widespread use," proclaims a banner during the film's intro. No it won't, you freaks. And to think, someone made a sequel to this toss.

■ Game legacy: **nothing, thank God.**



■ Net porn: a game for all the family.

### Hackers (1995)

■ An earnest film that tries too hard to make computer culture seem like the cutting edge of fashion. Hence the hackers are hip, Urban Outfitted 17-year-olds who send messages like "u r dead meat" over the Net. During his initiation into the "scene" Jonny Lee Miller frequents an underground club called, with crushing inevitability, Cyberdelia. They're so damn cool that they have the Prodigy on the sound system. One wall hosts a massive video screen

where Jonny displays his prowess at a shoddy futuristic racer in which *WipEout* (officially loaned by Sony) is co-opted into a gaming nightmare of the directors' own concoction, controlled by puzzling double-joystick action. The competition must be tough because Jonny racks up the high score in 30 seconds.

■ Game legacy: **Extreme-G, Star Wars Episode 1: Racer, Deth Karz and future racers ad infinitum.**



© 1985 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

■ "Man... hurry up and create the girl – I can't keep my hand out of my pants."

### Weird Science (1985)

■ "You simulate all kinds of shit on your computer – why can't we simulate a girl?" And so Wyatt slips a floppy disc the size of an atlas into his drive and the painstaking creation of a Frankenstein's monster – except with *much* better tits – begins.

When the boys decide they need more gigabytes for their MSX,

they hack the local electricity grid via a series of cheap computer graphics, using a modem the size of shed. But who cares about the extreme poetic licence? Gary wants their creation "to live, to breathe... to aerobicise!" Cue the appearance of a brilliant fax/scanner-thing, through which they filter the attributes of various

*Playboy* models. Oh, and Beethoven's hands. Somehow, by attaching electrodes to a plastic doll and wearing bras on their heads, they manage to invent Kelly LeBrock, at which point millions of adolescent boys slope off for a wank.

■ Gaming legacy: **Lula: Virtual Babe.**



■ "Look at that – it's a fax that didn't chew up in the machine!"

### Back to the Future 2 (1989)

■ A tenuous choice, seeing as Marty McFly plays no futuristic games during his brief sojourn to 2015. However, he does visit a retro '80s bar (*très* ironic) and attempts to impress the kids with his prowess at *Wild Gunman*. "You use your hands?", spits a dubious youth. "That's like a baby's toy!"

Marty Jr is later seen using crazy VR specs to operate a

variety of household appliances, yet despite a preponderance of hoverboards and flying cars, the film's other technological predictions are rather conservative. Marty Snr conducts business on a speakerphone and gets fired via the totally revolutionary medium of fax.

■ Game legacy: **TrickStyle (for the hoverboards).**





■ Bond remains alert as the evil Largo tugs on his double joystick.

**Never Say Never Again (1983)**

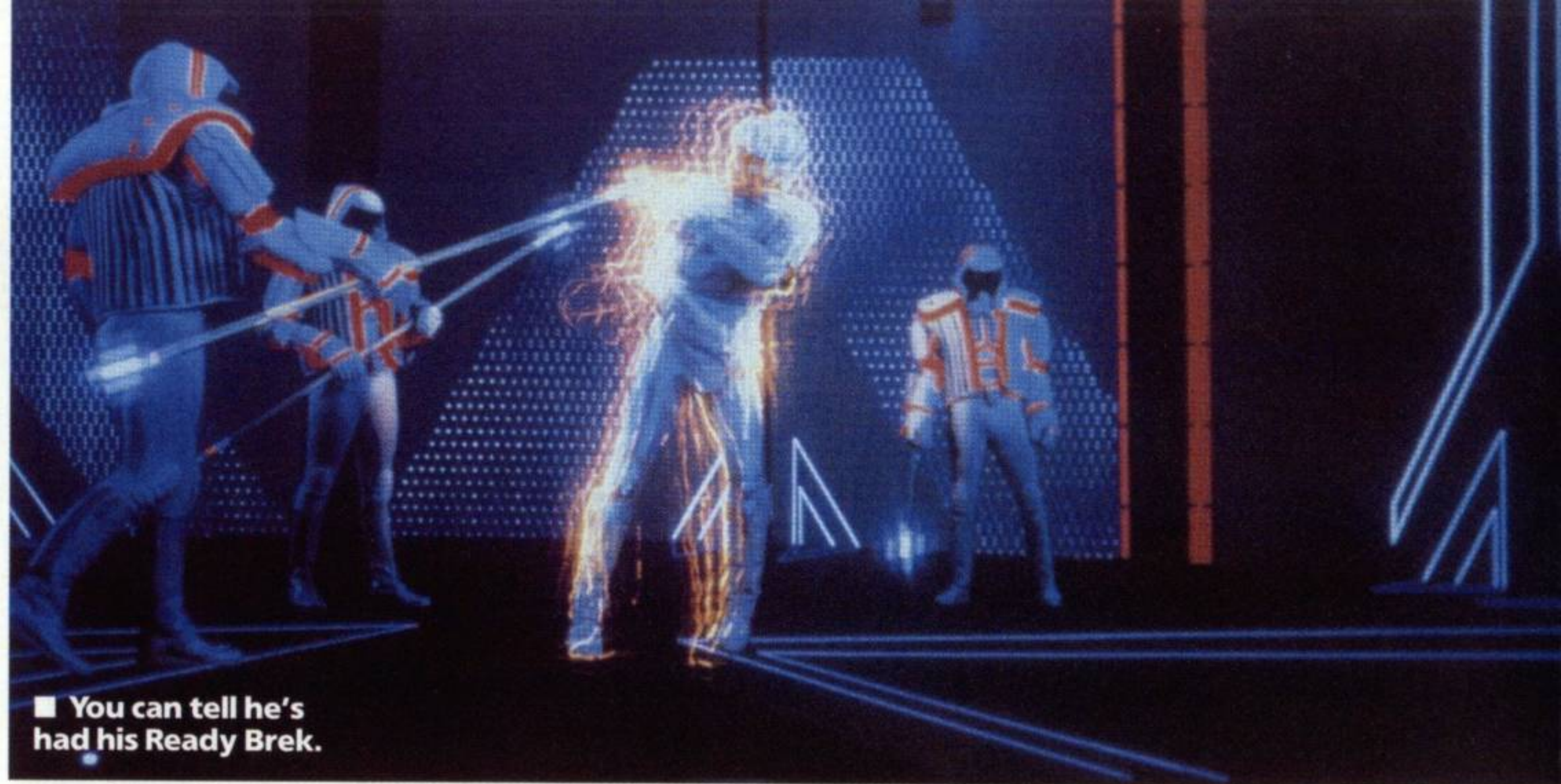
■ An "unofficial" Bond production viewed with disdain by 007 aficionados. It's also a trough of pigswill, casting a wrinkled Connery alongside numerous pensionable adversaries. And Rowan Atkinson. Kim Basinger is tempted by ropery Atari coin-op *Gravitar*, but instead chooses to ham outrageously as Bond takes on ubervillain Maximillian Largo at

*Domination*, a game born of the latter's oh-so-evil genius. *Domination's* revolutionary double-joystick mahogany action enables the player to rapidly accrue world territory while launching missiles at the opponent. Largo prefigures Force Feedback technology by wiring up the joystick to an electric shock mechanism. Unfortunately, this is his only useful innovation

as the tragically weedy holographic screen and laughable robotic in-game voice are shite. Naturally, Bond gets caned on his first effort but pulls himself off the floor to challenge Max for the "rest of the world" and inflicts some serious electro pain on the suspiciously Germanic foe. Cobblers. ■ Game legacy: **Command & Conquer, Live Wire.**



■ No Best Supporting Actress Oscar here.



■ You can tell he's had his Ready Brek.

**Tron (1982)**

■ "On the other side of the screen, it all looks so easy!" This is Flynn's verdict on being sucked into the futuristic maths/racing videogame of his own invention in order to prevent its takeover by a megalomaniac Master Computer Program. On the surface it sounds like a prime slice of Disney

hokum, but *Tron* remains a fascinating movie and, by creating an absorbing fantasy in the same way that *Zelda* or *Mario* entice you into their worlds, its treatment of videogames is far more intelligent than that of rubbish like *The Lawnmower Man*. *Tron's* computer-generated effects haven't dated

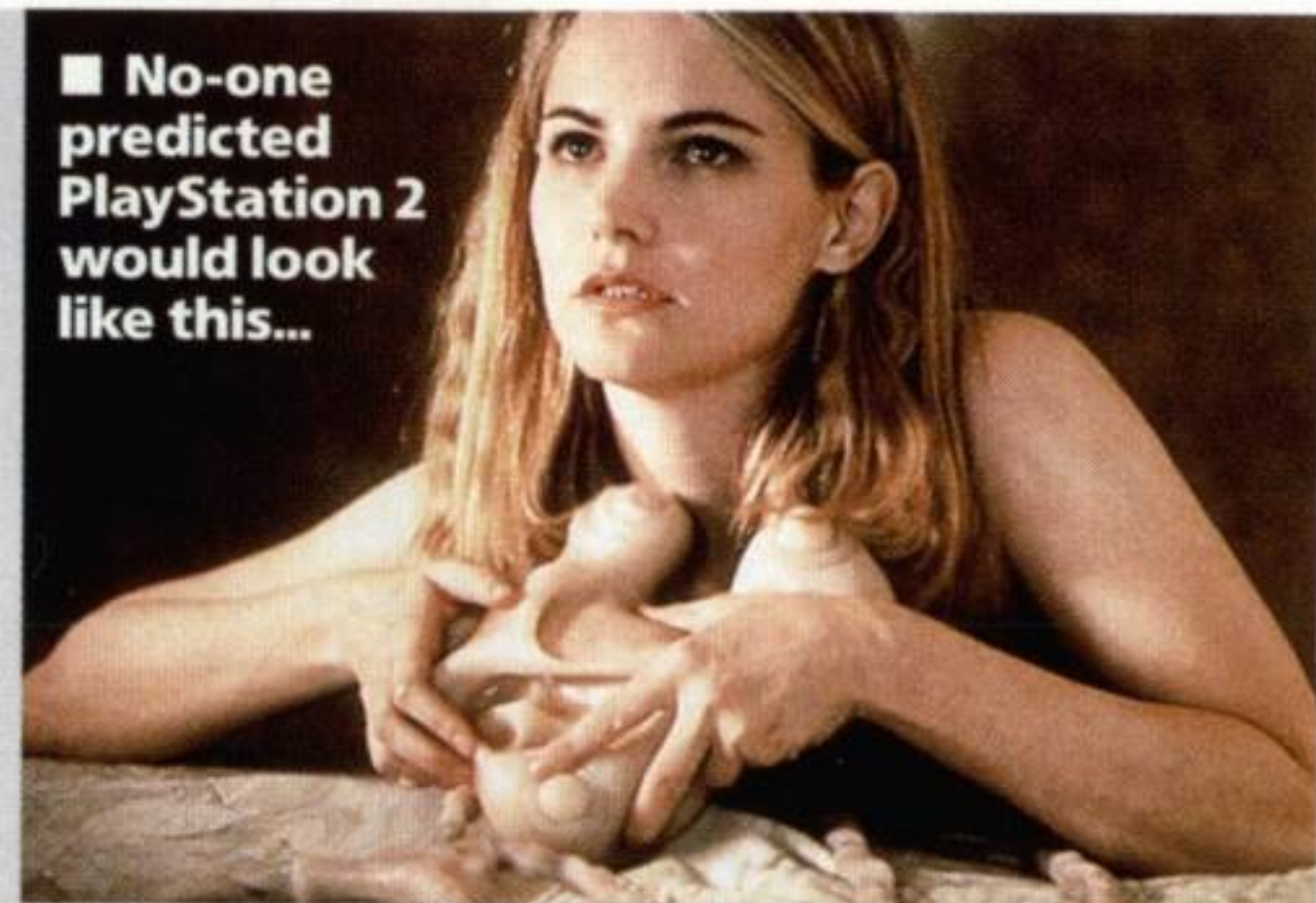
because they seem entirely abstract, almost beautiful, rather than "of a time". Even the film's central conceit – maverick games programmer rubs up against might of evil faceless corporation – is disturbingly prescient. It's fun to chortle at *Tron's* in-game jargon, the sight of Jeff Bridges in a

purple helmet driving what appears to be a neon Sinclair C5 and a guest appearance by Pac-Man. But even now, *Tron* comes across as a strange and unique film. ■ Game legacy: **Super Mario 64, F-Zero X, Metal Gear Solid: VR Missions.**

**eXistenZ (1999)**

■ You'd expect a film by David Cronenberg to be a bit weird with the same confidence as you'd expect a new series of *Russ Abbott's Madhouse* not to be funny. *eXistenZ* rejects VR or animation and films the gameworld straight, which does make it a bit mundane – with luck games of the future won't simply involve driving around aimlessly in the country. Grey boxes are made to look primitive

as this alternate gaming reality is accessed by plugging a breast-shaped joystick into the spinal cord, while the machine itself looks like a quivering deformed foetus. Mmmm. Yet, despite the complexity of *eXistenZ's* visceral gameworld, the players still reach an impasse instantly recognisable to anyone who's ever cursed a text adventure for not recognising specific commands. Naturally, we all have



■ No-one predicted PlayStation 2 would look like this...

high hopes that *eXistenZ* is correct in foretelling that future game design gurus will all look like Jennifer Jason Leigh rather than Shigeru Miyamoto.

■ Game legacy: **David Cronenberg confided to *Arcade* last issue that he'd love the chance to work on an *eXistenZ* computer game.**



■ Hit top score to nuke Russia.

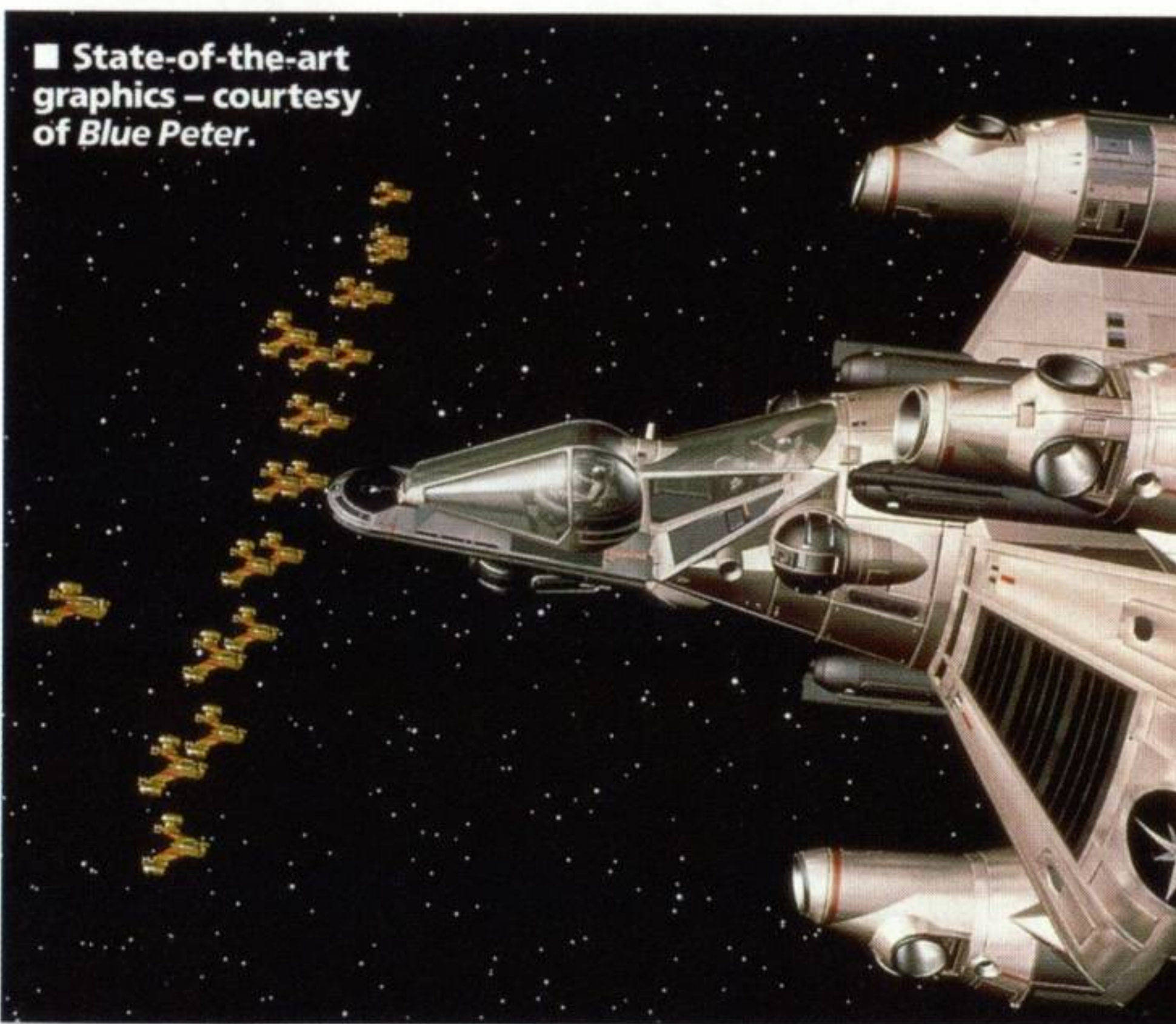
**War Games (1983)**

■ Best viewed as a portrait of a time when computers were still novel and exciting. Matthew Broderick just wants to play games, but hacks the US Defence System computers, almost kicking off a nuclear ruck with the Soviet Union. *War Games* conveniently raises several stock Hollywood themes at once (nerdy kids can be heroes; stick-in-the-mud grown-ups are always humiliated by upstart youngsters; technology is always being perverted to evil military ends; nuclear war

is probably a bad thing). The determined iteration of these themes is tiresome, but we can all chuckle at the idea of Broderick launching a world war from an Apple II, and those square grown-ups who mistake new-fangled CD-ROMs for coffee coasters. Ultimately, a game isn't fun any longer when the future of the entire world is at stake. Think on that, fools.

■ Game legacy: **Command & Conquer, Commandos.**

■ State-of-the-art graphics – courtesy of *Blue Peter*.

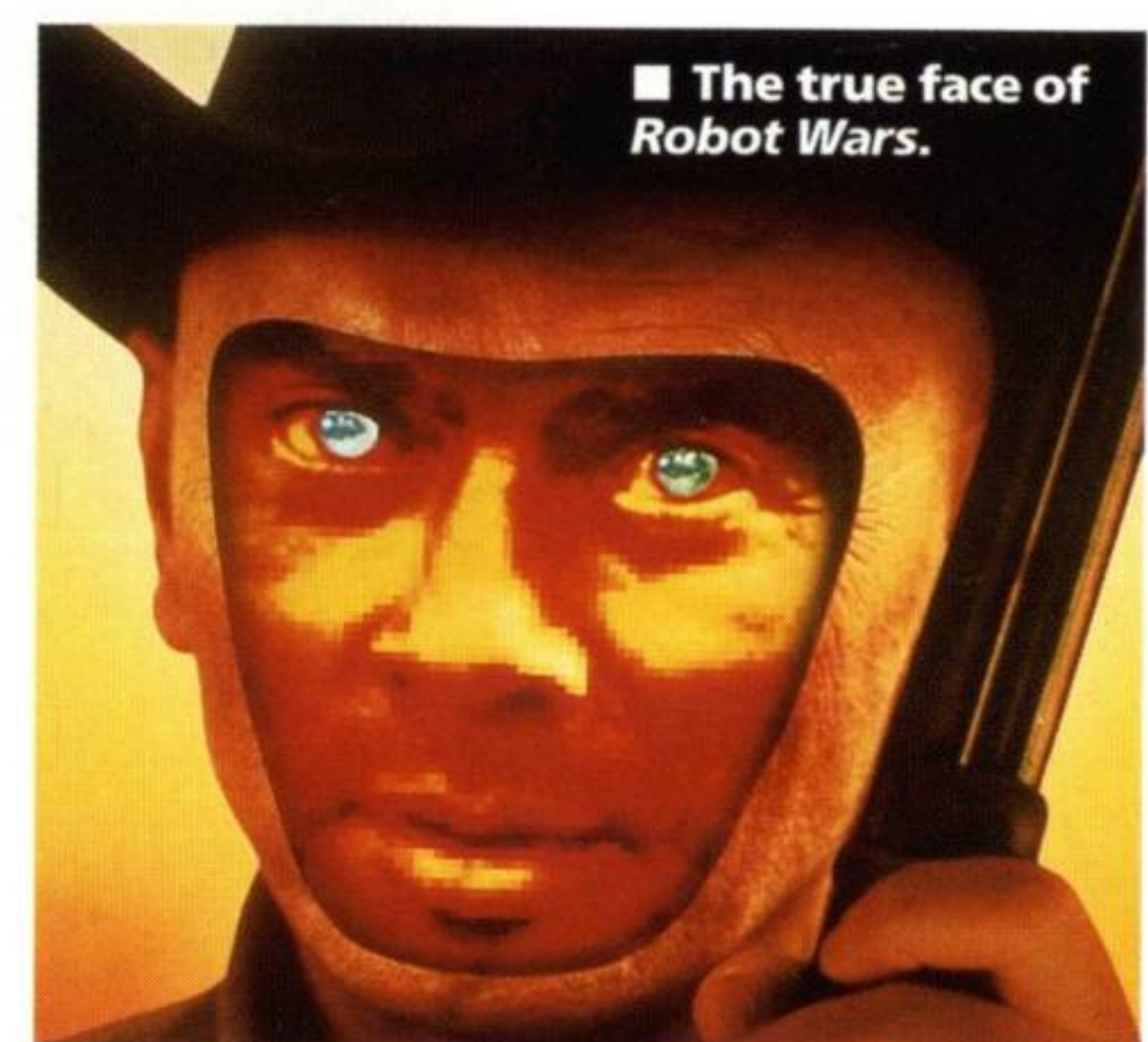


**The Last Starfighter (1984)**

■ Low-quality kids' sci-fi where all the budget was spent on some "state-of-the-art" computer graphics and none on a scriptwriter. Although exciting at the time, the visuals are used predictably and the film is packed with stupidly-voiced aliens

called Centauri and Xur. Basically, aliens searching for defence squad forces plant a *Starfighter* coin-op in a trailer park and then pay a visit to the kid who hits hi-score. A forward-looking concept which hasn't been exploited since,

unless, unbeknownst to us, *Final Furlong* is a front for racing trainers searching for the next Lester Piggott. ■ Game legacy: **Star Wars: Rogue Squadron, Omega Boost, any number of space blasters.**



■ The true face of *Robot Wars*.

**Westworld (1973)**

■ Included because while predating "virtual reality" by many years, it goes beyond that concept to create a real game world, in which the inhabitants are robots programmed to act like humans. Sadly, believing that this world can be sustained by ten bald geezers in labcoats manning a couple of banks of green-screen computers is tricky. Although genuinely eerie in places, it's just screamingly obvious that the *Westworld* holiday

camp is going to go tits up ("Westworld, where nothing can go wrong!" booms the advert). So why have the boffins clever enough to operate complex robots created an override measure so hopelessly shit that all it does is suffocate them inside their bunker, enabling Yul Brynner to massacre holidaymakers? ■ Game legacy: **MechWarrior and any robot games, Outlaws.**



# THE FUTURE: DREAMCAST

Sega, former game God humbled by recent hardware cock-ups, is the first to bring us a 128-bit console. Casper Field, editor of *DC-UK* magazine, believes that Dreamcast's on-line thinking is the way forward.

**S**eptember 23 will see Dreamcast's arrival in the UK and Sega's return to videogaming's centre stage. Following the dismal failure of Saturn, many pundits questioned whether Sega should be making consoles at all, reasoning that instead it should stick to creating great games. At one point, the reputation the company inherited from Saturn was so poor that Sega's logo wasn't planned to adorn Dreamcast's casing at all. Rightly, someone had a change of heart, and Sega, the once-mighty world champion, is about to make a career comeback, Mohammed Ali-style.

Leaving aside any hint of bias on my part (I am editor of a Dreamcast-dedicated magazine, after all) I can tell you that Dreamcast looks set to be a massive success. Honestly. Despite industry insiders' mumbled recantations of Sony's "Power of PlayStation" mantra, Sega's 128-bit superconsole has more than enough horsepower to hit the headlines – and stay there. When it eventually arrives, the next-generation PlayStation may have more graphical oomph than Dreamcast, but we're talking about matters of degree. Both are true 128-bit next-gen consoles.

The decisive battle for the coming videogame war will be fought over software, and Sega is lining up an impressive squad for Dreamcast's assault on the market. Since its March '97 UK release, the N64 has only had around 120 titles published for it. Already there are at least 50 games confirmed for Dreamcast in Europe, plus more in Japan and America – and while PlayStation may boast hundreds of games, quality control is rarely exercised, so few discs are ever really worth your £40.

Sega is a fantastic games company, with a string of addictive, playable, innovative

ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON; PHOTOS: CORBIS, PA NEWS



**Troublesome  
Dreamcast jargon  
explained.**

### 128-bit processor

Contrary to what you might think, Dreamcast's 128-bit processor does not make it four times more powerful than a 32-bit PlayStation. On a nice, sunny day, Sony's machine can produce

about 150,000 polygons in a second. Sega's new boy can run to around three million, which makes it graphically sharper than a set of silver steak knives.

### Hi-res

The first thing that will strike you when your

Dreamcast boots up is just how well the picture quality compares to N64 and PlayStation. Pushing your telly to the max and running at the highest resolution possible on current TV sets – 640 x 480 – the image is fantastically

crisp. Add to that a consistently high frame rate which plots the speed of the moving images – either 25 or 50 frames per second, depending on the game you're playing – and those millions of polygons will look gorgeous, darling!

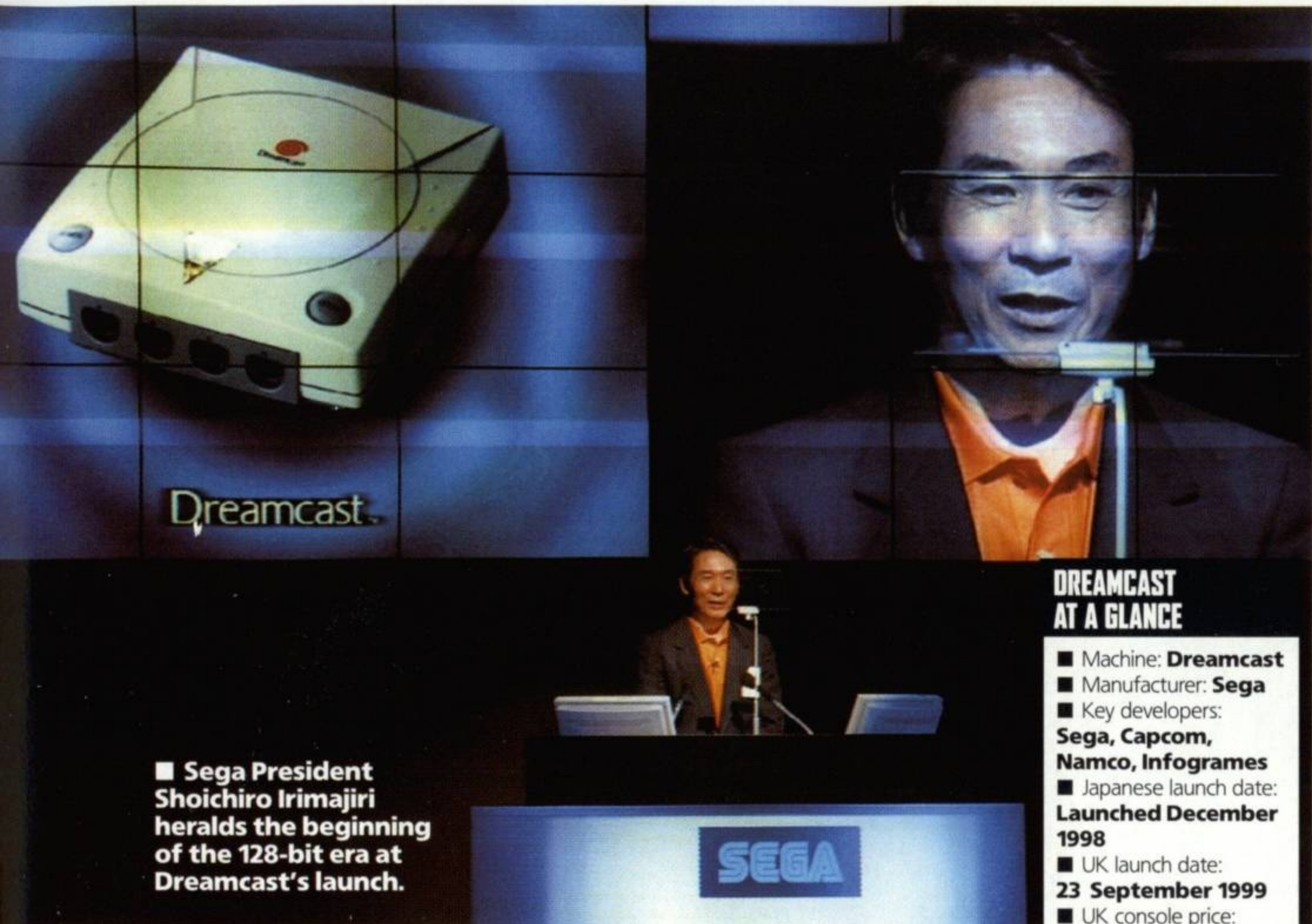
### Anti-aliasing

A neat graphical effect enabled by the Dreamcast processor, which blurs the edges of shapes to make them look smoother. No more block-shaped men then.

### GD-ROM

In a bid to prevent the





■ **Sega President Shoichiro Irimajiri heralds the beginning of the 128-bit era at Dreamcast's launch.**

**DREAMCAST AT A GLANCE**

- Machine: **Dreamcast**
- Manufacturer: **Sega**
- Key developers: **Sega, Capcom, Namco, Infogrames**
- Japanese launch date: **Launched December 1998**
- UK launch date: **23 September 1999**
- UK console price: **£199**
- Proposed UK game price: **£35-£40**



# There are at least 50 games confirmed for Dreamcast in Europe

titles to its credit. From *Virtua Fighter* (wait until you see the third iteration on Dreamcast), to *Sega Rally*, to the forthcoming *Shenmue* (see side panel) and latest arcade hit (and likely DC conversion) *Ferrari 355 Challenge*, the company's creations are unquestionably of triple-A quality. And Dreamcast is the only place you'll be able to play them.

Dreamcast's technical merits are many, but from a gamer's perspective the attraction of easily accessible on-line play is ultramagnetic. We all loved the realism of *Gran Turismo* – now imagine a racer with visuals 20 times that quality, where you have 15 human opponents to compete with. Multi-player races, fights, shootouts and who knows what else will be available as standard. As anyone with access to several decent PCs, some game-playing mates, and a local area network (a limited clique of

journalists and developers) will attest, nothing – but nothing – beats multi-player gaming. Be very excited.

Sega's recent deal with British Telecom means that if you buy a Dreamcast in Europe you will be able to browse the Web on your television for no more than the cost of a local telephone call. The fact that front-room console gamers will have simple access to on-line gaming and the World Wide Web will revolutionise Internet culture, taking it out of the hands of the tech-heads and bringing it to the masses for real. By the time Sony and Nintendo hit back, Dreamcast will have already changed the face of videogames.

Come September, a hurricane is going to rip through the Western game scene, and on the weather maps over here it'll be represented by a blue spiral. Sega is definitely, defiantly back.

kind of massive software piracy that has decimated PlayStation revenues in certain Asian markets, Sega's boffins have developed the GD-ROM [the G stands for gigabyte] for Dreamcast. Because it holds 1,000Mb of data,

rather than the 650Mb on normal CD-ROMs, the GD-ROM can't be copied on a standard CD writer, a fact that will have an adverse affect on car boot sale attendance figures.

**VMS**  
One of the neatest

tricks in Dreamcast's repertoire is its Visual Memory Storage (VMS) system. Similar in concept to Sony's PocketStation, the VM is a boil-washed Game Boy, with a 48 x 32 pixel display, mini D-pad and some tiny buttons. And by plugging one into

the top of a Dreamcast joy pad, the VMS's screen becomes usable while you play the console. Simple games can be downloaded into the VMS and you can connect two of the bijou little units together and stage pocket-sized battles.

## Press start

Three new Dreamcast games that will help the new console shake the world.



### Shenmue (Sega)

■ What do you get if you add 250 people, \$20 million, and the brain behind *Virtua Fighter* (and therefore all 3D beat-'em-ups)? *Shenmue* is the answer, a sprawling RPG played out on the streets of Hong Kong. Although suffering from a couple of delays, and being split into two parts, Yu Suzuki's opus is looking stunning; the character, facial and location visuals are second to none. But don't expect it in the UK this side of Christmas, this is one to look forward to.



### Power Stone (Capcom)

■ Capcom's free-roaming 3D beat-'em-up has quietly revolutionised the staid beat-'em-up genre since its Japanese release. Brilliantly balanced play mechanics cater for both weapon-based and hand-to-hand combat, while dozens of humorous touches make this a scream to play. Unmissable.



### TrickStyle (Criterion)

■ Set to appear alongside Dreamcast this September, Criterion's stylish hoverboard racer (formerly *Velocity*) is simply sublime. Designed by a fanatical skateboarder, *TrickStyle* makes full use of the Dreamcast's graphical muscle to send lovely, detailed characters gliding along multiple routes which thread their way through vast cities. Add full support for on-line racing and this Acclaim-published title is primed to become a major title.





# THE FUTURE: PLAYSTATION 2

Sony's first ever stab at a videogames system, the PlayStation, took the world by storm. Jason Brookes, former editor of *Edge* magazine, investigates how the PlayStation 2 is going to astound you all over again.

**I** first saw a demonstration of Sony's original PlayStation prototype in February 1994, a year before its Japanese release, and the results sent my head spinning. When shown the legendary dinosaur demo in its texture-mapped, light-sourced glory, I instantly became a believer. Here was an electronics giant with no experience in videogames, planning to take on the gaming superpowers, Nintendo and Sega. This was a brave move, and whether through blind adulation or just gut instinct, I knew it could win. It was just so right.

Now in 1999, with its "glimpse of the future" PlayStation 2 announcement in Tokyo back in March, Sony's plans have come full circle. Currently slated for a winter release in Japan, and an autumn 2000 release in the West, PlayStation 2 (not a final name, but we'll use it for convenience) has already set the games development world alight with its staggering tech specs and stunning graphical demos.

Now, if you believe Sony's numbers – and their sheer extravagance does verge on the fantastical – the next machine will be 50 times more powerful than the current model. Yes, 50. Five-O. So you'd be forgiven for wondering to what Herculean task this power will be put. Mapping hyperspace, maybe? Putting men on Mars? Who better to ask than Phil Harrison, now Vice President of Third Party Relations, Research and Development at Sony Computer Entertainment of America.

"There are a million techniques and ideas that have been researched over the past 20 or 30 years, but only reproduced on a non-realtime basis until now," he explains.

"These algorithms for complex simulation, dynamics and artificial intelligence can now be handled in realtime because of the colossal mathematical performance of the Emotion Engine [the



ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON. PHOTO: RICKBUETTNER, CORBIS



### 128-bit Emotion Engine

Essentially a fancy name for a very, very fast chip with the potential to revolutionise videogames. It can simulate complex real-life physics, and can power the mathematics behind game characters'

personalities, enabling games to better represent qualities like intelligence, spontaneity and, supposedly, even emotion. Boo hoo.

### Backward compatibility

Full compatibility with existing PlayStation

games is guaranteed. In fact, PlayStation is so powerful that it can run original PlayStation games with both joypads tied behind its back. Which raises the point that Sony has hinted at overhauling the concept of joypads as we know them.

### 75 million Polygons/sec

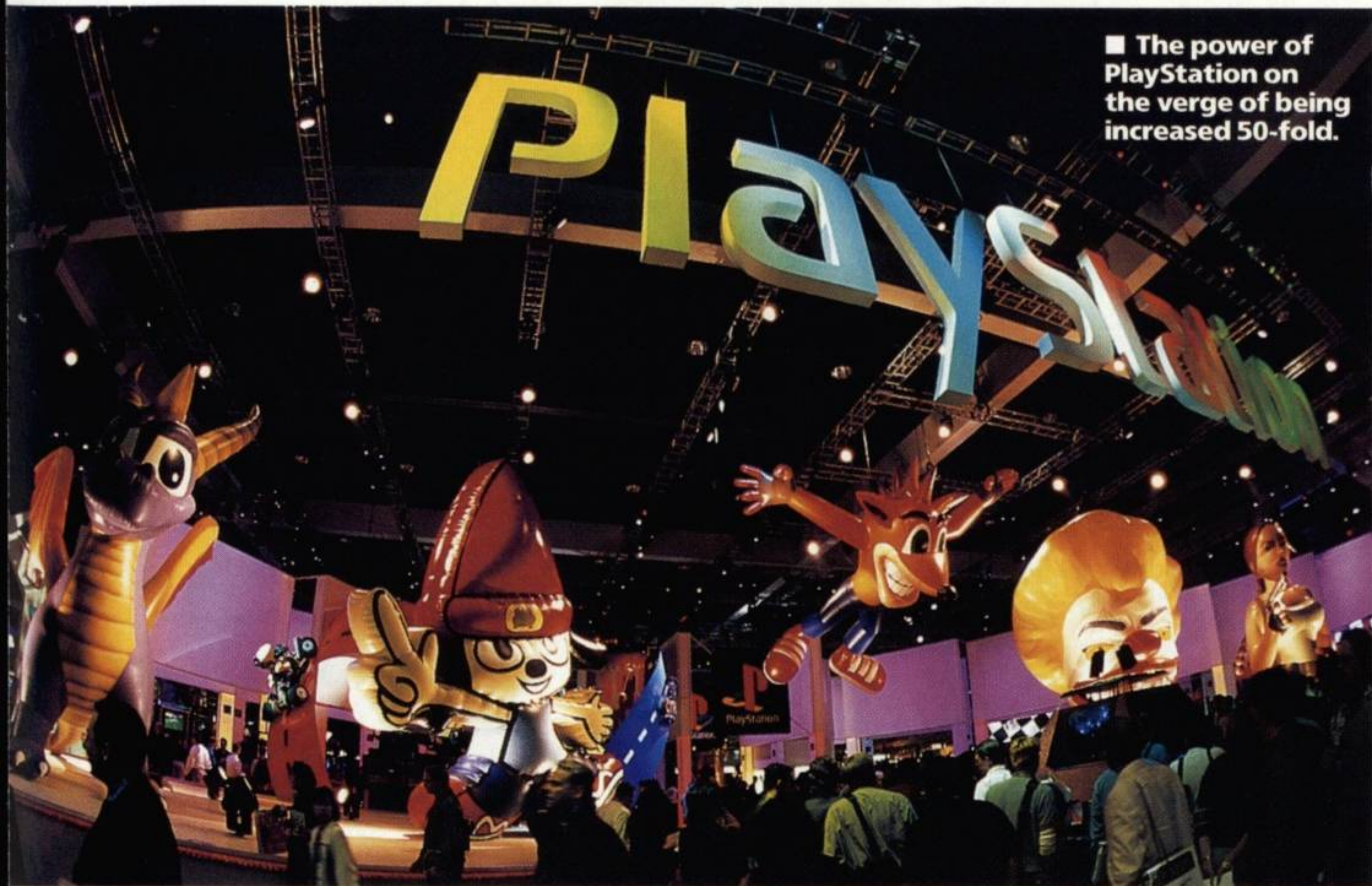
Refers to the physical geometry that makes up most graphics you see on screen – the higher the number the more detailed the graphics. This figure is a hypothetical maximum and something in the

region of 10-20 million will be more realistic with extras like game logic running and effects turned on.

### Graphics Synthesizer

This draws the pixels you see on-screen and features all kinds of





■ The power of PlayStation on the verge of being increased 50-fold.

## "I believe the new PlayStation will redefine the future"

chip at the heart of PlayStation 2). This means that objects in games can not just look realistic, but think, act, behave and respond realistically too. It's the difference between motion capture of a person and full dynamic skeletal physics." Phew.

Sitting snugly next to the Emotion Engine inside PlayStation 2 will be the Graphics Synthesizer, which has already been dubbed "the fastest graphics chip on the planet", and can chuck a ridiculous 20 million polygons around the screen. Even if you prefer to take Sony's numbers and technical posturing with a pinch of salt – it's doubtful PlayStation will look 50 times better than the original machine – the system's incredible graphics have the potential to seduce an even wider audience than the original.

In the space of four years Sony has entered a new market, conquered its rivals and brought videogaming kicking and screaming into mainstream consciousness.

Not bad going, really. Despite the fact that there's no official name for the new machine, no determined price, no visible marketing strategy and very little in the way of proof to back up the numbers, it's difficult not to feel that PlayStation 2 is going to very big indeed – the very future of videogames I had in mind after that first presentation all those years ago. However, Harrison sees an even grander possibility ahead: "I don't think our new machine fits into the future of videogames at all. No, I believe it will *redefine* the future, lead it and shape it. We are on the threshold of a golden era of in-home entertainment that stretches the contemporary definition of videogames in the same way that the development of colour film techniques changed cinema forever."

### PLAYSTATION 2 AT A GLANCE

- Machine: **No official name as yet.**
- Manufacturer: **Sony**
- Key developers: **Sony, Namco, EA, Konami**
- Proposed Japanese launch date: **Early 2000**
- Proposed UK launch date: **Autumn 2000**
- Proposed UK console price: **£200-£300**
- Proposed UK game price: **£35-£40**

sophisticated features such as alpha blending, bi-linear filtering, fogging and anti-aliasing. Don't worry about the exact meaning of these terms – they all go towards making the screen pictures as convincing and realistic as possible.

#### DVD-ROM

Although the first games will ship on CD, PlayStation 2 features the latest in movie technology so that video clips in games will appear beautifully clear and fuzz-free. There'll be an add-on to play DVD movies, too.

#### Ken Kutaragi

The designer of the original PlayStation chipset (universally acknowledged as one of the most "elegant" designs seen in the videogames arena) and now the chief architect of PlayStation 2, Mr. Kutaragi's fame and

glory will only increase as Sony's new machine embarks on its quest to take over the globe. Expect him to be thrust forward into the limelight as Sony's answer to Nintendo's loveable but perennially bowl-haircutted Shigeru Miyamoto.



## Press start

Three PlayStation 2 games that will shake the world.

### Metal Gear "Extra Solid" (Konami)

■ Solid Snake will look so detailed in this new version that – if you look closely enough – you'll even be able to spot the brand of tabs

he's smoking. Okay, this hasn't been announced yet and is pure dizzy-headed speculation, but Konami will need its

head seeing to if *Metal Gear Solid* doesn't get the PlayStation 2 treatment.



### Tekken: The Next Generation (Namco)

■ This hugely popular fighting series is likely to be one of the launch games. A brief demo and has already been seen, and looks

incredible – imagine a street brawl in which characters have the detail of those seen in pre-rendered intro scenes. Then, stand

them in the middle of a baying, 100-strong crowd and you have the best-looking beat-'em-up imaginable.



### Gran Turismo 3 (Sony)

When you consider how realistically the cars move and handle in the current version of this classic racer, the potential for the

simulation of complex vehicle physics is staggering. The demo shown in Tokyo took just two weeks to put together, and looked

nothing short of the hi-res intro from the original game. Give them two years and who knows what could happen?





# THE FUTURE: NINTENDO'S "PROJECT DOLPHIN"

Thanks to Sony's sassy marketing drive, the Nintendo 64 was forced into second place behind the PlayStation. *Arcade* scribe Mark Green explains how the Big N will regain the top spot.

## DOLPHIN AT A GLANCE

- Machine: "Project Dolphin" (working title)
- Manufacturer: Nintendo
- Key developers: Nintendo, Rare, Acclaim, Factor 5
- Proposed Japanese launch date: October 2000
- Proposed UK launch date: October 2000
- Proposed UK console price: £200 (estimate)
- Proposed UK game price: £30-35 (estimate)

ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON ILLUSTRATION: CORBIS



**O**ne day before E3 kicked off in Los Angeles in May, Nintendo held a press conference. The subject was Nintendo's powerful new console, code-named Project Dolphin, and the assorted tech specs, facts and statistics that emerged revealed the package would be due for release in 2000.

But the conference itself suggested a

different side to the project; by joining forces with industry powerhouses like IBM, Panasonic and NEC, Nintendo has set itself one simple aim – to break Sony.

In the process, Nintendo is abandoning one of its dearest principles – games on cartridge. The hope is that developers who were alienated by the cost and limitations of N64 carts will come running back to Dolphin's Panasonic-manufactured DVD drive, which can house a game 14 times the size of *Final Fantasy VII* on a single disc, and at one twentieth of the cost of a cart.

Technically, DVD puts Dolphin on an equal footing with PlayStation 2. But only a fool would bet against Nintendo developing superior games. With six teams beavering away on Dolphin development kits, and a host of others to follow, there's no chance the Dolphin will suffer from the lack of games that has beleaguered the N64. And with Nintendo having abandoned its "kids only" stance long ago, we can expect a far greater range of gaming experiences.

If Nintendo stays true to its word, the guts of Project Dolphin (two blindingly fast chips) should pack enough monstrous polygon-shifting power to make arcade machines wet themselves. Six times as speedy as Dreamcast is a conservative estimate, meaning Dolphin could happily provide a four-player, split-screen version of *Zelda* – with full graphical detail – with barely a bead of sweat on its brow. Nintendo's Shigeru Miyamoto himself commented that: "With this processor, I can take game designs to a new level." If the

best game designer in the world is excited, everyone should be.

The possibility of a built-in modem for Internet play, a newly-designed controller and the ability to play DVD movies out of the box is also exciting, but the prospect of developers like Acclaim, Factor 5, Rare and Nintendo letting their imaginations and talents run riot with Dolphin's potential takes the biscuit. If you're at all interested in playing the best games in the world, you're going to need this console. **A**

## Press start

**So, what will you get to play on the new Nintendo, then?**



■ Apart from *Arcade*'s exclusive news last month that *Rogue Squadron* developer Factor 5 is putting together a new version of shoot-'em-up *Turrican* ready for Dolphin's launch, there's no news of other launch titles. So, er... let's have a guess. A new *Mario*

game is bound to appear (*Super Mario 64 2* is still lying around unfinished somewhere deep in Nintendo HQ), along with a *Pokémon* game to capitalise on the cuddly critters' success in Japan. Rare will undoubtedly have something up its sleeve, which may be one of the 14 new Disney games they're contracted to produce. And a racing title is also likely, so *Mario Kart 128* or *F-Zero 128* anyone? You can count us in.



**Say what?**

**Troublesome Dolphin jargon explained.**

### 0.18 Micron Copper Technology

The term used to describe the Dolphin's central chip, the Gekko, which will be designed and manufactured by IBM. It refers to the narrowness and super-conductivity of the tiny

wires in the chip, helping Dolphin – and its games – run at phenomenal speeds.

### 400MHz clock speed

A complicated way of saying that Dolphin will be very fast indeed. 400MHz makes it one

third faster than PlayStation 2, and more than four times quicker than a Nintendo 64. This way, Dolphin's graphics will be ultra-detailed and supremely fast. The system's speed will also enable data to be loaded more efficiently from DVD.

### Panasonic Integrated Dolphin Technology

This is hugely exciting. Many of Panasonic's new stand-alone DVD players will come with the ability to play Dolphin titles, meaning there'll be a huge

market of people looking for Dolphin games who don't actually own the console. This may sound like madness, but it's an idea borrowed from Nuon (a rival games machine manufacturer) and could pay off big dividends for Nintendo.



# PC **FORMAT**

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# THE FUTURE: PC

The PC isn't just *the* gaming platform of the future, says Jim McCauley, features editor of *PC Format*, it's a versatile, strong, all-round entertainment system that'll keep on amazing you well into the next millennium.

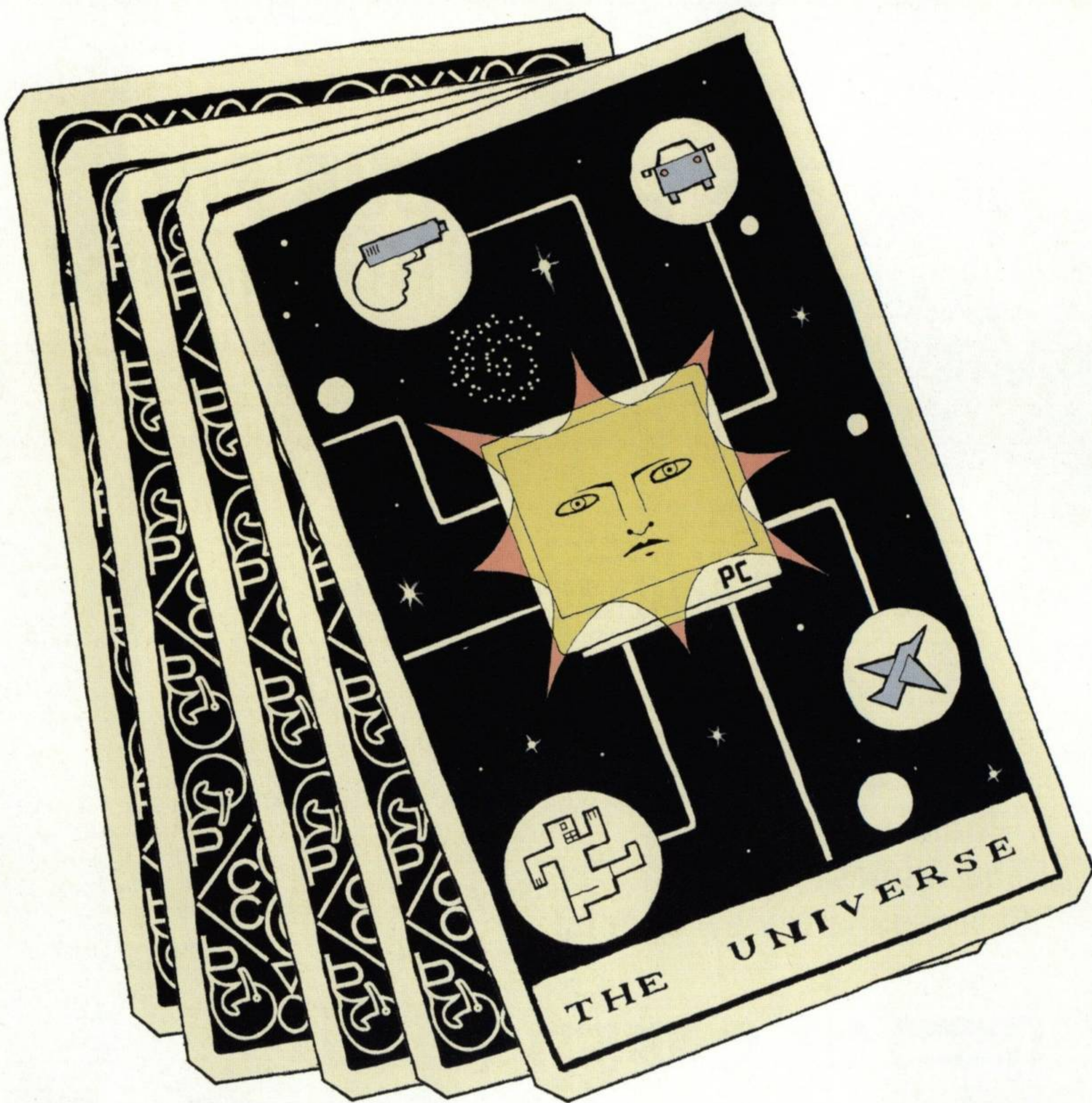


ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON

**A**nswer me this: what is the longest-lived gaming platform in the world? Here's a clue: it's not the Game Boy. Nintendo's ancient handheld is but a cheeky youngster when compared with the grandfather of gaming, and all these flash new consoles are just that – flashes in the proverbial pan – next to the mighty PC. It has been around for nearly 20 years, one way or another, and it's going to stay around. Get used to that fact.

Granted, the PC is your modern day philosopher's axe. Almost everything about it has been changed time and again, and the only thing that a modern Pentium III system has in common with a wheezy old IBM PC from the early '80s is a core of instructions from the Intel 8086 processor. But run a program from 1984 on a 1999 PC and it should go without any problems. Can you run a Master System game on a Dreamcast? Can you heck as like.

Of course, there's the problem of spending a grand on buying a shiny new system, and then a year later you have to upgrade it, a process unlikely to change in the near future. But consider it an investment; the equivalent of having your car serviced every year, with the difference that when your car comes back from the garage it's unlikely to go twice as fast as before and boast all-new options. A basic, entry-level PC outstrolls the PlayStation and N64. A top-of-the-range model laughs at the Dreamcast and will happily have a pop at PlayStation 2. You pay the price and in return you stay on the cutting edge for as long as you want to be there.

The proposed graphical power of the next generation consoles seems weedy compared to what an optimised PC can already do. Ultra-realistic 3D graphics already run at a TV-busting resolution of 1024x768. Super-fast hard disk reading and Dolby surround sound? Don't mind if I do. Plus it's almost taken for granted that with a PC the Internet's at your fingertips – the future potential of which is enormous. With the latest graphics cards you can even use your



**Say what?**

**Troublesome PC jargon explained.**

#### DirectX

With hundreds of motherboards, sound cards, graphics cards, 3-D cards and God knows what else available for the PC, supporting all of them has traditionally been a nightmare. Microsoft's DirectX drivers mean that

whatever hardware you have in your PC, it's almost certainly supported and your games will work to the best of their abilities.

#### ADSL

Clearly, it stands for Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line, and it's

the future of on-line gaming. Modems are too slow, ISDN lines are too expensive, but those crazy boffins have found a way to whack tons of data along ordinary copper phone lines at ridiculous speeds. It'll cost you around £15-£20 a month

if BT, as rumoured, introduces the service in the Autumn.

#### FlexATX

PCs are big and chunky, right? No longer. The FlexATX is a new, super-compact motherboard to be found in the PCs of the future. Next year

your PC is likely to be the size of a Breville Snack 'n' Sandwich Maker, rather than the size of an oven.

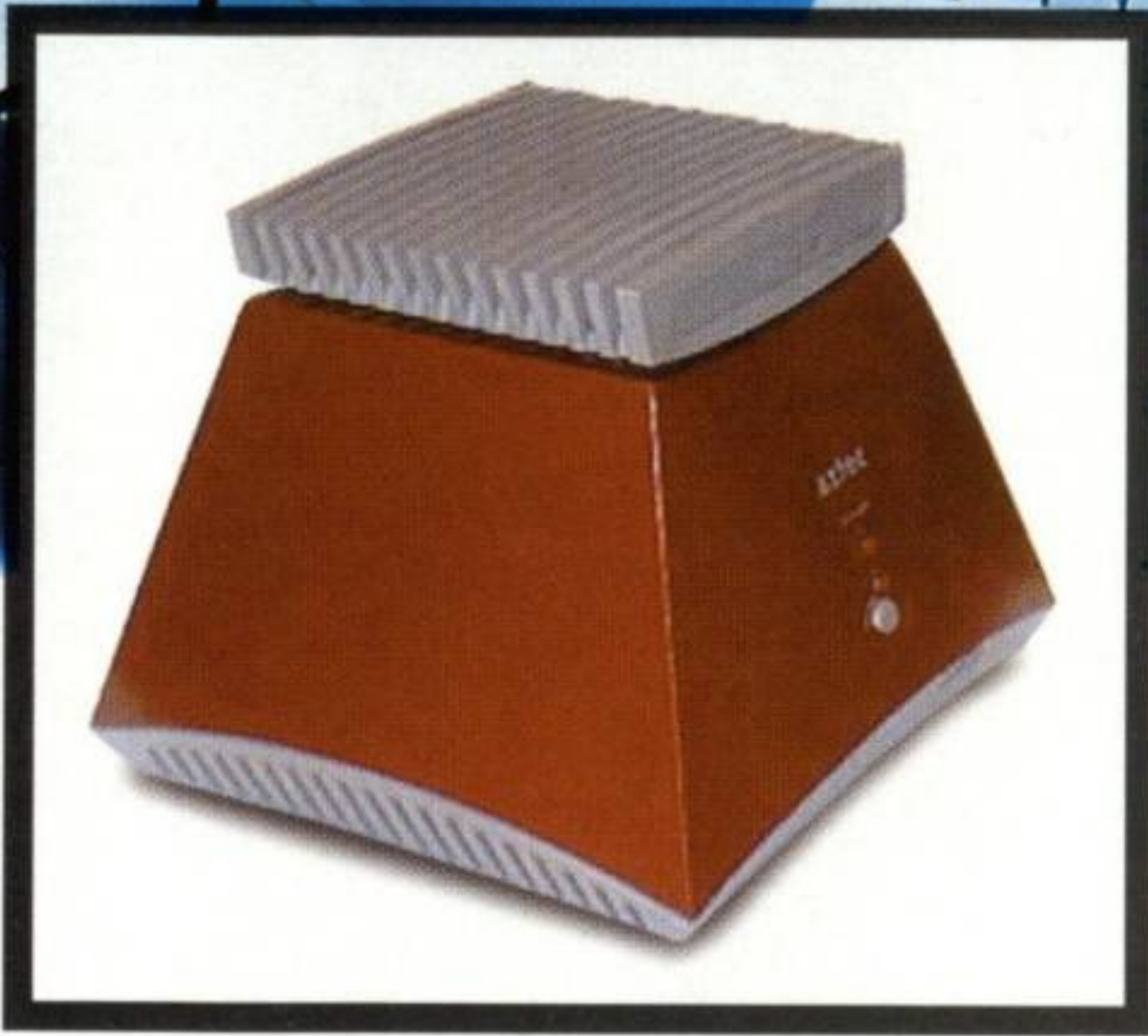
#### TCP/IP

Multi-player gaming on a single TV screen? How passé! TCP/IP is the networking protocol





■ Shape shifter: the PC as beige box and, ooh, that one there looks like a fish...




PC as a video recorder, storing your favourite shows on your hard disk, from where you can play them back without hunting through a collection of unlabelled tapes.

## Next generation consoles look weedy in comparison

The latest initiative to hit the PC industry is for more compact and stylish models, dwarves when placed next to the enormous tower and desktop systems that we're all used to. Says Steve Whalley, Intel's PC Initiatives Manager: "PCs can not only look good, they can also look accessible. One of the concept designs resembles a fish."

As for games, the cream of the PC crop looks and plays better than anything the consoles have to offer, which is a legacy of some of the brilliant minds behind them. John Carmack (*Doom*, *Quake*), Peter Molyneux (*Populous*, *Dungeon Keeper*),

Richard Garriott (the *Ultima* series). These people have been taking the PC to its limits for years, and they're all currently putting their not inconsiderable brains towards software that will once again change the face of gaming. The PC invented the first-person shooter. It refined role-playing beyond all recognition. It allowed for ultimate realism in racing games. In short, it's the driving force behind the best that the games industry as a whole has to offer, and with its myriad other abilities it's perfectly placed to become the most important gaming machine of the future. 

that enables you to hook your PC up to a network, or the Internet itself, and play against people in the next room, or on the next continent. It's fast and reliable, and it's the reason why the PC leads the field in multi-player gaming.

**USB**  
Universal Serial Bus. One of the big problems with the PC is that you can only plug so many things into it, and then there's a chance that they won't work with each other, not to mention the nightmare of installing

all the driver software. With USB you just plug in what you want, then sit back and smile to yourself as it works first time. And, should you so wish, you can daisy-chain hundreds of devices together in a bid to travel back in time. You crazy fool.

**Windows 2000**  
The last piece in the puzzle. For years PC owners have had a system with roots in the clumsy old world of DOS. *Windows 2000* is the true 32-bit OS that we've all been waiting for, and it'll mean faster, better games for all.

## Press start

Three great games worth buying a PC for.



### Black And White (Lionhead)

■ Peter Molyneux invented the God game with *Populous*, and he's about to invent it anew. *Black*

and *White* offers you almost total freedom to do what you want in a glorious 3D world, and its utterly intuitive

interface (you'll hardly notice it's there) means that anyone will be able to play it within minutes.



### Anachronox (Ion Storm)

■ *Final Fantasy*? Pah! *Anachronox* is expected to give the RPG a major kick in the backside with a

multitude of stunning 3D worlds, a gripping, emotionally involving storyline and the most cinematic look of any

game, ever. In short, *Anachronox* is all set to raise the role-playing game stakes to unbelievable levels.



### Quake III: Arena (id)

■ Multi-player gaming is the future, and *Quake III* is going to take you there. Coder John Carmack is a master of 3D graphics

and fast network code, and *Arena* is his magnum opus. Yes, it's just a first person shooter, and *Citizen Kane* was just a film.

With gaming this good available in people's homes, deathmatching should be an Olympic sport within the next couple of years.





Words | Sam Richards

# APOCALYPSE WHEN?

If videogames have taught us anything, it's that the Earth's future is bleak. According to most game plots, unspeakable horror (usually involving aliens) seems unavoidable. So when's it all scheduled to kick off?

**T**he people who design videogames aren't a particularly optimistic bunch. When was the last time you played a game set in a tranquil, idyllic future in which everyone's getting on really great? It just doesn't happen. Oh no, videogame designers are unanimous in their belief that the future sucks and that, sooner or later, one or two "lone warriors" – the last chance for mankind – will have to battle against outrageous odds to save humanity as we know it.

So what disasters can we expect when?

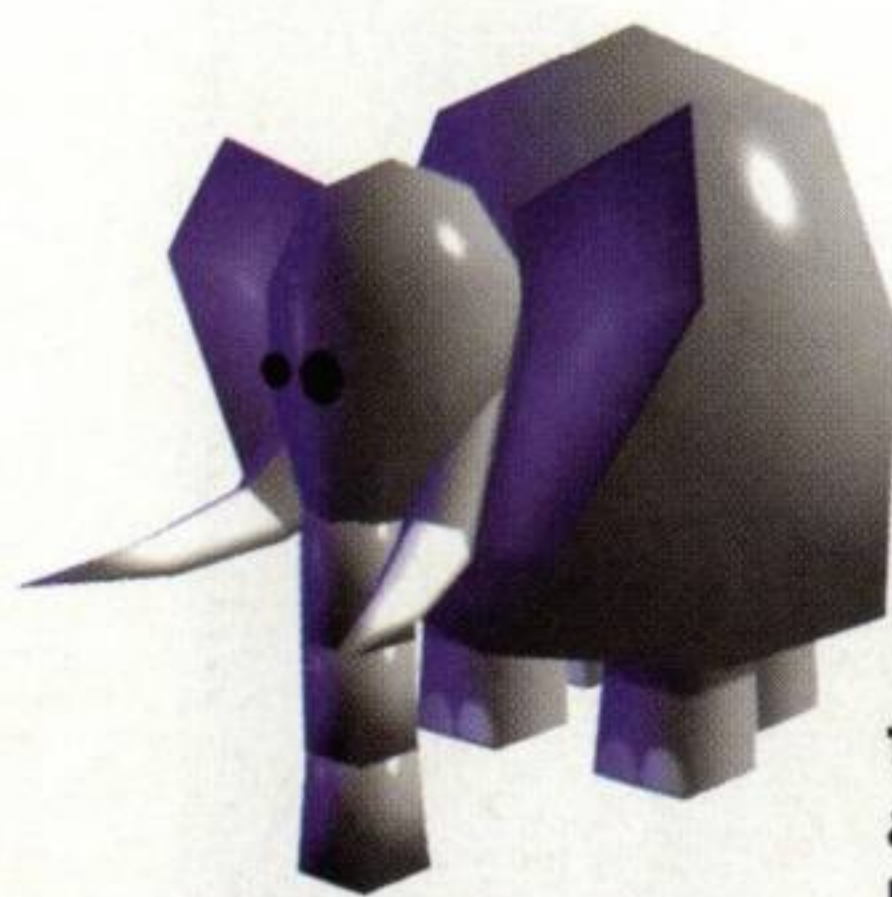
What sort of schedule have the videogame prophets set out for us? Will nuclear Armageddon will destroy the Earth, or will we be struck by a giant meteor first? Will global warming melt the ice caps and submerge the continents or will most of us meet our maker after some "rip in the space/time continuum" sends killer robots hurtling towards Earth?

There's only one way to find out, and that's to create *Arcade's* own prophecy for the future based on videogame plots. We might be wrong, of course (when George Orwell foretold the horrors of 1984 he wasn't thinking of the Eurythmics) but if Nostrodamus is still believed after so many years of getting it wrong, we reckon we deserve a punt at getting it right.



2032

**Amen: the Awakening** (GT Interactive, PC) tells us people will still drink eggnog on Christmas Eve, but maybe it's something in the drink which causes a third of the world's population to go insane and start killing everybody. While North America is invaded by "the afflicted", a European resistance is created, headed up by an ex-SAS nutter calling himself Bishop Six and an army veteran born in Canterbury. Safe hands, then.



■ Elephants will rule the earth! Maybe.

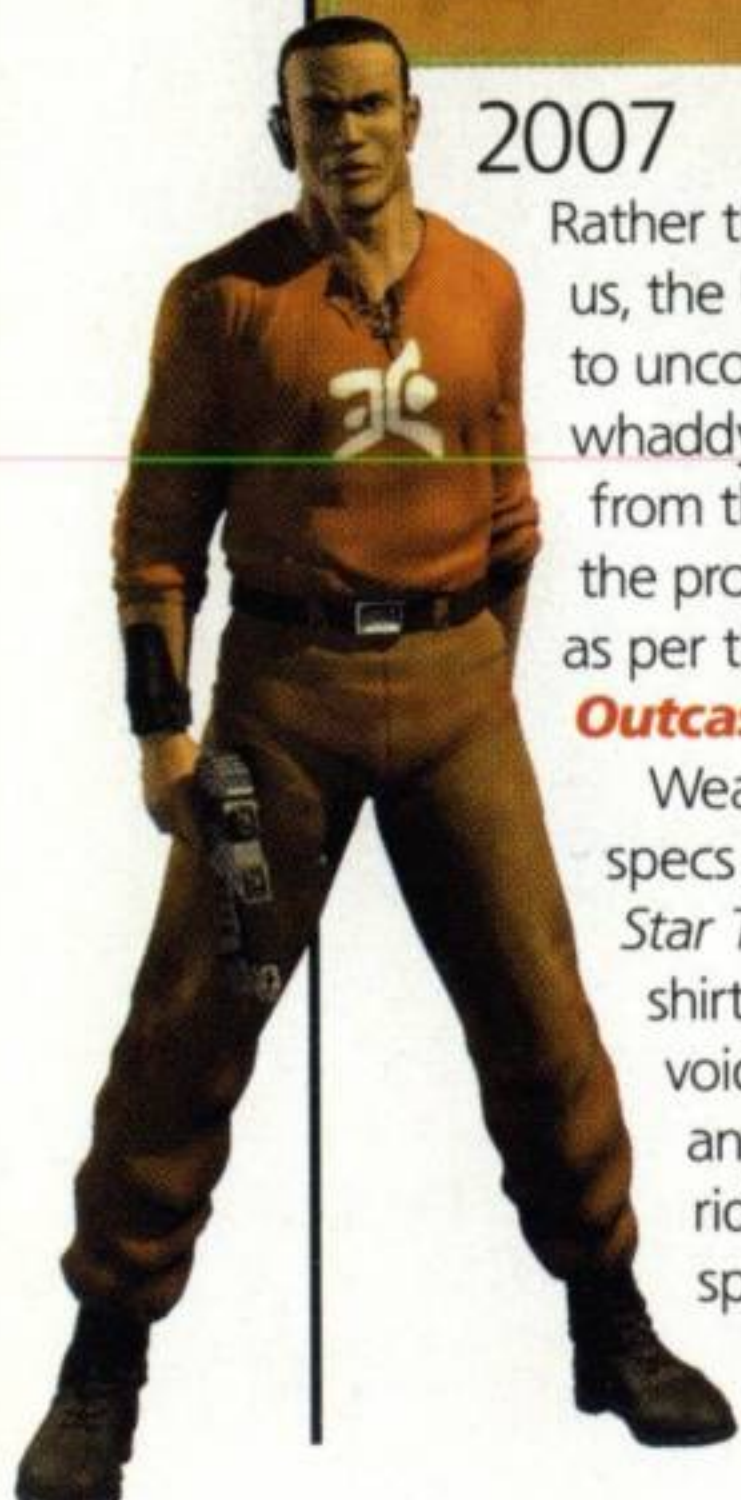
2007



2007

Rather than waiting for aliens to visit us, the US sends out a probe hoping to uncover a parallel universe. And whaddya know? Intelligent lifeforms from the world of Adelpha disrupt the probe and create a black hole, as per the events foretold in **Outcast** (Infogrames, PC).

Wearing only a pair of electronic specs (after the blind geezer off *Star Trek*) and a drawstring-neck shirt, Cutter Seal ventures into the void. It seems that in the future, any left-wing renegade with a ridiculous name can become a space hero, news which must be heartening for Tony Wedgewood Benn.



2012



2012

It's gratifying to learn that by this point, if **Psychic Force 2012**

(Taito, Dreamcast) is to be believed, at least some of us will have developed psychic, paranormal powers, enabling us to fly and move objects by telekinesis. It's also nice to see that these powers are being put to good use by having fights inside a large cube suspended in mid-air.



2016



2016

Aliens finally make contact. And damn it all if they're not sadistic blobs of green mucus intent on travelling through time and eating human

brains – blame **Body Harvest** (Gremlin, N64). At least we'll be able to chase them back through the calendar to Siberia in 1991, the arctic wastes of newly-democratic Russia being a popular destination for extra-terrestrial time-travelling holidaymakers for years to come.



2030



2030

Despite the fact that the San Francisco portrayed in **Daikatana** (Eidos, PC) is

populated by cyber gangsters, at least somebody's found a cure for AIDS. See, the future's not all doom and gloom. *Arcade* predicts that *Daikatana* might just about be completed in time to fulfil its own prophecies.







2052

According to **Deus Ex** (Eidos, PC), by 2052 the world is now a "dangerous and chaotic place", riddled with pollution and disease and completely overrun by terrorists. Great. Seems like the Mr Bigs behind international conspiracies might have given it all up by now, but they're still trying to take over what's left of the Earth.



2100

The holocaust has occurred – presumably as a result of the chain reaction caused when two **Wipeout** drivers scuffle over ungentlemanly use of the Quake Disruptor – which lends the technology of **Warzone 2100** (Eidos, PC/PlayStation) a distinctly back-to-basics feel. Tanks, hovercrafts, lasers and missiles are the tools, while seemingly motiveless, wanton annihilation of everyone not in your army is the reason for living. Bleak.



2455

Another section of **Daikatana**, which first shows that time travel is possible (perhaps even mandatory) by this time. Despite this, people haven't stopped searching for mythical magic swords, and the best accelerated evolution can offer is the RoboCo Froginator, an evil cyber-frog with a deadly tongue. Croak.



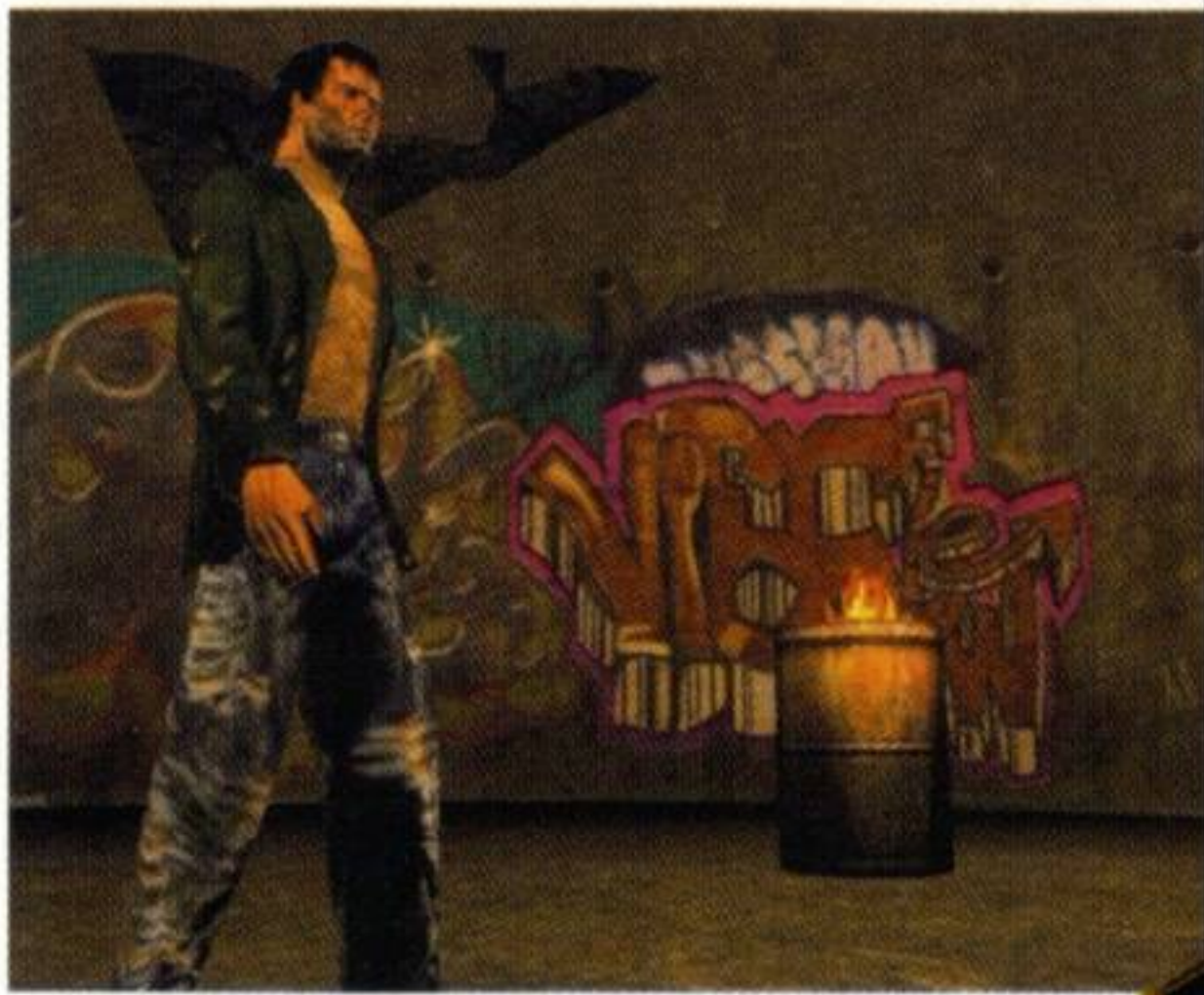
2555

At which point it becomes apparent that Merlin possessed time travelling powers back in medieval times, according to **Excalibur 2555 AD** (Telstar, PC). He could have said something. Anyway, he snubs the 20th Century and heads straight for the 26th, where yet again, a magic sword is the issue. And you thought they might have invented something better than magic swords by now.



3050

In 1000AD we were living in freezing stone buildings, no-one could read and the ruling hegemony was a bunch of bearded geezers from Norway. By 2000AD we could search for porn on the Internet. Such an astounding technological leap is hardly reflected by the third millennium, by the end of which humans take the form of microchips, assuming the bodies of mutant kangaroos or bomb-throwing rabbits with wheels for legs, just to give their lives a purpose. At least that's what **Spacestation: Silicon Valley** (Take 2, N64) tells us. Knowing that the last vestiges of humanity are desperately trying to enter sheep's corpses in order to survive almost makes you want to go and sign up to a mass suicide cult right now.



2042

2046 2052

2097 2100

2283 2455

2463 2555

3050



2042

Seems like the last disaster has been averted, only for PI Tex Murphy (see, they still have clichéd stock characters in the future) to uncover another accident waiting to happen – see **Under a Killing Moon** (Eidos, PC). America is racked with political corruption and the majority of the population are mutants. *Plus ça change.*



2046

The enormous faceless corporations and advanced terrorist operations of **Hard Edge** (Sunsoft, PlayStation) are an accepted part of society by now. But what kind of bizarre biological experiments are being cooked up to produce breasts of that shape?



2097

Earth has run out of natural resources, so everybody heads off to colonise

other planets. Evil corporations rule the waves, so what's left of earth government establishes a cyber police force, the **G-Police** (Psygnosis, PlayStation/PC). Judging by the size of the ads, Diesel is the biggest corporation on Callisto, while the half-metal police force attempts to prevent illegal imports of fashion jeans.

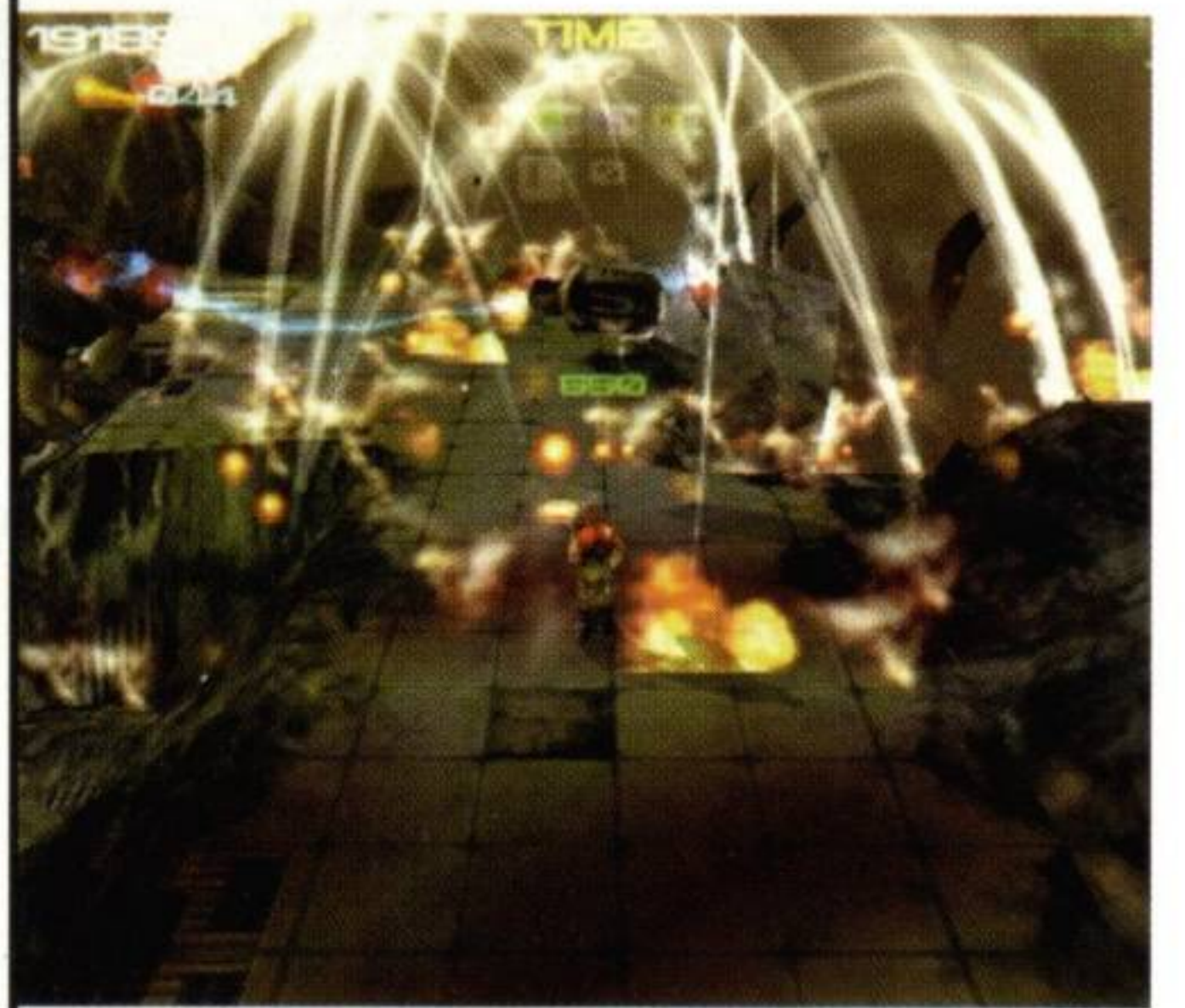


Meanwhile, Dave Coulthard's great-grandson drives an anti-gravity car without wheels at ostentatious speeds in **Wipeout 2097** (Psygnosis, PlayStation/PC).



2283

Give it a couple of centuries, and we've left Earth altogether and are fighting intergalactic wars against aliens who resemble giant dung beetles, like in **Outwars** (Microsoft, PC). All typical leisurewear suits include a built-in rocketpack.



2463

There's a new trend for Earth forces taking over inhospitable planets and "terraforming" them so they can grow useful stuff. Like wheat.

This is how they tell it in **Expendable** (Rage, PC), but these distant planets are left under the rule of robots with little human presence – can you spot the deliberate mistake, readers? Yep, scary aliens invade the remote colonies and eat everything so we have to start another war. Terrific.





# THE FUTURE OF VIDEOGAMES LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET



■ It'll be years yet before your present system's thrown out into the wilderness.

Words | Mark Green

## PEOPLE, HOLD ON

Eight reasons your PlayStation or N64 still rocks.

**D**reamcast this, Dolphin that – with all this talk of spanking new consoles and the greatest games ever, you'd be forgiven for feeling more than a little inadequate at the sight of your existing machine sitting quietly next to the TV. Your PlayStation or N64 may have given you hours of amusement, but up against the next generation of videogaming, it's looking fit for the scrap-heap.

But wait! Before you flush your PlayStation or N64 down the bog, there're a few things you should know about your ageing console. This isn't the first time a new wave of machines has arrived to topple the existing regime, and past experience tells us that there are many, many years of life left in Sony and Nintendo's existing consoles. Read on for the proof...

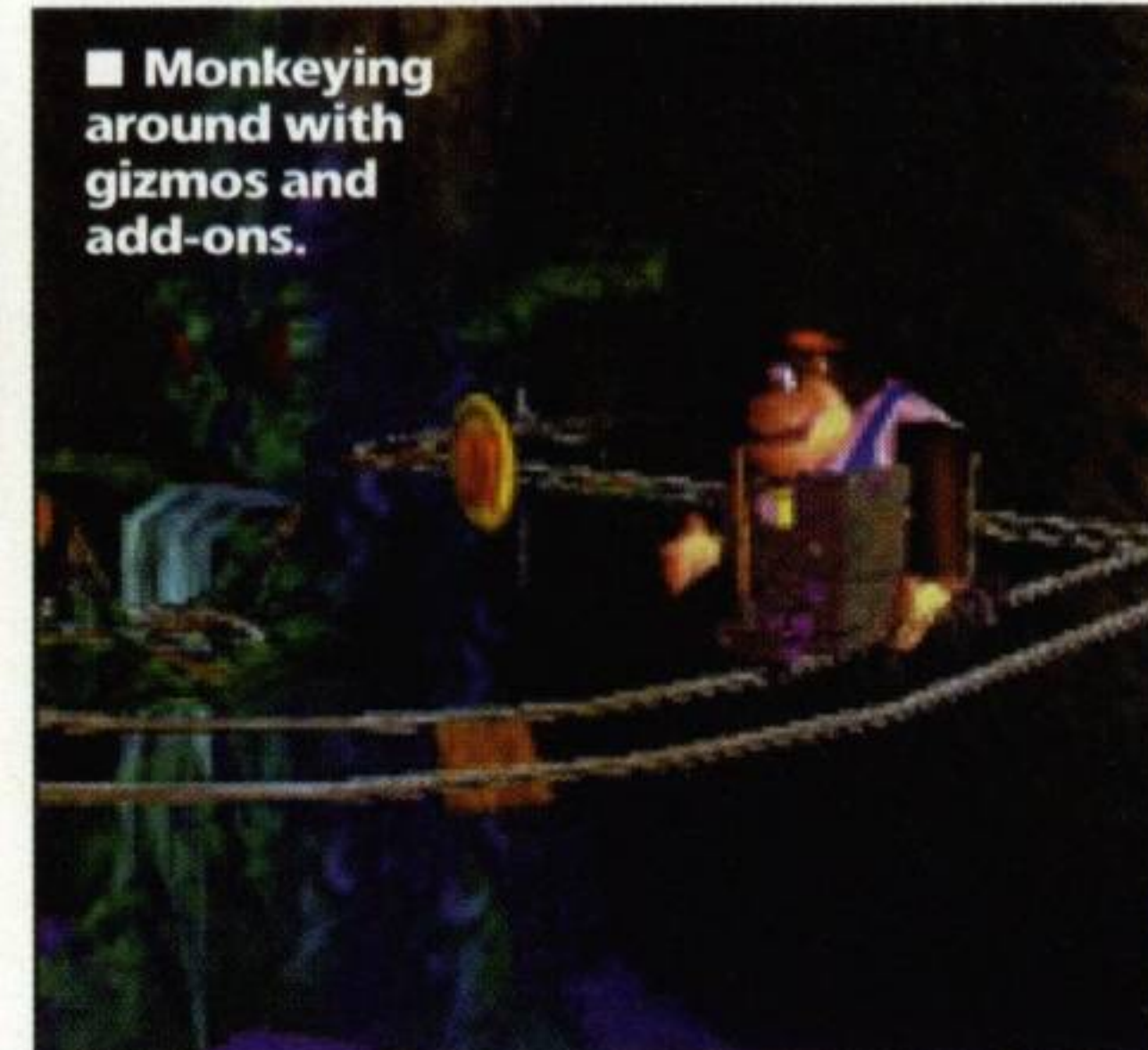
### 1. You're not alone

All the N64 and PlayStation owners in the country would fill 75 Wembley Stadiums, and to the game publishers that's an awful lot of wallets that need emptying. As long as a viable market exists, games will still keep reaching the shelves – six months prior to the N64's launch, brand new Super Nintendo games were still sneaking out. And who's to say that the current consoles won't emulate the Game Boy, which has just had its most successful year – a full decade after its original release?

### 2. Patience is a virtue

It's traditional for console manufacturers to price new machines astronomically high to begin with, extracting loads of cash from "early adopters" – those who *must* have new technology on day one. A few months later, the price-tag plummets. Meanwhile, at a time when the N64 and PlayStation are in their prime, developers will be treating the new consoles with a "wait and see" policy, meaning a dearth of great games. Konami has already put off any Dreamcast development until at least 2000.

PHOTOS: JUSTIN SCOBIE



■ Monkeying around with gizmos and add-ons.

### 3. Bits and pieces

As far as add-ons go, the N64 and PlayStation are in their infancy. A slew of new games enable pictures taken with the Game Boy's Camera to be imported into the N64 (*Perfect Dark*, for example, will let you shoot your friends' faces off) and Nintendo's great graphics-enhancing Expansion Pak will be exploited by a host of new games – you won't be able to play Rare's forthcoming *Donkey Kong Country* without it. Meanwhile, the PlayStation's analogue Dual Shock pad (recently relaunched in a rainbow of colours) is only now being fully exploited by games such as Sony's *Ape Escape*.

## As far as add-ons go, the PlayStation and N64 are in their infancy







#### 4. Prices will plummet

Carts and CDs have been slowly decreasing in price over the years, and the trend will continue – see Virgin Megastore's recent industry-shaking decision to price all PlayStation games at £29.99 or less. To add to this, Sony and Nintendo will release big games at cheap prices, to prevent you from abandoning your machines when you hear news of the next generation consoles. The big two might even lower the cost of manufacturing carts and CDs to entice developers, ensuring the pound in your pocket will go even further.

#### 5. Backwards compatibility

Two very important words that Sony pulled out of its bag, meaning that the PlayStation 2 will play every existing PlayStation title, from *Tekken* to *Tomb Raider III*.

The upshot of this is that current games will be staying on the shelves for a lot longer than usual (for the benefit of new PlayStation 2 owners). And you can bet that Sony will repackage every game as a cheap "classic" PlayStation title, creating an instant budget range.

■ **Don't worry: you'll be able to play with her forever.**



■ **With the N64's *Perfect Dark* (left) and PlayStation's *Final Fantasy VIII*, you're going to have more fun than ever before.**

#### 6. The best is to come

The Super Nintendo's greatest game – *Yoshi's Story* – appeared just as the console was taking its final breath, and it'll be the same story with your machine. In the PlayStation and N64's twilight years, the quality of games such as *Gran Turismo 2*, *Final Fantasy VIII*, *Perfect Dark* and *Zelda Gaiden* will hit impressive new heights. And Nintendo and Sony won't let any developers in on the next gen party unless they commit to making titles for the existing consoles.

#### 7. Expect delays

Spring 2000 for PlayStation 2? October 2000 for Project Dolphin? Piffle. The gaming industry's golden rule is that *nothing* should be released on time. Nintendo is historically well-known for missing its deadlines and, if we're being honest, the chances of Nintendo's latest console making it out before 2001 are very slim. Similarly, all the big PlayStation and N64 games are likely to be delayed too, indirectly extending the life of the existing consoles.

#### 8. It's a little bit of history

Within weeks of selling, lending or smashing your PlayStation or N64, you'll be pining for all those great games you used to play, and shedding tears at the painfully empty space in your living room or bedroom. And, several years down the line, you'll be kicking yourself as Hugh Scully tells some lucky punter that the console he bought from Electronics Boutique in 1995 is worth enough to pay the mortgage three times over.







Words | **Rich Pelley & Sam Richards**

# 30 GAMES TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Forthcoming software stunners that will alter the way you think about videogames forever.

**I**nventing clever new games machines is all very well, but as the companies behind the doomed Jaguar, 3DO and Saturn will tell you, they might as well be doorstops if you don't got the games wot rock the shop. Every so often a system is blessed with a magnificent piece of software that then becomes a benchmark by which every other game of its genre – or for the very best, every game full stop – is measured.

*Gran Turismo's* thrilling realism is the standard for racers everywhere, *Half-Life* forces all other 3D shooters to clean their boots, and platformers must doff their caps to *Super Mario 64*. Now prepare to meet the new generation of games primed to stamp their mark of innovation on the forehead of videogaming.



## Black & White

- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **Lionhead Studios**
- Publisher: **EA**
- On sale in UK: **Autumn**

**What is it?** The new breed of god sim. You play a sorcerer king; your goal is to gain love and worship from your people.

**How will it change the world?** Among its interface innovations is a fantastic new Gesture Recognition system, which casts spells using the mouse like the joypad combos of a beat-'em-up.



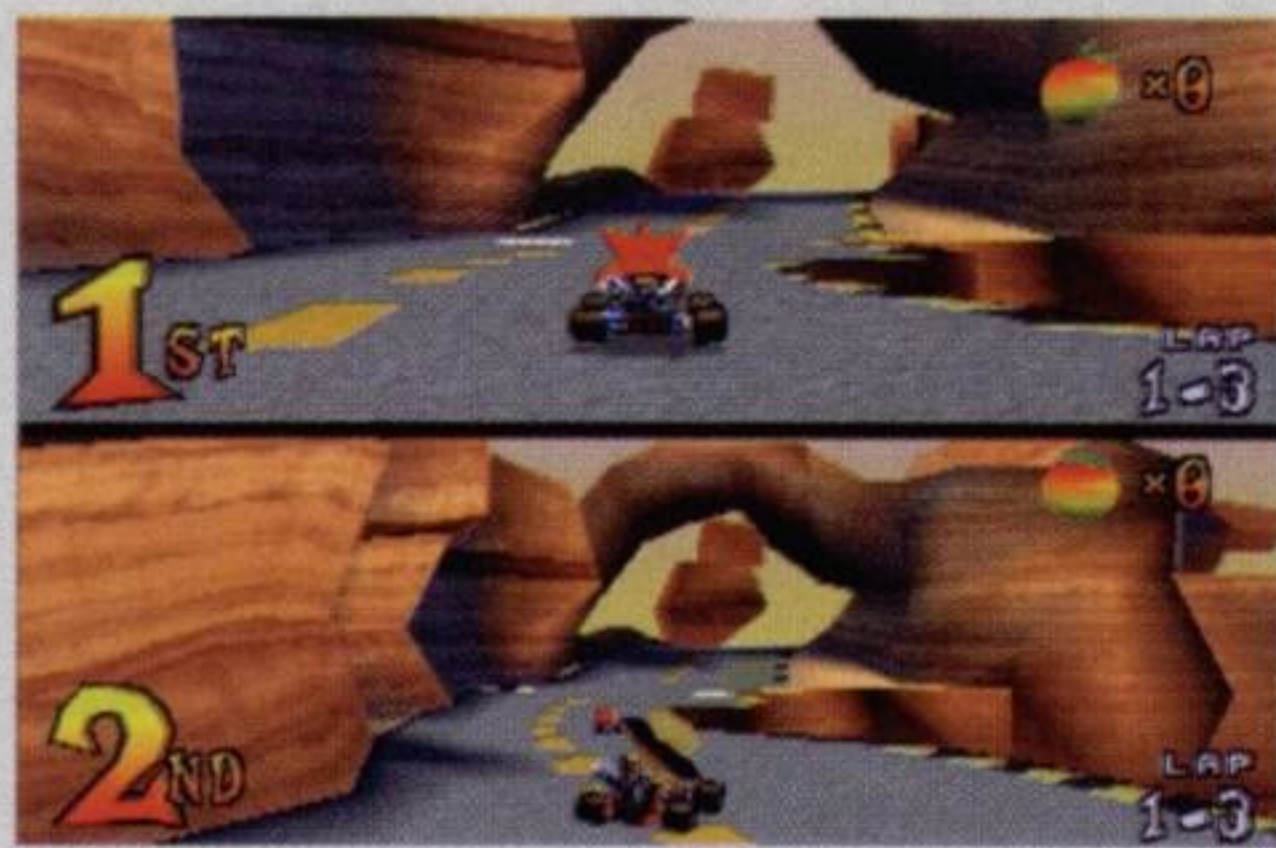
## Beatmania

- Format: **PlayStation**
- Developer: **Konami**
- Publisher: **Konami**
- On sale in UK: **Oct**

**What is it?** A DJ sim and the leading name in the rhythm-action genre.

**How will it change the world?** A glut of hip tunes from famous names will grace the UK version and shove videogames further into the dance music consciousness. It will also be great to live out those deck fantasies without shelling out for 1210s – a special joypad points the way toward a growing number of game-specific controllers.





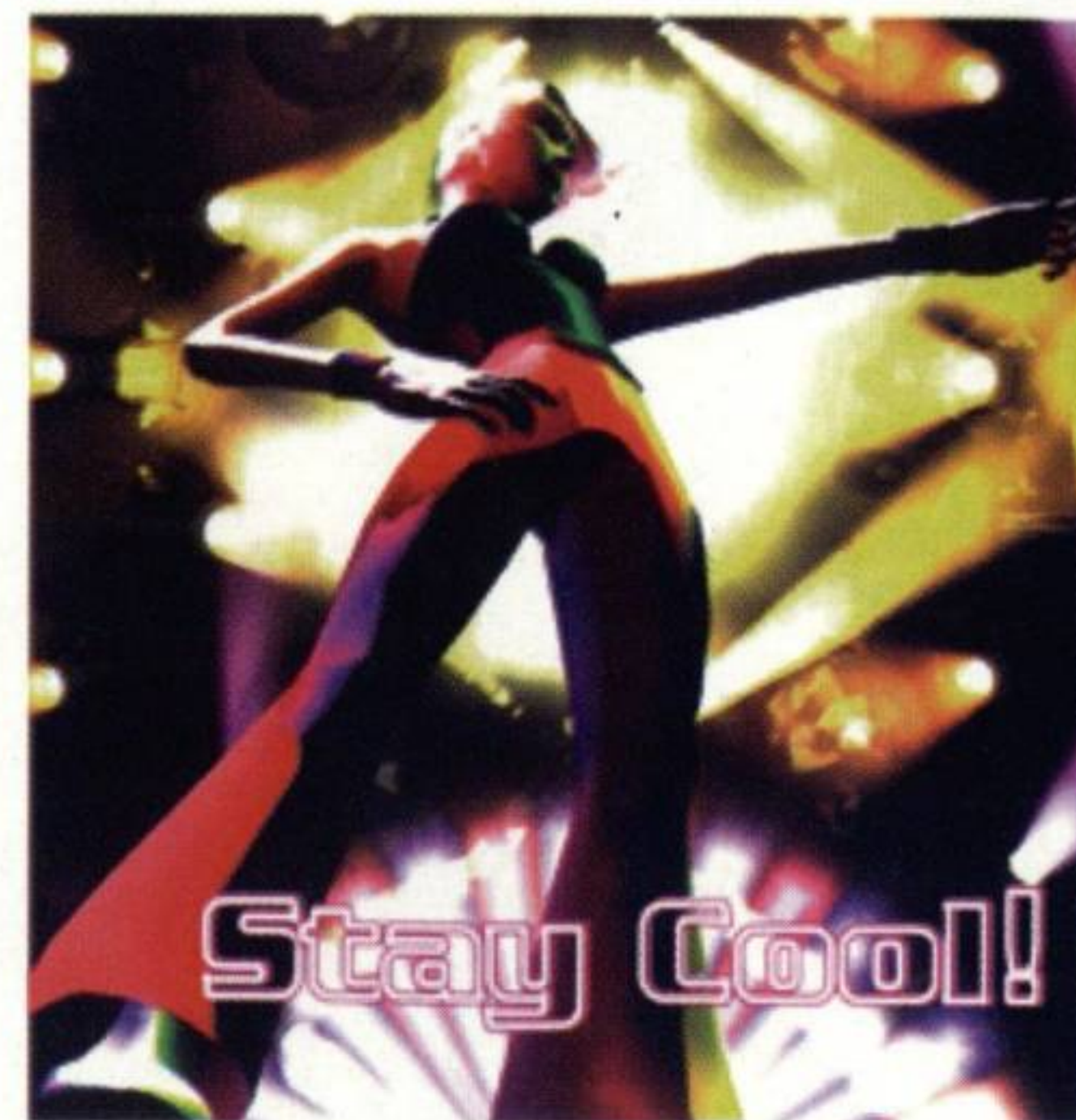
### Crash Team Racing

- Format: **PlayStation**
- Developer: **Naughty Dog**
- Publisher: **Sony**
- On sale in UK: **October**

**What is it?** *Mario Kart* for the PlayStation, featuring Crash "Crash" Bandicoot in the driving seat.

#### How will it change the world?

PlayStation owners will finally get to experience cartoon racing thrills akin to *Mario Kart*. An abundance of jumps and ramps should keep the gameplay up in the air.



### Dancing Stage

- Format: **PlayStation**
- Developer: **Konami**
- Publisher: **Konami**
- On sale in UK: **Early 2000 (TBC)**

**What is it?** You'd better believe it – the first action-dance game for consoles.

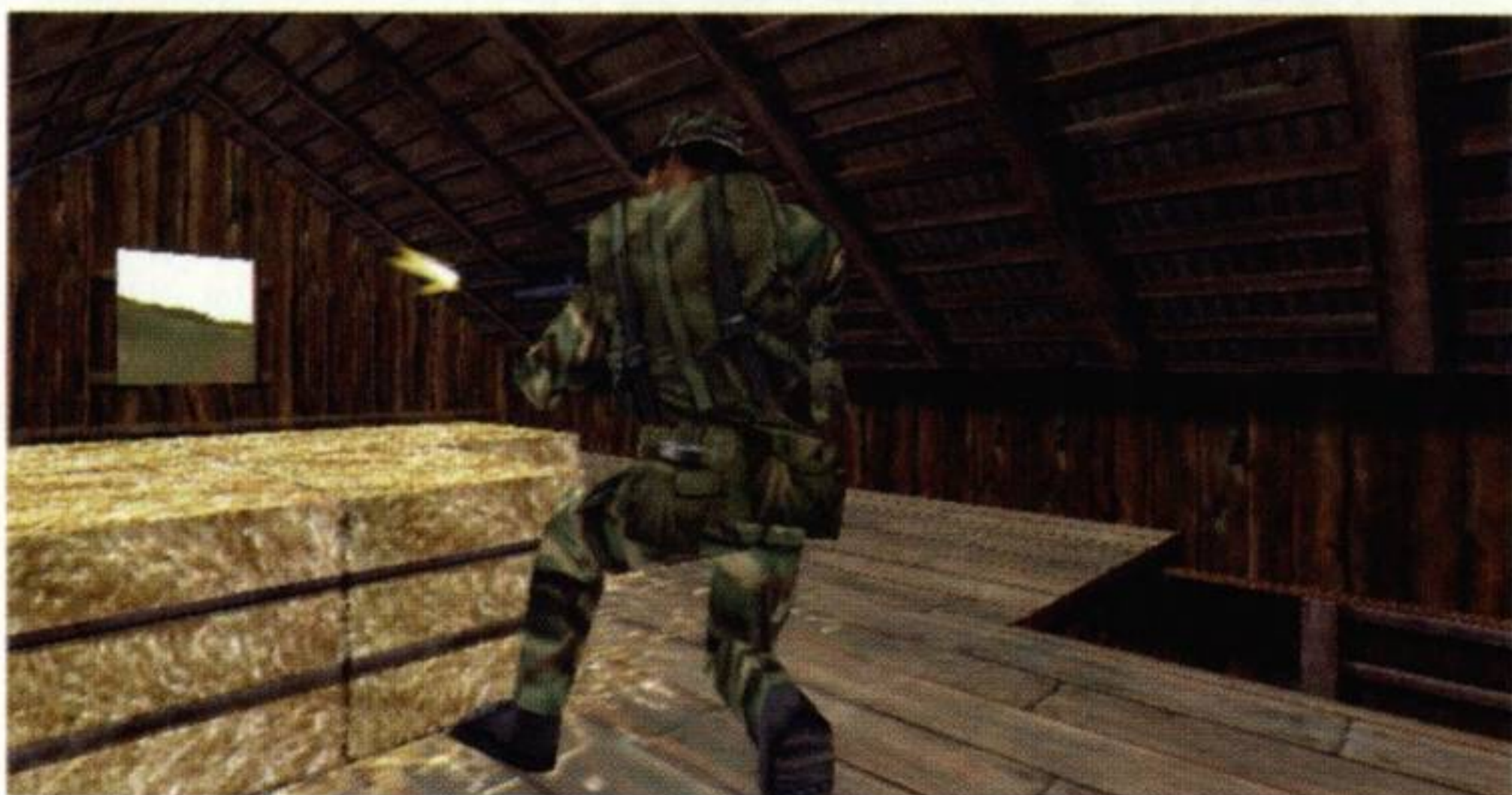
**How will it change the world?** A special mat plugs into your PlayStation and registers the accuracy and rhythm of your fancy jives. Provides home gamers with an active physical element.

### Delta Force 2

- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **Novalogic**
- Publisher: **Novalogic**
- On sale in UK: **Early 2000 (TBC)**

**What is it?** A wargame for the new millennium, offering you a fantastic amount of in-mission tactical control.

**How will it change the world?** The battlefield intelligence will be strictly real-time. Plus, remote-controlled, unmanned reconnaissance planes that haven't been seen since the days of *Carrier Command* make a return more welcome than that of an escaped lion back to its cage.



### Dino Crisis

- Format: **PlayStation**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Publisher: **Virgin Interactive**
- On sale in UK: **November**

**What is it?** *Resident Evil* with faster loading times, better character control and a storyline second to none.

**How will it change the world?** The most ambitious and frightening adventure to hit the PlayStation so far. Dinosaurs so scary that it'll make the *Land before Time* look like *Dogtanion*.



### Donkey Kong 64

- Format: **N64**
- Developer: **Rare**
- Publisher: **Nintendo**
- On sale in UK: **November**

**What is it?** The 64 update of the SNES' *Donkey Kong Country*, built on the *Banjo-Kazooie* engine and chock-full of levels, races and mini-games.

**How will it change the world?** By creating an easy-to-play adventure with massive depth. Introducing Tiny, Diddy, Lanky and Chunky Kong, *Donkey Kong 64's* replay factor will be huge, as you are asked to repeat each level with each character to access new areas.



### Duke Nukem Forever

- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **3D Realms**
- Publisher: **GT Interactive**
- On sale in UK: **Early 2000**

**What is it?** Expansive first-person shooter with your host, the foul-mouthed Duke of Nukem.

**How will it change the world?** Given that 3D Realms has now shelved *Prey* indefinitely, the whole team is pouring its skills into making this the most entertaining shooter ever. Lengthy gestation suggests something special is under construction.



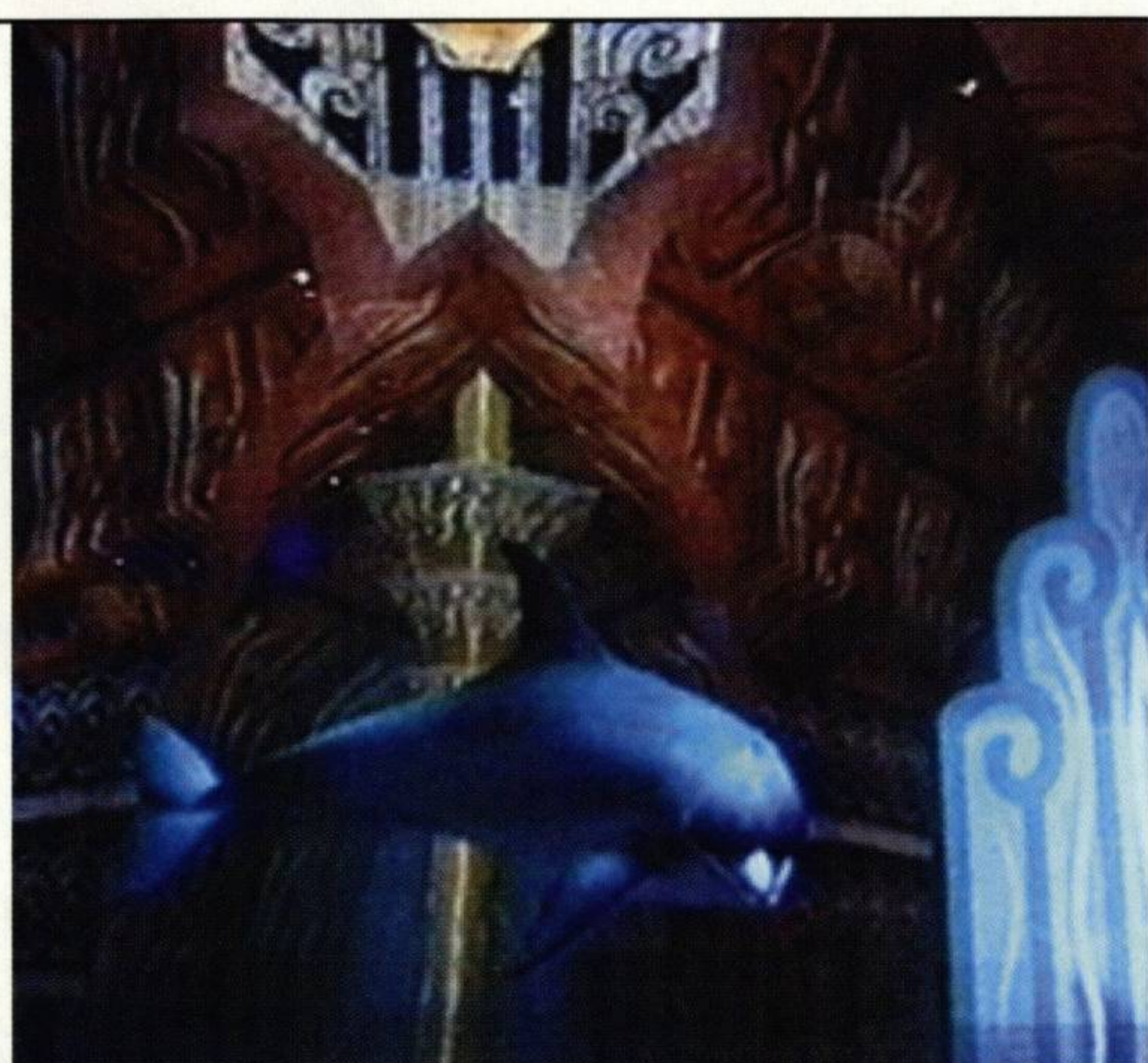
THE  
**FUTURE**  
OF  
**VIDEOGAMES**  
COMING  
SOON...



**Ecco the Dolphin**

- Format: **Dreamcast**
- Developer: **Appaloosa**
- Publisher: **Sega**
- On sale in UK: **December (TBC)**

**What is it?** Sega's update of the bizarre non-game. You swim around locating sonar beacons, but, ultimately, manage to get back to nature and relax.  
**How will it change the world?** Videogaming reveals its previously hidden ecological side.



**Final Fantasy XI**

- Format: **PlayStation/PC**
- Developer: **Square**
- Publisher: **TBC**
- On sale in UK: **Summer 2000 (TBC)**



**What is it?** Another step forward for the gaming world's favourite role playing series.  
**How will it change the world?** We're not sure, since the game's very existence is yet to be officially confirmed. However, mark our words, Square will be cooking up something special. Don't rule out a tie-in with the *Final Fantasy* movie currently under construction.

**Freelancer**

- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **Digital Anvil**
- Publisher: **Microsoft**
- On sale in UK: **Summer 2000**

**What is it?** Chris Roberts lays his film making ambitions to one side and gets back to creating an epic space adventure.  
**How will it change the world?** It's intended to be the most expansive space adventure ever designed and hence even summer 2000 may be an ambitious release date (although *Starlancer*, a kind of prequel, will be available in the meantime).



**Giants: Citizen Kabuto**

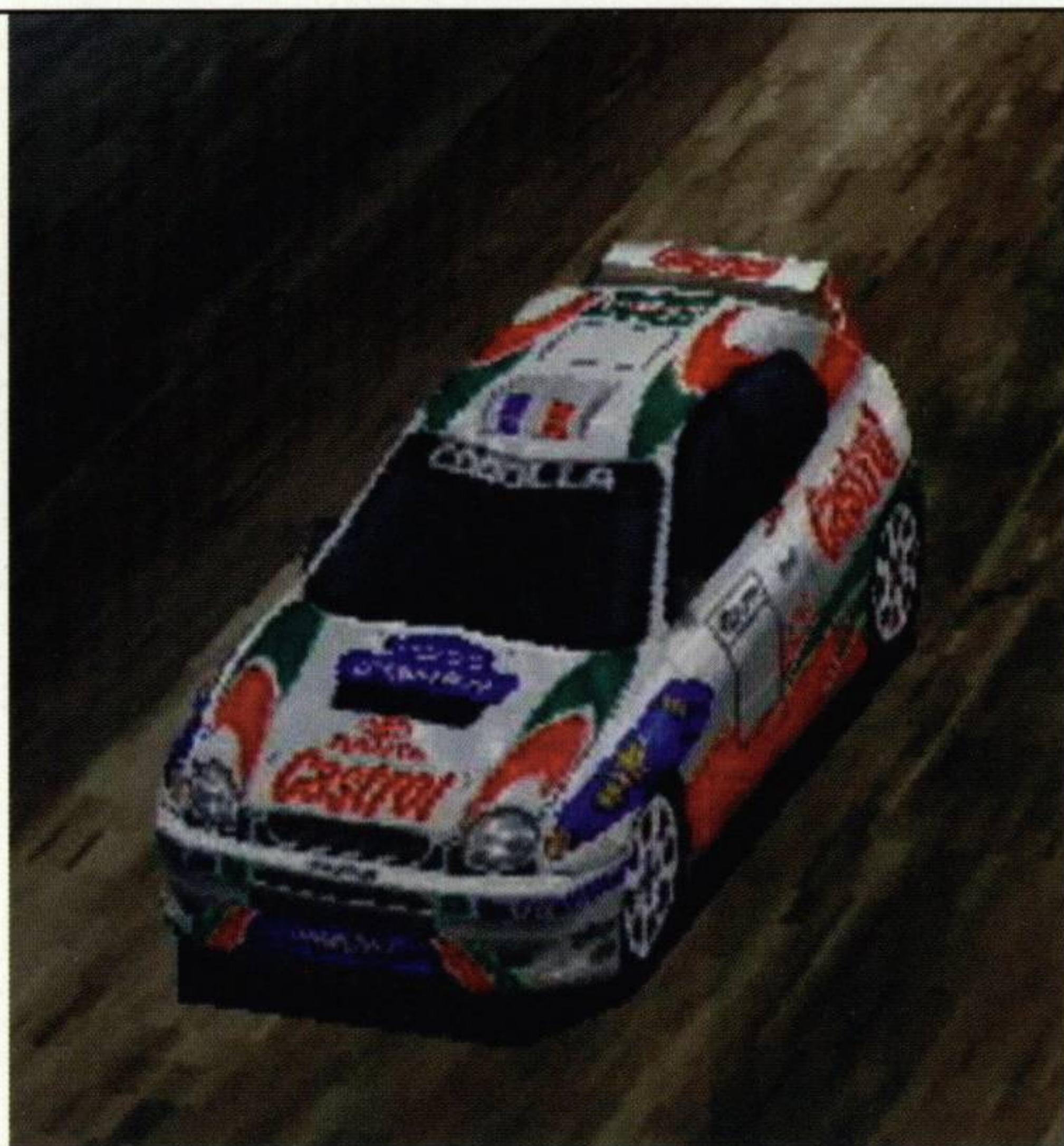
- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **Planet Moon Studios**
- Publisher: **Interplay**
- On sale in UK: **September**

**What is it?** An all-out battle of magic, technology and savagery between three different warring factions.  
**How it will change the world?** By introducing a brilliant 3D world in which your adventure is radically altered depending on which team you side with: the mystical Sea Reapers, the squaddie Meccaryn or the Giant himself.

**Gran Turismo 2**

- Format: **PlayStation**
- Developer: **Polyphony Digital**
- Publisher: **Sony**
- On sale in UK: **November (TBC)**

**What is it?** More cars, more tracks (with even greater graphics than the original) and more accurate than an electron microscope.  
**How will it change the world?** The official input from top car manufacturers means the famously meticulous simulation includes everything from Ferraris to Minis. *GT2* will push racing sims forward again, and that's without even mentioning *GT3*, scheduled for PlayStation 2...



**Grand Theft Auto 2**

- Format: **PlayStation/PC**
- Developer: **Rockstar**
- Publisher: **Take 2**
- On sale in UK: **October**



**What is it?** The sequel to the top-selling car-crime caper.  
**How will it change the world?** Not with another reappearance of that retro-stylised top-down gameplay, but with depictions of increasingly sick situations. Gang violence, torture and civilian massacre should get the censors frothing.





### Nox

- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **Westwood**
- Publisher: **EA**
- On sale in UK: **Autumn**

**What is it?** The new war strategy from the team that brought us *Command & Conquer*.  
**How will it change the world?** The innovation comes in the form of great line-of-sight implementation, restricting the screen display to what the game character can see in his field of vision.



### Perfect Dark

- Format: **N64**
- Developer: **Rare**
- Publisher: **Nintendo**
- On sale in UK: **December**

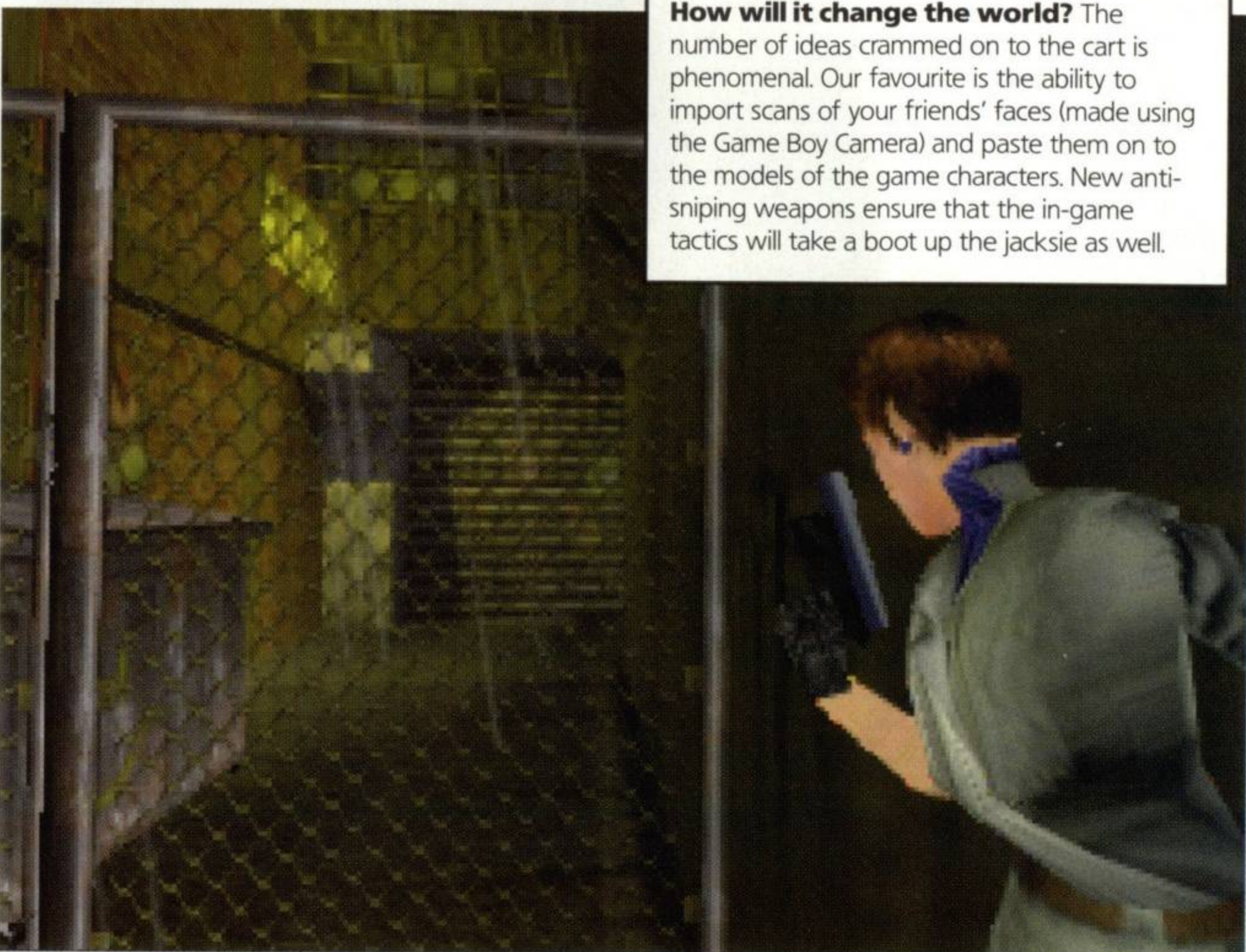
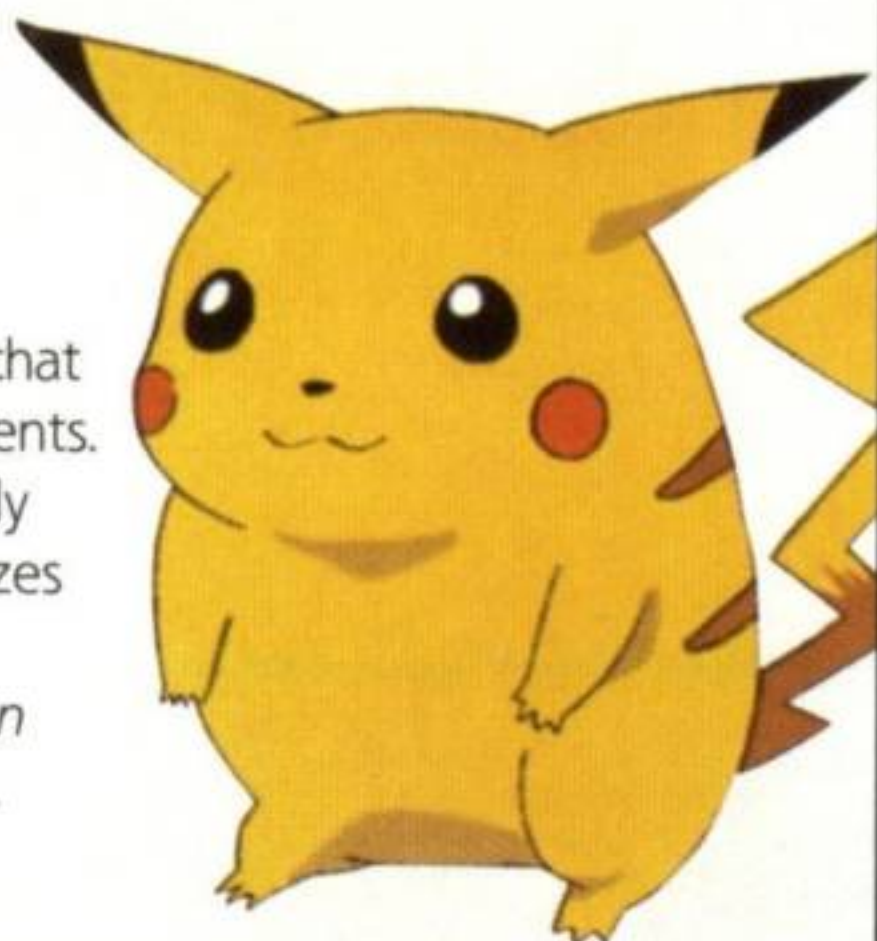
**What is it?** In all but the James Bond licence, *GoldenEye 2*.

**How will it change the world?** The number of ideas crammed on to the cart is phenomenal. Our favourite is the ability to import scans of your friends' faces (made using the Game Boy Camera) and paste them on to the models of the game characters. New anti-sniping weapons ensure that the in-game tactics will take a boot up the jacksie as well.

### Pokémon

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Developer: **Nintendo**
- Publisher: **Nintendo**
- On sale in UK: **October**

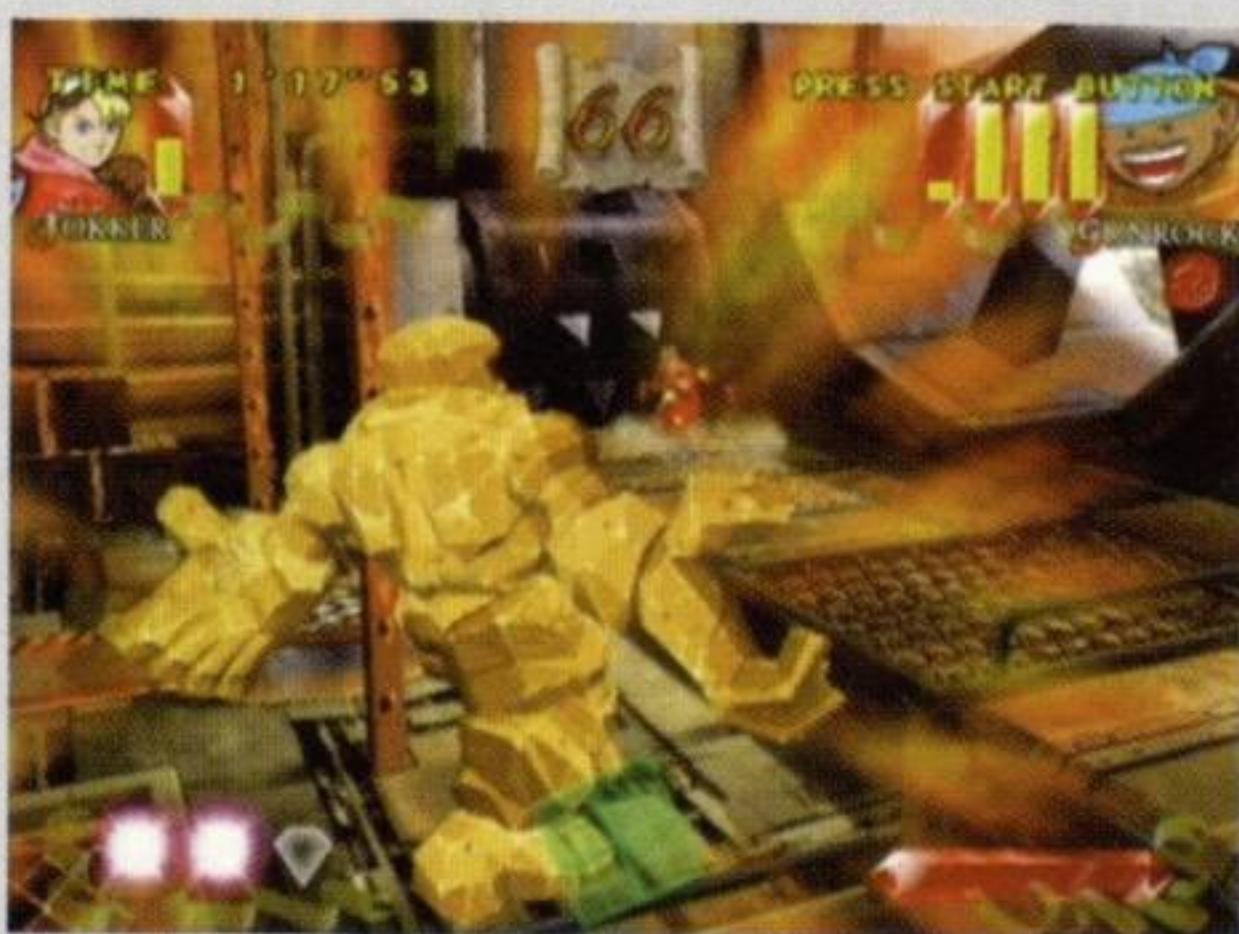
**What is it?** Cute, monster-collecting RPG that gets kids hooked with its Tamagotchi elements.  
**How will it change the world?** Already one of the most popular game and toy crazes of all time in Japan, the Game Boy game is merely the first strike of a massive *Pokémon* empire consisting of spin-off software, toys, books, TV shows and even a film.



### Power Stone

- Format: **Dreamcast**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Publisher: **TBC**
- On sale in UK: **October**

**What is it?** Groundbreaking 3D beat-'em-up.  
**How will it change the world?** Formerly master of 2D fight mechanics, Capcom has excelled itself with the most inventive beat-'em-up ever to grace a console. Full-on fisticuffs are augmented by power-ups and much lobbing of furniture. Hilarious.



### Quake III: Arena

- Format: **PC/Mac**
- Developer: **id Software**
- Publisher: **Activision**
- On sale in UK: **October**

**What is it?** The king of 3D shooters, back to reclaim its throne.  
**How will it change the world?** If you've played the test version, you'll already know how viscerally powerful and pant-wetting the *Quake III* experience is. For its prioritising of on-line link play and artificial "bot" intelligence, this game should make every developer think more seriously about Internet play. Look out for the simultaneous release of the PC and Mac versions.





**THE FUTURE OF VIDEOGAMES COMING SOON...**



**Resident Evil**

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Developer: **HotGen**
- Publisher: **Virgin Interactive**
- On sale in UK: **November**

**What is it?** Pocket-sized zombie cleansing.  
**How will it change the world?** The very first Game Boy Color adventure to shun 2D platforming in favour of ingenious perspectives and pre-rendered backgrounds.

**Sega Rally 2**

- Format: **Dreamcast**
- Developer: **Sega**
- Publisher: **Sega**
- On sale in UK: **September**

**What is it?** Very classy arcade-style rallying thrills.  
**How will it change the world?** *Sega Rally 2*, though a fine flagship driving game for Dreamcast, is hardly revolutionary in itself. However, it will become the first game to make use of Dreamcast's on-line capabilities, and the first console game ever at which you'll be able to play somebody who's living in a different continent.



**Sheep**

- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **Empire**
- Publisher: **Empire**
- On sale in UK: **Autumn**

**What is it?** It's a game in which you herd sheep.  
**How will it change the world?** It's likely to be one of those classic games that everyone will play and love, even though they think they know better. It's a bit like *Lemmings*, in as much as it's a very strange sounding concept featuring big, cartoony 2D visuals.



**Shenmue**

- Format: **Dreamcast**
- Developer: **Sega**
- Publisher: **Sega**
- On sale in UK: **Early 2000**

**What is it?** Epic 3D adventure from *Virtua Fighter* guru Yu Suzuki.  
**How will it change the world?** By establishing an entire immersive gaming world full of innovative adventure and sly sub-games. Dreamcast's *Zelda* but without the elves, and so big, it has to come in two parts.



**The Sims**

- Format: **PC**
- Developer: **Maxis**
- Publisher: **EA**
- On sale in UK: **Summer 2000**

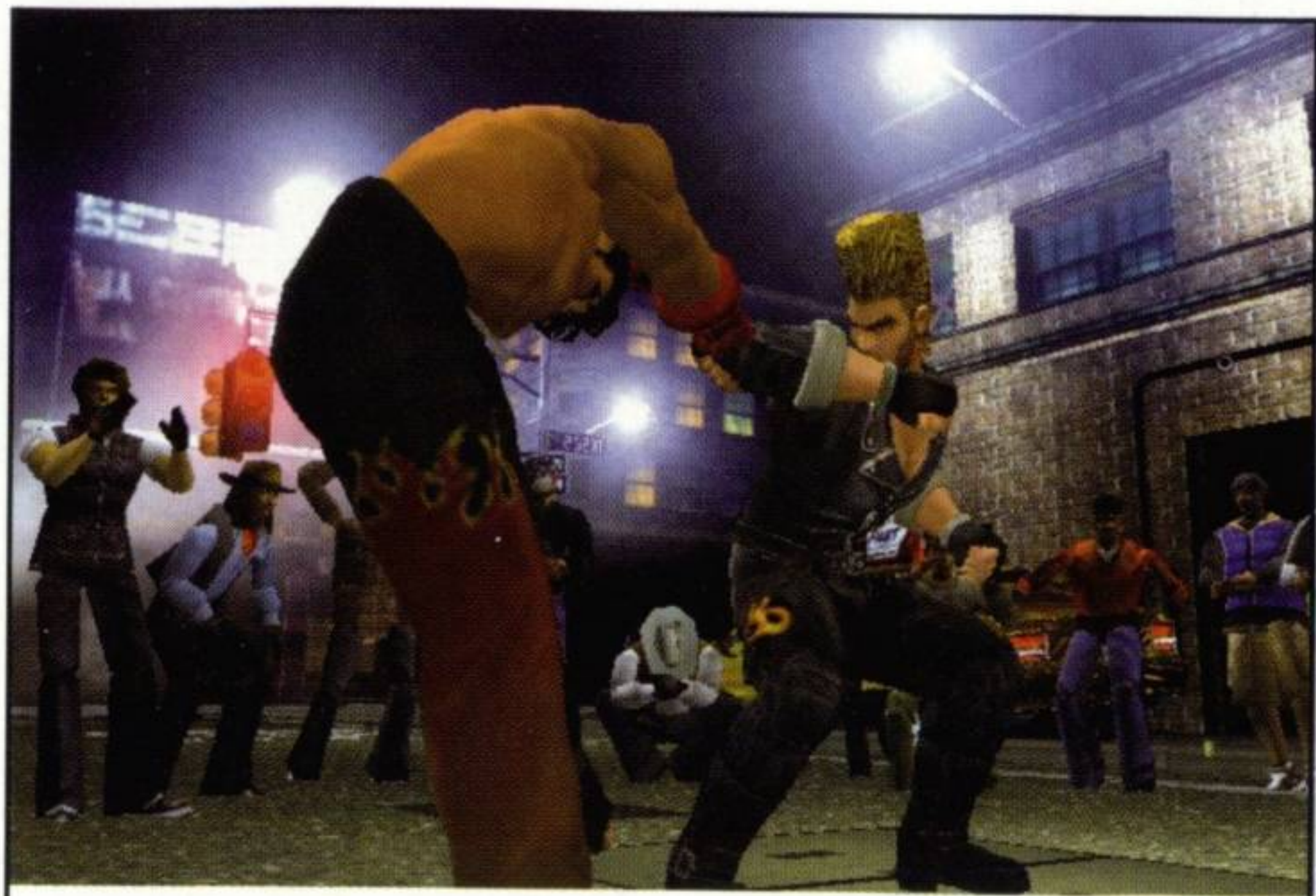
**What is it?** Videogame soap

from the makers of *Sim City*.

**How will it change the world?** By giving you detailed control over little people's destinies, *The Sims* is pitched somewhere between an adult

Tamagotchi and an interactive soap. Part of the new breed of games that are attempting to prey on your emotions – more simply, you can expect it to be extremely addictive.

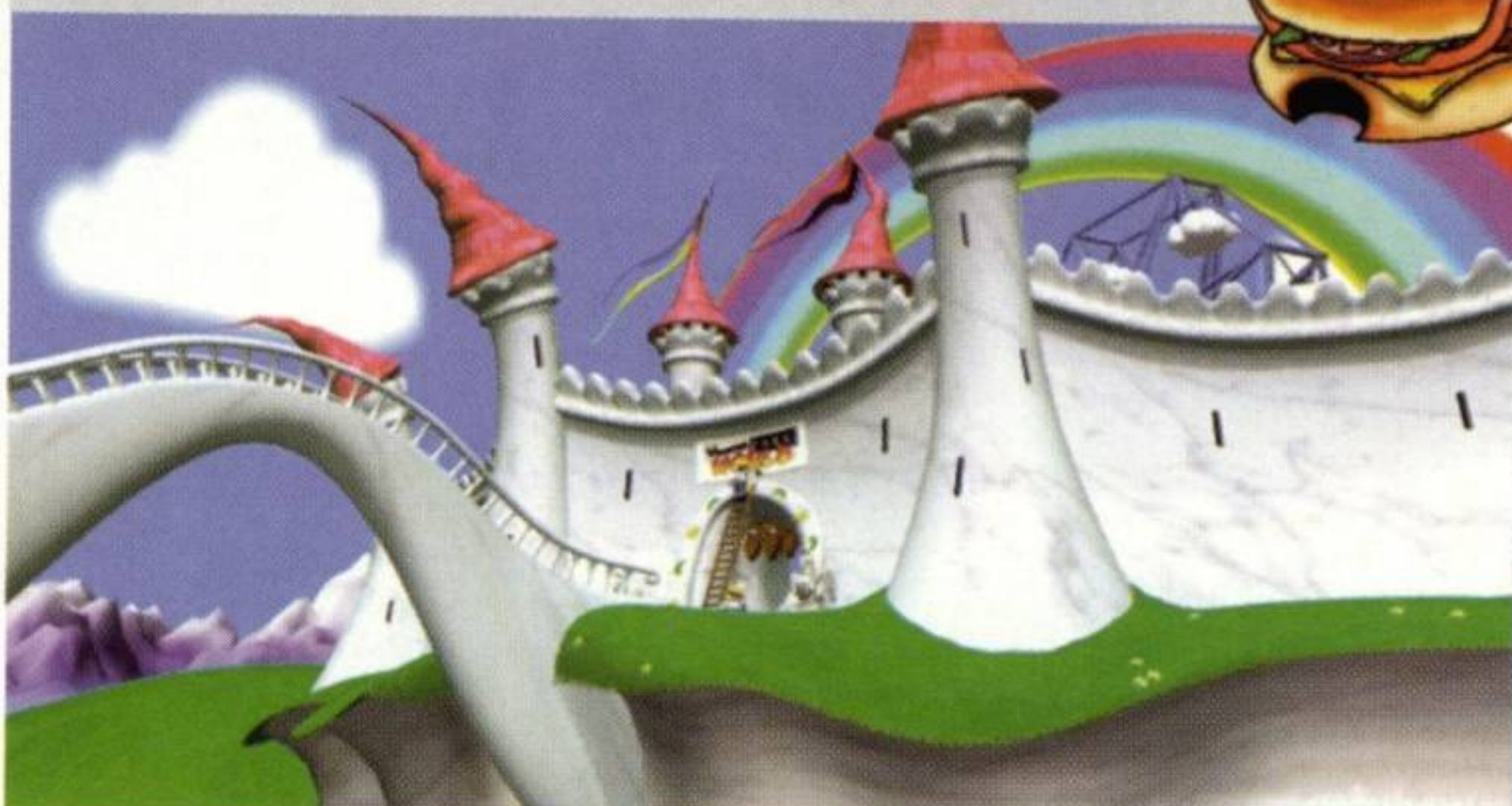
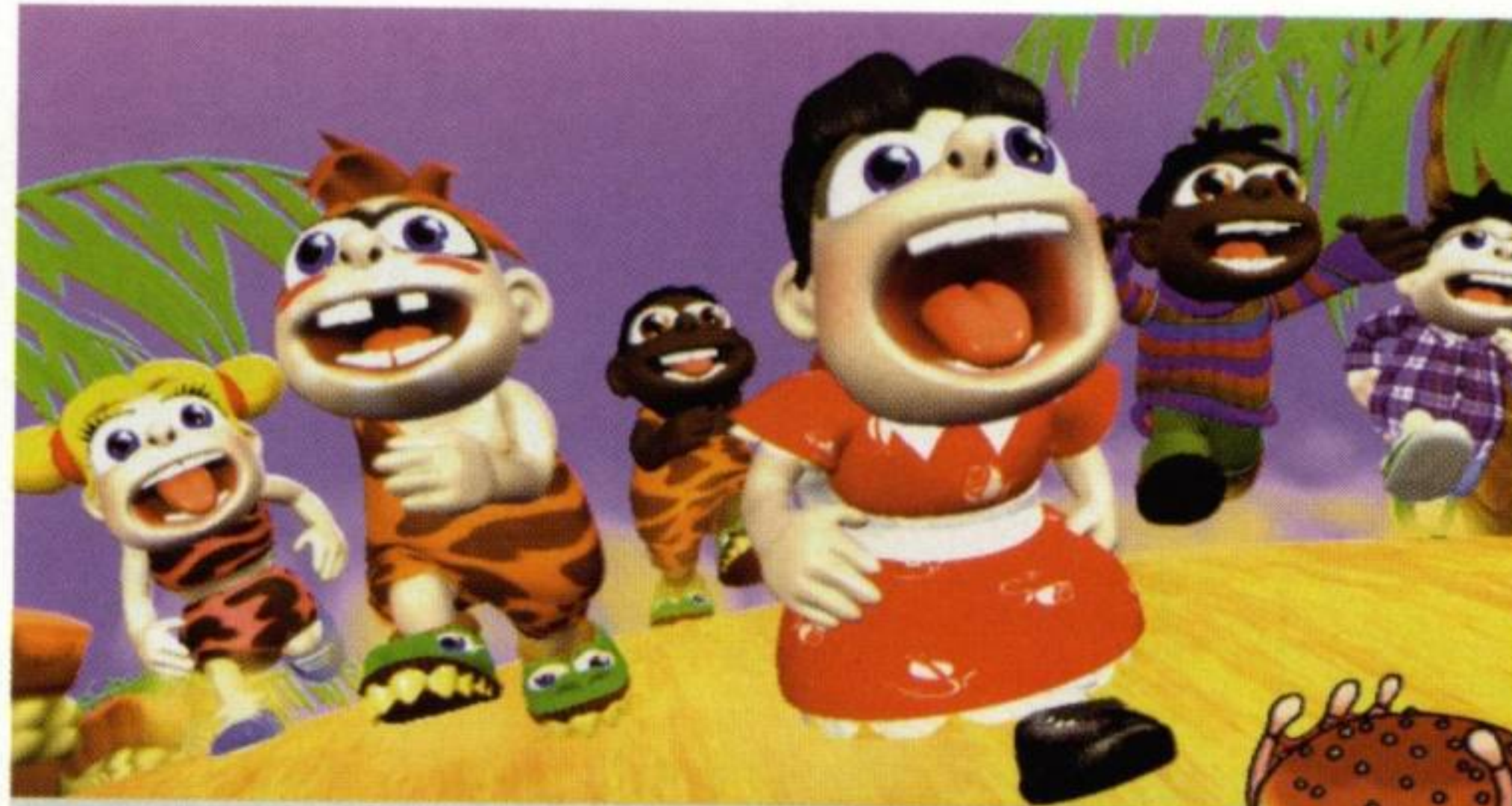




### Tekken "Next Generation"

- Format: PlayStation 2
- Developer: Namco
- Publisher: Sony
- On sale in UK: Autumn 2000

**What is it?** A beat-'em-up that's set to take another step into the future.  
**How will it change the world?** Out of all the PlayStation 2 demos, the Tekken video seemed to be making the most of the system's hardware to display some new gameplay innovations – multiple angles, real-time lighting effects and the detail of a baying crowd in attendance.



### Theme Park World

- Format: PC/PSX
- Developer: Bullfrog
- Publisher: EA
- On sale in UK: Autumn

**What is it?** Sprinkle too much salt on the chips to make everyone thirsty; put extra sugar in the cola to make them hungry. These are the steps on the route to capitalist domination when you're in charge of a theme park.  
**How will it change the world?** It may be a sequel, but expect Theme Park World to be the most inventive "theme" game to date. You even get to ride your own rollercoasters.



### Tomorrow Never Dies

- Format: PlayStation
- Developer: MGM/Black Ops
- Publisher: EA
- On sale in UK: Autumn

**What is it?** The new James Bond game.  
**How will it change the world?** What the N64 might have lost in securing the licence to the follow-up to GoldenEye (see Perfect Dark), the PlayStation looks to gain. Tomorrow Never Dies is a multi-sectioned game gone bonkers, with a great mix of skiing, driving and running about, all adhering to the film's plot and atmosphere.



### Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

- Format: PlayStation
- Developer: Neversoft
- Publisher: Activision
- On sale in UK: Sept

**What is it?** The welcome return of skateboarding to the videogame market.  
**How will it change the world?** Official input from famous skateboarder Tony Hawk finally vindicates PlayStation's street cool tag. Plus we've not seen a decent skateboard game since 720°.



### Wip3out

- Format: PlayStation
- Developer: Psygnosis
- Publisher: Sony
- On sale in UK: September

**What is it?** The futuristic racer back once again (from The Renegade Master) for its third, best-looking outing yet.  
**How will it change the world?** Full analogue control should help nurture a whole new array of driving techniques, while the music (provided by DJ Sasha and friends) should up the hip factor one notch even higher.

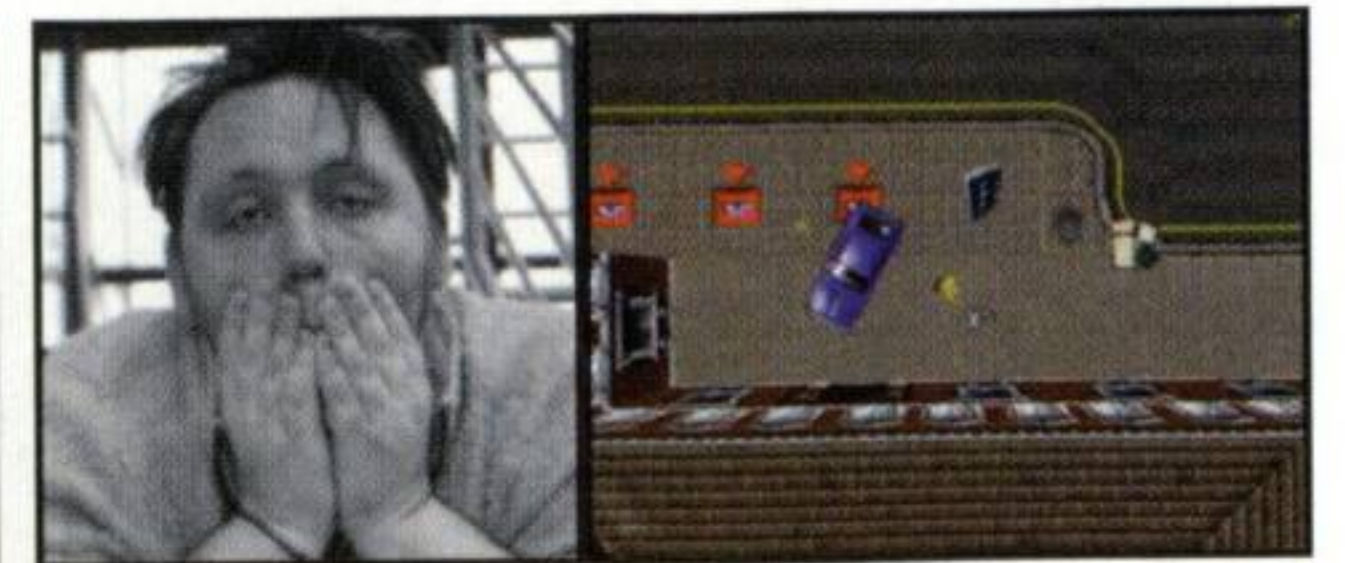
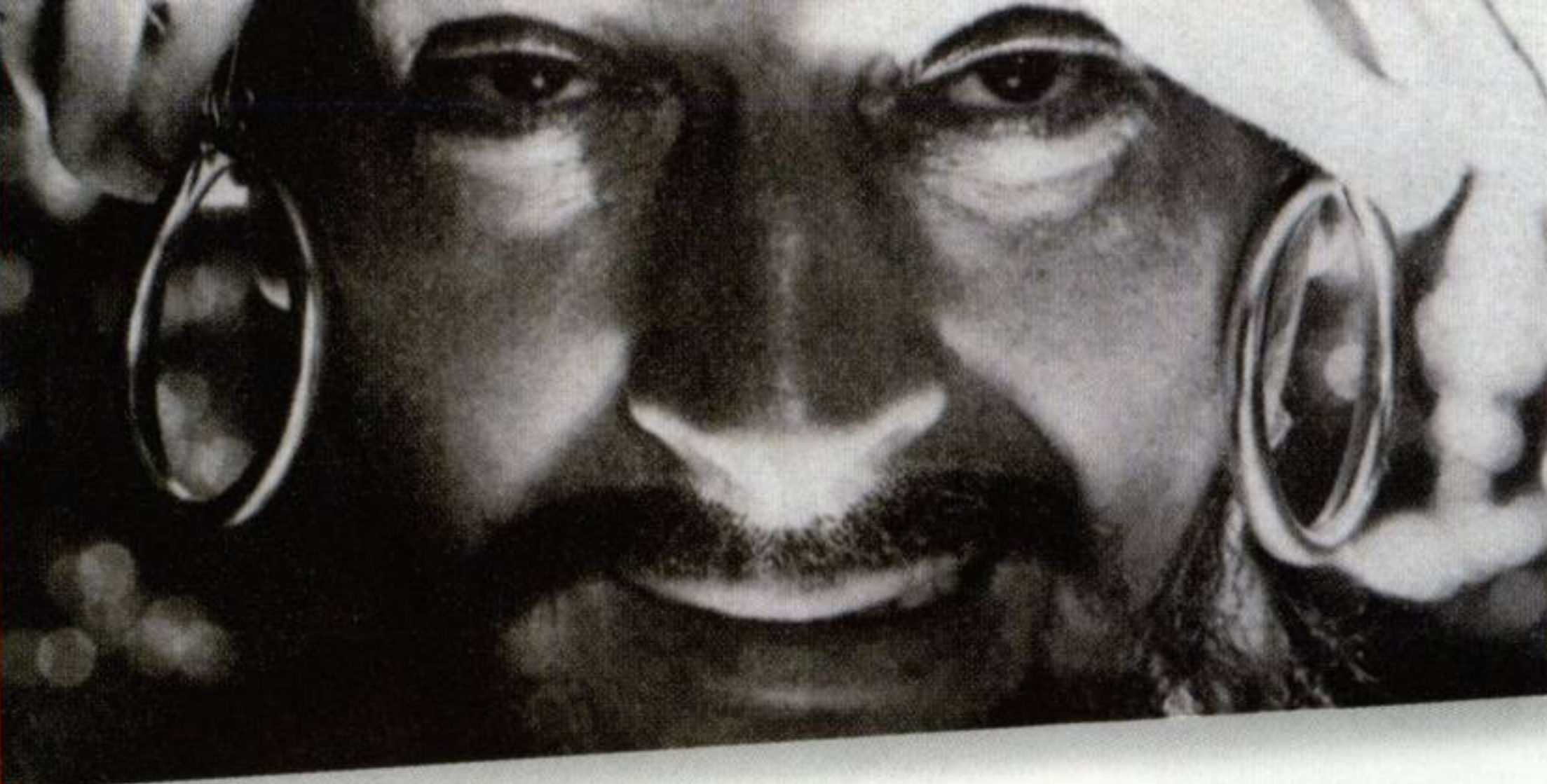


### Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style

- Format: PlayStation
- Developer: Paradox
- Publisher: Activision
- On sale in UK: November

**What is it?** Beat-'em-up starring everybody's favourite rapping clan, the mighty Wu-Tang.  
**How will it change the world?** A specially devised "thrill kill" engine will enable four players to play at a time and new tracks from the group should keep ya dope headz nodding. Could this pave the way for bands wanting more than just musical involvement in the latest games? What would we give for a Beck platformer or a shooter involving all five members of Steps?





**Gary Penn** (DMA Design)  
*From Grand Theft Auto to game design heroes.*

Words | **Sam Richards**

# EXPERT TIMING

Eight of the world's top game developers peer into their crystal balls for *Arcade*.

**V**ideogames have been around for 25 years, give or take, but what do the next 25 years hold in store? Ask all the sages, soothsayers and clairvoyants in the world, and you'd be repaid with a heap of tosh. If you want informed prophecy, you'd better ask the experts. *Arcade* speaks to the men who have already broadened gaming horizons forever with titles such as *Metal Gear Solid* and *Driver*. The future's so bright, they've got to write games.

■ "To get pretentious on you for a moment, videogames allow for the existence of a space somewhere between the physical and the spiritual – it's virtually real, a place where people can immerse themselves in the imagination of others.

"To enable this level of immersion, the technology will become more invisible and the sensory engagement could quite easily be total – probably as potentially disturbing as the more traditional, chemical methods of mental distortion can be on occasion.

"Creativity will come to the fore, with the makers of toys and entertaining interactive situations in particular becoming more recognisable heroes in the mould of film directors. About time!

"Certainly the future must lead to a more comprehensive education, covering how to deal with the power of imagination and its exploitation through new technology. Otherwise what is so often considered disturbing and unacceptable in the real world will remain underground and misunderstood instead of being explored more freely in the safety of virtual space."



**Mark Haigh-Hutchinson** (LucasArts)  
*From The Phantom Menace to a more worldwide experience.*

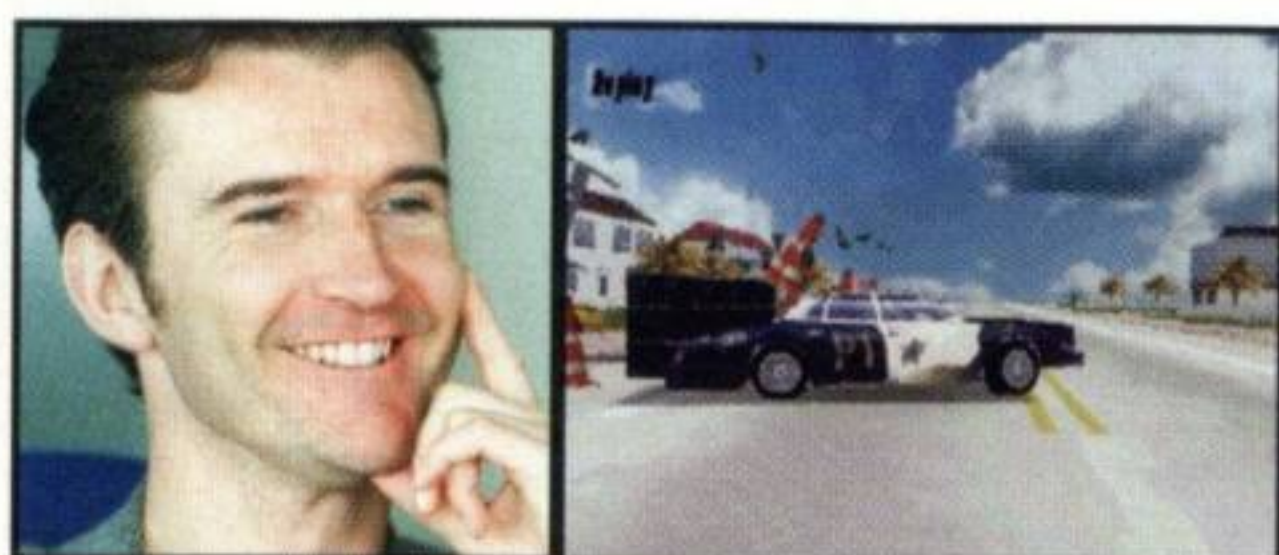
■ "All monitors become unnecessary because the images are fed directly into the player's optic nerve! The hardcore gamer gets a direct connection, while the casual gamer wears shades which laser-project images on to the retina. Games will be so absorbing and *real* that gaming will become a serious addiction, with many players opting-out of real-life in order to experience games instead. We'll probably see the first games-related coronary around this time, too.

"Multi-player will be *de rigeur* for most games, with persistent characters commonplace. Game identities will be bartered openly on the Net. Independent AI characters will become believable to the point that it is difficult to tell whether you are playing against human opponents or not. With all games machines automatically hooked up to the Net, no thought is given to the physical location of opponents or allies in games. It's possible to find opponents any time of the day or night."

PHOTOS: CORBIS, EDGE MAGAZINE, HIRO IZUMI, MARTIN BURTON, LEE SMITH

■ Eight developers with eight different views of the future of videogames; from true stereoscopic lenses to messing with your head.





**Martin Edmondson**  
(Reflections)

**From Driver to depth of reality.**

■ "I would like to see huge improvements in display technology. Playing a game on a small flat screen will always prevent true immersion, no matter how realistic the graphic representation. True stereoscopic views could be achieved using very small wearable lenses, providing a view with quality and depth comparable to real life.

"The next step would be to create 'Laser Quest'-type centres, which are in reality nothing more than an empty shed with partitions. Put on the lenses and everything becomes textured. A simple wooden walkway becomes a stone bridge over a flowing river when viewed through the lenses. Change the movable partitions and then load a new program for an entirely new environment. Your limb positions would be tracked without the need to wear heavy, compromising equipment. All other players would be tracked similarly and would appear to you as an alien, a man in a suit of armour, or anything the program decided."



**Hideo Kojima** (Konami)

**From Metal Gear Solid to Mars.**

■ "Twenty-five years from now, we'll probably have the ability to create a fake world within computers that is not any different from the real world. Pleasure, pain, and the five senses will all be re-created. Not only leisure, but education and all sorts of simulations will utilise this kind of 'virtual reality'. However, when this happens, there will be a certain kind of dissatisfaction among users who will know that this created world is artificial, no matter how real it may seem.

"That is the very moment when humans desire a real world – real cities to destroy and real enemies to defeat, so "tele-existences" such as nanomachines and robots will be in great demand. The future of gaming will then involve sending a robot to Mars and manoeuvring it by remote control or injecting a nanomachine into a person and moving around to explore the inner space. We will invent harmless and safe systems that allow playing in the real world, while providing the VR play feel."



**Dave Perry** (Shiny)

**From Messiah to total motel-room absorption.**

■ "First, systems will be enormously powerful – imagine buying a Pentium XX1 6000 Gigahertz processor! – allowing for fully realistic graphical ambience. Controllers will be remote, working from all your senses. Voice recognition will be a way of life, in your car, on your computer, at the bank and certainly in your games. Handheld games will be linked to satellite so you can play many people wherever you are.

"People will be able to escape fully into the games without being distracted by their environments. They will jack in from anywhere, like a scummy motel room, and become absorbed in a photo-realistic world; relationships will be formed *within* that world. Then again, people will lose their jobs and anyone already leading a dull life will be tipped toward the suicidal when their Internet connection is down. Or a big earthquake will trash Silicon Valley, decimating the industry..."

**"Anyone already leading a dull life will be tipped toward the suicidal"**



**Graeme Devine** (id)

**From Quake III to Net illness.**

■ "Optical technology is becoming so good that we'll see bio-optical additions that will provide information actually inside your eyes – I call this 'bioware'. Our understanding of the human body is rushing ahead so fast that we will be able to connect the human body to the Net without the need for a PDA or desktop computer. Bioware will allow you to communicate, recall data – and even play games – all within the privacy of your own eyeball. The downside of such technology will be a reliance verging on dependence. Expect Internet illness to become a common medical complaint!"

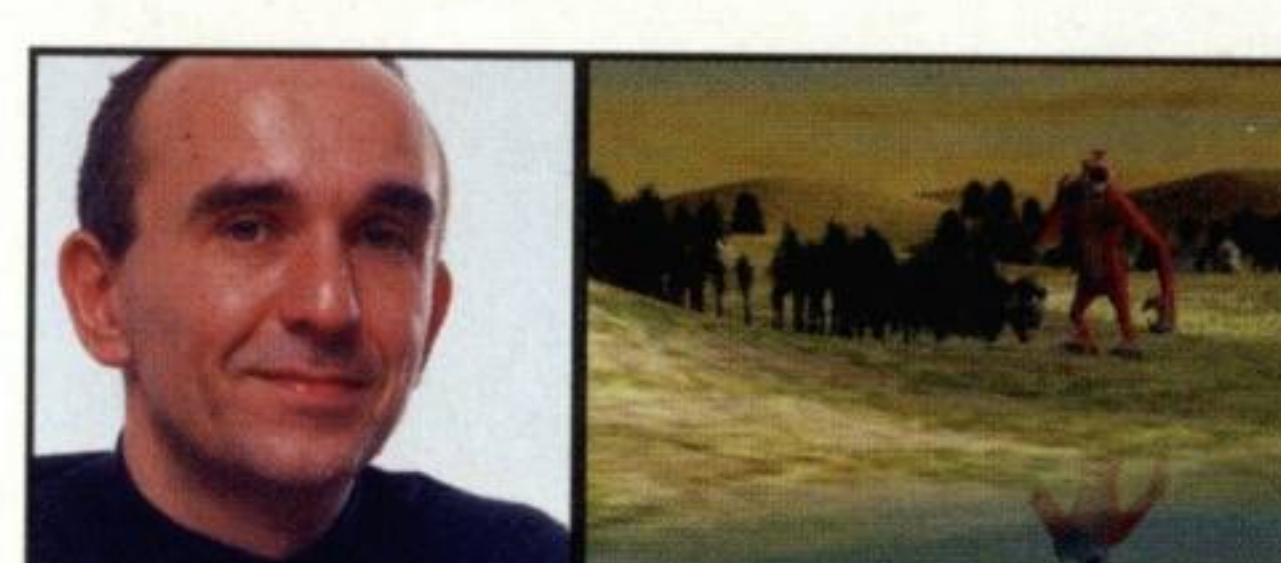


**Bruce MacMillan** (EA Sports)

**From FIFA 99 to a true extension of life.**

■ "The ultimate sports game is about striving to capture the feeling and emotion of coming from two goals behind to score a Treble-clinching winner. It's about producing an environment where true competition is created and felt. The first steps toward this are through AI, which can simulate emotions like courage, fear, happiness and anger. Realism will obviously progress hugely, but the danger is that the more realistic you make an experience, the more complex it becomes. This may prevent the consumer from feeling the emotions central to that ultimate experience.

"In the future I see CPU-versus-human gaming becoming outmoded. Instead, interactive games will take place in elaborate environments, contested by both human-controlled players and fully-lifelike CPU characters which live and exist within that environment. These games will be attended and supported in the same manner as sporting events. It won't be just a game any more, it will be a true extension of our lives and emotions."



**Peter Molyneux** (Lionhead)

**From Black & White to interfacing your brain.**

■ "What we've described as AI in the past is actually just an 'if-statement' – real AI would be like actually interacting with the game designer. The game would adapt to the needs and abilities of a player so everybody, young or old, novice or expert would be able to enjoy it. Improved graphics and physics are all fair enough, but game intelligence is the true goal.

"Surely the next step will be for games to interface directly with the brain. Whatever the moral arguments, if someone offered me the chance to play a game where I actually *believed* I was inside the game world, I'd be at the front of the queue. I don't believe this is inconceivable – experiments have already been carried out on rats who have had their cerebral cortex programmed. It would be the most addictive drug, ever – why would you want to leave a perfect world? – so it's dangerous, but I'm up for it!"

**"The next step will be for games to interface directly with the brain"**





# A Charts

Edited by | Mark Green

It's the September issue, it's page 66, it's time for *Top of the Pops!*

## Official Top 40

What videogames are the UK's current favourites?



**(2) Gran Turismo** Sony (budget)  
For £20, you can have the best racing game in the world, or 57 Chunky Kit-Kats. Tricky, we know. Kit Kats are great, aren't they?

**(-) Star Wars Episode 1: Racer** Nintendo  
Even the might of Star Wars can't threaten the big GT.

**(6) Tomb Raider 2** Eidos (budget)  
All that Lucozade has worked, as Lara somersaults back into the top 5.

**(-) Final Fantasy VII** Sony/Eidos (budget)  
Who can resist this ground-breaking role-playing game at Platinum price?

**(3) Grand Theft Auto** Take 2 (budget)  
Scampering around breaking laws in American cities is losing its appeal.

**(15) Brian Lara Cricket** Codemasters  
England's woeful performance makes armchair cricketers have a go.

**(1) Grand Theft Auto: London 1969** Take 2 (budget)  
Scampering around breaking laws in English cities is losing its appeal.

**(4) FIFA '99** EA  
A temporary stumble for FIFA - it'll fly back up once the next footy season cranks into action.

**(-) Star Wars Episode 1: the Phantom Menace** LucasArts  
We'd prefer to see this appalling cash-in festering outside the top 10.

**(8) Crash Bandicoot 2** Sony (budget)  
Crash hangs on - watch us struggle for puns other than "mad marsupial".

- 11 (5) Championship Manager 3** Eidos PC
- 12 (14) WWF: Warzone** Acclaim CGB N64 PSX
- 13 (-) C & C: Red Alert** EA (budget) PC PSX
- 14 (7) Metal Gear Solid** Konami PSX
- 15 (-) Star Trek: Birth of Federation** Microprose PC
- 16 (17) Tomb Raider 3** Eidos PC PSX
- 17 (-) Anna Kournikova Tennis** Namco PSX
- 18 (-) MechWarrior 3** Hasbro PC
- 19 (13) V Rally** Infogrames (budget) CGB N64 PC PSX
- 20 (12) Rugrats** THQ CGB PSX
- 21 (26) Premier Manager '99** Gremlin PC PSX
- 22 (21) Worms** Infogrames (budget) CGB PC PSX
- 23 (20) Rogue Squadron** LucasArts N64 PC
- 24 (19) TOCA 2 Touring Car** Codemasters PC PSX
- 25 (-) FIFA: Road to World Cup '98** EA (budget) PC PSX
- 26 (18) Rollercoaster Tycoon** Microprose PC
- 27 (32) Norton Antivirus 5.0** Norton PC
- 28 (-) Super Mario Bros DX** Nintendo CGB
- 29 (27) Civilization 2** Activision PC PSX
- 30 (23) Half-Life** Sierra PC
- 31 (30) Cool Boarders 2** Sony (budget) PSX
- 32 (9) Ridge Racer Type 4** Sony PSX
- 33 (-) TOCA Touring Cars** Codemasters (budget) PC PSX
- 34 (34) Hercules** Disney (budget) PC PSX
- 35 (35) Croc** Fox Interactive (budget) PC PSX
- 36 (-) Midtown Madness** Microsoft PC
- 37 (31) Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus** GT (budget) PC PSX
- 38 (37) Rayman** Ubisoft (budget) PC PSX
- 39 (-) Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time** Infogrames PSX
- 40 (-) Crash Bandicoot** Sony (budget) PSX



## Import Zone With Department 1 (0171 916 8440)



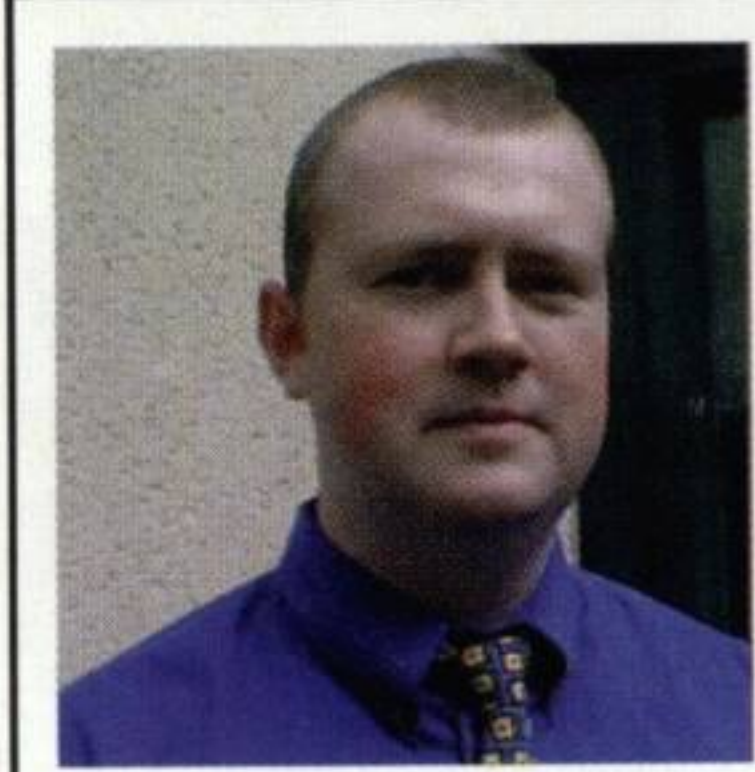
**Wars Episode 1: Racer** is our top N64 import title this month!" I see. But - "Also big sellers on import are *Lunar Silver Star Story* on the PlayStation, and *Tokyo Highway Battle* and *Get Bass!* on the Dreamcast."

■ **Did you say Get Bass? We're a little hard of herring.**

■ This month, Jason from Department 1 is here to tell us what's "hot" and what's "not" on the import scene. Hello, Jason. "Hello!" Er, you're dressed as Darth Vader. "That's because Star

actually in the new *Star Wars* film. "Oh. Still, I can do his funny breathing noise. Hsssthhhhh-sseettthth." You sound just like a coffee machine. "See ya!" Bye, Darth.

## Vox-Pop On the search for a new Arcade editor...



■ Hello. Would you like to be editor of *Arcade*? "Eh?" Go on. It'll be really easy. "What are you talking about?" *Arcade*. It's about videogames. We need a new editor. "Look, I've already got a job." Last chance? "Go away". Thanks anyway. Bye.

■ Hello. [Silence] Fancy a promotion? [More silence] You - yes, you - could be editor of *Arcade*. We'll make it worth your while, if you know what I mean. You can use *QuarkXpress* and *Photoshop*, can't you? Bet you're full of ideas. Go on. Oh, never mind then.

## Chart Analysis With the Games Gladiator



■ Taste my shiny stick! Taste it! Oh, hello, readers. It's the Games Gladiator here. In between entertaining the crowds with my sword-clashing, lion-wrestling and occasional bleeding, there's nothing I like more than casting my bloodshot, dangling eye over the latest videogame charts. This month, *Gran Turismo*'s platinum re-release has helped it grab the top spot, and it's a big thumbs up from me and my top mate Julius Caesar for that. Funny thing happened in the arena the other day - Vanessa Feltz wandered into the ring and got gobbled up by a lion. Everyone lapped it up - in fact, most of the crowd was "gladiator"! Ha! Oh, please yourselves.



## Japanese Top 10

1 (-) Mario Golf	N64, Nintendo
2 (-) Super Robot War Complete Box	PSX, Banpresto
3 (-) Racing Lagoon	PSX, Square
4 (3) Dance Dance Revolution	PSX, Konami
5 (-) Ace Combat 3 Electrosphere	PSX, Namco
6 (-) Beat Mania Append Gottamix	PSX, Konami
7 (9) Simple 1500 Series Vol 10	PSX, Culture
8 (2) Pokemon Stadium 2	N64, Nintendo
9 (-) Segare Ijiri	PSX, Enix
10 (-) Azure Kingdom: Slot Machine Simulator	PSX, TBG

## US Console Top 10

1 (6) Super Smash Bros	N64, Nintendo
2 (2) Pokemon Red	GB, Nintendo
3 (1) Pokemon Blue	GB, Nintendo
4 (-) Star Wars Episode 1: Racer	N64, Nintendo
5 (-) Ridge Racer Type 4	PSX, Namco
6 (-) Super Mario Bros DX	GB, Nintendo
7 (-) Street Fighter Alpha 3	PSX, Capcom
8 (5) Syphon Filter	PSX, Sony
9 (7) Mario Party	N64, Nintendo
10 (3) Need for Speed: High Stakes	PSX, EA

Official UK PlayStation, PC, Nintendo 64 and Game Boy charts start on page 123.

# Love is the strangest thing

## Top ten doomed videogame relationships.



Jet Set Willy: As much success with the ladies as ET.

**D**emi and Bruce. Ross and Rachel. Kermit and Miss Piggy. Doomed celebrity

relationships all, but videogames have also had their fair share of broken hearts and plain non-starters. Here are ten ill-fated videogame match-ups.

### 1. Mario and Peach

Peach invites Mario to her castle in *Super Mario 64* on the slim pretext that she has "baked a cake" for him. When he turns up with freshly-combed sideburns and his smartest pair of dungarees, she has already buggered off with some fire-breathing dinosaur. Tsk. Tsk!

### 2. Solid Snake and womankind

*Metal Gear Solid* is full of Snake's toe-curling attempts to get anything female into the sack. Most

of his lady friends do eventually end up horizontal, but sadly not in the sexual sense.

### 3. Mikie and his girlfriend

Time and again Mikie fights his way out of school, in the game that shares his name, only to receive nothing more than a kiss (*sans* tongues) from his waiting sweetheart. Let him get to second base, goddammit!

### 4. A Boy and his Blob

We can't remember much about this Amiga game, but let's face it – a small boy can never find true love with a loose collection of molecules in a semi-liquid state.

### 5. Cloud and Aeris

We would've bet money on *Final Fantasy VII*'s central characters getting it on – until the evil Sephiroth stepped up and snuffed



out the young Aeris. There's always someone who has to spoil things for everyone, isn't there?

### 6. Willy and Maria

In Spectrum classic *Jet Set Willy*, Maria the housekeeper wouldn't let Willy come to bed until he'd collected more than 200 discarded glasses. Frustratingly, an error in the game meant that it was impossible.

### 7. Panda and Bear

A classic tale of unrequited love. *Tekken 3*'s gigantic brown bear has a bit of a thing for his bamboo-chomping rival, but we've all heard about the trouble pandas have with their, er... equipment.

### 8. PaRappa the Rapper and Sunny Funny

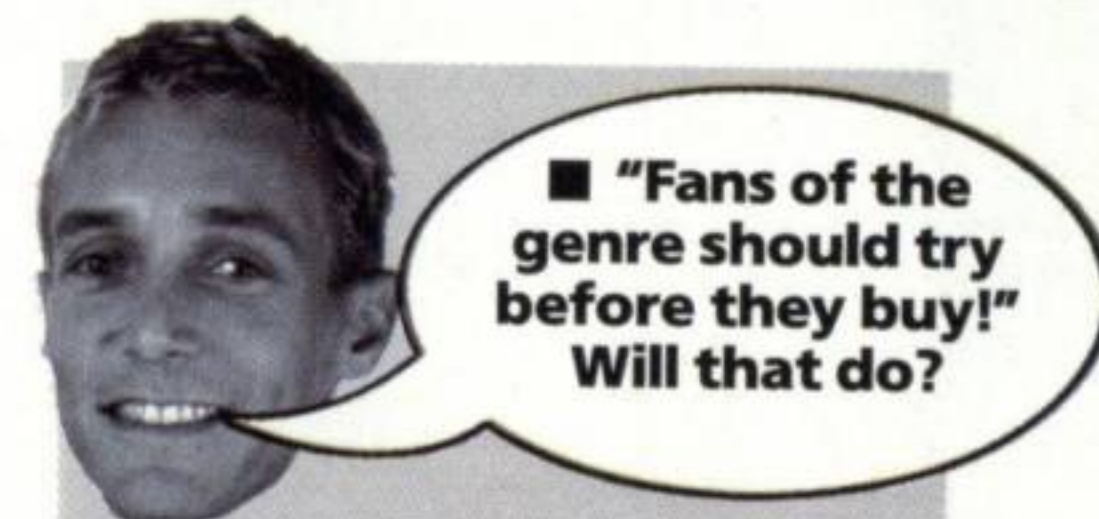
He's a dog, she's a sunflower. Rich couldn't get his head around this in last month's Great Gaming Moment, and neither can we. Still, if Sunny's inclined towards golden showers...

### 9. Banjo and Kazooie

A tip for those still courting – stuffing your loved one into a rucksack and carrying her around on your back makes it very unlikely that you'll be invited "in for coffee" later.

### 10. Link and Epona

But neither of them like to talk about that.



"Fans of the genre should try before they buy!" Will that do?

### Top 10 things reviewers say, and what they really mean

- "Incredibly challenging" – the publisher didn't give us any cheat codes.
- "Well-loved characters" – it's bloody Mario again.
- "This is the game of the year" – the publisher gave us a free holiday.
- "This could be the game of the year" – we're hoping that the publisher will give us a free holiday.
- "Stunningly realistic" – I guess that playing Premiership football must be a bit like this.
- "Lara's back with her two greatest assets" – we've run out of puns.
- "Bound to sell well" – it's another shite wrestling game.
- "Unlikely to sell well" – it's an original and refreshing new title.
- "Try before you buy" – we're paid to give our opinion, but we can't be bothered.
- "Another welcome PC-to-console conversion" – get this boring crap away from us.

# Q & A

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## More from Mark Green's encyclope... encyclap... big brain.

**Q** Oh mighty *Arcade*, please answer my pitiful questions. Will on-line gaming be faster on imported Dreamcasts than on British PAL machines? And as Sega is teaming up with BT to deliver its on-line services, will I miss out on free access because I'm not a BT customer?

Love and kisses.  
Sharon D, Glasgow



F-Zero: fast as you like.

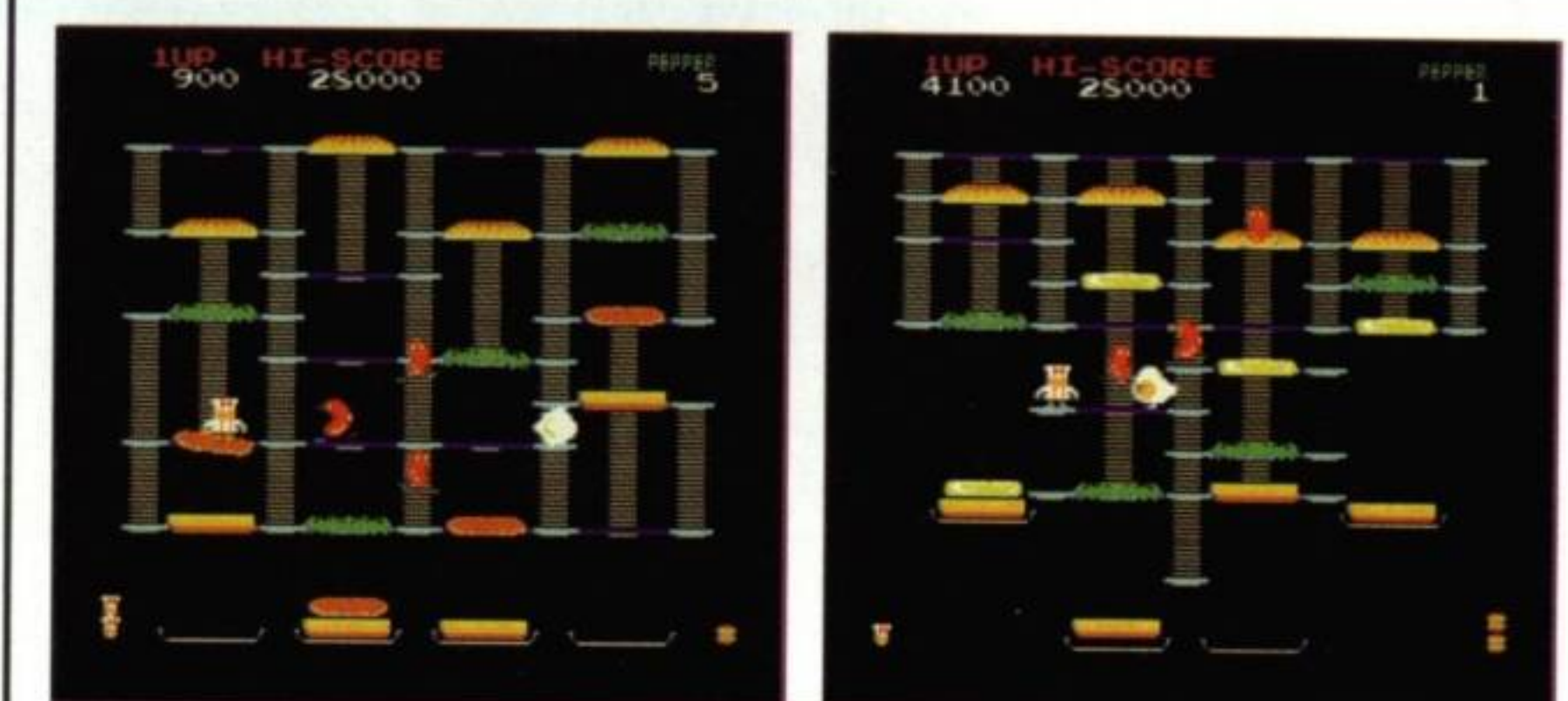
**A** First, you won't be able to play on-line games with an imported Dreamcast, because the UK Internet server will deny access to anything but UK machines. The answer to your second question is: no. BT is supplying a local rate (0345) phone number that your Dreamcast will call up for Internet access, and you can call this number using any company's telephone lines. There's no charge as such, but you will have to pay for the 'phone call – whether you're a BT customer or not.

**Q** Whatever happened to the N64's 64DD disk drive add-on? I was really looking forward to creating my own *F-Zero* tracks or being able to buy new levels for *Zelda*, but I

haven't heard anything about it for months. What's going on?  
Craig Brown, Cardiff

**A** Nintendo's long-delayed disk drive, which enables gamers to save and load data from their favourite games, is still on its way – in Japan at least. The 64DD is slated for a Christmas release date, with launch titles including *Mario Artist* and a built-in modem too. Be warned – although Nintendo says it is keeping an open mind about the drive coming to America and Europe, The Big N has a history of restricting add-ons like this to the folks in Japan.

## 'Gizza 10p mum!' Name that coin-op



Burger Time spawned a fantastic Spectrum spin-off, based on the now-defunct fast-food chain Wimpy.

**Q** I remember a coin-op from donkey's years ago where you had to put together a hamburger by stamping on individual ingredients until they fell to the bottom of the screen. You got chased around the screen by sausages, too. It sounds weird, I know, but I definitely remember it. What was it?  
Lee Burrige, Birmingham

**A** This was *Burger Time*, released by Data East back in the heady days of 1981. You played a chef, who needed to scamper over various bits of dead cow, stale

dough and unrecognisable vegetables in order to create the perfect burger.

Standing in your way were legions of irritating foodstuffs, including fried eggs, cooked sausages and chilli, who'd put an end to your culinary quest by stealing your hat. Luckily, the stash of lethal pepper in your pocket could be used to freeze the dangerous delicacies.

By far the best things about *Burger Time* were the way the burger ingredients bounced when they landed on a platform, and the chef's little jig when he completed a screen. If you'd like more information on the bouncing or the jigging, visit <http://www.emux.com>.

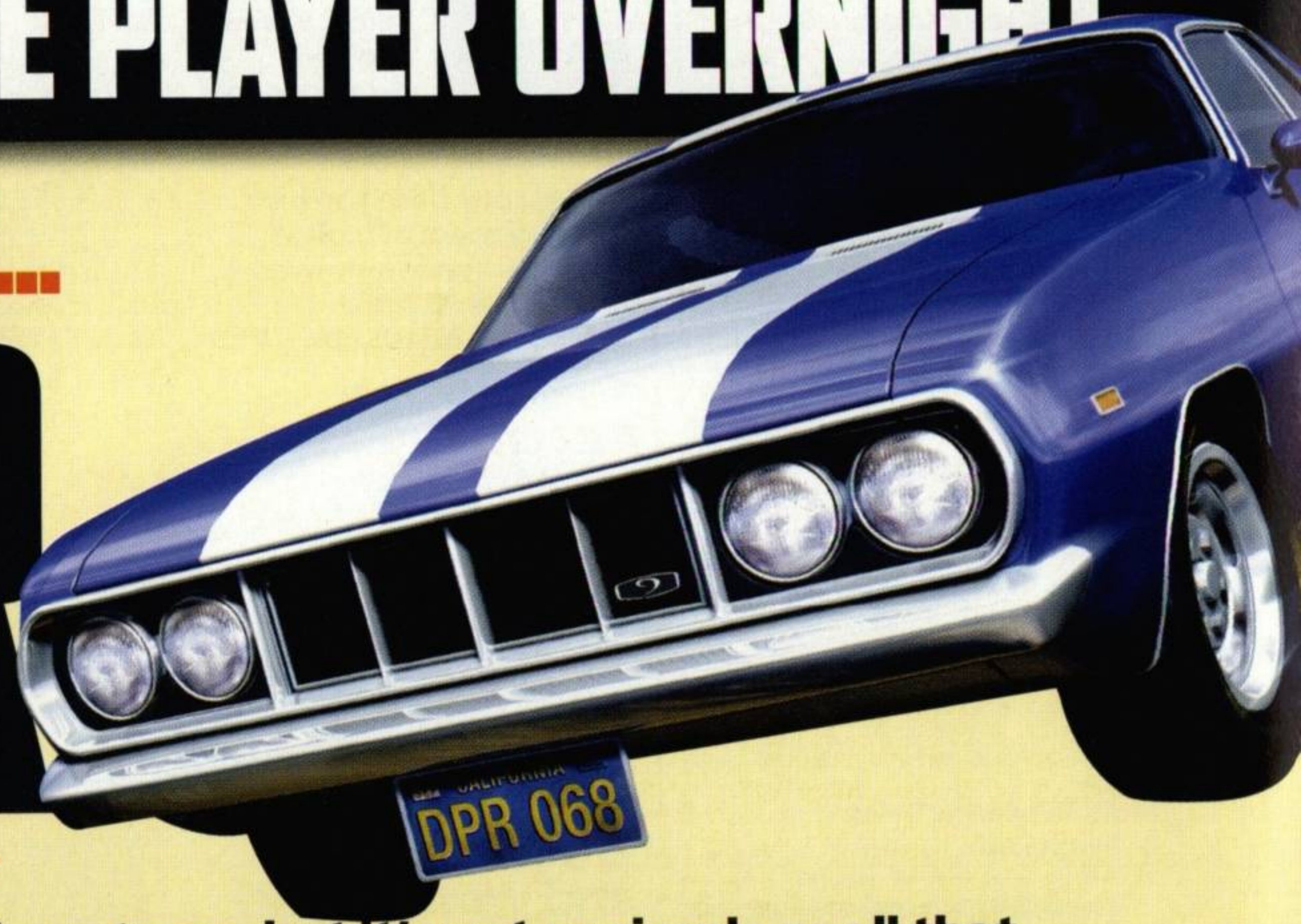


# KICK ASS

## BECOME A DEMON GAME PLAYER OVERNIGHT

### HOW TO GUN YOUR ENGINE IN...

# DRIVER



Format: **PlayStation** | Publisher: **GT Interactive** | Price: **£40** | Players: **1** | ★★★★★

There may be a big arrow on-screen telling you where to go, but it's not as simple as all that. Here's all you need to make like Steve McQueen in *Bullit* – black polo-neck sweater optional.

## DRIVING YOU MAD

■ No matter how hard you try, there are some parts of *Driver* that will have you tearing your hair out. However, these general tips should see you attain driving glory. They should work no matter what level you're on. Just keep your eyes on the road.

### 1. The reverse 180

This is the most annoying part of the maddeningly tough driving test, but you'll find it comes in mighty handy. The trick is not to touch the brakes as you would to pull off a forward 180° – just reverse until you reach top speed and swing the car either left or right in a sharp style. Screech.

### 2. The slalom

Still on the driving test, this'll frustrate simply because it's not clear you actually have to weave your way around the columns, turn around and do it again the other way. Confusing if not explained properly.

### 3. The police

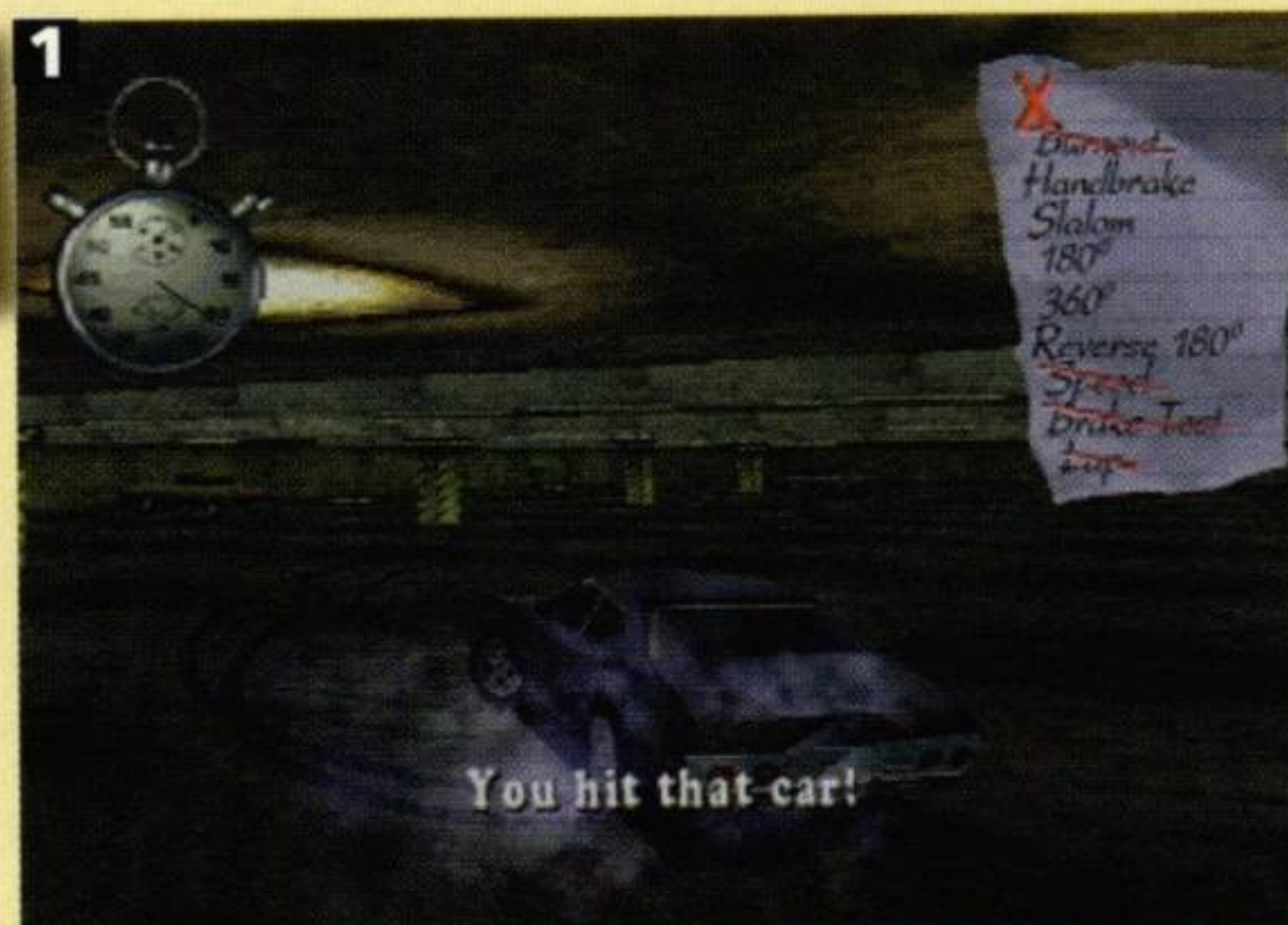
The Rozzers do have a nasty habit of completely messing up your life on a regular basis. But, as in real life, while the Dibble in *Driver* are pretty adept at running you down, they aren't that good.

If you're feeling as cocky as a joyriding teen, it is possible to play chicken with the forces of law and order. Simply drive headlong towards a cop car, see which side he's planning to hit you from (it's hardly ever a straight head-on smash) and turn the other way at the very last moment. *Olé*.

### 4. Roadblocks

If you seem to be doing particularly well, the police department sometimes resorts to setting up roadblocks. On freeways and the larger city streets, you'll find there is nearly always a gap on the pavement they've forgotten to cover. And, handily, it's a gap the size of a getaway car.

Sometimes, though, you have no other option but to



smash your way through. Go for the places where two cars meet rather than slap-bang in the side panels, and they'll split apart easily. Don't use **⊙** to burn away, though, as you'll lose control. Bugger.

### 5. Handbrake

Brilliant for getting out of police pursuits. When coming up to a corner, instead of braking normally, tap the handbrake after pointing the car in the right direction and watch the world whizz by in a sideways fashion. So, so much fun.

### 6. Other cars

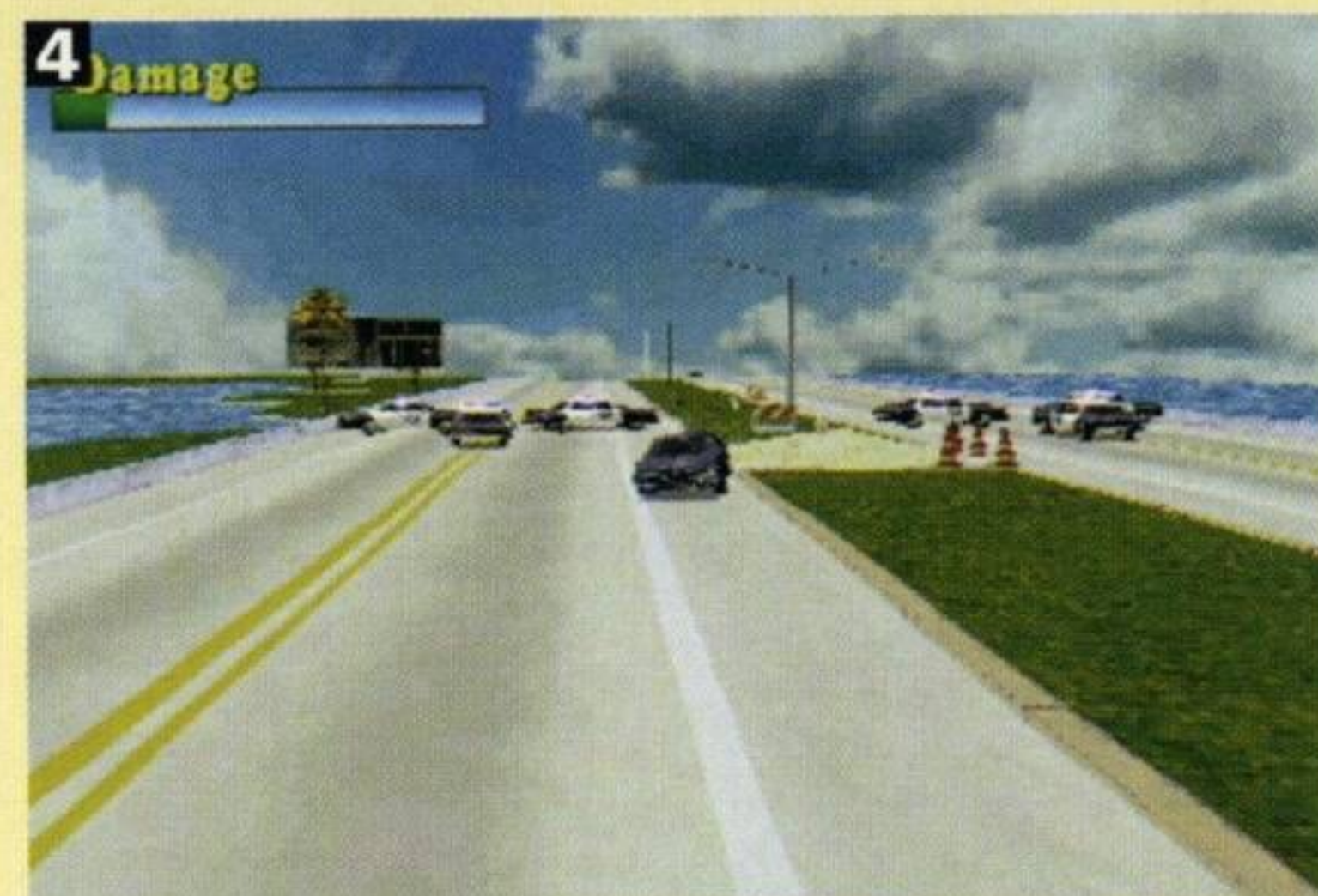
Sadly, the AI doesn't go as far as telling the other cars you exist. So, unless you avoid them, you'll be heading for the

wreckers yard double quick. It doesn't even make a difference if you weave around flashing your headlights and honking your horn. Sunday drivers...

### 7. Losing the tail

Means not losing your head. Madly burning around will mean hitting things, which will lessen the gap between you and the law, rather than giving you the desired elbow room to get up to a bit of naughtiness. So, if you've got time, find a straight and use the excessive speed at your command to your advantage.

If the clock is running low, a few circuits of the block mixed with a quick run down a few alleys normally does the trick. Sneaky.





# 11 GAMES TIPPED THIS MONTH

There's always more to every videogame than you think and to get the maximum gameplay out of them you need *Arcade's* top tips – and don't forget our Action Replay codes too.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



## PLAYSTATION

- P74 Driver
- P77 Syphon Filter
- P78 Trap Runner

## PC

- P76 Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace

## NINTENDO 64

- P76 Star Wars Episode 1: Racer
- P77 Superman
- P78 Big Air
- P79 A Bug's Life

## OTHER SYSTEMS

- P77 Duke Nukem 3D
- P78 House of The Dead 2

## COLOR GAME BOY

- P79 Quest for Camelot

## NOW PLAYING

There's more to every game than you think:

P78 *Arcade's* classic tips for *WWF Warzone*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Chameleon Twist*, *F-Zero X*, *Final Fantasy VII*, *Snowboard Kids*, *Gran Turismo* and *Actua Soccer 2*

P79 *Gameplay challenge: Turok 2*, *Mario Kart 64*, *Super Mario 64*, *Snowboard Kids*, *GTA: London 1969*, *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver*, *Anna Kournikova's Tennis*, *Street Fighter Alpha 3*, *Railroad Tycoon 2*, *Delta Force*, *SimCity 2000* and *Expendable*

## MIAMI MAYHEM

Many levels are as simple as following the arrows before the clock runs out. Some, however, require a little strategy. A quick tip: even though sometimes you'll have the cops right on your tail as you reach your target, you'll only rarely be asked to lose 'em.

### 1. The Clean-Up Part 2

Whatever route you choose, you'll come across a roadblock, and seeing as your damage is carried over from the first level, it's imperative to avoid prangs, just like you would avoid your Mum when you're stoned. So, for instant success, avoid the northernmost of the two roads you can go down (it's the thinner one). You can't avoid

the roadblock here, and you'll waste valuable time.

### 2. Bust Out Jean-Paul

If you've ever played *Die Hard Trilogy*, you'll love this. All you've got to do is ram the armoured car, and it's easy once you know how. Jean Paul will turn at right angles in the middle of a junction, but you can cut diagonally across the



inside corner and smash into the side of his car. He won't last long if you connect just right. Free at last.

### 3. Superfly Drive

This mission takes an age to master. Basically, you can't afford to crash your car if you want to complete it. The damage meter is more sensitive than usual, and you have very little time to get where you're going. So, here's the best route: take the thin highway from downtown.

Easy, right? No, but there really is no safer or quicker



way to get there. You just have to be good.

### 4. The Informant

This is the last level in Miami, and you'll be lucky if you see the first ten seconds of it the first few times. You've got to follow a monorail, but it's extremely difficult to get the flying start you need for it not to be out of reach from the off.

Take a right out of the lock-up, and keep the wheels turning right for the first right. Taking this corner well is vital – too slow and the car on the next left will almost certainly



curtail your chances. There are two ways around it: you can either cut across the front of his car and turn left across the central reservation using the handbrake – the monorail will be high on your right – or, if you're feeling confident, a better option is to cut across the back of the car. You can do

this by speeding through the tight gap between the building on the corner and the concrete post. You'll only make it once every ten times, but you'll be set up nicely...

After that, it's all pretty easy – in fact, it's even possible to beat the monorail train to its final destination.

## CALI CAPERS

San Francisco's hills are present and correct. But the angles are all wrong. So, make sure you choose the out-of-car view when you're flying downwards – otherwise you can't see what's coming!

### 1. The Casino Job

You'll find this hard right from the off, particularly as your car handles like the nasty station wagon it is. And it's made worse by the job being incomplete if you have a tail.

Time isn't much of an issue here, so just keep a beady eye on the radar and actively avoid any police contact, taking a round-about route if necessary. The entrance in the final part of this mission is really hard to find, but head for the boxes on the perimeter wall. Get through those, and it's a piece of cake.

### 2. In the Pickup

For some reason you take on an impossibly dangerous mission transporting high-grade explosive rolling about in the

back of a pick-up. So, you've got to be careful unless it's all to end in fireworks.

There are a load of roadblocks, but if you head right through downtown San Francisco before taking the major road through Chinatown, you should have enough room to work with.

### 3. Taxi

It's possible to pull this mission off the first time you try, but it's a little tricky and you can end up getting bogged down trying to complete it.

It's your job to scare the crap out of your passenger in just one minute. A quick 360 gets the scaredy-meter right up, but any kind of repetition soon calms him down. So, remember your driving test



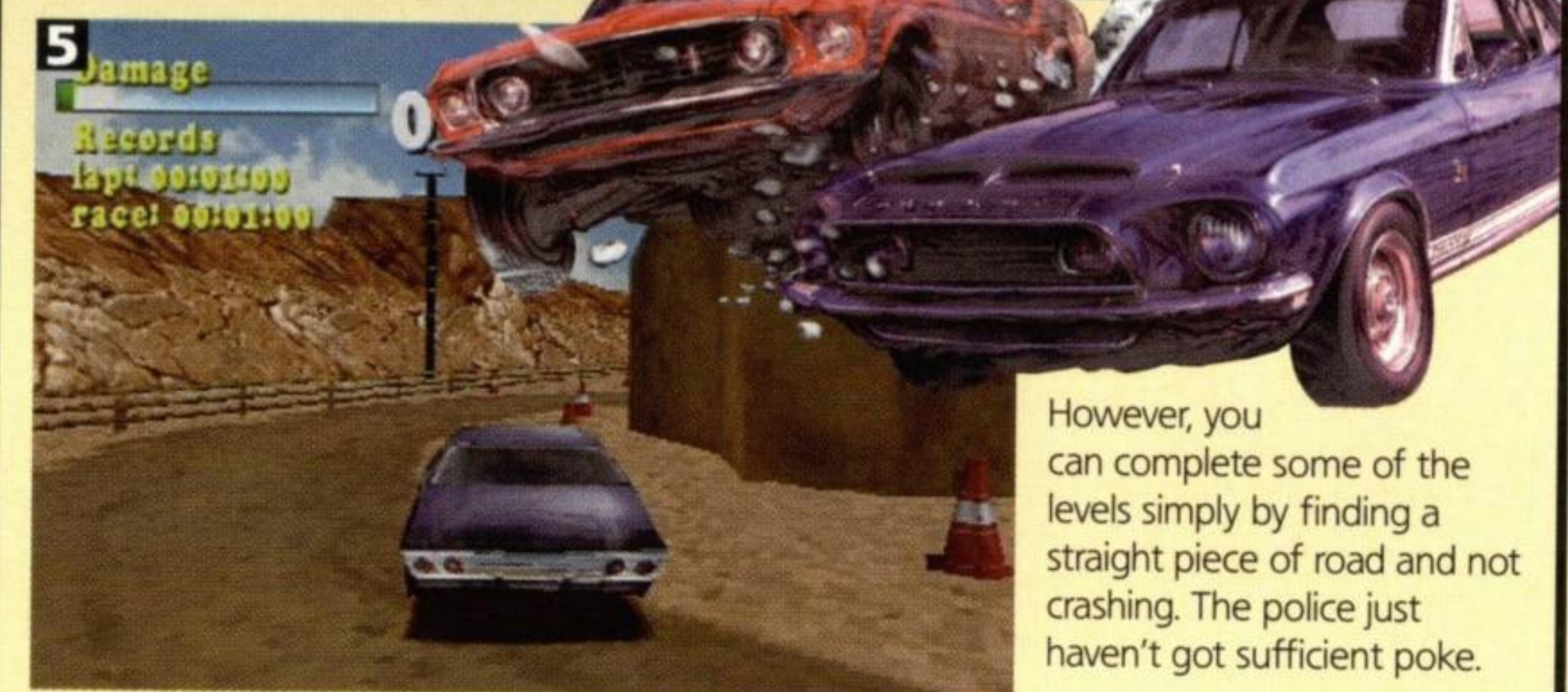
skills and see how he likes a reverse 180° before smashing headlong into lampposts and traffic! Lightweight.

### 4. The Set Up

The title gives it away, really, but when you reach the multi-storey car park (you'll see other cars coming out of it), you'll find John Q Laws everywhere.

Getting out and back to the hotel is tricky – watch the ramps. Because you can't turn in the air, it's a very good idea to slow down and take the ramps on four wheels. It may seem a bit boring with cops everywhere, but it certainly does the job.

## DRIVING GAME MINI TIPS



### 1. Crosstown Checkpoint

These games are most like the actual missions, so driving experts shouldn't have many problems. To get a good time on Miami 2, ignore the first flashing light on the map. Instead, cut across the yard space in front of the building you're heading toward – the checkpoint is inside. The time to aim for is around one minute for the whole thing.

### 2. Pursuit

Again, similar to the pursuit levels in the game proper. But

here there's more leniency – you can get away with a wrong turn. At the same time, the cars you need to catch are more erratic. But it's not too taxing. For example, in Miami 1 you can have the whole thing over in less than ten seconds if you cut inside your quarry as he turns right at the second junction.

### 3. Getaway

It depends how much fun you want to have. If you want to speed around back alleys, handbrake turning everywhere, you can.

### 4. Survival

The police can catch up here. They're super turbo-charged law enforcers, and you'll be lucky to last 20 seconds. But, keep away from walls, cars, and lampposts, and it's easy to build a good time.

### 5. Time Trial

Straightforward. Avoid small rocks – they look like you can drive over them, but you can't. And don't cause mayhem by driving through all the cones – you won't be able to see where you're supposed to go next lap!



# HOW TO FORGET THE FORCE IN... STAR WARS EPISODE 1: THE PHANTOM MENACE

Make a pact with The Dark Side and throw those rules out of the window.



■ For various messages, try typing (more than once): **OLDCODE**; **HAPPY**; **BUT I FEEL SO GOOD**; and **BRENANDO**

■ In the final battle, there's a much easier way to kill Darth



Maul than hitting him repeatedly with a lightsaber. Simply get him between you and the pit and keep pushing him toward it. He will soon fall in and die. The Force, eh? What a con.

## CHEAT CODES

■ During the game, hit **Backspace**, type the code in the red box and hit **Enter**. Most of the following codes toggle an effect (type once to enable the effect, repeat to disable). Be sure to include spaces – they're meant to be there.

**FROM ABOVE**  
Toggles top-view camera perspective

**NAUGHTY NAUGHTY**  
Toggles over-the-shoulder camera view

**PERF** Toggles character wireframe mode

**REX** Toggles wireframe mode for the menus

**60FPS** Toggles animation frames per second

**PERFECTION** Deflects blaster shots perfectly

**SLOWMO** Toggles Super Slowmo Mode

**TURN TABLES** Makes the Jawas on

Mos Espa really big

**I LIKE TO CHEAT**  
All the weapons with full ammo

**HEAL IT UP**  
Replenishes health

**GIVE ME LIFE**  
Replenishes health

**I RULE THE WORLD**  
Raises difficulty level

**I STINK**  
Lowers difficulty level

**FPS**  
Displays frame rate and resolution

**KILL ME NOW**  
Drains all your health

**DROP A BEAT**  
Wobbles vision

**IAMQUEEN**  
Play as the Queen

**IAMQUIGON**  
Play as Qui-Gon Jinn

**IAMOBI**  
Play as Obi-Wan

**IAMPANAKA**  
Play as Captain Panaka

**BEYOND CINEMA**  
Toggles widescreen mode

## NINTENDO 64

# HOW TO REMEMBER THE FORCE IN... STAR WARS EPISODE 1: RACER

Supercharge your pod racer for a new lease of life.



■ Psst. Want to unlock some secret characters?

### Jinn Reeso

Once you've unlocked Mars Guo, select an empty file, then press and hold **Z** while you scroll through the letters. Spell out the consonant-heavy word **RRJINNRE** by holding **Z** and pressing **L** while over each letter. The code should be spelt out in the bottom-left corner of the screen. When you're finished, highlight **End** then press **L**.

### Cy Yunga

Once you've unlocked Jinn Reeso, again select an empty space in Tournament mode and hold **Z** while pressing **L** over each letter and spelling out **RRCYYUN**. Then, while still holding **Z**, highlight **END** and press **L**, followed by **A**.

■ Here's how to cheat...

### Dual Control mode

Select an empty Save Game (to erase, press **C-Up**), then hold **Z** while scrolling through the letters on the name entry

screen. To enter a letter, hit **L**. Enter the following word: **RRDUAL**. When you've finished, select **End** and hit **L** again. Now enter your name the usual way. You now control the game with two analogue sticks. Press forward on both sticks to drive, pulling back to steer.

### Invincibility

In the same way, enter the word **RRJABBA**. Now enter your name the usual way. Start a race and press **Start** to pause the proceedings. Finally, press **Left, Down, Right** and **Up** on the D-Pad. You will be unbeatable.

### Mirror mode

As outlined above, enter **RRTHEBEAST**. Pause the race during play and press **Left, Down, Right** and **Up** on the D-Pad to activate Mirror mode.

### Debug menu

Enter **RRDEBUG**. Pause then press **Up, Left, Down** and **Right** for the Debug menu.

### Tournament mode

■ Pick the option to buy pit droids. Then press **Cancel** or **B**. Now press **Z** and use the control stick to look around. You'll see Watto at his shop, and your character. On either the left or right of the racer you've chosen, you'll see one

of a number of characters (these include a Jawa, R2D2, Qui-Gon Jinn and even the "naked" C-3PO). You can also see many of the game's characters in the bar.

Follow the same procedure right after choosing your pod and track.

■ You did know about the taunt feature, didn't you? At Tournament mode's Main Menu, hold **Z** while pressing **A** to start a race. You'll see a brief sequence in which your racer and a rival trash-talk each other in a hangar.



■ Take first place in all Tournament mode races, then activate the Mirror courses in the Track Info screen. When the Title screen goes into demo mode, press **C-Up**. Your reward? A photo of the team that designed the game. Whoop-de-doo.



## NOW PLAYING

### GAMEPLAY CHALLENGE

#### NINTENDO 64

### Race your way into the record books

■ Here are the times and/or tracks for *Star Wars Episode 1: Racer* that unlock the hidden characters and their racers. Can you do better?

**Seulba the Boonta Classic**  
Galactic Circuit  
Lap time: 02:04:210 Race time: 06:20:012

**Aldar Beedo Beedo's Wild Ride**  
Amateur Circuit  
Lap time: 01:02:986 Race time: 03:16:697

**Ratts Tyerell**  
Howler Gorge Semipro Circuit  
Lap time: 01:31:370 Race time: 04:48:510

**Mawhonic**  
Andobi Mountain Run Galactic Circuit  
Lap time: 01:39:309 Race time: 05:05:648

**Slide Paramita**  
AP Centrum Invitational Circuit  
Lap time: 00:58:410 Race time: 03:03:260

**Clegg Holdfast**  
Aquilaris Classic Amateur Circuit  
Lap time: 01:04:700 Race time: 03:16:926

**Bullseye Navior**  
Sunken City Semipro Circuit  
Lap time: 01:52:620 Race time: 05:43:101

**Ark Bumpy Roose**  
Bumpy's Breakers Semipro Circuit  
Lap time: 02:09:358 Race time: 06:47:380

**Wan Sandage**  
Scrapper's Run Semipro Circuit  
Lap time: 00:44:904 Race time: 02:23:978

**Bozzie Baranta**  
Abyss Invitational Circuit  
Lap time: 01:02:639 Race time: 03:12:934

**Neva Kee**  
Baroo Coast Semipro Circuit  
Lap time: 01:38:300 Race time: 04:59:640

**Ben Quadinaros**  
Inferno Invitational Circuit  
Lap time: 00:59:549 Race time: 03:04:160

**Teemto Pagalies**  
Mon Gazza Speedway Amateur Circuit  
Lap time: 00:16:072 Race time: 00:52:081

**Mars Guo**  
Spice Mine Run Amateur Circuit  
Lap time: 01:29:470 Race time: 04:30:880

**Boles Roor**  
Zugga Challenge Semipro Circuit  
Lap time: 02:01:261 Race time: 06:10:897

**Fud Sang**  
Vengeance Amateur Circuit  
Lap time: 01:16:880 Race time: 03:51:921

**Toy Dampner**  
Executioner Galactic Circuit  
Lap time: 00:31:540 Race time: 04:42:310



# HOW TO SNEAK LIKE A STOAT IN... SYPHON FILTER

Be especially sneaky in a game that's all about sneaking!

Get all the weapons, ammo, levels and movies, plus invaluable level advice.

- For all weapons and infinite ammo, pause the game and highlight the Weapons menu. Now press and hold **Right + L2 + R2 + ⊕ + ⊕ + ⊕**.
- To make your enemies easier to kill, pause the game and highlight the Map entry. While it's highlighted, press and hold **Right, R1, L2, ⊗**.
- To make the game harder, do this at the title screen: press and hold **Left, L1, R2, Select, ⊕, ⊕** and **⊗**.
- To select a level, pause the game and go into the Options menu. Highlight the **Select**

**Mission** option, then press and hold **Left + L1 + R1 + Select + ⊕ + ⊗**.

■ For Super Ammo, pause the game, select **Weapons** and highlight **9MM**. Now press and hold **Left, R2, Select, L1, ⊕ + ⊗**.

■ To view all movies, go to the theatre in the first level. (Remember? It's outside the window in the back alley where you fight endless enemies from behind police cars.) Pause the game and highlight **Maps**, then press and hold **Right, L2, R1** and **⊗**.

**Having problems on level 20?**

Turn right and go around the



missile. Watch out for the grenade-lobbing guard. Go down the elevator. Take out the two guards, then climb the two girders to get to the codes. After the movie, go to the right and roll under the door. Now go across the room and up the elevator. There are four guards between you and the next room. Get the key card from one of the scientists then go through the door. Now find the computer at the other side of the room.

**How about defeating Anton Girdeaux?**

Always try to keep a pole between you and Girdeaux – so he can't see you. Hold **L1** to manually aim the weapon you want. Then hold **L2** or **R2** to peek out from behind the pole. Fire only at the gas pack on Girdeaux's back (otherwise your efforts will come to nought on his body armour). You can see the gas pack when he turns to fire: shoot at it. Let go of **L1** and the other

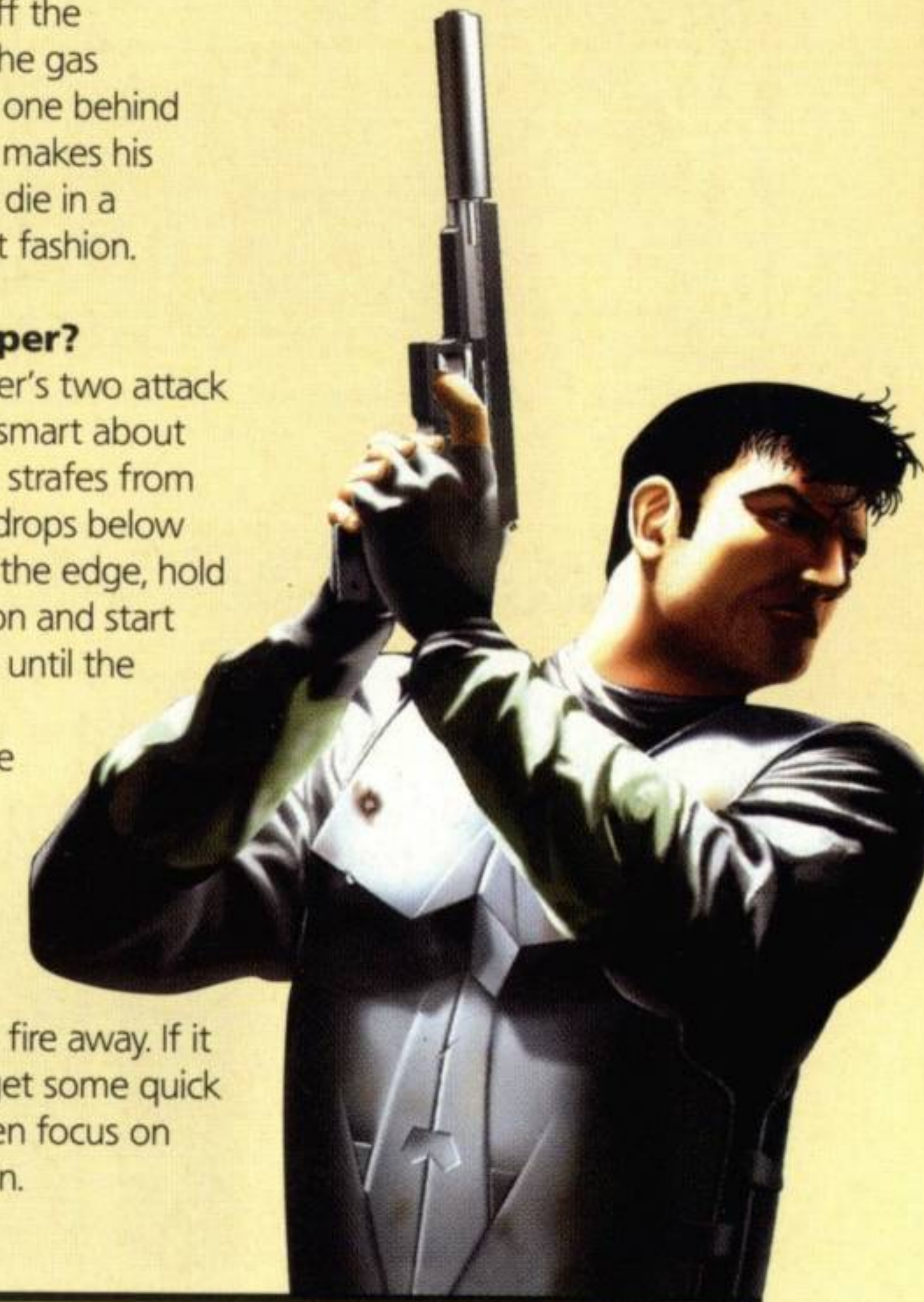
shoulder button, pressing **L2** or **R2** by themselves to crank your tail away from the flames. Repeat this about five times with the .45mm, or about ten times with the 9mm.

**And Rhoemer?**

Before turning off the computer, grab the gas grenades. Chuck one behind you as Rhoemer makes his entrance. He will die in a pleasantly instant fashion.

**And the chopper?**

Learn the chopper's two attack patterns and be smart about evading its fire. It strafes from side to side and drops below the fence. Go to the edge, hold the lock-on button and start shooting. Repeat until the whirlybird starts smoking. Face the ledge it's rising from, lock on and roll along the edge. When the chopper passes overhead, fire away. If it drops terrorists, get some quick head shots in, then focus on the chopper again.



## MACINTOSH

### DUKE NUKEM 3D



■ Enter the following codes while playing:

DNKROZ	God mode
DNSTUFF	All items
DNVIEW	Same as pressing F7
DNHYPER	Same as using steroids
DNITEMS	All items and keys
DNWEAPONS	All weapons
DNKEYS	All keys
DNSCOTT*#	Level skip: * = episode and # = level
DNUNLOCK	All doors unlocked
DNMONSTERS	All monsters disappear
DNCLIP	Walk through walls
DNSHOWMAP	Shows all of the map on the map screen

## NINTENDO 64

### SUPERMAN

■ For infinite Laser Vision, X-Ray Vision, Freeze Breath and Running Boosts, go to the title screen and hold **A + B + C-Up + C-Down**. Press **Start**.

■ To level select, begin a game in single-player mode. Play until you get the option to save your game on the Controller Pak. Do so, then reset. Select the **Load Game** option from the main menu, then choose the game you saved. A prompt (to insert a Rumble Pak) will appear. Hold **L + B** for one second, then press **A**. The resulting level selection screen enables any mission to be played on the current difficulty setting. Note: you can change the difficulty setting by entering the option screen from the main menu.

■ To defeat Darkseid, play through the eighth level until you get to the bomb in



the kryptonite room. Freeze said device with your chilly breath – when you walk out, Jimmy Olsen should be waiting for you. Talk to him and, when he leaves, go out through the path where the kryptonite room is. Go all the way around. When you get back to the same place, Darkseid should be waiting for you. Stand behind him (at a safe distance) and toast him with

your heat vision. He should just stand there as you kill him. Pick him up and take him to the cops at the beginning of the level.

■ And, er, to become a car, first go to **Practice** in the title screen. It doesn't matter if you don't kill the enemy who's shooting at you. Pick up the car (with **B**) and fly it (**Z**), then go through all the rings around the Lexcorp

building. Once you've flown through the last red ring (you *must* fly through it; if you walk through, the trick won't work), the game should glitch and you should end up in the car! Now you can go around Metropolis in style! Oh joy!



## ACTION REPLAY CODES

To use these codes you'll need an N64 or PSX Action Replay cartridge, available for £39.99 from Datel on 01785 810800. Off we go into hex-land, then...

### PLAYSTATION

#### WWF War Zone

Only works with Steve Austin as player 1. Instant pin and count out Player 2 – 800D94F4 E5ED; Always stunned Player 2 – 800D94EC FFFF; 800D982C 0000; Open cheats in basement (press L1 and R1 repeatedly) – 8007A6D0 00FF;

8007A6D2 1000, 8007A6D4 00FF, 8007A6D6 2000.

#### Actua Soccer 3

Home team has nine-goal head-start – 800F44FC 0009; Away team has nine-goal head-start – 800F44F8 0009; Home team's goals do not count – 800F44FC 0000; Away team's goals do not count – 800F44F8 0000.

#### Big Air

Always finish first – 3006BA60 0000; Stop game timer at 0 – 8006AC24 0000; Score 1 million – 8007BCAC 4240, 8007BCAE 000F

#### Grand Turismo

Confused opponents – D01B3A7E 001B; 80093BC8 0000. Only one lap to race – D00B6700 0000, 800B6700 0002.

Lotsa money – D009B876 0000; 8009B876 7FFF. Have all gold cups and open GT hi-fi mode – D009F8DC 0000; 8009F8DC 0101; D009F8DE 0000; 8009F8DE 0101.

### NINTENDO 64

#### Snowboard Kids

Infinite cash – 81122728 C350; Only

one lap to race – 801226C8 0009; Enable Sinobin – 8110B29E 0100; Open all tracks – 800ECE7C 0003

#### Star Wars Episode 1 Racer

One lap race/finish first – 81121CAA 0002; Infinite truguts – 8111CB1A FFFF.

■ If you'd like an Action Replay cartridge for free, send a postcard to "Hey! I'd like an Action Replay cartridge for free" at Arcade, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2DL and this and every month we'll send off one PlayStation and one Nintendo 64 cart to two, lucky hex-editing readers.



PLAYSTATION

# TRAP RUNNER



■ Go to the title screen (you can do that much, can't you?) and press:

- Alternate background music   Ⓞ, R2, R1, Ⓞ, ⓧ, Ⓞ, Right, L2, L1, Up, Down, Left
- Bonus characters           L2, L1, Up, Left, Down, Right, Ⓞ, ⓧ, Ⓞ, Ⓞ, R1, R2, R2, R1, Ⓞ, Ⓞ, ⓧ
- Bonus costumes           Ⓞ, Right, Down, Left, Up, L1, L2
- Bonus level                   Press Select 12 times
- Change traps           L2, R2, L1, R1, Up, Ⓞ, Left, Right, Ⓞ, Ⓞ, Down, ⓧ
- Secret save icon   Left, L2, L1, Up, Down, Right, Ⓞ, R1, R1, Ⓞ, ⓧ, Ⓞ

NINTENDO 64

# BIG AIR

■ For all levels and all players, go to the screen where you're asked to select which music track you want to listen to. Choose **blink 182, [dammit]** and play. Then choose **blink 182, [untitled]** and exit. When you leave, the game should start playing the latter track. Go to the Character Selection screen and hold Ⓞ + Ⓞ + Ⓞ + Ⓞ.



## NOW PLAYING

CLASSIC TIPS

Inject some new life into those old games clogging up your games' cupboard with some cheats from the *Legendary Arcade Kick Ass Classic Tip Vaults of Olde*.



PLAYSTATION

### WWF WARZONE

■ To call for a certain wrestler during a match, hold all four shoulder buttons (L1 + L2 + R1 + R2), then press a direction and a button. Each combination of direction and button corresponds to one of the 16 wrestlers in the game. The contest now becomes a Handicap match featuring you and whoever you called in against your opponent. Happily, no matter what happens, you'll win by Disqualification.



PLAYSTATION

### METAL GEAR SOLID

■ To get a Nikita Rocket Launcher early in the game, go through the first two levels, then, when you reach the third, go back to the second. Where you picked up the Socom pistol, there'll now be a Nikita Launcher. If you fail in Revolver's torture room and come into close contact with Sasaki (the guard patrolling outside your prison cell), you may catch the flu. This will make you sneeze every minute or so, but you can cure it with medicine, which you'll find in a green box with a red cross on the top.



NINTENDO 64

### CHAMELEON TWIST

■ When you enter a room with next to nothing for a life, save your game right there. Do this by pressing **Start** and selecting **Save** on the menu. Now go back to the menu by pressing **Start** and selecting **Exit**. You should be back at the main screen, in which case all you have to do is select **Load** and choose the slot into which you saved your game. You'll return to where you last saved, but this time you'll have a full life bar. Hopefully.



PLAYSTATION

### F-ZERO X

■ Check out these shortcuts:  
**Rainbow Road:** When you get a boost start, keep going until the guard rail disappears and falls off to the right or left. Move back on to the track.  
**Sector B:** When you're about to pass the purple pit, use a boost and go off to the left or right side at the top of the hill. You should land in the purple pit, where you can charge your power.  
**Red Canyon 2:** When you're leaving the tunnel, use a boost or two to take to the air. Go to the track with the backwards-facing hill.

DREAMCAST

# HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2



■ You know the special locations that reward you with various attractive items? Here's where they can be found:

■ In Level 2, a car drives at you. There's a zombie on top of it. Kill him. As the camera turns, you should notice a blue car to the right. Shoot the back door. A bloke will thank you. Again, the camera will pan to the right to another blue car. Shoot the extra.  
 ■ You'll be led up some stairs. Take out the little group of zombies, then the knife-throwing one. Shoot the door at the end of the hallway. Kill the two jumping zombies that block your way. A man comes out and gives you a little something.  
 ■ In Level 3, there's a scene in which a putrid green zombie attacks a man on a motorboat. Kill the zombie without killing the man. There's a box in the background, just to the right. Shoot it and a special extra will appear on the boat.  
 ■ In Level 5, having killed the waterboss with the open heart, continue driving over the bridge toward two cars and a gathering of the local undead. Shoot the back door of the left-hand car. Now kill the zombies between the cars, followed by the two zombies who have critters in their chests.



PLAYSTATION

### FINAL FANTASY VII

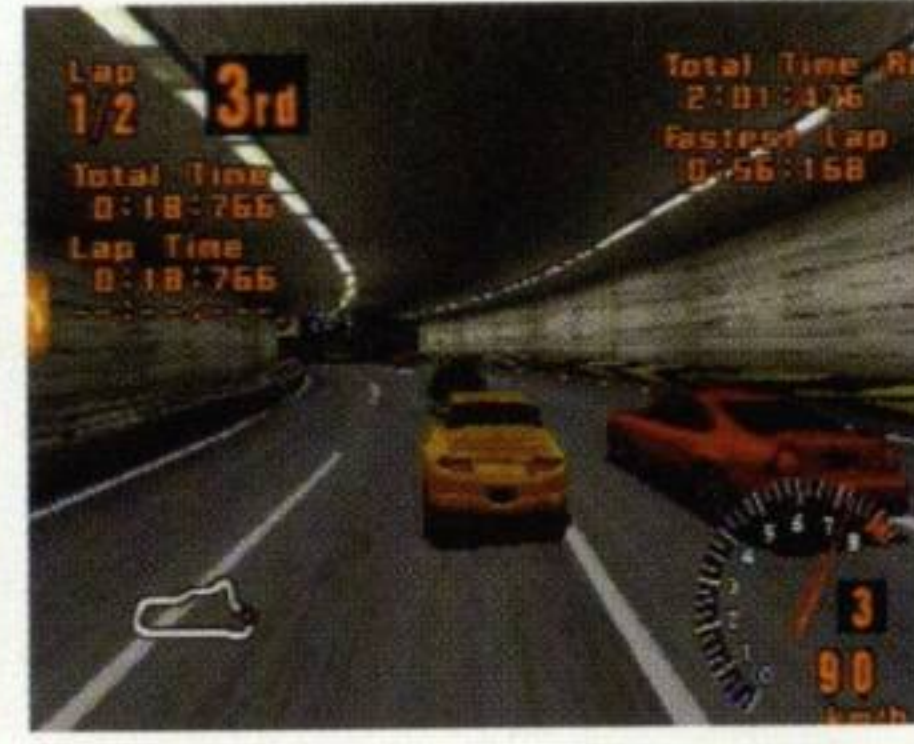
■ On your way to Coral, go to the switch that you push to let the others through. Explore the area and you should hear birds chirping. Follow said trillings up the hill (you might have to search to find the right spot) and pick the first option you're given. After collecting the ten Phoenix Downs, go back down to the lower tracks and follow your partners. As they turn to the right, you need to take the left split because buried in the hill under the tracks is a cave with an out-of-work miner. A Power Source, Mind Source and Tent can be acquired within this hidden area.



NINTENDO 64

### SNOWBOARD KIDS

■ At the title screen (where it says Start, and when all the characters are on view) press the following: **Down** on the stick, **Up** on the stick, **Down** on the D-pad, **Up** on the D-pad, **Down C, Up, C, L, R, Z, Left** on the D-pad, **Right C, Up** on the stick, **B, Right** on the D-pad, **Left C, Start**. You should hear a "Yeah!", which signifies that the code has worked. This opens up all the courses, gives you all the boards, gives you the secret character Shinobin and enables you to play the same character in multi-player mode.



PLAYSTATION

### GRAN TURISMO

■ To accelerate faster, rev your engine during the countdown. Before you go, be sure to go from the lowest point in neutral to the highest point in neutral, then back down to the lowest point in neutral. Do this as many times as you can. The easiest way to get lots of money later in the game is to race the all-nighter qualifier. You get \$20,000 just for qualifying, which is very easy to do in the GTO Special Edition (or any other car with good speed, acceleration and handling).



PLAYSTATION

### ACTUA SOCCER 2

■ At the Start menu, press:  
**BEACH BALL:** Left, Right, Left, Up, Left, Right, Ⓞ, Ⓞ  
**GIGANTIC PLAYERS:** Up, Down, Down, Right, Ⓞ, Ⓞ, Ⓞ, Ⓞ  
**GREMLIN 11 TEAM:** Left, Right, Ⓞ, Ⓞ, Up, Down, Ⓞ, Ⓞ  
**INVISIBLE PLAYERS:** Ⓞ, Ⓞ, Down, Ⓞ, Up, Right, Ⓞ, Left  
**SUPER FURY ANIMALS TEAM:** Left, Left, Ⓞ, Right, Right, Ⓞ, Up, Down



Anyone can complete games, but only a select few can truly master them. Are you brave enough for our gameplay challenges? Or are you *chicken*? Bwarrk!



NINTENDO 64

**TUROK 2**

■ Challenge: **In the dark**  
 "I've got a great gameplay challenge," claims Alex Williams of Colwall. "First, activate the blackout cheat – by typing **LIGHTSOUT** into the Cheat menu on the title screen – and then start the game. Can you complete the whole game in almost complete darkness? Very scary!" If you can't manage that, see how many levels you can get through without kicking the bucket. And no sneaky flare usage, either.



NINTENDO 64

**SNOWBOARD KIDS**

■ Challenge: **All around**  
 We want you to come first in a tournament without directly collecting any coins – you'll need to earn all your money by pulling off outrageous stunts at every opportunity. And that's not all. You're banned from using any weapons on the first two laps of any race (or just the first lap if it's a two-lap race). This superb racer has just been re-released at a budget price, so buy it. And good luck.



NINTENDO 64

**MARIO KART 64**

■ Challenge: **Wario Stadium II**  
 "Your *Mario Kart* gameplay challenge in *Arcade 8* was all well and good," says CoopDawgy, "but you can cut out far more than half the track on Wario Stadium. Drive at half-speed from the start, powerslide in a curve on to the hill, then tap **R** to jump as you strike the left-hand wall head on. Keep turning, and hit the wall again so that you leap over: you'll land behind the finishing line! Try to beat my lap time of seven seconds."



NINTENDO 64

**SUPER MARIO 64**

■ Challenge: **Super fly guy**  
 One of the most breathtaking moments in *Super Mario* comes when you scamper to the top of the mountain on Level 1 and look down at the landscape stretched below you. Our challenge is the exact opposite. Well, sort of. Make sure the camera option on the pause menu is set to **Lakitu** → **Fixed**, and hold down **R** as you start the level. Now try to get to the top of the mountain with the camera fixed at the position you started in. It's horrifically tricky.



PLAYSTATION

**GTA: LONDON 1969**

■ Challenge: **Carmageddon**  
 The ability to squish innocent pedestrians with hulking great vehicles seems to be built into every game now. Take 2's cockney-styled add-on for its original cop-baiting driveabout is no exception, so here's a challenge to take advantage of the citizens of London. Simply start your stopwatch and see how many people you can run over in three minutes without being manhandled by the filth. And remember to ring for an ambulance afterwards.



PLAYSTATION

**LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER**

■ Challenge: **Power-up probe**  
 This challenge comes from Amy Hennig, Lead Designer of *Soul Reaver*. "There are health and glyph power-ups hidden in the game, and these increase Raziel's energy and magic capacity. I challenge you to find all 15 health power-ups and all five glyph power-ups scattered throughout Nosgoth. You'll need to do some exploration to locate them, and use all the abilities Raziel acquires."



PLAYSTATION

**ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S SMASH COURT TENNIS**

■ Challenge: **Aces high**  
 The aim is to win a set by pulling off an ace with every one of your serves. Using **Ⓞ** for a powerful hit is a useful technique. Also, you might like to move your player to the edge of the court and attempt a serve right across to the opposite end, giving your opponent little chance of even glimpsing the ball.



PLAYSTATION

**STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3**

■ Challenge: **Triple X**  
 "Hey! Listen to my challenge!" screams Rich from across the office. "I never read the instruction manuals for fighting games. I'm happy just to press **X** on the joystick and hope for a win. Works every time." Or does it? See if you can win three consecutive matches using only the D-pad and **X**. Oh, and you have to pick the character that looks most like you as well.



PC

**RAILROAD TYCOON 2**

■ Challenge: **Sandbox racing**  
 From the Options menu, set the game running in Sandbox mode. Now, using the editor tools, create two rows of cities about 100 miles apart, three in each row. Build tracks between each pair of cities so you have three railroads running parallel across the landscape. Now buy three trains – no carriages – and start them all at the same time in the row on the left. Go! Which train reaches the "finishing line" first?



PC

**DELTA FORCE**

■ Challenge: **Run, rabbit, run**  
 Sneak-'em-up undercover adventures are all about stealthy movement, hiding in the hills and taking your opponents out with a sniper rifle. But we think "camping" is a darn ungentlemanly way to play. This challenge requires you to toss all that snooping aside and run through *Delta Force* as fast as you can. It's time that counts: a good machine gun is recommended in place of that sniper's kit.



PC

**EXPENDABLE**

■ Challenge: **Gun control laws**  
 As with many classic arcade shooters, the weapons available for pick-up in *Expendable* are plentiful. This challenge will prove that huge amounts of firepower aren't needed: you have to play through – either alone or with a mate as the second soldier – with the basic gun. No extras, not even grenades. Think before you pile into each wave of villains, and look for cover from the end-of-level bosses



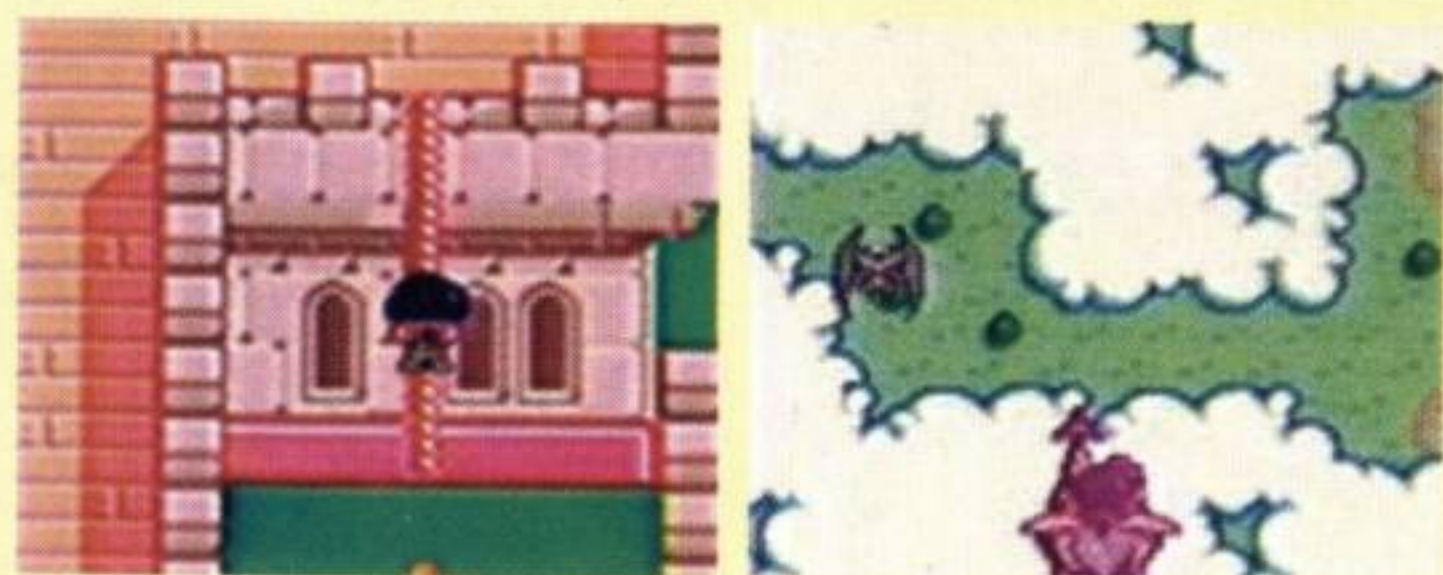
PC

**SIMCITY 2000**

■ Challenge: **Rush hour**  
 Start by building a really huge city or, better yet, importing one of the sample ones. Now take a good look around to size up where all the public transport systems are. Start your stopwatch. Try to cause as many plane and train crashes as you can in ten minutes, but without using the Disasters menu. Your best plan is to erect tall buildings next to airports, and to demolish one end of a bridge just as a train goes across it.

GAME BOY

**QUEST FOR CAMELOT**

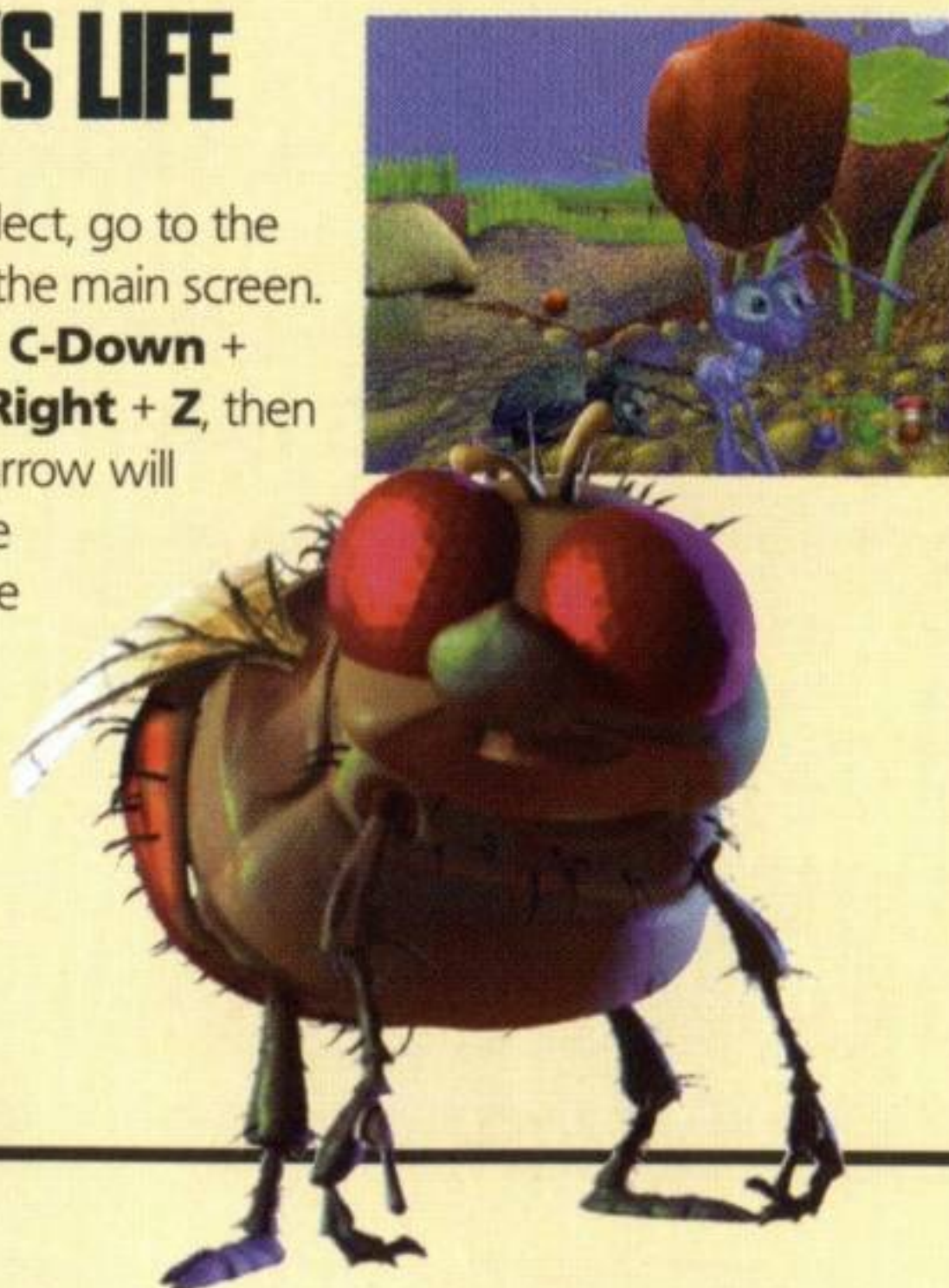


■ Provided you have at least 30 jewels, do the following when you've only got one heart left and are near a save point: save the game, restart, load. You'll be awarded a full complement of hearts.

NINTENDO 64

**A BUG'S LIFE**

■ To level select, go to the ant hill from the main screen. Hold **C-Up + C-Down + C-Left + C-Right + Z**, then press **R**. An arrow will appear at the bottom of the screen. This caters for all your cheating needs.



**CLOCKING OFF**

If Kick Ass was a cow, then it'd have had to be a really big cow (like a pregnant Fresian, except Fresians aren't particularly big, so perhaps like one of those big hairy cows you get in zoos) in order to have been stuffed to the udders with so many great tips. We'll be chewing grass and falling asleep standing up to bring you some more tips next month. See you there. Moo.

**Arcade**

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**CARD WARS!**

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BREAKNECK ■ **AND MORE - TURN TO PAGE 79!**

**WORLD EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!**

# OUTCAST

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**TIPPED!**  
The Phantom Menace  
Baldur's Gate: TOSC  
Aliens vs Predator



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September 1999



# A Review

## The Ultimate Game Buyer's Guide

PAGE 72

# V-RALLY 2

### STAY ON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW

## INSIDE...

- Silent Hill
- Kingpin
- Capcom Generations
- Dungeon Keeper 2
- F1 World Grand Prix II
- FA Manager
- Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time
- Outcast
- Discworld Noir
- Breakneck
- Austin Powers: Operation Trivia
- Malkari
- Quake II

**PLUS!** VIDEOS/BOOKS/MUSIC/COMICS/INTERNET/TOYS/BOARD GAMES/GAME ACCESSORIES/FILMS/DVD/GADGETS

#### 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.

**43**  
GAMES  
REVIEWED!

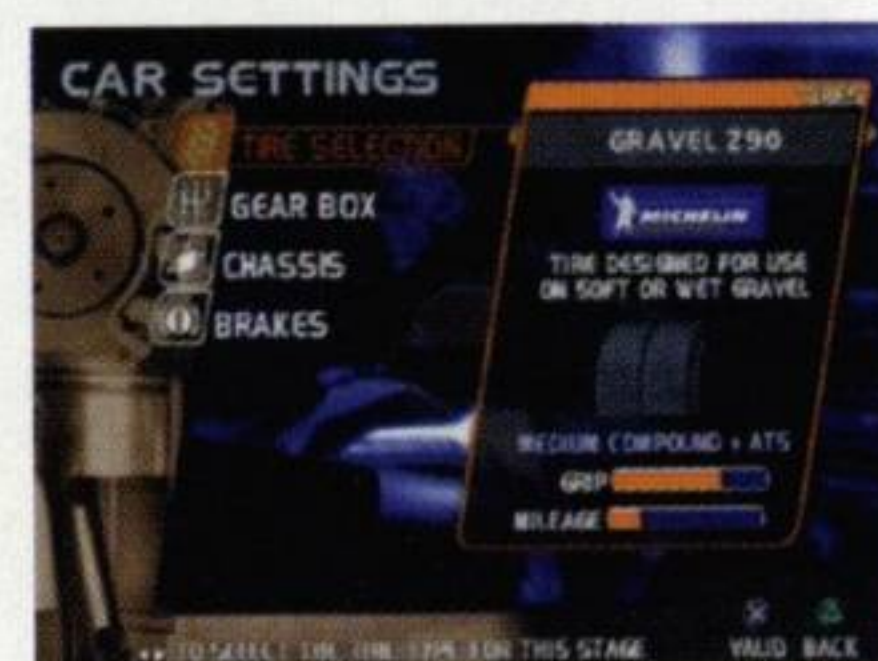
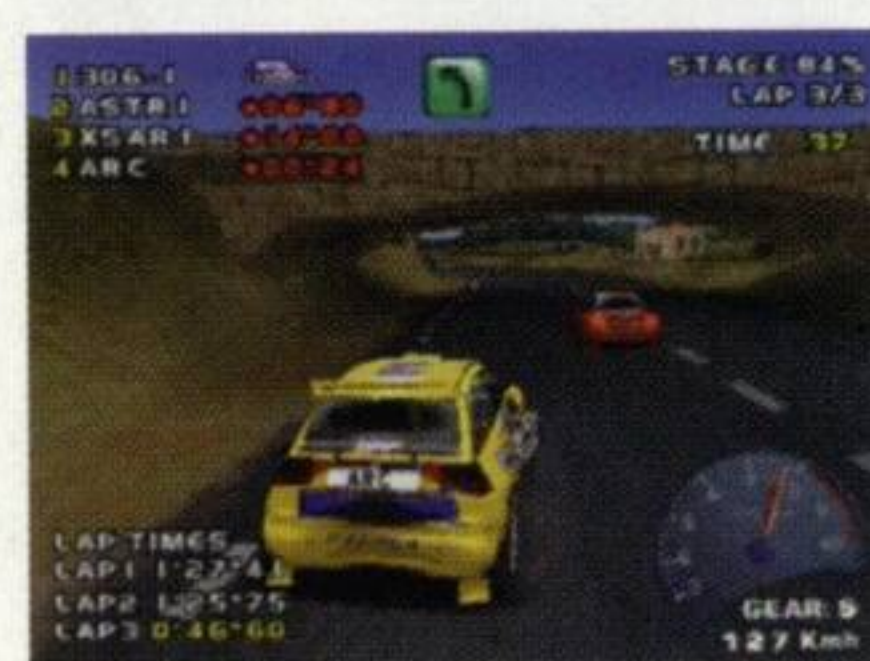


## DRIVING FORCE

### RALLY SIM TAKES REALISM TO THE NEXT STAGE



■ This is an in-game shot! Actually, that's



■ Presentation is slick throughout the game. Heck, even the hardcore driving sim Option screens look good.

## V-Rally 2

- Publisher: **Infogrames** ■ Developer: **Eden Studios**
- Price: **£45** ■ Release date: **out now** ■ Players: **1-4**
- Extras: **Memory card, analog compatibility**

**Mirror, signal, manoeuvre, finish last. Here's an examiner who hates nervous drivers.**

What if Han Solo had been a rally driver rather than a space pilot? (Specious *Star Wars* reference ahoy!) He would have said to Luke: "Rally driving ain't like dusting crops, boy! Without precise calculations, we could drive right through a bush or bounce too close to a fencepost and that'd end our trip real quick, wouldn't it?" And he'd be right. As *V-Rally* showed, rallying is a rough, tough challenge, and this sequel has managed to capture its charms even more seductively.

Here are the facts and figures. The 16 cars at the start of the game are split into three classes, namely World Rally cars, 2 litre kit cars and 1.6 litre kit cars. The first lot are the

fastest and meanest, comprising all the real-life rally stars – the Lancer, the Impreza, the Focus and the Skoda Octavia (stop laughing at the back). The rest, being more manageable, are perhaps a better way to get into the game. Finally, there are ten bonus cars which you can unlock by winning the various championships on offer. This is an eclectic bunch consisting of such classics as the Renault 8 Gordini and the Lancia Stratos, as well as other fun oddities.

What do these babies feel like to drive? Well, the short answer is "different". While the tiny Citroen Saxo is as skittish and squirmy as a kitten, the Mitsubishi Lancer is a tougher, sturdier ride – less likely to flip out at the least provocation. All the cars, however, require handling with respect and understanding. More so than in *Colin McRae*, the physics engine is thrillingly hyper-reactive – the cars often rock and swerve for ages after you clip an object – so you can't slam them around the place like dodgemen. You need to practise pinpoint control over the brake and accelerator; you need to stop the back spinning out on every corner; you need to drive bloody well.

Matching the hard realism of the driving experience is a series of gruelling gameplay options. Arcade Mode is split into three levels (1,2 and Expert). Each level comprises several races, and you have to make the checkpoints within a set time or it's Game Over. Trophy and Championship are similar in that both feature European, World and then Expert Competitions (again, each level consists of several races). Championship is the most sim-like of the three modes. Here you race entirely against the clock, and between each stage you have to tune your car and set to work repairing any damage you may have incurred in your previous race.



■ Get your motor running, head out on the highway.





■ Car variety is impressive, from the classic Gordini (above) to the modest Corolla (right).

What you get, then, is a gruelling test of endurance and ability – much like the sport itself. And to test that ability and endurance to the max, there are 12 countries to race through, each offering their own particular hazards. You get Sweden with its skiddy snow-covered roads (fantastic fun), the bumpy mud tracks of Finland and England with its driving rain (how's that for realism?). Some of the more exotic locations would have Judith Chalmers reaching for her *Wish You Were Here?* book of breathless hyperbole: Indonesia with its distant mountains and dark, hut-lined forests; Australia with its baked-red Outback; Argentina with its rocky deserts.

They're all beautifully realised, but what's important is that each offers different road surfaces and weather conditions. Come wet asphalt, dry gravel or snowy mud, you've got to be prepared. Before each race, it's essential that you study the prevailing conditions and make suitable alterations to your tyres, suspension and brakes. However, even when you think you've got this sussed, you're not in the clear. Danger lurks everywhere. For instance, Portugal's tracks tend to be lined with deep ditches ("Arrgh! My car has disappeared down a hole!"), while one or two of the vertiginous Italian and Spanish circuits are narrower than a supermodel's waist. This means you constantly have to modify your driving technique and remain on the lookout for roadside hazards as well as other drivers. It's a total experience, a real immersive trip.

And heck, if you don't like the circuits, design your own. *V-Rally 2* comes with an easy-to-use editor that'll have you belting out hard-as-hell tracks in no time – all of which you can save to memory card. A fantastic little feature.

If there's a problem with *V-Rally 2*, it's the sheer difficulty

### ↑ Uppers & Downers

- Accelerate**
- Great cars and top circuits
  - 4-player option
  - Track editor
- Brake**
- Tough handling
  - Overactive physics



of the driving. *Colin McRae* was realistic, but the handling was fun, free and easy: you felt you could push the cars around a bit and get away with driving a little loose and easy. In contrast, *V-Rally 2* demands that you focus completely and become anal about your driving – and this is hard work. The capricious AI doesn't help. At times, you'll make the slightest error and your opponents will whizz past (even though you've just come out of a corner that forced all four of you to slow to a snail's pace). But at least the enemy is interesting, which is more than can be said for most computer-controlled vehicles. When you see them up ahead, knocking at each other and careering off the road, you realise just how vicious they are. They'd sooner knock you into a tree than overtake, and they hate being overtaken.

*V-Rally 2*, then, is a real challenge. Completing the three competition modes (there's also a Time Attack in there, too) takes a while but, should you tire of the single-player experience, there are excellent two and four-player split-screen modes. In short, this is a consummate rally sim packed with gloriously engaging detail. No more, no less. ★★★★★

Keith Stuart

## WHAT YOU GET IS A GRUELLING TEST OF ENDURANCE AND ABILITY, MUCH LIKE THE SPORT ITSELF

### Or you could try...

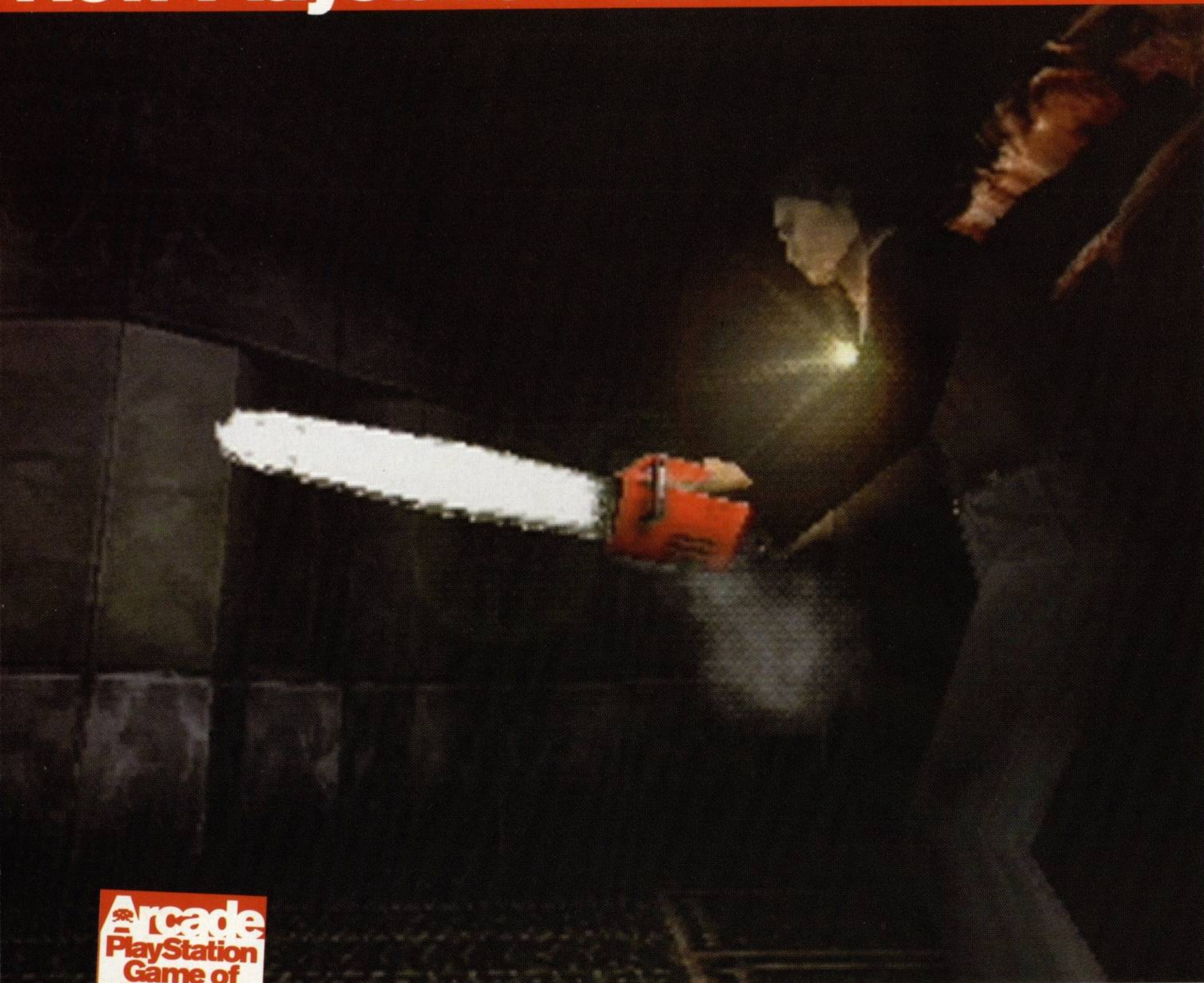
**Colin McRae Rally**  
Codemasters ★★★★★  
Realistic rally sim, based on time trialling competition. Fun handling saves the day.

**Ridge Racer Type 4**  
Namco ★★★★★  
Put off by all this talk of ultra-realism? Then opt for this wholly fabricated challenge.



■ You get to pit your skills against a wide variety of driving conditions, from pitch darkness to slippery snow.





■ With such murky levels you need a dependable weapon by your side. We recommend the chainsaw. It's not subtle but proves ideal for fending off the devil's own dogs.

**Arcade**  
PlayStation  
Game of  
the Month

# SILENT BUT VIOLENT

## THERE'S TROUBLE BREWING IN THE CITY



### ↑ Uppers & Downers

#### Dead good

- It's one sick puppy
- Massive amount to explore
- The vicious swoosh of handheld weapons

#### Dead from the neck up

- Several later puzzles are illogical
- Main character doesn't show wounding effects...
- ...and clip-clops like a pantomime horse

## Silent Hill

■ Publisher: **Konami** ■ Developer: **KCET** ■ Players: **1**  
■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Price: **£39.99** ■ Requires: **memory card, Dual Shock-compatible**

**One more reason to sweat profusely at night, here's a whole world of gratuitous mutilation, bad trips and brow-furrowing exploration on one disc. Would you kindly leave that light switch alone, please!**

If you've already had the pleasure of sampling the American version of *Silent Hill*, you'll remember the babies. We're not talking about yer generally pleasant strain of regular rugrat here – but rather some mewling psycho-stumpies who want to knife you into oblivion. Slap in the PAL version of *Silent Hill*, on the other hand, and you'll notice their absence in favour of comparative razor-clawed teddy bears with only half the demented appeal. According to Konami, their withdrawal from this "survival horror" newbie was because the company intended the characters to resemble alien "grays", and not

homicidal newborns – which is one controversy the company wants little to do with, thank you very much.

The point is that if you abhor games censorship and are thrown off by this pointless early tweak, you might be tempted to tune out and toddle along to hammer down Konami's door for being such soft conservative shites. Yet you'd be acting a tad prematurely because within this sublime splatter epic there are far more grim things that have avoided the virtual scissors.

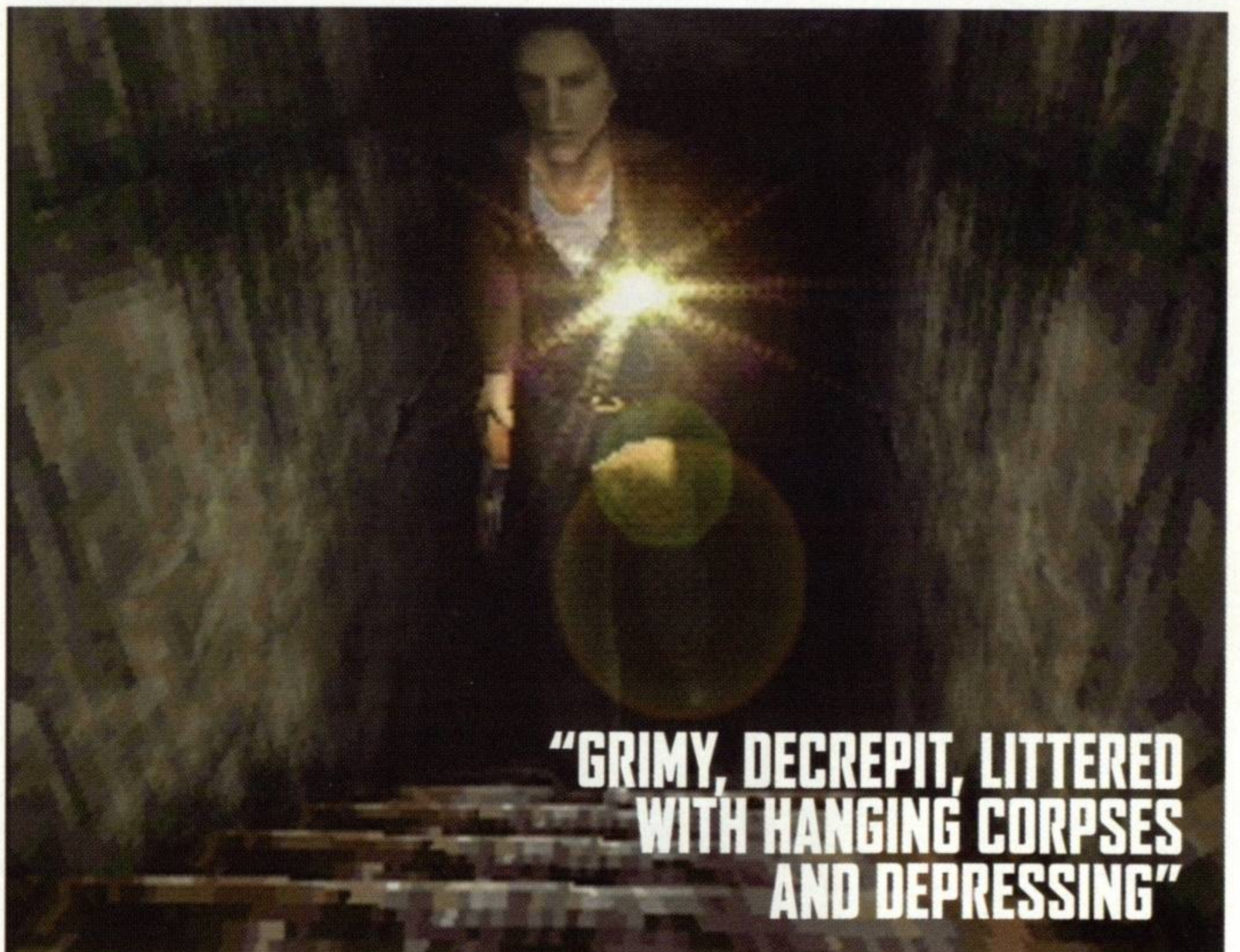
For one, the opportunity to take a pickaxe to the skull of a hunchbacked nurse. Plus, stomping on her head as she writhes in her final death throes. Then there's the general environment of the game: grimy, decrepit, littered with hanging corpses and depressing enough to make you throw up a noose – all in splendiferous 3D. Make no mistake, this is chillingly vivid.

"It's another blimmin' *Resident Evil* clone!" was the obvious accusation levelled at *Silent Hill*. And in the respect of bolting around amid mega-tense horror atmos, not knowing what's going to slither out of the darkness next, this is a fair summation. Ditto for the way in which weapons and inventories are implemented, and the puzzle-solving mechanics used to unlock new areas and suchlike.





■ **Giant maggot boss!** Just when you thought *Resident Evil* had included every fear and phobia from huge spiders to killer wasps, *Silent Hill* manages to surprise with this mega larvae. Shame it's so easily dispatched with the rifle.



**"GRIMY, DECREPIT, LITTERED WITH HANGING CORPSES AND DEPRESSING"**



■ **With large swathes of the game played by flickering torchlight, *Silent Hill* will give you the Fear. You're never sure what's going to leap from the shadows next.**

Unlike its predecessor though, *Silent Hill* feels much more like a seamless cityscape – as opposed to a few exceptional scenarios glued together. This makes for a great rolling plot as you, Harry Mason, first arrive unceremoniously in the town via a jeep crash. To make things worse, your daughter is kidnapped by some occult nutter who's turned the place into some great freakoid menagerie, and you must fart around getting her back. Even incidental characters manage to unsettle you as they burble and gibber through constructively dialogued cut-scenes.

Throughout your twisted travels there are loads of shops, bars, seaside properties and tourist spots to visit – several of which carry bonus goodies such as gun shells (for that kick-arse hunting rifle, perhaps). Many more establishments are marked on the in-game maps that, unfortunately, cannot be visited. But this is compensated by Harry's continual lapses into nightmarish unconsciousness: each time he awakens from keeling over in key areas, the mood and look of the environments change and go progressively more apeshit, doubling – nay, trebling – the gameplay. In one dimension at the school laboratory, he'll be carefully pouring acid over a preserved hand to free a gold medallion from its clutches; in the next, he might be furiously clubbing a gang of the aforementioned slasher teddies in that very same room.

As deliciously schizo as this gets, there are also a few minor irritations that might drive you mad for all the wrong

reasons. Nearly all of the bosses are too easy to kill, the spiny weapon-aiming "camera" is woefully inadequate when you're being rushed by multiple pterodactyls and hellhounds, and the pocket radio that emits static for detecting nearby nasties drills into your brain after a while. Similarly, you can't help thinking that the fact that the fog's at Spandau Ballet video levels most of the time is at least partly down to technical limitations as well as to build atmosphere.

Still, there's so much madness to deal with on the *Hill*, that you'll be more concerned about watching your back and wondering what's coming around the next corner. With multiple endings guaranteed, dependant on certain actions – like, should you give the lifesaving antitoxin to the infested lady cop, or just shoot her and scrub her from the game? – you'll be returning to get scared witless time after time. And us? We'll be back after we've scrubbed these, er, mysterious stubborn stains out of our kecks. ★★★★★

**Mark Greenway**

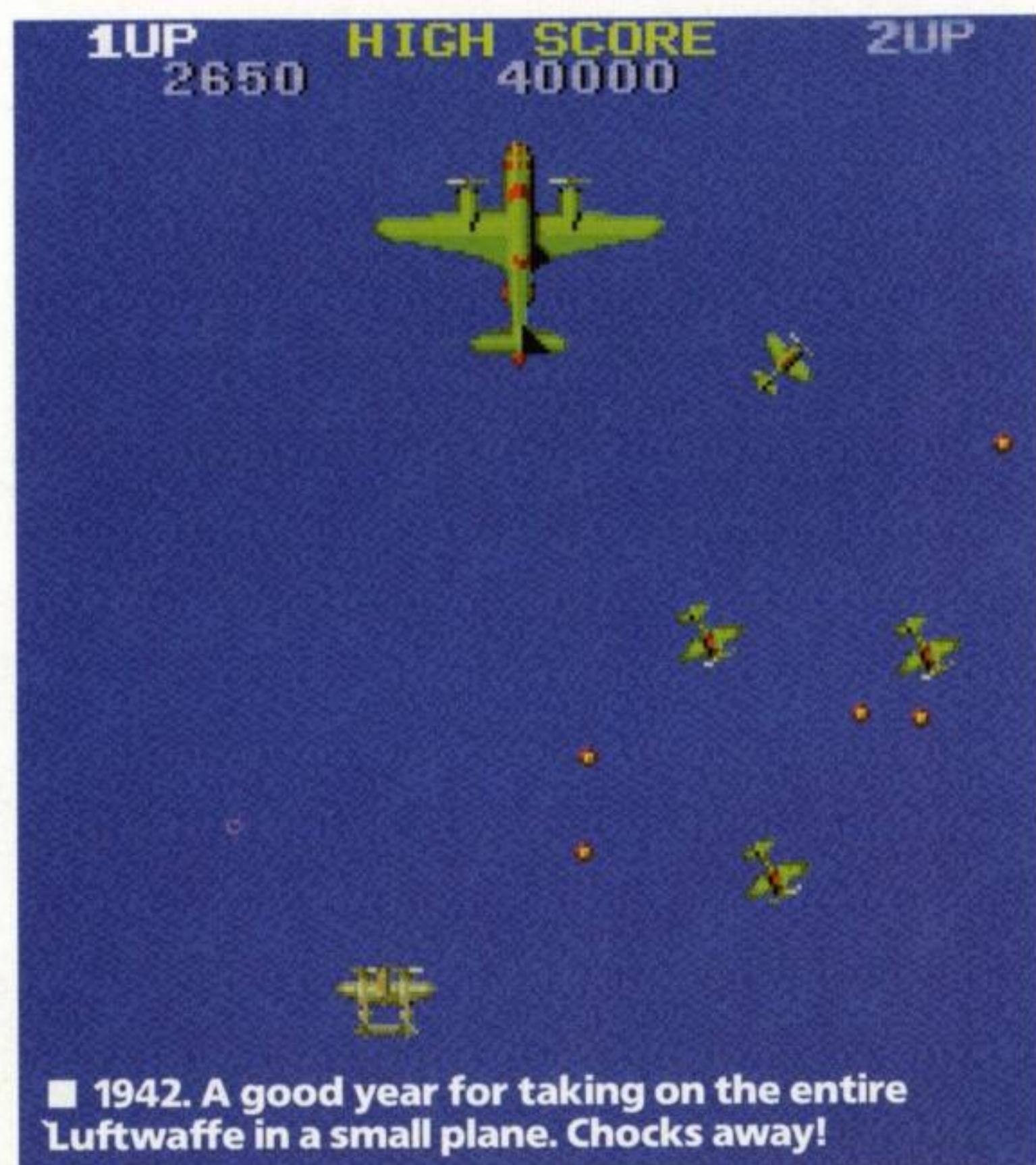
**Or you could try...**

**Resident Evil 2**  
Capcom ★★★★★  
The daddy of survival horror. Still unequalled for zombie limb removal.

**Nightmare Creatures**  
Sony ★★  
Ruck around old Lahndanahn with werewolves/Jack the Ripper types.







■ 1942. A good year for taking on the entire Luftwaffe in a small plane. Chocks away!



# GENERATION EXCELLENT

## NO SLACKING AS CAPCOM RAIDS THE ARCADE VAULTS

**↑ Uppers & Downers**

**1-Ups**

- Ghoul's'n'Ghosts
- Incredibly playable games
- Tremendous value
- Commando's grenades...
- Variety of titles

**1-Downs**

- The particularly "old" games
- Some repetition

## Capcom Generations

■ Publisher: **Virgin** ■ Developer: **Capcom** ■ Price: **£40**  
 ■ Release Date: **July** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Extras: **memory card**

**An incredible five-year, four-CD ROM voyage down the delightfully long lane they call Memory...**

**A**ll hail Capcom, true king of the ageing coin-op. And all hail *Capcom Generations*, the ultimate trip into that 10p-a-throw arcade of yesteryear.

While Namco may feel entitled to crow about its arcade heritage, you shouldn't forget that for every *Pac Man* there's a *Tower of Druaga*. Capcom, on the other hand, has an arcade pedigree worthy of any "Best of Breed" award and, while *Generations* is a reminder of the firm's shaky beginnings, the majority of these 13 games still bear up to scrutiny today.

Realising that punters care little for the earliest arrivals, Capcom has cherry-picked a handful of titles from its impressive CV, throwing together a superb cross-section of arcade genius in one stunning four-

CD set. Only one disc – featuring, inevitably, *Exed Exes* and *SonSon* – lets the side down, but the rest are pure gold.

In this potted history, *Super Joe Commando*, *Sir Arthur Knight* and the "Chocks away!" heroes of *1942* and *1943* are all present and correct. Not only do these gaming veterans' debuts get an airing, but in addition to the likes of *Ghouls'n'Goblins* and *Commando*, all the related follow-ups and pseudo-sequels are bunged in for good measure. Thus, also along for the ride are: *Sir Arthur's Super* and *Normal Ghouls'n'Ghosts* adventures; *MERCS*, the loose follow-up to *Commando*; and more dog-fighting (in *1942*, *1943* and *1943 Kai*) than took place during the whole of World War Two.

This is the beauty of *Capcom Generations*. Whereas other retro packs will bundle five games out of which maybe two are shining stars, Capcom has upped the ante by including at least seven excellent games, not to mention

considerably fewer weak links. It's not so much a stroll down memory lane as a full-on street party.

What's also apparent is how well-produced the assorted offerings are. Whether it's the jungle climes of *Commando* or *MERCS*, or the graveyards of *Ghouls'n'Goblins*, each game features levels that are perfectly plotted and implemented. Such were the limitations of technology at the time that every monster, enemy ship and hazard is there for a reason: the levels are tighter than a shark's arse at 50,000 fathoms. Playing *Super Ghouls'n'Ghosts* is likely to necessitate more timing and skill on the player's part than, say, the latest Gex efforts – which is as much a criticism of current releases as it is testament to this collection's quality.

Frankly, *Capcom Generations* is great – the videogame equivalent of watching a fine old blockbuster on a Sunday (*Back to the Future*, for example). It harks back to an era when gameplay was all, and yet the clarity of its graphics belies the passing years. By offering games that are fun and challenging, it's guaranteed to entertain. In fact, *Generations* is crying out for a sequel: believe it or not, this first slice of arcade history is but an aperitif compared to the rest of Capcom's back catalogue. ★★★★★ **Steve Merrett**

## GENERATIONS IS NOT SO MUCH A STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE AS A FULL-ON STREET PARTY



■ Back in the "good old days" all games looked like this.

**Or you could try...**

Namco Museum Volume 1  
 Namco ★★  
 The usual mix of the classics (*Pac Man*, *Gaggle*) and the best forgotten (*Toypop*).

Williams Arcade Hits  
 GT Interactive ★★★  
 Classic gold retro. Misty eyes and knackered thumbs with *Defender*, *Robotron* and *Joust*.

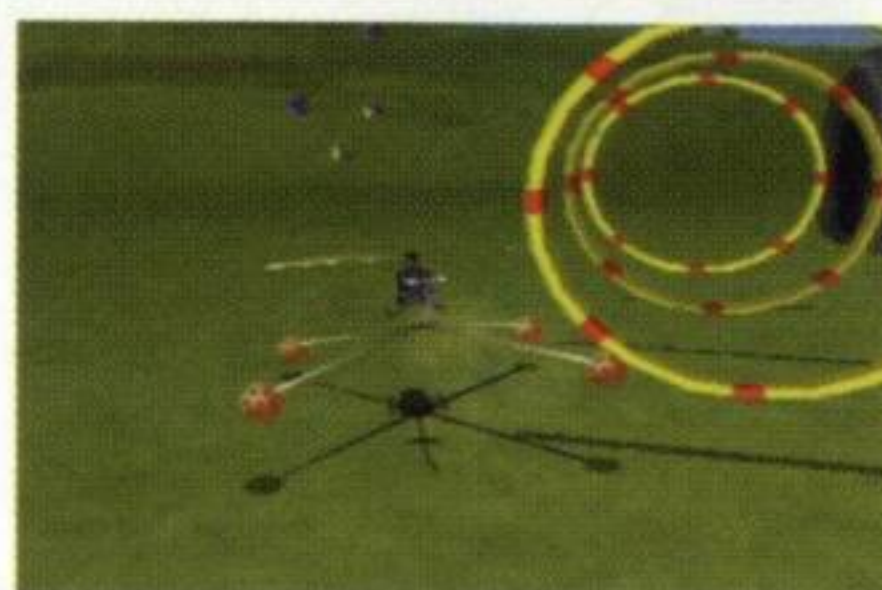


■ Sir Arthur Knight greatly enjoyed his first Glastonbury.





■ The rookie copter's fitted with some handy stabilisers.



# RADIOHEAD

## TAKE CONTROL OF THE SKIES

### RC Stuntcopter

■ Publisher: **Interplay** ■ Developer: **Shiny** ■ Price: **£40**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Extras:  
**memory card, analogue, Dual Shock-compatible**

**Shiny dusts off its "You don't have to be mad to work here..." sign with a helicopter game. That's a remote control helicopter game.**

**W**here most chopper-based games are bristling with guns and missiles as they try to pull off *Apocalypse Now!*, *RC Stuntcopter* contents itself with recreating the hobby of 40-year-old-men with too much money (because they still live at home with their parents); flying remote control helicopters. It's every bit as idiosyncratic as you'd expect from Shiny, the team behind the deranged *Earthworm Jim* and forthcoming prostitute-peddler *Messiah*.

*RC Stuntcopter* is also every bit as difficult as you'd imagine flying a real £4,000 miniature chopper to be. Despite an outwardly cartoony appearance, the flying physics feel realistic enough to have been modelled by a bearded Open University professor. The thumb sticks of the Dual Shock controller mimic the levers on a remote control box, with the left-hand one enabling you to climb and hover, the right-hand one tilting you so you can steer.

If only it was easy as it sounds. Even with a series of training missions showing you basic rotor skills, it'll take a good day's play before you stop banging around like a Daddy Long Legs.

In fact, the game's worth depends on how willing you are to grapple with the painfully precise controls. Each level is divided into five disciplines (hovering, a slalom

course, landing, flying through targets and shooting) that put a thumb-twitching emphasis on mastering your copter in flight. Time and again, you'll fail to amass enough points to qualify for the next stage, because you're flying too slowly, not landing smack in the middle of the target or – more embarrassingly – flailing into the scenery with rotor-snapping results. As if your initial ineptitude wasn't enough, there's also constant heckling from the unseen American commentator that, if he wasn't a voice on a CD, you would ask outside for a fight.

Master the delicate co-ordination of the two sticks, though, and it's surprising how much satisfaction you get from *RC*. There's a definite sense of achievement to be had powering your copter round a slalom course or nailing a perfect landing. It's a shame that your flight is limited to smallish areas that make up the different challenges and the Free Flight practise arenas, though. You'll never experience the joy of soaring through the blue yonder that you get on the N64's *Pilotwings*, for example.

Ultimately, this is unlike anything you've played on the PlayStation, which is a recommendation in itself. You'll have to work hard to avoid re-enacting *Airwolf* on Scrumpy, but this is worth a look, particularly if the thwap, thwap of mini-rotors appeals. ★★★ **Robin Alway**

#### ↑↓ Uppers & Downers

##### Airwolf

- It's unique
- Mastering controls gives a sense of achievement
- Very tidy looking

##### Flying Dog

- The commentator is a fool.
- Impossibly difficult to begin with
- Limited appeal

#### Or you could try...

**Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2**  
 Core ★★★  
 Primitive, but playable, chopper-based blaster.

**Ace Combat 2**  
 Namco ★★★  
 Reasonable-looking action flight sim, with plenty of shooting but little variety.



■ Come fly with me.



■ Advanced coptering.



### Chessmaster 2

■ Publisher: **Mindscape**  
 ■ Developer: **Starsphere Interactive** ■ Price: **£40**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now**  
 ■ Players: **2** ■ Requires: **memory card**

**The flash Grandmaster flexes his cerebellum once again. Let's rook! Sorry... Let's castle! No, that doesn't sound right either.**

■ Chess is one of those games you learn how to play as a kid, get thrashed regularly at by your Dad and never bother to play any more because it's too complex.

Electronic chess is no different, except it's not the pre-senile brain of your forebears doling out the punishment, in this case it's a wizened grey-haired philosopher known as the Chessmaster, and 95 of his mates. Mates that happen to include Gary Kasparov and Nigel Short.

All the requisite features are here; different board types, fancy pieces and exotic backgrounds – as many combinations of the same chequered theme as possible. You've also got the inherent irony of two-player chess on the PlayStation. Why not just make a board out of bits of coloured card, and whittle some pieces out of soapstone?

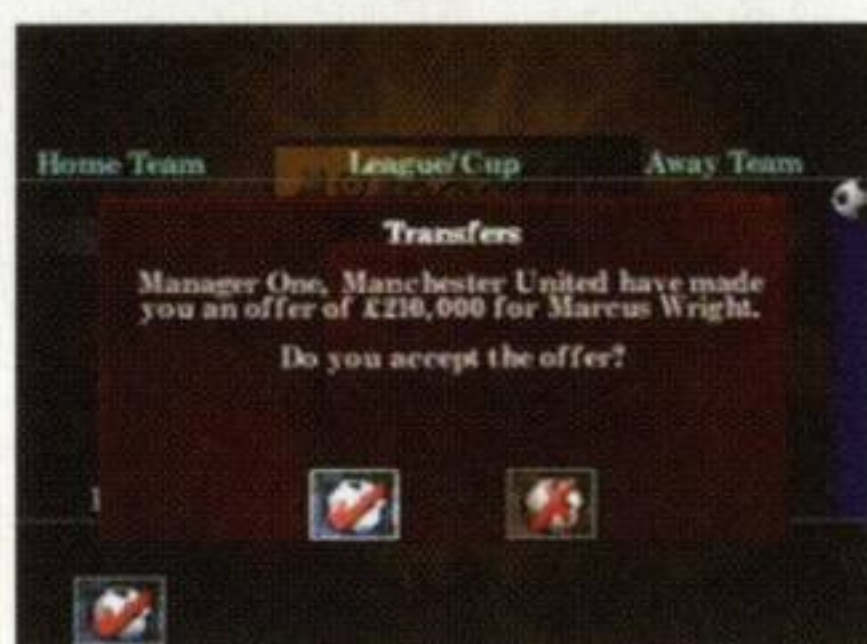
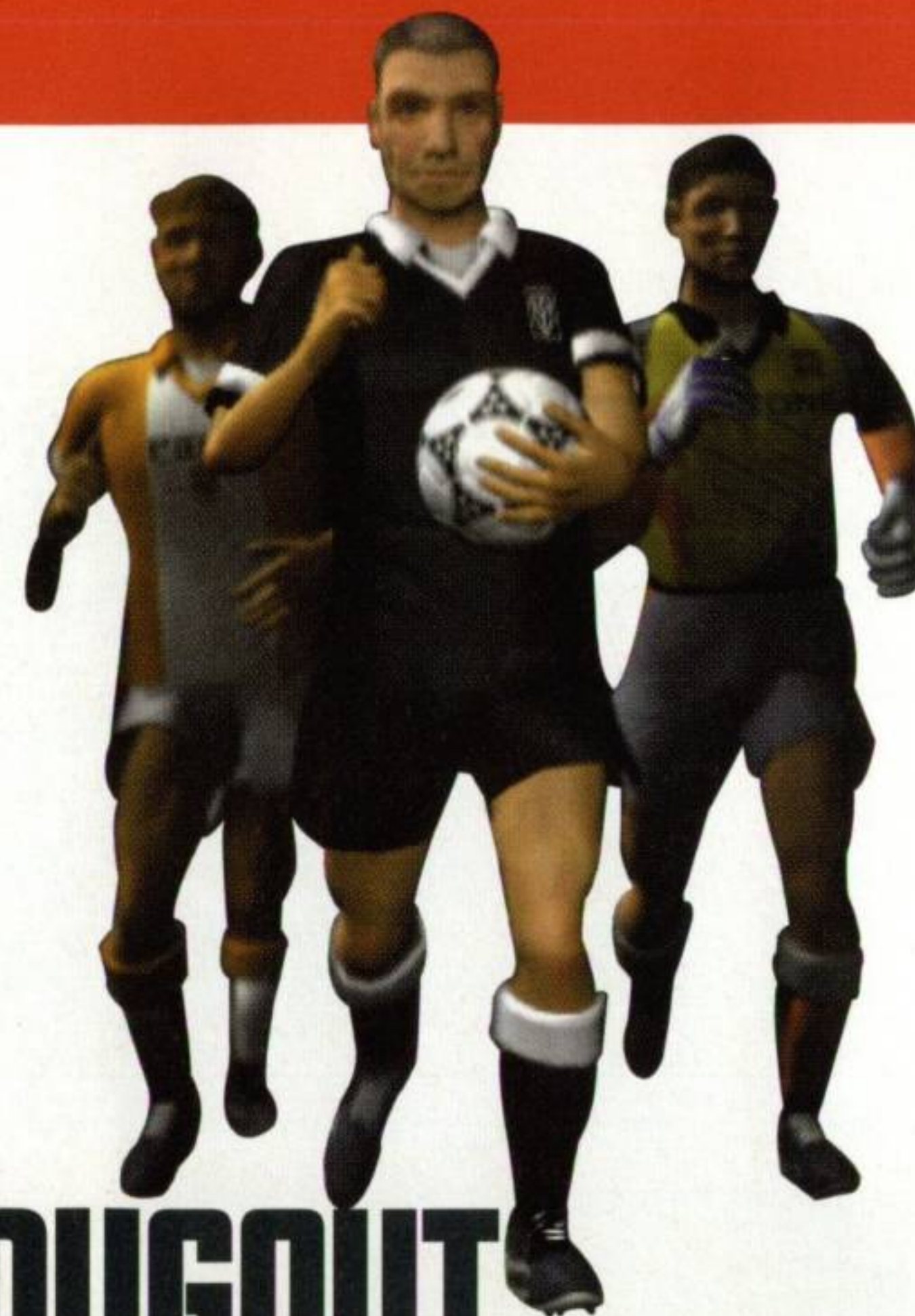
But what electronic Chess can give you is the chance to pit your wits against the great and the good from Chess's intelligensia. Do you *really* fancy your chances against Mr Karpov? No, of course not. Fortunately, you've got a selection of players across the logic spectrum to tinker around with, all of whom have their own international ranking, and some of whom are about as talented as your little sister. Which is good. The lower the ranking, the better your chances of winning, and as you build up points in simulated ranking games, so the quality of the opposition improves. Some of these guys are frighteningly good, but the key point to make about *Chessmaster 2* is that most of the players aren't much cop. You'll be sitting at the screen wondering why they've made such a daft move, but because it's the type of move you'd make on a bad day, you believe you're actually playing against a real person.

Even if Chess isn't your bag, you can trawl *The Times* for its chess competition, set up the pieces on your PlayStation, get the machine to do the hard work and then send in your solution for a bit of monetary remuneration. You'll be quids in after a few weeks. ★★★ **Dan Mayers**

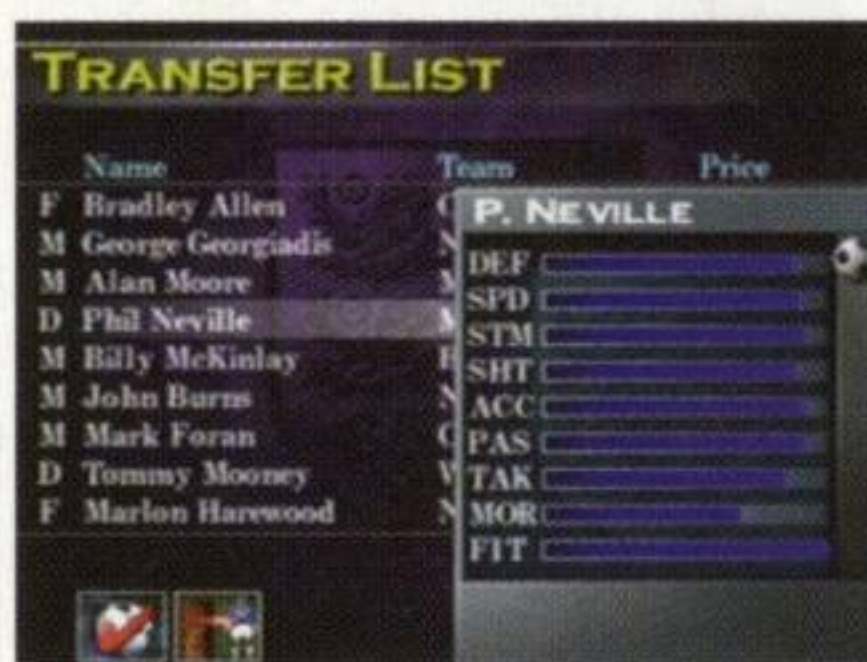


# SWEET FA

## TIME TO TAKE YOUR SEAT IN THE DUGOUT



Numbers fans will love this game like no other.



## FA Manager

- Publisher: **Eidos** ■ Developer: **Krisalis** ■ Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **memory card**

**Eidos' latest camel-coated concoction ropes in the might of the FA. So is the upshot a licence to print money or a licence to kill?**

With the experience of *Championship Manager* and the obvious clout of the Football Association behind the company's efforts, you'd expect Eidos to have produced a game so utterly stunning, so unbelievably perfect, that peace would reign throughout the world. But, alas, the twisted thug that is Mr Common Sense is always lurking around to deliver a fatal blow for the cause of reality.

So what has happened is that Krisalis has created a simplistic game engine (aiming to gain mass appeal, perhaps) and rather than concentrate on the options people really need, it would appear the company has shoe-horned in a load of unnecessary stuff.

For example, you can alter your "Team Bonus Incentives", but you have no control at all over your team's finances. You're denied the pleasures of fixing ticket prices, selling advertising space and raking in money from pie stalls, and you can only sit and watch your bank balance rise or fall. Equally, although *FA Manager* is an FA-licensed game, it's hard to see the sense in wasting hours over a season (literally) watching the game slowly update every single cup, league and friendly match in every single league. There must be a point

to it all, but, for now, the logic of it all is less than evident. If you're hoping for some blessed relief from this in the game's menu system, then you're going to be disappointed. Navigating around it is easy enough, but to cancel any menu requires a marathon of button pressing, since the game sends you right back to the Start screen each time you try it. Even the most simple of requests ends up being ridiculously time-consuming.

There's a list of statistics for each player, but with the information presented in bars rather than percentages you end up squinting at the screen for a vague sign that might indicate the worth of the striker you're about to spend three and a half million quid on. Buying a player is made even more tricky because their ages aren't displayed – you're going to need a near encyclopaedic knowledge of the English leagues to have any real chance.

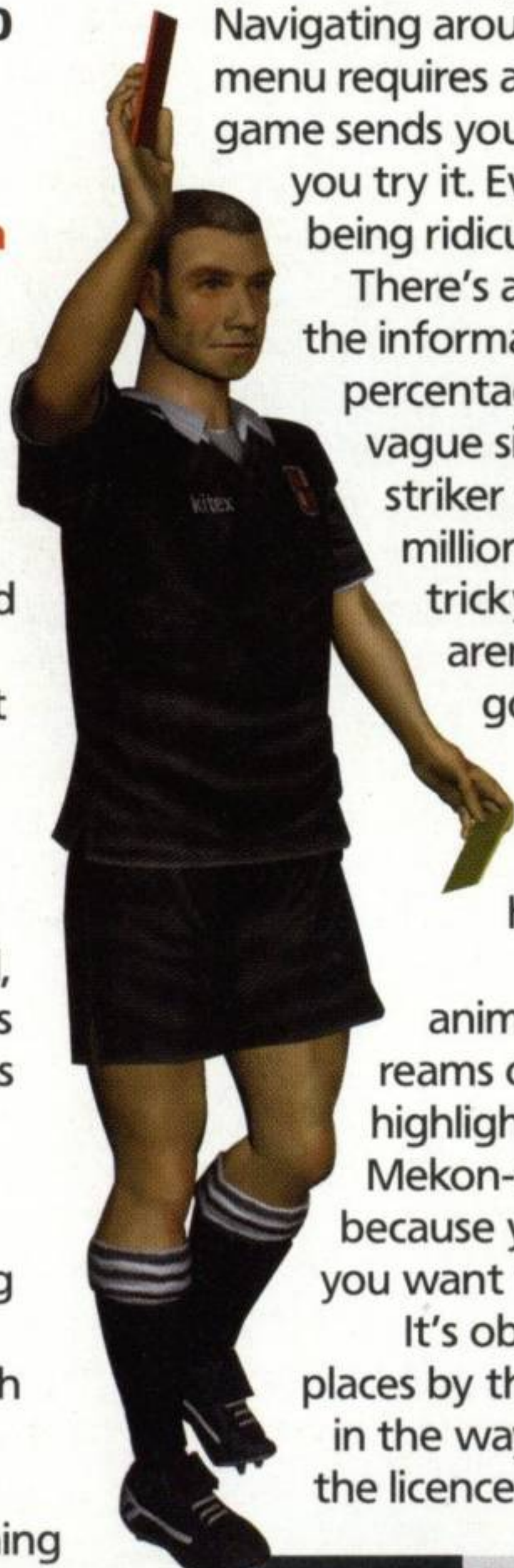
You get to enjoy the game via an animated mess towards the top of the screen as reams of statistics puncture your senses. The highlights are easy to follow, but you'll need a Mekon-sized brain if you want to bring on subs, because you can't bring up any stats on the players you want to add to the mix.

It's obvious that Eidos had its hands tied in certain places by the FA, but, unfortunately, there seems little in the way of plus points to be gained from having the licence in the first place. ★★

**Dean Mortlock**

### Uppers & Downers

- FA**
- Accurate wheeling and dealing, guvnor
  - Simple to ease in to
  - The licence surely won't harm sales
- Kickabout**
- Glaring omissions of simple common sense
  - Waiting ages for a game
  - Little financial control



Or you could try...

**Player Manager '98/'99**  
Infogrames ★★★  
How not to do football management. The clumsy menus render this a nightmare.

**Premier Manager '99**  
Gremlin ★★★★★  
Complex and masterful, the sensible choice.

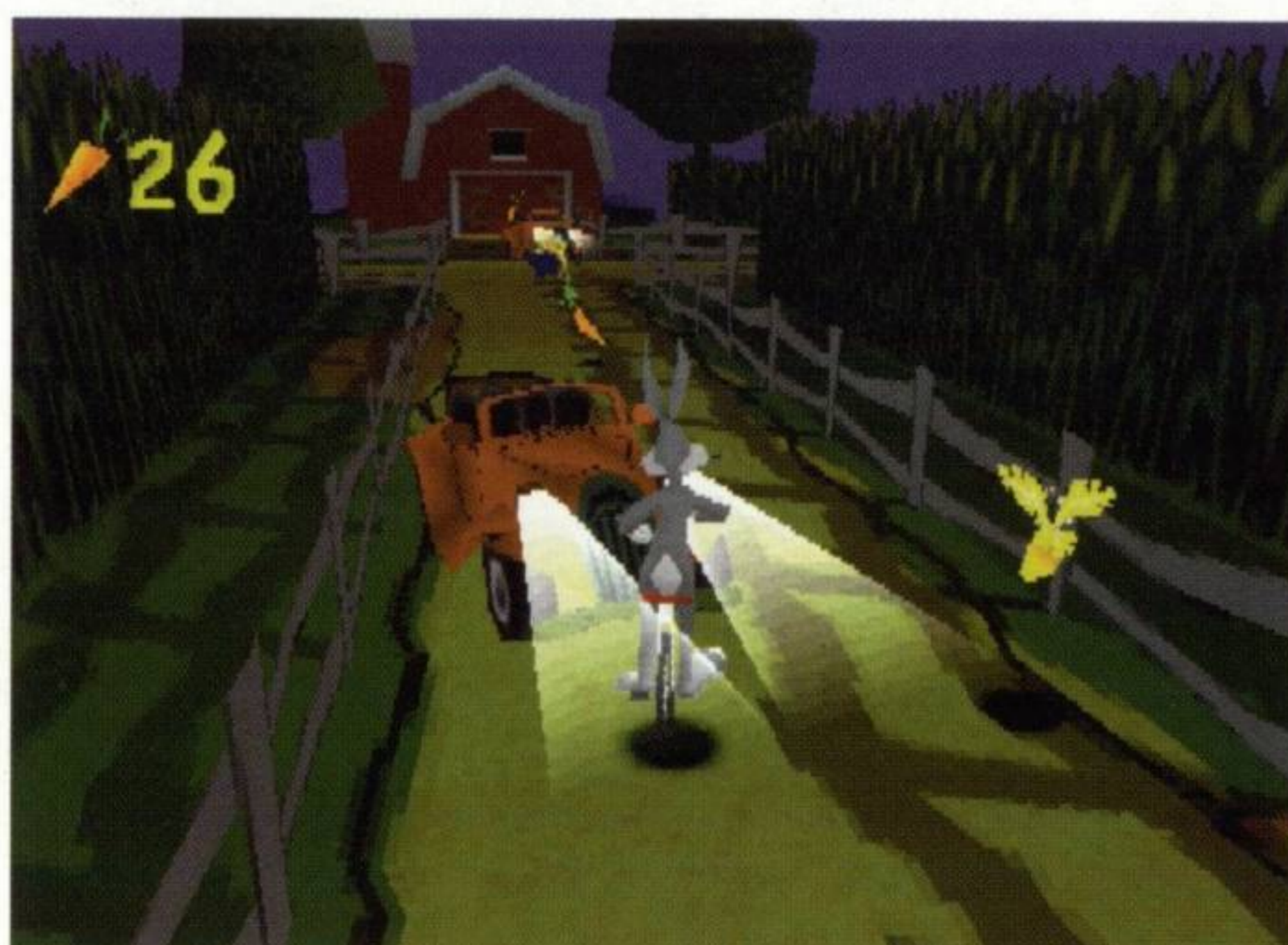


For added satisfaction, take control of Halifax and lead them to the Premiership.



# WABBIT WUN

## PLATFORM CRAZY CARTOON BUNNY FUN



## Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time

■ Publisher: **Infogrames** ■ Developer: **b'heivje(r)**  
 ■ Price: **£35** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**  
 ■ Extras: **memory card, Dual Shock-compatible**

**Infogrames drops Warner Bros brightest star into familiar platform territory...**

As soon as *Lost in Time's* oddly polygonal Bugs Bunny tunnels into a room and states "I knew I should have turned right at..." it's obvious that Infogrames has maximised the use of this excellent licence.

Unfortunately, good use of licence doesn't equate to a good game, and while Bugs valiantly struggles against the limitations of the 3D-platform genre, *Lost in Time* falls flat. A number of strong ideas vie for attention within the flawed framework, but are let down by an iffy camera system and hackneyed gameplay.

All credit to developer b'heivje(r) for trying something new, though. In a valiant attempt to escape the shackles of its platform locations, meat is added to the game's shaky bones with object-related puzzles. None are likely to worry Mensa's entry board, but the first few stages are perfect for introducing Bugs' jumps and attacking moves. They also show off some neat links to Bugs' cartoon heritage with OTT use of hammers, helicopter ears and a tiptoe move.

Bugs himself is viewed in the time-honoured third person and trailed by a floating camera system. This in itself

is fine, but as Bugs moves crates around, runs behind trees and generally explores the six worlds on offer, the camera displays an annoying inability to home in on the action. You're often presented with a view of a large item that Bugs is trying to move and can't therefore see what you're doing. This in turn has an adverse affect on certain puzzles – unfortunate, as they are the high points of the game.

While the assorted moves and puzzles do work to create a different take on the platform game, standard issue cartoon game routines conspire to drag *Lost in Time* into the realms of mediocrity. Even the time-travel plot is stale. Having inadvertently kick-started a time machine, Bugs finds himself looking for the golden carrots needed to take him into different time zones. Cliché after cliché is hammered home as those platform game stalwarts, the Medieval and Stone Age levels are trotted out again.

The feeling of *déjà vu* prevalent throughout *Lost in Time* even extends to the return of some key failings. While the level design is bright and colourful, an inevitable lack of resolution dumbs down the overall look of the game. Bugs and his supporting cast of Yosemite Sam, Marvin the Martian and Witch Hazel have all been transformed into polygonal forms; not entirely successfully. The overall look is not a complete disaster, but the sparsely populated worlds fail to capture the frenetic nature of the cartoons.

Frustratingly, there's a lot in *Lost in Time* to recommend – some of the puzzles are devious, the cameo appearances by Elmer Fudd and Yosemite Sam are inspired, and some of the levels are entertaining. Unfortunately, fundamental gripes such as twitchy cameras, routine content and a lack of pace far outweigh any positive aspects.

What's up Doc? Too much to mention, really. That's all, folks. ★★★

**Steve Merrett**

■ Moments of pure comic genius abound. Ten-ton weights drop from nowhere, Elmer Fudd is a hopeless shot and Yosemite Sam is excellent. As always.

### ↑ Uppers & Downers

- Warner Bros**
- Nice use of characters
  - Some puzzle elements work
- Moss Bros**
- Sparse levels
  - Twitchy, unhelpful cameras
  - You've seen it all before

## STANDARD ISSUE CARTOON GAME ROUTINES DRAG *LOST IN TIME* INTO THE REALMS OF MEDIOCRITY

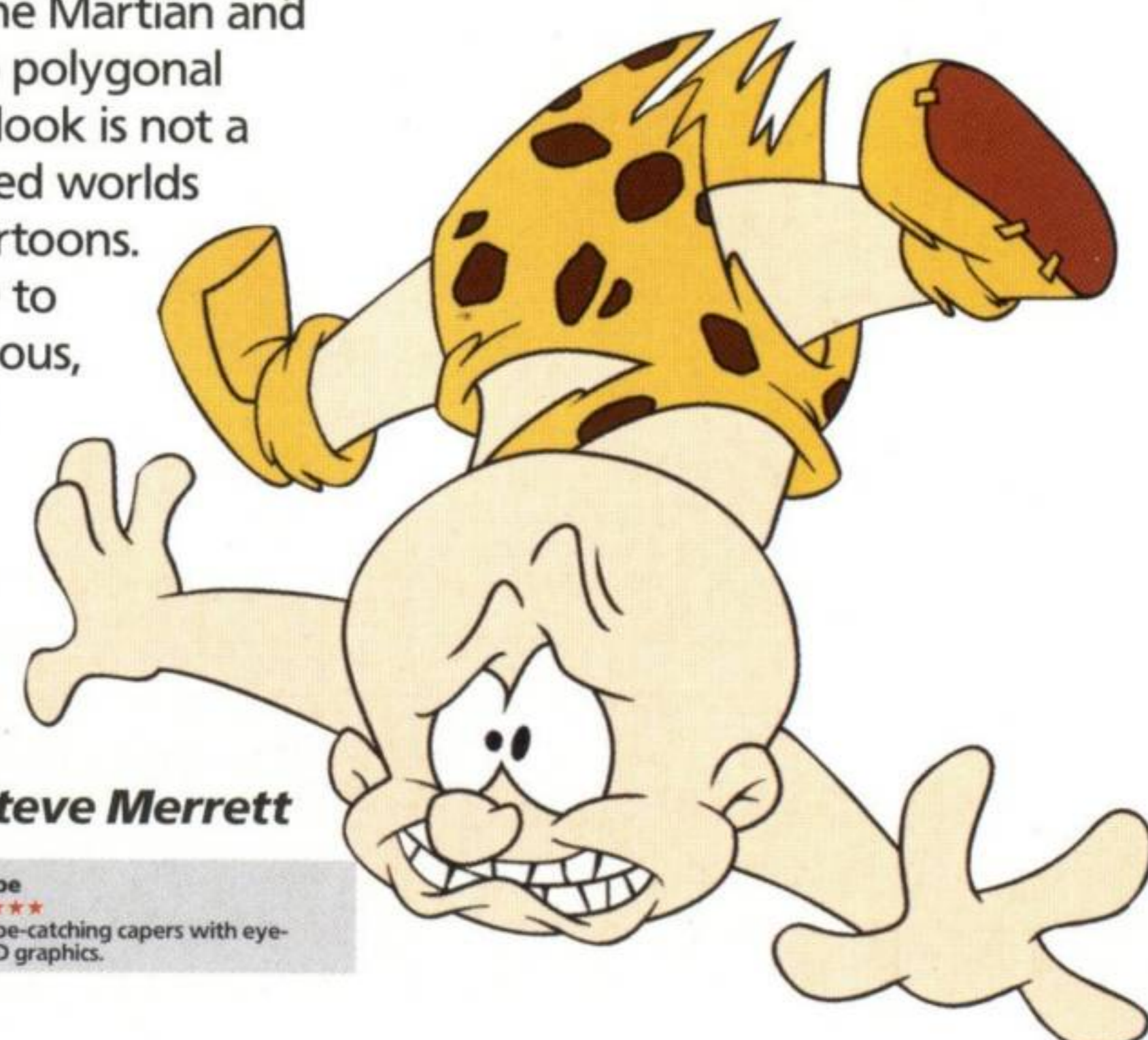


■ Bugs Bunny: not so much lost in time, as trapped in cliché.

### Or you could try...

**Croc 2**  
 Fox Interactive ★★★  
 More lacklustre 3D adventuring with the irritating green reptile.

**Ape Escape**  
 Sony ★★★★★  
 Comedy ape-catching capers with eye-popping 3D graphics.





# URBAN DECAY

## POP A CAP IN YO MOMMA'S ASS, BITCH



■ After weeks on the Slimfast plan, the strain of his diet was beginning to show.

■ The action is intense and bloody.



## Kingpin

■ Publisher: **Interplay** ■ Developer: **Xatrix** ■ Price: **£30**  
■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-8** ■ Requires:  
**P166, 32Mb RAM, 570Mb HD space, 4x CD-ROM, 3D  
accelerator card** ■ Extras: **P266**

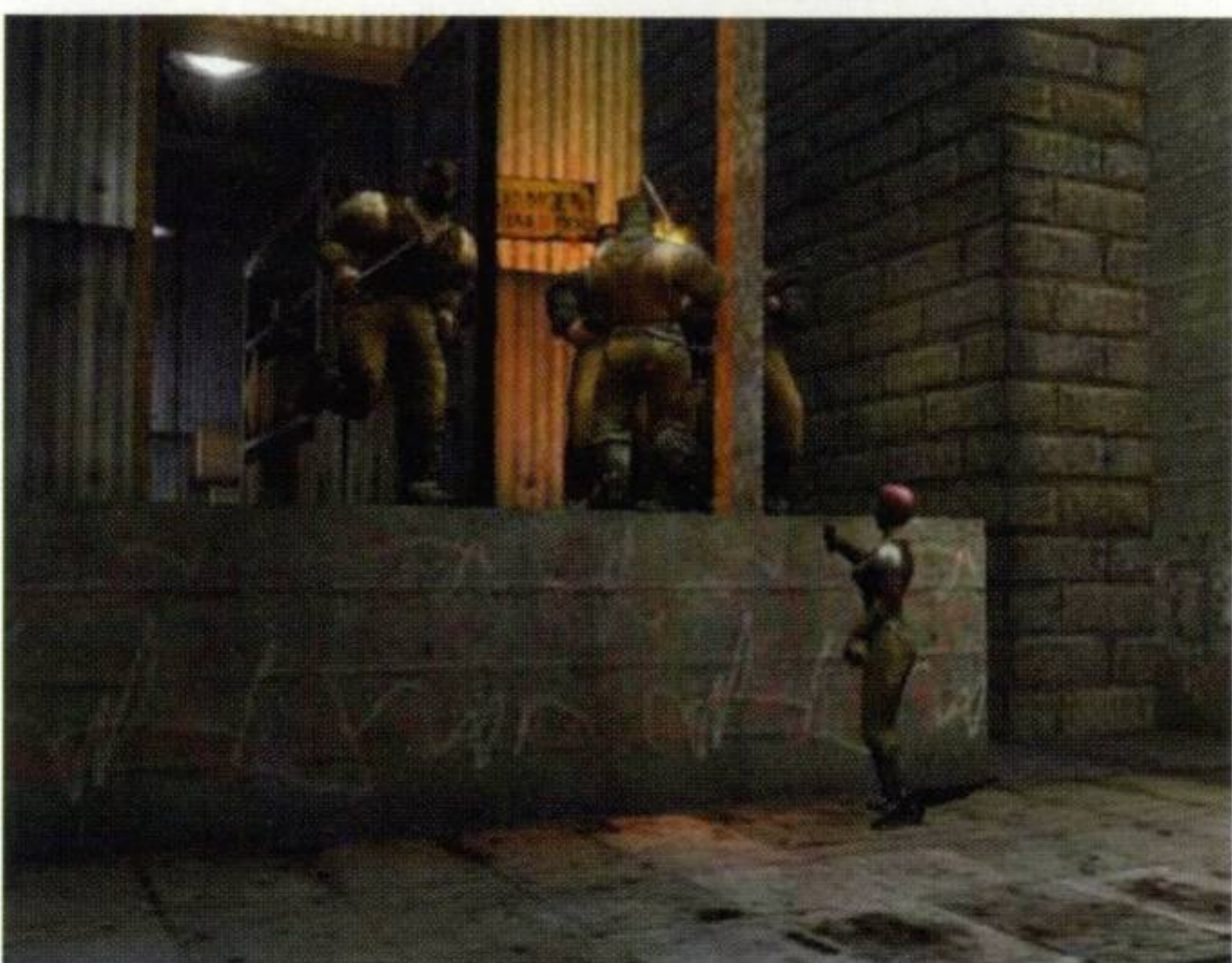
**Ultra-violent, ultra-sweary, retro-futuristic gangster romp. Meet the game that's more *Reservoir Dogs* than comedy bowling movie.**

**S** In the wake of the Littleton high school shooting, *Kingpin* developer Xatrix has taken every opportunity to stress that its game is intended for mature players only. Under no circumstances, it tells us, should it be played by anyone under the age of 18. This is a sophisticated product for sophisticated grown-ups, it says. It's a first person shoot-'em-up, so you expect a bit of violence – except that in *Kingpin*, if you shoot a bad guy (or an innocent bystander), or whack him/her over the head with a crowbar, the body part in question will blossom with bloody lesions. Hit them some more and their face will cave in. Drop them to the ground and you're free to take aim at body parts, eviscerating the corpse as you see fit. We're well-practiced serial killers, and even we were shocked.

Perhaps more controversial is *Kingpin's* use of language. There's a lot of interaction with non-player characters, and a fair number of plot-driving cut-scenes. During these, every other word of dialogue begins with "fu" and ends in "ck", "cking" or "cker". You'll also be informed that other players require "pussy". It's certainly no *Laura's Happy Adventure*.

The annoying thing about all this is that the violence and the swearing are the things most people will mention first when discussing the game. You know: rather like we just did. It can't be helped, though; we're just not used to such





adult elements in our games. Yet beneath its grisly, swearsy veneer, *Kingpin* is an excellent first-person shoot-'em-up, with the rare good fortune of originality.

The game begins with your character left for dead in an alleyway by your gangster rivals. Unlike in real life, where your first intention upon regaining consciousness would be to phone the police, in the crime-ridden universe of *Kingpin* you pick up a lead pipe, and set out to get even. Of course, taking down the toughs who roughed you up isn't going to be easy. You'll need weapons, and buddies. Weapons can be found or bought at the Pawn-O-Matic superstores that punctuate *Kingpin's* levels. Money to buy these weapons – which range from the usual shotgun, to a flamethrower – can be stolen from the bodies of victims. Muscle, however, can be hired from bars, where you'll also find specialists (such as safe-crackers), who'll join you for single missions. These gang-building elements, and the simple positive/negative conversational structure, elevate *Kingpin* above the average shooter, giving it an RPG-like feel. Albeit an RPG set in the grimmest, grittiest, pussiest urban unreality ever.

*Kingpin's* world is a big one. The levels download as you go *Half-Life*-style. However, they're also punctuated by the aforementioned cut-scenes, which usually lead to a change in architectural style. After playing through the first few levels, however, you'll need to go and have a bath. The filthy, litter-lined, rat-infested streets, populated by pimps and prostitutes, lead to an overload of badness in the brain. When the game progresses to better-lit locales (as you move up the criminal career ladder), it's almost a relief.

This is testament to *Kingpin's* graphics, which stretch the *Quake II* engine into arenas where *Half-Life* developer Valve

didn't dare venture. Xatrix, the team behind the game, performed similar miracles with the grossly underrated *Redneck Rampage*. The character textures are incredibly detailed, and though the people you meet have a tendency to wobble like humanoid waterbeds, they are, nevertheless, smoother and more rounded than anything seen thus far. Likewise, the detail of your surroundings is nothing short of awe-inspiring. Rusty corrugated sheeting propped up against rubble, bust-up ovens and fridges left in doorways, graffiti-covered walls... the realism and detail are astounding.

But all this scenery would've been for nothing if *Kingpin* was no fun to play. As it stands, the game achieves near-*Half-Life* levels of loveliness, lacking only that title's cohesiveness of plot and narrative. There are moments in the game where, by turns, you'll curse and giggle like an idiot. Imagine this: you're strutting down a street with your gang, weapons holstered. You come across a bunch of likely-looking meanies armed with lead pipes. You start giving them a bit of the old verbal. They cuss you back. Your gang pulls out its weapons. The meanies do a swift runner, and so you shoot their knees off. *Kingpin* is packed full of such moments. The non-player character AI is benchmark stuff: enemies will hunt you down, or leg it if they think they're in for a kicking.

Inevitably, the game includes a multi-player deathmatch mode (or "gangbang"), which is lovely in its own right, in a sort of my-gang-says-your-gang-dissed-my-bitch sort of way, but – as with *Half-Life* – the focus of *Kingpin* has to be the utterly immersive single-player experience it offers. And it's funting great, you cusk. ★★★★★

**Paul Rose**

## THE LITTER-LINED, RAT-INFESTED STREETS LEAD TO AN OVERLOAD OF BADNESS IN THE BRAIN

■ Meet this veritable rogue's gallery of toughs and tarts.

### ↑ Uppers & Downers

#### Mr Pink

- Unlike any other first-person shooter
- Stunning visuals
- Gritty Cypress Hill soundtrack

#### Mr Brown

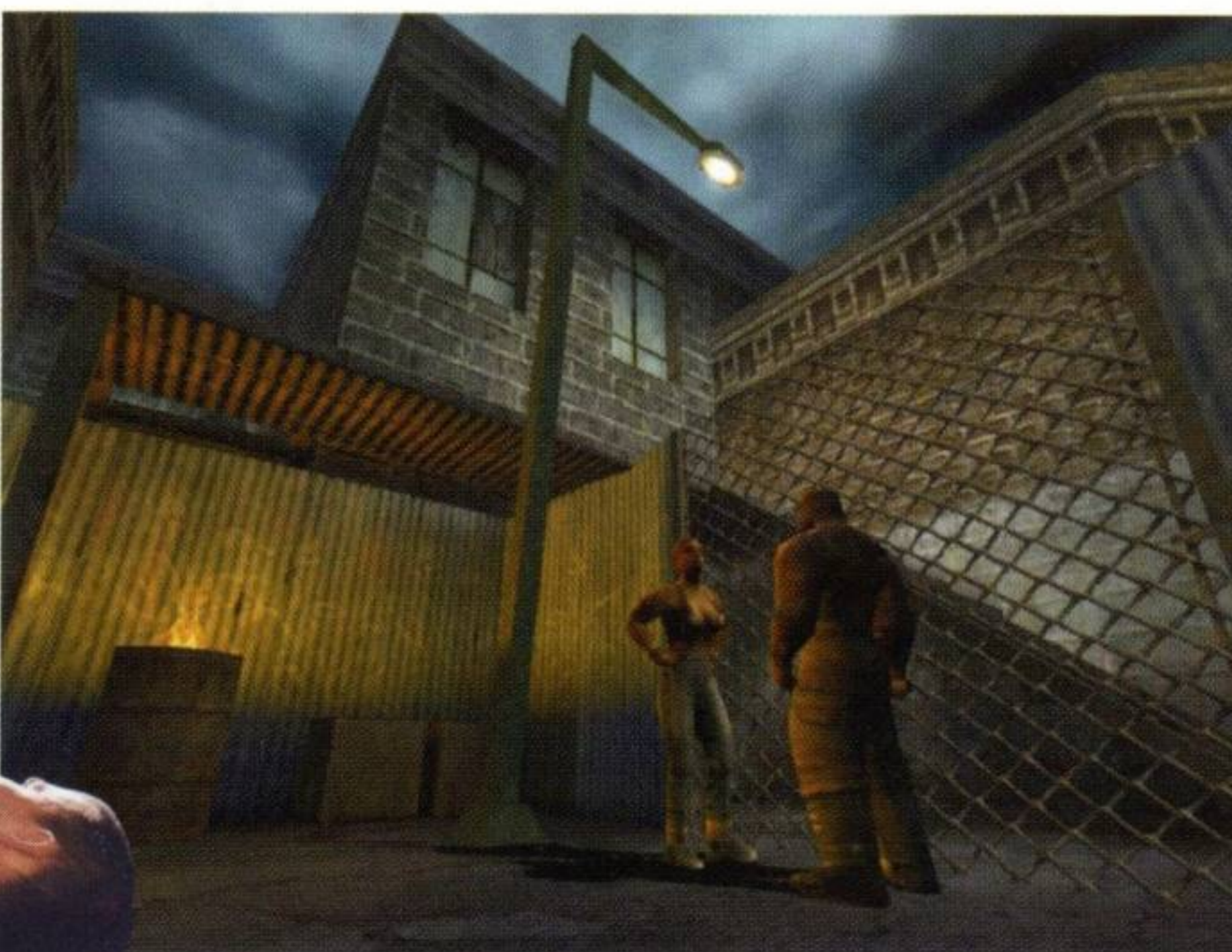
- Vague plot
- Tedious loading times
- Unclear mission objectives

### Or you could try...

**Half-Life**  
Sierra ★★★★★  
The benchmark first-person shoot-'em-up. Games do not get any better.

**Hidden & Dangerous**  
Take 2 ★★★★★  
Team-based shooter, without the tongue poking through the hole in the cheek.

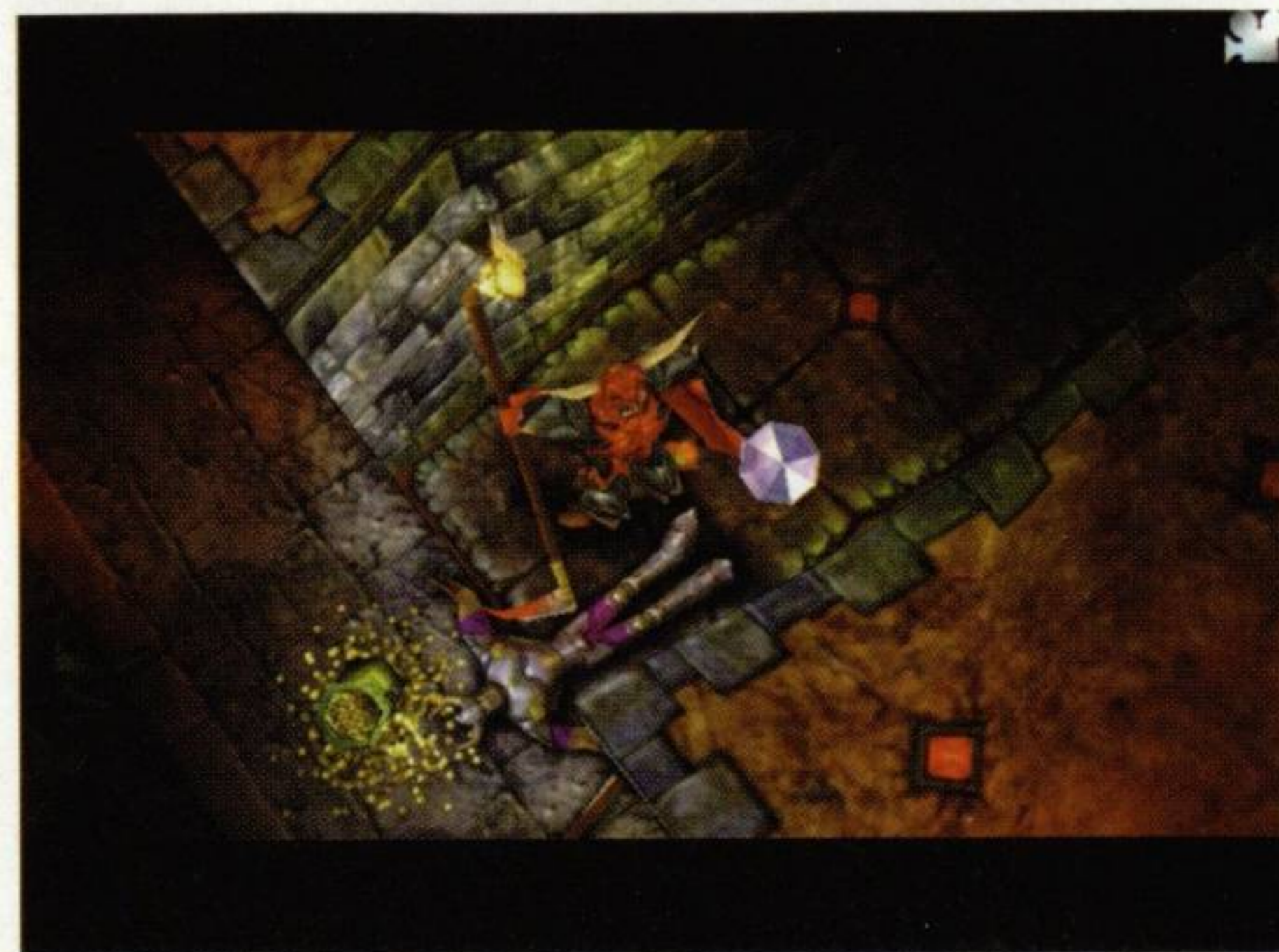
■ Meet-'n'-greet some evil characters in truly filthy city backstreet locations.





# FEELING HORNY?

## PREPARE TO UNLEASH THE BEAST WITHIN



■ **Oops, sorry ladies. Didn't mean to disturb you.**

## Dungeon Keeper 2

■ Publisher: **Electronic Arts** ■ Developer: **Bullfrog**  
 ■ Price: **£34.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now**  
 ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Requires: **P166, 32Mb RAM, 270Mb HD space, 4x CD-ROM drive** ■ Recommended: **P266, 64Mb RAM, 3D accelerator card**

**Back from the pit comes the strategy game that's best when it comes to being bad. Includes the finest use of a character called Horny since Mousse-T's summer dance hit.**

**F**rom the second you heard about the idea for this game, you loved it, passionately and devotedly. But, sadly, not for all eternity. Indeed, most of the original reviews for *Dungeon Keeper* were gushing fountains, spraying hyperbole like a post-Grand-Prix champagne celebration. Unfortunately, extended play revealed that the game – while climbing to admirable imaginative peaks – never quite scaled the summits that such a grizzly and original concept

should have been capable of reaching with ease.

So, in the manner of those trailers that show every good moment in a forthcoming blockbuster before you get a chance to see the film, we can quickly reveal that just about everything that disappointed in the original game has been repaired in this sequel. In short, *Dungeon Keeper 2* achieves what the first instalment *should* have. With interest.

Despite being such an improvement, the differences aren't profound. The basic concept, for example, is untouched. You play the eponymous Dungeon Keeper, a dread lord of Darkness. Your task is to create an underground cavern for a cast of nefarious, fantasy malcontents (goblins, dark elves, Horned Reaper) to inhabit. Then a whole slew of bearded heroes (knights, wizards, et-bloody-cetera) barge on in and attempt to remove your foul stain from the land.

So you kill them.

However, in what's the real Bullfrog trademark, you don't control any of your citizens directly to accomplish your evil aims; you merely guide them, influencing them towards your desires. Rather than telling individuals to attack a certain opposing force, you have to watch as they each act according to their own richly programmed personalities. So while you can pick up the monsters with your Hand of Evil™ cursor and move them near to the location of a fight, you can't actually *make*



### ↑ Uppers & Downers

#### Keeper

- A stunningly imaginative conceit...
- ...that works properly this time
- Both accessible and gorgeous

#### Dungeon

- Perfects rather than invents
- Unfortunately, the Hand of Evil is just too inexact a cursor
- You may not like being a bad guy. Well sod off back to your Sindy, wimp.





■ Rather than the uber-glam first person shots, you'll play most of the game in just ultra-glam third person.



them go and introduce Mrs Axe to Mr Dwarf's head.

In a similar way to many real-time strategy games (such as *Red Alert*) your warlike impulses are married to a maternal construction urge. Starting with a mass of rock, your cheerfully bullied imps (the lowest of the low of your servants) will dig out the tunnels and chambers that'll make up your dungeon. This leads to the accumulation of the game's two material resources: gold and mana. Mana is your magical strength, and is based on how big your complex is. It's used for the casting of magic spells and feeding your sorcery-devouring imps. Gold is used for just about everything else. Adding an extra torture chamber or guard room? Need to pay for your troops? Want to make a giant Mr T-style medallion? You need gold, and lots of it.

So... where are the changes?

The most immediately important is the tightening of the game structure. A common complaint about the original *Dungeon Keeper* was that the levels quickly became repetitive, but in this version a progressive, coherent Campaign mode has been attached. The early missions' steady addition of more complicated aspects creates a learning curve as smooth and pleasing as the first long suck on a Calypso on a scorchingly hot day. In fact, this is an impressively newbie-friendly package. Even the menu system alters to highlight important new features.

But it isn't boring for more experienced players. Each



■ The sprawling nature of many of the dungeons means that judicious use of the Map function is of paramount importance.

level alters the challenges presented to you, the eager subterranean dictator, forcing you to alter your tactics to succeed. *Dungeon Keeper 2* carefully walks the fine line between presenting a puzzle and presenting a problem (the difference being that a puzzle has only one possible solution, thus limiting your possibilities, while a problem can be savoured in many ways). Better still, if you want, you can play with the new "My Pet Dungeon" mode, which enables you to build and expand your personal dungeon until it gains vast, Mordor-like levels – rather like Lego for Satanists.

And, of course, the graphics have stepped into whole new realms. While not quite in the league of the best first-person shooters, *Dungeon Keeper 2*'s slightly surreal angles compliment the game's character perfectly.

In fact "character" is perhaps the best way to discuss *Dungeon Keeper 2*'s charms. The game bubbles and seethes with a pitch-black humorous atmosphere. No, not in the slightly-tedious rendered cut-scenes, but in the game itself. The personality of each of your dungeon's denizens shines through: the scampering imps, running in fear from receiving a hearty slap; the dumb-headed trolls and hysterical wizards; and – best of all – the Dark Mistress who manages to be the first interesting, whip-wielding dominatrix figure in computer game history (when you acquire a torture chamber, prepare for the first convincing (erm) and *intriguing* presentation of bondage yet seen).

In the original, the first-person mode was just an oddity, not actually much good for doing anything. In the sequel, however, this element is essential and fascinating. By casting a possession spell on an individual you see the world through their eyes (compound lenses for the firefly, or visor slits for the guard) and you can lead a squad of monsters deep into enemy territory. A vital skill throughout the game.

This year's vintage of strategy games (*Civ: CTP*, *Alpha Centauri*, *Braveheart*, *Sim City 3000*) has been so potent as to reduce the cerebral PC gamer to the state of giggling drunk. But if you're only going to open one intellectual bottle this year, the dark wine of *Dungeon Keeper 2* is really the one to savour. ★★★★★

**Kieron Gillen**

## IT'S LIKE LEGO FOR SATANISTS AS YOU EXPAND YOUR PERSONAL DUNGEON TO MORDOR-LIKE LEVELS



■ Chickens are your most important servants. No, really.

Or you could try...

**Theme Hospital**  
Electronic Arts ★★★  
Another ageing Bullfrog classic, set in a hospital. Cure rather than slay.

**Sim City 3000**  
Maxis ★★★  
The urban jungle. With town planners more evil than Horny could ever be.



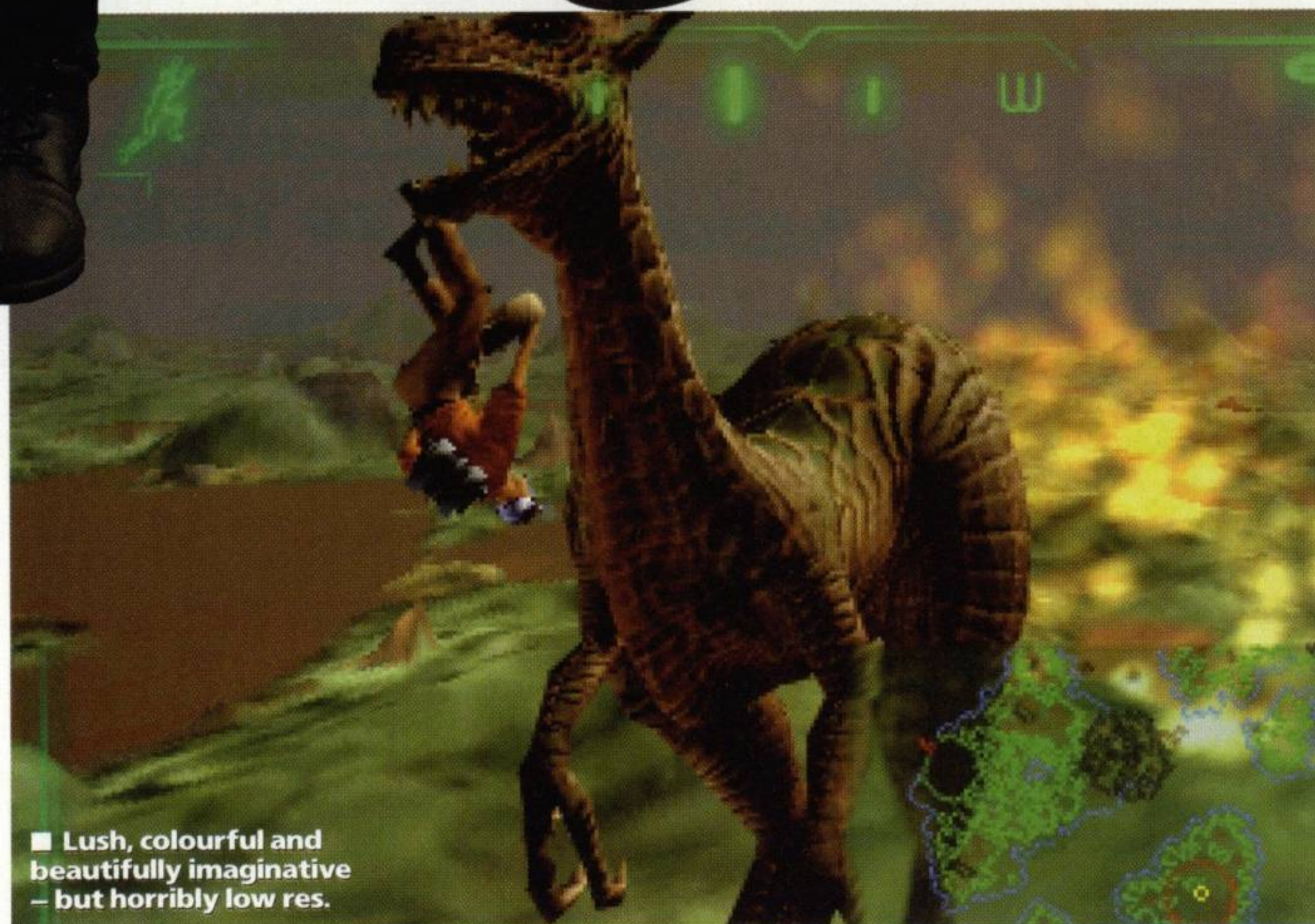


# RANK OUTSIDER

## NICE LEGS, SHAME ABOUT THE FACE



■ For a Navy SEAL, our hero wears a peculiarly girly shirt.



■ Lush, colourful and beautifully imaginative – but horribly low res.

## Outcast

■ Publisher: **Infogrames** ■ Developer: **Appeal** ■ Price: **£35**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1** ■ Requires: **P200, 32Mb RAM, 50Mb HD space, 4x CD-ROM drive, graphics card, Win 95** ■ Recommended: **P300, 64Mb RAM, 500Mb HD space, 8x CD-ROM drive**

**Mix together the best bits of *Zelda*, *Tomb Raider* and *Half-Life* and you've got – what? The finest game imaginable? An almighty mess? A bit of both?**

**T**here are many extraordinary things about *Outcast*, but most extraordinary of all is the fact that it is a game that touches at times upon genius – a game of breathtaking vision and scope which frequently threatens to become *Zelda* for the PC – and yet it looks so bloody dreadful.

There's no nice way to say it. *Outcast's* homebrewed software-only 3D engine might have appeared stylish and impressive three or four years ago, but falls dismally short of the hardware-accelerated expectations of today. Its fixed resolution of 400 x 300, compared with the now-standard 1,024 x 768, is – snigger – inducingly outré. Distant enemies have an almost *Space Invaders* blockiness and terrain and objects jag as though built from Duplo bricks.

And it starts off dreadfully, too. An excruciatingly lengthy opening movie introduces your in-game character, without a hint of irony, as a muscle-brained Indiana Jones wannabe with the preposterous name of Cutter Slade, who proceeds to gibber an inexhaustible supply of unfunny backchat. Called upon to save the world from (surprise, surprise) the chaos of a research-experiment-gone-wrong, he travels to a parallel universe (of course), where he is met by a large-chinned figure who delivers a lengthy series of lectures on prophecies, alien culture and (naturally) quests for objects scattered across many different worlds.

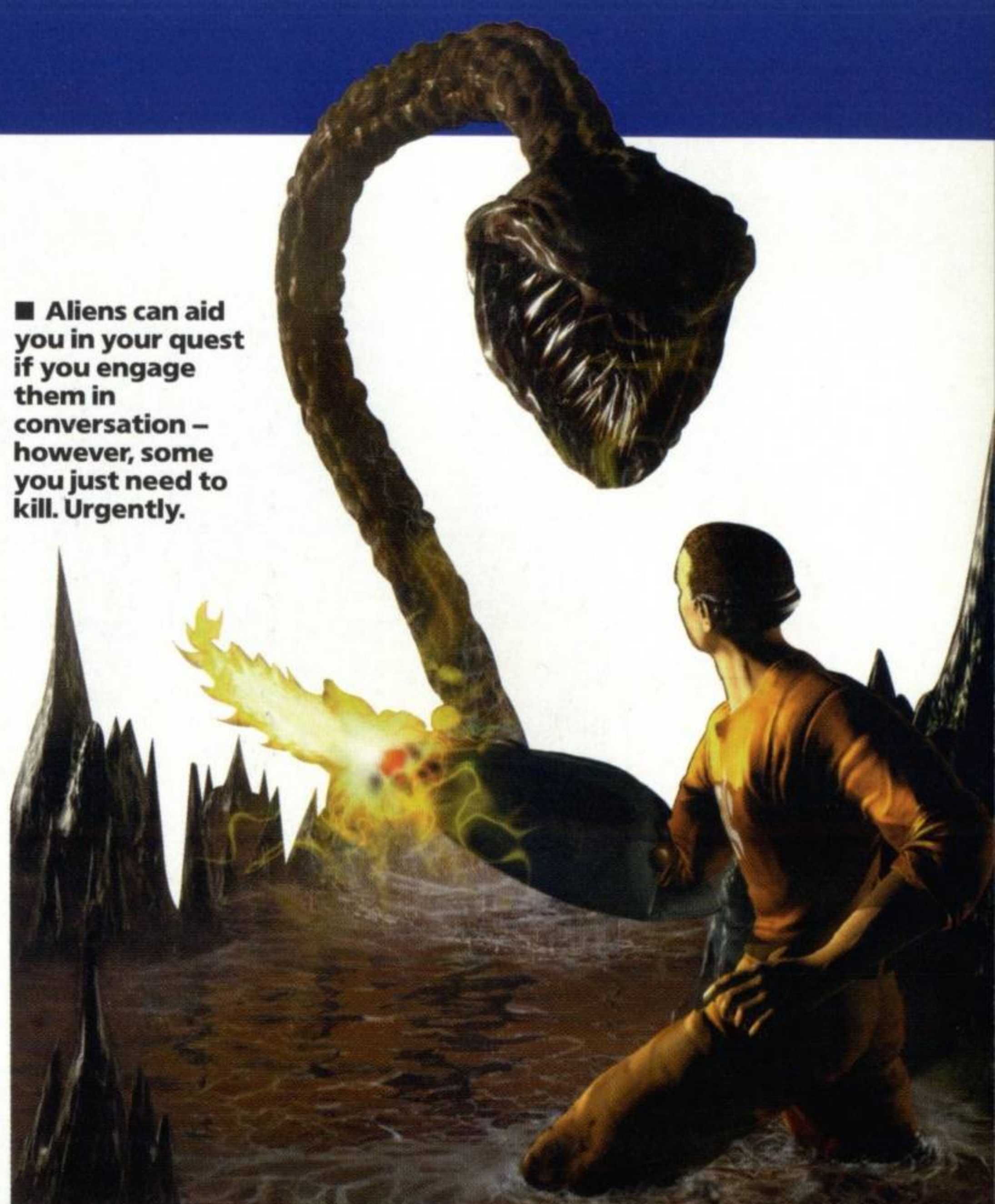
A quarter of an hour after trying to start the game, bamboozled and bored in equal measure, you finally take control. And, again, disappointment follows. Like the SAS





■ Third person perspective is most effective – but Slade's movement is frustratingly sluggish.

■ Aliens can aid you in your quest if you engage them in conversation – however, some you just need to kill. Urgently.



squad game *Hidden and Dangerous*, *Outcast* offers you the ability to switch between first and third person perspectives; but the behind-the-eyes view is unworkably myopic, and the third-person viewpoint makes you all too aware of Slade's limitations as an action hero. He has neither Lara Croft's tumbling athleticism, nor the tactical commando training of a *Hidden and Dangerous* soldier. On top of this, as you fire off the first few rounds from your laser-sighted pistol, only to observe the bullets meandering toward their target with all the thrilling ballistic spectacle of gently-lobbed tennis balls, you'd be forgiven for thinking that *Outcast* was a very dull game indeed.

But then, unexpectedly, everything falls into place. After a couple of hours of having odd conversations with aliens, wandering aimlessly around a desert city and engaging in a few cursory skirmishes with villainous soldiers, you suddenly find yourself completely immersed in the adventure.

The made-up vocabulary, which originally seemed like an irritating affectation, becomes a convincing part of a genuinely alien culture. Given context and purpose, the character dialogues turn from dire lectures into strangely compelling exchanges. Even the graphics begin to appear idiosyncratically appealing. With a greater depth of field, some epic settings and super special effects, the *Outcast* engine offers a stranger, more majestic vision than more familiar textured-polygon environments.

So it all begins to make sense. As your armoury expands, and your control of the main character becomes increasingly instinctive, combat gets exciting, too. The ultra high-powered sniper zoom is tremendous fun; launching a grenade at a bunch of off-duty guards, seeing them scatter and then rushing in to finish them off at close range with a souped-up shotgun, offers a real action-game thrill.

And then – when you've finally worked out exactly what's going on – *Outcast* becomes simply brilliant.

Once the gameplay mechanics have become second nature, you really start to appreciate the ingenuity and originality of *Outcast's* structure and style. Distinctive (and, in places, quite beautiful) alien worlds are interlinked via a scattering of (ahem) mystical portals. You use these in response to an immense collection of interlinked challenges, which require you to travel from zone to zone, moving from quest to sub-quest, in an engrossingly non-linear way. At the same time, you're also developing an ongoing primary narrative, brought to the fore from time to time by interspersed cinematic cutscenes. And there's a strategy game-esque aspect to play, as you hunt for alien resources to manufacture into ammunition, and manage

your finances so you can purchase weapons-upgrades and information.

With so much going on; such an intelligently adaptable game system, some complex plotting and outstanding imaginative moments, *Outcast* ends up as an absorbing adventure.

However, some of the quests can be deflatingly errand-like, and there's an overabundance of inventory-cluttering items, but these are churlish gripes when set against such a splendidly ambitious achievement. A more serious problem, perhaps, is the fact that any half-experienced games player will find *Outcast* rather easy, once they've got stuck into it. You have to be pretty careless to get killed.

But, while *Outcast* is by no means perfect, it's touched by greatness, full of energy, and one of the most interesting games we've seen for a long time. ★★ ★★ **Jon Smith**

## WHEN YOU'VE FINALLY WORKED OUT EXACTLY WHAT'S GOING ON *OUTCAST* BECOMES SIMPLY BRILLIANT

### ↑ Uppers & Downers

#### Greats

- A compelling mixture of adventure and action
- A well-constructed, non-linear game world
- Spectacularly cinematic

#### Grates

- Startlingly low-res graphics
- Some poor characterisation
- Too easy

### Or you could try...

**Final Fantasy VII**  
SCEE ★★★★★  
Epic storytelling and action-packed adventure in an alien world.

**Half-Life**  
Sierra ★★★★★  
More violent, but with spectacular sci-fi weaponry mixing action with narrative.



■ *Outcast* is full of ingenious touches – if only the graphics did justice to the adventure.





## Tomb Raider II: "Golden Mask"

■ Publisher: **Eidos** ■ Developer: **Core Design** ■ Price: **£14.99**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now**  
 ■ Players: **1** ■ Requires: **P90, 16Mb RAM, 4x CD-ROM drive, 3D accelerator card**  
 ■ Recommended: **P133**

**Four brand new levels boost the budget re-release of this best-selling action adventure.**

■ Like all true stars, Lara has aged very well. *Tomb Raider II* is still a remarkably impressive piece of work. Even without the cosmetic enhancements of the sequel, it wows with its dramatic settings and extraordinary *coups de theatre*. 3D accelerator cards – something of a novelty when the game first appeared – are now standard issue, so you now get the chance to see Lara look her best, and immerse yourself in high frame-rate, glitch-free action.

The four additional "Golden Mask" levels are an enjoyable bonus, although if you're a completist and thinking of shelling out just to get your hands on the extra section, you should be warned that two of the levels are already available to download, for free, from the Eidos Web site.

In case you're getting confused by the series, this is the *Tomb Raider* that starts on the Great Wall of China and moves on to Venice, the shipwreck and Tibet. There are loads of guns and you can save whenever you like.

And it's tremendous fun; consistently challenging and atmospheric. The puzzles are a little too easy, but the game makes up for that with an action-orientated vigour, and a very real commitment to violence.

The old problems are still in evidence, however. The enemy AI is almost non-existent, and combat gets repetitive, with hoodlums happy to run around aimlessly while you cut them down from a safe vantage point. On top of that, the auto-aim setup targets corpses, you can only shoot through *some* windows, you can't shoot through bars and you don't have enough control over Lara when fighting.

Nevertheless, *TR II* remains an engrossing game on an epic scale, which can still hold its own against state-of-the-art competitors. Bigger and bolder than the original; tauter and more playable than *TR III*, this is a bona fide classic. Play it for the first time, or enjoy it again. ★★★★★ **Jon Smith**

# PAINT IT BLACK

## PRATCHETT'S FINEST GET THE 3D TREATMENT



■ You never really get a feeling of success or failure – you just follow a contrived path.



■ Familiar faces abound for Pratchett die-hards: Nobby, Vimes and Death himself.

## Discworld Noir

■ Publisher: **GT Interactive** ■ Developer: **Perfect Entertainment** ■ Price: **£35** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1** ■ Requires: **P233, 32Mb RAM, 420Mb HD space, 4x CD-ROM drive, soundcard**

**Lightning flashes and the pianist launches into a melody he was asked never to play again. But the grizzled man in the hat is not who you think.**

In the novels of Terry Pratchett, humour depends mostly on the charm of incongruity. His city Ankh-Morpork – the setting for this third spin-off adventure game – is home to trolls and dwarves who bicker like London cabbies and could swindle for England.

While spoofing everything from rock music to the Internet, the world of Pratchett's books recently made room for a police force; a private detective caricature was the inevitable next step.

*Discworld Noir* is a tossed salad of murderous movie moments revolving around new hero Lewton, Ankh-Morpork's first PI. A broken-hearted alcoholic, sacked from Commander Vimes' City Watch for corruption, Lewton is a trench-coated Clint Eastwood with a line in pun-laden dialogue that only works thanks to understated irony. When a dame enters Lewton's office and begs him to find her lover, the plot slowly spirals outwards, leading to Lewton getting caught up in a murder case and meeting up with an old flame.

It's a step away from the previous two Discworld titles, most notably because Lewton and chums are in 3D. The



### ↑ Uppers & Downers

**Lights**  
 ■ Classy atmosphere  
 ■ Familiar Pratchett humour

**Shades**  
 ■ Tiresome and repetitive investigative method  
 ■ Overly gloomy

interface is still cursor driven and the backdrops pre-drawn, but the visuals are decidedly more *Grim Fandango* than *Monkey Island*.

*Discworld Noir's* gameplay is only partially object-based. In addition to the usual find-and-combine formula for solving puzzles by manipulating the environment, the game boasts

an innovative Notebook screen. Every time you meet a new character can refer to the notebook to decide how to interrogate them, based on what you have already discovered. The drawback of this method is that, before long, you have to ask dozens of questions before you get any useful information. And then you have to re-visit every single character each time you happen across a new clue to grill them over its significance.

Lewton's story is stylish and is backed by mellow jazz and a rain soundtrack that would impress the director of *Se7en*. The tributes to film noir are ham-fisted but classically witty – references to the Tsortese Falchion should flag up the kind of buffoonery on offer.

Although he didn't actually write the script for *Noir*, Terry Pratchett supervised and approved the game at every stage. This third interactive trip to Ankh-Morpork would make a great novel, full of the sprightly cynicism and attention to detail that mark his better works.

But as a graphic adventure game it's too laborious to truly entertain. ★★★ **Cam Anderson**

Or you could try...

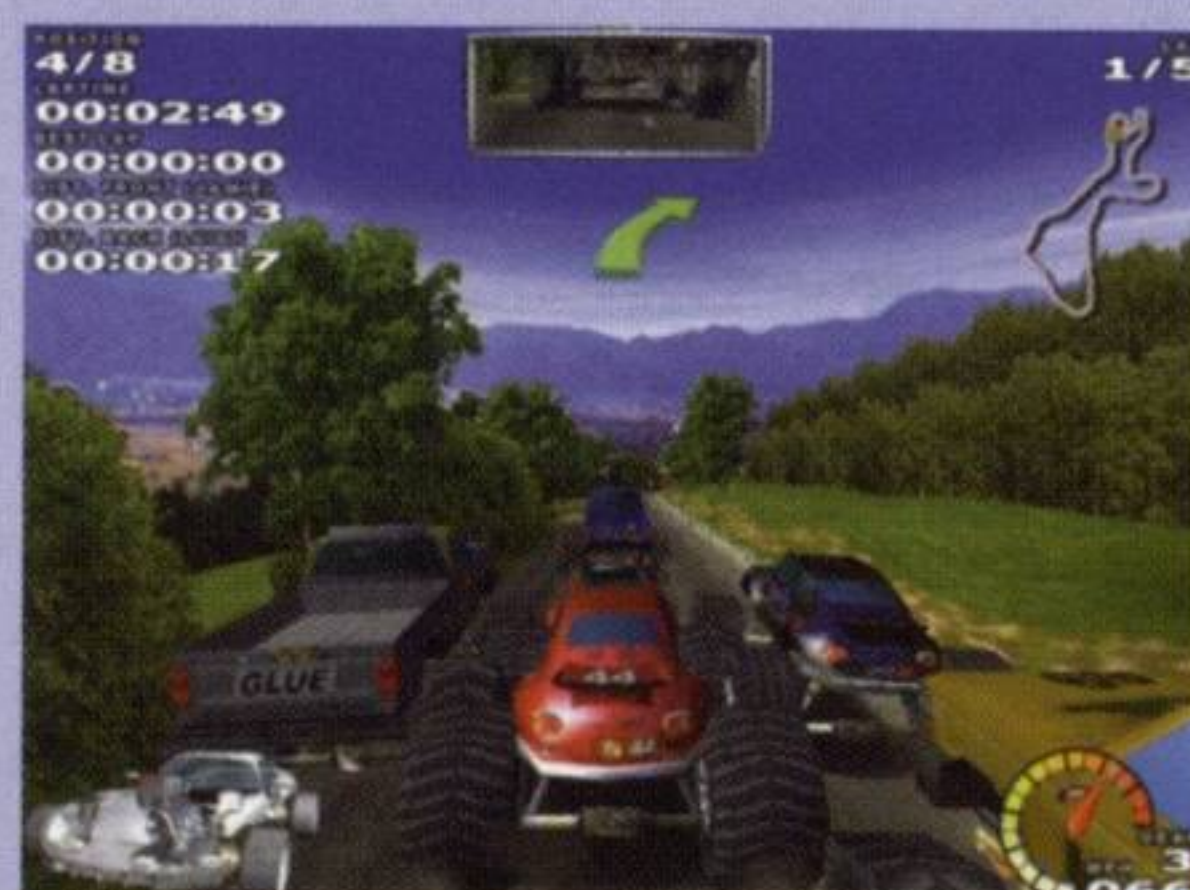
**Grim Fandango**  
 LucasArts ★★★★★  
 LucasArts' first 3D adventure, set in the land of the dead. Funny and fast-paced.

**Blade Runner**  
 Activision ★★★★★  
 The techno setting is a perfect backdrop for quiz-'em-up adventure antics.



# TRAFFIC JAM

## ALL-ROUND RACER OVERHEATS ON IDEAS



### Breakneck

■ Publisher: **THQ** ■ Developer: **Synetic** ■ Price: **TBC**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-8** ■ Requires:  
**P200, 32Mb RAM, 180Mb HD space, 4x CD-ROM drive** ■ Extras: **P266, 3D accelerator card**

**Pretty-boy racing game which, by trying to please all of the people all of the time, has trouble deciding whether it's Arthur or Martha. Or Eddi.**

"Here is my greatest tip," innuendoes the cap-wearing Eddi, your ever-present guide through the exhaustive options menu of *Breakneck*. Around the tenth time that your decision-making is interrupted by his needless and rambling witticisms, it's Eddi's neck you wish was broken. The option to remove Eddi's presence "if he is annoying you" suggested by the game's German developer, Synetic, is frankly unnecessary. Turn him off as soon as installation is complete.

*Breakneck* is a sort of potted history of racing games. On the one hand it's a simulation, prefaced by screen upon screen of options and *Gran Turismo*-inspired sponsorship negotiations; while on the other you have an all-out arcade game, with weapon-laden death matches, *Mario Kart*-style vehicles, trucks, buses and even the self-explanatory funny cars. Atop all this, there are some two dozen courses – plus variations – drawn from the usual pantheon of racing locales; snow-capped mountaintops, tropical islands, and hard, cold, Tarmac-covered raceways. Exhaustive is, indeed, the word.

That said, the simulation isn't really a simulation: the cars have unlikely names, such as the Speedsnake Targa Florio, and the handling lacks subtlety. Also, having a reset key – which automatically returns your car to the middle

of the road should you get ensnared on the Velcro-like scenery – is the final kick in the guts for Dr Realism. Likewise, the fairly sensible tracks render the arcade option all but impotent.

More seriously, in one-player mode at least, *Breakneck* is woefully inconsistent. You can

bomb it around most of the tracks with few excuses for applying your brakes, then you'll suddenly be overtaken when you're doing 120mph on an open stretch of road. Even worse, you'll waste valuable seconds fanning about behind a tree (although, strangely, you can turn them off), for instance, only to turn the next bend to find yourself bunched up against four cars which passed you half a minute earlier doing a cool ton.

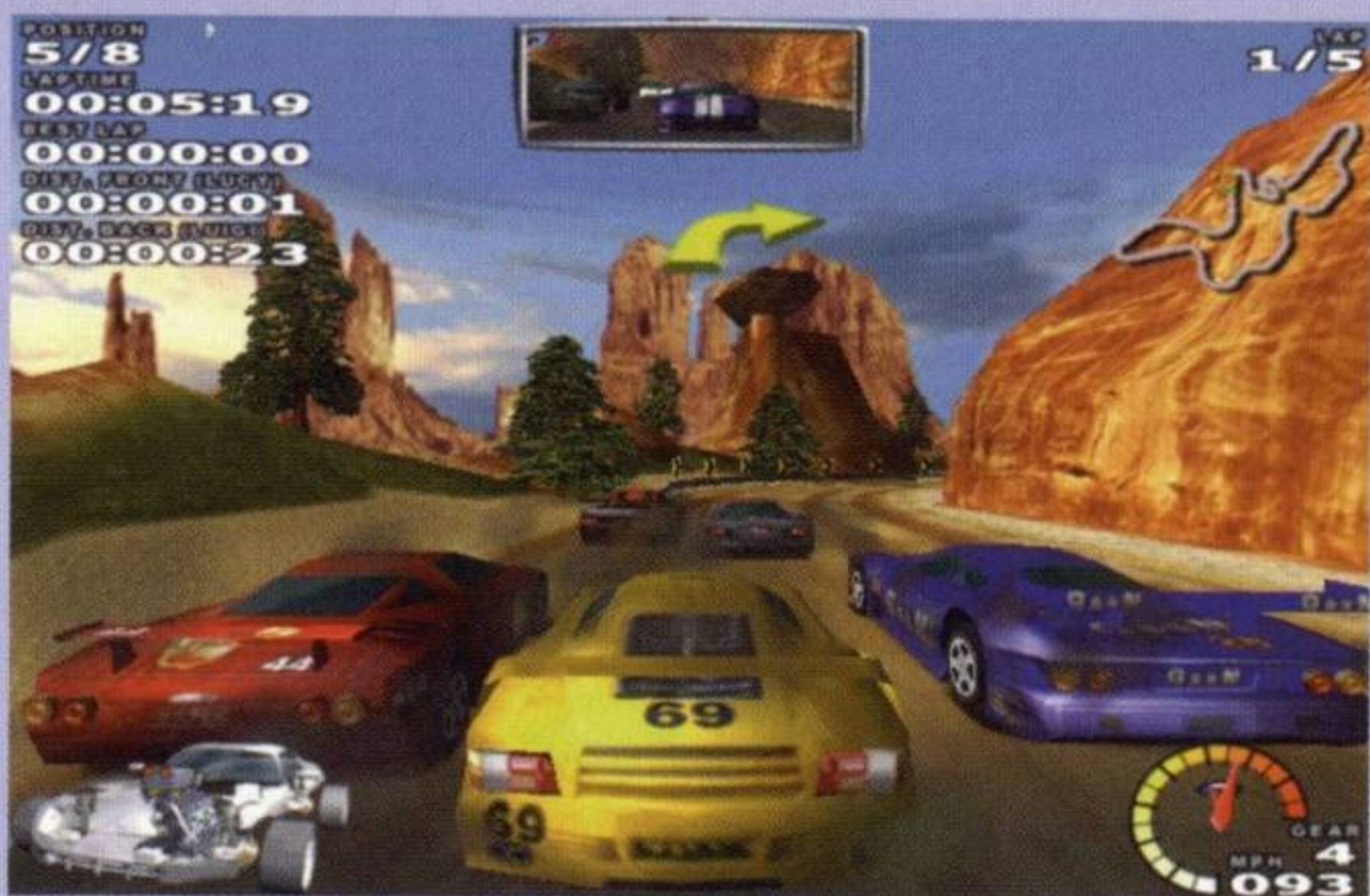
It's a bit of a shame really, because *Breakneck* is gorgeous to look at, and with umpteen styles of play, dozens of vehicles and more tracks than the Welsh hills, a lot of work has been done to ensure its longevity. In fact, as a whole, it borders on the brilliant. If only the developer had focused on getting the gameplay balance right, instead of just throwing everything into the mix, this would've been a cake to wolf down. Instead, you end up confused as to why anyone would bake something containing raisins, nuts, carrots, dog hearts, haggis and aspirin. Not to mention Eddi. ★★★

**Paul Rose**

#### Or you could try...

**Motorhead Gremlin** ★★★  
 Slick, futuristic racing game, albeit with cars that "wheel" as opposed to "hover".

**TOCA 2** Codemasters ★★★★★  
 Glorious grown-up racer with nary a weapon in sight.



■ *Breakneck* lets you bomb through nicely varied landscapes.

#### ↑ Uppers & Downers

- Eddie Irvine**
- Tons of cars and courses
  - A real looker
  - Stuffed with gameplay
- Eddie Large**
- Tries to do too much
  - Erratic gameplay
  - Eddi is an idiot



### Malkari

■ Publisher: **Interactive Magic**  
 ■ Developer: **Magic Labs**  
 ■ Price: **£39.99** ■ Release date:  
**on sale now** ■ Players: **1-40**  
 ■ Requires: **P90, 16Mb RAM, 4x CD-ROM drive, video card** ■ Recommended: **P166, 32Mb RAM, modem for Internet play**

**It's your opportunity to take control of the galaxy, rebuilding a civilisation destroyed in times gone by.**

■ *Malkari* isn't the sort of game you're going to whip out if a few mates come over. This epic tale of space colonisation is one of those huge-manual, no-action, functional-graphics affairs that you shouldn't embark upon if your social calendar is already fit to burst. But you can make up for your lack of human contact by meeting up to 40 like-minded individuals playing the game over the Net or a LAN connection.

The plot is fair enough – a huge rogue star has wiped out all life in the advanced Malkari planetary system. Cunningly, though, prior to the star's arrival, ancient residents thought to deposit banks of genetic material (people) and technology in asteroids throughout the system. The carnage created by the star ends and, thanks to the wiles of the ancients, civilisation can begin again. And this is where you step in. The ensuing mining, designing, colonisation, resource allocation and combat, works a treat, and is all beautifully complicated by the establishment of five rival Guilds among the populations of 150 asteroids.

To ensure your particular tribe triumphs you have to colonise as many asteroids as possible, and kill off the opposition. Obviously, combat is a major part of this and the turn-based play takes place either on land or in space.

Visually, *Malkari* is presented in a Galactic view, which itself is split into subsections, enabling you to get closer to the in-game action. These views themselves have four camera angles available, and this is where you start to become aware of what sets *Malkari* apart from its contemporaries, such as *Star Wars Supremacy*. The game's amazing complexity, from the views, to the navigation, to the vast amount of *stuff* that you have to do is staggering.

If you're a strategy veteran you'll get a lot out of this game, but it's not one to take on if this is your first stab at conquering the universe. ★★★

**Tim Cant**





## Austin Powers: Operation Trivia

■ Publisher: **Sierra** ■ Developer: **Berkeley Systems** ■ Price: **£25** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **2** ■ Requires: **P90 or Power Mac, 16Mb RAM, 50Mb HD space, 2x CD-ROM drive, soundcard, Win 95 or System 7.5.5**

**You've seen the film, aped the characters and goggled at the babes... now it's time to answer the questions.**

■ In this first digital foray into Austin Powers territory, some

smart decisions were made. For starters, Berkeley Systems was chosen as the developer. Berkeley was the company responsible for the wacky and quirky *You Don't Know Jack* – a title that set computer-based trivia games on their heads back in 1995.

It helps that all the right cues have been taken from the groovy *Powers* movies, which star Mike Myers as the snaggle-toothed British spy with hyper-cool threads and a shagging fixation. The graphics consist of wild, flat 2D colours, depicting silhouetted go-go dancers or battling heavies, backed by hot poppy tunes, sitar madness and even wacka-wacka bass guitar. Like in the films, this retro chic is pitched just right. The atmosphere created is instantly fun, and while it may not be enormously enduring, it's certainly not going to irritate the hell out of you straight away.

As trivia games go, *AP:OT* (subtitled *Win Lose Or Die*) boasts a plot. You find yourself coming live from The Electric Psychedelic

Pussycat Swingers Club, where as either Austin or the decidedly un-groovy Dr Evil you have to beat the opposition to save/destroy the world. The plot comes in the form of a meglomaniac scheme on behalf of Evil, who is holding the shagadelic Powers hostage and who (surprise, surprise) intends to take over the world, deciding its fate via the means of an "overly elaborate gameshow".

Each time you play the game it's a short run affair and follows a rigid structure: first you have to fill in a missing blank, then pick out four answers from a possible seven, and then (in *Keep Away*) differentiate between two subject categories like, say, plots that appeared in *The Brady Bunch* or *Gilligan's Island*. To round things off you have the Crazy Chain, where you answer a series of linked, multiple-choice questions.

The problem with this is that if you don't hail from the Land of the Free, you'll have to find a way to deal with the US TV references, which flow though *AP:OT* like relish through a chilli dog. There are questions about minor sitcom celebs, about neighbours in US soaps and comedies, and while none of these questions are terribly taxing, if you have no idea what is going on, then you are soon going to lose interest.

*AP:OT* nearly fulfils its job description. It's extremely funny, features great FMV of Austin and Dr Evil (though not performed by Mike Myers) and manages to create the right mood with a fast-talking, camped-up host. Sadly, though it's too Ameri-centric for us Brits to cope with. And, let's face it, an appropriate selection of questions is a somewhat essential feature if a trivia game is going to succeed. ★★ **Simon Kirrane**



## Eastern Front II

■ Publisher: **Take 2** ■ Developer: **Talonsoft** ■ Price: **£39.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Requires: **P133, 16Mb RAM, 4x CD-ROM drive, graphics accelerator card, soundcard, Win 95** ■ Recommended: **32Mb RAM, modem for Internet play**

**The niche market of historical wargames continues to thrive on the PC and nobody does it better than Talonsoft.**

■ Only the honeybee has a greater affinity with all things hexagonal than the wargamer. While modern PC technology pushes more and more games towards real-time action, with polygons aplenty providing visual feasts across your monitor, there is a stubborn minority who refuse to be swayed towards such aesthetic pleasures and still hanker after those hexes. *Eastern Front II*

is squarely aimed at this minority and it does them proud, with its turn based tactical engine offering the opportunity to re-enact the bloodiest confrontation of World War II, when the Germans and Russians went head to head on the battlefield.

Essentially, this is less of a sequel and more of a re-release of the original *Eastern Front*. All the scenarios and campaigns of the original are present, as are those that were supplied on the later-released add-on *Campaign Disc*.

The differences that are visible in this new release address some of the problems that were present in the original, with *Eastern Front II* providing an improved AI, though still typically aggressive, as is Talonsoft's wont.

The graphics have been smoothed in places to provide more convincing road and rail connections between hexes, though the improvements aren't drastic (or even noticeable, in some cases). You can also expect to see some more obvious graphic improvements, including better contoured terrain and some upgraded camouflage schemes. Other minor problems have been ironed out and the interface has been tweaked, too, leaving a much more polished product.

If you persevered with the original and are in doubt as to whether to invest in a revamped version of the same game, there are 45 brand new scenarios and some extra campaigns, both dynamic and linked, included to tempt you. A large section of the gaming community will ignore *Eastern Front II*, and rightly so, but if you are in that minority that knows its Tigers from its T-34s, then you need look no further.

★★★★ **Jason Weston**

## PC budget re-releases | by Kieron Gillen

**Even the prolific-breeding jungle of the PC market has its summer droughts, hence this month we present an unfortunately foreshortened round-up of what else is happening in the PC world. At this rate, we'll be reduced to sitting on a rug in the garden, eating ice cream and swatting wasps for fun.**



### Animaniacs

■ Publisher: **South Peak Interactive** ■ Price: **£20** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**

■ The cartoon *Animaniacs* is the finest post modern slapstick chaos of the '90s. So how many animation frames do you need to show one of the Warner Bros slapping a bad guy with a mallet? How about two? 1) Normal pose. 2) Whacking pose.

Disney must be spinning in his cryogenic chamber. In the traditional early-'90s Mega Drive manner, South Peak has turned the license into a paper-thin idea-desert of a platform game, to which even standing at a train platform would be preferable. Even old faults like non-interactive background scenery that looks like interactive foreground scenery make an unwelcome return. Let's hope an anvil falls from the sky and crushes the programmers. ★



### Carnivores

■ Publisher: **Wizardworks** ■ Price: **£15** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**

■ All the thrill of the hunt without the thrill of hunt, basically. However, rather than bagging innocent animals, you're hunting innocent dinosaurs, in an attempt to re-extinct them. Even though the attack of an allosaurus can provoke genuine fear, and the graphics engine isn't exactly a fossil, it's all a tedious experience. A diplomocuss-sized playing area contains roughly three prey beasts, leading to much yawn-provoking wandering, that's not helped by a run-speed more akin to an asthmatic hippopotamus than an intrepid hunter. But the full-3D trophy room raises a small round of applause. ★



### Deer Avenger

■ Publisher: **Simon & Schuster** ■ Price: **£15** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**

■ Anyone remember *The Foxes Strikes Back*? The amiable mid-'80s left-right scrolling Spectrum shoot-'em-up based on the concept of a Uzi-ed up Vixen mowing down throngs of inbred aristocrats? Well this is a little like that, but this time set in the States, with you playing a deer instead of a bushy tailed fox.

And it's just as unfunny, because this is a parody hunting sim, meaning the game consists of you using a map to walk around, praying that you'll bump into a would-be Elmer Fudd. Oh yes: you can do things like call out "Help! I'm naked and have a pizza" to attract your prey. While laughing at hunters is to be applauded, paying 15 quid for the privilege isn't. ★



### Extreme G-2

■ Publisher: **Acclaim** ■ Price: **£30** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**

■ A futuristic race game with shooting. So: is it *WipeOut* or should we wipe it out? Well neither, really. While managing to include a large selection of tracks and convey an impressive sensation of speed, *Extreme's* selection of faults leaves it moping at the starting line, while *Star Wars Episode 1: Racer* zooms towards the horizon. For example, *Extreme* fails to meaningfully differentiate between its many vehicles, and adds weapons that are so slow to fire they make aiming absurdly difficult. Not that it matters, as you'll cause no significant damage with their impact.

This game just drives at full speed into the sharp bend marked "Mediocrity". ★★



### Nascar Road Racing

■ Publisher: **Electronic Arts** ■ Price: **£35** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**

■ This is less a game and more a digital prolapse, and certainly the worst PC racing game in living memory. Its diabolic choir of faults deserves a page to itself, but let's be brief. Your car's clearly built on a different scale to the rest of the world. It takes a microscope to see what changes a 3D card is effecting. The handling mixes such severe understeering as to make you think that you're only turning by getting a passenger to lean suddenly to one side with brakes that bring your car to a halt in milliseconds. It's just lucky for the developer that we've abolished the death penalty for offences such as this in the UK. ★



### Traitor's Gate

■ Publisher: **Zabrac** ■ Price: **£40** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**

■ Everyone's a little 3D-rendered-adventure numb by now. You show a multiple-CD game (this one has four), with gorgeously constructed but virtually non-interactive scenery (*à la Myst* and *Riven*), and people just sort of... drift... away. But stop! We might be missing a gem here. This has a *Bladerunner* game-like personal assistant to analyse clues. It's being innovative, innit? Well, no, actually, it's not.

As per usual, this is the by-now standard mix of ridiculous plot (this time, thankfully, not involving orcs), a speed of play that makes shifting continental shelves look like Ferraris and puzzles that you'll solve through persistence rather than intelligence. If you get a copy, just return to render. Arf! ★





■ The sun is shining. Get out.

## Jane's Fleet Command

■ Publisher: **Electronic Arts**  
 ■ Developer: **Jane's/Sonolysts**  
 ■ Price: **£35** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-4**  
 ■ Requires: **P133, 16Mb RAM, 250Mb HD space, 4x CD-ROM drive** ■ Recommended: **3D accelerator card, modem for Internet play**

**As Jane takes to the water, it's only a matter of time before somebody cracks a gag about seamen...**

■ Three words. Get. A. Life. If you're the sort of person who finds the idea of commanding a

virtual fleet a bit tempting, then chances are you ought to get out more. Except, um, this particular military operation isn't at all painless. It's even good fun.

In a recreation of the kind of situations, snap decisions and blip-trackings that go on in a real military war room, you're put in command of a variety of aircraft carriers, submarines and airborne craft before being tested in global "situations". These range from elementary target identification and response jaunts to all-out naval mayhem, with friendly boats to protect, countless unknowns to be checked out and underwater, surface-to-air and air-to-air firepower to be unleashed. Strangely, trying to keep track of

the different icons, while executing missile attacks and interceptions, brings to mind Atari coin-op *Missile Command*.

Sensibly, the developers over at Jane's have realised that producing a map with a few icons just doesn't cut it these days, so all the pointy-clicky stuff is accompanied by 3D-accelerated visuals. Cue lots of tracking shots that let you know what your various units *actually* look like, and – more dynamically – what they look like when they're firing weapons or getting blown to hell. As military game graphics go, these aren't bad; they certainly remove some of *Fleet Command's* trainspotter whiff. That said, they don't always quite work. Track an

unknown target, for instance, and it will miraculously change shape once it's been identified. Gameplay compromise or natty cloaking device? You decide.

Still, the friendly visuals and easily-grasped map and menu systems do have the desired effect. Indeed, it's a major shock to discover a game about giving orders to boats that's this approachable and enjoyable.

Not that anybody will understand when you try to justify actually *owning* a copy of *Jane's Fleet Command*. Obviously, all the gameplay in the world can't change the fact that this kind of stat-heavy sim is a one-way ticket to a watery credibility grave. ★★★ **Mark Ramshaw**

## PC budget re-releases by Sam Richards

**If you were to stack all the budget game boxes on Earth one on top of the other, you'd die of boredom before it got high enough to require planning permission. Better, surely, to take the CDs out of the boxes and play.**



### Balls of Steel

■ Publisher: **GT Replay** ■ Price: **£14.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-2**  
 ■ The five virtual tables which make up this collection all suffer from a display problem, one that the best PC pinball simulations (such as MicroProse's *Addiction Pinball*) manage to avoid: either the whole table is shown, horribly cramped, or you have a too-limited view of the playing area, which scrolls up and down as the ball moves around. A more sophisticated choice of viewing perspectives would have been pleasing, because both options are quite unsatisfactory. The silver-ball arenas include the usual mix of kitsch horror and sci-fi themes, of which the unique *Duke Nukem* zone is the most fun. (It's from Duke himself that the "balls of steel" sound effect is drawn.) ★★★



### Grid Run

■ Publisher: **Sold Out** ■ Price: **£4.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-2**  
 ■ A chokingly dull "future-sport" in which you compete for your life against another gladiator on "the grid". In essence, *Grid Run* is a basic capture-the-flag scenario in which you race around a neon arena, turning the banners to your colour before your opponent turns them to his. A laughably self-indulgent animated story introduces what turns out to be an uncomfortable mix of platform-style puzzles and frenetic shooting. The gameplay rapidly loses its fascination, particularly since the visuals were rudimentary even two years ago. Fans of fast-action map-based puzzlers are advised to go with *Atomic Bomberman*, also available on budget. ★



### Theme Park

■ Publisher: **EA Classics** ■ Price: **£12.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**  
 ■ In terms of graphics and complexity, this classic build-'em-up was surpassed years ago by *Theme Hospital*, also courtesy of Bullfrog. But clinics aren't as intrinsically entertaining as amusement complexes, which is why *Theme Park* wins hands-down when it comes to madcap activity. Even with a sequel lurking ever closer, this title remains a national favourite, and if you've never attempted to design and manage rollercoaster rides and burger bars, you should give it a go before *Theme Park World* raises all the benchmarks. The interface is a triumph of point-and-click practicality, and cartoon charm oozes from every one of those dinky characters. ★★★★★



### Carmageddon

■ Publisher: **GT Replay** ■ Price: **£12.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-8**  
 ■ The BBFC chose to make an example of the excessively violent *Carmageddon* when it first became available, so for almost a year you could only buy it with green zombie blood substituted for regular gore. Thankfully, this budget version is the 18-branded package that finally appeared, so the points you earn as you drive around various themed locations are for splatting proper red-blooded pedestrians (extra scores for doing so with style). The tongue-in-cheek bad taste will offend mothers and MPs, but, although the visuals have dated, well-adjusted adults will enjoy the smart levels and exaggerated movie-style physics. Vehicle crashes and collisions are plentiful. ★★★



### Terricide

■ Publisher: **Sold Out** ■ Price: **£4.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-4**  
 ■ Feeling like a technology demo, *Terricide* was launched by the outfit behind *Team Apache* and pitched as the spiritual successor to *Descent*. Piloting a small fighter craft, you must infiltrate the interior of an attack fleet bound for Earth, taking on all sorts of robotic defences. The game's reliance on special effects makes for a dizzying experience, but ultimately it all feels a bit shallow. (That said, many of the later levels are very well-mapped.) As with *Descent*, you're able to upgrade your craft with bits salvaged from crushed opponents. Not bad for a fiver, but *Terricide* can't compete with the sheer complexity of *Forsaken*. ★★★



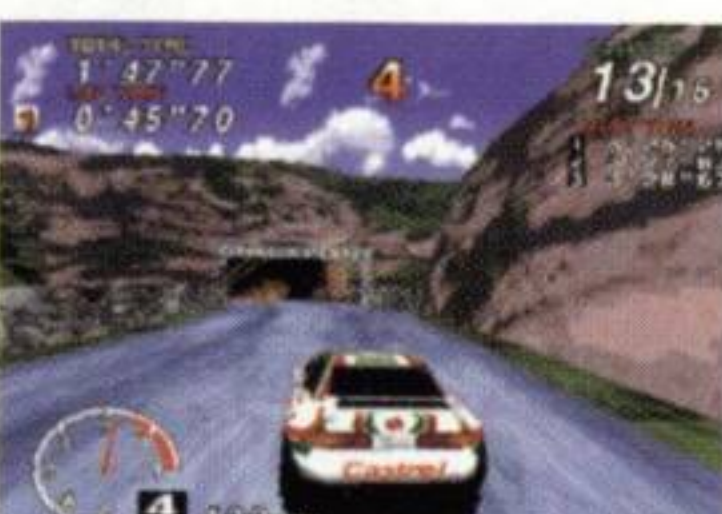
### Conquest Earth

■ Publisher: **Sold Out** ■ Price: **£4.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-2**  
 ■ The trouble with conceiving a passable real-time strategy title is that there are so many genuinely excellent attempts already on the scene. So it is with this aliens-versus-humans wargame, which tries very hard with its global tactical overview segments and varied campaign structures. However, the interface is clumsy and uninviting, and after playing something like *Dark Reign* you realise that *Conquest Earth's* troop AI really isn't much cop. And that ridiculous soldier/alien face-off on the intro screen reeks of no-budget B-movie. A missed opportunity. ★★



### Unreal

■ Publisher: **GT Replay** ■ Price: **£14.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-16**  
 ■ Known as *Unreleased* in the industry (due to the amount of time between its announcement and subsequent launch), *Unreal* boasts the finest first-person 3D engine ever to grace a PC. Connoisseurs will natter about how its weapons pack less of an oomph than *Quake's*, or how the plot is more banal than *Half-Life's*, but screw them: *Unreal* is an audio-visual treat, a monument to accomplished level design. Scripted set-piece encounters keep the tension turned up to maximum, and the open-air maps are simply radiant. Be aware that you'll need a 3D card to play *Unreal*, but it's the perfect way to show off your new Voodoo 2. ★★★★★



### Sega Rally Championship

■ Publisher: **Sega** ■ Price: **£14.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**  
 ■ Yet another credible arcade cabinet which turned into a disappointment on the PC, *Sega Rally Championship* swapped all its accessible charm for jerky visuals and unrealistic handling. Despite the car-customisation options (you can design and save four vehicles, which is great for personalised multi-player competitions), with only four track locations it's too limited. Even the "Championship" upgrades can't save it from feeling like the same old Sega off-road racing sim of bygone days. If you're a fan, it'll pass the time while you wait for *Touring Car Championship* to be re-launched. Otherwise, *Powerslide* constitutes better value. ★★



### Lego Island

■ Publisher: **Mindscape** ■ Price: **£12.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**  
 ■ One for the bairns or the hopelessly nostalgic, this was Lego's first foray into the realm of PC games. You play one of the plastic inhabitants of an island that's being harassed by the Brickster, a crook who steals the blocks from which all your houses are made. The resulting adventure is in 3D, and perches somewhere between comic action and lame puzzle-solving. Some inspired use of ever-versatile Lego saves it from complete oblivion, but the charmless characters are unlikely to impress today's demanding youngsters. Ultimately, point-and-click construction just can't compete with real-life Lego bricks; we suggest you stick to the latter. ★★



### Titanic: Adventure Out of Time

■ Publisher: **Europress Software** ■ Price: **£11.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**  
 ■ It's 1912, you're a British spy and you're off to America in an attempt to prevent world war. Sadly, your chosen method of transport is the ill-fated *Titanic* so, as the band plays on, you must point and click yourself to safety. You can put all thoughts of Kate Winslet aside, however, because this has nothing to do with James Cameron's disaster movie. With its poor-quality FMV and shallow plot, it's really just a virtual tour of the glamorous ship. A few puzzles have been bolted on as an excuse to call it a "game", but your actions are restricted to minor pre-scripted choices. Just depressing. ★



### Powerslide

■ Publisher: **GT Replay** ■ Price: **£14.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-4**  
 ■ Post-apocalyptic cities make great venues for sci-fi racing events, and the burnt-out rubble of the *Powerslide* world is no exception. Expertly fashioned tracks and a tidy eye for detail mean that its speed-and-skid formula is always turbulent, while its up-to-date use of 3D and natty driver AI provide vital gameplay frills. And yet *Powerslide* remains an unsatisfying experience. The cars – *Mad Max* buggies with huge wheels – tend to feel unpleasantly lightweight, floating around the track like airy fairies. Any sense of power and aggression (abundant in *WipEout 2097* or even *Dethkarz*) is absent, so your interest quickly wanes. ★★



### Red Baron 2

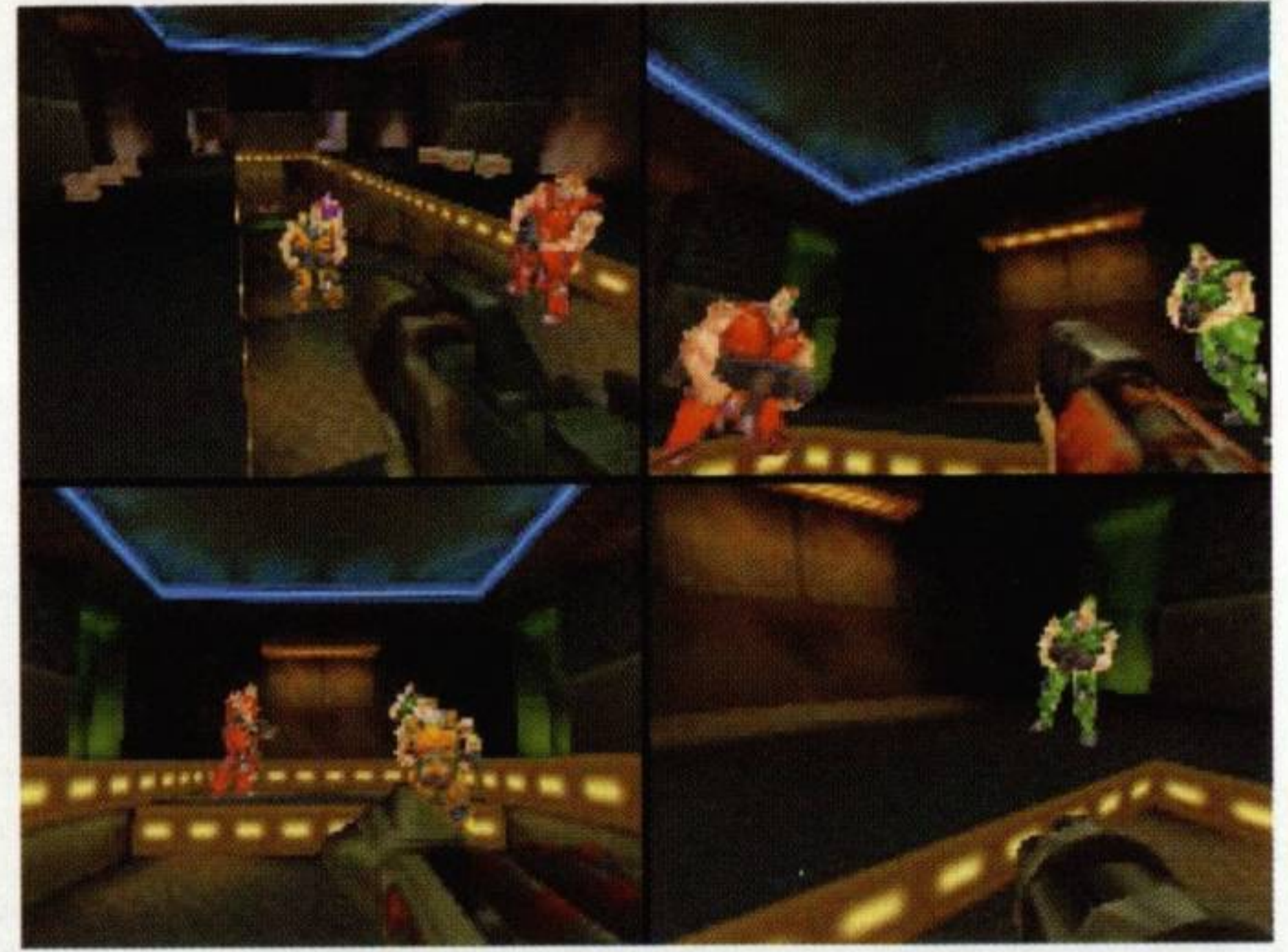
■ Publisher: **Sierra Originals** ■ Price: **£9.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-8**  
 ■ Although impenetrably difficult at first, *Red Baron 2* is a shipshape sequel with an accurate flight model and some well-researched campaign options. It is, of course, a First World War biplane dogfighting simulation, and for our money that alone makes it far more interesting than modern fire-and-forget jet games. Neat gimmicks, such as the option to define your squadron's paintwork, make for great multi-player aerial battles. It's let down, however, by some dodgy visuals (why is there no 3D card support?), and by an almost wilful desire to alienate newcomers to the genre. *Red Baron 2* is an awful lot of fun, but only serious flying enthusiasts need apply. ★★★



# New Nintendo 64 Games



■ **Strogg-U-Like!** Or rather, **Strogg-U-Don't-Like.** These monsters of metal and flesh come straight out of one of HR Giger's less pleasant dreams.



**Arcade**  
Nintendo 64  
Game of  
the Month

# QUAKE UP BOO!

## TRAVEL TO STROGGOS, MASSACRE ITS PEOPLE

### Quake II

■ Publisher: **Activision** ■ Developer: **id Software/Raster Productions** ■ Price: **£50** ■ Release date: **on sale now**  
■ Players: **1-4** ■ Extras: **Rumble Pak, Controller Pak, Expansion Pak** ■ Other formats: **PSX/PC**

**One of the biggest-ever PC titles gets crammed into the tiny N64 cart. Quart into a pint pot? Lake Michigan into a thimble, more like.**

**F**irst up: this is more a version than a conversion. A full installation of *Quake II* on the PC greedily guzzles its way through 400-plus Mb (and that's megabytes, none of your wimpish megabits on the PC) of hard disk. Cramping the entirety of *Quake II* on to the N64 can't be done – even if you were to cut so many corners that you were to turn it into one big diagonal line.

So, instead, you get a stripped-down, re-designed *Quake II* that features the same monsters, the same weapons but mostly new levels. The end result is a job that a lot of people thought couldn't be done: a damn fine *Quake II*, but on the N64. Hallelujah!

As to the wisdom of such labours... well. You could argue that bringing *Quake II* to a console – no matter how powerful the system – is a curate's egg of an exercise in advanced circle-squaring. It all boils down to the controls. The fact is that you can't play *Quake II*, or *Quake*, or any other game of the ilk as well on a console as you can on the PC. The mouse is central to successful and skilful control. Trying to play such games with a joystick is like trying to ski with your legs in plaster: you can manage it for a few stilted seconds but you'll come a cropper eventually. Thankfully, then, with this version new levels have been designed so as not to tax joystick jockeys. What you would give for twin-pad controls à la *GoldenEye*, though.

Enough comparisons with the PC, already. There are



■ **One super shotgun at close range, one dead grunt. Nice.**





### Uppers & Downers

#### Good Strogg!

- Non-stop action
- Plenty of secrets
- Supreme deathmatch

#### Bad Strogg!

- Fairly linear
- Short single-player lifespan
- Doesn't quite work with a joypad



■ Ladies and gentlemen, we have a new deathmatch champion. Yes, really. *GoldenEye* has the brains, but *Quake II* has the brawn.

much better things to discuss. *Quake II*'s looks, for example. It uses the Expansion Pak, but not in a *Turok 2* kind of "doubling the resolution but sticking with the crappy frame rate" kind of way. Instead, it uses the pak to maintain a stunning frame rate that keeps you glued to the action. And there's plenty of that.

As you move around on the planet Stroggos, you'll find that there isn't a corner that doesn't conceal a monstrous inhabitant or two. These range from weedy guards that drop at the merest whiff of a shotgun through to chaingun-wielding Enforcers, railgun-equipped Gladiators and the multiple-armed Tanks. Then there are the likes of the Flyers and Icaruses (Icarii?) in the air, and almost exactly enough guns and ammunition to deal with all of them; in other words, you're unlikely to maintain a comfortable ammo buffer, and will often find yourself trying to kill something enormous and nasty with your basic shotgun, while hunting for extra ammo. This can be annoying at times, but you're never reduced to having no ammunition at all; a sure sign of a perfectly balanced game. *Quake II* doesn't have as many weapons as *GoldenEye* or *Turok 2*, but it gives you what you need. Two shotguns, a machine gun, an ultra-fast chaingun, grenade and rocket launchers, a hyper blaster, a mighty railgun (with a slug that slices through the toughest foes), and the death-spitting BFG. The B stands for Big, the G for Gun. You work the rest out.

The missions are less complex than those of *GoldenEye* and, mercifully, a lot shorter than *Turok 2*'s slumber-fests, but they'll all take you a good few goes to complete, then a few more if you're intent on finding all the secrets. You'll be pleased by the varied scenery without being particularly amazed, you'll enjoy the sudden switch to low gravity during the space station section and you'll find your palms itching at the continuous growl of the Rumble Pak when fighting your way through a space freighter. You'll hate the designers for making you think that you've finally survived that really difficult bit, then producing a last, lethal Strogg from a dark corner that you hadn't paid much attention to.

And then you'll invite some friends round for a deathmatch, and you'll love the designers once more. In a toss-up between *Quake II* and *GoldenEye*, the coin would probably land on its edge, wobble for a couple of seconds then settle on the *Quake II* side. While *GoldenEye* has the complexity and the assorted game options, the *Quake II* deathmatch, which can include up to four players, is fast, frantic and, ooh, about ten times as visceral.

*Quake II*, then. *GoldenEye* still rules, and there's no doubt that *Perfect Dark* will stomp all over both, but at least *Quake II* knocks the vastly-overrated *Turok 2* on its arse. Make the most of the fine single-player game, but once you've seen all it has to offer (something which shouldn't take you more than a week or two) then you can still look forward to the deathmatch-filled months ahead. ★★★★★ **Travis**

## THE GOLDENEYE DEATHMATCH HAS THE OPTIONS, QUAKE II'S IS ABOUT TEN TIMES AS VISCERAL

### Or you could try...

**GoldenEye 007**  
Rare ★★★★★  
This James Bond masterpiece is still the king of the first-person shooters on the N64.

**Turok 2**  
Acclaim ★★★★★  
Gorgeous monsters, billions of weapons, but fog, huge levels and a rubbish deathmatch.



■ Berserker plus super shotgun? Job done, easily.





M. SCHUMACHER 3  
FERRARI

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LAP 1/4

**Uppers & Downers**

**Chequered flag**

- Flawless graphics
- Lots of different ways to play
- Labels on the tyres

**Black flag**

- But why not use 1999 stats?
- No action replay
- A bit serious for an N64 game

# GRAND FORMULA

NNNYEEEEEEAAOOOOOOOOOWWWW...  
NNNYEEEEEEAAOOOOOOOOOWWWW...

## F-1 World Grand Prix II

■ Publisher: **Video System** ■ Developer: **Paradigm**  
 ■ Price: **£40** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1-2**  
 ■ Extras: **Rumble Pak**

**Games rarely introduce themselves more obviously than that. Oh, all right then. It's the sequel to the N64's brilliant Formula One game.**

**F**ormula One games are absolutely beastly things to review. Look at *F-1 World Grand Prix II*, for example. Just look at it. It's a thing of beauty – the N64 at its polygon-propelling best, recreating every second of the 1998 GP season right down to the little labels on Mika Hakkinen's tyres as he squeals out of the pits. And yet, the more accurate an F1 sim gets, the more it's

going to polarise gaming opinion. On the one hand, *World Grand Prix II* trounces practically every other F1 game that's available – regardless of platform – from the PlayStation's much-loved *F1' 97* to most of the PC's very best offerings. But at the same time, the game's realism means nothing tends to happen for lap after lap – no overtaking, no crashes, no dicey powerslides, none of the things that enliven games like *Gran Turismo* and *TOCA 2*.

But you don't want to hear about our problems. You want to know (a) how *World Grand Prix II* is different from *World Grand Prix I*, (b) whether it's fun to play, and (c) if it's worth buying if you've already got a copy of the first game.

Right, (a) seems a logical place to start. And the biggy is that we're now only a year out of date again, with a full set of slimmed-down 1998 cars and their equally svelte drivers. This being *World GP* we also get the option to race with 1998 events, whereby if a driver crashed out halfway through the real race last year, he'll do it in your sitting room, too. (Although that's not strictly true. Wait to see



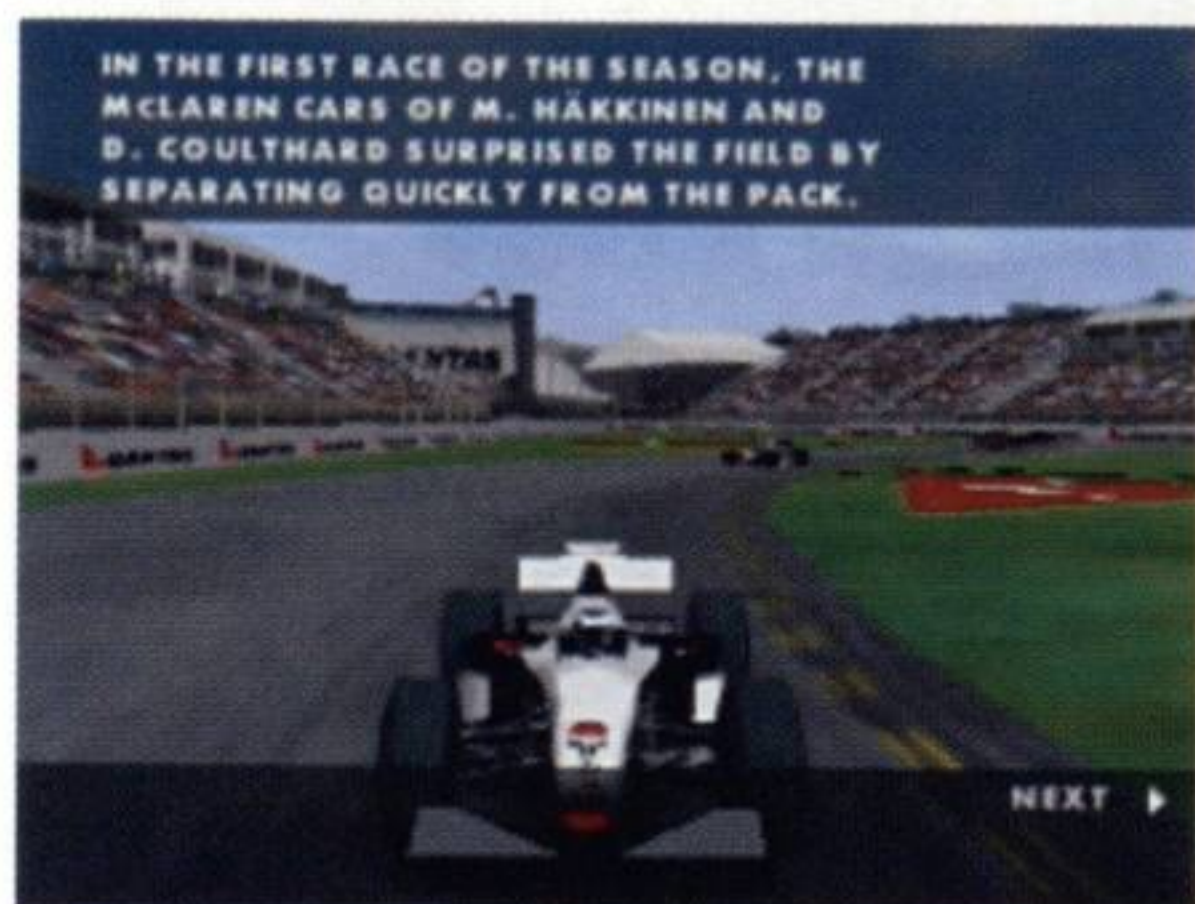
■ Squint hard, and you could be watching it on TV.





■ Squeezing your car past an opposition driver is always a neck-tightening moment – one false move and you can wave bye-bye to your wheels.

■ Don't let PlayStation owners tell you that *Gran Turismo*'s looks can't be beaten – *World Grand Prix II*'s vehicles are mouth-wateringly smooth and shiny.



Eddie Irvine squeeze Heinz-Harald Frentzen into the barrier on lap ten at Monaco, for example, and you'll be highly disappointed – in the *World Grand Prix II* recreation the Williams driver simply parks up without any prompting from the volatile Irishman.)

Other than that it's just minor cosmetic tweakery. The Paddock screen's been tidied up a bit. A new Tutorial mode takes you on a lap of each circuit and gives you tips. And it looks like the developer's managed to find a few more frames per second – *World Grand Prix I* wasn't quite as smooth as you'd demand an N64 game to be; now that super-detailed scenery slithers past you just fine.

Right. (b), then. And the big draw of a game like this is always going to be its making-you-feel-like-a-multi-million-pound-earning-F1-driver-ness. And here *World Grand Prix II* succeeds beautifully, courtesy of its fantastic graphics. The atmosphere of every track is captured perfectly, from the claustrophobic streets of Monte Carlo to the perpetual drizzle of Spa. And the "nice touches" of the original game remain, like the way your tyres pick up dust in gravel traps. (Those labels stay adhered a little longer this time, so you can have a good look at them.) You still get all the lovely, authentic, TV-style graphics, too.

The handling hasn't been simulated too accurately, luckily. Whereas a real, groove-tyred 1998 F1 car would spin into the gravel if you dared to sneeze, *World Grand Prix II* lets you take liberties with skids and grassy detours.

And if you can't stomach the full race distance there are other ways to amuse yourself. There's a nifty time trial

mode with ghost car, there's the two-player option (although it's hard to make a case for this against *TOCA 2*'s) and there are the challenges that drop you into the cockpit at crucial moments during 1998 races.

Which brings us rather neatly to point (c), where it becomes clear that you need to be three things to buy *World Grand Prix II* if you already owned the first game: an enthusiastic player of it to this day, an almost dangerously obsessive F1 stat-fiend and unreasonably rich.

*World Grand Prix II* finds itself suffering from the same unfortunate predicament that beleaguers all F1 games. It's trying to simulate a sport where, these days, if you want to win, you need absolutely nothing to happen for an hour and a half. So without the spectacular crashes of *Grand Prix 2* on the PC, or the versatile action replay mode of *Official F1 Racing* that's available for, oh... er, the PC as well, it's just a bit too dry to earn the full five stars.

It gets a well-deserved four, though, just for giving all N64-owning F1 fans something to rejoice about in these dark, game-lacking times.

Phew. That's that reviewers' nightmare taken care of for another year, then. ★★ ★★

Jonathan Davies

## IF YOU WANT TO WIN, YOU NEED ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO HAPPEN FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF

Or you could try...

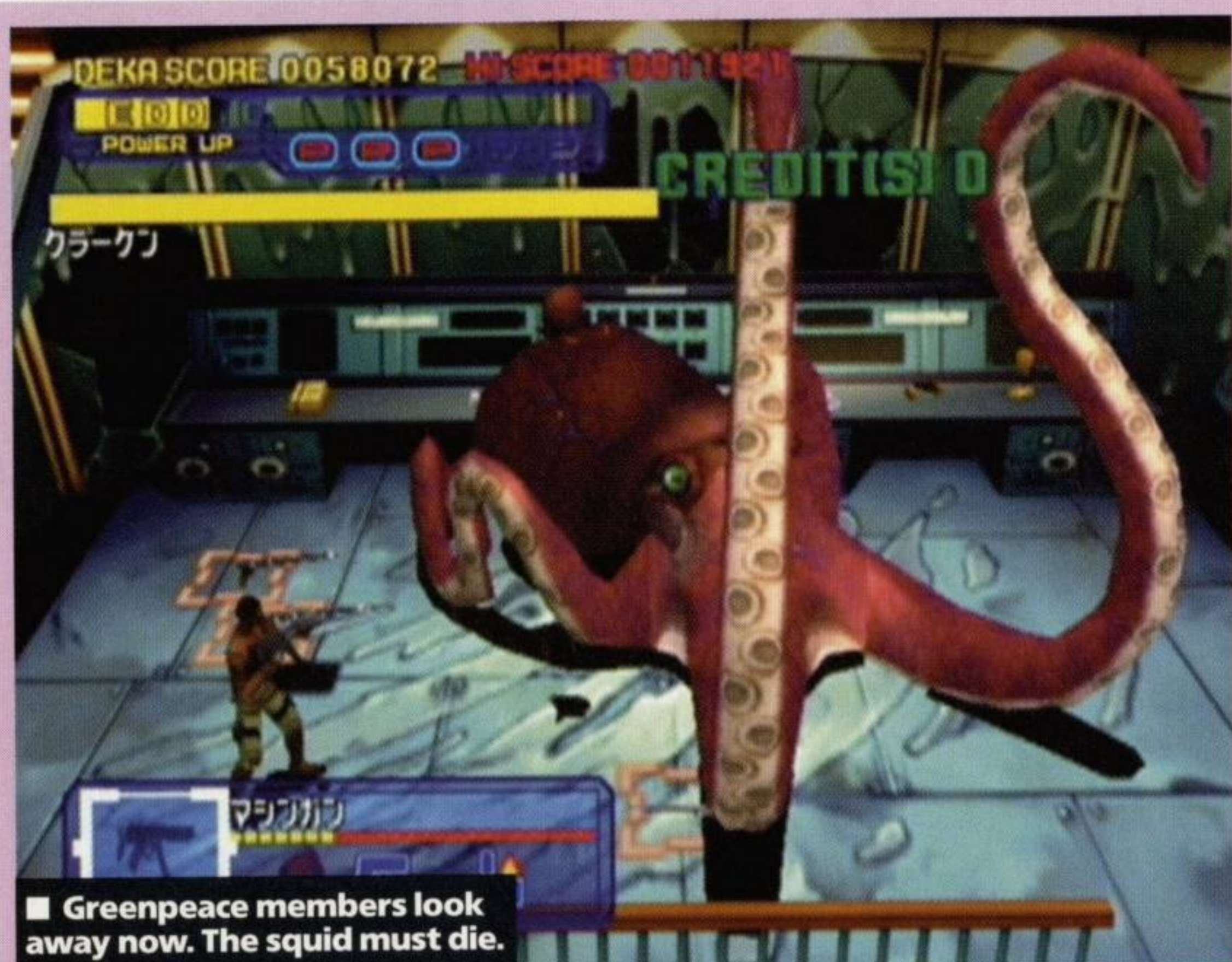
F-1 World Grand Prix  
Video System ★★ ★★  
97% the same, but you should be able to find it for a tenner less than WGP II.

F1 Pole Position  
Ubi Soft ★★  
But then again maybe not. It's a dinosaur left over from a previous era of gaming.



■ The red blotches on the right mean your car's burnin'.





■ Greenpeace members look away now. The squid must die.



■ Why anyone would want to rescue this dire damsel is unclear. Sega's FMV artists must have been having a bad day when the *Deka 2* job came in...

## COIN-OP

# FIGHTING FORCE

## PUT YOUR STAYING POWER TO THE TEST

### Dynamite Deka 2

- Publisher: **Sega** ■ Developer: **Sega** ■ Players: **1-2**
- Release date: **on sale now (Japan)** ■ Price: **£48.99**
- Contact: **Department 1 on 0171 916 8440**
- Extras: **VMS**

**Another Sega coin-op makes the journey between arcade and Dreamcast without losing anything in transit. But, robbed of its coin box, is this scrolling beat-'em-up worth playing at all?**

**A** word to the wise: not all coin-ops should be converted into console games. The reason? Shuffling around the arcade, we play most games for a couple of minutes, watchfully wary of the pound coins that are rolling through our fingers. Slumped on the lounge floor, cup of tea and bag of crisps waiting nearby, we want to get as *Final Zelda Solid* as we can. Five-minute gameplay died with the 8-bit home calculators. Er... computers.

Which is why Sega's conversion to Dreamcast of its arcade beat-'em-up, *Deka 2* (aka *Dynamite Cop 2*, aka *Die Hard Arcade 2*) simply doesn't cut the 128-bit mustard. Taking a fun-for-five-minutes-because-that's-all-you're-supposed-to-play-it-for coin-op such as *Deka 2* and putting it in a context where it will be expected to last days, or even weeks, was never going to be a good idea.

But we're running ahead of ourselves. *Deka 2* is a simple, one- or two-player beat-'em-up in the mould of Core's frumpy *Fighting Force*, which in itself was inspired by coin-op classics such as *Double Dragon* (ooh) and *Final Fight* (aah). There's none of the 50-button jiggery-pokery of *Street Fighter Alpha 3*'s combos here, just good old

punching, kicking and jumping. However, there's also none of the refinement found in Capcom's recent supreme scrapper, *Power Stone*. Defeating the bad guys in *Deka 2* is simply a matter of battering away on the buttons, swapping occasionally from punch to kick – whenever you can be bothered.

To make up for this simplicity, *Deka 2*'s settings are littered with various weaponry, ranging from the extremely powerful to the extremely silly. As you flick from one location to the next (none of that new-fangled scrolling around these parts), everything from missile launchers to vacuum cleaners can be used to batter the opposition into submission. Arcade office favourites include the bowl of apples, the swordfish carcass, and the lighter/aerosol combination. There's no doubt that this bizarre armoury is *Deka 2*'s highlight: if the game doesn't make you grin like a loon the first time you play, it's time to call a doctor.

However, the gameplay and plot's lack of depth ("So there's this boat, right, and there're these terrorists on it who've kidnapped this – remarkably ugly – girl, yeah, and you have to rescue her..."), leave the game in the ranks of also-ran. Frankly, it wasn't a grade-A arcade game in the first place, so any home conversion would have needed more than the few sub-games, such as a one-on-one scrap, that Sega has bunged on back of the main game. Oddly, an obscure 1980 coin-op by the name of *Tranquilliser Gun* is among the extras – perhaps one of the development team had a hand in coding that game? It's not much cop, anyway.

If nothing else, *Dynamite Deka 2* is a refreshing blast of uncomplicated gameplay. But, while it stood proud as a five-minute wonder in the arcade, back home there's simply not enough in it to keep you playing. Stay in the '90s and buy *Power Stone* instead. ★★ **Simon Garner**

### ↑ Uppers & Downers

#### Knuckle sandwich

- Ridiculously fun weaponry
- Easily accessible scrapping

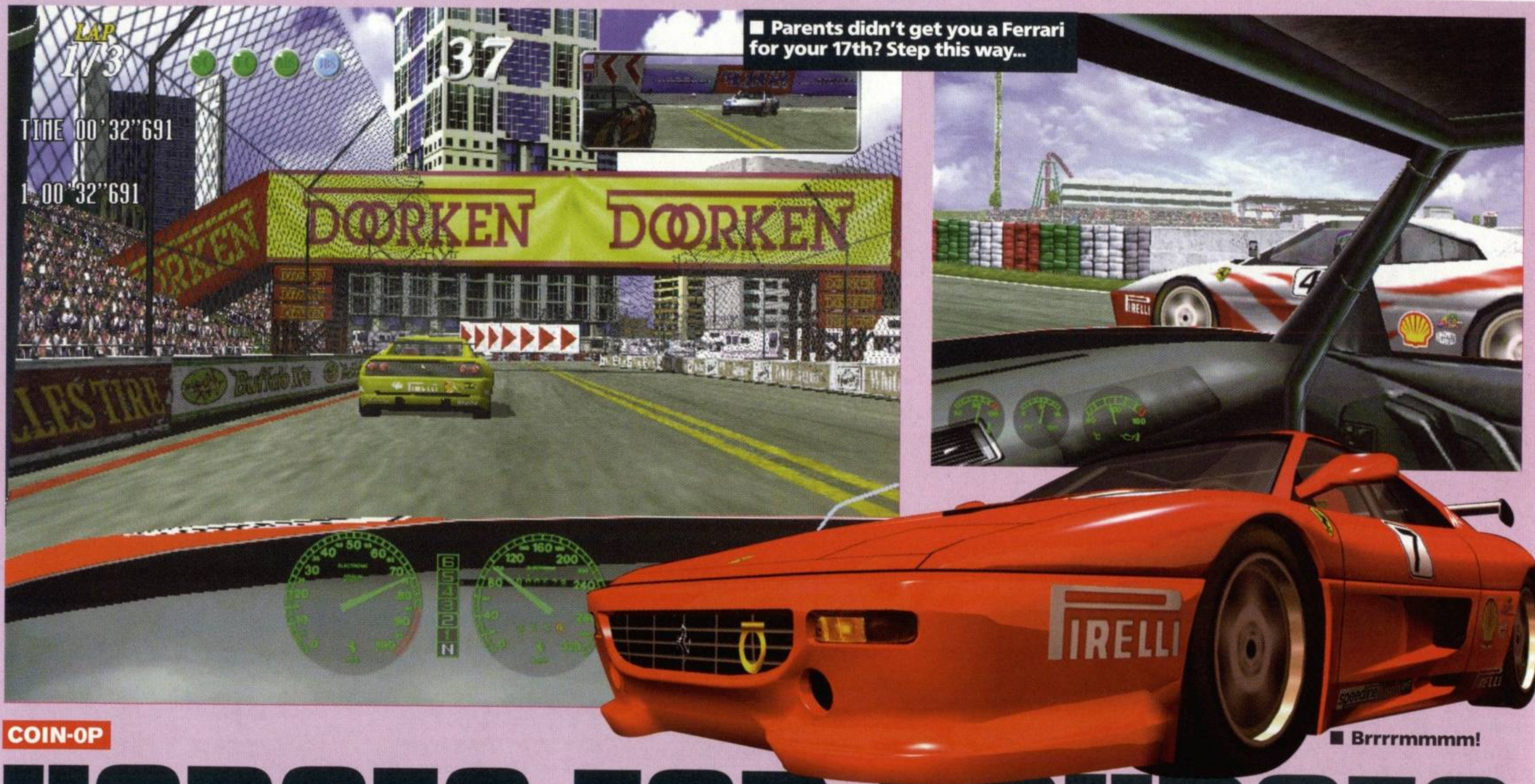
#### Finger buffet

- See the credits in half an hour
- No depth
- Awful plot



■ He's pinned down for a snog with nowhere to run.





COIN-OP

■ Brrrrmmmm!

# HORSES FOR COURSES

## SHAME SCHUMACHER IN STYLE

### Ferrari F355 Challenge

■ Publisher: **Sega** ■ Developer: **Sega AM2**  
 ■ Release date: **TBC** ■ Players: **1-8**

**The best racing game company in the world joins forces with the world's sexiest car manufacturer. Face it... you're going to have to play it.**

Coin-op games are a funny old business. While the realism of *Gran Turismo* helped it secure pole position in the consumer charts, coin-op racing sims have struggled to stay the course.

Sega, in particular, has fallen foul of this rule of reverse logic, with *Le Mans 24* and *Touring Car Championship* both failing to impress. And with the release of *Daytona 2* last year, it looked like Sega was ready to give up producing a racing simulator and return to a more comfortable world where gameplay is God. Little did we know that Sega and Ferrari (a marriage akin to Posh and Becks) had ordered the cake, had the dresses fitted and were wandering merrily up the aisle.

The result, *F355*, is truly awesome, and for once the designers – Yu Suzuki and his AM2 team – have thrown every option into the mix and found that it works.

You get to speed around six tracks: Monza, Sugo, Long Beach, the Motegi Twin Ring and two versions of Suzuka –

one longer than the other. Coupled with this are three different gear selection modes: Novice offers automatic transmission, Intermediate is semi-automatic with gear levers behind the wheel, and Simulator has a six-gear stick-shift and clutch pedal. Depending on which transmission set-up you select, there are four other control systems that can be switched on or off: stability, traction, anti-lock braking and intelligent braking.

*F355* sits in a deluxe cabinet complete with Ferrari decals, including three monitors to offer peripheral vision, a motor reactive steering system and enough speakers to shame Glastonbury. And it runs off *four* Naomi boards.

You can also test yourself in three levels of gameplay: Training shows you the line and breaking areas, Practice is a simple time trial and Race is the full-on, 24-car speed rush that you would expect.

The cabinet also incorporates a printer which vends a printout of your performance, which includes all the options you have chosen plus best lap time, a map of the track showing your racing line and braking areas and car telemetry showing gear selection, engine rev speed and actual speed for the best lap.

Impressed? Well, maybe not, because with all the options above you may think that it's a little too much for your average quid down the arcade. But that isn't the case. *F355* is awesome to play and is about as close as we'll ever get to racing the real thing – the Ferrari Club of America has already given it the thumbs up. ★★★★★

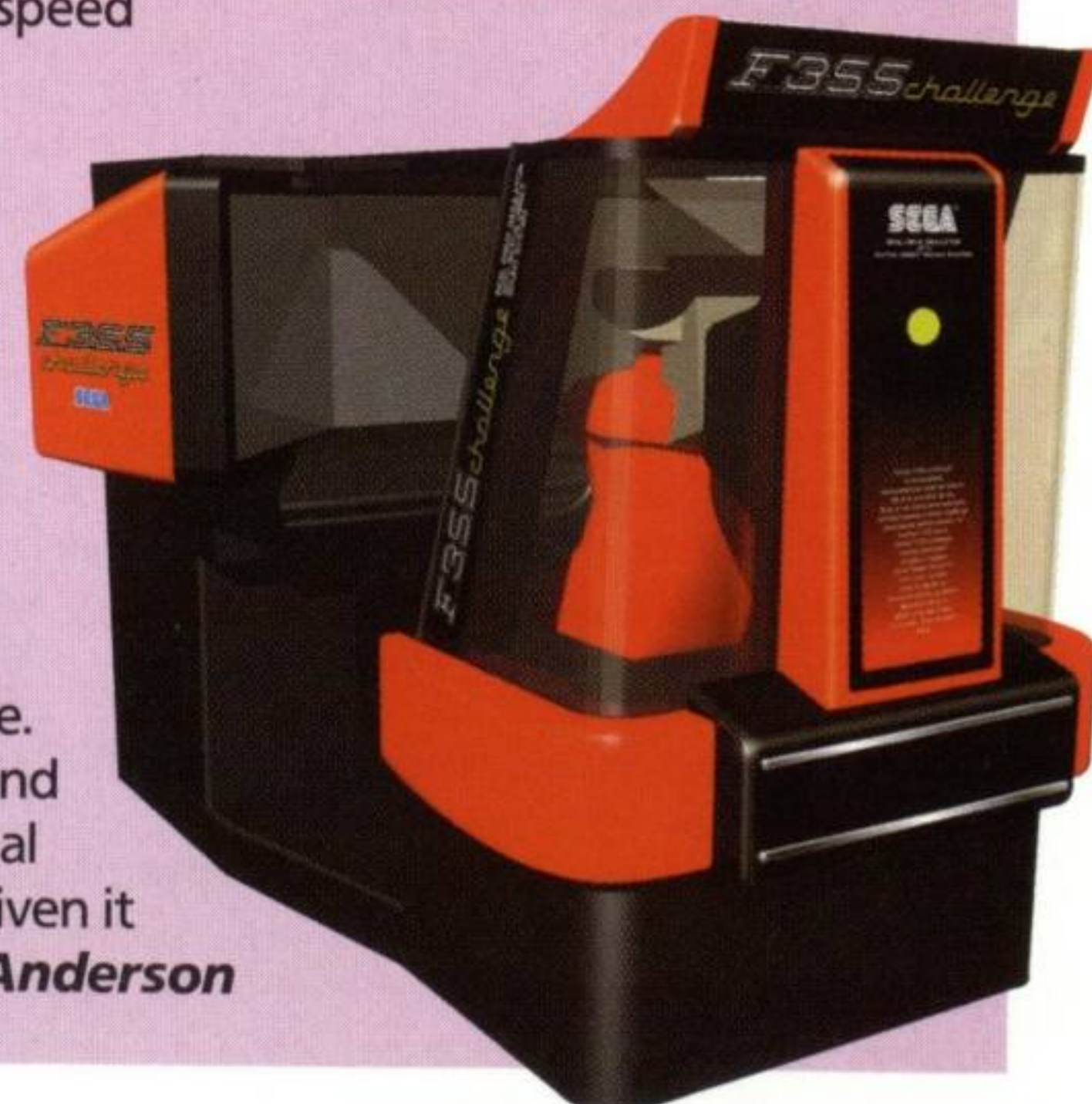
Cam Anderson

#### ↑ Uppers & Downers

**Open road**  
 ■ It's a Ferrari – you can drive it. 'Nuff said  
 ■ Enough options to make you weep tears of joy  
 ■ Basic thrasher mode  
 ■ Performance printouts

**Speed trap**  
 ■ The speakers can be a bit loud and...  
 ...er...  
 ■ That's it.

■ Check the three-monitor cab with booming speakers.



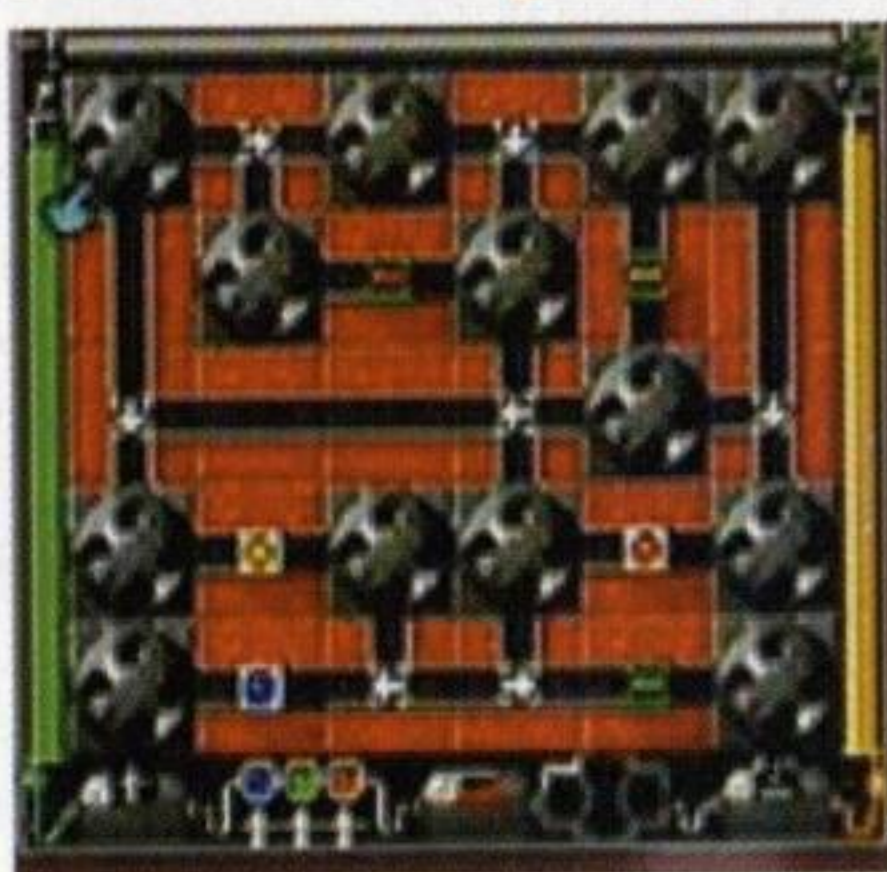


GAME BOY COLOR

# MINIATURE MARVELS

## THEY MAY BE SMALL, BUT THEY'RE BEAUTIFULLY FORMED

Alex Bickham gently caresses the latest batch of little wonders to grace the technicolour Game Boy.



### Logical

■ Publisher: **THQ** ■ Developer: **Conspiracy** ■ Price: **£24.99**  
 ■ Players: **1** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Extras: **colour only**

**Marbles and madness, in one tiny cart.**

■ Coming on like *Ker-Plunk* with a superiority complex, *Logical* is all about balls. Coloured balls, to be precise; the mainstay of many a cracking puzzle game. Sadly, this is no *Bust-A-Move 4*, as it's let down by its own simplicity.

The premise is that a series of coloured balls are fed on to the screen, one at a time. As they travel along, you have to catch them in *Downfall*-style notched wheels, and transfer them around a series of pathways, until you can fill a wheel's four notches with balls of the same colour. Fill every wheel with identically-hued balls, and it's on to the next level. Needless to say, you're playing against the clock.

All well and good, you might think; it's a classic case of simple ideas put together in a brain-teasingly "logical" way. And, truth be told, it's a great idea on paper, and would seem to be the stuff that classic puzzlers are made of. But in practice, it just doesn't have that *After Eight* more-ishness that you really want in a puzzler. As you claw your way through the levels, they get devilishly complex and really rather challenging, but there just aren't enough features to hold your interest for long. And it's not down to bad presentation; the graphics are smooth and polished, and the "mouse" pointer control system is great; the whole thing simply lacks that essential spice that should keep you coming back for more. ★★★



### Conker's Pocket Tales

■ Publisher: **Nintendo**  
 ■ Developer: **Rare**  
 ■ Price: **£24.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**

**Rare in average game shocker!**

■ Rare, the home-grown genius behind the likes of *GoldenEye* and *Banjo-Kazooie* for the N64 seems incapable of putting a foot wrong. Knocking out quality game after quality game, and out-cuteing even the mighty Shigeru Miyamoto with its rich assortment of personified woodland fauna, it's almost become more Nintendo than Nintendo itself.

On, then, to *Conker's Pocket Tales*. We've seen Conker before, as one of the contestants in *Diddy Kong Racing*, and he's soon to feature in his very own N64 title, *Twelve Tales*. In *Pocket Tales*, it's Conker's birthday, and he's got his lady round for a slice of cake and a bit of a knees-up. But up pops the evil Acorn and kidnaps her and the prezzies, leaving Conker blubbing like a schoolgirl. He soon pulls himself together though, and sets off in search of justice.

In essence, it's a *Zelda DX*-style top-down RPG with adventure, puzzle solving and baddie-boshing. To begin with, Conker is unarmed, and must find tools with which to dispatch the evil forest fiends pitted against him. He meets many characters along the way who'll offer pointers as to his next task, or objects to help him along.

The puzzles are all a bit simple, and you're always pointed in the right direction by some friendly creature – this is certainly one for the nippers. Sadly, it doesn't look too hot either, and falls way short of *Zelda DX* standards. Remember kids – cute doesn't pay the bills; you need a bit of charisma as well, and *Conker* just don't got it. ★★★



### Pocket Bomberman

■ Publisher: **Nintendo**  
 ■ Developer: **Hudson Soft**  
 ■ Price: **£24.99** ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1**  
 ■ Extras: **B&W compatible**

**Bomb the basin-head.**

■ Few are those who don't recall *Bomberman*, that rare and marvellous blend of strategy, action, and sheer knee-jerk reflex prompting, usually resulting in a foot/TV screen interface. If there were two games for the SNES that stood for engrossing multi-player action, they were *Mario Kart* and *Bomberman*, and as the former's been revisited on the N64, it's high time *Bomberman* poked up his tin-dad noggin for another go.

We're sad to see it go, but *Pocket Bomberman* has no link-up option, and therefore no multi-player mode. Boo! What we have instead is two game types, both revolving around our hero's unique ability to produce bombs bigger than himself, from nowhere.

The first game type, "Normal", is a sort of platform-cum-puzzle game, where the object is to clear each level of baddies. There are plenty of hidden traps, and the levels can be de-forested to reveal hidden power-ups, all pretty much along the lines of the original.

Normal mode is definitely what you'd buy the game for as the "Jump" game falls way short of any expectations you may have. It involves travelling upwards in a narrow column of landscape, blowing up and avoiding baddies, but you have no control over your jumping, as if every platform you land on is a trampoline.

Sometimes, it's all you can do just to avoid enemies; it's unusual, it's curious, and it's annoying. It's a puzzley platform game, with bombs. And not a lot else. ★★★



### Pokemon Pinball

■ Publisher: **Nintendo**  
 ■ Developer: **Nintendo** ■ Price: **£20** ■ Release date: **on sale now (import)** ■ Players: **1**  
 ■ Extras: **colour only**

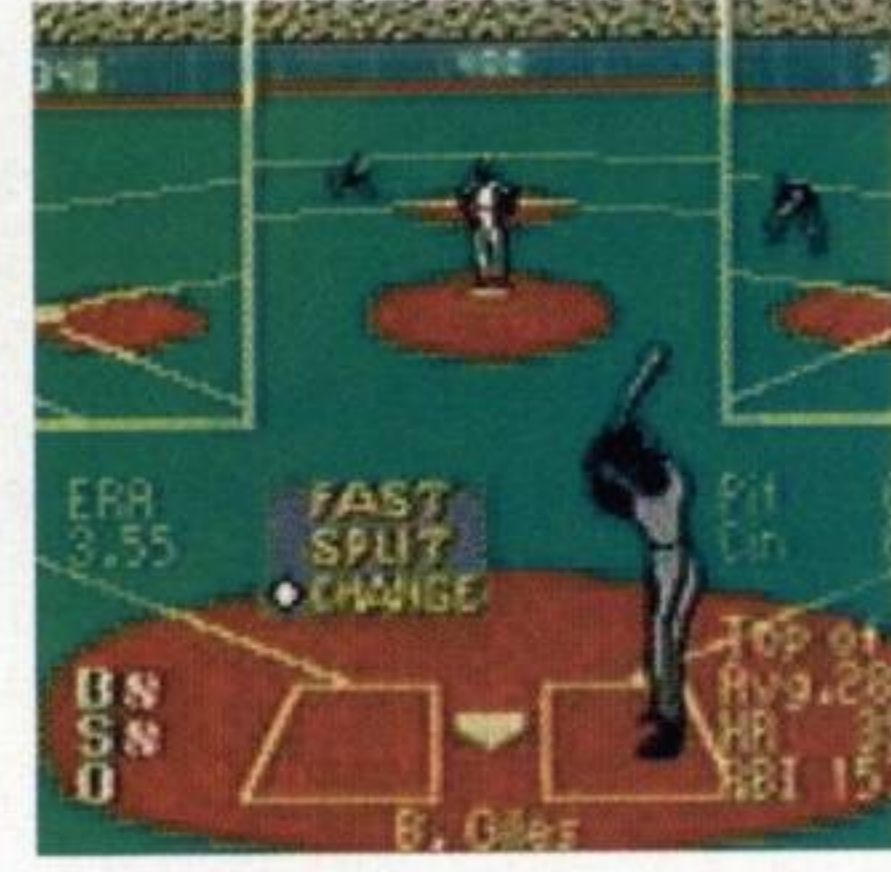
**He's a pinball lizard...**

■ Pikachu! PIKACHU!! Don't you just lurve that little fluffy yella fella? Well, millions worldwide can't be wrong, if *Pokemon* sales are anything to go by. When *Pokemon* comes to our shores in late autumn, you can bet your buns that things are going to go a bit *Poke*-mental.

*Pokemon Pinball* is just one of several *Pokemon* spin-off games, featuring the cute critters of Japanese and Stateside fame. It's, well, it's a pinball game. But, surprisingly, it's really rather good.

The first thing to note about this little bundle of supercharged cuteness is the fat pod that sits on the back of the cartridge. Like *Top Gear Pocket*, *Pokemon Pinball* carries its own little Rumble Pak around with it. It's such a great and inexpensive innovation that you wonder why people didn't think of it years ago. Another excellent feature is that it's one of the first games to enable you to transfer game data between Game Boys using the little infra-red doohickey on top of your GBC.

It's not all fancy hardware innovation; at the heart of this striking yellow-and-black cartridge is a compelling and absorbing blast of a pinball game. The feel of the ball on the table is great, as it displays inertia and momentum on its travels. There are two tables on which to play, and bonuses appear as chances of capturing *Pokemon* – as long as you consistently aim the ball right. It's hard enough to find a good pinball sim on most large consoles, and here we have a handheld miracle. ★★★



### All-Star Baseball 2000

■ Publisher: **Acclaim Sports**  
 ■ Developer: **Realtime Associates** ■ Price: **£24.99**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now**  
 ■ Players: **1** ■ Extras: **B&W compatible**

**Honey, I shrunk the team.**

■ American sports have never been huge over here, American football being the most notorious, but it's still nothing like the home grown spectacle of real football.

That hasn't stopped countless NFL, NBA, WCW and other sports body-endorsed games surfacing for various consoles though. The John Madden games have enjoyed a long-standing respect from Mega Drive gamers onwards, and have served to bridge the gap 'twixt Yank and Brit sport sims.

The closest most of us get to baseball, however, is primary school rounders, or that episode of *The Simpsons* where Homer ends up at a game with Monty Burns. Enter the fun-sized surprise that is *All-Star Baseball 2000*.

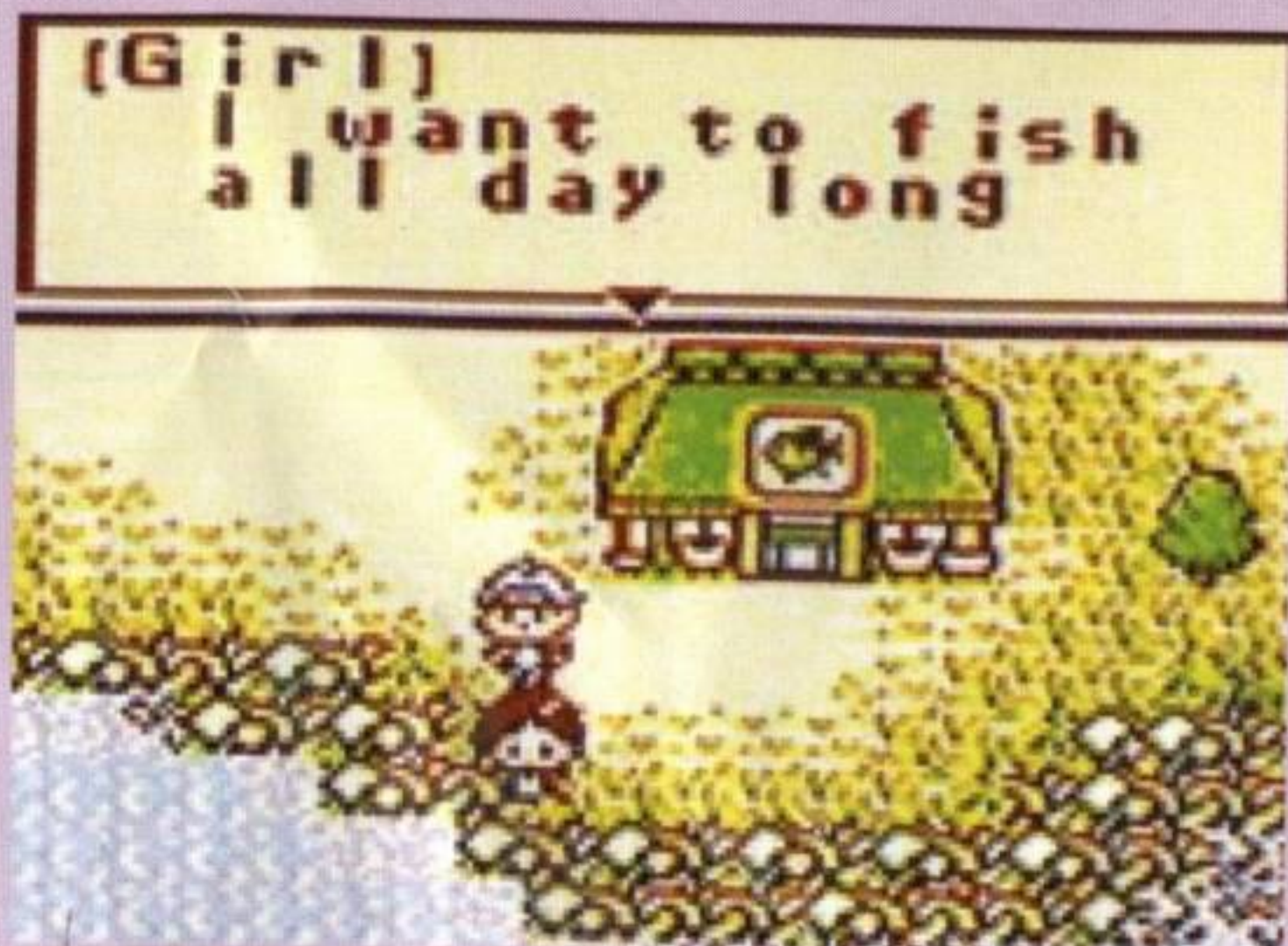
Yup, it's a baseball sim. Yup it's on the Game Boy Colour. But don't expect some pants little hit-and-run fest; *A-SB* gets downright tactical. You can monkey with team set-ups, re-organise your fielders, and the number of teams and real players on offer is huge.

After deciding which kind of game you're playing (Exhibition, Playoff, or a full-blown Season), you choose the teams, sort out your game-plan and get out on the field, where you're in control of batsmen, pitchers and fielders. The action is varied enough to hold your attention, and you can even play a strategic game. It'll appeal to the American market more than ours, but it's fun nonetheless, and one of the best baseball games around. ★★★



# GAME FISHING

## A WHOPPER IN YOUR POCKET



HP 70 | Fight  
EXP 215 | Menu  
307 | Escape



What do you want to do?

■ Wasps to fight, girls who live to fish. What hasn't River King got?

### Uppers & Downers

- Turbot**
- Angling without the gnats
  - Storyline keeps you playing
  - Shoals of fish
- Flounder**
- Annoying monster attacks
  - Occasionally abstruse
  - Mistaken-for-a-corpse risk

**GAME BOY COLOR**

## Legend of the River King

■ Publisher: **Nintendo** ■ Developer: **Victor** ■ Price: **£25**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now** ■ Players: **1** ■ Extras: **B&W compatible**

**Cast aside your guns and your bombs and instead persecute fish using a bit of string tied to a stick.**

If you play *Legend of the River King* on the train, you're likely to find fellow passengers glancing at you nervously. "He's dead, isn't he?" they'll be fearing. "Why hasn't he moved for so long?" Little will they realise that for the last three quarters of an hour, with imperceptible taps of the A button, you've been nursing a maggot-baited hook closer and closer to a fat – and hopefully hungry – trout.

*River King* has at its heart a strange dichotomy. For the most part it's a fishing game, with you hauling carp from their watery homes, dropping them into a bucket to die, and then flogging their carcasses to the local chippy in order to finance further piscine slaughter. Select Raise on the menu screen, however, and you'll find yourself looking after your own pet sturgeon, feeding it, cleaning out its tank and planting water weed for it, like a sort of subaqueous Tamagotchi. Weird.

Anyway, the fishing's the main thing. It's been arranged in RPG format, sending you on a quest to find the Guardian Fish to heal your poorly sister. To do this you'll have to work your way through a series of rivers and lakes, upgrading your tackle till you've got what it takes to handle catfish, eels and carp. Most of your time will be spent staring fixedly ahead, waiting for that tell-tale twitch of your rod, but the momentum's kept going by a storyline which has you running errands for other characters in return for extra equipment.

If your previous experience of angling is limited to the sub-game in *Link's Awakening* you'll find *River King* a different kettle of, erm, fish. Having selected the appropriate rod, float and bait, and registered a bite, you'll have to display the utmost delicacy as you coax your quarry towards the riverbank. It's unexpectedly and thoroughly absorbing, and a welcome alternative to the 1,808 platform games on the Game Boy.

Just two foibles relegate *River King* to could-have rather than must-have status: the first is that the RPG analogy has been taken a touch too far, so from time to time you find yourself being attacked by tiresome monsters as you wander up and down the river bank. The second is that it can be just too impenetrably odd for its own good – *Arcade* finally lost interest when the fish suddenly became impossible to catch, making off with the bait 15 times in a row. ★★★

**Jonathan Davies**

RRP  
£12.99

# STREET FIGHTER II

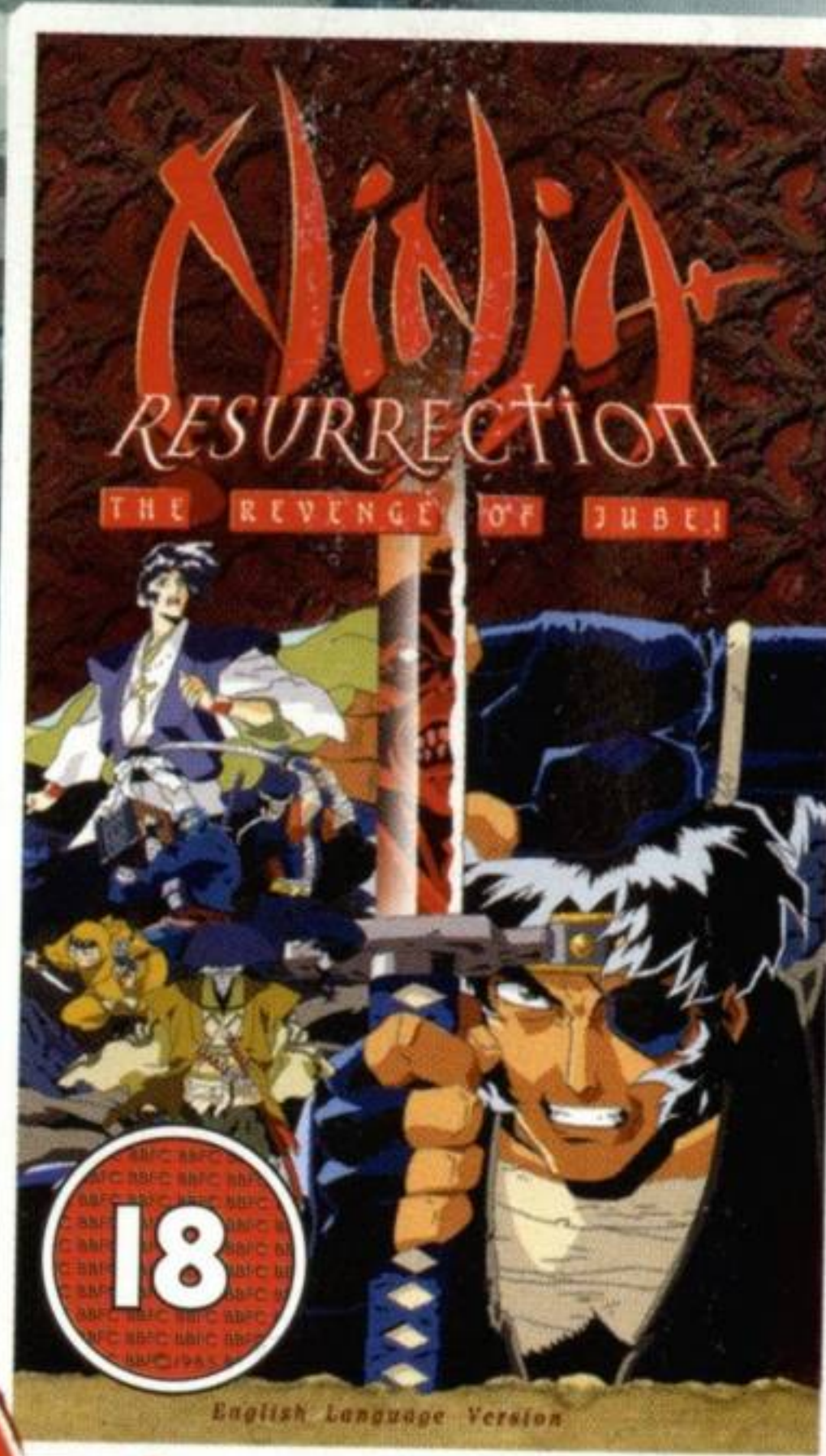


© 1995 Capcom/Group Tac - Amuse - Tomihiro Telecasting Corp. All Rights Reserved.

Fleeing from the sinister Mister Lin, Ken, Ryu and Chun Li are forced into a series of deadly confrontations. Even the temporary safety of stunt work for a Hong Kong action film is fraught with danger, especially when the star decides to make a battle to the death just a little too real in *Street Fighter II V, Volume 2!*

### The Child of Heaven Strides Rivers of Blood

Born of prophecy, a savior has come to lead the true believers in their hour of greatest need. Join a nightmarish journey through faith and betrayal as the infamous warrior Jubei Yagyu confronts the ultimate evil!



© Futaroh Yamada / Amuse • Phoenix

RRP  
£12.99

# NINJA RESURRECTION

THE REVENGE OF JUBEI

RELEASE DATE  
2<sup>nd</sup> AUGUST 1999



Available to buy from all good video retailers and mail order from A.D.Vision on 01248 421000

e-mail: [ADVUK@ADVFILMS.COM](mailto:ADVUK@ADVFILMS.COM)  
[WWW.ADVFILMS.COM/ADVUK](http://WWW.ADVFILMS.COM/ADVUK)



# Accessories

WHICH  
ONES BEST?  
PC  
JOYSTICKS



## Panther XL

■ For: **PC** ■ Price **£49.99**  
■ Available from **Mad Catz** on **01992 707400**

■ This odd-looking beast consists of a conventional stick and a not-so-conventional trackball, the idea being that you can use it not just for the games you'd usually play with a joystick, but also for all manner of 3D shooters. Not a good idea. If you want to master the likes of *Half-Life*, there really is no substitute for good old mouse and keyboard – and yet manufacturers will keep trying to replace them. Clearly, the answer is not to bother.

That said, the XL isn't all bad – for instance, the buttons are fully programmable, and the actual stick is a brawny affair. And, who knows? Maybe you'll find a use for the other half of its "innovative" two-for-the-price-of-one "concept". Anyone for a game of trackball marbles? ★★★



## Destiny D5

■ For: **PC** ■ Price **£29.99** ■ Available from **LMP** on **0800 0183 061**

■ Yet another robust, bargain-priced offering from the Destiny range, and a match for just about any other joystick you can name. Boasting hat switch and throttle (essential for flight sims), analogue axis and a fully programmable set of eight buttons, the D5 nimbly

covers the three most important bases – reliability, accuracy and durability.

The stick's action is a touch more rigid than it should be, and the throttle is nowhere near smooth enough – classic examples of corners being cut to bring down the price. The D5 would also have benefited from the addition of another button or four, but for the amount of cash you're spending, it's up there with the best of them. Cheap and, despite minor drawbacks, nicely cheerful. ★★★

## ★ OUR CHOICE

### Sidewinder Precision Pro

■ For: **PC** ■ Price **£34.99** ■ Available from **Microsoft** on **0345 002000**

■ That charcoalish grey-green colour can mean only one thing – you're in the presence of the best there is. The Precision Pro is yet another example of Microsoft's dominance of the peripheral department. A step up from the traditional Sidewinder joystick, this king of the desktop wagglers sports all the right features: throttle, hat, fully programmable buttons, easy-to-configure control software, a comfortable grip and even some brand-new digital technology – just to make sure that the accuracy is second to none. It's USB-compatible too, so you shouldn't have any trouble setting it up (provided your computer can cater for such luxuries).

Have you been looking for the ultimate in durable, sturdy, all-purpose, non-Force-Feedback joysticks? Then sing hallelujah, for your searching is now over. ★★★★★



## SFS Flight Controller USB

■ For: **PC/iMac** ■ Price **£29.99**  
■ Available from **Suncom** on **01453 885855**

■ The SFS is the joystick equivalent of a pair of Adidas Gazelles – retro look, pretty comfortable, but you wouldn't want to put it to the ultimate test. Sure, you can run for the bus in your Gazelles, but take on the London Marathon? Of course not, and this stick is much the same – it's sturdy enough, but it simply doesn't boast as many good features as its competitors. (Okay, that was a crap analogy.)

If you want to program the SFS, you'll need to get hold of a compatible throttle (these are sold separately). And, although the buttons are situated roughly where you'd want them to be, three or four more would have been nice.

The hat is beautifully tough – there's even an attractively large LED sitting on top of it – but all in all this is a pretty basic stick. One for the traditionalist, then – and an undiscerning one at that. ★★



## Wingman Interceptor

■ For: **PC** ■ Price **£49.99** ■ Available from **Logitech on 0181 308 6582**

■ The Interceptor is clearly trying to become the definitive flight sim controller, and it doesn't do a bad job either. On top of the stick are three (yes, three) hats, which will come in exceptionally useful for flight sims that ask you to check multiple views on a regular basis. The nine buttons on the

base of the stick are fully programmable, and the smooth throttle makes it ideal for fans of demanding flight sims.

The stick's action is a touch on the loose side, however, and you'll experience a bit of slippage if the base isn't fixed to your desk as firmly as possible. Carping aside, though, the Wingman Interceptor is one of the most comprehensive all-in-one flight sim peripherals around and, at £50, you don't have to shell out bagloads of money for it either. ★★★★★



**ALSO ON SALE THIS MONTH**



## Vix Interactive Games Chair

■ For: **PlayStation/N64** ■ Price: **£80**  
 ■ Available from **Meld Marketing Strategies Ltd on 01242 582067**

■ Few would argue that the chair is an important item of apparatus if you're after optimum games-playing enjoyment. Thankfully, the living rooms where our game consoles are located are full of chairs. So versatile are these chairs that we employ them for other leisure activities too:

watching television, reading the paper, or plain "lounging around". So what use could we have for a chair that's been designed specifically for games-playing, but which is actually uglier, less comfortable and more expensive than our existing chairs?

Ask Meld Marketing, which has created this futile seat. It doesn't have legs, so you have to sit on the floor like it's some kind of rowing machine. Except that rowing machines are designed to keep you fit, thus preventing muscle strain, whereas sitting in this chair could do your back in. You can place your steering wheel, or even your dinner, on the little metal tray if you want. But you won't want to, because the Vix Interactive Games Chair is bollocks. ★

## Play Safe Carry Case

■ For: **PlayStation** ■ Price: **£50** ■ Available from: **Foam Forms on 01285 659669**

■ Your mates are having a blokes' night in. "We've got a fridge full of Stella, some takeaway Chinese and subscriptions to Sky Sports and Television X: The Fantasy Channel, so be here at eight," says Dave. "Oh, and bring your PlayStation." Leaving aside the nagging doubt that you're valued not for your genial company but for your access to popular gaming hardware, how to transport Sony's magic grey box becomes the issue.

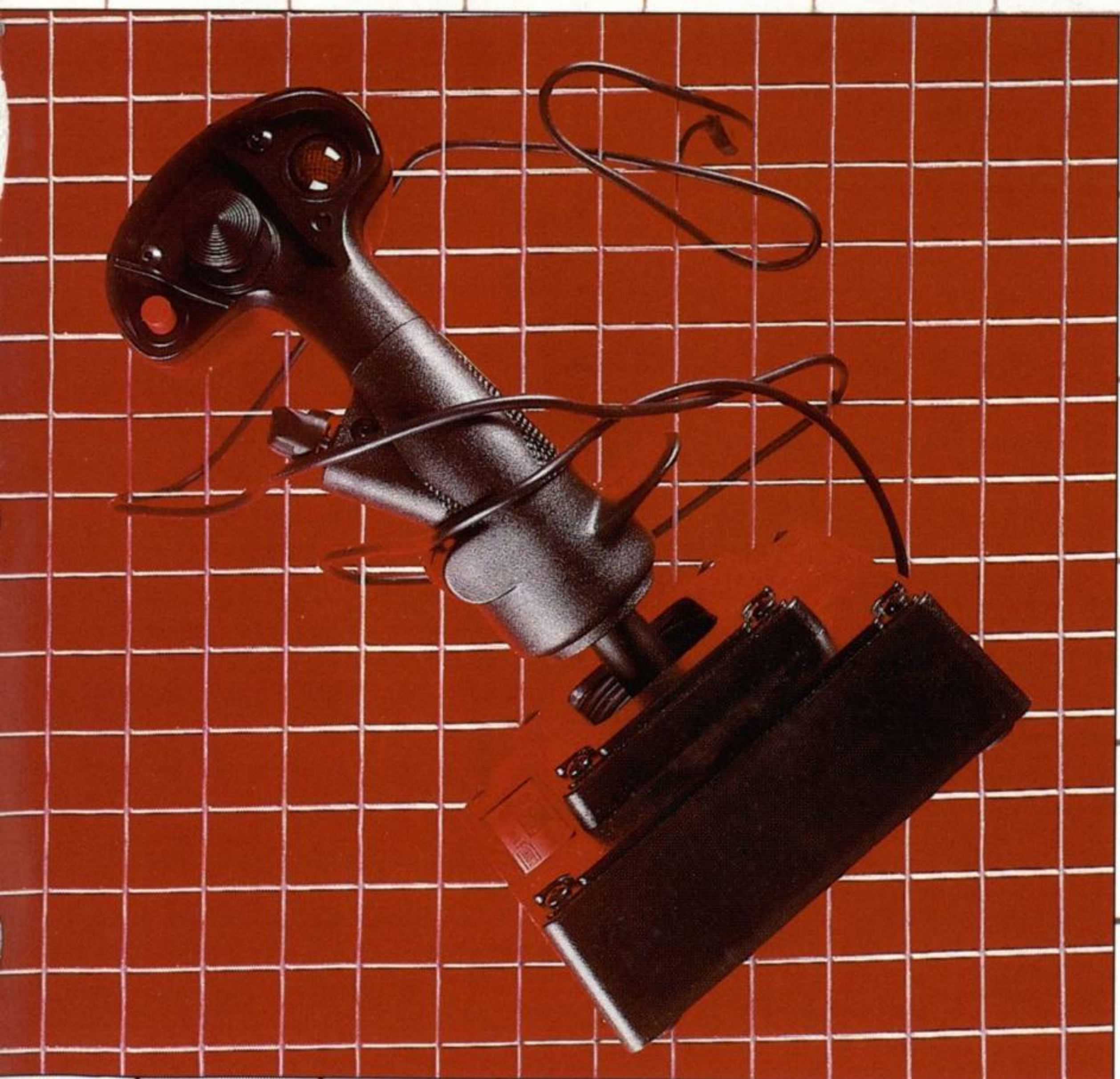
Enter Foam Forms, whose Play Safe Carry Case has been designed for this very purpose. Unfortunately, unless you believe that carrying a briefcase invests you with a sense of importance beyond your social status, lugging the Play Safe around could make you feel a bit silly. Particularly as



it's not the kind of flash briefcase that people fill with gold bars in Hollywood films about CIA corruption.

The Play Safe will hold one machine, along with all your leads, games and memory cards. Bafflingly, however, there's only room for one joystick. Be warned, the Play Safe could do untold damage to both your bank balance and your credibility. ★★

PHOTOGRAPHY: JUSTIN SCOBIE

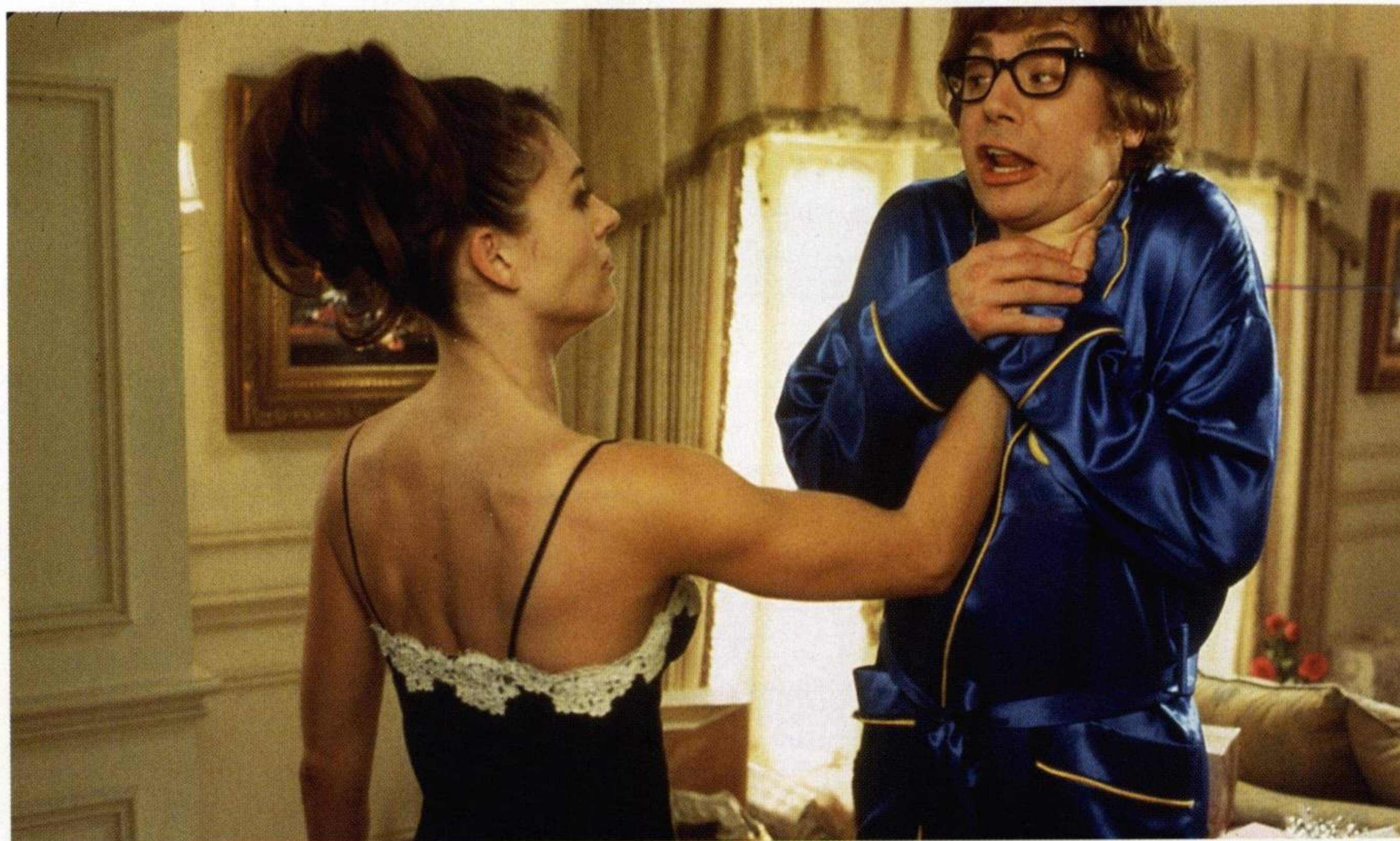




## Film of the Month

# SHAG TO THE FUTURE

## THE WELCOME RETURN OF BOSTIN' AUSTIN



■ Geeky, lecherous '60s throwback takes on the might of the *Star Wars* empire – and triumphs! Groovy, baby.

## Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me

■ Director: **Jay Roach** ■ Starring: **Mike Myers, Heather Graham, Michael York, Robert Wagner** ■ UK release: **30 July**

Having somehow cracked from his outer-space cryogenic coffin, Dr Evil has returned to Earth.

■ "And when Mr Bigglesworth gets angry, people die!!!"



After confronting his son on a "My Father is an Evil Dictator" Jerry Springer special and chucking a couple of chairs about, Evil soon turns his attentions toward his favourite hobby – world domination.

Taking advantage of his swirly new time machine and accompanied by his cloned dwarf Mini-Me, the little-finger sucking baldie flashes back to 1969 to deal with his tombstone toothed nemesis Austin Powers. His cunning plan? To steal Power's mojo and render his adversary eternally impotent...

Who would have thunk it? Just when you thought *The Phantom Menace* had the summer season sussed, it was barged from its box-office perch by a myopic, over-sexed dental monstrosity. Clearly, when Austin

Power's teaser trailer shrugged "If you see one film this year, make it *Star Wars*. If you see another one, make it *Austin Powers*", it wasn't joking. And, to be honest, Mike Myers's commendably bawdy sequel deserves every punter it gets. Opening with a credit sequence that serves as an extended nob gag, Myers's lewd intentions are set out from the start – keep it quick, keep it stupid and, whenever possible, shove in an arse gag.

Unlike the original movie, which spent its time dealing with such fripperies as character and plot, this goes all out for laughs. Joyfully crapping on the complications of its time travel plot, this is as close as the '90s has got to the sheer skit-after-skit assault of *Airplane!* Fact is, this flings so much hit-and-miss material, you'll each have your own prolapse-inducing favourite (although the thoroughly indecent, impossibly funny shit-drinking gag is a safe bet for the most uncontrollable snort).

But it's Myers who makes the pic, taking on three roles (roostering buffoon Austin, comic misfire Fat Bastard and blundering nemesis Dr Evil, who this time gets equal billing). Every time the slaphead appears, an indecent snort is guaranteed, whether it be from his inability to control his stupid electronic chair or deadpanning "www.shhh.com" to shut up his moaning teenage son. See it with a crowd, laugh your arse off and stick around for some of the daftest end credits in years. ★★ ★

■ Drew Barrymore has *Never Been Kissed*. Huge "suspension of disbelief" time.



## Rushmore

■ Director: **Wes Anderson**  
 ■ Starring: **Bill Murray, Jason Schwartzman, Olivia Williams**  
 ■ UK release: **20 August**

Seeing as your average high school comedy rarely raises above the smart-arsed and slappable, Wes Anderson's dry-witted and appealingly odd feature comes as a breath of fresh laughing gas.

Max Fischer (Schwartzman) is an infuriatingly bright student, good at everything, yet great at nothing, flunking his grades but managing to run every club there is at Rushmore Academy. In fact, he's so self-assured, when he develops a crush for widowed teacher Miss Cross (Williams), he's convinced that she'll eventually cave in. But soon he finds he's in competition with local tycoon Blume (Murray), who's also gone and fallen for the mistress.

A critical darling in the States but a box-office bellyflopper, it's easy to see why – with no pretty leads and a love triangle that resembles *The Graduate* in reverse, it's a tough one to sell. But *Rushmore's* many pleasures lie in its left-field charm and sly set-pieces. And it also boasts a first-class, typically happy-go-cynical performance from Murray. Laudibly odd and stubbornly unconventional as it is, one senses *Rushmore's* sweet surrealism will have significantly more appeal over here. ★★ ★

## Never Been Kissed

■ Director: **Raja Gosnell**  
 ■ Starring: **Drew Barrymore, David Arquette, Leelee Sobieski**  
 ■ UK release: **27 August**

■ Okay, take a belief-suspension pill and swallow this. Ditzzy Drew





Barrymore is a copy editor on *The Chicago Sun-Times* with ambitions to become a reporter. The inevitable big break? Her publisher sends her on a make-or-break undercover job at the local high school to scrape up her own story.

Barrymore has never – that's never – been kissed before. She's 24. The kids in the school are 17. Something of a nerdy girl at school, she has similar problems fitting in with the hep cats of the class, a considerable downer considering her bosses want a story on teenage sex, an activity alien to those geeky bottom feeders in the high school food chain. In desperation, she asks her brother Rob (Arquette) to help her out. He returns to school, becomes number one fun guy of the month, she latches on and soon pursues a student-teacher relationship scoop. And all the

while, the layabouts on the paper are viewing her progress through a camera hidden in her brooch.

And the final dose of belief-suspension? It ain't too shoddy. Granted, the laughs are light and the script's fluff-brained, but Barrymore lifts the movie, investing her character with such unsophisticated sweetness that the thundering clichés melt into the distance. Christ knows what will happen when she finally decides to appear in something decent. ★★★

### All About My Mother

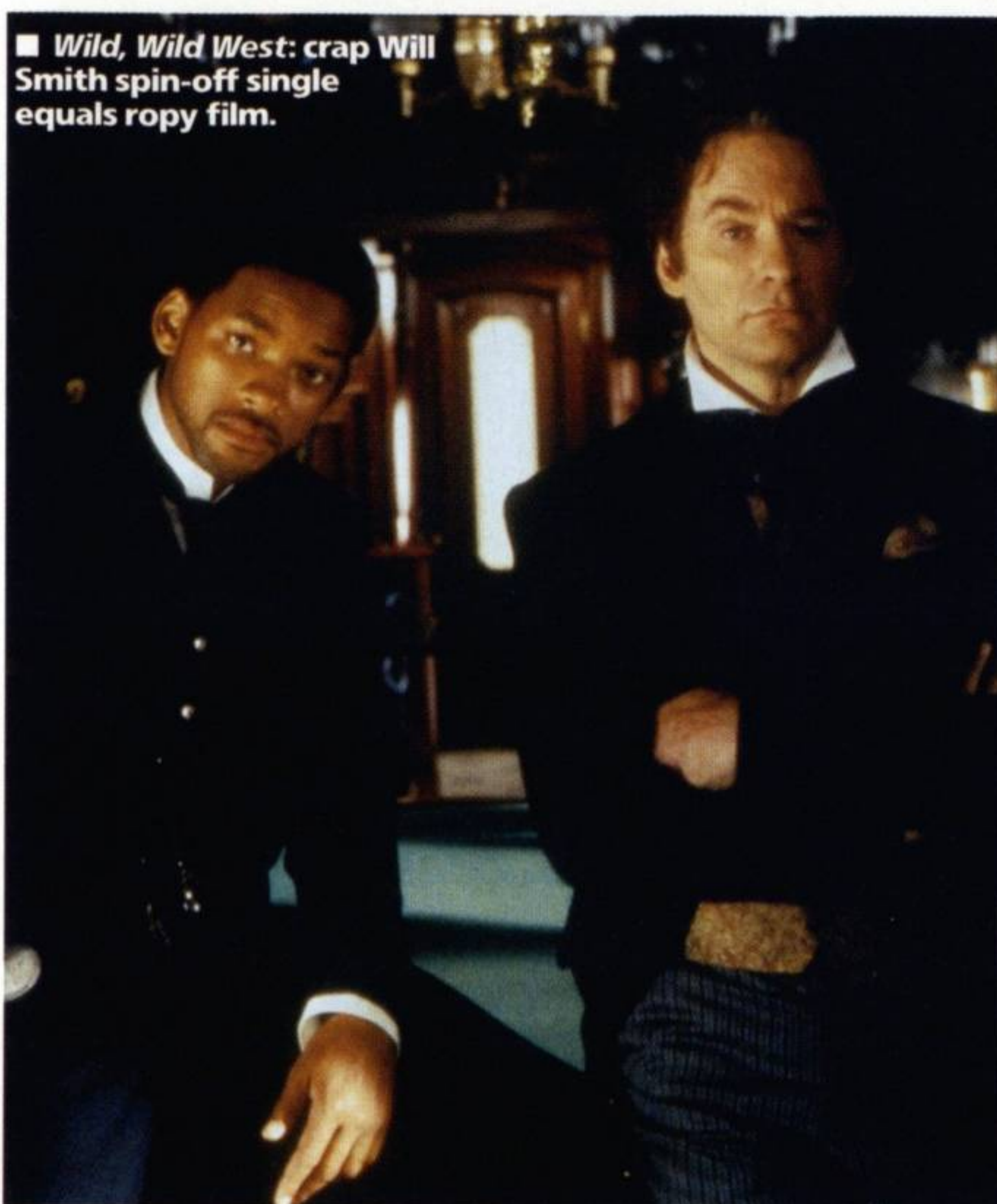
■ Director: **Pedro Almodovar**  
 ■ Starring: **Cecilia Roth, Antonia San Juan, Penelope Cruz** ■ UK release: **27 August**

■ Even though it was snubbed by this year's Palm D'Or jury in Cannes, Pedro Almodovar's *All About My Mother* emerged as one of the rare must-sees at this year's festival. Anybody familiar with the Spanish auteur's output would probably expect the usual high camp and bawdy humour to be in abundance.

But this signals a change in direction for Almodovar – by far his most mature movie, the signature kitsch has been muffled in order for him to delve into weightier themes. Shining as the pic's emotional core, Cecilia Roth is outstanding as Manuela, a single mother who, having seen her son killed by a car, attempts to relieve her grieving by travelling back to Barcelona to revisit past friends, most of whom are eccentric transvestites. Soon she finds herself surrounded by an oddball ensemble of fallen nuns and vibrant drag queens, who, one way or another, help her to untangle her past and her future.

Sounds stark, but Almodovar's light touch invests both humour and spirit to mould a unique, sharply scripted melodrama, performed to perfection by a first

■ *Wild, Wild West*: crap Will Smith spin-off single equals ropy film.



rate ensemble. Go and see it and it'll resonate in your mind for years to come. ★★★★★

### Wild, Wild West

■ Director: **Barry Sonnenfeld**  
 ■ Starring: **Will Smith, Kenneth Branagh, Kevin Kline** ■ UK release: **13 August**

■ Take the world's favourite jug-eared actor, reunite him with the director behind *Men in Black*, pour on a generous fizzle of state-of-the-art effects and – boom! – a surefire hit.

Surefire shit, more like. Sonnenfeld's primary tactic is to assault the viewer with a volley of whizzing set-pieces, stupid Bond-like gadgets and heavy-handed gags. It's like watching a cartoon (without the subtlety) and the weak storyline is barely discernable as the characters lurch

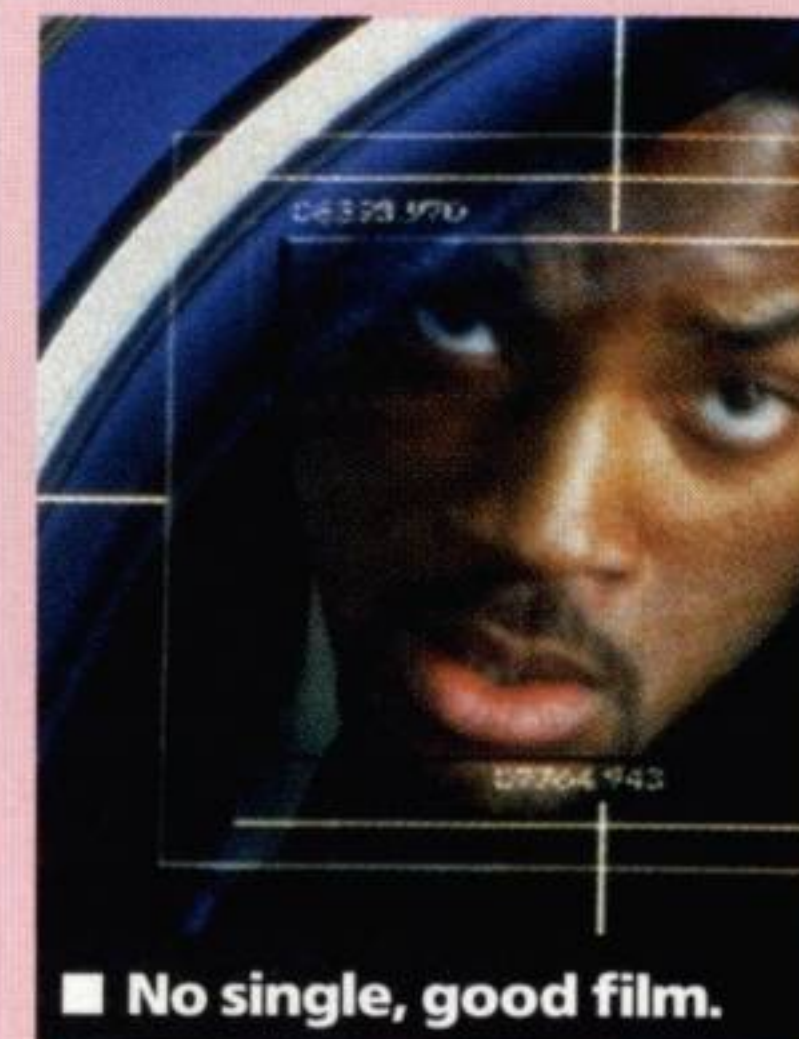
pointlessly from one noisy farce to the next.

Loosely based on the '60s cult TV series, *Wild, Wild West* teams government agents James West (Smith) and Artemus Gordon (Kline) as they attempt to stop Dr Arliss Loveless (a rather scarily-bearded Branagh) from assassinating the US President. For anyone not familiar with the TV show (and that probably includes everybody in the UK), the mingling of cowboy chic with sci-fi style is arbitrary and daft.

Chemistry between the leading duo is scant as Smith is at his mugging, hyperactive worst and Kline just wonders what he's doing there.

To underline *Wild, Wild West*'s constant misfiring, the crucial scene suddenly rejects the hi-tech as Smith and Kline grapple with a flying bicycle. Tragic. ★

## Videos to rent



■ No single, good film.

### Enemy of The State

■ (Touchstone)  
 ■ Extravagant paranoid fantasy with Will Smith as the unwitting victim of a massive government surveillance operation. After Will comes into possession of a videotape depicting a politically-motivated murder, the corrupt congressman behind it all makes Will's life a misery by planting secret mics in his cacks.

Bruckheimer channels his blockbusting skills into some brilliant depictions of technology at work, and there's only one exploding building. Meanwhile, Will Smith acts almost humbly and he's given no opportunity for jive-talking or irritating tie-in singles. Impressive. ★★★★★

### Pecker

■ (Entertainment In Video)  
 ■ Amusing John Waters film which wears the "quirky" tag without shame. Pecker is an amateur teenage photographer whose sharp, endearing portraits of smalltown life become a *cause célèbre* for the New York art establishment. The story is pure ham, but that's half the point. The plot is merely a frame on which to hang a gallery of charming characters, from the kleptomaniac best friend and the sugarholic baby sister to the gay stripper/dancer who gets fired for "teabagging" a bald customer. A good laugh, although quaintness prevents it from greatness. ★★★★★

### The Opposite of Sex

■ (Columbia Tristar)  
 ■ Another Christina Ricci film where she plays a teen lead, although here she's queen bitch rather than cute girlfriend. Deedee begins the movie by spitting on her stepdad's grave and goes on to seduce the gay lover of her half-brother, shoot her ex-boyfriend, steal a trust fund, elope to LA (later Canada), have a baby and still keep everyone wrapped around her little finger. Five or six brilliant characters vie for Deedee's attention, including a surprisingly emotive performance by Lisa "Phoebe" Kudrow as the embittered maiden aunt figure. *The Opposite of Sex* could have done without the periodically irritating postmodern voiceover, but otherwise it's a clever and tender film. ★★★★★



■ Pecker. Quite.

## DVD | The biggest new releases



■ *Practical Magic*: get witch quick.

### Practical Magic

■ (Warners)  
 ■ Distinctly mediocre romantic "comedy". Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman are witches, suffering under a curse that deals out an untimely death to any blokes they accidentally fancy. Extras include: full-length audio

commentary from Bullock, director Griffin Dunne and others, plus two featurettes. ★★★

### Queer as Folk

■ (VCI)  
 ■ Quality TV drama which started off as the "gay *This Life*" but soon developed into a phenomenon of its own. Depictions of

underage gay sex generated controversy, but the emotional weight and cultural süss of the series were its true merits. This double DVD has the entire eight-part series. Extras include: behind the scenes footage, interviews with actors, comprehensive photo library. ★★★★★

## Videos to buy

### A Bug's Life

■ (Disney/Pixar)

■ It might be 100% computer-generated, but the characters, plot and – most importantly of all – humour of *A Bug's Life* is as strong as you'll find in any other video release this year. Following the adventures of Flick the ant, *Bug's Life* has all the ingredients of an instant classic: the royal love interest (Princess Atta), the menacing ant-eating grasshopper (Hopper) and the band of inept circus rejects who inadvertently end up helping the aforementioned misfit ant to save his colony from destruction.

With the superb voice-overs (especially Kevin Spacey as Hopper

and Denis Leary as the hard, but unfortunately effeminate-looking, ladybird) and visual gags aplenty, *A Bug's Life* is a movie that you'll want to watch time and time again. ★★★★★

### South Park Series Two: Volumes 3 & 4

■ (Warner Vision)

■ Cute, badly drawn cartoon kids in profane, lavatory-oriented adventures. We know all this, we've abused the catch phrases to hell and some of our less fashion-motivated chums have even worn the T-shirts. But now the mischievous mites are beginning to look a little jaded. Each episode provides an inkling of comic invention – the



■ "Hurry! Fart some more!"

giant firework snake, Jesus's cable TV soap special, Kyle and Stan hallucinating a flashback in which Kenny doesn't actually die – but it's mostly rather tiresome. Simply laughing at turds and people with odd diseases isn't enough to expect you to pay for the privilege at the rate of £11 an hour. ★★★

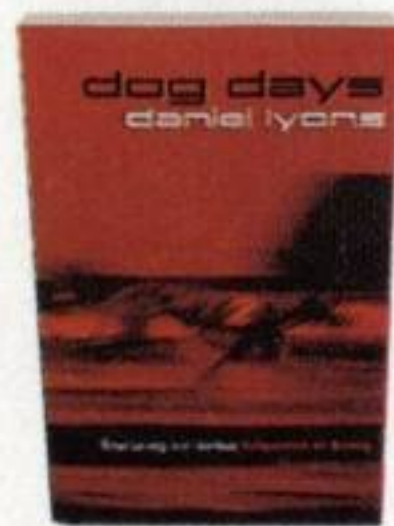


## Book of the month

■ The best dog racing/computer programming novel ever written.



# MAN BYTES DOG HAPLESS HACKER WHIPS WHIPPET



## Dog Days

■ Author: **Daniel Lyons**  
 ■ Publisher: **Bloomsbury**  
 ■ Price: **£6.99**  
 ■ ISBN: **0-7475-4401-8**

Confessional novels from former computer programming nerds have become so popular in recent years, they almost deserve a genre of their own. There's nothing in Daniel Lyons' biography to indicate a former life as a code-munching minion of some evil software corporation, but plenty in this beautifully observed and vastly entertaining debut novel to suggest he's been there, done that and got the ZedSoft Systems T-shirt to prove it. If it's not the convincing handle on programming technology and culture, it's the transparent and always hilarious detest of Bill Gates which proves Lyons' credentials.

Central characters Reilly and Evan are genius creations. Hippie hangovers from the garage-programming scene of the '70s, they're left to their own devices in the heart of Ionic Software, trading conspiracy theories and terrorising the zombies in marketing. That's until Ionic pulls the plug

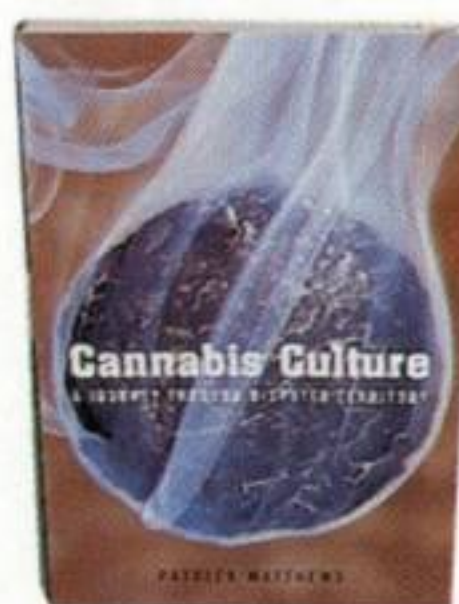
on *Nectar*, the pair's beautiful-but-flawed Web shopping program, and the sum total of two years' hard coding. Reilly's girlfriend dumps him for a stuffed shirt, his unenlightened neighbours in Boston's rundown North End make his life a misery and he thinks he's suffering from impotence. Drastic measures are required.

These measures include kidnapping the local mafioso's prize greyhound and hacking into bank computers in order to collect a massive ransom – the stuff of which great tales are made.

Apart from an inspired storyline, *Dog Days* is stuffed with cracking dialogue, mostly involving Evan, who emerges as a borderline psychotic, keen to equate the complexities of the female orgasm to America's favourite shooter: "Imagine if every time you played *Quake*, all the keys did something different. You couldn't be blamed if you didn't make it to the next level." Quite. ★★★★★ **Sam Richards**

## Cannabis Culture

■ Author: **Patrick Matthews**  
 ■ Publisher: **Bloomsbury**  
 ■ Price: **£12.99**  
 ■ ISBN: **0-7475-4281-3**



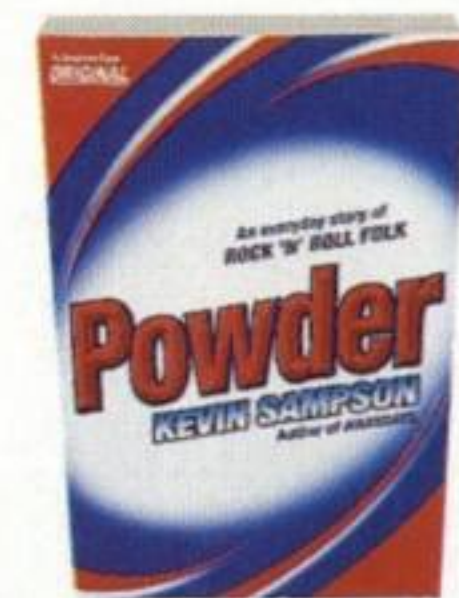
■ Clichéd rhetoric would suggest that anyone who knows enough about cannabis to write a book wouldn't in

fact be writing a book – they'd either be living it up like Howard Marks or transfixed in a permanent state of blissful catalepsy. Not Patrick Matthews, who approaches the subject with the breathless enthusiasm of the true fanatic and the cultured palate of a former wine writer.

This is no clueless stoner tirade on the benefits of making trousers out of hemp in a desperate attempt to disguise the fact that you just wanna get, like, totally wasted. This is a brilliant cultural history which in the first chapter whisks you from the valleys of the Moroccan Rif to an Ealing public school in the '60s, and back out via Amsterdam, a West End dope den run by Jamaican yardies and a radical squat community in Bedfordshire. Next time you take a long drag of Parvatti Cream, let *Cannabis Culture* put it all in perspective. Top draw. ★★★★★

## Powder

■ Author: **Kevin Sampson**  
 ■ Publisher: **Random House**  
 ■ Price: **£10**  
 ■ ISBN: **0-224-05082-6**



■ Keva is the singer in a band called The Grams. He likes to think of himself as part tortured artist, part rock god, but

circumstances bar his path to stardom. His manager is a geek, his guitarist is a coke fiend, his record label boss is trying to fleece him, he's being stitched up by the music press and, meanwhile, his deadly rivals are playing Wembley Arena.

*Powder* is a speedy but intricate rock'n'roll novel, packed with recognisable characters, and yet it's never convincing. Perhaps this is because Sampson invests The Grams (crap name, crap lyrics, crap clothes, crap music) with all the glamour and appeal of Shed Seven. Maybe this is the point – that the music biz is essentially hollow – but anyone could tell you that, and in fewer pages.

*Powder* is entertaining in spasms, but the reason all rock novels fail is that the happenings of real-life popstar folk, reported with more humour and panache in music mags, are always more interesting than fiction. ★★★★★

## The Nudist on The Late Shift

■ Author: **Po Bronson**  
 ■ Publisher: **Secker & Warburg**  
 ■ Price: **£10**  
 ■ ISBN: **0-436-20477-0**



■ Success. Money. Cutting-edge technology. These are the features of Silicon Valley, but Po Bronson is more

interested in the personalities of its inhabitants. Forget Coupland's *Microserfs*, these people are real. Bronson looks at entrepreneurs, struggling to persuade the world to buy their dreams. He meets the co-founder of Hotmail, who made \$500 million out of his dream, and the billionaire founder of Yahoo!, who used to sleep under his desk one night a week (he stopped only when his paperwork took up the space).

Bronson watches coders trying to get a piece of software running to meet a deadline and follows a CEO as his company floats. All sectors of Silicon Valley society – thinkers, nerds and salesmen – are here, and the book's written in a pacy, Californian style. It's an interesting snapshot of life on the information superhighway, and makes up for in breadth what it lacks in depth. ★★★★★

**Miriam McDonald**

## Witchblade Featuring Tomb Raider: Covenant

■ Author: **Michael Turner and others**  
 ■ Publisher: **Titan Books**  
 ■ Price: **£9.99**  
 ■ ISBN: **1-84023-084-3**



■ Don't get too excited – if you're after learning a bit more about the enigmatic *Tomb Raider* star, this is a total washout,

seeing as she only appears in one of the six comics included in this collection, and then only as a co-star. As a piece of storytelling, it's little better, being predictable, clichéd, often sloppy stuff, albeit with a certain amount of manic, action-movie chutzpah.

*Witchblade* herself – the NYC cop with the magic glove – is actually rather dull, if predictably easy on the eye. The graphics are better. Michael Turner is one of the current "Image" school of American artists who likes to throw in loads of big splash pages. The full page portrait of Lara on page three is the best bit, revealing that her green top is actually a body or swimsuit, not a mere T-shirt. However, consistent reference to our girl as "Laura" reminds you of this comic's poor quality. ★★ **Matt Bielby**



**Tindersticks**

**Simple Pleasure**  
Label: Quicksilver



Forget any sun-induced plans of summer lovin' and sex on the beach – the Tindersticks have come to piss on your barbecue. Thank the Lord that the perennial miserabilists piss with such grace and beauty, otherwise we'd feel compelled to eject them from the party. In fact, at 3am, after your girlfriend's disappeared with your best mate and all that's left is half a bottle of cheap Scotch, the Tindersticks become the perfect companions, offering lusciously-orchestrated solace and earfuls of worldly advice.

*Simple Pleasure* is their best album for years, introducing a proto-gospel feel and a pervading ambience which is more blissful than mournful. Tindersticks won't ever start the party with a bang, but they will help soothe your hangover. ★★★★★

**GZA/Genius**  
**Beneath The Surface**

Label: MCA



Another month, another Wu-Tang-related album. In fact, *Beneath The Surface* is the third this month, but it's easily the pick of the crop. Genius' debut solo effort, *Liquid Swords*, remains the best of any individual clan member to date, and he has the ability to remind us why the Wu-Tang are so venerated.

Genius is the most furiously intellectual of rappers and just to emphasise the point, an accompanying CD-ROM video depicts him eschewing the typical trappings of nubile women and gold in favour of chess. His rhymes echo with informed forays into science, religion and record company politics, while on "Mic Trippin" he appears to dish out an entire career's advice to young upstart rappers. Genius only sounds clumsy when revisiting stock ghetto themes ("Victim"), but for the most part, his crisp metaphors are captivating when delivered in such authoritative style. *Beneath The Surface* goes a long way towards justifying that immodest pseudonym. ★★★★★

**Kid Loco**  
**Jesus Life For Children Under 12 Inches**

Label: East West



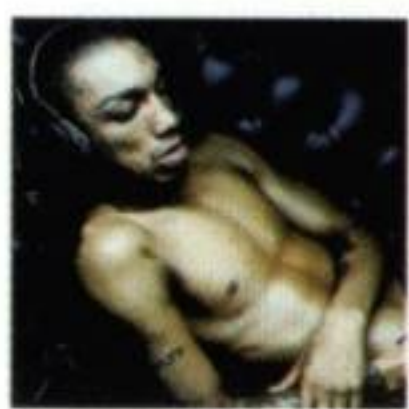
For application of a luscious Parisian sheen to what would otherwise be a grubby guitar workout, yer UK bands could worse than to commission a Kid Loco remix. This collection, boasting a bizarre title and a cover which dubiously references Hendrix's *Electric Ladyland*, brings together Kid Loco's best contract work to date and on the whole it is rather good. Anyone who can take the (albeit charming) shambles of The Pastels' "Viaduct" and mould it into something velvety and seductive deserves your attention.

Elsewhere on *Jesus Life*... Kid Loco gives a lick of silver paint to

Mogwai, St Etienne and Talvin Singh. Despite badmouthing lovable Gallic music-makers Air in the press, your man Loco takes a similar route towards melodic trip-hop whimsy. If only some of the more obscure remixes on this compilation had given him better raw material to work with. ★★★

**Tricky**  
**Juxtapose**

Label: Island



In 1995, Tricky released *Maxinquaye*, an astonishing, unique, beautiful record. Trust me when I say you need reminding of this, because after listening to this arrogant shrug of an album (only 35 minutes long, and even then two of the tracks are the same), you'd scarcely think they were conceived by the same artist. Tricky's infamous paranoia becomes grindingly tedious at around the five seconds mark, when he starts whining about his record deal, and his once-effective murky growl allied to a lazy, fuzzy production makes the second half of the album nigh on unlistenable.

Tricky's demise here is sad, particularly as "For Real" and "Contradictive" – both built around hypnotic guitar hooks – are two of his finest ever tracks. The nadir is an offensive rant by MC Mad Dog on (cough) "I Like The Girls". Any irony intended is lost on me and Tricky sounds as if he was too stoned to notice, or didn't care if he did. ★★

**SING A RAINBOW**  
**COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS**



**Quannum**

**Spectrum**  
Label: Mo'Wax

Hip-hop is all about collectives. While this is a little known fact, it's actually in the contract of all US rappers and DJs that at no point must they ever venture into the open unless surrounded a posse of rhyme collaborators and assorted homies lest they fall limply to the ground. In the worst case scenario this results in undeserved fame by association, but all the best collectives serve to give a leg-up to fresh talent. From the Sugarhill Gang through the Native Tongues to the endlessly propagating Wu-Tang Clan, shouts are going out by the hundred.

The biggest shout right now is coming from San Francisco, residence of the prodigious DJ Shadow. Drafting in the respected MC talents of Latyrx and Blackalicious, together they call themselves Quannum. A few quick phonecalls and the posse swells to include the smooth rap stylings of the Jurassic 5, soul songstress Joyo Velarde, legendary producer The Automator and the Poets Of Rhythm (a live funk outfit from Germany). It's a fearsome conglomerate of hip-hop power.

The result is far less extravagant and pompous than DJ Shadow's last musical outing as one half of UNKLE alongside the redoubtable James Lavelle. *Spectrum* is relaxed, crisp and funky. As one, the MCs rise to the occasion to drop appropriate lyrical science on intelligent jams which range from the unstoppable surge of "Bombonyall" to the doomy "Storm Warning". In a nonchalant display of versatility, we're whisked back to an '80s freestyle party for "Hott People", while "I Changed My Mind" is a prime slice of original soul, destined to be sampled to death by less inspired crews. *Spectrum* has a good handle on the concept of collective euphoria. ★★★★★

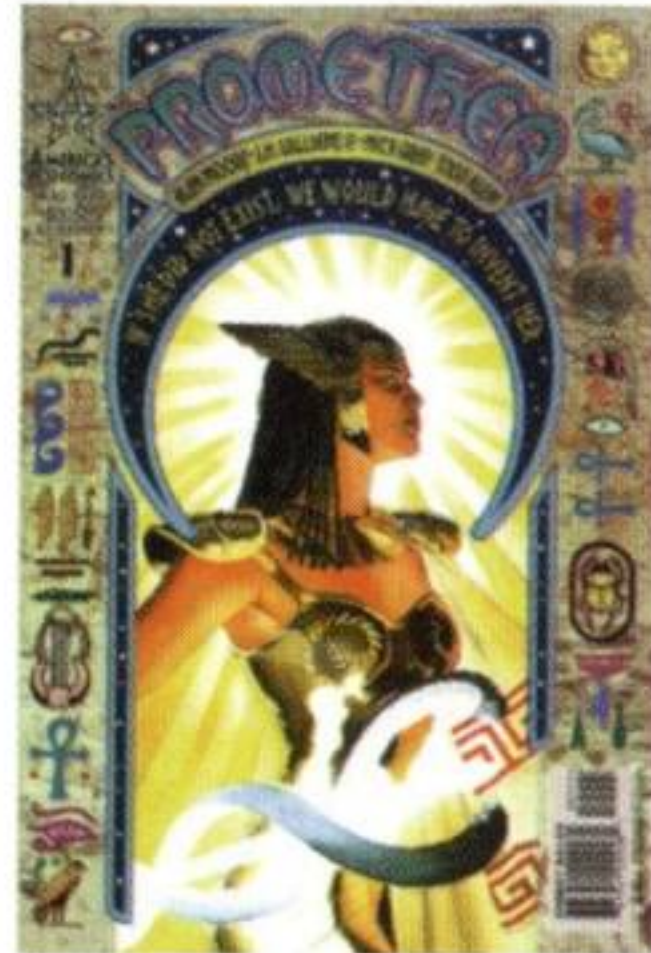
**EARTH GODDESS**

**Promethea**

Author: Alan Moore  
Artists: JH William III and Mick Grey  
Publisher: America's Best Comics

No apologies for the way this Comic of the month slot is fast turning into a bit of a fanboy's celebration of the return of Alan Moore to relatively lightweight, fun superhero comics – his new America's Best line is currently turning out the most interesting stuff on the shelves. This latest entry, *Promethea*, is his take on the whole "goddess walks amongst us" strain of super heroines, best exemplified by Wonder Woman.

On the surface, this is the story of a young woman in an alternative universe



version of present day New York, who inherits the ancient power of Promethea just in time to do away with a destructive, semi-mindless shadow-creature. More interesting, however, is the whole underlying question of just what this Promethea is – it seems she's not merely



a long forgotten mystic being who has somehow reappeared in the real world. In effect, she's a living story, capable of transporting herself into anyone with enough imagination and enthusiasm for the character. Or, as the new Promethea herself has it in her final

**Wonder Woman meets Tutankhamun in New York. Simple.**

battle with the shadow-beast: "I am... art's fiercest spark... imagination's blaze in mankind's dark." Stirring, fascinating and intriguing stuff. ★★★★★ **Matt Bielby**

**Millennium Jukebox**

*If music be the food of love, then we'll have a Big Mac and fries to go, burger boy.*

**Leftfield Leftism**

It's old, but then again so is Neil, and he keeps putting it on. He also claims to have given his copy to a beautiful woman with a creepy name. The softie.

**Pavement Terror Twilight**

Hipster than an NHS stock room, Pavement are the band to play – and this is the album. Cool points by the bucketload.

**Hole Celebrity Skin**

Forget the music, we like the album cover. Any excuse to peruse Courtney's celebrity nipples. Priceless.

**Chemical Brothers Surrender**

Remember the '80s? These cheeky big beatsters do, and we love 'em for it. Repeated plays have yet to settle whether that's Jesus Jones singing.

**Britney Spears Sometimes**

There's just something about knowing that a 17-year-old is already out of his league that makes Mark's heart sing. If only Britney could learn from it.

**The Egg Travelator**

Good name, good album and bloody good Glastonbury memories for the Arcade campers. Weep, you're great etc...





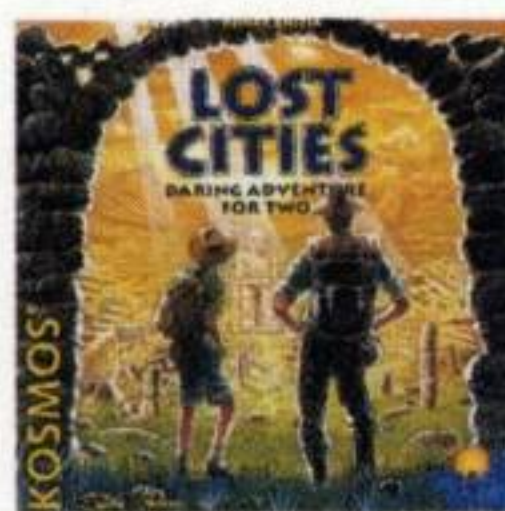
## ON THE CARDS

### NEW WAYS TO CUT THE DECK

■ *Lost Cities*: simple concept, fun gameplay.



**Fluxx**  
 ■ Publisher: **Ice**  
 ■ Price: **£6.99**  
 ■ Players: **2-6**  
 ★★



**Lost Cities**  
 ■ Publisher: **Rio Grande Games**  
 ■ Price: **£7.99**  
 ■ Players: **2**  
 ★★★★★

■ Both games available from **Esdevium Games** on **01252 326116**

**F**luxx is a genuinely original concept, although one which is ultimately flawed. Based around the age-old "pick up and discard" method of play, Fluxx is unique in the way that each card can denote a change of rules. Staying alert is vital as within the space of a turn the number of cards you pick up, the number you're allowed to hold and the number you must trash can all change. Even the aim of the game is flexible, so you could find yourself holding a winning hand, only for the player before you to declare a new winning combination.

In theory, Fluxx is ingenious and the idea could work in some form. However, there

are too many rules and too many possible combinations making strategy obsolete and victory random. With character cards including peace, love and chocolate, Fluxx was probably invented by hippies, who were too stoned to test it properly.

*Lost Cities* is less original, copping a few moves from *Patience*, but it translates perfectly into a two-player game. The adventuring aspect is cosmetic, but it does make for a beautiful design. The aim is simply to gamble on placing ever-higher runs of cards in five different suits, going on the cards in your hand, the number left in the pack and the nature of your opponent's plays. Although superficially simple, tactics between two learned players can become increasingly sly – how all the best card games should be.



■ Fluxx: overly complicated.

## SOUND WAVES

### LITERALLY SHOWERS OF FUN



## AE2170 Portable Radio

■ Contact: **Philips** on **0181 689 4444**  
 ■ Price: **£30**  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now**

**E**ver dreamt of taking a shower with Zoe Ball? Or maybe you'd prefer a watery one-to-one with gorgeous redhead Chris Evans? Well, you can. Not literally, you understand, but you can at least be "soothed" by Zoe or Chris's "laid-back" tones as you perform your morning ablutions. Philips's splashproof portable radio sports watertight vacuum-laminated controls, so it's more than up to the task of joining you in the shower for a rousing singalong to the latest Billie/Britney Spears masterpiece. Or you could listen to the shipping forecast over on Radio 4: the AE2170 is both AM- and FM-equipped.

The AE2170's sound quality is surprisingly good for a radio of this size, and loud enough to be heard above the downpour of water from the showerhead. And if you get carried away shouting "'Cos we want to! 'Cos we want to!", there's even a little clock on the front to remind you that you're late for work. ★★★★★

## STRANGE WRIST ACTION

### ROBOTIC CHRONOMETER

### Tokima Robot Watch

■ Contact: **Paul Smith** on **0171 379 7133**  
 ■ Price: **£95, £99 or £109** (depending on finish)  
 ■ Release date: **on sale now**

■ As any true style guru will tell you, it's your accessories that make all the difference. You can be resplendent in your best Armani suit or dress, but if you've teamed it with a pair of your Dad's old flipflops and a pink plastic belt from Tammy Girl, you are *not* going to cut the sartorial mustard. You need to

ensure that the accessories complement the outfit, which is why there are thousands of watches out there, each trying to get noticed in a fickle marketplace. In short, your watch says a lot about you.

There are two strange things about this offering from Japanese firm Tokima. The first

we can understand. The Japanese love their mad gadgets, and gadgets don't get much more nonsensical than this: with a few small adjustments, your watch metamorphoses into a dinky robot. No, the truly odd thing is that the Tokima is sold in the UK by Paul Smith – you know, the posh suits guy. Which means we must be wrong about accessories. Which means you can wear flipflops after all. ★★★★★



■ This season's leading fashion trend? Metal Mickey chic.



# PALM D'OR

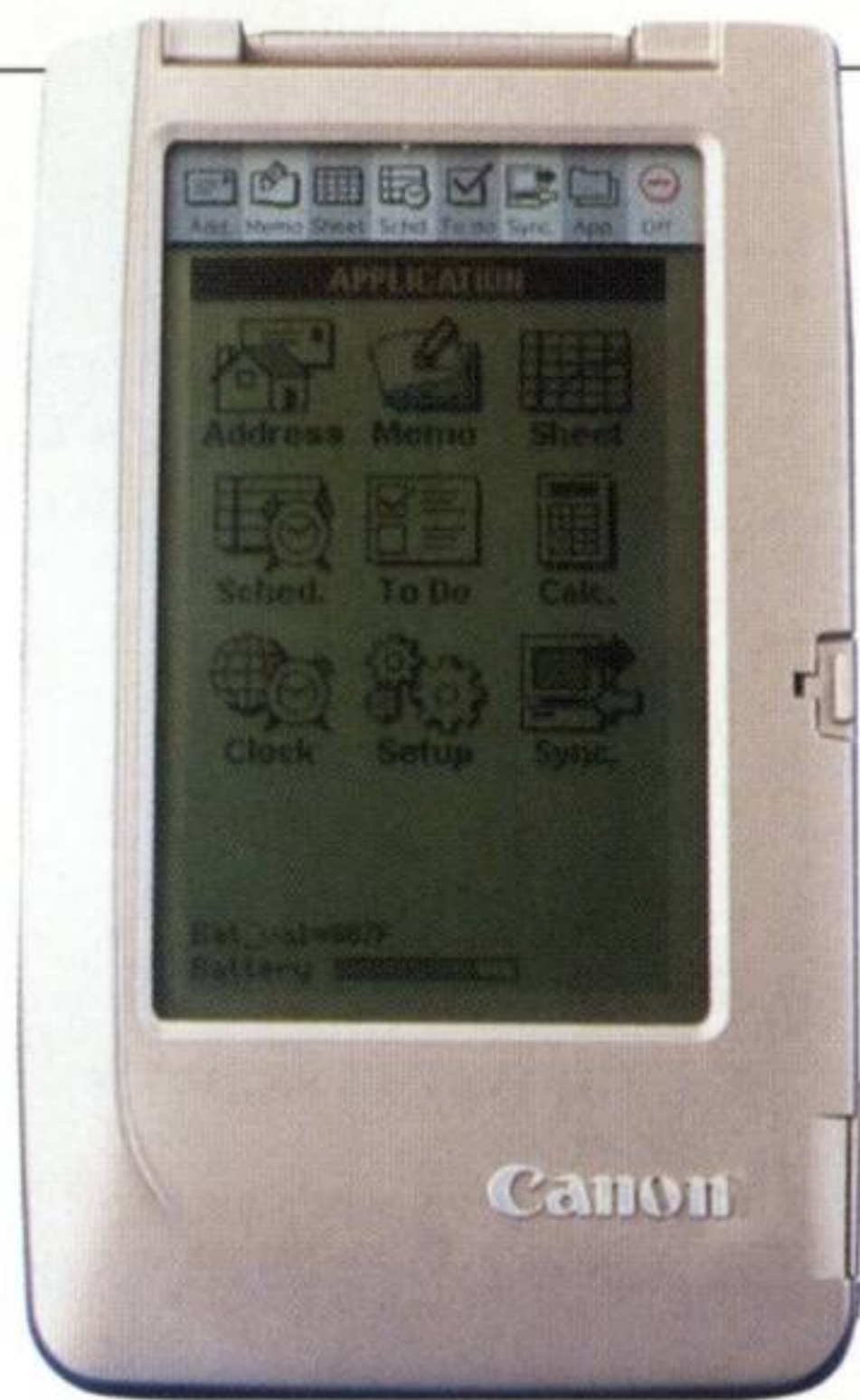
## NIFTY HANDWORK

Isn't it time you chucked out that battered old Filofax and upgraded to something a little less twatty? *T3* magazine's Russell Deeks is your guide to the latest electronic solutions.

### Canon ZX10

- Available from: **Canon on 0800 616417**
- Price: **£150**
- Release date: **on sale now**

In the world of handheld computing, while it's true that "you get what you pay for" (unless you're a shoplifter, but that's naughty), it's also true that machines are available to suit every budget. Check out the ZX10, for instance. It doesn't look any different from the other stylus-driven palmtops on review here, does it? Yet, because it lacks some of the more advanced features of the others (such as handwriting recognition and e-mail, for instance), it's considerably cheaper. But if all you want is a neat little device to store important phone numbers, remind you to pick up a present for your mum, write brief notes and, most importantly, make your mates feel inferior, you can't really grumble about the ZX10 – not at this price anyway. ★★★★★

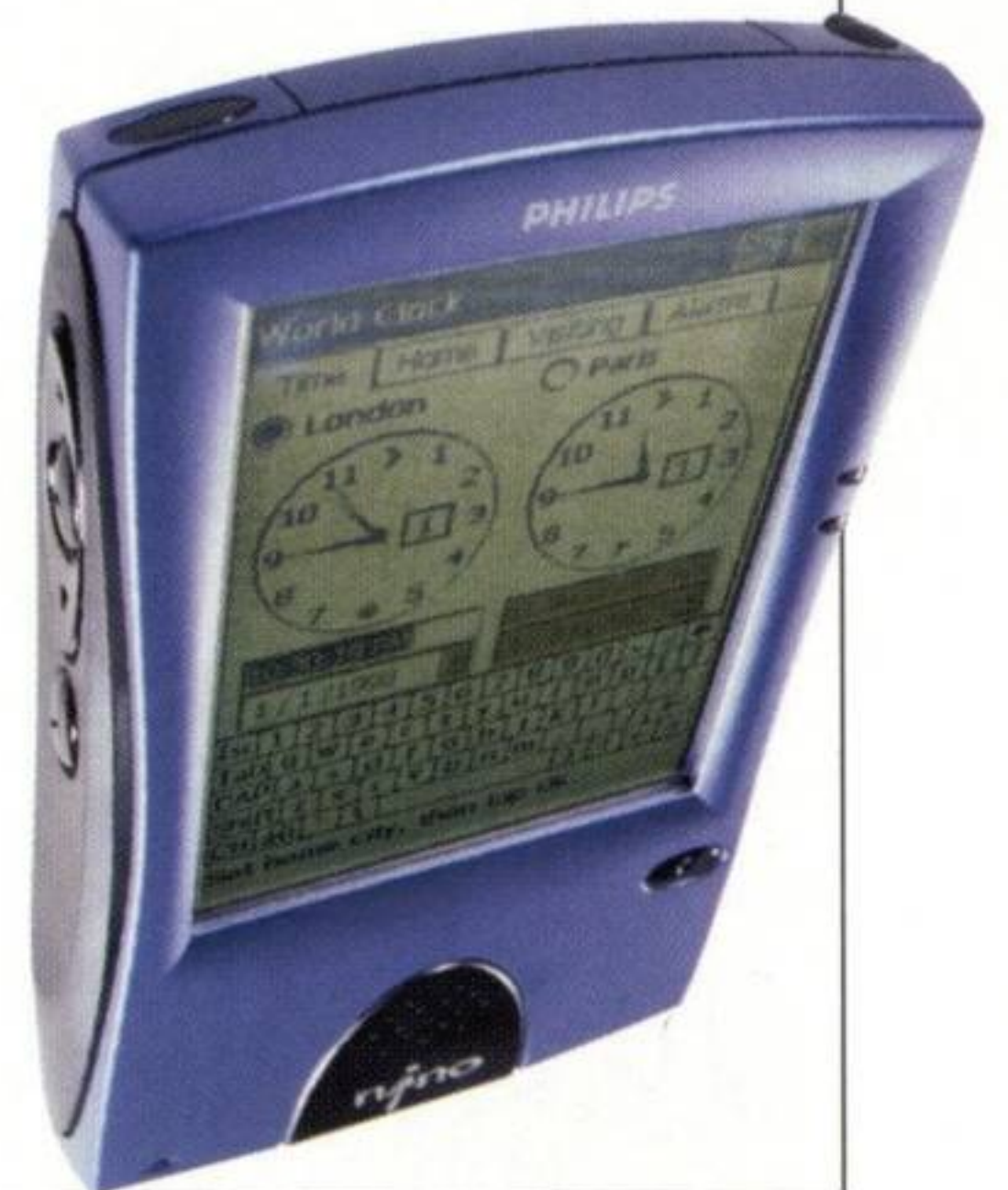


### ★ OUR CHOICE

### Nino 200

- Available from: **Widget on 01438 818800**
- Price: **£230**
- Release date: **on sale now**

Blue is beautiful, as they used to say on *Magic Roundabout*. Philips obviously agrees, having chosen a rather nice shade of electric blue for the latest and most affordable in its Nino range of palmtop PCs. Like the Palm V, the 200 is operated by means of a stylus – again for handwritten input or on-screen typing – and you can link it to your desktop PC for speedy data transfer (the cable's included). At this price, you don't get many bundled applications, but one consolation is Microsoft's Windows CE operating system, which means dizzying amounts of compatible software are in the shops and on the Net. Worth looking at if funds are tight. ★★★★★

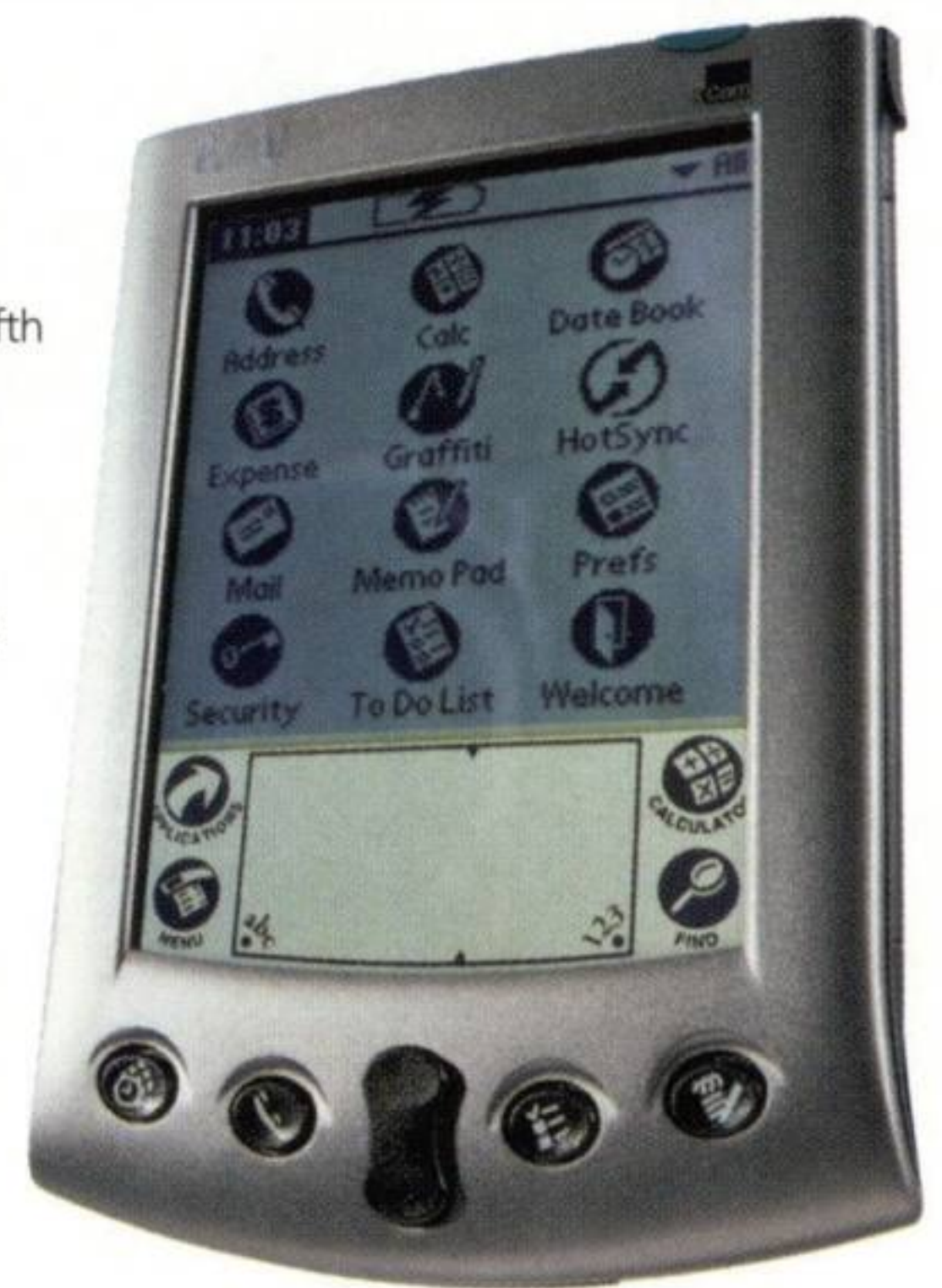


### Palm V

- Available from: **3Com on 0118 927 8200**
- Price: **£350**
- Release date: **on sale now**

As the name might suggest, this is 3Com's fifth Palm/Palm Pilot model, so you'd expect it to be getting it right by now. And it is. Running on its own proprietary operating system, the Palm V comes with pre-installed e-mail and notepad software, address book, diary, calculator and to-do list. Added to which, literally thousands of commercial and shareware applications are available for you to purchase or download.

You enter data with the stylus, either by poking at the diddy on-screen keyboard or by making use of the Palm V's built-in *Graffiti* handwriting recognition package; you can also download information to and from your desktop or laptop PC via the supplied docking station. The Palm V looks great, too, with a brushed aluminium body and groovy backlit screen, and it's a mere half-an-inch thick. Not cheap, mind. ★★★★★



### Crosspad XP

- Available from: **Technomatic on 0800 338000**
- Price: **£188**
- Release date: **on sale now**

Okay, the Crosspad XP sits a bit oddly with the other devices here, but we're featuring it because it's such a bizarre little thing. Here's what it won't do. It won't send e-mails. It won't store phone numbers or addresses. It won't remind you that your Auntie's birthday is imminent, or that you're due in the bank manager's office at 2.30. And, at a smidgeon over A5 size, it won't fit in your back pocket (not unless you've got elephantiasis of the arse and require very large trousers). What it *will* do, though, is take your mad scribbles and translate them into a text file that you can download to your PC via the supplied serial lead. Quite what the point is, we're not entirely sure, but it could be just the ticket for the QWERTY-phobe in your life. ★★★★★



### Psion V

- Available from: **Psion on 0990 143050**
- Price: **£370**
- Release date: **on sale now**

Veteran gamers will remember Psion from the heady days of the ZX Spectrum, when it brought the world such classics as *Horace Goes Skiing*. But the company also does a neat line in handheld computing, having been practising palmistry since 1982. That's a lot of experience, and it shows: the Psion V has been vastly successful.

Although based on the company's proprietary operating system, all of the Psion V's supplied packages (word-processing, spreadsheet, diary/calendar and so on) are compatible with their Windows-based equivalents, so it's a breeze to swap data back and forth between desktop and handheld (using the supplied lead and *PsiWin2* software). An infra-red link also means that, with a GSM phone, you can send and receive e-mails and browse the Web. Best of all, while the V might not look as svelte as a little touchscreen palmtop, its "real" keyboard makes entering any amount of data a lot easier. ★★★★★



## How to read palms

Anything that fits in your hand and does computing-type stuff can loosely be called a handheld computer, but there are subtle differences between each kind of device

**Handheld PC**  
A small portable device running Microsoft's Windows CE (or WinCE) operating system and featuring a QWERTY keyboard.

**Palmtop PC**  
A device running WinCE but using a touchscreen and stylus, rather than a keyboard, for data entry.

**PDA (Personal Digital Assistant)**  
Any proprietary-OS device that will fit in your hand or pocket and stores addresses, phone numbers and so on. You can pick up cheap PDAs for £30 now!



## On-line gaming

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5	By Request Video Boyzone	£12.99

**CD-ROM BESTSELLERS**

1	Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace PC CD-Rom	£34.99
2	Star Wars Episode 1: Racer PC CD-Rom	£39.99

**Synkronized by Jamiroquai**  
Jamiroquai's 4th album is as funky as ever! 10 tracks including 'Canned Heat' plus a bonus track of 'Deeper Underground'. **Buy it now at the reduced price of only £11.99!**

**Surrender by The Chemical Brothers**  
Pre-Order the new Chemical Brothers album, Surrender, featuring amongst others, Bernard Sumner, Bobby Gillespie and Noel Gallagher. 11 Tracks including the single 'Hey Boy Hey Girl' - Order before 1.00pm Friday 18th June and have it delivered on the release date of 21st June! Reduced to **only £11.99!**

**Man Utd 1998/99 Video**  
Now available -

**■ If it's entertaining, you can find it here. Finally, the opportunity to shop in the nude without fear of arrest.**

# TOP OF THE SHOPS



■ Everything you'd find at your local branch, but on a Web site. And no queues.

■ See the latest movies on DVD, often while they're still playing to British cinemagoers. Hurrah!

Forget the manky old high street. Splash your cash over the Net and be a good consumer from the comfort of your own bathrobe.

You've chosen the slothful option, but what items of consumer fun are you after? Games, mayhap? URWired's vast selection is available at a tasty discount from <http://www.urwired.com/>: we spotted *GTA: London* for two quid less than the retail, and *Episode 1: Racer* for a whole fiver less.

There's more to life than games, though. There's music and videos and... well there must be other stuff, too. Most of which you can get from <http://www.hmv.co.uk>, which is the same as your local HMV, but without the furtive teenage shoplifters. For DVDs, we suggest you go straight to the mouth of the horse, which is DVD Express (<http://www.dvdexpress.com>). The company's based in the US, offers 40% discounts on pre-ordered titles and will FedEx your order to you in two or three days (plus an extra few hours while HM Customs & Excise has a nose through your new discs. The gits). For other, more technical, purchases, go to <http://www.software-warehouse.co.uk>. Cunningly, there's hardware here, too.

That's but a tiny selection. By the way, don't swallow all that nonsense about credit card fraud - ensure that you buy from a reputable source and you're laughing.

**DVD EXPRESS**  
high speed entertainment

our interoffice delivery dog **scooter** says check out MY DVD

**Taxi Driver: Collector's Edition**

Starring: Robert De Niro, Jodie Foster, Cybill Shepherd, Harvey Keitel, Albert Brooks, Peter Boyle  
Director: Martin Scorsese  
Rated: R

Alienated, psychotic Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro) drives a cab by night in New York City, and spends his days alone in his room or in porno theatres. When he meets 12-year-old prostitute Iris (Jodie Foster), he is determined to save her. After he is rejected by a beautiful campaign worker (Cybill Shepherd), Bickle begins his rampage, starting with an attempted political assassination, and ending with a violent bloodbath in order to rescue Iris.

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<http://www.pacman.net/>  
■ Want some hot *Pac-Man* action? Forget it. You have reached the virtual offices of GUSNet Web Hosting Services.

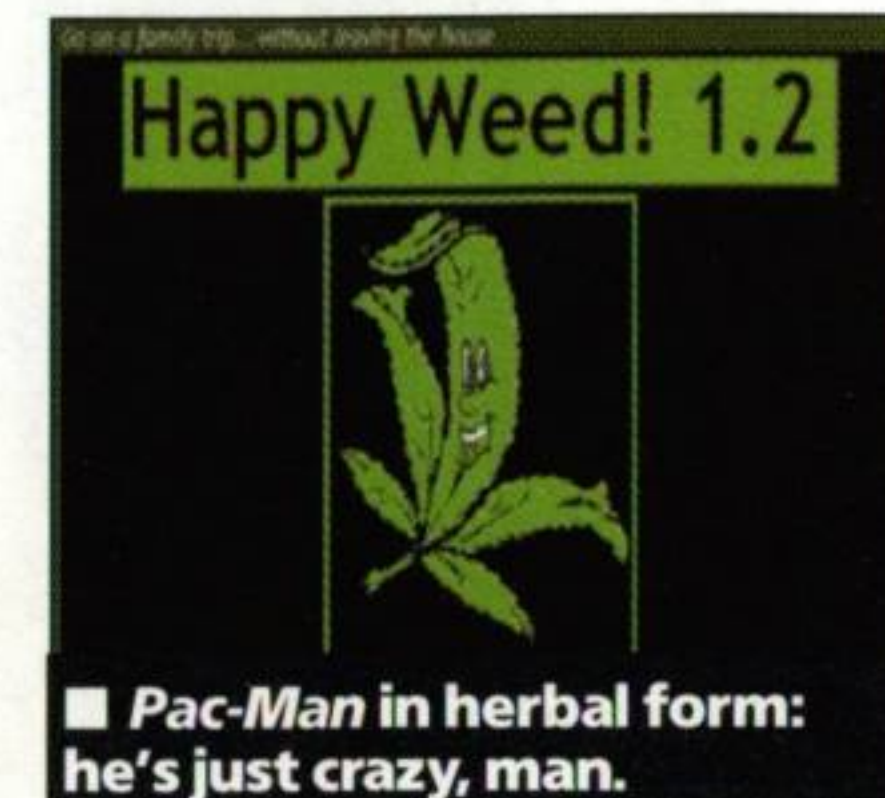


<http://www.emeline.com/pacman/pacman.htm>  
■ Naturally, nobody we know would commit the criminal act of downloading the arcade *Pac-Man* ROM. No, that would be illegal, so they'd try this not-too-bad Java version instead.

<http://www.pacmangroup.com/>  
■ Still looking for hot *Pac-Man* action? Not a chance here. The Pacman Group makes self-adhesive stationery items. It has offices all over the Middle East, so if you're ever in Saudi and you need a sticky label...

<http://www.comedycentral.com/southpark/cartman>

</cartman.htm>  
■ "Sweeeet!" Quite possibly the only *Pac-Man* clone to feature *South Park*'s Eric Cartman.



<http://www.ccs.neu.edu/home/maddog/hw12.html>  
■ Happy Weed? Wonder what that's about...

<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/5266/pacmanart.html>  
■ Very bad *Pac-Man* art. But the chap in charge of this site is so desperate for good examples, he'll give a genuine Atari *Pac-Man* cartridge as a reward for the best bit of scribble he receives. So get thee daubing.

<http://homepage.tinet.ie/pacman/start.htm>  
■ Any hot *Pac-Man* action yet? No, it's Universal Floral Display Ltd: for all your floral-display needs.

<http://www2.crosswinds.net/essen/pacman/>  
■ Probably some kid who calls himself Pacman. We're not sure, though: the site's in German.

## CD-ROM of the month



**Rhodes on ROM**  
■ Publisher: Europress  
■ Price: £9.99 ■ Release date: on sale now ■ Requires: 486, 4Mb RAM, 4x CD-ROM drive

■ Cookery, it's the new rock 'n' roll. No really. Thanks to the likes of Rhodes, Ramsey and the Naked Chef (and entirely despite the efforts of Ainsley Harriot) cooking is cool. Indeed nowadays your culinary skills are just as important an aid to credibility as your CD collection, especially when it comes to wooing the ladies. So what better way to impress potential partners (or even merely stun

your drinking chums) than by demonstrating your own à la carte artistry, with a little help from *Rhodes on ROM*. The CD boasts a total of 500 simple recipes, most of which are capable of snapping knicker elastic at 12 paces. As well as an A-Z database and a novel Melting Pot option (which enables you to select the ingredients you have in your fridge and let the disc sort out a snack) the CD also enables you to pick a recipe according to mood, so whether you're planning to try romancing her with aphrodisiacs or just cheering yourself up with lard when she's blown you out, you'll find an ideal alternative in there. In the unlikely event that you don't find something suitable on the disc there's plenty of Web links provided (including Gary's own site). Even if you only ever use a small sample of the recipes, £10 is surely a very small price to pay to improve your pulling power. ★★★ **Chris James**



Next month

In September's  
**Arcade**  
**WipEout 3**

**Free!**  
WipEout 3  
music CD

PlayStation's king of high-octane racing returns to melt your brain.

**Plus**

- Top 50 best videogame pick-ups
- Total Annihilation: Kingdoms reviewed and rated

Get Arcade 11 on 23 August. The world's fastest games mag.



# Arcade

# Back issues

You've nearly reached the end of another *Arcade*, but don't be sad. Here's your chance to pick up a previous issue you may have missed. But hurry, they're going fast...

## Issue 4 March



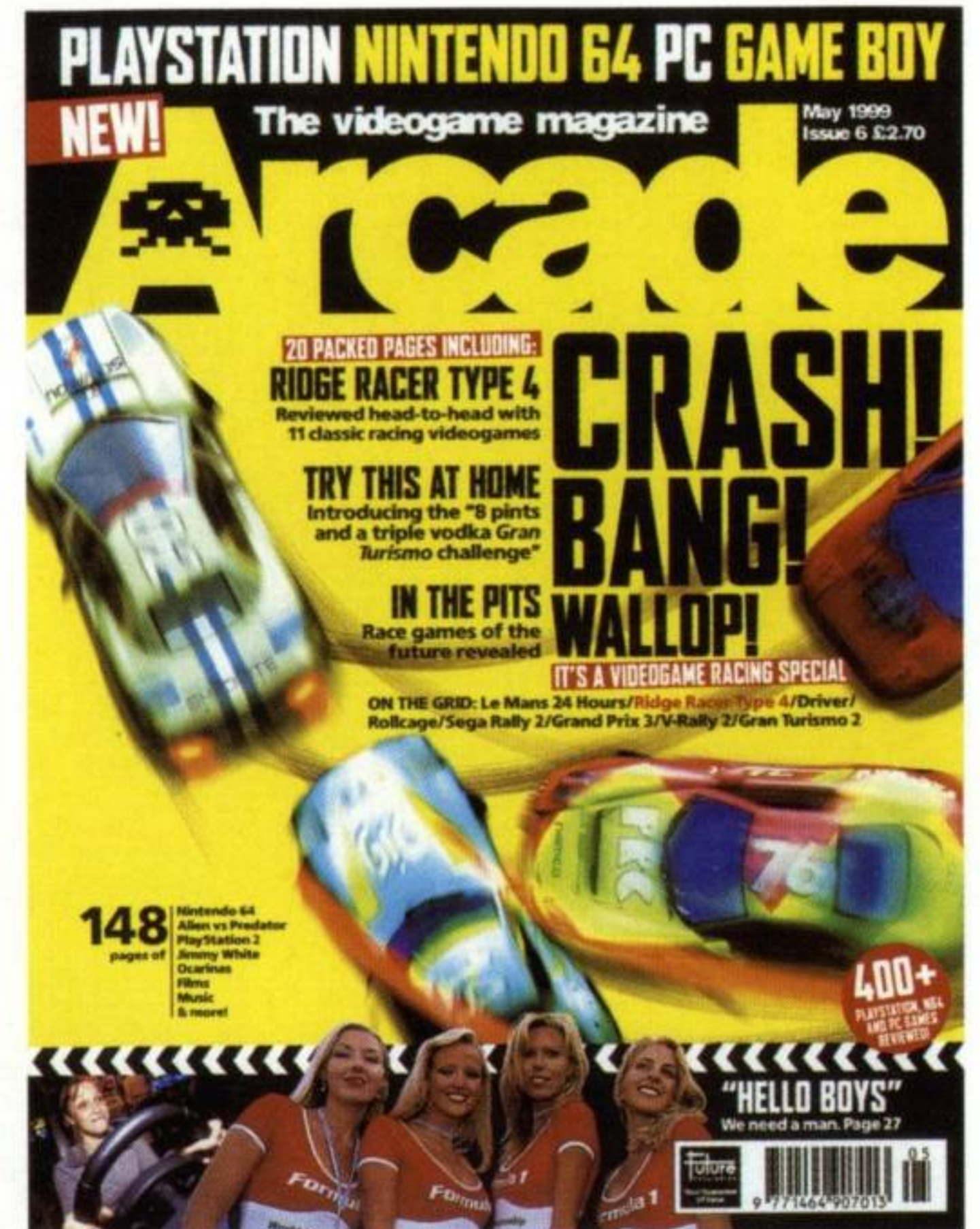
■ 24-page football special, how to turn Lara blonde and naked, censored games revealed.

## Issue 5 April



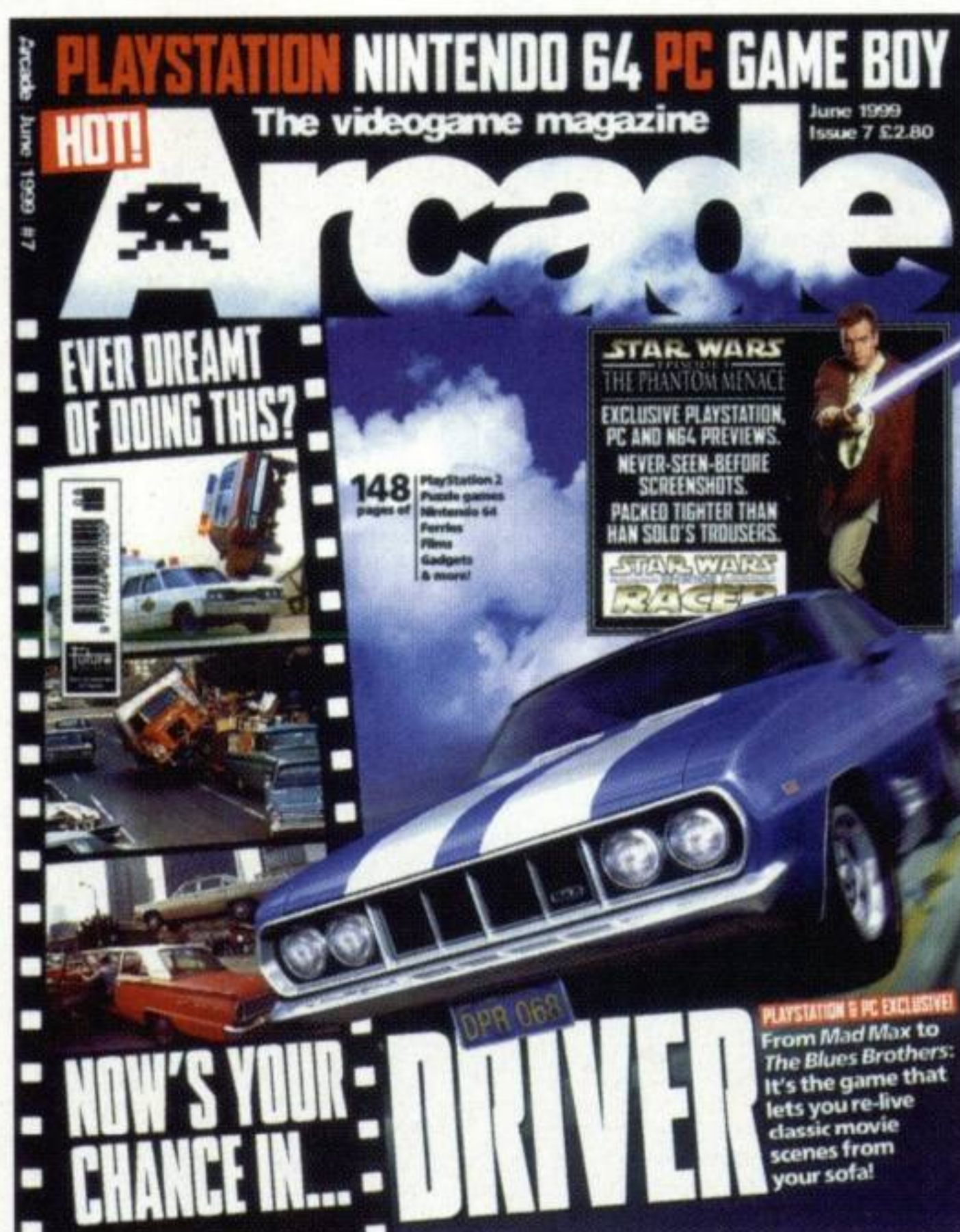
■ *Metal Gear Solid*, SAS interview, the 50 most powerful people in videogames.

## Issue 6 May



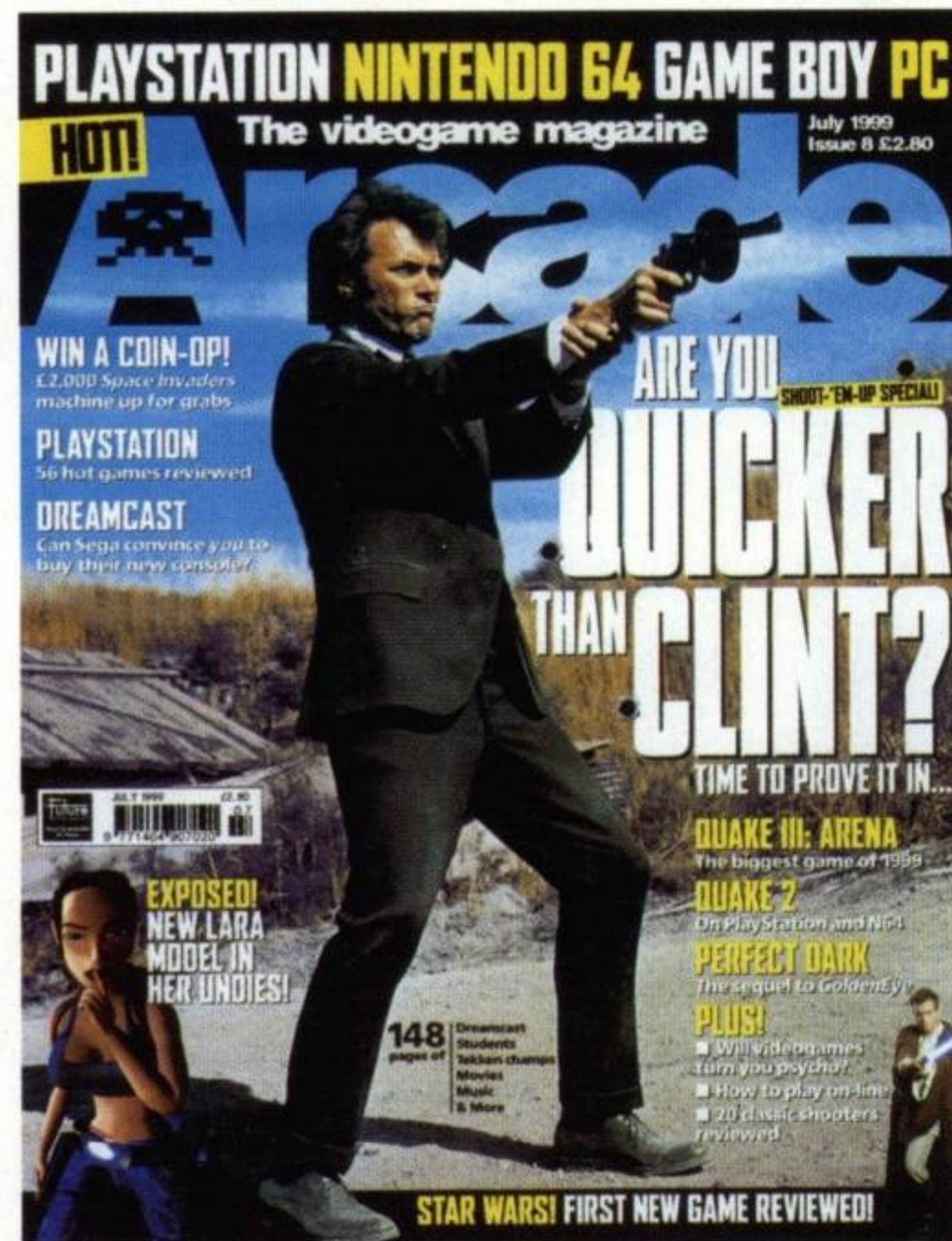
■ Racing games special, Jimmy White games night, free *Game Over* book.

## Issue 7 June



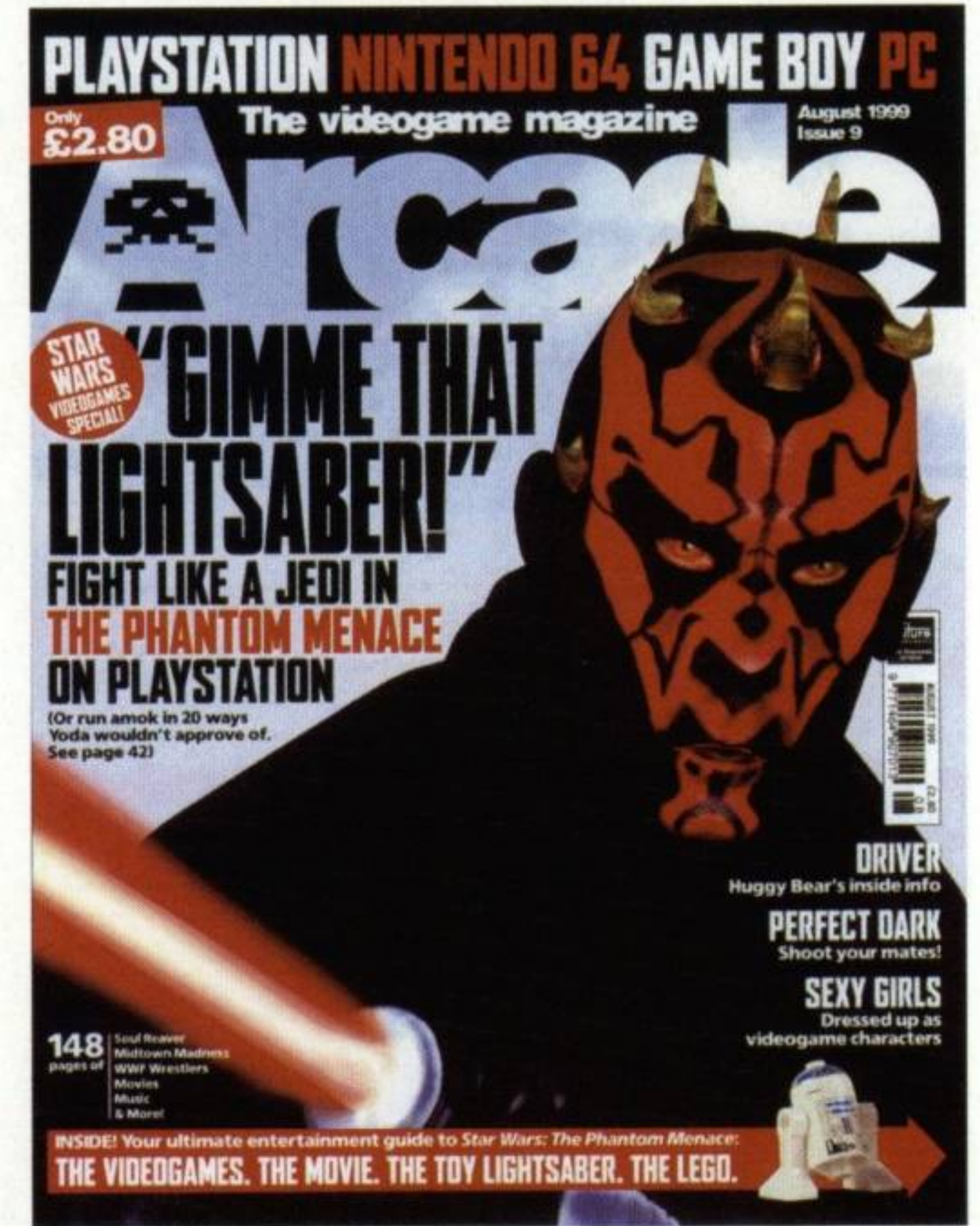
■ *Driver*, *Star Wars* game previews, My Beautiful Cross-Channel Ferry.

## Issue 8 July



■ 3D shooter special, and the new Lara Croft model wearing very few clothes indeed.

## Issue 9 August



■ *Star Wars* extravaganza, games night with WWF wrestlers and sexy girls at America's E3.

## 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 then fill out your 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, TA11 6TB, UK**. However, if you long for human contact, pick up your plastic card and call the hotline on 01458 271126.

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YOUR GUIDE TO OVER  
**340**  
GAMES

Edited by  
Mark Green

# A-list

Miss World gathers together lovely laydees from around the globe and wittles down the numbers until there's only one left. The lucky winner is then crowned and blathers on about children and travelling for a bit. The A-list is very similar. But in a videogame-related way.

## Featured this month:

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



### 110 PlayStation

127 of your favourite games reviewed and rated, plus the very latest PlayStation top 20 and a look at what'll top the charts next month.

### 114 PC

The top 20 most irresistible titles around, plus a guide to 135 games and a look at big names of the near future.

### 117 Nintendo 64

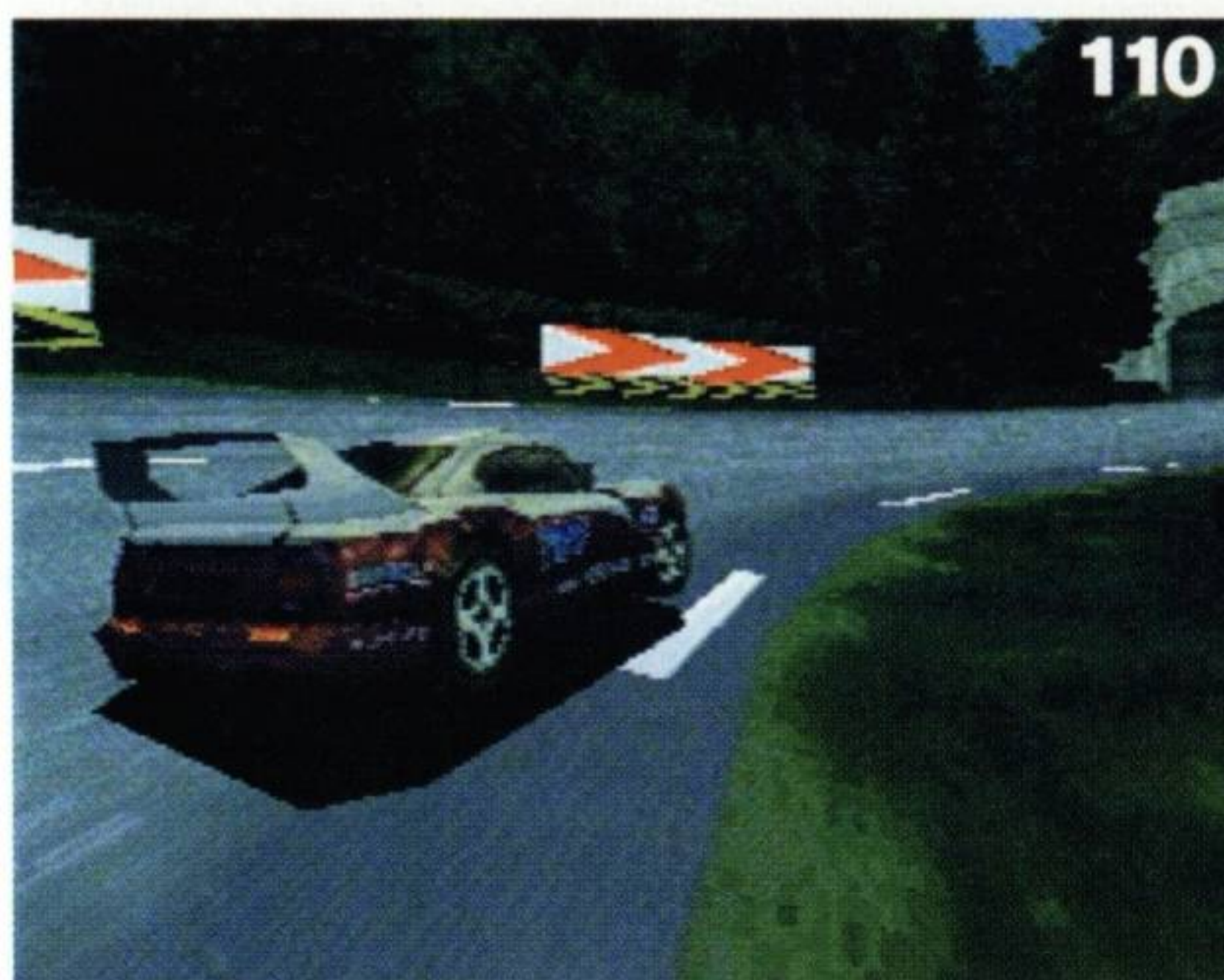
Reviews of 57 games for N64, plus the 20 hottest titles and our pick of the secondhand market.

### 119 Game Boy

29 hot games to slot into your little friend, plus the top five best-selling titles of the moment.

### 112 Plus...

How Rich missed his Chemistry A-level because he was too busy playing *Parasol Stars* on the Amiga.



### Star ratings

- ★★★★★ Simply the best. A game you really should try.
- ★★★★ Excellent. Definitely worth your money.
- ★★★ Good stuff. Not exactly a world beater, but fine within its genre.
- ★★ Strictly average. We say: don't buy it.
- ★ Really bad news. Avoid at all costs.
- £ Games now available at a budget price.



## aPlayStation Top 20 The country's favourite games – on sale now.



**1 (2) Gran Turismo ■ Racer ■ SCEE ■ £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. A hefty number of vehicles and courses ensure this masterpiece plays perfectly. ★★★★★



**2 (-) Final Fantasy VII ■ RPG ■ SCEE ■ £20**  
**150 hours of epic adventure** Takes all the usual RPG staples (moving around a landscape, chatting to the locals, solving puzzles) and adds cut-scenes that mix seamlessly with the moving characters, exciting conflicts and an engrossing story that will have you emotionally involved. ★★★★★



**3 (3) Grand Theft Auto ■ Misc ■ Platinum ■ £20**  
**Crime-added 2D driver** Shoddy graphics and lack of speed affect the appeal of kicking in civilians and driving, in whatever vehicle you care to purloin, but this is still an involving crim-'em-up. Don't compare the visuals that you'll see on the PlayStation to those on the PC, though – the outstanding PC quality will make you cry. ★★★

**4 (6) Tomb Raider II ■ Platformer ■ Eidos ■ £20**  
**The lovely lady explores again** Eighteen levels, a few new moves and vehicles to drive, increased speed and better controls. The level designs, which in some ways surpass the original's, make this another classic. ★★★★★

**5 (1) GTA: London 1969 ■ Misc ■ Take 2 ■ £20**  
**Cockney-style '60s add-on** A London setting, 32 new missions and 30 new cars comprise this mission pack for *GTA*. The missions are open-ended and the new-look London visuals are splendid, but the fiddly controls and overhead perspective ruin the fun that comes through simply driving about. ★★★

**6 (5) Crash Bandicoot ■ Platformer ■ SCEE ■ £40**  
**Maniacal pseudo-3D antics** Control a mad marsupial as he runs into the screen, collecting apples and avoiding the bad guys. The linear level format and disappointingly easy play don't help Crash's cause. ★★★

**7 (12) Brian Lara Cricket ■ Sport ■ 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. ★★★★★

**8 (-) C&C Red Alert ■ Strategy ■ Virgin ■ £30**  
**Update of the original real-time strategy game** Improvements include better graphics and a brilliant, though often neglected, link-up game. A fine strategy title with loads of missions, but it's difficult to play without a mouse. ★★★★★

**9 (4) 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. ★★★★★

**10 (-) Anna Kournikova Tennis ■ Sports ■ SCEE ■ £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. ★★★★

**11 (9) WWF: Warzone ■ Fighter ■ Acclaim ■ £40**  
**Lardy leotarded lovelies fight it out** Moves and characters that make play interesting, and a great create-a-player section that enables you to custom-build your own fighter. Slow, sluggish and lacking variety, but somehow still enjoyable. ★★★

**12 (8) FIFA 99 ■ Sports ■ EA Sports ■ £40**  
**Long-running official footy update** All the visual thrills, but it's too easy to score – especially with the super-speedy players – and the developer just doesn't seem to care enough about football. A game that's much more suited to beginners. ★★★

**13 (11) Tomb Raider III ■ Platformer ■ Eidos ■ £45**  
**The bitch is back** More puzzle-solving and shooting with everyone's favourite woman. A new hi-res mode, some more well-designed puzzles and increasing difficulty are tempered by frustrating moments at the hands of the controls and camera. ★★★★★

**14 (10) Rugrats ■ Platformer ■ THQ ■ £40**  
**Faithful but poor cartoon tie-in** Confusing controls and flawed camera angles ruin this odd puzzle-oriented animated adventure. It seems too complicated for children, yet far too simple and repetitive for grown-ups. Avoid it, we say. ★★

**15 (16) Premier Manager '99 ■ Sport ■ Gremlin ■ £40**  
**Footy management for everyone** Endorsed by Kevin Keegan, this sim features more squads than you'll be able to fit into your brain – including a future-proof European Super-League – and good controls. However, you'll need patience to become the best. ★★★★★

**16 (-) FIFA: Road to The World Cup ■ Sport ■ EA ■ £20**  
**Strong but out-dated football sim** Electronic Arts has once again shelled out for the official FIFA rights, giving you all the official teams, stadia and statistics. There's also an improved game engine for your money. ★★★

**17 (13) Cool Boarders 2 ■ Racer ■ SCEE ■ £20**  
**Snowboarding for the masses** The racing game for the smart arse, with increasingly difficult stunts to pull off. The two-player mode and cocky computer opponent make this a vast improvement on the previous snowbound instalment. ★★★

**18 (7) Ridge Racer Type 4 ■ Racer ■ SCEE ■ £40**  
**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 powerslide and you'll unlock 320 unique cars. If you're after realism, though, *Gran Turismo* is for you. ★★★★★

**19 (-) TOCA Touring Car ■ Racing ■ Codemasters ■ £20**  
**Early proper racing sim** Genuinely exciting races with decent speed and excellent tracks, coupled with a good sense of control. Real-time damage, too, but the graphics and lack of options let the game down slightly. ★★★★★

**20 (18) Croc ■ Platformer ■ Platinum ■ £20**  
**3D crocodile runabout** Lovely looking cutesy platformer, that's unfortunately ruined by some odd camera angles, poorly designed levels and a complete lack of originality. It's less of a true 3D environment than you're led to believe, too. ★★

### Also on sale... Fighters

**Bloody Roar 2**  
 ■ Virgin ■ £40 **Animated animal pugilists** The ability to transform into gorgeous, speedy beast warriors is a welcome one, but the fighting lacks variety, depth and finesse. ★★★

**Dark Stalkers 3**  
 ■ Virgin ■ £35 **Odd-looking beastly beat-'em-up** Eighteen monsters, but a lack of options and stilted play. ★★

**Evil Zone**  
 ■ Titus ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

**Kensei**  
 ■ Konami ■ £45 **Polished traditional beat-'em-up** Less flash than Namco's *Tekken*, but the wide range of characters and depth of play make this admirably comprehensive. Visuals and humour are lacking, but there're plenty of challenges, and well as opponents who learn. ★★★★★

**Marvel Superheroes Vs Street Fighter**  
 ■ Virgin ■ £35 **Simplistic 2D cartoon combat** Good selection of fighters and game modes, but too simplistic and lacking the much-needed Tag mode. ★★

**Rival Schools**  
 ■ Virgin ■ £30 **Teachers and students take to the ring** Absolutely mad *Grange Hill*-style fighter, with over-the-top moves and a huge selection of modes and sub-games. Not technically great, but it's a whole heap of fun, thanks to its pleasingly easy-to-pull-off moves. ★★★★★

**Soul Blade**  
 ■ Platinum ■ £20 **Big weapons fest** Replacing the fist-bleeding fights of most fighters with weapon-clattering scraps steeped in folklore, this caters for the all-round gamer. The moves are easier than in *Tekken*, but *Soul Blade* still offers some of the fastest, most beautiful beat-'em-up action on the PlayStation. An interesting one-player "story" mode maintains the longevity, making the whole package top fun for little money. ★★★★★

**Street Fighter Alpha 3**  
 ■ Virgin ■ £40 **Supremely polished 2D fighter** Each fighter comes in three variations, enabling you to pick one whose technique suits you. The addition of a meter showing your defences weakening is inspired, and the inclusion of all your *SF* faves makes this possibly the most enjoyable, *SF* game in years. ★★★★★

**Street Fighter Collection 2**  
 ■ Virgin ■ £40 **Fun-filled retro fisticuffs** *SF2: World Warrior* is fun despite its simplicity, thanks to the balance struck between the assorted pugilists. *SF2: Championship Edition* is good for similar reasons, while *Turbo Hyper Fighting* is entertaining, but even faster. Arcade-perfect, uncomplicated fun. ★★★★★

**Tekken**  
 ■ Namco ■ £20 **The original classic all-rounder** This may have been usurped by its progeny, but the first *Tekken* combines slick visuals with a series of moves that would have your mother fainting on the floor. Plenty to do in one-player, and the two-player is only surpassed by its sequels. ★★★★★

## Watch out for Right about now – games heading into the charts this month.



**Driver**  
 ■ 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 make for added fun. ★★★★★



**Evil Zone**  
 ■ Titus ■ £40 **Anime-themed battles** Well-rounded characters and wave upon wave of outlandish Japanese-inspired attacks, but not technical or attractive enough for *Street Fighter*/*Tekken* fans. ★★★



**Ape Escape**  
 ■ SCEE ■ £40 **Satisfying simian search** The task of catching panicky monkeys with nets refreshes the platforming genre, while the coin-collecting sub-quest and bonus games ramp up the replayability. The true 3D world looks lovely, the controls are perfect and it's as fun and challenging as you could want. ★★★★★



**Syphon Filter**  
 ■ SCEE ■ £40 **Accomplished third-person espionage action** Stop terrorists releasing a deadly virus, in a game that almost matches the might of *Metal Gear Solid*. A coherent environment, great pacing and a comprehensive control system provide a real feeling of involvement, despite the visual rough edges. ★★★★★



**Croc 2**  
 ■ Fox Interactive ■ £40 **Rescue gonk-like Gobbos** Flick your tail, dash and jump about as the eponymous crocodile. *Croc 2* is tricky and woefully unoriginal, but also good looking and relatively involving. ★★★



### Tekken 2

■ Namco ■ £40 **Slick, pure beat-'em-up action** The second in the series is as polished as we've come to expect from Namco, with fights that feel right. The one-player game is engrossing, which is a novelty, and there are plenty of moves, bosses and secrets to get your teeth into. ★★★★★

### Tekken 3

■ Namco ■ £45 **Adept slapping** A 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. ★★★★★

### WCW/nWo Thunder

■ Eidos ■ £35 **Woeful wrestling tedium** Slow, unresponsive and ugly. ★

### WWF Warzone

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

### X-Men Vs Street Fighter

■ Virgin ■ £30 **Speedy collision of comic and coin-op** The great controls and 2D fighters that you'd expect from the long-running *Street Fighter* series, but otherwise repetitive, jerky and a bit shallow. ★★★



## Racers

### 360

■ Smart Dog ■ £40 **Futuristic watery speeding** Hoverboats and weapons are combined in a confusingly-put-together racer. ★★

### Big Air

■ EA ■ £40 **Snowboarding shenanigans** Six characters and six courses, but patchy, slow and unrealistic. ★★

### Bomberman Fantasy Racing

■ Virgin ■ £30 **Slow, tricky animal racing** Vicious handling prevents you exploiting the power-ups to the full, but the two-player mode is maniacal fun. ★★

### Colin McRae Rally

■ Codemasters ■ £45 **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. ★★★★★

### Cool Boarders 2

■ SCEE ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

### Destruction Derby 2

■ Psygnosis ■ £20 **Smash-heavy racing sequel** Your opponents are happiest when slamming into your backside, so reaching the finish without your car falling apart is an achievement. Making good on almost all of the faults of the original, this sequel is fast, includes varied well-designed tracks and offers more crashes than you'd get from your average PC. The chaotic nature of the races doesn't suit everyone. ★★★★★

### Driver

■ GT Interactive ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

### Formula 1 '97

■ Psygnosis ■ £20 **Realistic F1 sim** A much-needed follow up to the original *F1 '96*. All the stats, drivers, tracks and fag ads are there, along with increased responsiveness and more realistic opposition. The two-player mode is disappointing. ★★★★★

### Formula 1 '98

■ Psygnosis ■ £35 **Purportedly accurate driving sim** Inadequate views, horrendous handling and a physics engine that's simply wrong. ★★

### Gran Turismo

■ Platinum ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

### Max Power Racing

■ Infogrames ■ £40 **Fun boy free-wheeling** Fancy graphics and a good impression of speed can't save this from its over-long tracks, finger-clenching difficulty and niggling faults. ★★

### MicroMachines v3

■ 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 as beautifully designed as Philippa Forrester. The speed can be bewildering, but that's part of the charm. ★★★★★

### Moto Racer 2

■ EA ■ £40 **Barely improved motorcross sequel** The track editor adds longevity above the 32 built-in tracks and 16 bikes, but the inadequate handling and badly planned difficulty curve cut short any enjoyment. ★★

### NASCAR 99

■ EA ■ £40 **Circular-track banger racing** Thirty-seven cars, 17 tracks and a unique arcade-style feel to the racing. A good solid simulation, despite the awry handling. ★★

### Need For Speed: Road Challenge

■ EA ■ £40 **Competent cop-chasing** Once the novelty of being chased by the Fuzz has worn a bit thin, even the wealth of licensed cars can't make up for the game's simplicity. ★★

### Rally Cross 2

■ SCEE ■ £35 **Tedious off-road racing** Three cars on just three types of terrain, too many crashes and awful handling. ★★

### Ridge Racer Revolution

■ Namco ■ £20 **Rocket-speed arcade racing** Improves upon its prequel, with a polished (solitary) track, faster speeds, better handling and gorgeous, rendered scenery. The racing's fast, satisfying and difficult to master, with opposition cars that are only too happy to overtake you after every minor mistake you make. The all-new *Ridge 4* surpasses it in every way, however. ★★★★★

### Ridge Racer Type 4

■ Namco ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

### Rollcage

■ Psygnosis ■ £40 **Chaotic futuristic racing** The crisp visuals, block-rocking beats and cars that can flip, turn and spin to accommodate any terrain and contour are great, but the speed and ease with which you will crash create a very random, unfair feel. Otherwise, it's an original and exhilarating race. ★★★★★

### Running Wild

■ SCEE ■ £35 **The first PlayStation on-foot racing game** Run around uninspiring tracks. *Very slowly.* ★

### Sports Car GT

■ EA Sports ■ £40 **Glitchy, ugly driving mess** Satisfying handling and a good choice of cars, but woeful presentation. ★★

### Street Racer

■ Ubisoft ■ £20 **Mario Kart-style comedy** Awful. ★

### Street Skater

■ EA ■ £40 **Tarmac skateboarding** Poor controls and tiresome simplicity. ★

### Tank Racer

■ Grolier ■ £40 **Jerky Caterpillar-tracked racing** Even 22 tracks of destructible scenery can't make racing these clunky tanks enjoyable. ★★

### TOCA Touring Car Championship

■ Platinum ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

### TOCA 2

■ Codemasters ■ £40 **Frighteningly fast driving sim** A garage-full of cars that all handle differently and embrace accurate driving physics. If it wasn't for the difficulty, this would be perfect, with accurate courses and speed that's scary. ★★★★★

### Vigilante 8

■ Activision ■ £20 **'70s-influenced destruction driving** Blowing up buildings and cars using '70s vehicles sounds great, but when your reward is just more explosions per level, monotony soon follows. ★★

### V-Rally

■ Platinum ■ £20 **The original countryside rallying sim** Even staying on the track is difficult, but with 60 tracks and a wealth of weather conditions that affect them, you'll be happy to stick at it. The addition of Dual Shock rumblings and another car make this Platinum re-release a sound purchase. ★★★★★

### WipEout 2097

■ Psygnosis ■ £20 **Face-flapping space-age hover races** A better bet than the original *WipEout*, as the learning curve is gentler, but the new, more difficult racing class should make veterans weep. It has excellent CPU opposition, more weapons and the twistiest tracks this side of Alton Towers, although – dare we say it – in comparison with some of today's gorgeous offerings, it's starting to look a little rough around the edges. ★★★★★



## Sports

### Actua Ice Hockey 2

■ Gremlin ■ £40 **Average frozen water exploits** This looks and sounds impressive, and provides the option to up the game tempo, but the lack of an official license might be a deterrent to purchase. ★★

### Actua Soccer 3

■ Gremlin ■ £30 **Polished pigs bladder kick-a-thon** Pleasingly difficult and wonderfully fluid, producing play that flows like a well-oiled Brazilian back-four. Let down by some occasionally ropey animation, but otherwise this is a solid – if largely unimproved – sequel. ★★★★★

### Actua Tennis

■ Gremlin ■ £25 **Proper simulation of ball and racquet** Stilted and basic. ★

### All Star Tennis '99

■ Ubisoft ■ £20 **Serious recreation of Henman's hobby** Fast and comprehensive, but the rather inadequate camera makes things difficult. Stick to the multi-player option and "bomb tennis" sub-game to pick up some limited laughs. ★★

### Anna Kournikova's Smash Court Tennis

■ SCEE ■ £35 **See "Top 20"**

### Bloodlines

■ SCEE ■ £40 **Fist-based future-tag** Run between swirly vortexes and beat up opposing teams. Too fast, too simple. ★★

### Brian Lara Cricket

■ Codemasters ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

### Everybody's Golf

■ SCEE ■ £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 your golf too seriously. And who does, apart from that Faldo chappy? ★★★★★

### FIFA 99

■ EA Sports ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

### ISS Pro

■ Konami ■ £20 **Masterful footy sim** There's little reason to buy this, now that its smarter sequel has reached the shelves. Still, with silky play, perfect motion capture, scores of teams and the most intuitive controls this side of a light switch, we couldn't blame you for handing your cash over for this Platinum release. ★★★★★

### Jonah Lomu Rugby

■ Codemasters ■ £20 **Oval ball antics** An admirably accurate simulation of the sport, including plenty of options. The only choice for rugby fans. ★★

### Knockout Kings

■ EA Sports ■ £35 **Boxing very clever** A simulation of punch-uppery, with a power-bar system to make sure you don't just stab the "Hit" button until your opponent falls. Plenty of modes, a create-a-player section and the chance to meet a virtual Muhammed Ali. Cripes! ★★★★★

### Madden NFL 99

■ EA ■ £40 **Admirable US footy sim** Tons of stuff to do and alter, and options to skip the more complicated features. Some splendid motion capture and a bevy of realistic moves are married with a slow-paced feel that will satisfy simmers but not arcadesters. ★★★★★

### Michael Owen's World League Soccer '99

■ Eidos ■ £20 **Silky smooth wonderboy-licensed play** Ooh, this looks bad, with players skating around the pitch like Torville and Dean. However, you'd be hard pushed to fault *WLS '99* in any other way, because it plays like a dream. The finest details of footy have been recreated with the Liverpoolian Boy Wonder in a starring role, and the intuitive controls, sexy combos and realistic difficulty level make this a fine interpretation. ★★★★★

### NBA Live 99

■ EA Sports ■ £40 **Well-rounded basketball** Sleek motion capture, proper gurning faces, and Simulation and Arcade modes that should satisfy both proper basketball fans and normal people alike. Rodman aficionados should also be happy with the cornucopia of stats and the create-a-player mode. ★★★★★

### NBA Pro '99

■ Konami ■ £40 **Syrupy basketball interpretation** Ridiculously slow. ★

### NHL 99

■ EA Sports ■ £40 **Ice hockey for mother puckers** Too many goals, married with too little action. Disappointing. ★★

### NHL Face Off '99

■ SCEE ■ £35 **Complete-but-dull puck-'em-up** Everything's here, from stats to scrapping, but it ain't no fun. ★★

### Pool Shark

■ Gremlin ■ £40 **"Baized" on the popular sport** Inexplicably replaces the friendly power-bar with a click-at-the-right-moment system (*à la* golf games). Take your 50p pieces down the pub instead. ★★

### Player Manager: Season '98/'99

■ Infogrames ■ £40 **Comprehensive but unwieldy coachmanship** The huge UK and foreign player roster and detailed tactical options offer great scope, but the clumsy menu system used here makes the game unmanageable. ★★

### Pro 18 World Tour Golf

■ Psygnosis ■ £40 **Complex and challenging pitch-'n'-putt** Accurately modelled courses and a plethora of well-known names, aided by a novel and interesting control system. ★★

### Sensible Soccer: European Club Edition

■ GT Interactive ■ £30 **Old-school soccer update** Tedious footy, where shooting and passing are toe-curlingly difficult. ★★

### Premier Manager '99

■ Gremlin ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

### Tiger Woods 99 PGA Tour Golf

■ EA Sports ■ £40 **Decent fore-play** Easy to pick up and with lots of eye-pleasing real-life courses, *PGA Tour Golf* delivers a realistic, option-heavy simulation. The mechanics of play leave a little to be desired, but it's still worth your readies. ★★★★★

### Puma Street Soccer

■ Infogrames ■ £40 **Abysmal five-a-side soccer** Badly put together and too fast. ★

### Triple Play 2000

■ EA Sports ■ £35 **Innovative baseball sim** New batting and pitching ideas give genre-refreshing results. The atmosphere is typically well-realised, and the clearly presented player information makes detailed play possible. ★★★★★

### UEFA Champions League '98/'99

■ Eidos ■ £40 **Accomplished European Cup football sim** Past and present Euro teams are all here, and there are bucketfuls of realistic moves available to string into combos. Exciting, but suffers from stodgy gameplay. ★★★★★

### Virtual Pool

■ Interplay ■ £20 **Ball-cue collisions** Accurate, but you'd be better with *Pool Shark* – this isn't as extensive or attractive. ★★



## Platformers

### A Bug's Life

■ Disney ■ £40 **Ant-based adventures** Crude animation and repetitive play. ★

### Akuji The Heartless

■ Eidos ■ £40 **Voodoo-inspired puzzly platformer** A creepy *Tomb Raider*-style romp with switch-pushing and jumping. Plenty of graphical wizardry, but tedious, simple gameplay. ★★

### Ape Escape

■ SCEE ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

### Batman & Robin

■ Acclaim ■ £30 **Lacklustre platform/puzzle tie-in** A mixture of various gaming styles that doesn't gel. ★

### Crash Bandicoot 2

■ SCEE ■ £20 **Pseudo 3D antics. Again** Control a mad marsupial as he runs into the screen, collecting apples. The linear level format and ease of the gameplay don't help. ★★

### Croc

■ Platinum ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

### Croc 2

■ Fox Interactive ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

### Gex 3D: Enter The Gecko

■ Take 2 ■ £20 **Lizard-lover's plat-fest** It's after *Mario's* crown, but *Gex's* running, jumping and collecting exploits don't feel as free-roaming as the *Big M*. Still, the level design almost matches Nintendo's and there are 125 moves at your disposal. ★★★★★

### Heart of Darkness

■ Infogrames ■ £20 **Typically uninspired 2D platform fare** The detailed backdrops and cinematic cut scenes can't rescue the frustrating trial-and-error gameplay. ★★

### Jurassic Park The Lost World

■ Platinum ■ £20 **Dino Spiel** Control your dino trudging across a dull 3D landscape. ★★

### Ninja: Shadow of Darkness

■ Eidos ■ £25 **Sneak about in a Tomb Raider style** A third-person wanderer, with a great range of punches, kicks and magic. Enjoyable, but difficult, and with an odd camera system. ★★

### Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus

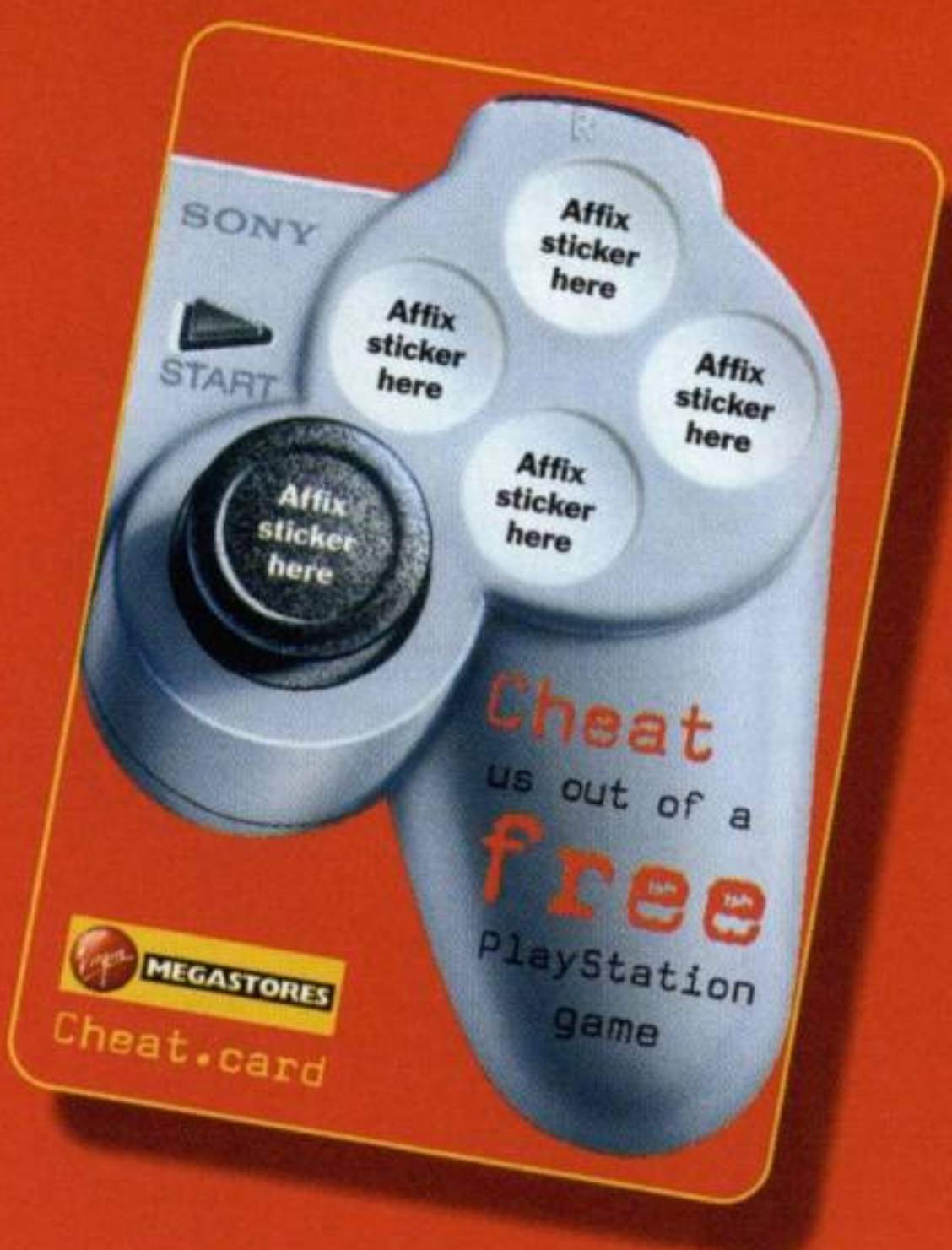
■ GT Interactive ■ £20 **Puzzly platformer with agile alien** Wander through 2D screens and rescue friends, solving puzzles along the way. Often infuriating, but neat touches and marvellous graphics make it a long-lasting and enjoyable challenge. ★★★★★

### B-Movie

■ GT Interactive ■ £20 **'50s-themed alien shooter** A 3D shoot-'em-up – it's mission-based, with cartoony alien ships. Odd controls and a high difficulty level ensure frustration. ★★



Dare  
you  
cheat  
on  
me?



DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE  
THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION AT



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THE GAME THAT RUINED MY LIFE

## Amiga amnesia

Like petrol and water, Rich Pelley, *Parasol Stars* and A-Levels don't mix.

■ Amiga ■ Platformer ■ 1992 ■ Ocean



Everybody gets it once in a while. That funny feeling when the rational part of your brain suddenly gives way in favour of the irrational part in a case of the "so long as". "So long as I get this crumpled up ball of paper into the bin within three attempts," you think, "that girl I fancy will go out with me." "So long as I can chuck this sock into the washbin in one go, my family won't all die in a car crash."

The worst "so long as" that ever hit me was during my A-Levels. "So long as I can finish obscure two-player Amiga game *Parasol Stars* featuring Bub and Bob from *Rainbow Islands* (and later, *Bust-A-Move*), I'll get three As," I thought.

You might not have heard of *Parasol Stars*, of course. In fact, few people had, other than me and my friend across the road, Nick. But what we loved was the fantastic two-player mixture of competitiveness and cooperation. Without each other's help, you couldn't get very far. But there was no way

that you were going to let The Other Man get his hands on the bonus point-rewarding fruit that accompanied the end of each level.

So there I was, over at Nick's house one morning, desperately trying to finish *Parasol Stars*, blissfully unaware that the Chemistry Paper 3 exam I believed to be in the afternoon was actually taking place as I played. That is, until a phone call came through from my school. And I had to hurry in, like a madman.

Luckily, there is a happy ending to this story. They let me sit the exam in the afternoon, because it was the one-hour multiple choice one, so they figured I couldn't cheat. And I got an A. And Nick and I finished *Parasol Stars* later, if memory serves, that afternoon. Now, if I can just hold my breath until I've spell-checked this boxout, nothing like this will ever happen to me again...

### Colony Wars: Vengeance

■ Psygnosis ■ £35 Epic space battle This sequel takes you and your spaceship through a variety of first-person missions and all-out battles. It's methodical, but with enough realism to make *Star Wars* fans wet their pants. ★★★★★

### Shooters

#### Doom

■ GT Interactive ■ £20 Seminal corridor shoot-'em-up Superb conversion of id's breakthrough first-person shooter. *Doom* sees you playing a squaddie traipsing through future-dungeons, making bloody holes in whatever you meet. The graphics are years out of date, but this merely enables the excellent level design and gameplay to shine. ★★★★★

#### Duke Nukem: Time to Kill

■ GT Interactive ■ £25 Time-travelling alien blast Twelve levels of killage seen from a *Tomb Raider*-style perspective. It's fun for a while, but then gets repetitive, dodgy looking and difficult to control. ★★★

#### Omega Boost

■ SCEE ■ £35 Flashy 3D blaster Tasty graphics – check. Sore thumb from frenzied blasting – check. But the absence of power-ups and the sheer difficulty of it all disappoint. ★★★

#### Point Blank

■ SCEE ■ £35 Lightgun shooting fun Only the Japanese could create a shooting gallery featuring ninjas and piranhas, stick in a four-player mode and still ensure that it has the most weirdly addictive gameplay ever. Get your mates and some beer round, and laugh your socks off. ★★★★★

#### Retro Force

■ Psygnosis ■ £35 Unimaginative aliens attack Old-skool vertical shoot-'em-up that's just plain dull. ★★

#### R-Types

■ Virgin ■ £30 Classic scrolling shoot-'em-up *R-Type* parts one and two; emulated rather than converted, and therefore closer than close to the originals. Lovely level designs, perfect power-ups and unbridled addictiveness, squeezed into your little portable TV. ★★★★★

#### Soviet Strike

■ EA ■ £20 Chopper war missions Pilot a helicopter and fire guns at buildings, tanks and installations. Hard, but fun. ★★★★★

#### Syphon Filter

■ SCEE ■ £40 See "Watch out for"

#### Time Crisis

■ Namco ■ £20 Trigger-happy first-person fun The innovative "duck and reload" option is present, as are the G-Con 45 lightgun and the host of bad guys. Both make for exciting, bloody and flowing play that relies on pure speed. With bonus levels available if you persevere, don't worry about the longevity, just feel the power. ★★★★★

### Strategy/God

#### Asterix

■ Infogrames ■ £40 Real-time war with Gaulish hero Tiresome and sluggish. ★

#### Civilization II

■ Activision ■ £40 Engrossing empire-building and battling Construct prehistoric cities and nurture them and their inhabitants through the ages, while dishing death on your competitors. Encompasses politics, trading, exploration and war to create unrivalled depth. ★★★★★

#### Command & Conquer

■ Virgin ■ £20 The original real-time strategy A

complicated, but accessible, point-and-click war sim, where you manage resources and decide where and when to send men to their deaths. C&C's solid and involving nature has made it extremely popular, but sadly, it's dated. The design of the levels and speed of the action make it a bargain, though, so we advise you to get it in while you can. ★★★★★

#### Command & Conquer: Red Alert

■ Virgin ■ £30 See "Top 20"

#### Command & Conquer: Retaliation

■ Virgin ■ £40 The Soviets vs Europe Missions from the PC-based *Counterstrike* and *Aftermath* versions of C&C: *Red Alert*, and 100 two-player missions to play with a link cable. Clicking on and navigating your troops has been made a lot easier, and the graphics are clearer too, but it's difficult, making it more suited to seasoned C&C fans. ★★★★★

#### KKND: Crossfire

■ Infogrames ■ £40 Lacklustre post-nuclear skirmish Frustratingly difficult point-'n'-clickery with a unique two-player mode. ★★

#### Populous: The Beginning

■ EA ■ £40 Be a god for the day This translation of the PC title, sees you forming tribes that worship you and destroy your enemies. It's easily controlled, big enough to last weeks, pleasingly involving and the 3D visuals create a great sense of freedom. ★★★★★

#### Theme Hospital

■ EA ■ £30 Medical resource management This build-your-own-hospital-and-cure-comedy-illnesses strategy pales next to C&C. The lack of a PSX mouse can make it a sod to play. ★★

#### Warzone 2100

■ Eidos ■ £35 Futuristic war sim The excellent controls, which complement the on-screen menus perfectly, help lift this above the usual C&C clones. With long-lasting missions, deliciously large weapons and explosions, and a pleasing depth of play, this is the PSX's best strategy game. ★★★★★

### RPGs

#### Final Fantasy VII

■ SCEE ■ £20 See "Top 20"

#### Guardian's Crusade

■ Activision ■ £40 Isometric, action-based story Fast-moving, with plenty of interaction, in the form of chatting, killing and spell-casting. The interesting "raise-your-own-dragon" sub-game is great. ★★

#### Legend of Kartia

■ Konami ■ £40 Drone role-playing Protect your world from spell-casting rebels. Tiresome story-based play. ★★

#### The Granstream Saga

■ SCEE ■ £35 Pedestrian role-player set on floating islands The promising plot reveals obvious, simplistic puzzles. ★★

#### Monkey Hero

■ Take 2 ■ £35 Adventuring monkey magic Role-playing, fighting and puzzling huddled together, but with far too much bog standard switch-flipping and object-moving. ★★

### Adventures

#### Metal Gear Solid

■ SCEE ■ £40 See "Top 20"

#### Resident Evil 2

■ Capcom ■ £35 Scary 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. The improved script and acting (and the wildly increased zombie count) will scare your skin off, and the cut-scenes, once again, are the highlight of a polished and creepy package that will leave you scared to be alone at night. ★★★★★

#### Hard Edge

■ Sunsoft ■ £40 Boring *Resident Evil*-like Horribly complicated maps in this tedious puzzle-solver. ★★

### Puzzlers

#### Bust-A-Move 4

■ Taito ■ £30 Bubble-bursting brilliance Fantastically addictive puzzle game, where the simple – yet infuriating – aim is to match coloured bubbles. It's as easy to pick up and painfully compulsive as previous versions. The bubble-link feature makes for faster, more frenetic play, and the story mode levels add some novel bits, too. Don't bother laying out cash for this if you already own an earlier version, though. ★★★★★

#### Devil Dice

■ SCEE ■ £35 Cuboidal conundrums This beautifully presented 3D dice-based version of dominoes isn't for the casual gamer, but it's tough to put down once you get your head around the astonishing speed of the thing and the utterly soul-numbing creepiness of the central evil pixie characters. ★★★★★



## Kula World

■ SCEE ■ £35 **Indecently addictive ball-based puzzler** Ball-rolling-impossibly-on-floating-maze game. As head-bending as it sounds, but you'll be hooked, thanks to the well-designed controls and tricky levels. ★★★★★

## Sentinel Returns

■ Psygnosis ■ £10 **Classic '80s strategy puzzler** Absorb the Sentinel, who sits high atop the 3D chequerboard landscape. A successful retro update at long last, with the graphics all kept deliberately low-key to maintain the feel of the original. ★★★★★

## Super Puzzle Fighter II

■ Virgin ■ £20 **Superb Tetris-style puzzling** Mix Tetris and Bust-A-Move, add Street Fighter kiddie characters and you have one of the best puzzlers of all time, where successful moves affect an on-screen battle. It's insanely addictive in two-player, but try one-player mode and you'll have the family banging on your bedroom door, wondering where on Earth you've been for the past month. ★★★★★

## Swing

■ Software 2000 ■ £35 **Quest to match coloured balls** Leisurely variant of Bust-A-Move, where the balls swing at gravity's whim. It's an insanely addictive experience, but you'll need patience to master it. ★★

## Trap Runner

■ Konami ■ £40 **Devious split-screen skirmishes** Set traps for your enemy to stumble upon in an isometrically viewed arena. *Trap Runner* is tension-packed and polished, although the tricky controls could initially confuse. ★★★

## Yo Yo's Puzzle Park

■ JVC ■ £30 **Fun bomb-blasting head-scratcher** Set off bombs to brutally maim your enemies, *Bomberman* style. The innocent quality of the play is endearing, but the differently-themed levels and power-ups make things complicated. ★★★★★



Party

## Bomberman

■ Virgin ■ £40 **Old-skool bomb-throwing maze game** Tiny characters in a top-down TNT tournament. It looks years out of date, but the wealth of power-ups and extensive options add to the already addictive play. The loading delays are particularly annoying, though. ★★★★★

## Aironauts

■ Red Storm ■ £35 **Novelty hang-gliding challenges** Good, straightforward tasks to pull off in your soaring craft – including destroying enemy mines and flying through hoops – but it all tires quickly. ★★

## Die Hard Trilogy

■ Platinum ■ £20 **Three action games in one** Excellent value for money, this triple bundle includes a *Tomb Raider*-style shooter, a *Time Crisis*-like and a driving game. Effort has been expended on each section, and it's tricky enough to last you for ages. ★★★★★



Misc

## Grand Theft Auto

■ Platinum ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

## GTA: London

■ Take 2 ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

## Music: Music Creation for The PlayStation

■ Codemasters ■ £35 **Custom-built techno** Create toons by manipulating little chunks of music and pictures. Too difficult for novices and too insulting for pros. Worth contemplating for that post-club chill-out, though. ★★★

## Poy Poy 2

■ Konami ■ £40 **Multi-player chuck-a-thon** Run around, pick up stuff and then throw it at your opponents. Funny – especially with friends – but ultimately too confusing. ★★★

## Rampage 2 – Universal Tour

■ GT Interactive ■ £35 **B-movie-style monster mash** Dull, repetitive smash-'em-up nonsense. ★

## SECONDHAND BARGAINS | Found one of these for a bargain price? Grab it now!

### Dead or Alive

■ SCEE **Slick high-res beat-'em-up** Barren-looking, but with quick-as-you-like visuals, this is a slick deviation from the more usual *Tekken*-style fighting, with its clever use of counter-attacks and emphasis on grabbing your adversary and throwing them into the heavens. ★★★★★

### Fade to Black

■ EA **Over-the-shoulder space-age adventure** Looking its age, but still a commendable mix of puzzles, running and shooting. Very good fun for the price. ★★★★★

### Klonoa

■ Namco **Cutesy dog jumpery** This is more involving than your average platform game. It's well-designed, but you'll finish it far too quickly. ★★★★★

### NFL Blitz

■ GT Interactive **US footy simplified and made fun** Abandoning the usual American football style (overloading on thousands of rules and stopping for a rest every other minute) and moving to something that's rather more worthwhile (emphasis on speed, simple controls, usage of fists), this is top fun. ★★★★★

### Rage Racer

■ Namco **Face-flapping arcade racing** The third in the *Ridge Racer* series is speedy, good looking and option-laden. This is the definitive racer if you like your cars a bit more "Woa, woah, wooahhh!" than *Gran Turismo*, with powersliding and rocketing down straights at 100mph all part of the fun. Let down only by the lack of a split-screen option, but the link-up facility goes a long way toward correcting this. ★★★★★

### Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha

■ Capcom **Fast version of the long-running series** Conversion of the first 3D *SF* coin-op, with loads of lovely extra bits chucked in. Excellent speed and good backgrounds, as well the pleasingly familiar moves and style, make this every bit as intuitive as its great predecessors. ★★★★★

### Wild Arms

■ SCEE **Huge role-play adventure** A strong RPG, eclipsed by Squaresoft's seminal classic *Final Fantasy VII*. It suffers rather from *FP*'s random battle syndrome, and the slick-but-retro-looking visuals strip away much of the feeling of involvement, but it's still absorbing. ★★★★★

### WipEout

■ Psygnosis **Futuristic hovercraft action** The game that made PSX the console of choice, with the soundtrack that helped make gaming cool, but the opposing craft mean you'll need to persevere to succeed. Your reward is the opportunity to career down classic neon tracks, massaging the sensible controls and throwing up your lunch. ★★★★★

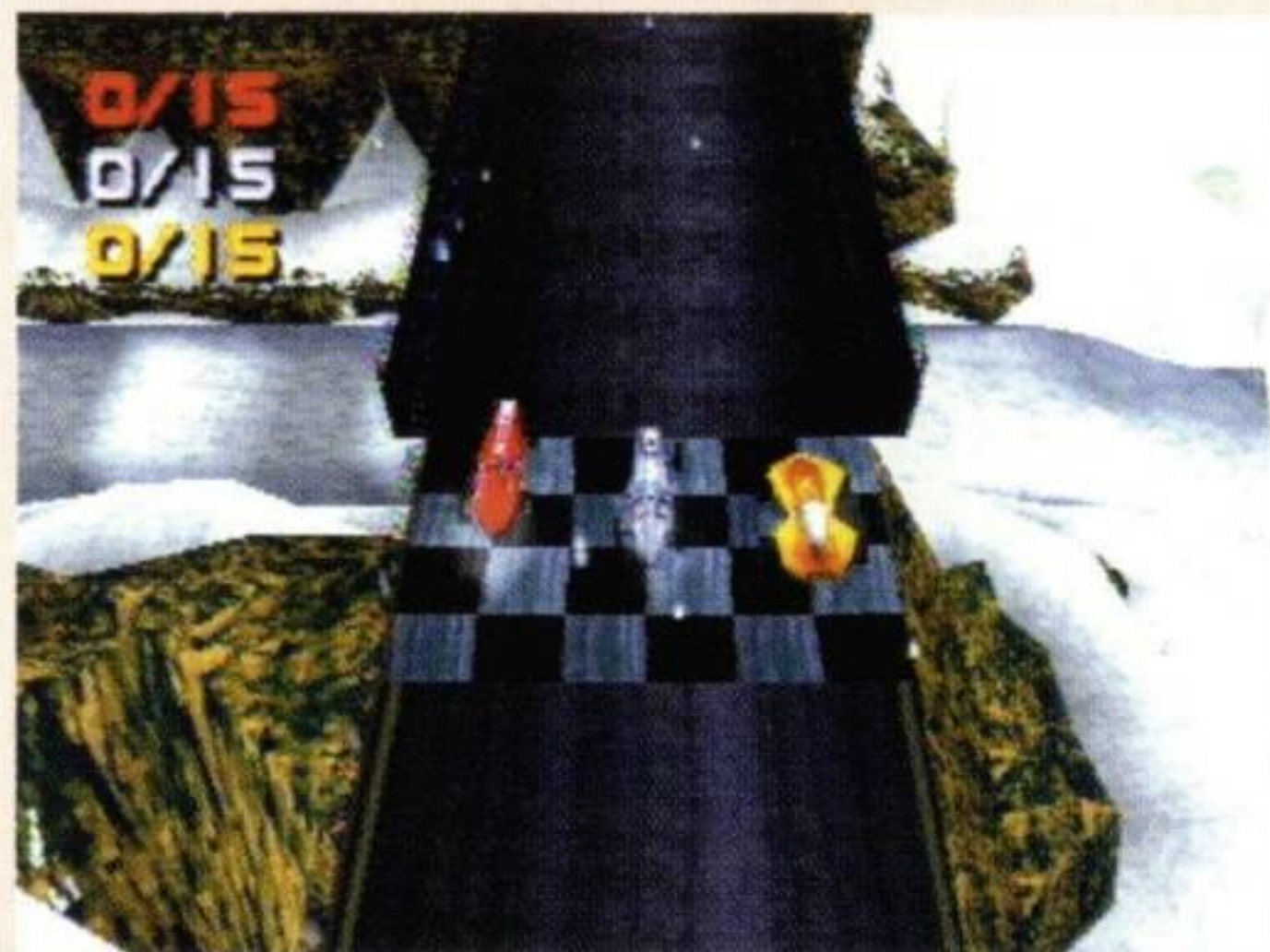
### PaRappa The Rapper

■ SCEE **Puppy love songs** It's time to join the rapping dog with "attitude", and tap buttons in time to some outrageously bizarre rap tunes. The selection of songs is fantastic, helping to make this brilliantly funny and completely original. You'll finish the game in an afternoon, but you'll still have tons of fun with it. ★★★★★

## SNAP IT UP

# Circuit Breakers

■ Racer ■ Mindscape

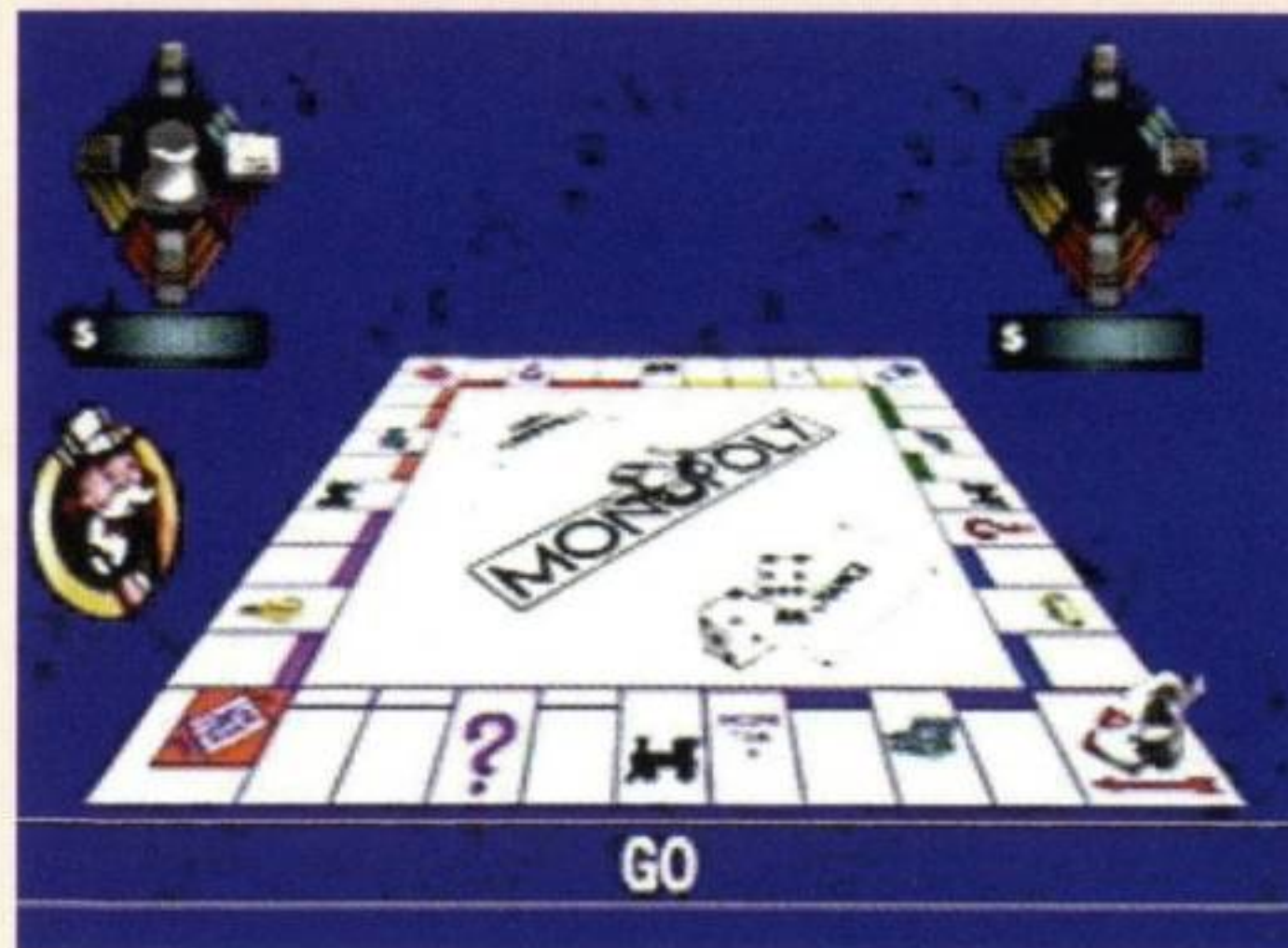


■ Tiny cars, a full-screen four-player mode and eccentric courses – if you're a comedy racing fan, you won't be surprised to learn that *Circuit Breakers* was created by the same team that brought you *MicroMachines v3*. Despite the similarities, *Circuit Breakers* is able to hold its own, with crisp, smooth graphics, 18 intelligent track layouts and a selection of pleasingly destructive power-ups. The position of the camera can occasionally make judging the upcoming twists and turns nigh-on impossible, and the range of vehicles is disappointingly small, but by-and-large *Circuit Breakers* provides brilliant, boisterous, multi-player racing fun. ★★★★★

## SMACK IT DOWN

# Monopoly

■ Party ■ Hasbro Interactive



■ *Monopoly's* great, isn't it? Tapping a small brass dog around a board, square by square, coming second place in beauty contests and giggling with glee as your opponents reluctantly cough up the crippling rent required for a stay in your swankiest hotel. Sadly, despite the faithful re-creation of the terrier statuette, this PlayStation interpretation is fundamentally flawed. Aside from the game hiding the other players' houses and hotels (removing those nerve-wracking "Pleeease don't make it a five!" dice-roll moments), the physical pleasure that comes from placing itty-bitty green houses on Park Lane or receiving a thick wad of cash from an "It's Your Birthday" Chance card has been lost. Best stick to the real thing. ★

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## PC Top 20

Resist everything but temptation – and these gorgeous games.



**1** (-) **Star Wars Episode 1: Phantom Menace** ■ Adventure ■ LucasArts ■ £35  
**Faithful movie tie-in** Run, jump, swing and lightsabre your way around isometric-ish environments, ripped straight from the movie. The camera angle is unhelpful, the graphics merely "okay", and the puzzles tedious – pushing switches and cutting robots in half with your glorified strip-bulb is about as far as it goes. ★★★



**2** (1) **Championship Manager 3** ■ Sport ■ 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. ★★★★★



**3** (-) **Star Trek: Birth of The Federation** ■ Strategy ■ Hasbro ■ £35  
**Civilization for Enterprise fans** Turn-based galaxy resource-building in a *Star Trek* style. Its looks and interface are clumsy, but the well-researched depth makes it a challenging experience. Needless to say, if you're not a Trekkler, you'd best look elsewhere. ★★★



**4** (-) **Mechwarrior 3** ■ Strategy ■ Hasbro ■ £35  
**Giant robots in Earth-shattering battles** Sophisticated strategy, hot first-person robot-on-robot action, and atmosphere so dense you'll have trouble breathing. Dubious enemy AI can't ruin the beautifully complex robot wars. ★★★



**5** (-) **Star Wars Episode 1: Racer** ■ Racer ■ Activision ■ £35  
**Anakin takes to the track** The 25 courses are varied and pleasingly stomach-churning, and the speed is mind-blowing, but the complicated controls and detached hovering feel means it doesn't work all that well. ★★★



**6** (-) **Tomb Raider II: The Golden Mask** ■ Platformer ■ Eidos ■ £20  
**The luscious Lara returns** The original *TRII* plus five new levels. A must-buy if you don't already own a copy, but not good value if you're already initiated. ★★★★★

**7** (4) **Rollercoaster Tycoon** ■ Strategy ■ Microprose ■ £40  
**Build a theme park** Constructing death-defying rides and keeping the public happy is interesting for a while, but it was all done much better by Bullfrog's *Theme Park*. This is detailed and comprehensive, but also dull and fiddly. ★★★

**8** (9) **Norton Anti-Virus** ■ Virus checker ■ Norton ■ £30  
**Bust those bugs** The PC's most popular virus-checker, with an Internet-based update file that's refreshed every week. Making an appearance in the charts again this month because the *Melissa* e-mail virus is panicking PC owners. ★★★★★

**9** (6) **Half-Life** ■ Shooter ■ Sierra ■ £35  
**Stunningly atmospheric first-person shooter** Built with a terrifyingly believable environment and logical puzzles, and incorporating mind-bogglingly intelligent bad guys and a decent amount of gorgeous all-out alien-blasting. ★★★★★

**10** (-) **Midtown Madness** ■ Racer ■ Microsoft ■ £35  
**Maniacal city streets racing** A perfectly-recreated Chicago, streets packed with intelligent traffic and a heavenly range of vehicles make up a breathlessly exciting racer, where collisions are as involving and exciting as the actual racing. ★★★★★

**11** (17) **Brian Lara Cricket** ■ Sport ■ Codemasters ■ £35  
**Leather on willow** A plethora of options, up-to-date players and teams, and a selection of real-life grounds, create an authentic feel, although the difficult controls do make for a slightly frustrating game. Otherwise, this is a very successful simulation. ★★★★★

**12** (7) **Civilization: Call to Power** ■ Strategy ■ Activision ■ £35  
**Real-time populace production** Nurture a society from 4000BC to the future, indulging in a fair amount of all-out war along the way. A lasting challenge, no-one should be disappointed by this. ★★★★★

**13** (3) **Official Formula 1 Racing** ■ Racer ■ Eidos ■ £40  
**Challenging racing sim** A conversion of the N64's *F1 World Grand Prix*, skewed in favour of providing arcade thrills over strict simulation. Although graphically sparse, *Official's* comprehensive options, good controls and proper 1998 license are right on the button. ★★★★★

**14** (15) **Blade Runner** ■ Adventure ■ Activision ■ £20  
**Replicant-hunting adventure** Take control of a government bounty hunter, who's on a quest to smack up cyborgs. Stunning 3D worlds, plenty of puzzling to keep you occupied, but the characters are a little shallow. ★★★

**15** (-) **Championship Manager 2** ■ Sports ■ Eidos ■ £20  
**Be Kevin Keegan** With *Championship Manager 3* imminent, this prequel has appeared at a bargain price. Looking a little out-of-date now, and still far, far too easy, it's nevertheless engrossing and packed with neat details. ★★★

**16** (13) **Sim City 3000** ■ Strategy ■ 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. ★★★★★

**17** (12) **Crickets World Cup 99** ■ Sport ■ EA Sports ■ £30  
**EA's official cricket offering** Well-presented, with an authoritative, genuine feel and good control. Strangely, however, *CWC* omits the option to control fielders, and the behaviour of the bat and ball are highly suspect. ★★★

**18** (11) **Grand Theft Auto** ■ Misc ■ Take 2 ■ £20  
**Drugs death and driving** Notorious for its lack of scruples, *GTA* encourages the killing of bystanders and the trafficking of drugs. The graphics are disappointing and the missions repetitive, but the freedom to drive around cities and dodge the cops gives a great buzz. ★★★★★

**19** (10) **TOCA 2 Touring Cars** ■ Racer ■ Codemasters ■ £35  
**Heavily realistic revs** Even with 15 cars jostling for position in front of you, *TOCA 2* never looks anything but stunning. The realistic handling makes free-wheeling over the varied courses a pleasure, and the added support races supply extra value-for-money. ★★★★★

**20** (18) **Worms** ■ Party ■ Sold Out ■ £5  
**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, the true pleasure comes from indulging in the tricky tasks proper. ★★★★★

## Also on sale...



### Fighters

**Street Fighter Alpha 2** ■ Virgin ■ £15  
**Famous fighting fun** Hopelessly shoddy compared to console versions of the long-running beat-'em-up series. ★★



### Racers

**Boss Rally** ■ Southpeak Interactive ■ £35  
**See "Watch out for"**

**Carmageddon 2: Carpocalypse Now** ■ Sales Curve ■ £30  
**Violent pedestrian-squishing car action** The controversy added road-rager is back once again. With the game structure improved to include races, deathmatches and some interesting power-ups, it's a pleasing time-waster. ★★★

**Colin McRae Rally** ■ Codemasters ■ £45  
**Convincing hills and dales driver** With time and damage your only opponents, this isn't your run-of-the-mill arcade racing game. Plenty of tracks and cars, authentic handling and responsive controls make for realistic driving. ★★★★★

**Excessive Speed** ■ Iridon ■ £15  
**Faulty isometric racer** Weightless car-handling and unfortunately limited course design. ★

**Grand Prix Legends** ■ Sierra ■ £25  
**Historical pointy-nosed vehicle races** A pure simulation of 1967 Formula 1 racing that's aimed squarely at enthusiasts. Eleven incredibly difficult courses, five very different cars and suitably realistic physics create a commendable feeling of sitting in the cockpit and moving at trouser-wetting speeds. Difficult to fault, although it's missing some real-life drivers. ★★★★★

**Midtown Madness** ■ Microsoft ■ £35  
**See "Top 20"**

**Monaco Grand Prix** ■ Ubisoft ■ £20  
**Unofficial take on F1 racing** A retro '60s mode and the option to play arcade-style or as a simulation are fine, but the 2D scenery and lack of an official licence leave this one on the starting grid. ★★★

**Motorcross Madness 3D** ■ Microsoft ■ £35  
**Motorbikes and dirt tracks** A huge array of racing modes and more tracks than you can shake a Kawasaki at. No two-player, but a fair amount of racing thrills. ★★★

**Official Formula 1** ■ Eidos ■ £40  
**See "Top 20"**

**Rollcage** ■ Psygnosis ■ £35  
**Wacky futuristic WipeOut rival** Annoying physics and frustratingly kamikaze racing. ★★

**Slipstream 5000** ■ Sold Out ■ £5  
**Futuristic hovercraft racing** High speed racing thrills, but the opponent AI is appalling. ★★

**Sports Car GT** ■ EA ■ £35  
**Big-licence racing thrills** Shiny graphics and multiple tracks don't necessarily make for a good game. ★★

## Watch out for

Keep your eyes peeled, these beauties will be hitting the charts soon.



**Boss Rally** ■ Southpeak Interactive ■ £35  
**N64 racing port** Hovers between mediocre and atrocious, with repetitive tracks and insane opponents. The vehicle handling is impressive, though. ★★★



**Thrust, Twist & Turn** ■ Take 2 ■ £30  
**Space-age nightmare riding** Network play and a track editor are included, but it's not the rollercoaster ride the developer would have you believe, thanks to unresponsive controls and a general blandness. ★★★



**Hidden and Dangerous** ■ Take 2 ■ £40  
**World War II-themed strategic shooting** Lead SAS assassins through 23 missions. Masterful mission design and tense gameplay (aided by the realism of the game environment), make for a superb action-strategy game. The limited multi-player lets it down a little. ★★★★★



**Tunguska: Legend of Faith** ■ Project 2 ■ £40  
**Frustrating third-person shenanigans** Repetitive puzzles and overly simplistic combat. ★



**Ed Hunter** ■ EMI ■ £25  
**Linear mouse-click zombie shooter** Probably the worst game ever. ★



## Star Wars Episode 1: Racer

■ EA ■ £35 See "Top 20"

## Superbike World Championship

■ EA ■ £35 **Motorcycle merriment** The heavily-licensed nature of this biking sim makes it far more realistic than others on the market, but it's unforgiving if you're still struggling with L-plates. Practise, though, and you'll experience some thrilling racing. ★★★★★

## Thrust, Twist & Turn

■ Take 2 ■ £30 See "Watch out for"

## TOCA 2 Touring Cars

■ Codemasters ■ £35 See "Top 20"

## Ultimate Race Pro

■ Microprose Powerplus ■ £10 **High-powered racing** Shiny 3D racing game that feels like a technology demo, but is actually very strong as a multi-player driving challenge. With slickly designed courses, perfect handling and a range of car options, you'll need a powerful machine to run this baby. ★★★★★

## V-Rally

■ Infogrames ■ £35 **Aged-looking four-wheeled fun** Slippery handling and average graphics, but there's a decent multi-player mode. ★★

## Viper Racing

■ Sierra ■ £35 **Screaming sports cars** Over-realistic car mechanics give way to some frighteningly comprehensive racing, that's added to by great network multi-player options and individual tweaking. ★★★★★

## Virtual Karts

■ Sold Out ■ £5 **Rubbishy go-kart racing** Rubbish. ★



## Sports

## Actua Golf 2

■ Eidos Premier ■ £13 **Competent club-and-ball** A flexible, mostly attractive golf sim, which fails against *Links LS* and *Jack Nicklaus*. The courses are detailed, and the Peter Alliss commentary is excellent, but you'll need frustratingly accurate timing to play successfully. ★★

## Actua Soccer 2

■ Eidos Premier ■ £13 **Lacklustre 3D footy** Smooth polygonal characters and an intuitive floating camera, but the perspective is often disorienting, and the whole thing's much too fast. ★★★★★

## Championship Manager 2

■ Eidos ■ £15 **Take your team to the top** Attractive at its bargain price, but looking a little out-of-date, and still far too easy. Nevertheless, it's engrossing and packed with details. ★★★★★

## Championship Manager 3

■ Eidos ■ £30 See "Top 20"

## FA Premier League Football Manager 99

■ EA ■ £20 **Well-executed coaching simulation** Including both Scottish and English divisions, and with plenty of coaching and business matters to deal with, this is the most realistic management title out there – your decisions really affect the games. ★★★★★

## FIFA 99

■ EA ■ £35 **Long-running official footy update** All the visual frills, but scoring goals is much too easy, especially with the speedy players. More suited to beginners. ★★★★★

## Jack Nicklaus 6: Golden Bear Challenge

■ Activision ■ £40 **Aesthetically pleasing golfing thrills** Six real courses, motion-captured players and the usual mouse controls, but intrusive menus and low difficulty level mean this game can't match up to *Links LS*. ★★★★★

## Jimmy White's 2: Cueball

■ Virgin ■ £30 **Whirlwind-endorsed balls** The large pool room – complete with fruit machine, jukebox and dart board – has atmosphere, but it's the accuracy of the pool itself, and the intelligence of the computer opposition that makes this such an unputdownable outing. ★★★★★

## Links LS '99

■ Eidos ■ £35 **Authentic golf action** The visuals are lovely, but it takes time to draw the scenery and – predictably – *Links* uses the same power-bar system as all other golf games. Still, with four courses, eight players at your disposal and 30 modes of play, who's complaining? ★★★★★

## Microsoft Golf '99

■ Microsoft ■ £25 **Familiar-looking pitch-and-putt** Six beautiful courses with weather and skill options, and mouse click-driven gameplay that's identical to the last year's version. ★★★★★

## NBA Live 99

■ EA ■ £35 **Slam-dunking fun that's very well done** Although it's too easy, because of the limited computer opposition, *NBA Live 98* never pretends to accurately represent basketball. It controls well, looks fantastic and has a wealth of options. ★★★★★

## Pool Shark

■ Gremlin ■ £30 **Run-of-the-mill spherical outing** Offers nothing new over other pool games, and stupidly replaces the accepted controls with an unwieldy and annoying power-bar system. Grrrr. ★★★★★

## Savage Arena

■ Rage ■ £35 **Sociopathic, violent future sport** The pace makes for over-difficult play. ★★

## Superbike World Championship

■ EA ■ £35 **Motorcycle merriment** The heavily-licensed nature of this biking sim makes it far more realistic than others on the market, but it's unforgiving if you're still struggling with L-plates. Practise, though, and you'll experience some thrilling racing. ★★★★★

## Tiger Woods 99 PGA Tour Golf

■ EA Sports ■ £40 **Satisfying fore-play** Easy to pick up and with lots of eye-pleasing real-life courses, *PGA Tour Golf* delivers a realistic, option-heavy simulation of the game with the grass. The mechanics of play leave a little to be desired, but it's still worth your readies. ★★★★★

## Triple Play 2000

■ EA ■ £35 **Acceptable rounders-for-Americans** An effective fielding system with simplistic and accessible batting and cartoony graphics. It's a little repetitive at times, however. ★★★★★

## Viva Football

■ Virgin ■ £35 **Fast-paced ball control** The high speed of the game limits the control you have, although you'll forgive it for its lovingly-crafted looks. ★★★★★

## Worldwide Soccer

■ Sega ■ £15 **Football sim from the Saturn** The 3D is ropery and the pace is leisurely, but the tactical nature of the game is satisfying, even if the whole thing's a little easy. ★★★★★



## Platformers

## A Bug's Life

■ SCEE ■ £35 **Disney-based 3D** Disappointing – a ropery, monotonous run-about. ★★

## Starshot: Space Circus Fever

■ Infogrames ■ £25 **Curious French 3D platformer** Leap gaps 'til you're sore. ★

## Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace

■ LucasArts ■ £35 See "Top 20"

## Tomb Raider II: The Golden Mask

■ Eidos Premier ■ £12 See "Top 20"

## Treasure Island

■ Crystal ■ £20 **Skull-and-crossbones run-and-jump** Overly-difficult, with ropery graphics. ★

## Tunguska: Legend of Faith

■ Project 2 ■ £40 See "Watch out for"



## Shooters

## Asteroids

■ Activision ■ £13 **Old-skool rock shooting** Exactly the same as the original. ★

## Battlezone

■ Activision ■ £13 **Retro tank battling** The gameplay is lightly based on the classic monochrome tank coin-op, but manages to throw in plenty of novel elements. A well executed mix of in-cockpit combat and resource management, with cleverly designed missions and plenty of variety. ★★★★★

## Blood II: The Chosen

■ GT Interactive ■ £25 **First-person bloodiness 3D** wandering with some of the most violent and amusing blood-spillage this side of American wrestling. A strong story and good variety in the map layouts. ★★★★★

## Ed Hunter

■ EMI ■ £25 See "Watch out for"

## Expendable

■ Rage ■ £35 **Old-fashioned top-down scrolling shooter** Impressive graphics, but the 18 levels of blasting are dull. ★★

## Extreme Assault

■ Blue Byte ■ £13 **Poorly presented vehicle shoot-'em-up** Non-stop attack waves of enemies and well-designed locations, let down by the poor rendering engine. ★★★★★

## G-Police

■ Psygnosis ■ £10 **Mission-based future-cop antics** A fine showcase for Psygnosis' 3D technology, but the fiddly gameplay and repetitive missions cost it stars. Tricky handling means you'll need to be patient. ★★★★★

## Half-Life

■ Sierra ■ £35 See "Top 20"

## Heretic II

■ Activision ■ £20 **3D medieval marauding** A traditional three-dimensional shooter, that sticks the main character on the screen, shoves in a set of offensive and defensive spell-casting, and makes sure that the controls, damaging weapons and graphics are all in place. It works. ★★★★★

## Hexen II

■ Activision ■ £10 **Medieval fantasy fire-power** Magical staves and offensive spells replace rocket launchers, but the 3D isn't up to the latest examples and the repeated wandering back-and-forth is frustrating. Not bad overall, though. ★★★★★

## Klingon Honor Guard

■ Microprose ■ £20 **Pasty-headed Doom-style exploits** A full complement of niggling factors in this *Star Trek*-based 3D shooter – such as suddenly completing levels without realising you were anywhere near the end of a mission – are negated by the sheer intensity of the big-weapon shooting action. ★★★★★

## Lander

■ Psygnosis ■ £40 **Futuristic shooting-cum-exploring flight sim** Initially cumbersome controls give way to a frustrating 3D "collect the objects" game that owes a lot to classic title *Thrust*. ★★★★★

## Quake II

■ Activision ■ £20 **Seminal first-person baddie-beater** More of one of the finest games in the world. *Quake II* 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 III: Arena*, is imminent, so you may want to wait for that. ★★★★★

## Rainbow Six

■ Red Storm ■ £30 **Stealthy first-person hostage action** Starring SAS-style combat heroes, this third-person shooter is set in real-life terrorist situations. The healthy dose of realism works well and the overwhelming amount of strategy makes it more cerebral than your usual shooter. ★★★★★

## Recoil

■ EA ■ £35 **Tanks, guns, and more guns** Arcade blast in the purest sense. Trundle your zippy tank through a series of cleverly designed levels, all packed with varied terrain and secret areas. Repetitive after a bit. ★★★★★

## Redline

■ EA ■ £35 **Unremarkable walking/driving 3D combo** Wander about with a gun or hop into a fully-armoured car – either way, *Redline*'s disgustingly bloody gameplay is shallow when compared to that of either *Half-Life* or *Quake*. ★★★★★

## Requiem

■ Ubisoft ■ £40 **Ever-so-violent first-person shooter** Guide a good angel around some hellish environments, smiting all and sundry with your deadly arsenal. *Requiem*'s unoriginal, but it has enough tricks up its sleeve to make it worthy of note. The sheer range of deaths make up for the clumsy controls. ★★★★★

## Shogo: Mobile Armour Division

■ Microids ■ £15 **Big robots with guns** A first-person shooter distinguished by both its anime styling and the opportunity it provides to dress up as a robot. Getting about in a hulking great metal suit is easier than you'd think and the visuals perfectly complement the intelligent level design. ★★★★★

## Sierra

■ Activision ■ £20 **Traditional first-person shooting action** The splendid graphics of *Quake II*, the intelligent mission style of *GoldenEye* and the heartily big guns of *Duke Nukem*. Unfortunately, *Half-Life*'s done it all better. ★★★★★

## South Park

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **Horrendously poor TV tie-in** Dreadful first-person shooter. ★

## Spec Ops: Rangers Lead The Way

■ Gametek ■ £30 **First-person war soldier sim** Complete five missions where stealth and the need to learn tactics are vital. The graphics and AI are top, but you'll need a top-notch PC to go with them. ★★★★★

## Star Wars: X-Wing Alliance

■ LucasArts ■ £30 **A final outing for the classic universe** At last, you get the chance to fly Han Solo's Millennium Falcon, and the intuitive interface and difficult missions make it very enjoyable. Add impressive detail and atmosphere, and you get the definitive *Star Wars* blaster. ★★★★★

## Thief: The Dark Project

■ Eidos ■ £35 **Medieval sneak-'em-up** A first-person shooter with the usual brazen room-crashing and gun-toting replaced by *Metal Gear Solid*-style sneakiness. Atmospheric, but unabsorbing. ★★★★★

## Trespasser

■ EA ■ £40 **Disappointing dino shooter** Blasting diplodoci is difficult, dull and depressing. ★

## Turok 2

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **Gloriously gory dino hunting** Identical to the N64 version, this fluid, complex shoot-'em-up is made too easy by the combination of the PC mouse and the option to save at any time. ★★★★★

## Unreal

■ GT Interactive ■ £20 **Accomplished and moody first-person blast** This has to be the fastest, most enjoyable *Doom* clone available for the PC. It's packed with luscious scripted moments, a fully pumped-up atmosphere, strictly intelligent denizens and enough eye candy to rot your lashes, although the slightly poor weapons do sometimes give the feeling that you are defending your corner with nothing more dangerous than a pair of curling tongs. ★★★★★

## Wild Metal Country

■ Gremlin ■ £30 **Curious tank-based violence** A convincing physics engine has your tank tracks and shells acting in a very believable manner, and the excellent aural enable you to hear enemy machines trundling towards you. Good weapons and useful controls add to the fun. ★★★★★

## Wing Commander: Prophecy Classic

■ EA Classics ■ £15 **Epic space battling** As your brave space pilots face an unidentified alien threat, *Prophecy* presents less monotonous video footage and more 3D shooting than you might expect from this occasionally tedious series. At its best, the game looks like a particularly thrilling episode of your favourite sci-fi TV show, with only the occasional on-screen stats display spoiling an otherwise perfect space opera. ★★★★★



## Strategy/God

## Caesar III

■ Sierra ■ £35 **Roman-based strategy antics** There are two ways to play this: either as a *Sim City* rip-off where you build your own empire or as a mission-based Roman Emperor-'em-up. It's complicated, and the amount of stuff to do may bring on a "Caesar", but stick at it and you'll find it involving and addictive. ★★★★★

## Civilization: Call to Power

■ Activision ■ £35 See "Top 20"

## Civilization 2

■ Microprose ■ £13 **Excellent real-time strategy** Choose an ancient race and set off to conquer the world. Build great cities, arrange political coups, manage your crops and then stomp on neighbouring nations. The interface is showing its age, but this is a must-have if you're serious about PC fun. ★★★★★

## Close Combat III: The Russian Front

■ Microsoft ■ £35 **Montgomery-'em-up** Bark orders at military units, watch them advance over enemy lines, then listen to their horrifying death screams. More immediate than the usual tile-based war sims, this is easy to get to grips with, yet complex enough to satisfy. ★★★★★

## Command & Conquer Classic

■ EA Classics ■ £15 **Real-time war veteran** Pick an army, then point-and-click to build up resources and guide your troops into battle. It's since been surpassed, but is ideal if you're a real-time-strategy virgin. ★★★★★

## Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines

■ Eidos ■ £35 **Take charge of WWII scraps** Real-time strategy with clear isometric graphics, all boosted by the inclusion of units with individual skills and vulnerable soldiers. The emphasis on stealth is absorbing – it's just a pity not to see a multi-player option. ★★★★★

## Dark Reign

■ Activision ■ £10 **Another futuristic battle sim** The future-bound setting of this real-time battle title, the intelligence of the missions and the clear interface make for a pleasurable experience. Buy it at this budget price, and you can't go wrong – even if the visuals and sound leave a little to be desired. ★★★★★

## Delta Force

■ 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. ★★★★★



## Dune 2000

■ EA ■ £20 **The granddad of real-time strategy returns** This new build-your-own-empire game houses 27 levels and three "tribes", but it's too simple. ★★★

## Dungeon Keeper

■ EA Classics ■ £13 **Run your very own dungeon** Manage your murky torture chamber in this strategy-laden epic. Difficult at first, especially with the mix of game modes and cameras, but soon the sense of humour and finely-tuned gameplay will hook you. ★★★★★

## Heroes of Might & Magic III

■ Ubisoft ■ £40 **Enjoyable medieval turn-based play** As usual, you must develop castles, gather resources and build armies. The 3D graphics are merely functional, but the game is elegantly intuitive, with an expanded combat system that helps supply more than enough strategic challenge. ★★★★★

## Hidden and Dangerous

■ Take 2 ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

## Jeff Wayne's War of The Worlds

■ GT Interactive ■ £20 **No one could have believed...** that marrying C&C-style combat with a Risk-like map could have been so completely dull. ★★

## Machines

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **Another lacklustre C&C replica** Build bases and control tanks, hopping into your tanks for the occasional first-person section. Dull and derivative. ★★

## Magic & Mayhem

■ Virgin ■ £20 **Swords and sorcery in strategy shocker** Featuring knights and wizards, this real-time strategy gives you a great spell-casting, creature-creating environment. The main characters are well-designed, the story sucks you in and the 3D maps are realistic enough to make you feel you're there. ★★★★★

## MechCommander

■ Microprose ■ £20 **Real-time strategy, management and big robots** Based on the *BattleTech* board game, but a strategical step away from the action of previous *Mechwarrior* games, *Commander* boasts clearly laid out logistics, intricate detail and superb level design. ★★★★★

## Mechwarrior 3

■ Hasbro ■ £35 **See "Top 20"**

## Populous: The Beginning

■ EA ■ £30 **Omnipotence thrills** You're a god! Build huts, breed warriors and braves, get new spells to alter the land, fight and conquer enemies, and all that. Essentially the original all over again, but it's a lot easier and, of course, it's all 3D. You'll be playing for hours. ★★★★★

## Railroad Tycoon II

■ Take 2 ■ £30 **Comprehensive train-track management** An improvement on the original, with financial management and train direction given more emphasis at the expense of tedious railway construction. There's a pot full of time zones and trains to play with, and the range of options leaves you with scope to customise the game. Chuffing great. ★★★★★

## Rival Realms

■ Digital Publishing ■ £30 **Hefty dose of swords and sorcery** A reasonably happy marriage of real-time strategy and role-playing. The fiddly controls and character intelligence mess it up bad, though. ★★★

## Rollercoaster Tycoon

■ Microprose ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

## The Settlers III

■ Blue Byte ■ £35 **Sim City-style strategy** This threequel enables you to build cities for a variety of distinct races, and then resource-manage until you're blue in the face. The combat isn't up to scratch, but it's beautifully designed and fine-tuned. ★★★★★

## Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri

■ EA ■ £35 **A new beginning** Re-create Earth's society with several clicks of a mouse. It looks dull, but offers endless challenge and is full of details that'll keep you on the edge of your seat. ★★★★★

## Sid Meier's Gettysburg!

■ EA Classics ■ £15 **Re-live obscure American battles** Sid Meier turns out another fun, real-time strategy game. Take control of either side in the American Civil War. There're equal measures of good, head-hurting strategy and all-out shooting action. ★★★★★

## Sim City

■ EA ■ £15 **Construct 'til you're sore** A timeless classic that does without pretty graphics and over-the-top complexity, but packs in simplistic gameplay that's as engrossing as anything available in its younger siblings. Play is more difficult without the pages of help on offer in *Sim City 2000* and *3000*, but you should know the drill by now. ★★★★★

## Sim City 2000

■ EA Classics ■ £15 **Classic build-'em-up** Extremely intuitive to play, but hard to master. Design a town from an isometric 3D perspective, allocate funding to transport and policing, then watch it flourish or fall apart. It's slow and unattractive, but also creative and pleasingly open-ended. ★★★★★

## Sim City 3000

■ EA ■ £35 **See "Top 20"**

## Starsiege Universe

■ Sierra ■ £45 **Pleasingly violent robot-battling** Two games – *Starsiege*, which packs in a bewildering array of mech-customising options, and *Starsiege Tribes*, a multi-player first-person shooter that combines weapon construction and tactical teamwork brilliantly. ★★★★★

## Star Trek: Birth of The Federation

■ Hasbro ■ £35 **See "Top 20"**

## Star Wars: Supremacy

■ LucasArts ■ £10 **Write your own plot** An R2-D2-with-the-top-removed-sized bin full of strategies, with overly complex gameplay. ★★

## Tanktics

■ Gremlin ■ £30 **Animal-themed tank warfare** Unfortunately scuppered by tricky controls, dated graphics and too little variety. ★★

## Total Annihilation

■ GT Replay ■ £15 **Futuristic strategy nonsense** More intense than your C&Cs and the like, and as easy to use as an inflatable sheep (straightforward for beginners and yet challenging for experts), the battles are great and there are plenty of additions available on the Web. ★★★★★

## Uprising 2

■ Ubisoft ■ £35 **Failed strategy-action hybrid** Be a tank driver. Too long-winded. ★★

## Warcraft

■ Sold Out ■ £5 **Wizards and warriors** Amusing yet complex, *Warcraft* has long been bettered, but this re-release still provides some challenging and atmospheric real-time strategy, with all kinds of wizards and knights at your disposal. ★★★★★

## Wargasm

■ Infogrames ■ £20 **Ultra-realistic war sim** With graphics that'll have your family convinced you've taken to watching videos of the recent Gulf-type incident, and the option to control battles from either the squaddies' boots or the commander's chair, *Wargasm* is an extensive death-'em-up. ★★★★★

## Baldur's Gate

■ RPG ■ £35 **Dungeons and dragons** Control a motley band of thieves, elves and wizards in this old-fashioned role-playing game. The controls take time to get the hang of, but it's choc-a-block with sub-quests, exciting real-time combat and some impressive isometric 3D graphics. ★★★★★

## Everquest

■ Sony ■ £35 **Role-playing for internet fans** Leap into a real-time game world and embark on minor quests. It'll take you weeks to earn on-line money and friends, but the concept and scope of this ever-changing on-line world are phenomenal. ★★★★★

## Fallout 2

■ Interplay ■ £35 **Old-skool RPG** As you find your way around this apocalyptic city, you'll be shocked by the isometric 3D, turn-based combat and an overload of stats, but F2 will still win you over with its simplicity. The intelligent unfolding of the plot merely adds to the pleasure. ★★★★★

## Final Fantasy VII

■ 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. ★★★★★

## King's Quest: Mask of Eternity

■ Cendant ■ £30 **Third-person romp** A graphically impressive game that attempts to disguise its RPG nature by using fancy effects. Sadly, the combat and puzzle-finding action give the game away. Still, it's approachable, easy to use and fun. ★★★★★

## Curse of Monkey Island

■ LucasArts ■ £30 **Fantastic point-and-click adventure** Amusing, and with clever puzzles, *Monkey Island* scores well for its controls, which make exploring and examining as easy as possible. It's great to look at and listen to, if a tad frustrating and illogical, but mostly top notch. ★★★★★

## Grim Fandango

■ LucasArts ■ £35 **You look like Death warmed up** The style, presentation and content of this odd, amusing adventure – where you play a travel agent who shuffles people between the living world and heaven – leave it towering above everything else. The puzzles are obscure, but you'll forgive the game this, thanks to its neat touches, absorbing plot and downright loveliness. ★★★★★

## Lands of Lore II

■ EA Classics ■ £13 **Adventure and action combined** Search for a cure for your character's animalism. There's too much FMV and lots of unnecessary running and jumping, but the spell-casting and puzzles are well handled. ★★★★★

## Lands of Lore III

■ EA ■ £35 **Hardcore fantasy role-playing** Search for your stolen soul. There's plenty to do and it's sufficiently large, but the muted colour schemes, confusing layouts and average gameplay let it down. ★★★★★

## Liath

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **Cliché-rich rendered adventure** An abomination of adventuring. ★

## The Fugitive

■ Crystal ■ £20 **An isometric \*Great Escape\*** Time your prison breakout to correspond with the workings of the living, breathing gaol where you are imprisoned. Charming, but under-developed. ★★

## Warhammer: Dark Omen

■ EA ■ £40 **Fantasy role-playing** This suffers at the hands of its controls and is confusing overall. Having to repeat missions will get on your nerves. ★★

## The X-Files

■ Fox Interactive ■ £30 **Spooky cash-in tie-in?** It may be a pile of video clips stuck together with VirtualCinema glue, but the seven weeks of exclusive filming and freedom of movement elevate this above the herd. ★★

## Atomic Bomberman

■ Sold Out ■ £5 **Deceptively simple top-down maze game** Arguably the best multi-player puzzle game ever. Take control of a Bomberman and run around a top-down maze trying to blow up your opponents. Splendid power-ups and fiendishly-designed levels help make this a must, although it's limited in one-player. ★★★★★

## Worms

■ Sold Out ■ £5 **See "Top 20"**

## Worms: Armageddon

■ Hasbro ■ £30 **Take-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 one-player, but flawless controls and eye-popping visuals create a multi-player gem. ★★★★★

## Puzzlers

### Bust-A-Move 2

■ Acclaim ■ £10 **Match bubbles, go mad** The most addictive puzzler since *Tetris*, bringing its match-coloured-bubbles-to-get-rid-of-them idea to your screen in an explosion of rainbow-hued visuals. It's a simple idea and has an addictive two-player mode that highlights its overall brilliance. ★★★★★

## Flight sims

### Apache Havoc

■ Empire ■ £35 **Proper war flight sim** You're in a war that carries on regardless of whether you're controlling your troops or making a cup of tea. The missions are increasingly complex, tricky and time-limited for added tension, and it's all wrapped up in some splendid visuals. ★★★★★

### F-16 Aggressor

■ Virgin ■ £40 **Stunningly accurate African flights** Play an ex-USAF pilot flying for a mercenary squadron in war-torn Africa. Fluid and fast, with realistic handling, but it's the quality of the graphics that will leave you truly astounded. ★★★★★

### Falcon 4

■ Microprose ■ £35 **Long-running air manoeuvres** Only one craft to fly, but it's all so realistic, with accurately-mapped terrain and a pilot and engineers employed to advise on the simulation's finer details. Hardly a game, more of a proper realisation of mid-air flying. ★★★★★

## SNAP IT UP

# Outwars

■ Shoot-'em-up ■ Microsoft



■ As a member of the Dreadnaughts, a Marine Corp involved in an intergalactic colony war, you have a simple job – blow off the head of any alien who shambles your way. In fact, although *Outwars* is a simple third-person shoot-'em-up at heart, it takes in several intelligently plotted missions, including sections where you must protect colleagues or creep through levels without being spotted by the alien scum. Rocky planets, ice worlds and entire spaceships pass by in glorious 3D, the music and sounds alter to suit each environment, and the chance to choose your team-mates and equipment prior to each mission adds a welcome strategy element. ★★★★★

## SMACK IT DOWN

# Excalibur 2555 AD

■ RPG ■ Interplay



■ Obviously intended as a medieval *Tomb Raider*, this conversion of a PlayStation game instead manifests itself as an impossibly tiresome third-person platformer that just happens to star a girl. The promises of involving combat and varied missions are exposed as lies by the game's *four* fighting moves and single mission type (find and collect an object). Also, while we know there're more important things than looks, female lead Beth is the most stunted and physically repulsive game heroine we've ever clapped eyes on. PC owners have a habit of cruelly mocking any console conversion that comes their way – with *Excalibur 2555AD*, this mocking is justified. ★★



# Nintendo 64 Top 20

The nation's favourite N64 purchases.

### Fighter Squadron: The Screamin' Demons Over Europe

Parsoft ■ £35 Be a '20s

**Tom Cruise** Almost too real, with floating-point maths used to simulate every force acting on your aircraft, and planes designed to react to a clip with the ground just like the real thing. Plenty of vehicles and a diverse range of missions, but only for fanatics – there's no arcade flying-about-and-shooting-things here. A fantastic simulation. ★★★★★

### Flight Simulator '98

Microsoft ■ £40 Ultra-realistic aeroplane antics

Not for the casual gamer, including, as it does, a load of knobs to get the hang of. It's supposed to be a true flying experience, so the controls are difficult to use, however some of the graphics are less realistic than you might like. There's also a nightmarishly-difficult-to-control helicopter included as a "bit of a laugh", too. ★★★★★

### IF/A-18E: Carrier Strike Fighter

Interactive Magic ■ £20

Fly theoretical aircraft

Simulating a plane that won't be flying for some five years, for the most part *Strike Fighter* looks gorgeous. The missions are varied and convincing, and your degree of success alters what you can do in later levels. ★★★★★

### Pro Pilot '99

Sierra ■ £35 Fly high in the sky

Functional graphics and mostly flat cities make pointing your plane in a certain direction and watching the scenery go by generally uninteresting. ★★★

### 1 2 3 4 Compilations

### Atari's Greatest Hits: The Atari Collection 2

GT Interactive ■ £30 Six

arcade antiques The cold light of the '90s exposes these titles as woefully simplistic. ★★

### World of Combat 2000

Novalogic ■ £35 Budget

real-world combat sim

Fancy getting your hands on a helicopter, jet fighter or tank? Then this is the compilation for you. All the vehicles are based on genuine military specs, and the controls remain easy to use, while still managing to provide a complex experience for the expert. The visuals suffer slightly, but that doesn't matter a jot. ★★★★★

### X-wing Collector Series

LucasArts ■ £30 You

must face Vader again

*X-wing*, *TIE Fighter* and *X-wing vs TIE Fighter*, plus all their mission packs, bundled together at a budget price. Rather than merely being standard licensed tat, these titles offer frenetic *Star Wars*-themed blasting and, as the first two instalments here have been improved graphically, this compilation is a must. ★★★★★

### Misc

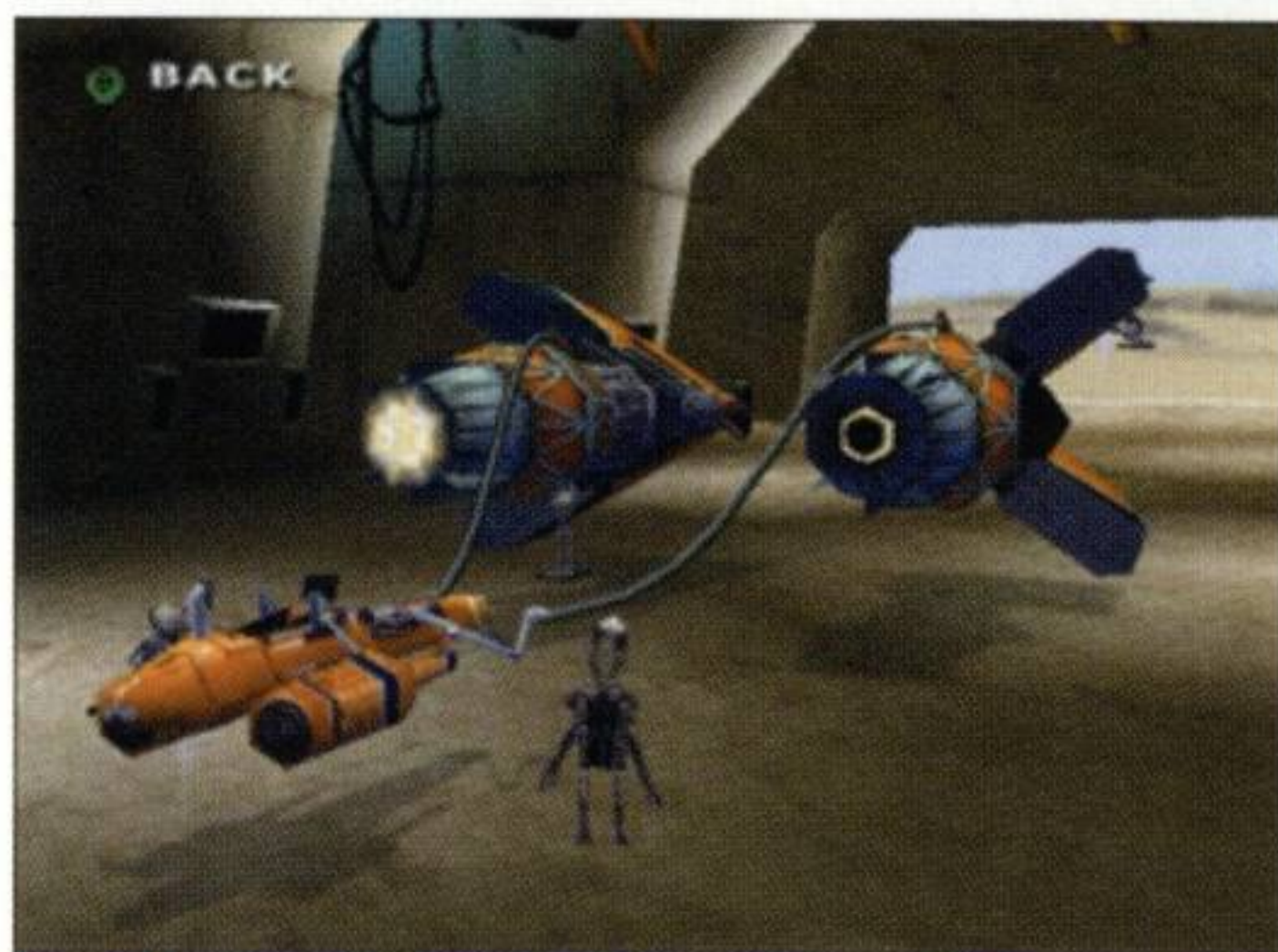
### Grand Theft Auto

Take 2 ■ £20 See "Top 20"

### Grand Theft Auto: London

Take 2 ■ £20 Mob your way around '60s London

Drive around, killing pedestrians and stealing cars using this GTA add-on pack. It's a great idea, but the missions are limited and too much like the original. ★★★



### 1 (2) Star Wars: Episode 1 Racer

**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, as the handling is more forgiving. No weapons, though, and too short. ★★★★★



### 2 (2) Star Wars: Rogue Squadron

**A 16-mission battle against the Empire** Marries arcade gaming with authentic *Star Wars* visuals and sounds. The action is slow, but the ships, enemies and locations are there, and it's surprisingly involving. *Star Wars* fans will find little wrong with this. ★★★★★



### 3 (4) Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time

**The best game in the world ever** Keeps all of the traditional *Zelda* hallmarks and wraps them up in a beautifully realised 3D world. The wandering about, talking, fighting and cut-scenes have been fine-tuned until they're perfect. An absolute marvel. ★★★★★

### 4 (3) FIFA 99

**Licensed balls-up** Every team, kit and player is here, but sluggish controls, unconvincing visuals and disappointing simplicity are the main faults. Things have improved slightly since the last instalment, but it simply doesn't play a convincing game of football, and with the superior *ISS '98* sitting on the shelves, you'd be a fool to plump for *FIFA*. ★★★

### 5 (11) F1 World Grand Prix

**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. ★★★★★

### 6 (8) Mario Kart 64

**Cute characters go to the races** The original comedy racer returns. The one-player game is a lonely experience, but the time-trial adds longevity and the multi-player game is arguably the greatest on any platform. ★★★★★



### 7 (5) Mario Party

**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 friends. ★★★★★

### 8 (6) V-Rally

**Roads, revs and racers** The cars skid and flip into trees if you don't use the brake, making *V-Rally* difficult to learn but pleasing to master. Not outstanding, but the graphics and velocity are adequate, and there's a wealth of challenge available. ★★★★★

### 9 (1) Castlevania

**Dracula delirium** Konami's 3D version of its classic platforming series is hindered by camera problems and inadequate game length. It's packed with atmosphere, though, and there's enough puzzling, jumping and vampire killing to sustain your interest. ★★★★★

### 10 (7) South Park

**Oh my God! It's rubbish!** A cynical cash-in at the expense of fans of the TV show. The voice samples might be funny, but the visuals are shrouded in fog, the weapons are unsatisfying and the gameplay never extends beyond throwing snowballs at turkeys and the like. ★★

### 11 (10) WCW/nWo Revenge

**Greasy blokes a-wrestling** A largely unimproved update of *World Tour*, *Revenge's* claim to fame is a slew of up-to-date grapplers. It's quick, and looks better than its predecessor, but it's still too easy and samey, with over-long matches. ★★★

### 12 (12) GoldenEye 007

**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. ★★★★★

### 13 (-) Banjo-Kazooie

**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-wincingly amount of cute. Almost knocks Mario from his perch. ★★★★★

### 14 (9) MicroMachines 64 Turbo

**Aged toy car racing** Top-down driving that's renowned for its unequalled multi-player fun. Unfortunately, it's almost too simple, and the format has already aged considerably. ★★★

### 15 (18) Turok 2

**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. ★★★★★

### 16 (17) Body Harvest

**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 a treat. ★★★★★

### 17 (20) Mission: Impossible

**Tom Cruise in 3D roamabout** Not bad looking, with some great ideas that should've turned this 3D stealth-'em-up into a potential *GoldenEye*-beater. But it's just too bland and under-developed. ★★

### 18 (19) Doom

**Seminal PC shooting-in-corridors** Nothing wrong with this conversion, but the alien-blasting gameplay has been knocking about too long to push the N64's graphical power. ★★★

### 19 (-) WWF: Warzone

**Leopard-tastic** Despite the good looks, it's boring in one-player. Get your wrestling-loving mates to join in and you can enjoy four-men-on-the-floor action. A novel create-a-player section rounds it off. ★★★★★

### 20 (-) All Star Baseball 2000

**Rounders-with-money sim** This leisurely interpretation of baseball is laden with options and astounding hi-res visuals. It's difficult and the slow play won't please everyone, but it's great baseball. ★★★★★

## Watch out for

And-a-sneakin' into the top 20 in front of your very eyes...



### Mystical Ninja 2 – Starring Goemon

Konami ■ £40 Odd retro-style 2D fare The opportunity for RPG elements in the pretty between-level villages is wasted, and the basic platform stages themselves are monotonous. ★★★



### NBA Pro '99

Konami ■ £40 Frustrating basket-and-ball action A stuttering frame rate, unconvincing players and irritating simplicity. ★★



### Charlie Blast's Territory

Nintendo ■ £40 Move crates around... yawn Shunt boxes of explosives about and blow 'em to kingdom come. Tedious screen-by-screen fare. ★★



### Rampage 2 Universal Tour

Midway ■ £35 Structure-smashing retro update Spectacularly dull monsters game. ★



### Duke Nukem: Zero Hour

GT Interactive ■ £40 Violent third-person adventures The winning control layout, splendid weaponry and excellent, imaginative levels make for an addictive, involving shoot-'em-up. The time-tard angle gives scope for varied environments and interesting missions. Top. ★★★★★



### Also on sale...



### Fighters

#### Fighters Destiny

■ Ocean ■ £20 **Probably the world's best N64 fighter...**

Well-defined characters and plenty of moves make this, by default, the N64's *Tekken*. It's too easy, but the excellent range of challenges ensures longevity. ★★ ★

#### Flying Dragon

■ Interplay ■ £40 **Arcadey fighter**

Two games in one: a "serious" option and a "super-deformed" version with bulbous-headed characters. Good value, but the fighting is limited. ★★ ★

#### Rakuga Kids

■ Konami ■ £35 **Pastel-based punch-'em-up**

The fighting hiding underneath these crayoned crazies is surprisingly solid, even if it's often difficult to work out whether you've made contact with your opponent. ★★ ★

#### WCW/NOW Revenge

■ THQ ■ £50 **See "Top 20"**



### Racers

#### 1080° Snowboarding

■ 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. ★★ ★ ★

#### Beetle Adventure Racing

■ EA ■ £40 **Disappointing Herbie-'em-up** Ludicrous jumps and nitro-aided speed-a-plenty here, but the dense computer opposition and time-wasting shortcuts fail it. ★★ ★

#### F-Zero X

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **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. ★★ ★ ★

#### F1 World Grand Prix

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### Iggy's Reckin' Balls

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **Incredibly ugly spheres roll for their lives** Racing without cornering. It doesn't work. ★ ★

#### Mario Kart 64

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### MicroMachines 64

■ Codemasters ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### Snowboard Kids

■ Nintendo ■ £30 **Mario Kart for the snowboard generation** This looks, sounds and plays in a simplistic way, but is packed full of fun and liable to make you a load of new friends if you show people the multi-player option. ★★ ★ ★

#### Snowboard Kids 2

■ Atlus ■ £60 **Mario Kart of the slopes** Race on everything from grass to the keys of a giant piano, relying on comedy power-ups to out-do your cutesy competitors. The fuzziness of the visuals is disappointing, but the multi-player mode excels. ★★ ★ ★

#### Star Wars Episode 1: Racer

■ Nintendo ■ £50 **See "Top 20"**

#### Top Gear Overdrive

■ THE ■ £35 **Devilish driving**

The handling's a bit iffy, and it's all slightly unfair, but the track design, visuals and vehicles means that *TGO* serves up a funky four-wheeled treat. ★★ ★

#### Twisted Edge: Extreme Snowboarding

■ Nintendo ■ £45 **Slow races on white stuff** This is unattractive, too difficult and lacks both speed and originality. ★ ★

#### Vigilante 8

■ Activision ■ £40 **All-out automobile attack** Flattening buildings and killing your competitors with 12 tooled-up '70s cars is enjoyable for a while, but finishing each level takes too long. Jerky multi-player, too. ★★ ★

#### V-Rally

■ Infogrames ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### XG2: Extreme G2

■ Acclaim ■ £35 **Space-age motorbike sequel** Iguana hasn't done much to improve on the faults of the original game – you never feel completely in control and the frame rate still dips dangerously low. ★★ ★

#### Wave Race 64

■ Nintendo ■ £30 **How jet-ski games should be done** Though it's more than two years since its release in Japan, this title offers water-based frolics that are second to none, even compared to coin-op titles at a thousand times the price. The tracks are beautifully designed, and the controls are as responsive and intuitive as you'd expect from Nintendo. Just remember to keep a bucket handy for the seasickness. ★★ ★ ★



### Sports

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### All Star Tennis '99

■ Ubisoft ■ £40 **Frilly pants and strawbs** This looks and plays reasonably, but with realistic players pulling off over-the-top shots, *All Star Tennis* can't settle between serious play and light-hearted fun. ★★ ★

#### FIFA 99

■ EA ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### Kobe Bryant in NBA Courtside

■ Nintendo ■ £20 **Basketball, but good** The *Madden* of basketball games, this provides an easy-to-use control system, coupled with gameplay that behaves properly. But who the hell is Kobe Bryant? ★★ ★ ★

#### Milo's Astro Lanes

■ Interplay ■ £40 **Space-age ten-pin bowling** Dreadful beyond all words. ★

#### Nagano Winter Olympics

■ Konami ■ £45 **Sim of snow sports** Utterly boring. ★

#### NBA Jam '99

■ Acclaim ■ £35 **Option-heavy basketball sim** Looks good, plays fast and contains loads of options. It's tricky – defending is a nightmare – but a sports game that's realistically difficult is a refreshing change. ★★ ★ ★

#### NBA Pro '99

■ Konami ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

#### NFL Quarterback Club '99

■ Acclaim ■ £45 **Stateside soccer** Visually more detailed than the real thing. Tackling and defending are as user-friendly as possible – only the passing system causes frustration. ★★ ★ ★

#### Virtual Pool

■ Interplay ■ £40 **Decent balls sim** As exciting a version of pool as consoles are ever likely to see. When it comes to physics, it's all faultless, and the pleasingly spherical balls are very easy on the eye. It's limited, but good if you're searching for a pool title. ★★ ★ ★

#### World Cup '98

■ EA Sports ■ £20 **The officially-licensed Coupe de Monde** The sluggish controls and rather disappointing visuals mean you'll be left with a sense of bitter disappointment. ★★ ★



### Platformers

#### Banjo-Kazooie

■ Nintendo ■ £50 **See "Top 20"**

#### Chameleon Twist

■ Ocean/JSS ■ £25 **Jump, run and tongue** Interesting platformer, but the camera and simplicity damage it. ★ ★

#### Chameleon Twist 2

■ Sunsoft ■ £40 **Gad about with a long tongue** Unoriginal, boring and cumbersome. ★ ★

#### Gex 64

■ GT Interactive ■ £40 **Rubbish reptilian roam-about** Laughable. ★

#### Lode Runner 3D

■ Infogrames ■ £40 **Age-old hole-digging hero returns** A lovingly crafted retro update that maintains the addictive gameplay of the original. The fiendishness of each puzzle makes for hugely satisfying play. ★★ ★

#### Super Mario 64

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **The king of 3D platformers** A masterpiece, with huge levels, sublime controls and totally immersive gameplay. As with all Miyamoto games, it slowly sucks you in and refuses to let go, and its full-on 3D graphics still have the power to impress. ★★ ★ ★

#### Mischief Makers

■ Nintendo/Treasure ■ £20 **Old school 2D plat action** Mad as you like, but top-notch platforming action. Well-crafted levels, coupled with difficult-to-learn but effective controls, make for a crate of fun. So who said 2D platforming was dead? ★★ ★ ★

#### Mystical Ninja 2 – Starring Goemon

■ Konami ■ £50 **See "Watch out for"**

#### Spacestation: Silicon Valley

■ Take 2 ■ £40 **Take control...** Kill animals and then manipulate their bodies to solve puzzles. The graphics do their job well, the controls and puzzles are great, and the detail is fantastic. ★★ ★ ★

#### Starshot: Space Circus Fever

■ Infogrames ■ £30 **Weird French 3D jumpery** The necessary unwieldy camera and over-fiddly controls are present and correct. You'll also find a great deal of wandering between one place and the next. ★★ ★

#### Yoshi's Story

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **2D antics with Mario's mate** An easier retreat of the original *Yoshi's Island*, and suffering from few fresh ideas and a lack of challenge. Hidden areas and difficult puzzles arise after more play. ★★ ★ ★



### Shooters

#### Body Harvest

■ Gremlin ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

#### Buck Bumble

■ Ubisoft ■ £45 **Honey bee-based shooting** Mission-based, with puzzle elements. There's a varied bunch of enemies, but the levels just aren't involving. ★★ ★

#### Doom

■ GT Interactive ■ £20 **See "Top 20"**

#### Forsaken

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **Futuristic space-tunnel hoverbike-shooter** The controls let it down, but it's still frantic and absorbing. Each tunnel's filled with baddies for you to take out, at the same time as you try not to smash into the walls. Impressive graphics and lighting techniques. ★★ ★ ★

#### GoldenEye 007

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### Knife Edge

■ Microware ■ £30 **Into-the-screen action** Boring. ★

#### Quake 64

■ GT Interactive ■ £25 **Classic gory gun-fest** With no more than two players able to take part in the roaming blaster at any one time, the multi-playing that made the original such fun takes a back seat to the more monotonous one-player game. ★★

#### South Park

■ LucasArts ■ £30 **See "Top 20"**

#### Star Wars: Rogue Squadron

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### Turok 2

■ Acclaim ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**

#### Vigilante 8

■ Activision ■ £40 **All-out automobile attack** Flattening buildings and killing your competitors with 12 tooled-up '70s cars is enjoyable for a while, but finishing each level takes too long. Jerky multi-player too. ★★ ★



### RPGs

#### Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time

■ Nintendo ■ £50 **See "Top 20"**

#### Castlevania 64

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **See "Top 20"**



### Puzzlers

#### Bust-A-Move 3 DX

■ Acclaim ■ £35 **Spherical fun** So simple, and yet so utterly absorbing, this bubble-bursting sequel wipes the floor with most puzzlers. There's a new four-player mode, and a ton of other options and challenges, although the story mode's a smidgeon easy. ★★ ★ ★

#### Charlie Blast's Territory

■ Nintendo ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

### SECONDHAND BARGAINS | Keep scanning out the second-

#### Aero Fighters Assault

■ Konami **Sky-based shooter from the team behind Pilotwings** Aerial dogfights against massive aircraft, and some huge submarines, but ultimately it's chock full of unforgivable flaws and levels that you can complete in your tea-break. ★★ ★

#### Automobili Lamborghini

■ Nintendo **Drive around racetracks** A lack of options, decent courses and proper handling add up to a driving experience that's worth forgetting. ★★ ★

#### Bust-A-Move 2

■ Acclaim **Addictive bubble-matching puzzler** Hardly the best-looking game on the N64, but the simplicity of the idea makes for a ridiculously addictive experience when played against a friend. Arrange for someone to phone you at sporadic intervals to remind you to eat and sleep. ★★ ★ ★

#### Dark Rift

■ Vic Tokai **Low-lit beat-'em-up** Dark they say, and dark it is. There are some good graphics hiding beneath the blackness, but there's a lack of the kind of moves and inventiveness that you'll find in *Fighter's Destiny*. ★★ ★

#### Dual Heroes

■ Hudson **Boring robots fighting** A good complement of moves, but no challenge in one-player. ★ ★

#### Duke Nukem 64

■ GT Interactive **Bad taste alien gunplay** No bare-breasted ladies appearing this time through, though there's still plenty of destruction and a particularly decent four-player deathmatch. But isn't there a better first-person shooter available out there? Some kind of a James Bond licensed thing or other? ★★ ★ ★

#### Duke Nukem: Zero Hour

■ GT Interactive ■ £40 **See "Watch out for"**

#### Extreme G

■ Acclaim **Futuristic motorbike racer** *Turok*-style misting enables this to run at a phenomenal speed, and the experience of pounding along tracks with 90° turns while beautiful scenery flicks past is a pure adrenaline rush. ★★ ★ ★

#### F1 Pole Position

■ Ubisoft **Disappointing Grand Prix driving** Schumacher and his friends shouldn't have to put up with this poor handling and terrible pop-up. ★★ ★

#### Hexen

■ Midway **Early goblin battler** Shoddy *Doom* clone that uses magic spells instead of guns. ★ ★

#### Lylat Wars

■ 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, and the inclusion of a level select would have improved the game, but it's still addictive, well-crafted and frantic. Better still, it features some pure blasting action at a time when such opportunities are relatively rare. Brilliant speech, too. ★★ ★ ★

#### Madden 64

■ EA **Latest in the ubiquitous US football series** Looks sparse, especially without the official logos that *Quarterback Club* offers, but the controls and game mechanics are so intuitive that you'll feel like you actually understand what's going on. Hut, hut, hut! Or something. ★★ ★ ★

### SNAP IT UP

## Extreme G

■ Racer ■ Acclaim



■ *WipEout* excepted, futuristic racing games traditionally have a hard time on the shelves of videogame shops. Acclaim's space-age motorbike racer *Extreme G* didn't set the cash registers alight upon its release two years ago, but it remains an exhilarating mix of stunning visuals and reflex-damaging speed. Getting your fingers around the slip-slidy bikes and 90° turns takes time, but spend the first few races at the back of the grid and you'll have ample opportunity to test the range of eye-splintering weapons on offer. The recent sequel, *XG2*, ruined everything by improving the graphics at the expense of smoothness, so we recommend this original if you have a need... a need for speed. ★★ ★ ★



hand shelves to discover these bargains...

**Mortal Kombat Trilogy**  
**GT Interactive** **Three speedy beat-'em-ups rolled into one** Diabolical, even given that there are three offerings rolled into one package. ★

**Mystical Ninja**  
**Konami** **Surreal adventure with a blue-haired maniac** More of an RPG-platform game than anything; the fundamental unfolding of the story is coupled with a range of Mario-style platforming tasks, and is all the better for it. The only downer is that once you've finished, there's not enough to keep you coming back for more. ★★

**NBA Hangtime**  
**GT Interactive** **Over-simplified basketball.** Again Strip away 80% of the players and you end up with this take-turns-to-score farce. ★★

**NBA Pro '98**  
**Konami** **Realistic, speedy basketball** Another sports game for the minority audience. A lack of any intelligence in the computer-controlled players, along with a more general list of niggling faults, lets this one down. ★★

**NHL Breakaway '98**  
**Acclaim** **Ridiculously fast ice hockey** This sim fails to present anything that's either exciting or polished. The computer-controlled players are decent opponents, but you'll be scuppered by the speed of the game. ★★

**Pilotwings 64**  
**Nintendo** **£20 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 – including piloting a jet-pack through an underground tunnel. Basically, it's a truly unique flying experience; after all, where else do you get to spring-boot up to a terrifying 100 feet? ★★★★★

### SMACK IT DOWN

## Iggy's Reckin' Balls

■ Racer ■ Acclaim



■ The flipside of Acclaim's usually impressive racing output is this bizarre take on the racing game concept, where a gang of balls roll their way around a fixed path. These aren't any old balls, though, because they possess horrifically ugly faces. Annoyingly, the narrowness of the tracks and the lack of a jump control makes it impossible to overtake, reducing races to a mind-numbing case of pushing the control stick left and waiting for the finish line to appear. By which time, the unforgiving computer opponents will have lapped you. Twice over. Take it away. ★★

**San Francisco Rush**  
**GT Interactive** **Big cars, mean streets** *Rush's* handling and controls simply aren't what you'd expect from a PlayStation racer, especially coupled with the Cellöphane-over-the-screen blurry visuals we've come to expect from the N64. But it's fast, has excellent handling and a top two-player mode. ★★

**Tetrisphere**  
**Nintendo** **£20 Tetris, in a 3D sphere** Trying to manoeuvre blocks into a sphere to free little robots is a great way to get incredibly annoyed and bring on a lovely thumping headache. ★★

**Turok: Dinosaur Hunter**  
**Acclaim** **Make dinosaurs extinct** Irritating aspects such as the fogging and precision jumping are soon forgotten in the face of velociraptors and nuclear guns. ★★

**War Gods**  
**GT Interactive** **Primitive fighter** A complete lack of moves and decent characters. ★

**Wayne Gretsky 3D Hockey '98**  
**GT Interactive** **Update of original ice hockey sim** Fast and smooth enough to make for an accurate interpretation of the too-quick-to-watch sport. ★★

**Wetrix**  
**Ocean** **£30 Build lakes and fry 'em with fireballs** More of a successor to *Tetris* than *Tetrisphere*, initially this is difficult as hell. Stick with it, though, and the clear – if rather limited – tactics quickly become obvious. A *Tetris*-like addictive state will then take control of your life. Again. ★★

## Game Boy Top 5



1 (-) Super Mario Bros DX ■ 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 a shedful of extras ensure that the simplistic gameplay won't pall. ★★★★★

2 (1) Rugrats ■ Platformer ■ THQ ■ £30

**Lacklustre cartoon tie-in** A simplistic two-dimensional platformer that fails for the same reason as the PlayStation and PC versions – it doesn't try hard enough. The colour is put to good use, but the controls, character movement and level structure just aren't up to scratch. ★★

3 (2) Zelda DX ■ RPG ■ Nintendo ■ £25

**Puzzle-solving with your fave elf** An involving plot, coupled with 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. Can *Zelda* do no wrong? ★★★★★

4 (-) Game & Watch Gallery ■ Retro ■ Nintendo ■ £10

**Five game-and-watch items** Bundling five ageing unplayable handheld curiosities together was never going to be a good idea, and even a set of updated versions with Mario and friends in the starring roles can't help. ★

5 (4) Star Wars ■ Shooter ■ LucasArts ■ £15

**You must face Darth Vader again** 2D platforming with your favourite intergalactic heroes, combined with some top-down driving sections. Simplistic, uncomplicated fare, which is really starting to show its age. ★★

### Also on sale...

#### Fighters

**WWF Attitude**  
**Acclaim** **£25 Here come the Men In Pants** Scaled-down version of the PlayStation/N64 game, and it ain't half bad. The graphics are beefy, there are a few tasty moves and there's a good sense of involvement. There's too much emphasis on simple punches, though. ★★

#### Racers

**Super R.C. Pro-Am**  
**Nintendo** **£20 Dinky driving** This re-release of Rare's frantic remote-controlled car racing game looks primitive, but the races are a joy. The chance to both use weapons against the ruthless opponents and upgrade your own car as you go are great. ★★

**Top Gear Pocket**  
**Kemko** **£30 Simplistic pocket racing** Two cars and three tracks (with more to discover), and a Rumble Pak built in. Sadly, driving on Game Boy is always woefully simplistic. ★★

**Bugs Bunny Crazy Castles 3**  
**THE** **£25 Warner Bros-themed platformery** Ladders and drainpipes replace the usual jump-up-and-down motion, creating a surprisingly addictive if simplistic, experience. ★★

#### Platformers

**Gex**  
**Interplay** **£25 Soulless 2D reptilian platforming** Twenty huge levels, with three missions per level, but the running and jumping on offer is so very uninspired. ★★

**Loony Tunes**  
**Infogrames** **£25 Animation-inspired adventures** All the Warner Bros characters have made their way on to the Game Boy for this attractive, varied platformer. A little more use of colour would have been nice, but after the gaming dross the Game Boy has had to cope with, this offering is platform-based heaven. ★★

**Lucky Luke**  
**Infogrames** **£25 Rootin' tootin' jumparound** Skip around the screen shooting gringo scum and avoiding giant tumbleweeds. Some nice touches, but it's nothing new. ★★

**Maya The Bee and Her Friends**  
**Acclaim** **£25 Platforming with a difference** Played on single screens rather than in a scrolling environment, with three uniquely skilled characters to switch between on each level. The fiendishly logical levels are married to a pleasant platforming feel. ★★

**Obelix**  
**Infogrames** **£25 Run and jump with Asterix and friends** Collect items to impress Caesar. Pretty, but shallow. ★★

**Oddworld Adventures**  
**GT Interactive** **£20 Save your alien chums** Abe's ability to run, jump, tiptoe, fart and possess enemies has survived intact from the PlayStation version, but this is still frustrating, and lacks the original's lovely graphics. ★★

**Rugrats The Movie**  
**THQ** **£25 Nappy-wearing big movie license** Faultless presentation and excellent use of colour, with varied collect-the-objects gameplay. Eventually uninspiring. ★★

**The Smurfs' Nightmare**  
**Infogrames** **£25 Colourful midget fun** Another simple Game Boy platformer with little, if any, innovation. It looks lovely, though, making full use of the "Color" features. ★★

**Super Mario Land**  
**Nintendo** **£15 The pipe man cometh** One of the Game Boy's original releases, *Super Mario* still excels in most areas, despite its now having reached a very elderly nine years old. The graphics are simple, but the subtlety of control and excellent level designs have been carried over to the bijou Nintendo with aplomb. ★★

**Turok 2**  
**Acclaim** **£25 Dinosaur-shooting extravaganza** Excessively difficult side-scrolling platformer, with too much jumping. ★★

**Tweety & Sylvester: Breakfast on The Run**  
**Infogrames** **£20 Canary capers** Impressive visuals, but the 2D puzzle-solving is insultingly simple. ★★

#### RPGs

**Harvest Moon**  
**THE** **£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. Managing the animals and crops is trickier than you might initially think, and the detail is astonishing. The amount of stuff that there is to do will have the Game Boy stuck to your hand for a month. ★★

**Shadowgate Classic**  
**Kemko** **£25 Yesteryear's role-playing** Find keys, open doors. Deadly tedious trial-and-error play ensues. ★

**Quest For Camelot**  
**Titus** **£25 Swords and sorcery** Based on the cartoon, this Merlin-maneuvring quest is colourful and involving, but contains too much wandering. Second-best to *Zelda*. ★★

#### Puzzlers

**Bust-A-Move 4**  
**Acclaim** **£35 Near-perfect bubbly puzzling** Simple but immeasurably frantic puzzle fun where you match similarly coloured bubbles and prevent the screen from filling. The added challenge modes and pulley systems make things devilishly tricky, but challenging. You won't want to put it down. ★★

**Hexcite**  
**Ubisoft** **£25 Pick up polygons** Fit shapes together and score points for the closest fit. *Hexcite* isn't likely to displace *Tetris* – it lacks that title's immediacy – but it's frantic, head-scratching fun, that's curiously compulsive when played against a friend. ★★

**Tetris DX**  
**Nintendo** **£20 Brick drop return shock!** The graphics, sounds and modes might have changed, but this is still the same old *Tetris*, known worldwide as the most addictive version of the Russian puzzler. Stemming the rising wall of bricks is, in fact, all the better for being able to save your high scores at long last, but sadly the game doesn't work well in black and white. ★★

#### Retro

**720**  
**Midway** **£25 Difficult skate stunting** Skate around town, pulling stunts that '90s kids have long forgotten. Unfortunately, the Game Boy's D-pad doesn't lend itself to skateboard action. Disappointing colour, too. ★★

**Arcade Hits: Defender & Joust**  
**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. There's a tear-jerking joy to be gleaned from the experience of holding old coin-ops in your palm. ★★

**Breakout**  
**Take 2** **£20 Shoot insects** Ancient arcading. Stupidly simple ★

**Centipede**  
**Take 2** **£20 Hit the bricks** Astonishingly straight conversion of the '70s coin-op. Why? ★

**Dropzone**  
**Acclaim** **£25 Kill aliens, save people** *Defender* with a bloke in a spacesuit, fresh from the Commodore 64 era. Killing waves of aliens in the side-scrolling levels is fast and smooth, and the baddies become satisfyingly bizarre on later levels. ★★

**Frogger**  
**Take 2 Interactive** **£25 Highway toad** Colourful, but so dated that it's hard to get excited about. ★★

**Game & Watch Gallery 2**  
**Nintendo** **£20 Handheld retro** Five games and all enjoyable, especially the full-colour versions with *Mario* characters. ★★

#### Misc

**Rampage World Tour**  
**Midway** **£25 Old-skool building-breaker returns.** Control King Kong and smash up buildings. Boring. ★

**NEXT MONTH**  
 ■ That's 21,804 words of damn fine advice you've got there, young fellow-me-lad. Better than we had in our day. Now you just make sure you follow it this time, and don't go wasting any more of your hard-earned cash on utter rubbish. **A**



# Subs

A photograph of two young women with blonde hair, smiling and shouting excitedly. They are holding large, blue, toy-like assault rifles. The woman on the left is wearing a black jacket over a white collared shirt and has several rings on her fingers. The woman on the right is wearing a black top and has a bracelet on her wrist. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a party or event, with warm lighting.

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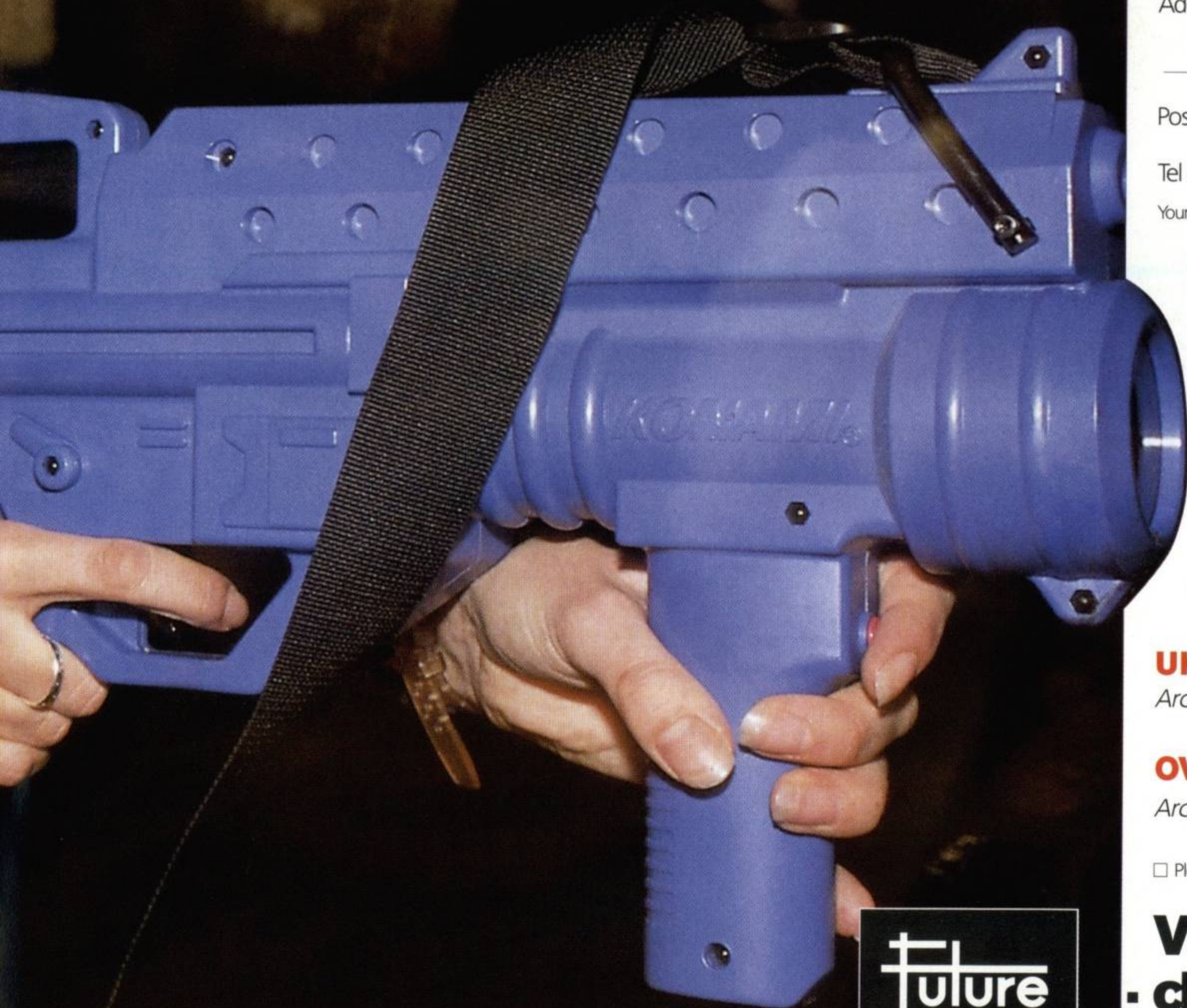
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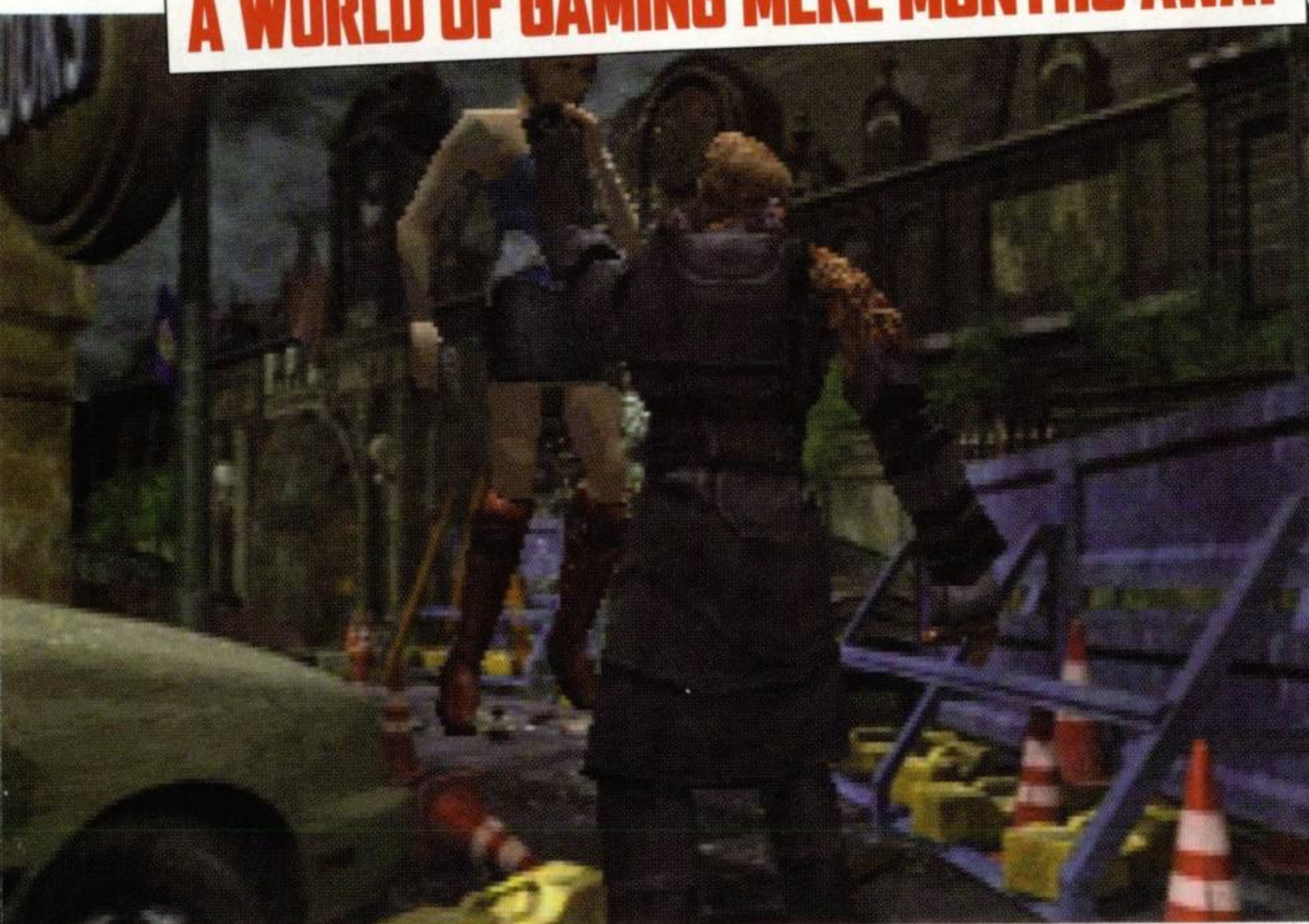
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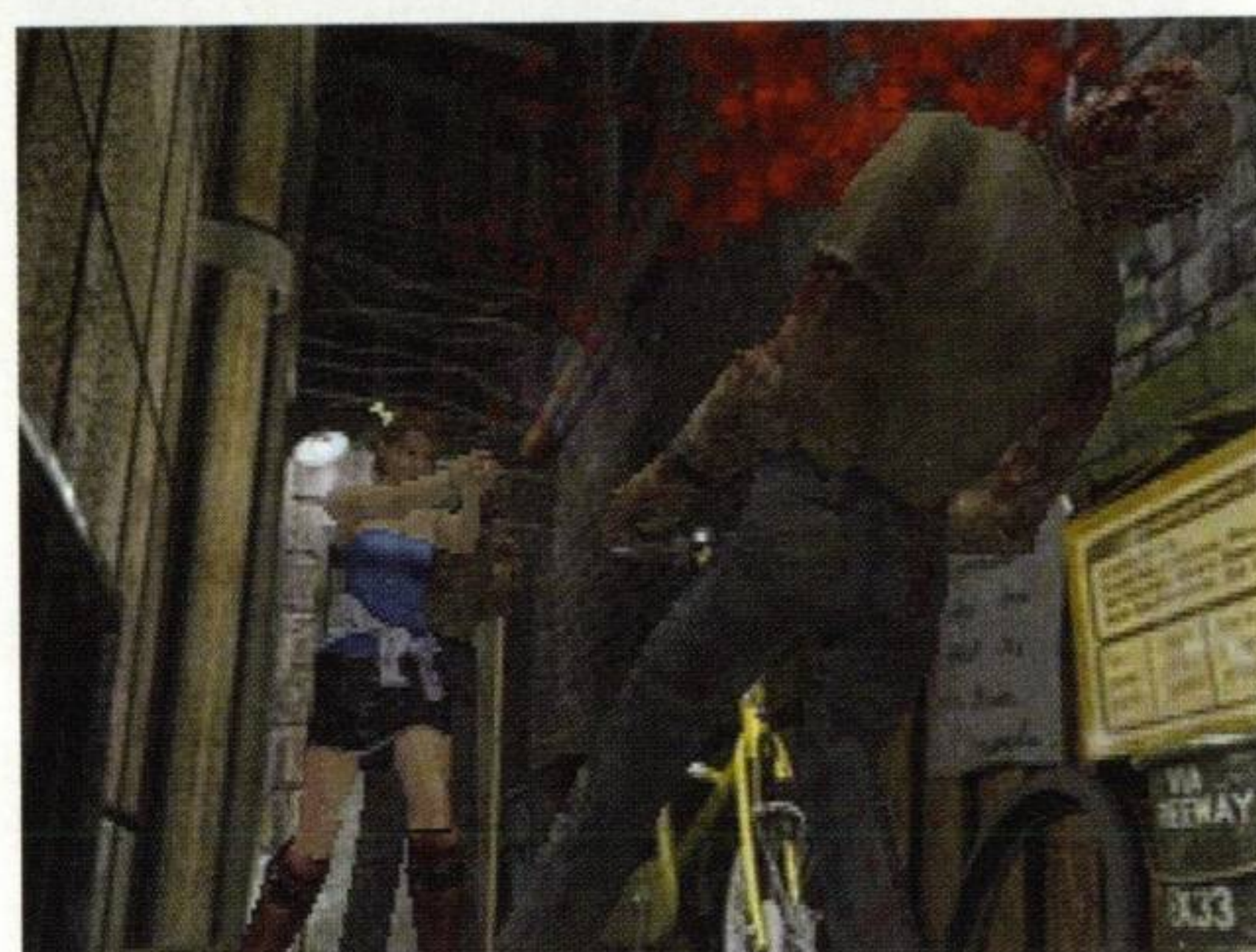


# COMING SOON

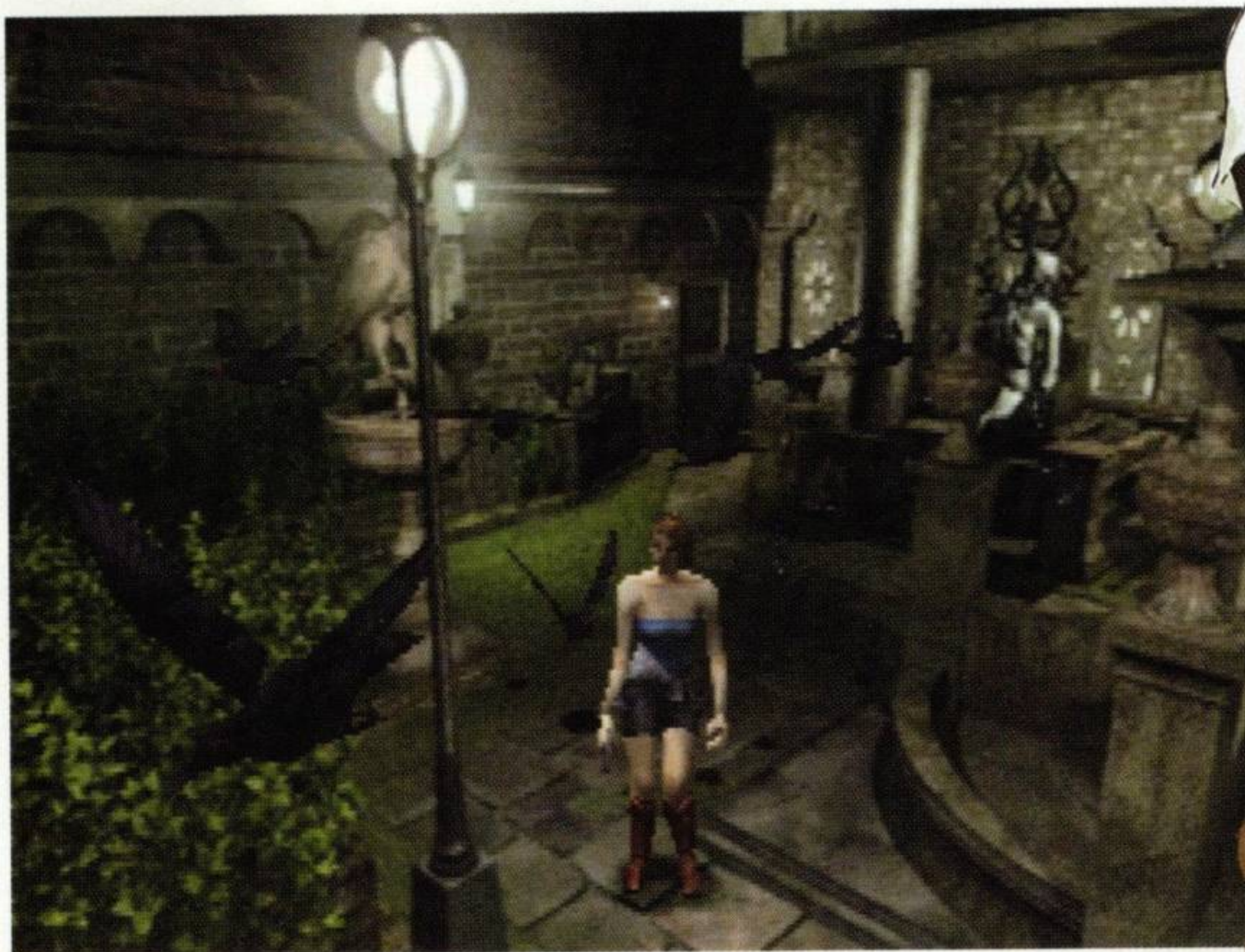
A WORLD OF GAMING MERE MONTHS AWAY



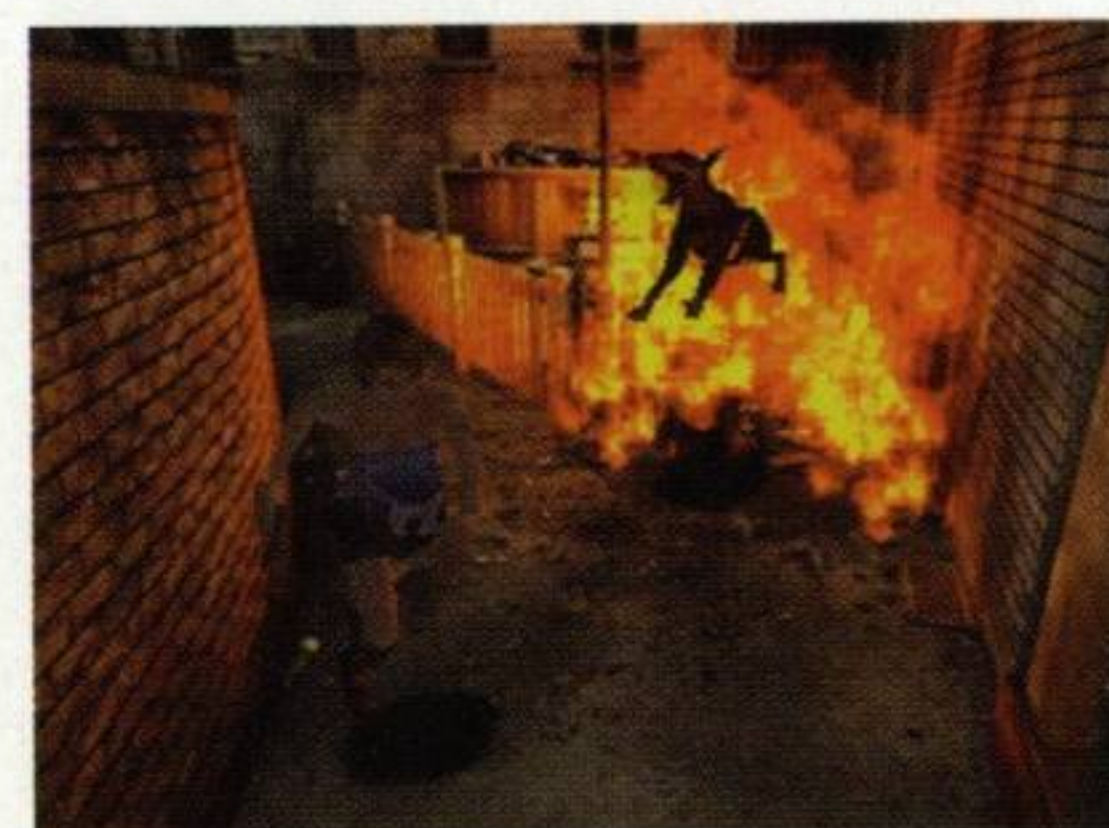
■ Guess my weight, big guy.



■ Valentine: light, tight and up for a fight.



■ Fido paid the ultimate price for vindaloo theft.



Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **Capcom** | Publisher: **Eidos** | Players: **1** | On sale in UK: **November**

## RESIDENT EVIL 3

This is shaping up to be the bloodiest year yet on PlayStation. Yikes.

**A**fter a whole host of rumours suggesting the next episode in the *Resident Evil* story would be a *Codename: Veronica* game for Dreamcast, PlayStation owners should prepare to cover behind the sofa all over again – the third offering is well under way and is bigger, bolder and bloodier than ever.

A tired trequel? Not a bit of it. *Resident Evil*'s genius to date has been in the storyline as much as the gameplay, and the newbie in the series is showing no signs of letting anybody down. But maybe it should be named *Resident Evil: The Strangely Placed Sequel*, as Capcom has done a *Phantom Menace* on us and set its new

game mere hours before *Resident Evil 2* kicks off. And then after it, too. Confused?

Basically, you start off as Jill Valentine (a star of the original *Resi*), before getting knocked out. So a big, bad Brazilian by the name of Carlos Oliveira makes his entrance with one aim: to find a cure for Jill. Sadly, there's the deeply worrying prospect of dealing with the Nemesis along the way. Brilliantly, this is not a static baddie and will chase you until you can escape – even following you through loading screens.

While the screenshots above make *Resi 3* look like more of the same, the characters and backgrounds are actually far more detailed and smoother. The way that you interact with the environments on offer has also been substantially improved. That

famously eerie atmosphere and the game's shock tactics are better than ever, too – right from the very first tension-packed scene, where a man beset with panic and fear runs away and locks himself in a cupboard. The first encounter with zombies had us jumping out of our skins as they piled out from behind a hidden door. It's all horrible stuff, and made even scarier by Capcom having dreamt up ten different types of flesh-eater for this installment.

Just to make things even more maddeningly taxing, the undead now remain, er, undead, even when you shoot them. They may fall, but they can rise again at any time. Strange to think there should be an analogy for Manchester City in a Japanese horror-fest, but there you have it.

### BEST BIT SO FAR

#### I'm oil right, Jack

Early on you're confronted by a large number of hungry, moaning zombies. Happily, they're behind bars and you're free to bait them. However, you'll soon tire of that and turn to explore an oily rope. Interesting...

Until... surprise! The bars collapse and the very-much-alive-undead descend and take you to pieces. That is, until you notice some oil drums in the vicinity. Shoot them, and the whole place goes up, taking out the zombies in the explosion. *Olé*, just don't stand too close. It's great, and if the rest of *Resident Evil 3* matches up to this, we're in for one hell of a ride.



Unlike City, however, you have a dodge feature that enables you to counteract danger from any of these creatures who just won't let it lie.

Critics might question *Resident Evil 3: Nemesis*'s similarity to *Dino Crisis*, and yes, the two are twins separated at birth (probably with blunt instruments of immense pain). However, the atmospheric of *Resi 3* set it apart from the competition. Which means that, come Christmas, you'll be begging to meet your Nemesis. It's going to be that good.







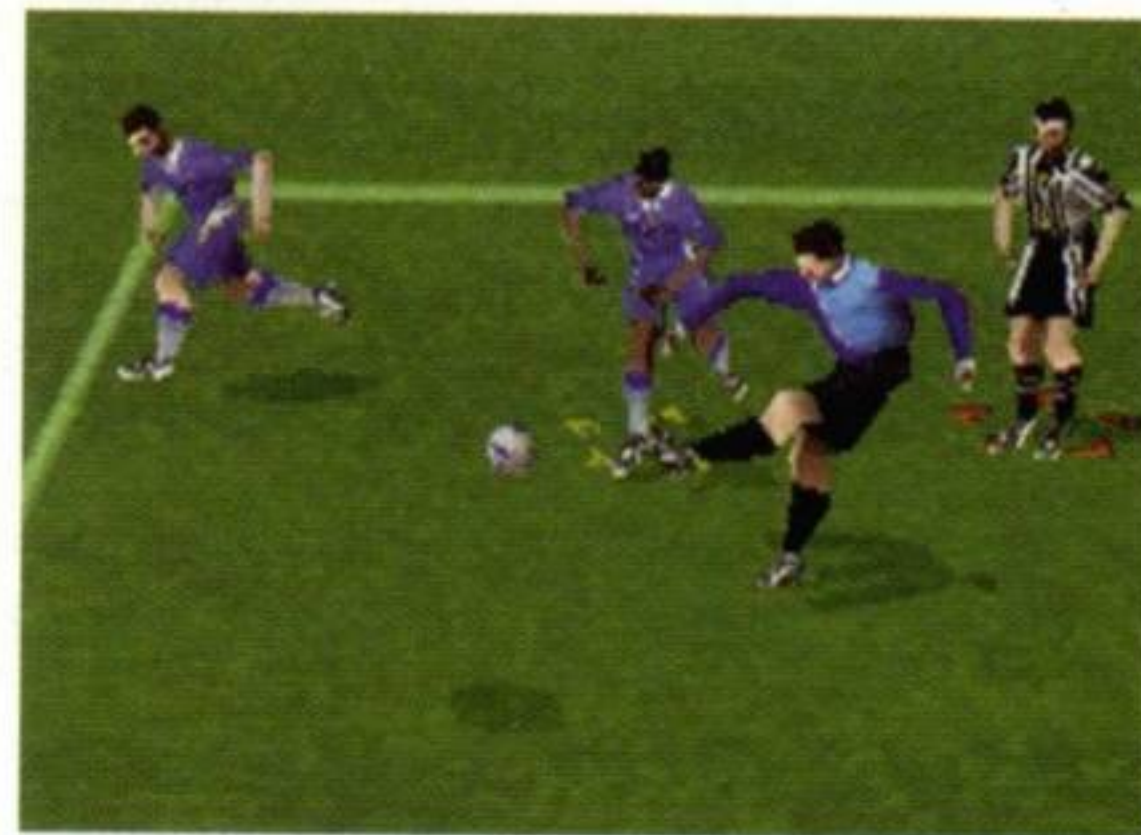
■ The league you play in is the Premiership. But you can qualify for a Champions League-style competition.



■ The replays are great. You can stop at any time and watch from any angle.



■ Foul! Surely that isn't Keane on the ball, is it?



#### BEST BIT SO FAR

### Shirt shenanigans

Another great feature of *Stars* is the kits, which have been recreated wonderfully – right down to the correct sponsors. Which, of course, is interesting where Arsenal is concerned. The team's new home kit for the 1999/00 season displays the word "Dreamcast", while the yellow away strip is emblazoned with "Sega". Sony is obviously not prepared to let this happen on the virtual recreation of the Nike shirt, and to pass the Japanese company's stringent tests, it's said that EA Sports has been asked to make sure something other than Sony's major competitor appears in a Sony PlayStation game. As yet nobody knows what EA is going to do about the problem. We'll keep you posted...



and is an innovative feature which is surprisingly easy to master.

*Stars* will be out in time for the season start in August, and this release pattern is something we can expect to see repeated in the future: a *FIFA* at Christmas and a *Stars* in the summer. If forthcoming games can improve on this already-improved effort, maybe our *FIFA*-based relationship will stay the course after all.

Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **EA Sports** | Publisher: **EA Sports** | Players: **1-4** | On sale in UK: **August**

# FA PREMIER LEAGUE STARS

New football player looks ready to impress in the new season.

It struck us the other day that EA's *FIFA* games are rather like a failing relationship. No, really. You know? You argue. You make a scene. And then you leave, only to return ridiculously soon afterwards, promising: "It'll be different this time." But apart from those first few weeks, where you might do the washing up or might turn off *Driver* at a reasonable time, it never is, is it?

Cynical? Us? Well initially, *FIFA: August 99* – sorry, *FA Premier League Stars* – has all the trademarks of an EA Sports football game. There's speedy gameplay, fantastic goals and spot-on presentation on offer in abundance. And then, after a few goes,

you have to admit something, however sheepish you might feel – *Stars* fails to live up to *FIFA*-influenced expectations, and instead is really quite good.

Rather than take its cue from *FIFA 99*, *Stars* seems to be influenced by the *ISS '98s* of this world. Which can be no bad thing. As a result, the pitch is much bigger, there's more room to create passing moves and there's a power bar to make shooting for goal a much more precise art. The times of heading for the sweet spot and simply pressing Circle are no more, and we're quietly pleased about that.

Why the changes? Apart from the obvious (even EA can't release the same game all over again), *Stars* was not been made in EA Sports' world-famous Canadian

studios. This is a completely British game, and, though it uses elements of the *FIFA* game, it has a lot more besides.

Of course, the official licence means unprecedented levels of realism. Every Premier League ground is recreated, and each has been done stunningly well. All the players will be playing for the right teams for the new season, and Watford, Bradford and Sunderland are in there, too.

As for the *Stars* business of the name, these operate as a means of currency. Whenever you notch up a win you are awarded a number of stars, which you can then assign to individual team members to increase their abilities, or save to buy, say, Gianfranco Zola for 343 stars. This really comes into its own in the Season mode,



**COMING SOON**  
A WORLD OF GAMING MERE MONTHS AWAY

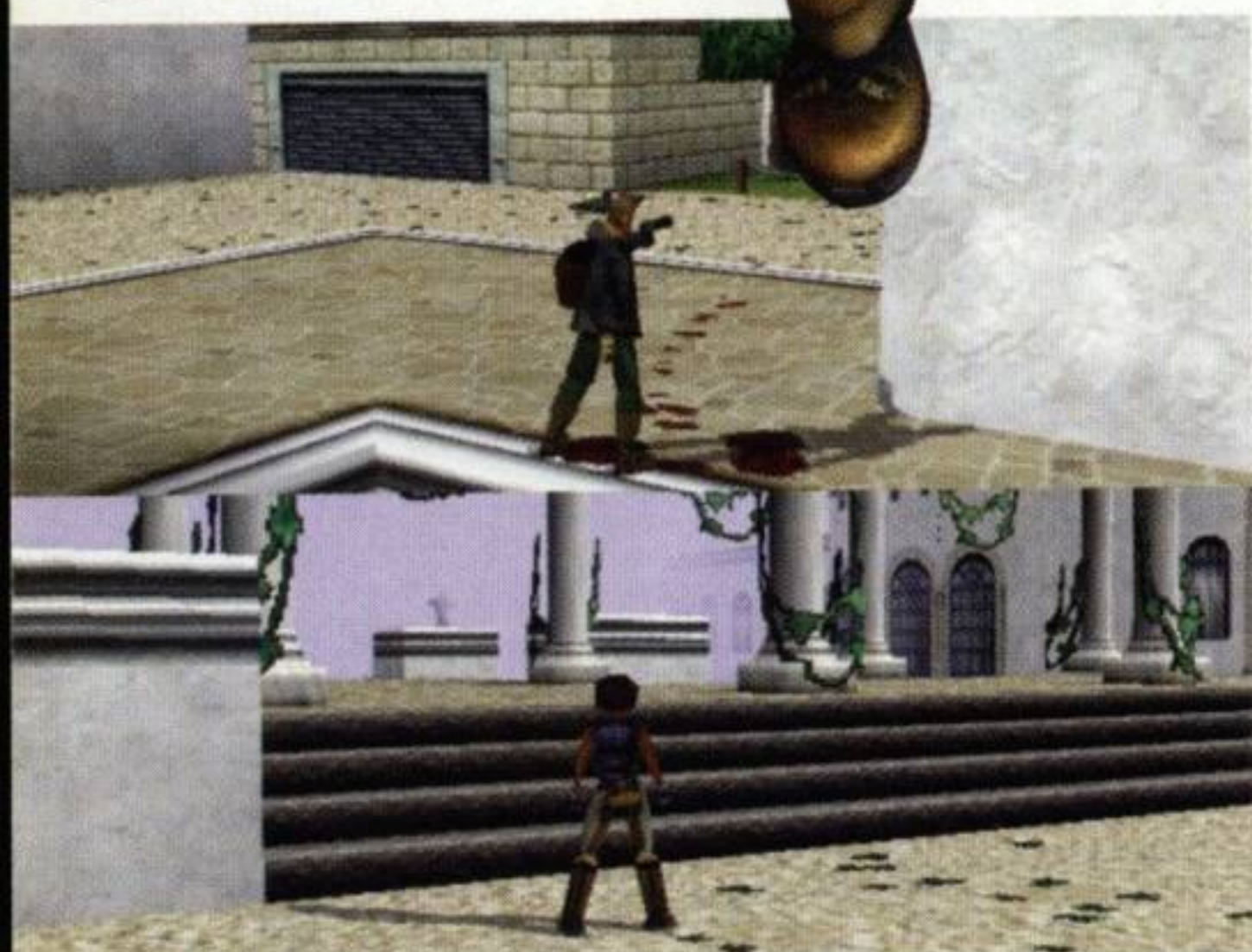


■ The end of the world is nigh. Let's play...

■ Darci may be the rookie, but she's not to be messed with.



■ One of the best bits about *Urban Chaos* is that not only can you stroll along beautifully realised streets, you can interact with them as well.



Format: **PlayStation/PC** | Developer: **Mucky Foot** | Publisher: **Eidos** | Players: **1-2 (co-operative)** | On sale in UK: **September**

## URBAN CHAOS

**Go anywhere. Do anything. Save the world.**

If, as some videogame pundits would have it, there's a terminal shortage of new ideas in games, developer Mucky Foot doesn't seem to care. The company doesn't care that – like *Resident Evil* – *Urban Chaos* enables you to play as either a male or female police hero. Or that – like *Tomb Raider* – the action is played out before an intelligent hovering third-person camera. Or even that – like *Deus Ex* and a host of others – the game is set in the near future, about ten minutes before the end of the world...

This could be because the real art in creating games is in the implementation.

And we wouldn't be reporting on *Urban Chaos* if it didn't promise the kind of features that are destined to set it apart from the morass of forthcoming 3D shooters. It's all very well to be able to wander down a beautifully realised street, but you feel a bit cheated if you can't decide to stroll into the buildings, hoist yourself over fences or even joyride the odd car or two; all of which form integral parts of *Urban Chaos*.

In this free-form world, you'll take control of either Darci or Roper, the agile rookie and grizzled veteran, respectively. The plot revolves around a prediction of impending doom made by our old scaremongering friend and part-time astrologer Nostradamus. But rather than a

plain, drawn-out adventuring bore-fest, you'll be challenged and wrong-footed at unforeseen moments by intense combat sequences that can involve a massive variety of heavy weapons, small arms and good old hand-to-hand fighting.

The character you choose to control will affect the way you play the game: as Darci, you'll be quicker on your feet and able to perform gymnastic feats both in combat and on the city's rooftops; Roper is a more straightforward character, handy with his guns and not afraid to use them.

But it's the atmosphere of *Urban Chaos* that has us most excited. The city's streets, sewers, buildings and open spaces are brought to life by real-time lighting and environmental effects including snow, fog and swirling leaves and rubbish, as well as a beguiling day/night cycle. Among the city's inhabitants are some 40 unique non-playing characters for you to interact with, all of whom have the ability to furnish you with

### BEST BIT SO FAR

#### Grand Theft Auto

Despite being good-at-heart coppers, Darci and Roper aren't afraid to liberate a few vehicles to help them in their tasks. Cars are the obvious choice – a convenient, dry and speedy way to tour the city – but rumour has it that you'll be able to get around using motorbikes, subway trains and even a hang-glider. This is all part of the realistic environment that Mucky Foot is so keen to bring to life in *Urban Chaos*; the way you'd respond to a situation in real life is the way you'll be able to respond in the game. Taxi!



invaluable information and assistance with each of your missions.

That said, it should come as no surprise to learn that the ambitious gang at Mucky Foot has its roots in the legendary developer Bullfrog, which is famed for its commitment to player involvement. *Urban Chaos* is set to reinvigorate a genre that is currently mired in dull shoot-outs, lever pulling and bland exploration. Needless to say, we'll bring you a full review as soon as we get our mucky paws on it. **A**





■ Not, we think you'll agree, your average house spider. Luckily, your armour's packed with guns. Handy.



■ It's not all bugs you know. Take this: a monster made of rock.

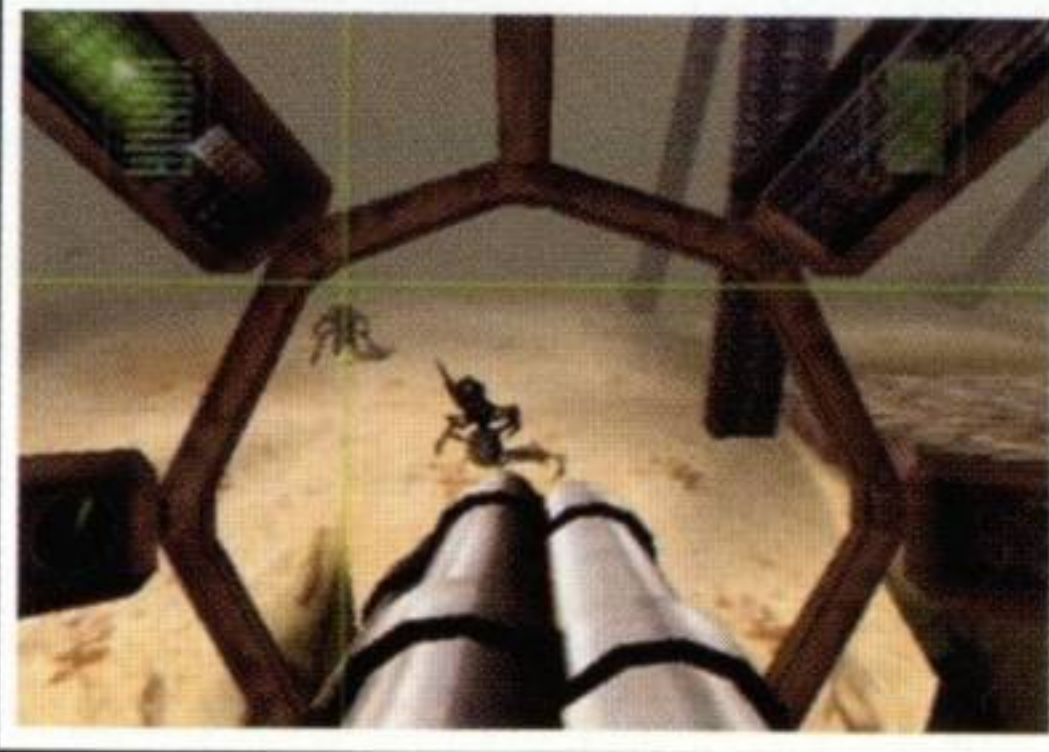
■ The machine gun. Hurts if you get in the way.



#### BEST BIT SO FAR

### Bitten by the bug

Play *Armorines* and one thing becomes clear immediately: the game's bugs aren't fools. Acclaim London has tweaked them until they respond with amazing intelligence. Watch as they scuttle out of the mist and hunt you down. Wryly smile as one bug wanders into another's territory and they start fighting it out. Wonder as you take to the hovercopter (pictured), start firing off rounds at them and the little buggers scramble back into their hives. Fabulous.



Format: **N64** | Developer: **Acclaim** | Publisher: **Acclaim** | On sale in UK: **November** | Players: **1-4**

## AMORINES

### Infectious insects.

**I**n the light of the *Turok* twosome and next month's exceptional *Shadowman*, it's hard to believe that only five years ago Acclaim was bashing out film-licensed turkeys and cobbled-together sub-games. Now its development studios – formerly Iguana's US and UK outfits, and London-based Probe – must rank alongside the best in the world. And it's at Probe (recently renamed Acclaim London) that this game is taking shape.

*Armorines*, like *Turok* and *Shadowman*, is a title that has been inspired by Acclaim's own comic book line and is, quite simply, 128Mb of *Starship Troopers*. Together with

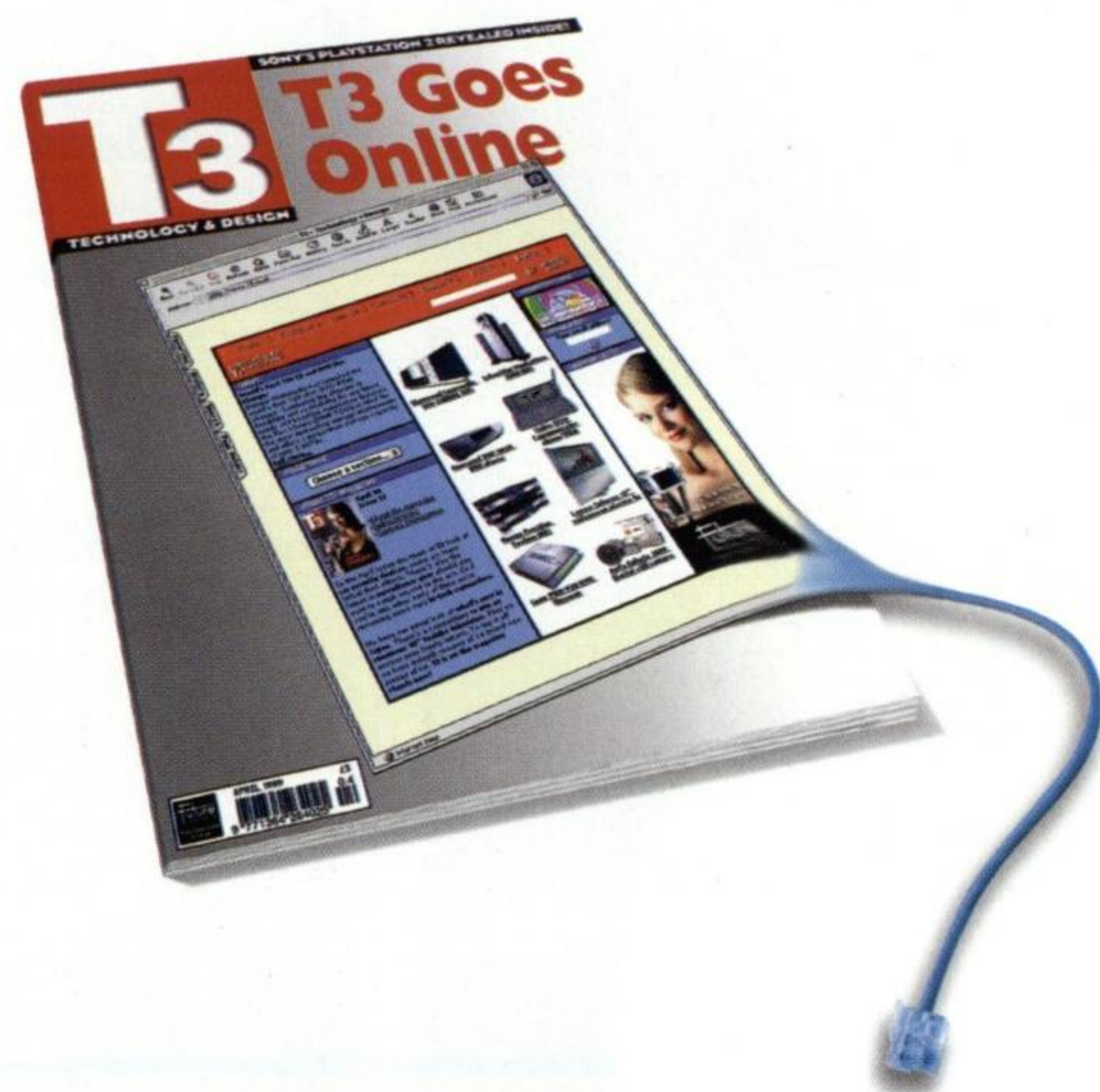
boss bugs who can create an earthquake by just entering the room, you will face four-legged bugs that will try to rip your spine out and eight-legged critters that will hunt you down and – skin-crawlingly – chase after you. Yup, *Armorines* promises to deliver all the thrills of Paul Verhoven's hyper-violent blockbuster, plus a little bit more. And it's aided in its quest by an all-new version of the *Turok 2* engine.

By spending six months smoothing out problems with the fantastic, if not flawless, *Turok* sequel, Acclaim London has managed to create an enviable new feel to its game. Smoother movement, more precise aiming and no Expansion Pak-led slowdown are just three achievements, but the developer has also listened to public criticism and has sub-divided levels into save points, avoiding long slogs through the game. Weapons and weapon selection also play a larger role.

So, all being well, be on your toes ready for a Christmas release.



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**COMING SOON**  
A WORLD OF GAMING MERE MONTHS AWAY



■ (Above) Violet and violent: who would have thought space could be so purple?



■ (Left) Your shields in full effect.

■ (Above) It's not just an empty void up there.



**BEST BIT SO FAR**

**Looking good**

*Sinistar: Unleashed* is going to stretch your 3D card to the limits of its powers. But the extent to which GameFX has loaded the game with graphical sweetmeats is nothing short of gobsmacking. Real-time lighting makes the biggest visual impact, as colourful explosions and laser blasts set the varied environments alight with graphical glitz. We recommend you play wearing a good pair of sunglasses.



Format: **PC** | Developer: **Game FX** | Publisher: **THQ** | On sale in UK: **September** | Players: **1-8**

**SINISTAR: UNLEASHED**

**"Beware! I live!"**

If you don't recognise the above phrase, you probably didn't spend much of the '80s – and all of your pocket money – in the arcades. It was *Sinistar* that first unleashed the terrifying power of digitised speech on a generation, and now the game is being reborn for the millennium in the shape of *Sinistar: Unleashed*.

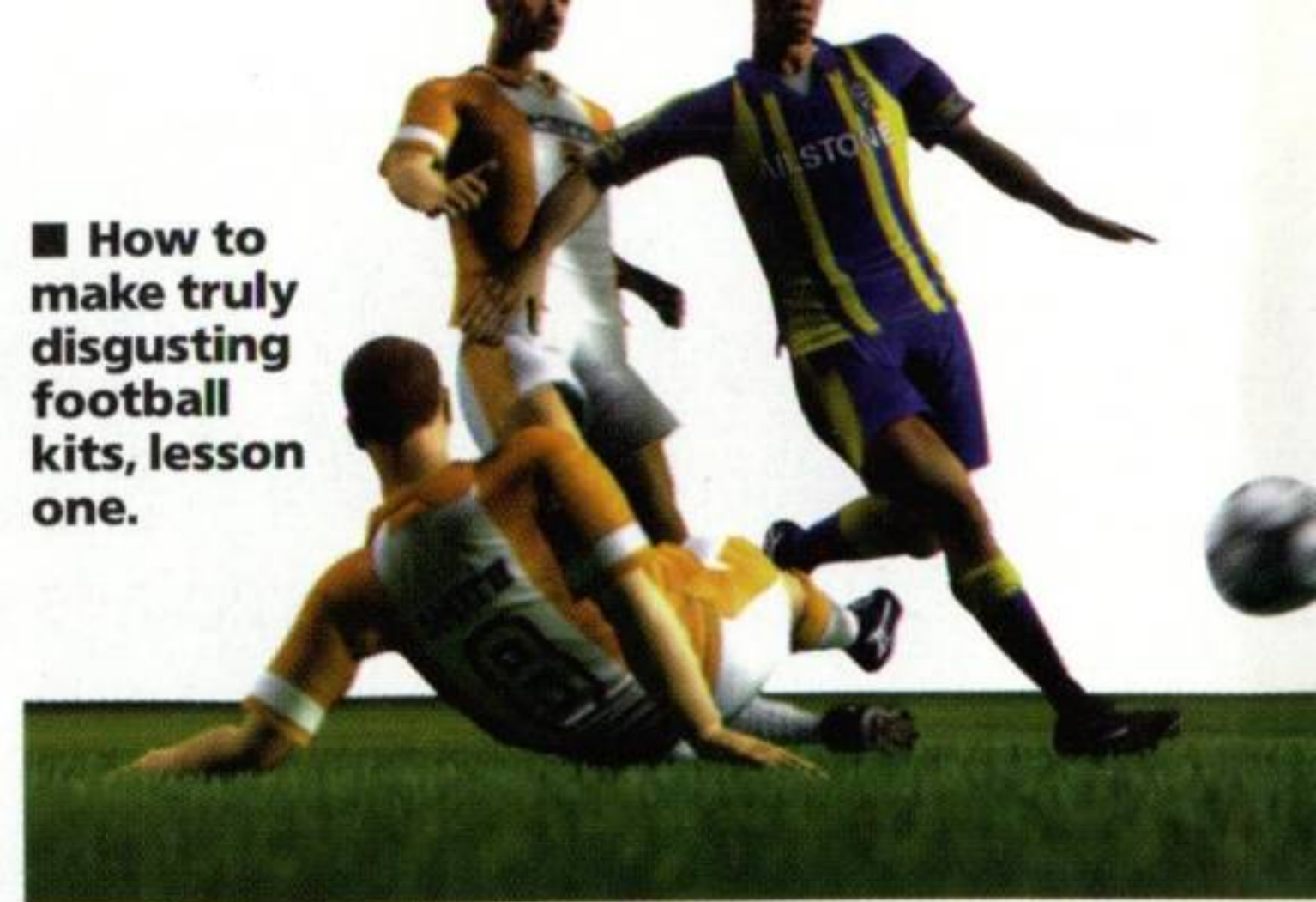
With the PC currently suffering a criminal lack of good, honest, arcade-style games, *Sinistar: Unleashed* is threatening to bring us all to our knees with its mix of retro concept, accessibility and modern presentation. A gloriously ludicrous story sees you pitched against an entity of supreme evil, intent on destroying all life in

the Universe, and you must direct your trusty ship through space, hoarding power crystals in preparation for the big scrap with Sinistar itself. A choice of six ships and an array of nine weapons and eight power-ups aid you in your righteous quest.

The passage of time has permitted developer GameFX to inject the proven formula with all manner of elements to bring it up to date. Rather than the cynical repackaging that marked Asteroids' half-hearted return earlier this year, *Sinistar: Unleashed* offers full 3D from a first or third-person perspective, enabling you to zip around the icy expanses of space in the manner of more recent space combat games. Some 24 vast levels, devious bosses and a multi-player option, guarantee that this game won't be shooting off your hard drive in a hurry.



■ How to make truly disgusting football kits, lesson one.



■ This is how detailed LMA gets. Think your trainer's a bit old? Sack him!



■ That all important cup draw. But where are Man United? Oh, on a beach. In Brazil. Nice.

**BEST BIT SO FAR**

**Real estate**

We've talked about the small footy challenges, but undertaking building work to increase the capacity of your ground is also a whole lot of fun. All the stadia have been recreated so that their attendances and details are as accurate as possible, but with enough money you can add tiers, or even demolish old stands and build new state-of-the-art structures. Hotels, restaurants and supermarkets are not options. Yet.



Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **Codemasters** | Publisher: **Codemasters** | On sale in UK: **October** | Players: **1-2**

**LMA MANAGER**

**A seat on the bench**

The *LMA* bit stands for *League Manager's Association* and serves to highlight the ridiculous lengths software houses are going to in their quest to get a license to hang their games upon.

As it is, the fact that Codemasters has got a license is A Good Thing, because it means this football management game will get a release. Programmed by dedicated *Championship Manager* lovers, *LMA*'s set to be the definitive PSX management sim.

*LMA* boasts live action sequences to accompany the games, and (at last) they actually seem to work. In fact, the developer is so confident of this feature – where you can actually watch who's doing well by

their performance on the pitch – that they say they were ready to ditch it and go with *Champ Manager*-style commentary if it wasn't 100% perfect.

Using *Match of The Day*-style presentation, where you can watch the highlights of the day's play in an incredibly impressive hi-res replay mode, this is slick stuff indeed. But best of all are the small challenges you can play. This is where *LMA* is truly revolutionary – you can sit down with a mate, take on the same five-match challenge (for example, it's the end of the season: win the League, Champions' League and FA Cup) and be finished within the half hour, making it much more immediate, social, and most important of all, fun.

With completely up-to-date squads, easy menu controls and a fantastic training facility, the preview version we've looked at is quite simply the best footy management sim PlayStation is ever likely to see. Even if it does have a funny name.





# RELEASE SCHEDULE

Q. Why do tomorrow's games always seem more exciting than today's? A. They just do. [Sigh]

## AUGUST

6th	Chocobo	Squaresoft	PSX
6th	Premier League Soccer	EA	PSX
6th	Re-Volt	Acclaim	PSX
6th	Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain	Eidos	PSX
6th	South Park	Acclaim	PSX
6th	Re-Volt	Acclaim	N64
6th	WCW Mayhem	Nintendo	CGB

13th	FA Premier League All-Stars	EA	PSX
13th	Quake 2	Activision	PSX
13th	Speed Freaks	Sony	PSX
13th	Spider-Man	Activision	PSX
13th	This is Football	SCEE	PSX
13th	Spider-Man	Activision	N64

20th	WWF: Attitude	EA	PSX
20th	Command & Conquer 64	Nintendo	N64
20th	Bass Hunter	Nintendo	CGB

27th	RC Stunt Copter	EA	PSX
27th	Shadowman	Acclaim	PSX
27th	Cut Throats	Eidos	PC
27th	Homeworld	Cendant	PC
27th	Premier Manager 64	Gremlin	N64
27th	Shadowman	Acclaim	N64
27th	Antz	Disney	CGB
27th	Track & Field	Konami	CGB

TBA	Civilisation 2: The Test of Time	Activision	PSX
TBA	Blade	Gremlin	PC
TBA	Drakan	Psygnosis	PC
TBA	FA League Premier Manager 2	EA	PC
TBA	FIFA 2000	EA	PC
TBA	Giants	Interplay	PC
TBA	Premier League Soccer	EA	PC
TBA	Prince of Persia 3D	Mindscape	PC
TBA	Shadowman	Acclaim	PC
TBA	Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain	Eidos	PC
TBA	Tonic Trouble	Ubisoft	PC
TBA	Urban Chaos	Eidos	PC

## SEPTEMBER

3rd	Alien Resurrection	EA	PSX
3rd	Carmageddon	SCI	PSX
3rd	GT 2: Gran Turismo 2	Sony	PSX
3rd	Indiana Jones and The Infernal Machine	LucasArts	PSX
3rd	No Fear		
3rd	Downhill Mountain Biking	Codemasters	PSX
3rd	Star Wars Episode 1	LucasArts	PSX
3rd	Star Wars Episode 1: Racer	LucasArts	PSX
3rd	Alien Resurrection	EA	PC
3rd	Command & Conquer 2: Tiberium Sun	Westwood	PC
3rd	Carmageddon	SCI	N64
3rd	Duke Nukem: Zero Hour	GT	N64
3rd	Hybrid Heaven	Konami	N64
3rd	Perfect Dark	Rare	N64
3rd	WWF: Attitude	EA	N64
3rd	Asteroids	Activision	CGB
3rd	Carmageddon	SCI	CGB
3rd	TOCA Touring Cars	Codemasters	CGB
3rd	Yoda Stories	LucasArts	CGB

10th	Le Mans 24 Hours	Infogrames	PSX
10th	Rainbow Six	Take 2	PSX

10th	UEFA Striker	Eidos	PSX
10th	Um Jamma Lammy	SCEE	PSX
10th	Unification	GT	PSX
10th	Rayman 2	Ubisoft	PC
10th	Rayman 2	Ubisoft	PC
10th	Magical Tetris	Capcom	N64
10th	Rainbow Six	Take 2	N64
10th	Road Rash 64	EA	N64
10th	Starcraft 64	Nintendo	N64
10th	Super Smash Bros	Nintendo	N64
10th	Tetris 64	Nintendo	N64
10th	Banjo-Kazooie	Rare	CGB
10th	Resident Evil	Capcom	CGB
10th	Resident Evil	Capcom	CGB

17th	Rogue Spear - Rainbow Six 2	Red Storm	PC
17th	Jet Force Gemini	Nintendo	N64

23rd	Blue Stinger	Sega	DC
23rd	Cool Boarders DC	Sega	DC
23rd	Sega Rally 2	Sega	DC
23rd	Sonic Adventure	Sega	DC
23rd	Soul Caliber	Namco	DC
23rd	UEFA Striker	Eidos	DC
23rd	Virtua Fighter 3tb	Sega	DC

24th	Earthworm Jim 3D	Interplay	PSX
24th	F1 '99	Psygnosis	PSX
24th	Prince Naseem Hamed Boxing	Codemasters	PSX
24th	Silent Hill	Konami	PSX
24th	Earthworm Jim 3D	Interplay	N64
24th	World Driver Championship	Midway	N64

TBA	Age of Empires 2: Age of Kings	Microsoft	PC
TBA	Black & White	EA	PC
TBA	Carmageddon Rally	SCI	PC
TBA	Daikatana	Eidos	PC
TBA	Driver	GT	PC
TBA	Force Commander	LucasArts	PC
TBA	Indiana Jones and The Infernal Machine	LucasArts	PC
TBA	Quake 3	Activision	PC
TBA	Star Trek: First Contact	Microprose	PC
TBA	Star Trek: Secret of Vulcan Fury	Microprose	PC
TBA	Starlancer	Microsoft	PC
TBA	Ultima Ascension	Origin	PC
TBA	Unreal Tournament	GT	PC

## OCTOBER

1st	Diablo 2	Blizzard	PC
1st	Ultimate Soccer Manager 2000	EA Sports	PC

8th	Tarzan	Nintendo	PSX
8th	Tenchu	Platinum	PSX
8th	Pokemon Blue	Nintendo	CGB
8th	Pokemon Red	Nintendo	CGB
8th	Re-Volt	Acclaim	CGB
8th	Star Wars Episode 1: Racer	LucasArts	CGB
8th	Tarzan	Nintendo	CGB

15th	Destruction Derby 3	Psygnosis	PSX
15th	Mario Golf	Nintendo	N64

28th	Music 2	Codemasters	PSX
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29th	Resident Evil 2	Capcom	N64
29th	Twelve Tales: Conker 64	Rare	N64
29th	Power Stone	Sega	DC

30th	Constructor	Acclaim	PSX
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TBA	Battlezone 2	Activision	PC
TBA	Max Payne	Take 2	PC

## NOVEMBER

5th	Final Fantasy VIII	Squaresoft	PSX
5th	Spyro 2	Sony	PSX
5th	Get Bass	Sega	DC

12th	Apocalypse	Platinum	PSX
12th	Nightmare Creatures 2	Activision	PSX
12th	WipEout 3	Psygnosis	PSX
12th	Nightmare Creatures 2	Activision	N64
12th	Magical Tetris	Capcom	CGB

19th	South Park - Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	PSX
19th	WWF	THQ	PSX
19th	Half-Life: Opposing Force	Sierra	PC
19th	Half-Life: Team Fortress 2	Sierra	PC
19th	Armourines	Acclaim	N64
19th	Nuclear Strike 64	EA	N64
19th	South Park - Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	N64
19th	Turok: Rage Wars	Acclaim	N64
19th	WWF	THQ	N64
19th	Turok: Rage Wars	Acclaim	CGB
19th	WWF	THQ	CGB

23rd	Metropolis Street Racer	Bizarre	DC
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26th	Die Hard Trilogy 2	Fox	PSX
26th	FIFA 2000	EA	PSX
26th	Knockout Kings 2000	EA	PSX
26th	Resident Evil 3: Nemesis	Capcom	PSX
26th	South Park Rally	Acclaim	PSX
26th	Tomorrow Never Dies	EA	PSX
26th	Vigilante 8: Second Offense	Activision	PSX
26th	Wu Tang Clan	Activision	PSX
26th	Donkey Kong World	Rare	N64
26th	Knockout Kings 2000	EA	N64
26th	South Park Rally	Acclaim	N64
26th	Vigilante 8: Second Offense	Activision	N64
26th	Worms	Infogrames	N64
26th	Worms	Infogrames	CGB
26th	Die Hard Arcade 2	Sega	DC
26th	House Of The Dead 2	Sega	DC
26th	South Park Rally	Acclaim	DC
26th	Vigilante 8: Second Offense	Activision	DC

TBA	Carmageddon 3:		
TBA	Death Race 2000	SCI	PC
TBA	Duke Nukem Forever	GT	PC
TBA	Le Mans 24 Hours	Infogrames	PC
TBA	Obi-Wan Kenobi: Dark Forces 3	LucasArts	PC
TBA	Star Trek: Insurrection	Microprose	PC
TBA	Theme Park 2	EA	PC

■ RELEASE SCHEDULE IN ASSOCIATION WITH HMV



■ Power Stone - Capcom's frankly brilliant 3D beat-'em-up gets an early UK release.





# August 1992

Compiled by | **Mark Green**

**Monkeys, fish, cavemen, Woody Allen and toe sucking were the talk of the town seven years ago. But not necessarily in that order.**



verbs which enabled the player to interact with objects and characters.

With this being *Monkey Island*, those objects and characters were simply an excuse for jokes and one-liners. Along with the now-infamous spitting contest were hilarious moments such as clicking through 87 answers to the question "If a tree falls in a forest when no-one's around, what colour is it?" before stumbling upon the right response, or Guybrush's helium-aided interpretation of the Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive".

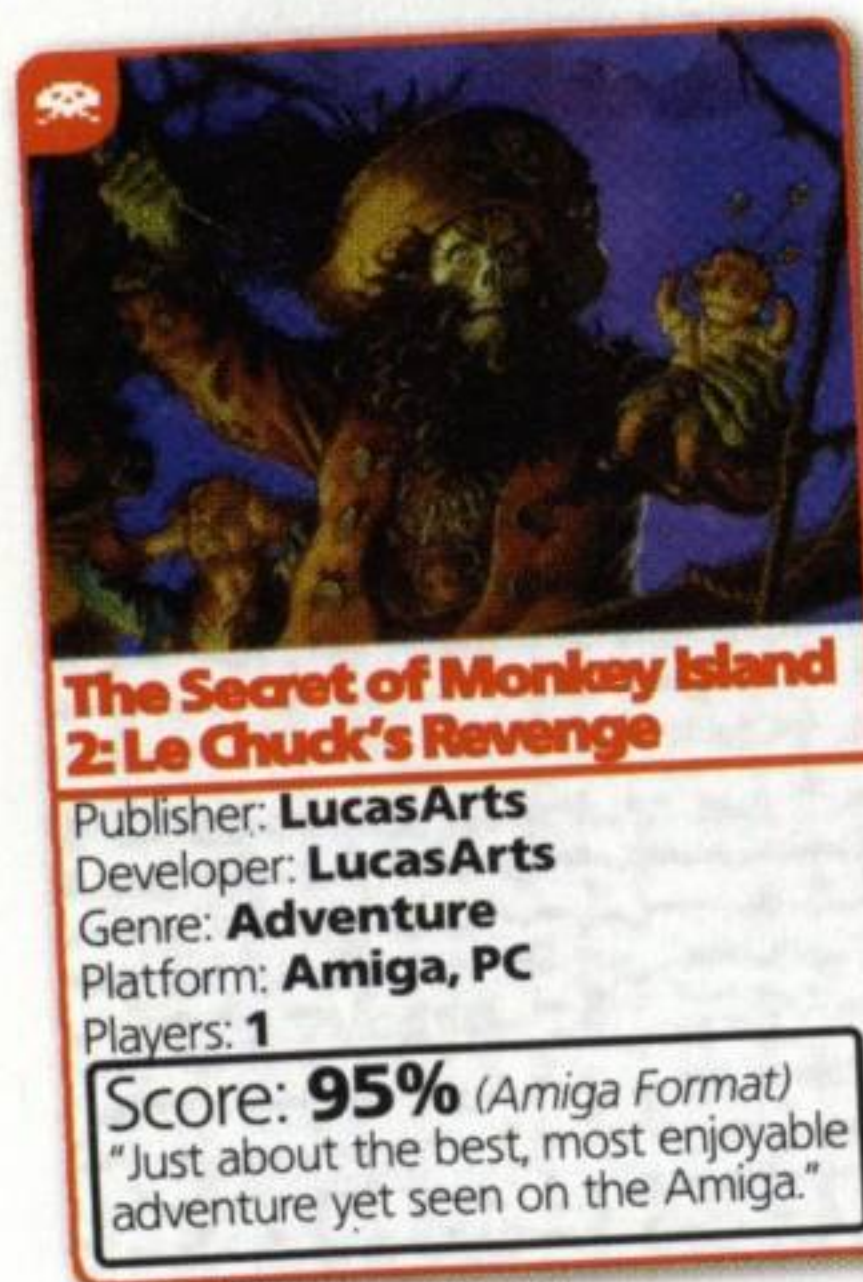
According to Ron, the game's quality was largely down to the office atmosphere. "The experience of programming *Monkey Island 2* was very positive," he says. "I had a great time working on it. The team was incredible and we all really clicked, which is why the game was so good. If you're not having fun making a game, then it's not going to be fun to play."

*Monkey Island 2* was praised as bigger, better and funnier than its prequel, but the hackneyed ending was criticised by some. "*Monkey Island 2* was one big set-up for *Monkey Island 3*," admits Ron, "so it was supposed to leave you hanging and a little confused – much like *The Empire Strikes Back* in the *Star Wars* trilogy." This plan was ruined when Ron left LucasArts, leaving the third game – *The Curse of Monkey Island* – to be written and developed by others. "My story for *Monkey Island 3* is still sitting in my head," says Ron. "I've never told it to anyone."

Ron is now at Cavedog Software, programming real-time strategy titles such as *Total Annihilation*, but he foresees

interesting developments for adventure games. "The player gets frustrated by puzzles because they want to see what happens next in the story. But developers are limited in how much content they can create, so the puzzles are there to slow things down. One way to solve this is to sell games for £2 that only last one hour, but that won't happen until we can sell 10 million copies of a game. Just wait. It is the future." **A**

## Monkey business



■ Desert island disk.

**M**onkey *Island 2* is one of those game titles that conjures up entirely the wrong image. Think of an island of banana-high apes running riot, where a rugged hero and his beautiful assistant risk life and limb to restore simian order, and you've fallen straight into the trap. LucasArts' *Monkey Island 2*, released on the Amiga in August 1992 and recently re-packaged for the PC on the *Monkey Island Bounty Pack* compilation, was in fact a hilarious adventure based around pirates, hidden treasure and voodoo.

Ron Gilbert, the brains behind *Monkey Island 2*, reveals that the game had a strange conception. "My main influence was *The Pirates of The Caribbean* ride at Disneyland," he admits. "I also watched a bunch of old pirate movies from the

'30s and 40s – but they were more of an excuse just to watch movies. With *Monkey Island 2*, the story and setting moved on naturally from the first. I liked the voodoo stuff in the first game, so I expanded on it for the second."

### "My main influence was *The Pirates of The Caribbean* ride"

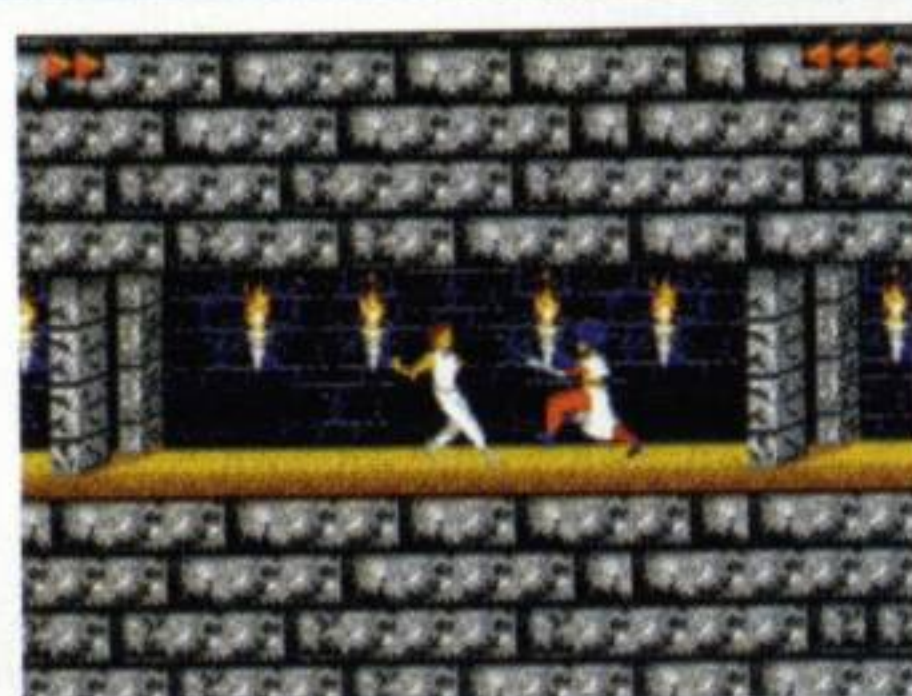
The plot saw Guybrush Threepwood, the hero of *Monkey Island 1*, embarking on a search for a hidden treasure – the Big Whoop – with an undead incarnation of his arch-enemy LeChuck close behind. Appearing after the traditional text-based adventure had fallen out of favour, and shortly before the simple "point-at-objects-and-click" interface had been properly refined, *Monkey Island 2* employed a menu of clickable

## Games of the month | The games that were great in 1992 – and not a single one swore at you.



### Street Fighter II

**System:** SNES  
**Publisher:** Capcom  
■ The game that kept Nintendo afloat in the early '90s. With its classic mix of well-rounded characters and over-the-top button-bashing moves, this arcade conversion enticed thousands into purchasing the newly-released Super Nintendo.  
■ **Mean Machines:** 98%



### Prince of Persia

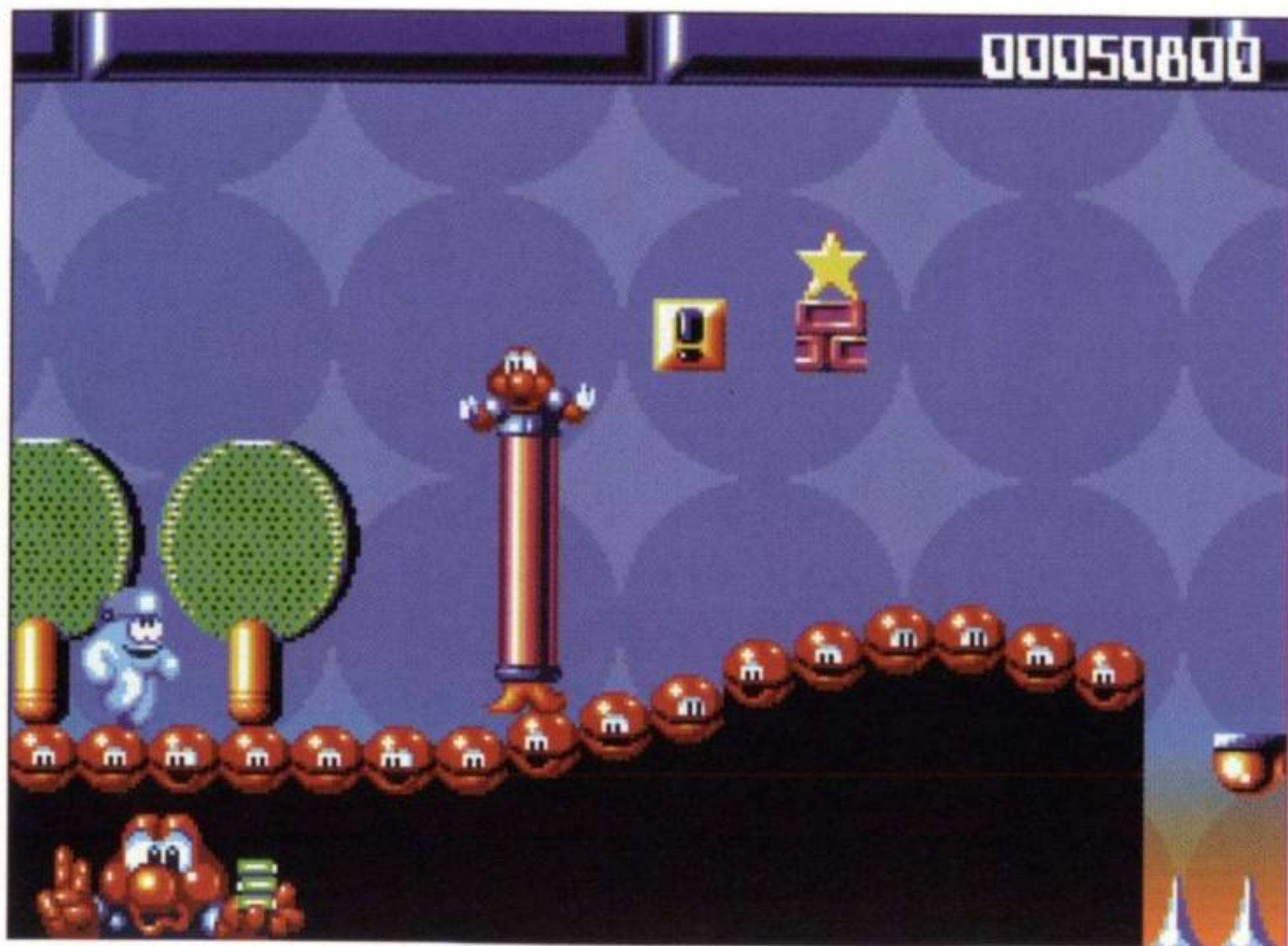
**System:** Master System  
**Publisher:** Domark  
■ A stunningly-animated puzzling platformer, *Prince of Persia* influenced games like *Flashback*, *Abe's Oddysee* and, ultimately, *Tomb Raider*. This conversion suffered graphically thanks to the Master System's limitations, but the challenging gameplay remained intact.  
■ **Mean Machines:** 91%



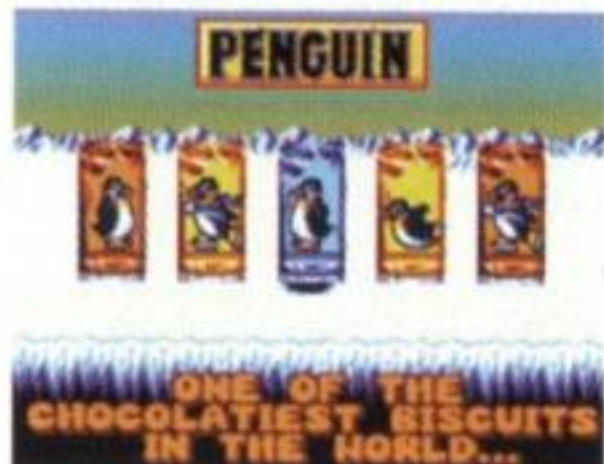
### Sly Spy Secret Agent

**System:** Spectrum  
**Publisher:** Hit Squad  
■ Originally pulled moments after its release, this slipped out again on budget in 1992. Based on an obscure Data East coin-op, which itself borrowed more from James Bond, it was a tedious and lightweight shoot-'em-up.  
■ **Your Sinclair:** 46%





James Pond 2 was one of the few games released for Commodore's ill-fated CD32 console.



# Cod in a DJ

**A**s far as expressions go, "like a fish out of water" is the most inappropriate – fish are a little more than "awkward" when plucked from their moist surroundings. Aimless fin flapping, sickening bodily spasms and bulging eyes are part and parcel of a fish's life outside of the bowl.

Unless, of course, the fish happens to have two arms, a bionic torso and a day-job as an undercover spy. Meet Mr James Pond, the star of Millennium Software's *James Pond 2 – Codename: Robocod*, which was converted to the Commodore 64 seven years ago this month.

So, a fish as videogame hero? Chris Sorrell, *JP2*'s lead developer, attempts to explain. "We wanted to make the character stand out, and of all the quirky animal-based game characters to date, no-one had attempted a fish. The name – and James's secret agent lifestyle – came from Millennium's MD, and I knew I had to turn James into Robocod for the sequel once the pun occurred to me. His new-found robotic nature was what led to him leaving the water behind."

Released on the Amiga and Mega Drive first, *James Pond 2* was one of the early '90s few genuinely accomplished 2D platformers, with colourful visuals, smooth scrolling and sprawling, open-ended levels. It's a

surprise to discover that Mario wasn't a particular influence. "It wasn't until late in development that I even got to play on a Nintendo system," admits Chris. "The biggest influence was *Mickey's Castle of Illusion* on the Mega Drive – I was just doing my best to make the game fun." Videogame magazines gave *JP2* almost universal 90%+ scores.

Playing the game, it's hard to avoid noticing one of *JP2*'s most original features – product placement. McVities paid Millennium to have the plot revolve around Penguin biscuits, which didn't please Chris. "At the time we were embarrassed by this," he admits. "It seemed to cheapen what we were doing. In hindsight, though, I think it almost adds to the charm of *JP2*."

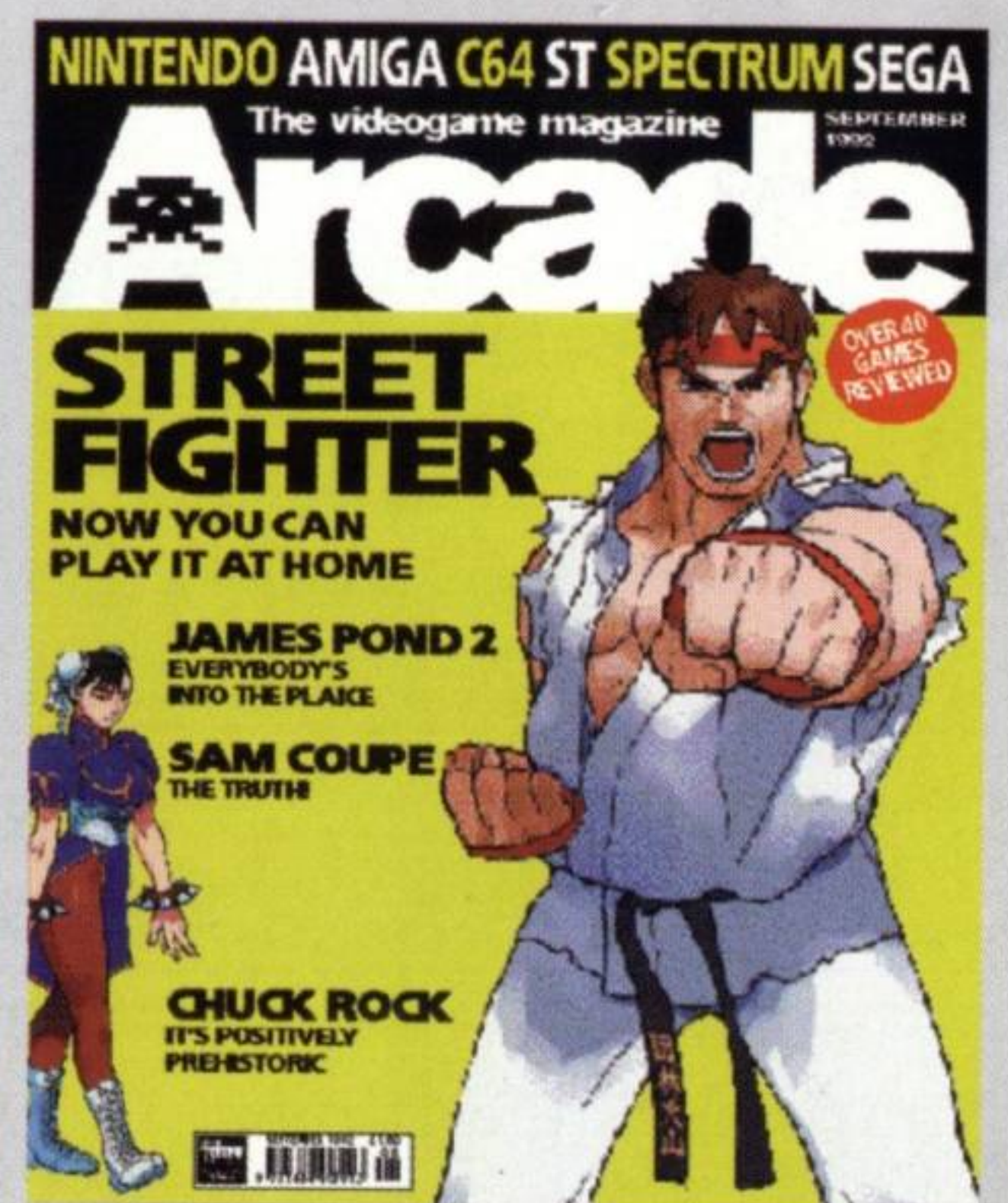
Chris is now at SCEE, as Creative Director on an undisclosed PlayStation 2 project, but in common with many developers, he's reminiscent. "I'd love to be able to capture the feeling of innocence we had back then," he says. "I didn't especially know nor care what the rest of the world was up to, I just focused on making a great game with the resources available. These days, with so many pressures on developers' minds, I think it's almost by accident that games turn out to be fun to play."

And the future of James Pond? "It would be fun to do a modern 3D implementation of *Robocod*," Chris admits, "but I don't think it will happen." Never say never again, Chris... **A**

## Gaming Round-up | Also going on this month

The Commodore 64 version of *Parasol Stars* was canned – purportedly due to the development disks being lifted from the programmer's house by a burglar. The third in the superb *Bub & Bob* trilogy, following *Bubble Bobble* and *Rainbow Islands*, *Parasol Stars* had already enjoyed a successful conversion to the Amiga and ST.

SAM Computers Ltd, which provided support for the Spectrum-based SAM Coupe computer, went into receivership. The company, formed from the ashes of Coupe manufacturers Miles Gordon Technology, blamed lack of money and over-generosity with handing out free game demos. The SAM Coupe itself failed largely due to bugged



Of course, if we could find a picture of the lovely Chun-Li showing her knickers, we'd put that on the cover instead. Maybe.

hardware and a missed pre-Christmas launch date. Palace Software passed away. Palace had been trading since 1984, making it one of the longest-running

videogame publishers, and was responsible for popular 8-bit games such as *Cauldron* and *Stiffip & Co*. It's probably best remembered for featuring a near-naked Maria Whittaker in magazine adverts for 8-bit title *Barbarian*.

Commodore ceased production of the Amiga A500, in favour of the new cut-down, games-based A600. Meanwhile, the A590 CD-ROM drive was released for existing Amiga machines, paving the way for Commodore's disastrous CD32 videogame console.



Stiffip & Co: Monochrome marvel.

### Your Sinclair Spectrum top 10 Reader's Chart

- |                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Italia '90                   | Tronix      |
| 2. Rainbow Islands              | Hit Squad   |
| 3. Dizzy's Excellent Adventures | Codemasters |
| 4. Manchester United            | GBH         |
| 5. Bubble Dizzy                 | Codemasters |
| 6. Seymour Goes to Hollywood    | Codemasters |
| 7. Golden Axe                   | Tronix      |
| 8. World Cup                    | D&H         |
| 9. First Division Manager       | Codemasters |
| 10. Treble Champions            | E&J         |

### Gallup Amiga top 10

- |                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. John Madden American Football | Electronic Arts  |
| 2. The Manager                   | US Gold          |
| 3. Epic                          | Ocean            |
| 4. Project X                     | Team 17          |
| 5. Eye of The Beholder 2         | US Gold          |
| 6. Formula One Grand Prix        | Microprose       |
| 7. Space Crusade                 | Gremlin Graphics |
| 8. John Barnes European Football | Krisalis         |
| 9. Dizzy's Excellent Adventures  | Codemasters      |
| 10. Sim Ant                      | Ocean            |

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALLSPORT

## World News Headlines

And here is the news...

Britain came home from the Barcelona Olympics with a clutch of medals, as Chris Boardman, Sally Gunnell and Linford Christie all scooped gold. Also this month, Nigel Mansell finally became Formula One motor racing champion after years of incompetence.

A war erupted between Woody Allen and Mia Farrow. In custody hearings, Allen admitted that he

was romantically involved with the couple's adopted daughter, Soon-Yi, but denied that he had sexually abused his other adopted children.

Despite protests from Buckingham Palace, *The Daily Mirror* published a spread of photographs of the Duchess Of York and her financial advisor John Bryan "enjoying a relaxing break". The toe-sucking jokes began here.

Florida succumbed to the might of Hurricane Andrew, with winds of 160 miles per hour killing at least 15 people and causing damage estimated at \$20 billion.

Linford: Hot legs, baby.

### Music Charts

7 August 1992

- |                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Rhythm is a Dancer            | Snap            |
| 2. Ain't No Doubt                | Jimmy Nail      |
| 3. Achy Breaky Heart             | Billy Ray Cyrus |
| 4. Barcelona                     | Freddie Mercury |
| 5. This Used to be My Playground | Madonna         |

Information © CIN

### Film Charts

7 August 1992

- |                      |
|----------------------|
| 1. Universal Soldier |
| 2. Far and Away      |
| 3. Batman Returns    |
| 4. The Player        |
| 5. Nights on Earth   |



### Lure of The Temptress

System: Amiga  
Publisher: Virgin  
Created by Revolution Software, the team behind the popular *Broken Sword* adventures, *Lure of The Temptress* was an involving and attractive (if slightly short) adventure game, packed with believable characters.

Amiga Action: 91%



### Chuck Rock

System: C64  
Publisher: Core Design  
A scrolling platformer starring a rock-wielding caveman, from the people who went on to invent *Tomb Raider*. Originally released on the Amiga, this C64 conversion featured the kind of primitive graphics you'd expect from a near-prehistoric (ha!) computer.

Zzap 64: 96%



### MicroMachines

System: NES  
Publisher: Codemasters  
Nintendo refused Codemasters a license to release this top-down toy car racer, so it manufactured and marketed the game itself. Offering unrivalled multi-player fun, *MicroMachines* spawned a huge PlayStation sequel.

Mean Machines: 93%



## Great Gaming Moments

# Headless chicken

Remembered by | Rich Pelley

Ever felt like killing someone? Some people find that even the cute little star of **Super Mario 64** can boil the blood. But now it's time to enjoy your revenge.



**B**ack on *The Mary Whitehouse Experience* in the early '90s, David Baddiel used to do this great sketch about what would happen if Bez (the mad boggly-eyed dancer) ever left the Happy Mondays. The premise was Bez in the Job Centre, trying to land a career. "So," said the hypothetical man in the Job Centre. "What can you do, exactly?" "Well," replied the hypothetical boggly Bez, "I can dance forwards waving my maracas around, like this. And I can dance backwards like that. And... that's it."

The Happy Mondays split and morphed into Black Grape. And there was Bez again – saving the DHS £40 a week – looking drugged up to his eyeballs on goodness knows what and dancing around with his maracas. And now the Happy Mondays have

reformed. With Bez hamming it up for the cameras on *TFI Friday*, only this time he's wearing a rather silly hat.

All of which, of course, has nothing to do with videogames.

Or does it?

Perhaps there is a Bez figure in the world of videogames.

A figurehead who focuses your attention (taking it away from the gameplay), who hogs the limelight and who contributes to the enjoyment as diddly as squat can get.

It's Mario, isn't it?

It's only when you think about the *Mario* games you realise Mario isn't a star at all. It's the world he lives in that makes his games so good. The simple block-based, jump-on-baddies-to-kill-them world of *Super Mario Brothers* on the NES was a revelation. The 3D world of the N64's first game – *Super Mario 64* was an even bigger revelation. But never did playing a plumber in red dungarees feel even remotely out of the ordinary.

Come on. Just look at him.

He's as fat as you like, and he's got a stupid moustache.

He's the most unlikely game star ever.

He doesn't even deserve to be famous.

Which is why it's such a Great Gaming

### Wanna play?

■ Someone else writes: The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of *Arcade*. Cos, you've got to admit, *Mario 64* is a damn fine game. Since *Mario World 64*, Mario has starred in many fine Nintendo releases, namely *Mario Kart*, *Mario Party* and *Super Smash Brothers* – all great games. Okay, maybe he is annoying, but if you've got an N64, you owe him – without Mario and all he's done for Nintendo, the N64 probably wouldn't even exist.

Moment when you turn on *Super Mario 64*, your N64 pings, a voice says "It's me, Mario" and you're whisked to the "Press Start" screen. And there's his stupid, fat, smug head. He's been – and this is the Great Gaming Moment – decapitated. Yaay!

Sure, once you press the Start button and begin playing, chunky little Mario's likely to drown, be squished by a big paving slab, exploded or burnt alive.

But that moment, when you can imagine that he's just been executed, beats them all. Like Anne Boleyn.

And with a bit of finger-work on the C-buttons, you can rotate Mario's skull to your heart's content. He has no nostrils. And no eyelashes. And no ear holes. Weird.

And do you ever wonder why picking Mario in *Mario Kart* is like having to play as the boot in *Monopoly*? It's because no one really wants to play a smug, Italian, porky plumber, that's why.



**And there's his stupid, fat head. He's been – and this is the best bit – decapitated.**





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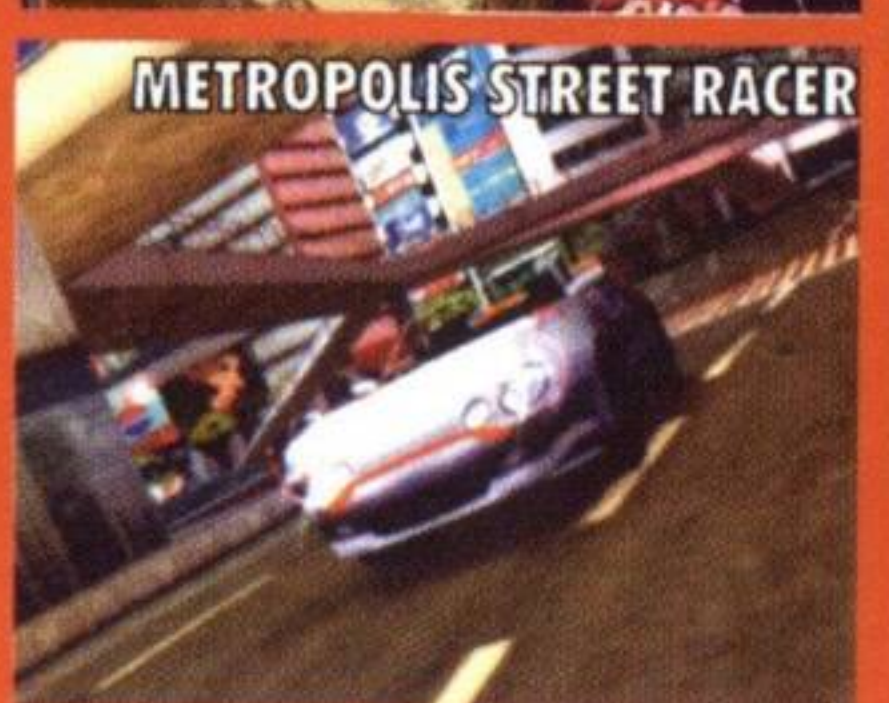
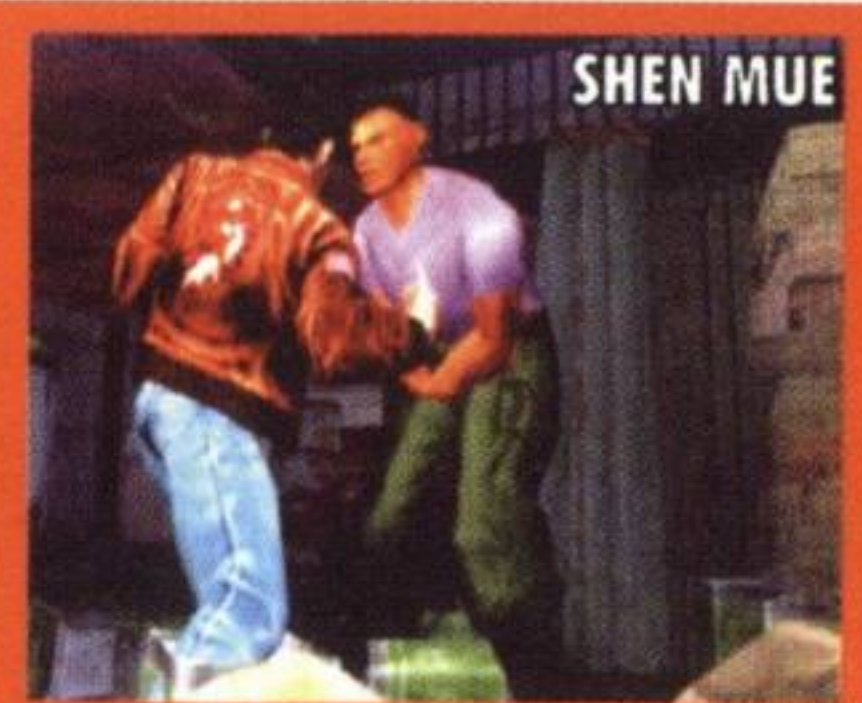
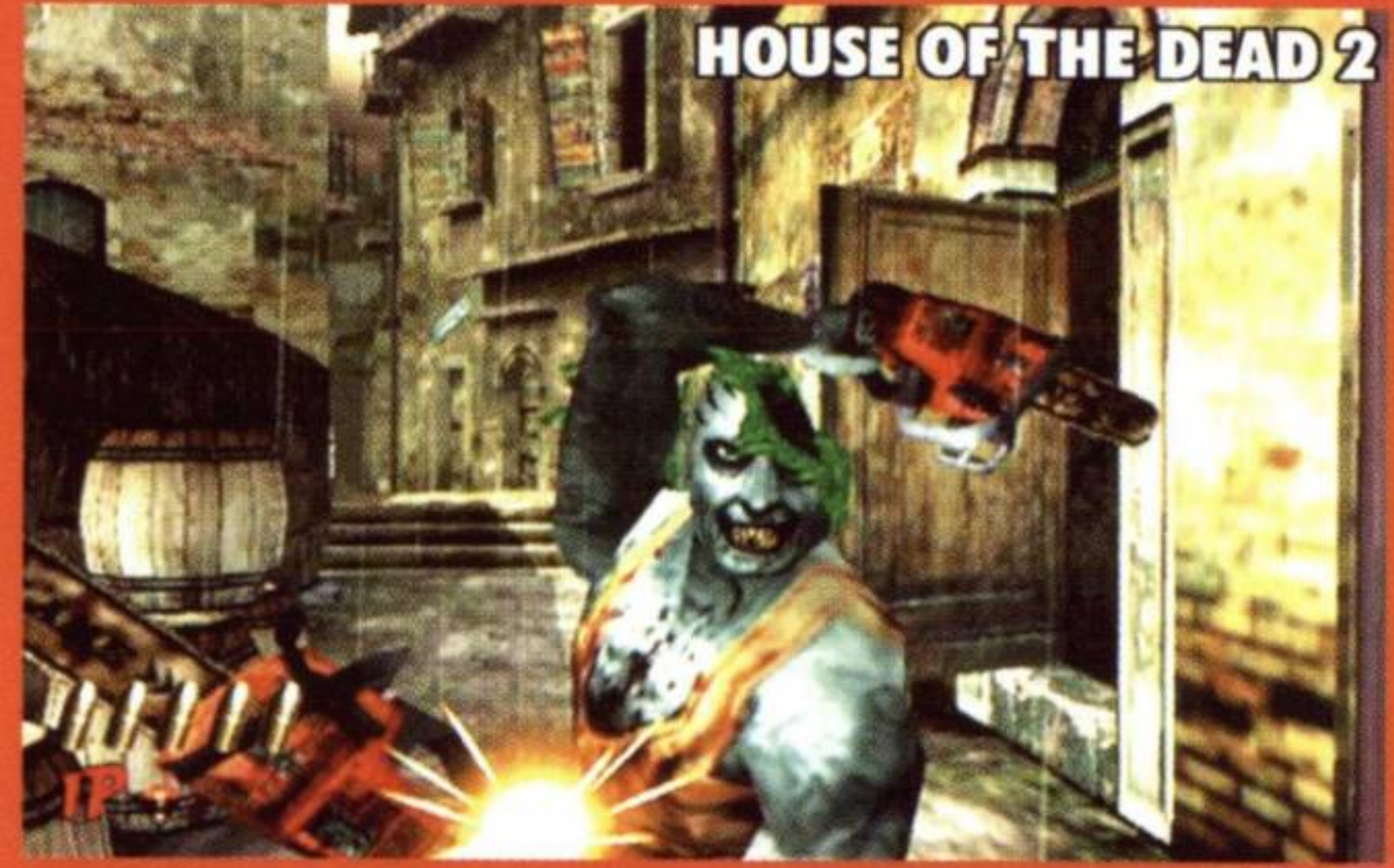
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