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# MEGA POWER



MAY 1994  
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ISSUE 10

not an official sega publication

the ONLY magazine for Mega-CD owners!

## SOULSTAR

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printed in the uk



direct from Paragon Publishing. See page 12

Soulstar Mega-CD not available on export copies of Mega Power magazine. However, playable demo is available

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Soulstar ♦ Tomcat Alley ♦ AX-101 ♦ Sensible Soccer ♦ Shadow of the Beast 2 ♦  
Space Ace ♦ Powermonger ♦ Third World War ♦ Virtua Racing ♦ Streets of Rage 3

**INSIDE**

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# PRESS

# s t a r t

**W**elcome to the all-new Mega Power. Not only has the editor changed (you won't catch me wearing a hanky on my head), but so has the whole magazine. It's now concentrating on the Mega-CD and will carry a CD demo on the cover of every issue from now on!

This is mainly due to the serious amount of mail we've been getting, pleading us to do more covermounted CDs. We were keen to do so, particularly as previous covermounted issues had been so popular, but had reservations about upsetting our non-Mega-CD-owning readers with the unavoidable rise in the magazine's price.

It was simply no good trying to keep two completely different sets of readers happy by putting the occasional coverdisc on. So rather than compromise, we decided to go the whole hog and create the world's first magazine dedicated to Mega-CD owners. As well as covermounting a CD demo every month, we'll be devoting the vast majority of our coverage to Mega-CD games. Although there will still be reviews of the very best Mega Drive carts, we feel that Mega-CD owners are primarily interested in what discs they can buy – after all, if you've paid 200-odd quid for a machine, you want to use it!

It's certainly an exciting time for the Mega-CD, with top software companies planning many CD releases this year. Indeed, some formerly sceptical publishers are now eager to produce games for the machine. They've finally realised the advantages of much lower production costs than cartridges, and that Mega-CD owners are crying out for quality games on CD. Some of the credit to this change of heart must be accredited to the huge success of Core Design's Thunderhawk last year, which showcased exactly what the Mega-CD was capable of. And their new game Soulstar should have an even greater impact on the Mega-CD market. We're certainly very proud to be able to offer our readers the exclusive chance to sample this ground-breaking game, and our sincere thanks go to Core for allowing us to do it.

Finally, I'd like to wish our former editor Dave Perry the best of luck with his exciting new magazine project. All the best, as well, to Steve Bough who has left these shores for the superior surf of Australia – send us a postcard, you jammy git!



phil king

## phil king

After gaining the editorship, Phil has gone power crazy, ordering everyone around like some mad dictator. He's even been getting Daz to bring cups of tea and lardy cakes to him on a silver tray, and demanding to be called 'sire' at all times.

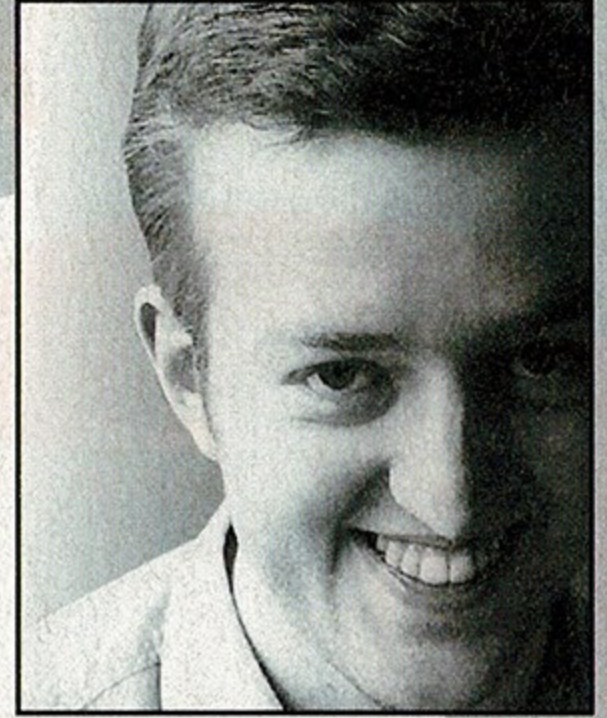
However, Phil was brought back to embarrassing reality when someone here discovered his appalling secret: he'd actually paid £14.50 to go and see Bonnie Langford and Wayne Sleep at the Bournemouth International Centre. It's no good coming out with the excuse about taking your parents to see the show, Phil – they told us you enjoyed it more than they did!

Meanwhile Phil's been moving into his new 'bachelor pad' which, although conveniently near the office, is situated right next to Bournemouth's busy dual carriageway. Mind you, with Phil's penchant for ambient music, he'll probably enjoy the 'soundtrack' made by the traffic – it doesn't sound that different from some of the tracks on the new Aphex Twin album!

**Playing:** Soulstar demo, Powermonger, Shadow Of The Beast 2.

**Listening to:** Nine Inch Nails (the new album's great), Dead Can Dance, Aphex Twin.

**Watching:** Countdown (he claims he got a nine-letter word the other day), Brookside, Ren & Stimpy, Fantasy Football League.



## daz white

Our new reviewer, Daz (real name Darren) is a Cockney chappie with a love for rhyming slang. His favourite TV programme is Eastenders (what else?) which he reckons is just like real life. In fact, he says he's got a mate just like Phil Mitchell, who was banged up for setting fire to the local car yard!

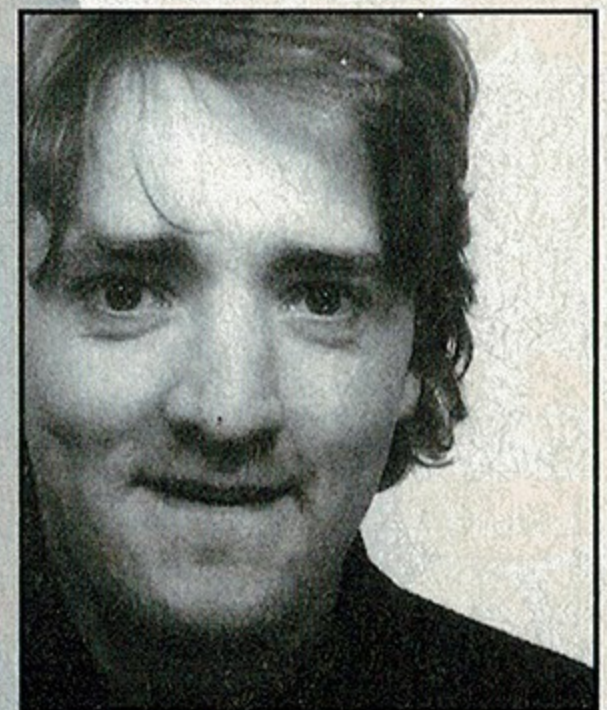
Gameswise Daz is a total shoot-'em-up fan and has been glued to the screen while playing this month's stunning Soulstar cover demo. "It's brill, innit?" says Daz.

However, the biggest excitement of the month came when Daz was nearly arrested. He was looking around Dingles while carrying his lunch box, and some woman thought it was a bomb! she followed him back to the Mega Power office and called the police. Daz was thus questioned by a couple of officers who stood back nervously while he opened his lunch box!

**Playing:** Soulstar demo, Third World War, Thunderhawk.

**Listening to:** East 17, Take That, Dead Anchovies, EMF (Daz loves to rock in his chair and hum as he listens to music on his Walkman).

**Watching:** Eastenders, The Bill, George and Mildred.



**Mega Power**

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# MEGACD CONTENT

## SOULSTAR

You've got your exclusive covermounted CD demo in your hand, but how do you play it? We tell you everything you need to know, and give you a special progress report on how *Soulstar* is coming on.

cover disc



## reviews



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The latest FMV shoot-'em-up launches you into a world of rendered 3-D.

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Put your finger on the nuclear button as you aim for global domination.



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Psygnosis convert this beast of a game to the Mega-CD in fine style.

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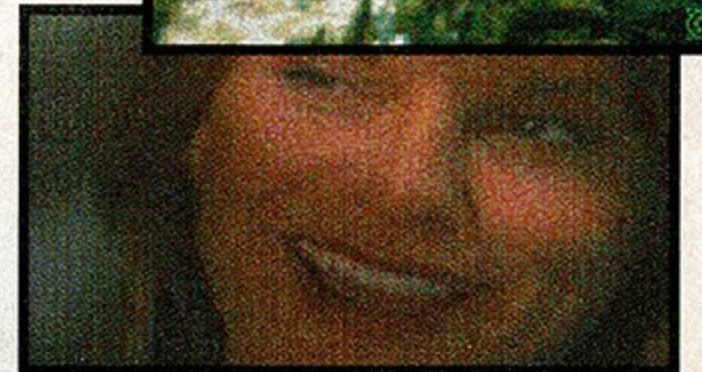
Gun down bandits at five o'clock in Sega's FMV jet fighter blockbuster.



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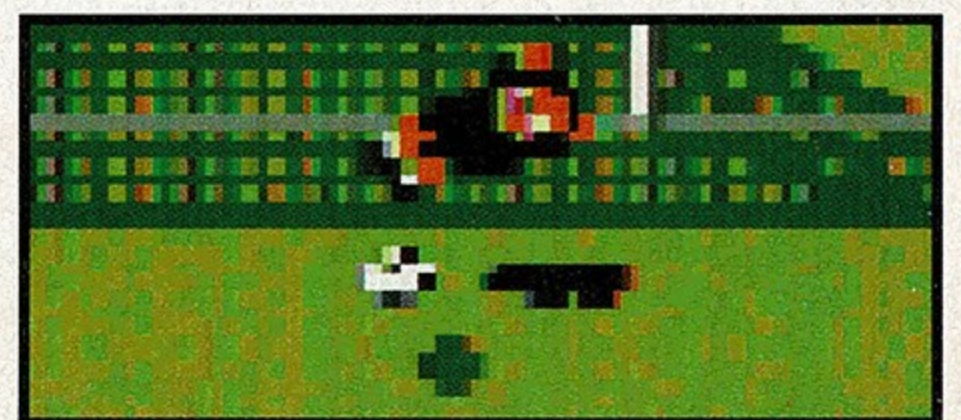
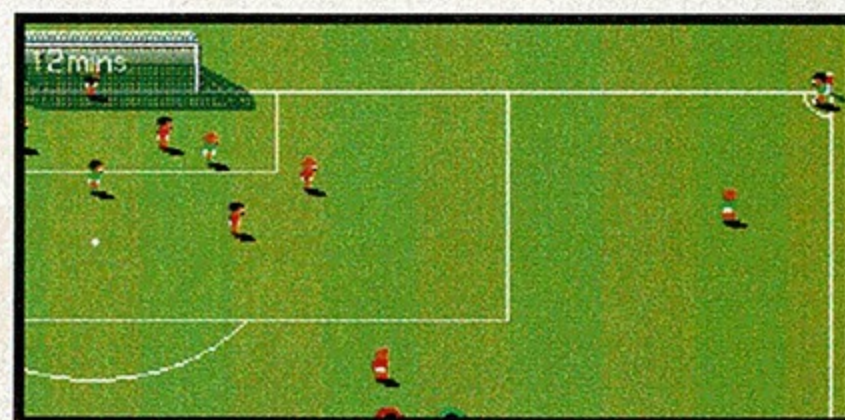
Pillage those villages as you conquer the lands in EA's classic conversion.



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This top football simulation gets the star treatment for its CD conversion.



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## reviews

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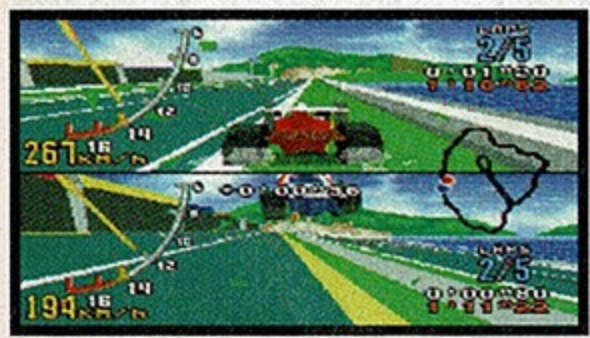
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Meet the new editor and a brand-new reviewer for this new-look MEGA POWER!

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Order MEGA POWER back issues and host of games and goodies from the comfort of your armchair.

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If you can't wait to find out what's going to be on next month's cover disc, look here!

# THE WORD 'MARS' FILLS SEGA'S

## FLASHBACK ON DISC

Sony are to release a special enhanced version of *Flashback* on the Mega-CD. Created by the same programmers as the cart, French software house Delphine, the new version will



have many improved features. These include the ultra-atmospheric soundtrack which has been specially recorded in

CD-quality sound in Delphine's in-house studio. All the game's sound FX have also been resampled for crystal clarity. Most impressive of all, the many cinematic animated sequences shown throughout the game have been reconstructed using a Silicon Graphics Station for even greater detail and atmosphere.



The actual gameplay will remain much the same, a super-slick arcade adventure with a mixture of platform action, character interaction, puzzle solving and exciting shootout action as the gun-toting hero battles through futuristic worlds and cities. As in the cart game, the hero has very realistic animation for his many movements. This was achieved using Rotoscoping: an actor was filmed and the footage was digitised and touched up. With such great graphics and deep gameplay it's no wonder *Flashback* has received a host of awards on various formats – and the Mega-CD version should be the best yet.



## A MONSTER OF A GAME

The new movie version of *Frankenstein* is to be converted into a video game by Sony Imagesoft. A top Hollywood source exclusively informed MEGA POWER about the blockbuster licence deal, although he couldn't yet reveal exactly what type of game it will be. The deal is no big surprise as the makers of the movie, Columbia Tri-Star are part of the huge Sony empire and have previously provided licences such as *Last Action Hero* and *Cliffhanger*.

Due to appear on all console formats, including Mega Drive and Mega-CD, the game is likely to appear around Christmas to coincide with the release of the film. The latter will star the brilliant Robert De Niro as the monster – apparently his make-up takes 18 hours to put on, so he often has to sleep in it!

Meanwhile Sony are also developing a 'big' music tie-in licensed from CBS Records. More news as we get it.



Sega are to release a special add-on device this Christmas to soup-up the Mega Drive and Mega-CD. Originally code-named the Mars, and now to be known as the Mega Drive 32, the new peripheral will enhance the Mega Drive's capabilities with two 32-bit RISC chips and a special video processor. The Mega-CD will also be able to utilise the add-on's extra features for enhanced versions of games.

Costing around £150 and fitting into the Mega Drive's cartridge port (like the Power Base Master System converter), the device will upgrade the machine's colour palette to 256 and offer massively enhanced 3-D capabilities. This will enable MD32 conversions of new Sega coin-ops such as *Virtua Fighter*, which would be impossible on a normal Mega Drive. There will also be a special *Virtua Racing Deluxe* release, featuring many extra tracks and options.

Sega currently have 30 MD32 titles in development and a dozen of these should be available at the time of the machine's release. Around 30 more third-party titles are predicted for the MD32's first year. All of these games will be released on both cartridge and CD. There will be no unenhanced Mega Drive versions of the titles, but some will appear on CD in two forms: MD32 compatible and non-MD32 compatible.

Sega are also likely to launch a new Mega Drive with the MD32 technology built-in for around £200 next year – although cart-only, it will be compatible with the Mega-CD.

Rumours have abounded about a supposed 'super-Mega Drive' in the last couple of months, due to the massive technology gap between the Mega Drive and the new 32-bit CD-ROM Saturn machine to be launched later in 1995. Sega see the Saturn as a high-end multimedia machine to compete against the 3DO and forthcoming Sony CD-ROM console, appealing to a completely different market than the Mega Drive 32. Indeed, the price of the Saturn is likely to be a whopping £400, and a cut-down cartridge-only version (code-named Jupiter) has now been shelved.

Sega are to release a special add-on device this Christmas to soup-up the Mega Drive and Mega-CD. Originally code-named the Mars, and now to be known as the Mega Drive 32, the new peripheral will enhance the Mega Drive's capabilities with two 32-bit RISC chips and a special video processor. The Mega-CD will also be able to utilise the add-on's extra features for enhanced versions of games.



## BACHELOR OF ELECTRONIC ARTS!



Games fans keen to get involved in the software industry will soon be able to take a degree in the Design and Production of Interactive Games. A world first, the course will cover all aspects of games design including software engineering, graphics and audio. The aim will be to teach students the concepts of game design itself, encompassing existing and developing hardware platforms.

The first university to offer the degree is Middlesex, who are starting a one-year Master of Arts course in September. This will be followed by a three-year Bachelor of Arts course the year after. Other universities also plan to start similar courses in 1995.

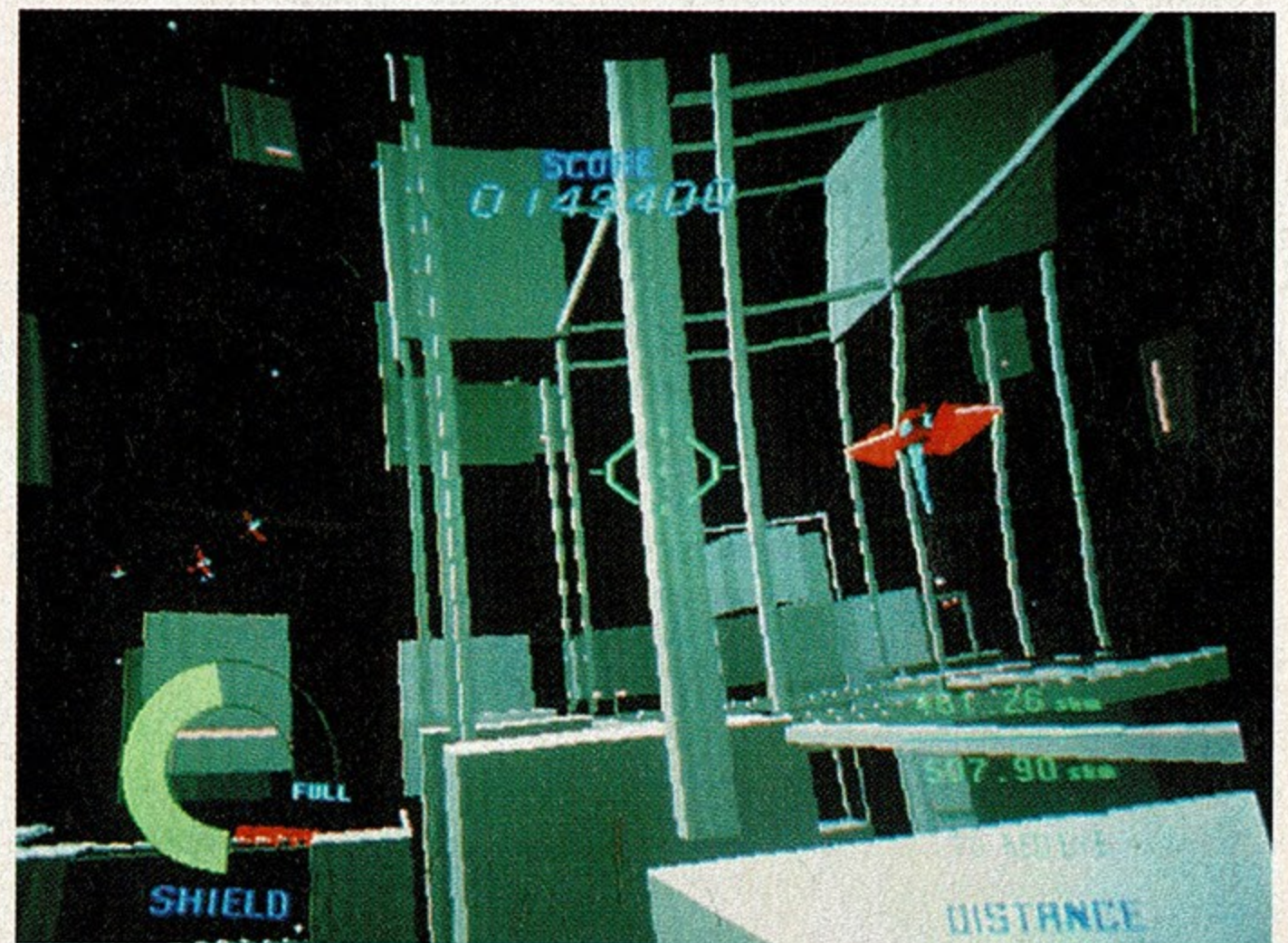
The Interactive Games course will be supported by software publishers, many of whom will provide the necessary hardware and software. Some are also offering work experience with potential job offers at the end of the course.

The whole concept has been set in motion by a new enterprise call the Education Initiative, founded by Domark's former development manager Russell Ferrier. He commented, "The games industry was in danger of becoming stale and tired and the only solution is to seek out new blood and bring it in. Setting up a degree course will provide this new industry with educated design-trained graduates who will be able to bring fresh creative thinking to the whole area of consumer software."

## STARBLADE BLASTS AHEAD

News just in that Namco are to release their classic coin-op *Starblade* on Mega-CD. We haven't seen any shots yet (the one pictured here is from the arcade machine), but we should be able to bring you a preview in next month's MEGA POWER. In addition we hope to do a covermounted demo nearer the game's release in late summer.

For those who haven't played the arcade machine, it's a classic space shoot-'em-up using fast polygon 3-D graphics. It was also the game that inspired the stunning *Starwing* cartridge (also known as *Starfox*) on the SNES. That release incorporated an extra Special FX chip to handle all the polygon graphics (which the SNES couldn't), but with the Mega-CD's 3-D scaling and rotation abilities there's obviously no need for any extra hardware for *Starblade*. However, the possibility of special Mega Drive 32 ('Mars') cart and CD versions can't be discounted when the Sega add-on appears at the end of the year.



# BIG ZERO!

Sony's *Ground Zero Texas* has achieved a meteoric success, storming to straight to the top of the Gallup CD-ROM sales chart. Sales of the game were so phenomenal that they took Sony to a historic first place in the overall CD market share table, the first time that Sega has been toppled from pole position since the chart's inception! Thanks to *Ground Zero Texas*, Sony's share of CD sales rose incredibly from 1.8% to 24.4%, while second-placed Sega only achieved 13%.

It's a deserved success for possibly the best 'interactive movie'-style game yet. Earning a creditable 83% in the March issue of MEGA POWER, *Ground Zero Texas* incorporates over 70 minutes of high-quality Full Motion Video, all filmed with movie-style production values featuring real actors and spectacular special FX.



## DOMARK'S NEW ASSAULT

Domark have announced a host of new titles, including several Mega-CD conversions and a CD-only version of their computer flight sim *AV8B Harrier Assault*. No screenshots as yet, but apparently it'll look completely different from the computer versions, using rendered 3-D and lots of sprite scaling. Domark claim it'll be even better than *Thunderhawk* when it appears in July.

This will coincide with the cartridge release of *Marko's Magic Football* (previewed in MP#8), which is due to be converted to Mega-CD in October with 'lots of new presentation and features'. The *Kawasaki Superbikes* cart has also been put back to October, although no CD version of it is planned. Better news on the racing front comes with an enhanced version of *F1* on both cartridge and CD in November. Titled imaginatively *F1 '94*, it'll feature updated season details, circuits and a host of new features.

Finally, Domark are already planning well into 1995 with a 'fantastic' football game - working title, 'Amazing Football' - and a game of the film *Cyberpunk*. Both will appear on cart and CD.

# RACING

The Mega-CD isn't renowned for its racing games, with the best action to be found in the driving sections of *Batman Returns!* But all that looks set to change with the Japanese release of *Formula One World Championship 1993 Heavenly Symphony*.

Apart from boasting possibly the longest title ever, Sega's official Formula One racer will feature real drivers (such as Prost and Senna), tracks and cars. The latter can be fine-tuned to suit the current circuit, by altering aspects such as tyres, handling, brakes, wings, steering and transmission. You also get realistic pre-race practice and qualifying sessions.

The fast 3-D race action is viewed from the car cockpit but, as in *Virtua Racing*, you can switch the view to watch from other angles. For true realism, the trackside scenery includes authentic advertising hoardings, grandstands, cranes (to take crashed cars away) and even cows (eh?!).

Watch out for the full review of this slick-looking CD racer in the next MEGA POWER.



# may 1994

## Snippets

■ Sega Europe's long-time managing director Nick Alexander is leaving the firm but hasn't yet revealed which company he's joining. He will be replaced by his former deputy Frank Herman. Meanwhile Sega is already forecasting profits for the new financial year, following last year's massive losses.

■ Sega are set to milk their Sonic character even further. They have teamed up with Unigate Dairies for a three-month national promotion of Sonic's Megamilk (however do they get it out?). Buy your first carton of Megamilk and you'll receive a Mega Pack bundle of goodies including a cheats book, poster, placemat and stickers.

■ Psygnosis have a bundle of Mega-CD titles planned for this year, including the sequel to *Microcosm*, titled *Scavenger 4*. There will also be the beat-'em-up *Phoenix Rising*, a conversion of the platformer *Second Samurai* (including a cart version), and a licence of Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* books. More news about all these next month.

■ Core Design are currently in the process of redesigning their *Chuck Rally* Mega-CD racer after being unhappy with the original gameplay. Meanwhile the previously scheduled CD version of *Bubba 'N' Stix* has been scrapped.

■ Bad news for gridiron fans. Electronic Arts have indefinitely postponed the release of the CD version of *Madden NFL '94*. Although playing very similar to EA's *Bill Walsh College Football* (recently released on CD), the game has the added attraction of real NFL teams.

■ International Computer Entertainment are developing a Mega-CD licence of the Manga cartoon hero Akira for an as yet unrevealed Mega Drive publisher. Sadly we didn't receive the screenshots in time for this issue. We hope to be giving you a full preview next month.

## POWER

### April

Body Count	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Brett Hull Hockey	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Dune	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
Excellent Dizzy Collection	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK
F1 Heavenly Symphony	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
F-15 Strike Eagle II	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK
Powermonger	EA	Mega-CD	UK
Rage In The Cage	Acclaim	Mega-CD	UK
Ryan Gigg's Champions	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Speed Racer	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Star Wars: Rebel Assault	JVC	Mega-CD	Japan
Streets Of Rage 3	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Terminator, The	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
Virtua Racing	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Who Shot Johnny Rock?	ALG	Mega-CD	US

### May

AX101	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
Centre-Court Tennis	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK
Grindstormer	Tengen	Mega Drive	Japan
Mega Race	Mindscape	Mega-CD	UK
Mortal Combat	Acclaim	Mega-CD	UK
Ms Pac-man	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK
Outrunners	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
RBI Baseball '94	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK
Shadow Of The Beast II	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK
Tomcat Alley	Sega	Mega-CD	UK
World Cup '94	US Gold	Mega-CD	UK
World Cup '94	US Gold	Mega Drive	UK

### June

Another World 2	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
Dragon	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Flashback	Sony	Mega-CD	UK

Incredible Hulk, The	US Gold	Mega Drive	UK
Itchy & Scratchy	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Jungle Book	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Juggernauts	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Madness - House Of Fun	Gremlin	Mega Drive	UK
RoboCop Vs Terminator	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
Sensible Soccer	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK
Sink Or Swim	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK
Soulstar	Core	Mega-CD	UK
Space Ace	Readysoft	Mega-CD	US
Sub-Terrania	Sega	Mega Drive	UK
Super Kick Off 3	Anco	Mega Drive	UK
World Soccer '94	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK

### July

AV8B Harrier Assault	Domark	Mega-CD	UK
Battlecorps	Core	Mega-CD	UK
Champions World Class Soccer	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Chaos Engine, The	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK
Marko's Magic Football	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
Virtual Bart	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK

### August

Chuck Rally - Rocky Racers	Core	Mega-CD	UK
Starblade	Namco	Mega-CD	UK

### September

Battle Fantasy	Micronet	Mega-CD	Japan
Bubsy II	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK
Burning Fist	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan
Demolition Man	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
Demolition Man	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Hybrid Front	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
Hyper Road Monarch	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
Lawnmower Man, The	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK
Mortal Combat II	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Pinkie	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK
Rock 'N' Roll Racing	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK

Rolling Thunder 3	Namco	Mega Drive	Japan
Shadow Run	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan
Shining Rogue	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan
Smaartvark!	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK
Tinhead	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK
Ys: Master Of The Sun	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan

### October

Boo!	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK
Goal!	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Kawasaki Superbikes	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
Marko's Magic Football	Domark	Mega-CD	UK
Megaswiv	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK
Psycho Pinball	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK
Rise Of The Robots	Mirage	Mega-CD	UK
Rise Of The Robots	Mirage	Mega Drive	UK
Second Samurai	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK
Second Samurai	Psygnosis	Mega Drive	UK

### November

Alien Trilogy	Acclaim	Mega-CD	UK
Biker Mice From Mars	Konami	Mega Drive	UK
Cannon Fodder	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
ESPN Baseball	Sony	Mega Drive	UK
F1 '94	Domark	Mega-CD	UK
F1 '94	Domark	Mega Drive	UK
Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Judge Dredd: The Movie	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Links	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK
Lion King, The	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Micro Machines 2	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK
MLBPA Grand Slam Baseball	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Sensible Golf	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK
Star Gate	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
Syndicate	EA	Mega Drive	UK
True Lies	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
USHRA Monster Truck Wars	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK
WWF: Raw	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK





SEGA

MEGA-CD



## NOW YOU CAN SEE THE POWERMONGERS IN THEIR TRUE COLOURS.

It's not a pretty sight. That is unless you get off on the barbarity of battle. But now brought stunningly to life on CD, it's an awesomely impressive spectacle. The screen drips with colour - you can almost reach out and touch the action. If you don't mind risking the loss of a limb or two.

For in the world of PowerMonger™ the only currency is power, the only language is violence, and law and order is a concept a few hundred years away.

If you possess the cunning of a sewer rat and the persuasive skills of the Spanish Inquisition, you could have what it takes to join in. You'll also need a taste for brutality - often the best policy, and definitely the most fun.

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# SOULSTAR

Oh yes! The Mega Power cover-mounted CD returns, and this time it's back for good! This month we bring you a world-exclusive playable demo of the hottest shoot-'em-up of the year, Core Design's Soulstar. Read on to discover how to play your demo, how to blast your way through the three explosive playable stages, and what lies in store in the finished game...



# SOULSTAR DEMO

## How to play your CD

■ On loading up, you'll see the Soulstar logo scroll onto the space backdrop, followed by a large spaceship. The logo then reappears, spins round a few times as it moves into the distance, then zooms into the foreground. After a flash, you get the special Mega Power message. When you've read this, simply press the START button to launch into the playable demo.

The demo contains the first three stages of the game, taking you from deep space, onto a planet surface and then back out into space to try and enter the evil Myrkoid Warpship. All the time you'll be attacked from every side by various fighter ships, spinning mines and ground-based enemies, all using the Mega-CD's graphics scaling capabilities to the full. Then there's the gorgeous texture-mapped landscape on the second stage where you fly at exhilarating speed over a planet's surface, coming up against ground-based gun turrets and hoverships. Finally there's the Warpship itself, which scales smoothly into view until you actually enter its landing bay.

## Demo differences

We think you'll agree that this really is a jaw-dropping demo of undoubtedly one of the hottest Mega-CD games this year. Note that as Soulstar is still in development, the finished game will be even better as there are several aspects to be added and tweaked.

For a start, instead of just fading out from one stage to another, there will be animated intermission scenes in rendered 3-D. This includes the transformation of your ship into its other two forms: the Turbo-Copter and Attack Tank.

You'll also get to choose a character before the game starts, accompanied by another animated sequence. Throughout the game, the different characters will give unique advice and warnings using lots of sampled speech.

Another thing to be finalised are the weapons systems – there are likely to be up to eight different ones available in the finished game. As in the demo, weapon power-ups are collected by flying through rings of spheres. But whereas the blue ring gives you extra missiles in our demo, in the finished game it will increase your accumulator (top-right) which, in two-player mode, is the pooled power which can be allocated by the second player to the ship's engines, weapons, shields etc.

Last, and certainly not least, the finished game will contain many 360° stages which allow full freedom of movement around the landscape.

Hopefully we've given you a mouth-watering taster of what to expect with this ground-breaking piece of software. To discover more about the rest of Soulstar, see the latest work-in-progress report on pages 16–18 of this Mega Power.

## Controls

Strapping yourself into the seat of your Aggressor Strike Craft, you're handed a top-secret Mega Power HQ message telling you exactly how to control your craft...

■ **D-pad:** Moves your ship around the screen in standard fashion. Note that your ship has realistic inertia and carries on moving for a split second after you've released the direction.

■ **Button A:** Fires the current weapon shown in the status bar at the top of the screen. You can simply hold down the button to emit a regular stream of fire.

■ **Button B:** Toggles between your four weapons systems. The weapon in use is shown at the top of the screen – some weapons also have a power bar which can be increased by collecting power-ups.

■ **Button C:** Has no function in this demo. But when using the Turbo-Copter in the finished game, pressing C and up/down will move alter the craft's height, while pressing up/down alone controls the speed.

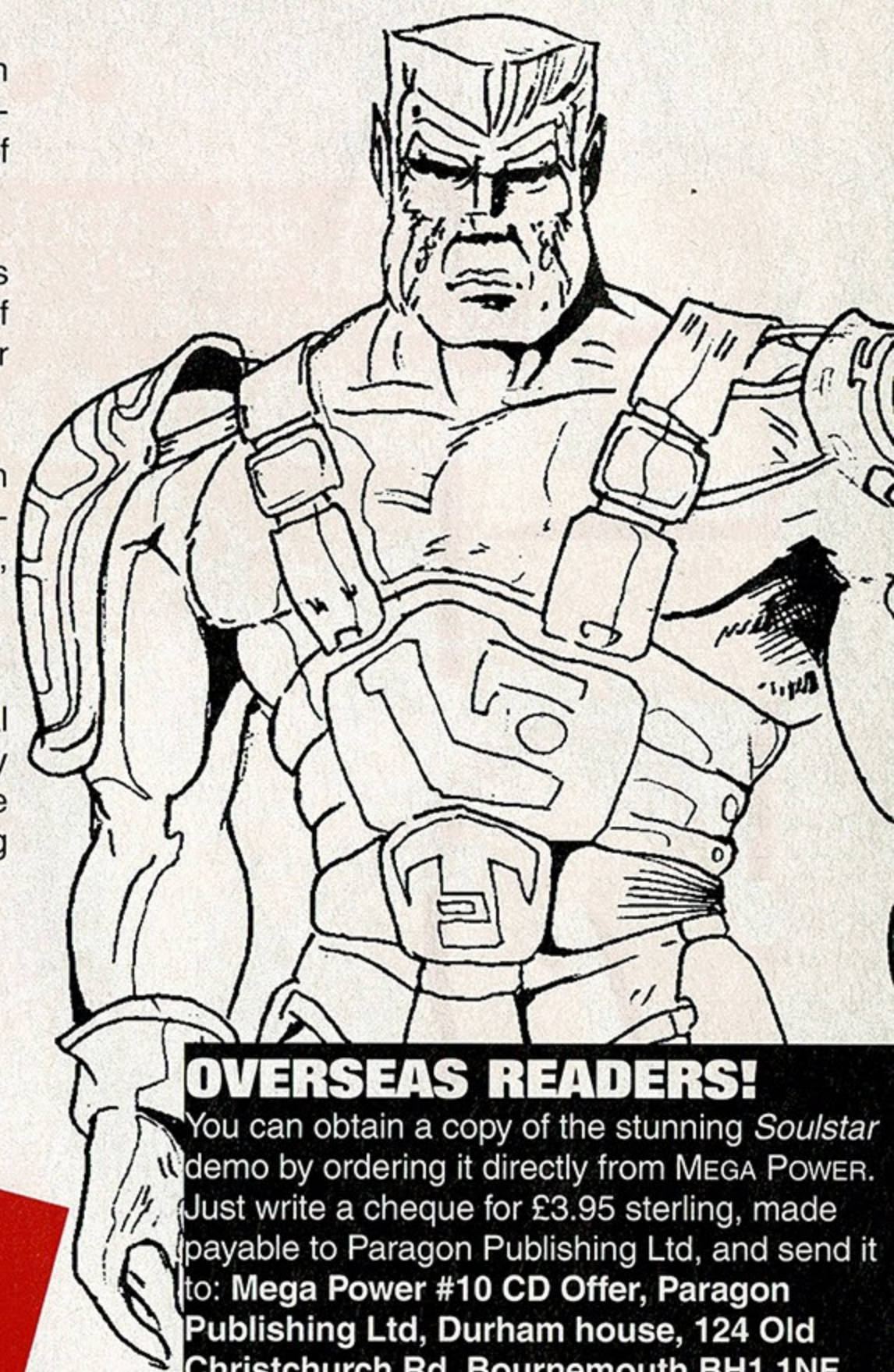
## Power-ups

When blasted, some enemies leave behind special orbs which drift towards you. Shoot them and they change into rings of small spheres. Fly through the middle of these to collect a power-up, depending on the ring's colour...

■ **Red:** Upgrades selected weapon

■ **Green:** Increases your energy (top-left bar)

■ **Blue:** Gives you four missiles (in the finished game this power-up will increase your accumulator bar)



## OVERSEAS READERS!

You can obtain a copy of the stunning *Soulstar* demo by ordering it directly from MEGA POWER. Just write a cheque for £3.95 sterling, made payable to Paragon Publishing Ltd, and send it to: **Mega Power #10 CD Offer, Paragon Publishing Ltd, Durham house, 124 Old Christchurch Rd, Bournemouth BH1 1NF.** Alternatively, you can pay by Mastercard/Visa by phoning or faxing your order through on: tel: +44 202 299900; fax: +44 202 299955

## STAGE 1

The first of the three stages in this demo has your Strike Craft approaching the Soulstar solar system where the evil Myrkoids are battling to take control. You're immediately confronted by waves of Myrkoid fighters which weave intricate patterns around the screen and release a hail of bullets. As the planet Leira approaches, the Myrkoid fighters are soon joined by other hazards such as spinning mines and space debris.



As soon as your ship appears, you're thrown in at the deep end as Myrkoid fighters zoom in from behind. Note the incredible smoothness of the scaling as they appear from left and right sides and speed into the distance.



You need to keep moving to avoid the orange bullets fired by the constantly circling and weaving Myrkoid ships. Stay in one place and you've had it. Also, mind you don't collide with the fighters themselves as they zoom back out of the screen.



As you blast the Myrkoid ships to smithereens, some of them leave behind special orbs which gradually drift towards you. Shoot these and they turn into rings of small spheres which you must fly through to collect power-ups.



Your Strike Craft has just been hit by a Myrkoid bullet, engulfing it in plasma and removing some of your energy (top left). Fly through the middle of the ring of spheres to your left to receive an energy or weapon power-up.



After destroying or avoiding the first waves of Myrkoid ships, you come up against these spinning space mines. They don't fire at you much, but are still a menace as they drift left and right. Blast them before they get too close.



As the last group of mines approaches, more Myrkoid fighters zoom in from behind you. By this stage you should have upgraded your weapons considerably, so get blasting while ducking and diving to avoid enemy fire.



As you approach the planet, things get even more hectic. As well as more Myrkoid fighters to deal with, you have to weave between these high-tech space 'pillars' as they drift towards you – they cannot be destroyed.



When you get through the 'pillars', another wave of fighters and mines moves in for the kill. There's only a short way to go, though, before the screen fades out and you're transferred to the second stage on the planet's surface.

## GET ON THE CASE

As requested by many readers, we now bring you a special cutout inlay so you can store your demo disc with style in a proper CD case. The inlay has been designed to fit either slimline jewel cases (as used by singles) or standard ones (albums).

For a slimline case, simply cut around the RED dotted line, score along the red fold lines and there you are. For a standard jewel case, cut out the inlay, score along the centre fold, put it in the case and trim off the excess (the GREEN crop lines are there to help you).

# STAGE 2

Blast your way through the Myrkoid resistance on the first stage and you get to fly over the surface of the planet Leira. Not only is this littered with dangerous rock formations for you to steer around, but also a host of ground-based Myrkoid units such as gun turrets, huge towers and hoverships. If this wasn't enough, there are waves of Myrkoid ships circling the skies above, unleashing a torrent of fire your way. Make sure you collect the power-ups along the way as you'll need all the firepower at your disposal to get through this section.



The planet's surface is littered with these spiky rock formations which you must weave between. This gets much trickier when the baddies start appearing, and you often need skilful flying to reach power-ups near to the rocks.



The first of many enemy waves arcs into view from the right. Unlike the fairly unpredictable fighters on the first stage, these ships like to fly in strict formation, making them an easier target – but you still have to weave between the ground hazards.



Another trick these Myrkoid ships like to do is to line up in a diagonal cross formation for a few seconds, and are thus easier to hit, they're about to emit a whole load of bullets your way. So blast them quickly.



If not destroyed, those bug-like ships circle round to the foreground, scattering more bullets towards you. Meanwhile a new wave of ships is emerging from the right side. And you have to watch out for the ground targets as well!



Phew, that was a close shave. You managed to destroy that Myrkoid tower just in time before you collided with it. There's little time to marvel at the spectacular explosion as you come up against yet more ground-based enemies.



As you zip along the gorgeous texture-mapped planet surface, you're confronted by numerous ground-based hazards such as the gun turrets on the right, huge towers on the left and hoverships which zoom into the distance.



Yet another close thing as you swerve round the base of the tower you've just destroyed in spectacular fashion. Your ailing ship is smoking again, so you'd better collect an energy power-up – not so easy with all the hazards in your way.



You made it! After blasting and weaving your way through countless ground and aerial hazards, you've reached the end of the second stage. Your ship automatically activates its thrusters and zooms upwards to launch back into space...

### THE DEMO

The scintillating MEGA Power Soulstar demo contains the first three stages of the game, taking you from deep space, onto a planet surface and then back out into space to try and enter the evil Myrkoid Warship. Droll at the awesome 3-D graphics and blast away to your heart's content...

### CONTROLS

- D-pad Moves your ship around the screen
- Button A Fires the current weapon
- Button B Toggles between your four weapons systems
- Button C Has no function in this demo

### POWER-UPS

When blasted, some enemies leave behind special orbs which drift towards you. Shoot them and they change into rings of small spheres. Fly through the middle of these to collect a power-up, depending on the ring's colour...

- Red: Upgrades selected weapon
- Green: Increases your energy (top-left bar)
- Blue: Gives you four missiles (in the finished game this power-up will increase your accumulator bar)

### CREDITS

- Many thanks to Core Design for all their cooperation.
- Special thanks to Richard Barclay and Susie Hamilton.
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MEGA POWER PRESENTS

S O U L S T A R

P L A Y A B L E D E M O



3 THREE

MEGA POWER PRESENTS  
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MEGA POWER SOULSTAR PLAYABLE DEMO DISC 3

3 THREE

MEGA POWER

3



THREE

# STAGE 3

## STAGE 3

The third stage takes you back out into space to take on different Myrkoid fighters which appear in even greater numbers than before, along with many mines and indestructible pillars. The action gradually hots up as you approach the Myrkoid Warship in the distance. Eventually this comes to fill the whole screen as you attempt to enter through the doors of its landing bay. In the finished game this will take you to a 360° section where you choose between three wargates to select an easy, medium or hard route through the game.



Back out in space, your ship immediately comes under attack from a different type of Myrkoid fighters. These are just the first of many. In the distance is the Myrkoid Warship which gradually approaches throughout this stage.



As well as dealing with waves of fighters, you have to contend with more of those pillar-like structures which drift into the foreground. They can't be destroyed so you just have to weave between them.



More spinning mines are thrown towards you, along with a host of bullets. Once again, your ship is down to its last drop of energy so you urgently need a power-up replenishment before the action gets even more frantic.



The Myrkoid Warship is getting nearer and the action is hotting up accordingly. Waves of fighters stream out from it, along with more of those spinning mines. You certainly need all the weapon power-ups you've got to handle this.



A brief respite from the enemies as the huge Warship approaches. This is where those sumptuous scaled graphics are most impressive – particularly as there's never any drop-off in the speed of the action.



Whoah! Not content with filling the screen, the Myrkoid Warship gets even closer. Somehow you have to get inside it, but will your tiny bit of energy see you through the last wave of enemy fighters? It's tense stuff.



Just look at the size of that thing! Finally, the Warship's sliding doors start to open for you to fly inside. For heaven's sake, don't lose it now – and keep an eye out for stray bullets approaching in these last tense moments.



Yesss! At last your ship makes it through the doors into the landing bay of the Warship. That's all for now, folks, but in the finished game you'll see the Warship interior in glorious 3-D and have full 360° freedom of movement as you explore it.

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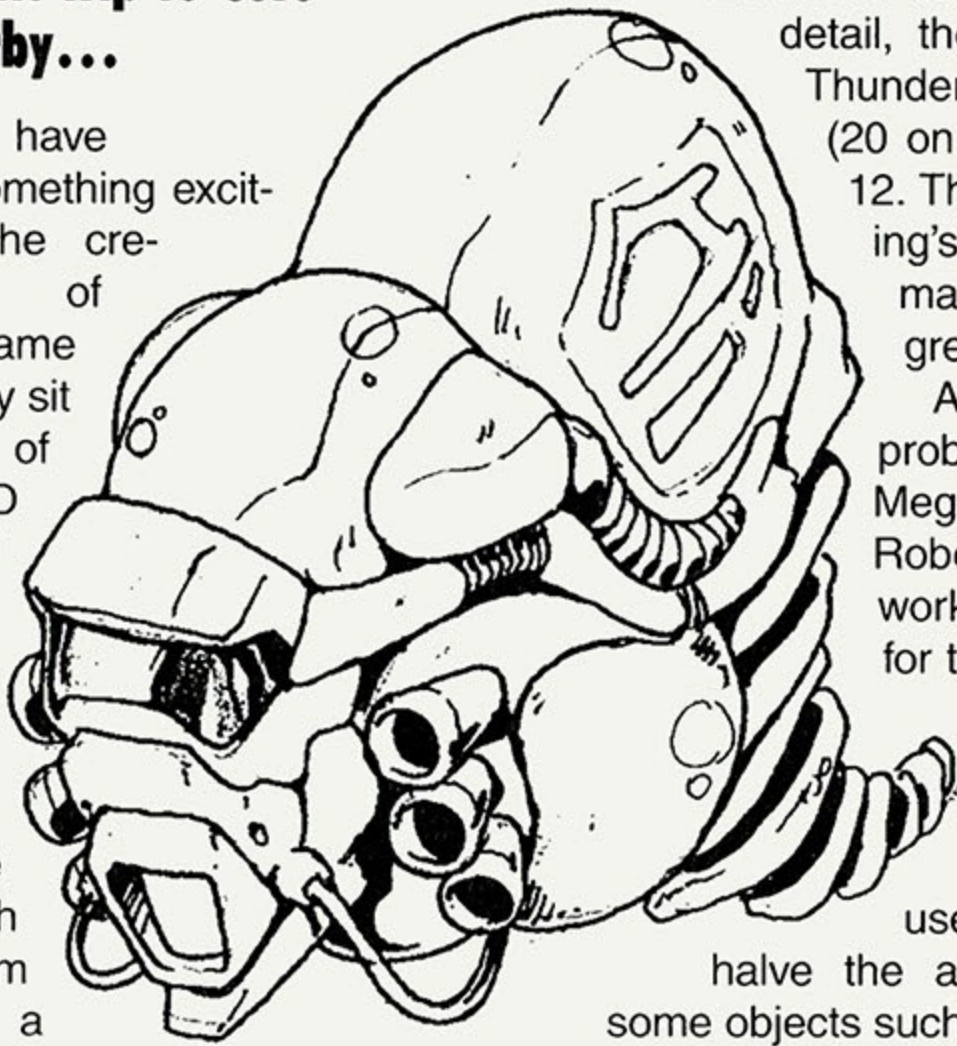
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**If you've played this month's stunning CD demo, you'll undoubtedly want to know more about Soulstar. For the full lowdown on the game, Mega Power launched their own Strike Craft (aka Ford Escort) and took an intergalactic trip to Core Design's HQ in Derby...**

**Y**ou might have expected something exciting from the creators of Thunderhawk, the game that made the industry sit up and take notice of what the Mega-CD could achieve. But if you thought that game pushed the technology to its very limits, you ain't seen nothing yet. Core's new game Soulstar isn't so much a step forward from Thunderhawk, but a giant leap.

Created by the same programmer who brought us Thunderhawk, Soulstar improves on its predecessor in nearly every department. For a start, the graphics have bettered what many thought was the pinnacle of the Mega-CD's technical capabilities. Again, Soulstar makes great use of the Mega-CD's unique graphics scaling chip. As programmer Mark 'Mac' Avory explains, "It's just that little piece of silicon that sets the Mega-CD apart from the other CD machines." And this time, Mark and graphic artist Roberto Cirillo have utilised the chip for an incredible range of objects, ranging from small fighter ships to the truly gigantic Myrkoid Warship.



Whereas Thunderhawk used 16 colours on screen, Soulstar's completely new sprite system permits an incredible 64 for much-increased detail and smoother shading. This is further enhanced by the use of 'depth shading', so distant objects gradually fade into view from the horizon, getting brighter as they approach. Yet even with the increased amount of sprites and graphical detail, the game runs much faster than Thunderhawk – at 16 frames per second (20 on an NTSC system) compared to 12. This is partly due to the sprite-scaling's more efficient use of the machine's Word RAM, enabling greater speed.

As with Thunderhawk, the main problem has been dealing with the Mega-CD's tiny 64K video RAM. Roberto jokes, "It nearly always works out that you need about 70K for the graphics you've planned – it's always that bit too much." This restriction has resulted in some of the graphics being cut down, but the team also used clever mirroring techniques to halve the amount of memory needed for some objects such as the huge Warship.

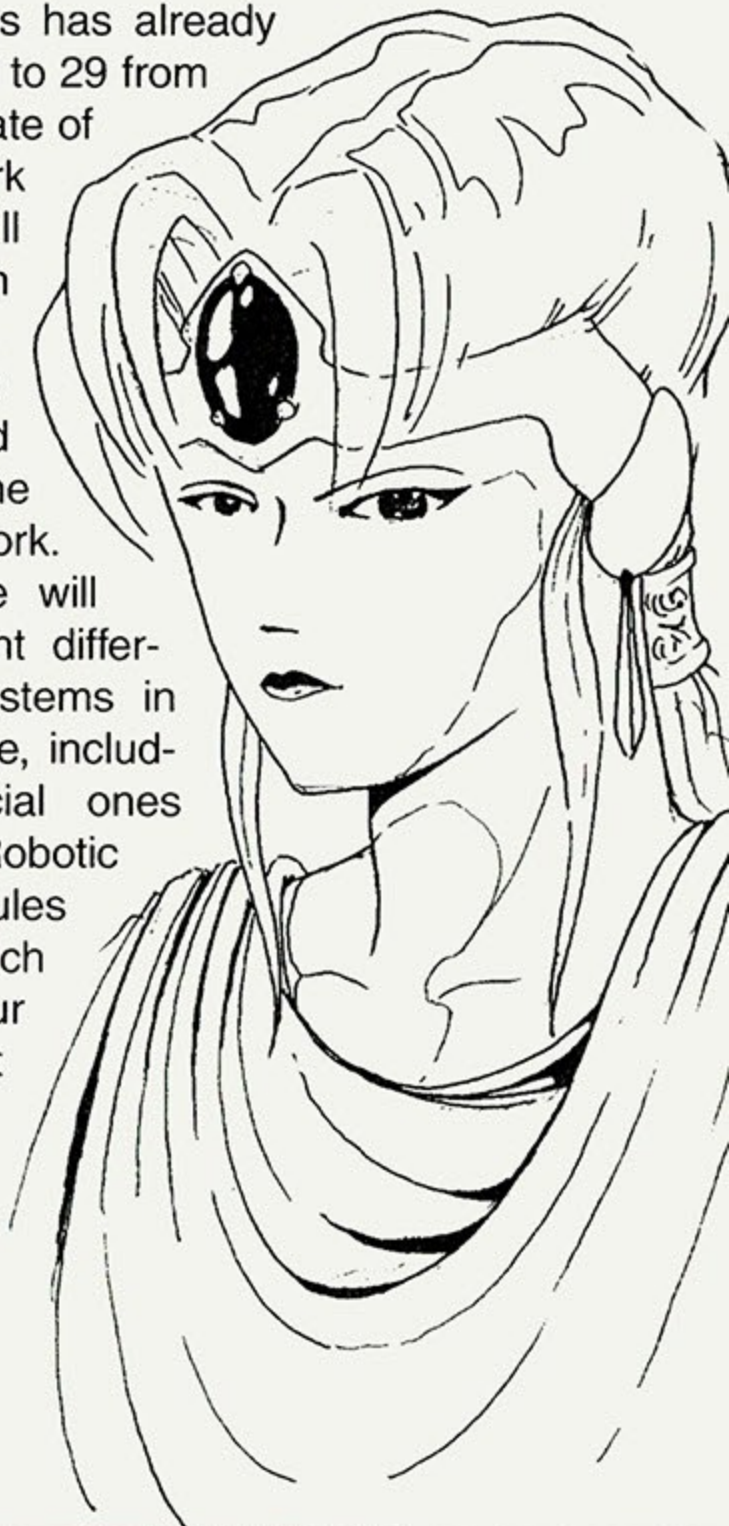
### Pattern of play

With nearly all the sprites and level backdrops now finished, Mark and Roberto are busy working on the enemy attack patterns. The original ones created for the first few stages were found to be a bit too difficult for that early in the game, as Roberto explains, "There were far too many bullets flying around – up to 16 on screen at a time." Mark has now created a special editor, running on an Amiga, to make it much easier to design the many attack patterns needed throughout the game. Mark laughs, "The only trouble is, when we transferred them to the Mega-CD they were running almost twice as fast!"

The speed of the attack patterns is crucial as not only does it have to be right for perfect playability, but it also has to synchronise perfectly with Nathan McRee's stunning orchestral soundtrack. For example, when a new enemy appears on screen, it will be accompanied by a dramatic change in the continuous music. The soundtrack itself makes full use of the Mega-CD's 8 PCM channels and the Mega Drive's 6 FM ones, to create an incredible aural atmosphere to perfectly complement the stunning visuals.

Meanwhile Mark, Roberto and product manager Guy Miller are discussing the finer points of how the game will work in its final form. The number of stages has already been rationalised to 29 from an original estimate of 40 but, as Mark points out, it's still far more than in most games. Another aspect still to be decided is the way the weapons will work. Mark says there will probably be eight different weapons systems in the finished game, including some special ones such as Robotic Assistance Modules – drones which accompany your ship, helping it out. You'll also be able to radio to your Avatar mothership, ordering it to fire on the enemy in emergencies.

There's still a

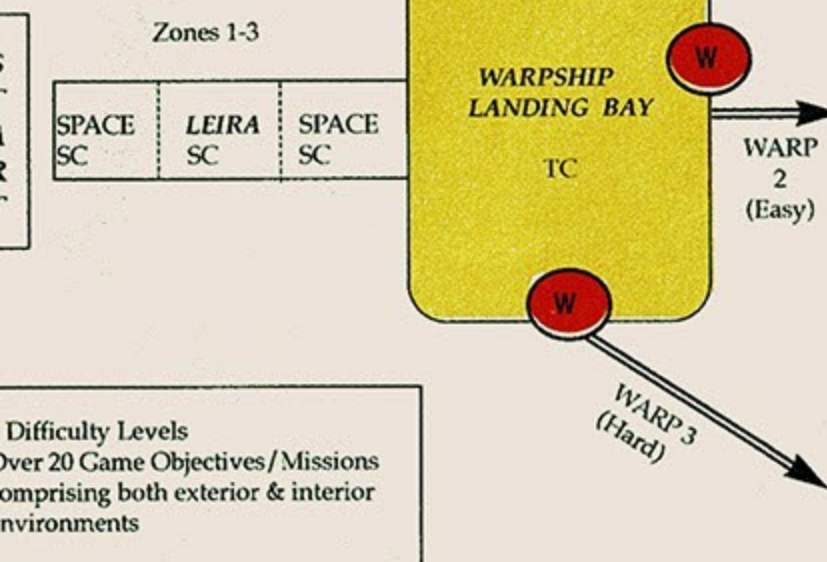




**SOULSTAR GAME MAP**

12/94  
VERSION 1.3

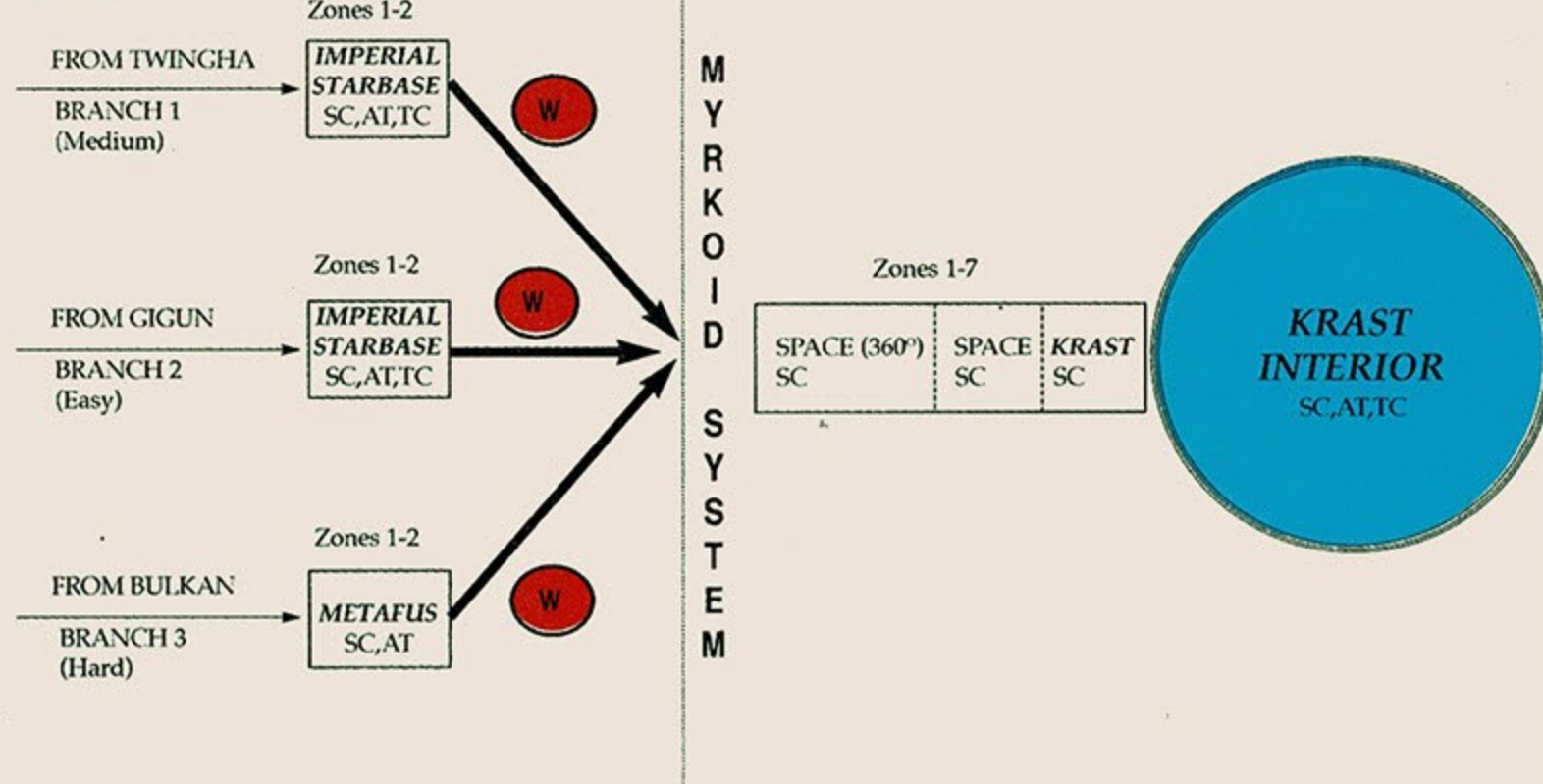
C - Strike Craft  
C - Turbo-copter  
T - Attack Tank  
W - Warpgate



Difficulty Levels  
Over 20 Game Objectives/Missions  
comprising both exterior & interior  
environments

**SOULSTAR GAME MAP**

25/2/94  
VERSION 1.3  
CONTINUED...



lot of work to be done on the game, including the addition of stunning rendered 3-D animations for the intro and between some levels. Even so, from what we've seen and played already, Soulstar certainly looks like a contender for Mega-CD game of the year.

**The Myrkoid Menace**

A 3-D shoot-'em-up of epic proportions, Soulstar takes you on a rollercoaster ride of supreme blasting action as you attempt to defeat the evil Myrkoids. This ancient alien species has a unified mind that's intent on conquering star systems and sucking them dry, draining every planet of energy until it's just a lifeless husk. And now the Myrkoids have their eye on the Soulstar system. A rendered 3-D game intro will show them flying their city-sized Warship into the system and launching a squadron of fighters to attack the planet Leira and establish bases there.

You control a team of Cryo-Commandoes who have chased the Myrkoids for centuries. Now is the day of reckoning as you finally get to confront them in a battle to the death. Your main weapon is the Aggressor multipurpose craft, which morphs into three different vehicle types: a Strike Craft spaceship, bladeless Turbo-Copter and armoured

Attack Tank. This automatic transformation will be shown by a rendered 3-D animation sequence between stages.

**Any which way**

Starting in the Strike Craft, the first mission (the one on this month's CD demo) entails breaching the Myrkoid Warship's defences and flying into its landing bay. This brings up the first 360° section of the game: using the Turbo-Copter you have full freedom to rotate and explore the interior of the ship. You have to find and enter one of the three Warps to decide which route you go through the system: easy, medium or hard. Some of the multi-stage planets and missions will appear in more than one route, but the attack patterns of the aliens will be completely different.

Each planet visited has a mixture of normal and 360° sections, the latter mainly using the Copter and Tank vehicles. If you manage to destroy the Myrkoids' numerous bases in the Soulstar system, you finally get to attack the Myrkoid system itself. The final seven zones of the game use all three vehicle types as you head towards the Myrkoid homeworld of Krast and attempt to destroy their evil for ever.



**MOBI POWER**

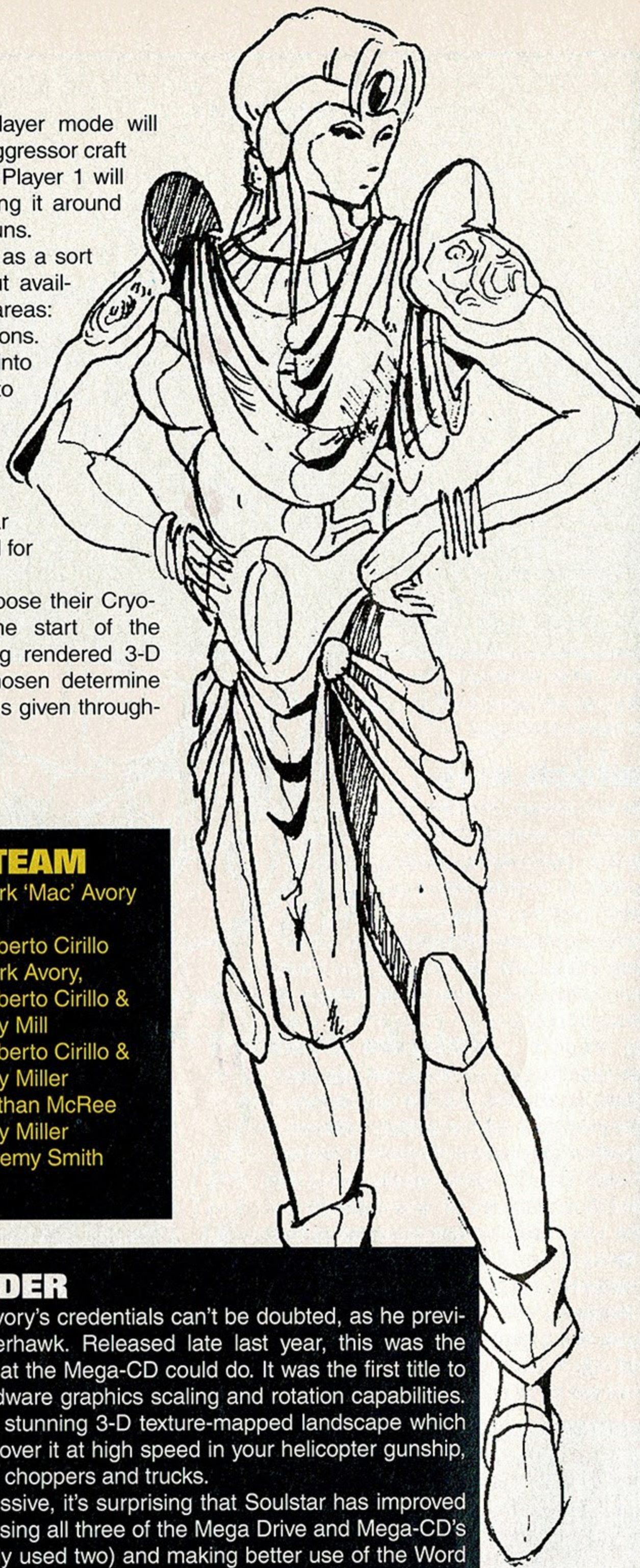


## IT TAKES TWO

The game's innovative two-player mode will share out the controls of the Aggressor craft between the two participants. Player 1 will pilot the ship as usual, steering it around the screen and firing normal guns.

Meanwhile Player 2 will act as a sort of ship's engineer, sharing out available power between three areas: shields, engines and weapons. This brings a strategic aspect into play in deciding where best to pump the power to deal with a particular game situation. The second player also gets to fire special weapons, including ordering the Avatar mothership to fire – best saved for emergencies.

Both players also get to choose their Cryo-Commando characters at the start of the game, bringing up a stunning rendered 3-D sequence. The characters chosen determine what sampled-speech advice is given throughout the game.



## THE SOULSTAR TEAM

Programmer: Mark 'Mac' Avory  
 Production Designer & Graphic Artist: Roberto Cirillo  
 Game Design: Mark Avory, Roberto Cirillo & Guy Mill  
 Story: Roberto Cirillo & Guy Miller  
 Music & Sound FX: Nathan McRee  
 Product Manager: Guy Miller  
 Producer: Jeremy Smith

## STEALING THUNDER

Soulstar programmer Mark Avory's credentials can't be doubted, as he previously created Core's Thunderhawk. Released late last year, this was the game that showed exactly what the Mega-CD could do. It was the first title to fully utilise the machine's hardware graphics scaling and rotation capabilities. These were used to create a stunning 3-D texture-mapped landscape which tilted and rotated as you flew over it at high speed in your helicopter gunship, blasting away at scaled tanks, choppers and trucks.

So with graphics this impressive, it's surprising that Soulstar has improved so dramatically on them. By using all three of the Mega Drive and Mega-CD's processors (Thunderhawk only used two) and making better use of the Word RAM, it has upped the frame speed from 12 to 16 fps, and increased on-screen colours from 16 to 64.

If there was one criticism of Thunderhawk it was that the missions were a bit samey. This certainly can't be said of Soulstar, with its many different level types and use of three unique vehicles. Additions such as the choice of route through the game, and the innovative two-player mode, should ensure even greater long-term appeal.



## THE VEHICLES

Your Aggressor craft automatically transforms into one of three vehicle-types for the next stage of the game. This will be shown by more of those wonderful rendered 3-D sequences between levels.

### Turbo-Copter

The bladeless Turbo-Copter first comes into play in the Myrkoid Warship landing bay. It's predominantly used for 360° stages, where you have full freedom to explore the level. Unlike the Strike Craft, you can control its speed by moving up/down and can even move in reverse. Therefore you need to hold down button c with up/down to alter its height on the screen. It's a slightly trickier control system, but you soon get used to it.



### Strike Craft


This classic spaceship is what you start out in as you fly through space towards the Soulstar system. Apart from one final 360° section, it will be used for the game's 'linear' stages: ie where you have no control over your speed or general direction (as in the demo

### Attack Tank


This ground-based vehicle is unsurprisingly only used for driving around landscapes in 360° stages. Slightly slower than the other vehicles, it has its own unique weapons. These are fired from the gun turret in an arc: the trajectory depends on whether you're moving forward, back or doing nothing at all. You need to get used to this to accurately hit those enemy gun and missile installations.




## SOULSTAR



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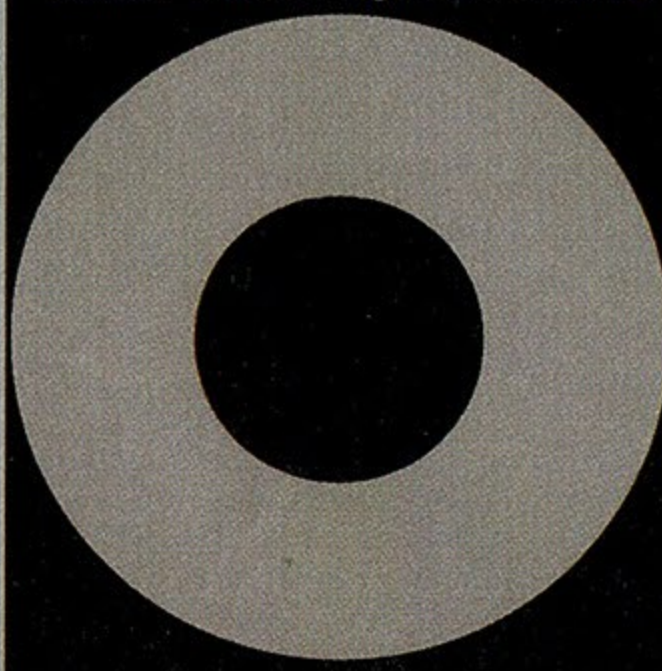


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# FEEDBACK

At MEGA POWER we take our readers' comments very seriously: in fact, it was the sheer amount of mail praising our previous covermounts and asking for more that prompted us to change the format of the magazine. So, what do you think of it? What would you like more of? Please let us know.

To have your say about MEGA POWER, the Mega Drive/Mega-CD, games or whatever takes your fancy, drop us a line at: **Feedback, Mega Power, Paragon Publishing, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 1NF.**

## CD DESIRES

Dear MEGA POWER,

As a Mega-CD owner, I first noticed your magazine when you put a CD *Thunderhawk* demo on the cover of Issue 4. Needless to say, I snapped it up straight away when I saw it gleaming on my local newsagent's shelf. When I loaded the *Thunderhawk* demo on my Mega-CD at home, I was very impressed with the game and saved up my hard-earned cash to buy it. I was also pleased with the magazine itself, particularly the amount of space dedicated to each very detailed review.

All the same, I was a bit miffed when Issue 5 came out without a CD on the cover, as I'd hoped you'd continue what you'd started. So when Issue 6 came out with the brilliant three-game *Psygnosis* demo, you can just imagine my delight. However, since then you've reverted to not having a CD on the cover for two whole issues. Don't get me wrong, I still like the magazine and buy it every month, but it was better with the CD on the front – even for the higher price.

What I want to know is when you're going to do another CD demo, as I'd really like to see you continue this ground-breaking trend. No other magazine has bothered enough about us poor Mega-CD owners to do a demo, and most of them have very small CD coverage as they don't want to 'offend' the majority of their readers who don't own a Mega-CD. MEGA POWER seems to be the only magazine that gives a jot about Mega-CD owners, so please don't let us down – give us more CD demos!

Mark Waters, Basildon, Essex

Thanks for your comments, Mark. Yours was just one of the many letters we've received recently, pleading for another covermounted CD demo. Well, as you can see, that's exactly what we've done – and we're going to keep on doing it. From now on, every issue of MEGA POWER will have a covermounted CD demo of the latest, hottest game. Now is everybody happy? I hope so. If you have any comments to make on the new-style MEGA POWER, please do send them in.

## DISC-USTING PRICES

Dear MEGA POWER,

After your recent article about the sad state of Mega-CD software [Issue 7], I must say I have to disagree about the quality of the games. There have been a whole load of great CD games already this year, including of course the brilliant *Ground Zero Texas*. Then there's Core Design doing more great things with *Soulstar* and *Battlecorps*. If these are anywhere near as good as *Thunderhawk*, we're in for a treat.

Okay, there's still a lot of Mega Drive 'port-overs' with just enhancements to sound and a few FMV clips thrown in, but even these aren't so bad as long as you haven't got the original cart. And EA's idea of cutting the price by a fiver is brilliant – I only wish Sega would follow their lead. Somebody like Codemasters could even put more than one game on a disc for a great-value compilation. I've seen this sort of thing on the Amiga CD32, so why not the Mega-CD?

This is really my gripe with Mega-CD software: why is it so damn expensive when the manufacturing process is so cheap? – probably less than a quid a disc. Sega really should be able to release CD stuff at least cheaper than their cartridges. As another reader pointed out, CD32 discs sell for far less than Mega-CD ones – even for the same game, such as *Microcosm*!

No, it's not the quality of the games that's at fault, but the flippin' prices. Isn't it about time Sega gave us Mega-CD owners value for money?

Andrew Crease, Northampton

Too right, Andrew. If only Sega reduced their Mega-CD game prices to a sensible level, I'm sure it would give a huge boost to the machine. As you said, there would be room for all sorts of cut-price compilations and budget rereleases, as happens on the CD32. Okay, so there's also a lot of poor games released for that machine, but the freedom for software companies to release their games when and at whatever price they wish is a strong incentive for them to support the machine. Unfortunately Sega's 'quality control' policy undoubtedly reduces the amount of choice for Mega-CD owners, as well as increasing the price of games.

MP

## SHUFFLE TROUBLE

Dear MEGA POWER,

I read Dave Perry's inspirational editorial in Issue 8 about going to newsagents and putting MEGA POWER in front of the other Mega Drive mags. Well, being a great fan of the magazine since Issue 2, and wanting others to discover what a brilliant read it is, I decided to go down to my local shopping centre and do a bit of magazine shuffling.

In the first few shops I visited, everything was fine, with MEGA POWER given as much shelf space as its rivals. However, when I went into one newsagent (which shall remain nameless) I was dismayed to see my beloved MEGA POWER tucked on the bottom shelf behind a load of Amiga mags! Well, you can understand how enraged I was, so I promptly grabbed a whole load of MEGA POWERS and started placing them neatly in front of the other Mega Drive

mags on the shelf above. Imagine my horror when one of the shop assistants started moaning at me not to fiddle with the magazine displayed which he said he had carefully arranged that morning. I told the dopey git he couldn't have been that careful if he'd managed to put MEGA POWER on the Amiga shelf. But the prat took no notice and started putting the Mega Powers back where they came from.

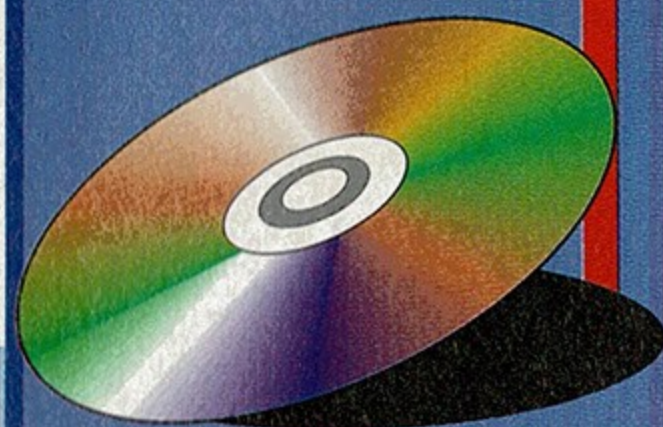
I left the shop and vowed never to return there again. I ask you, why are these snotty shop assistants so unwilling to take a piece of friendly advice?

Jim Green, Nottingham

Who knows, Jim? But we hope it won't deter you from continuing your campaign to put MEGA POWER to the front of the shelf where it belongs.

MP

# REVIEW



# POWERMONGER

**Electronic Arts' sumptuous strategy game offers the chance to conquer a whole medieval world. As the battle cry sounds, the MEGA POWER-mongers take up arms...**

**O**ver a year after its appearance on cartridge, *Powermonger* is back with a vengeance. Electronic Arts have taken note of the criticisms made of the cart and strived to correct them for the new Mega-CD version. Of course, there's also a lavish new animated intro sequence showing the powermonger emperor ordering his generals to conquer yet more lands for him.

You play the part of one such general, just landed on foreign shores. Populated by many warring factions and tribes, this world is divided up into no less than 195 territories for you to conquer. Starting from the top-left corner of the huge scrolling world map, your aim is to reach the far bottom-right.

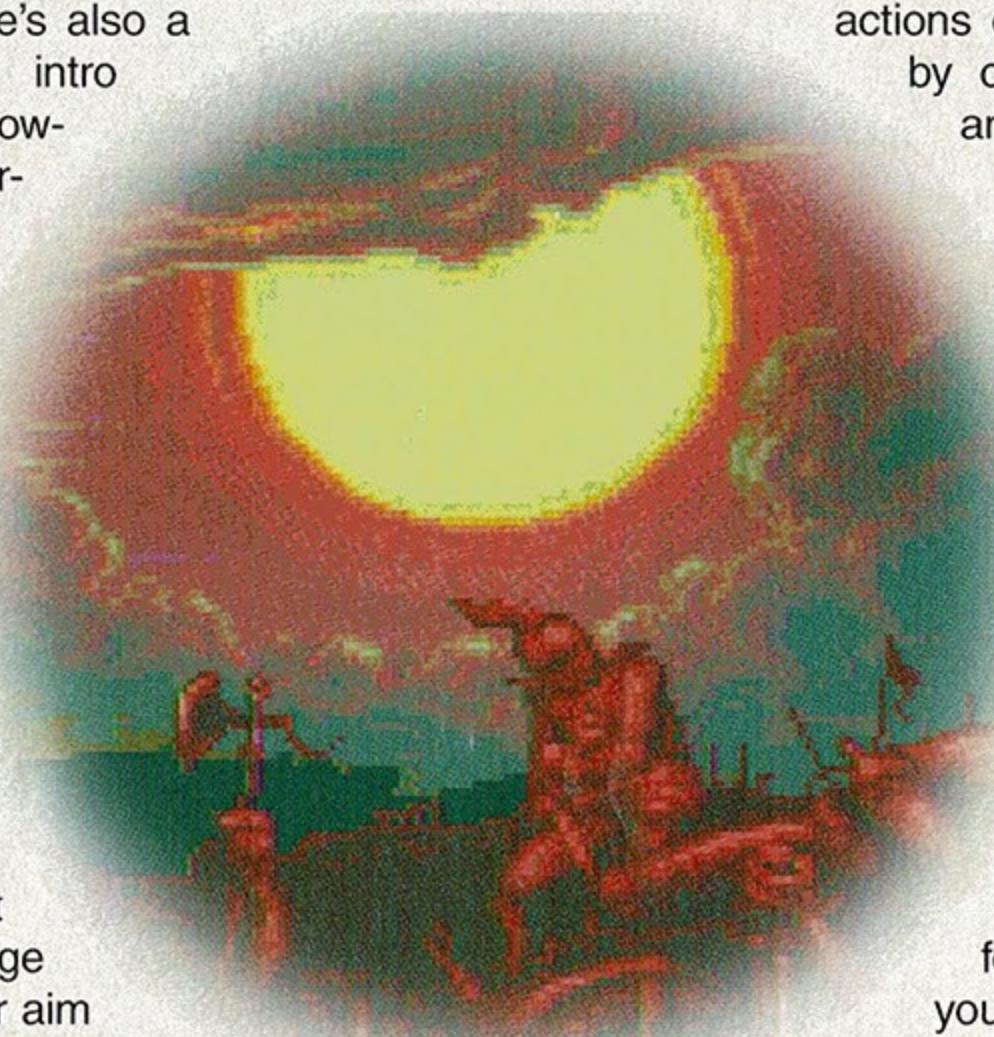
After choosing an adjacent land to the ones you've already conquered, it is pre-viewed in an impressive 3-D sequence with the camera panning and zooming around the contoured terrain. The scene then switches to the main play screen, where the land is viewed in detailed isometric 3-D. As well as scrolling around the terrain, you can zoom in and out and even rotate it 360° to see it from any angle. Around this land 'table' sit your captains – initially you only have one, but more can be recruited, enabling you to perform more than one task at once.

Improvements over the Mega Drive version include a welcome 30% increase in the formerly cramped isometric view, as well as larger lands. Another useful addition is the pop-up map which

allows you to zip around the land much more easily than scrolling the main view. The command icons are now along the bottom of the screen (rather than on the left and right), and it is these that you primarily use to control the actions of your men. For example, by clicking on the battle icon and then an enemy village, you instruct your troops to try and take it.

However, there's much more to this game than simple warmongering. As the game progresses, more complex aspects come into play. For a start you'll want to recruit more soldiers as you go, so it's no use slaughtering all the enemy. Then there's the problem of food: you've got to keep your men well fed or they'll start deserting. This is achieved by taking food from friendly settlement, but take too much and the villagers will eventually become traitorous. To conquer larger towns, you'll also need to equip your men with better weapons. These must first be invented by finding a workshop near the raw materials required: trees for wooden weapons like bows and catapults, or a metal-ore mine for swords and cannons.

On later levels, you'll also need to trade items with other tribes and even make alliances to defeat a more formidable enemy. You'll certainly need efficient use of all the commands at your disposal to conquer the whole world and be a true powermonger.

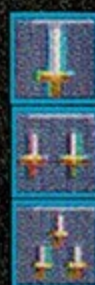


## CONQUERING

**There are no less than 20 command icons to use to control your captain and his follower's actions...**

### CAPTAIN'S POSTURE

This setting determines how aggressively your men act when carrying out your orders. Attack a village on the lowest of the three aggression settings and your followers will try to subdue the population instead of butchering them all. The aggression posture also determines how much food or equipment you take from a town and what sort of items you create when inventing.



### WITHDRAWAL

This sends a captain and his followers back to their homes – ideal for a quick retreat.



### SOLDIER ALLOCATION

Comes into use when you have more than one captain, enabling you to transfer soldiers from the command of one captain to another. How many are given depends on the donating captain's posture.



### FOOD COLLECTION

Lets you take food from a conquered settlement or food cache. The amount taken depends on your captain's posture.



### FOOD STORAGE

Makes your captain drop some of the food he's carrying. If left in the wilderness, this becomes a hidden food cache which can be used by your other captains.



### FOOD SUPPLY

Orders a captain to collect food from friendly settlements and drop it off at another village. This is useful when one captain is inventing while another captain is supplying his settlement with food.



### INVENT

The captain and his followers use a settlement's workshop and inhabitants to create new items and weapons. The sort of objects made is influenced by the captain's posture; eg in passive mode you'll usually get pots and ploughs, while in aggressive mode you're more likely to get weapons. The items also depend on the local raw materials such as trees and water, and on the presence of merchants to supply additional materials from elsewhere.



### MOVEMENT

Sends your captain to the chosen destination. Can be used during battle to move your captain out of harm's way while his men continue fighting.



### INFORMATION

Gives detailed information on settlements, including the ruler, loyalty level, amount of food and inventions. Or click on a person to discover where they live, how healthy they are, their profession and age etc.



### DISMISSAL

Your captain sends some or all of his followers back to their homes. Unlike the Withdrawal command, the captain stays put.



### SPY

Orders a captain to enter an enemy settlement and gather intelligence on its armies' movements, so you can see them on the overview map. It's a dangerous activity: if a captain is caught spying he is executed on the spot!



### ALLIANCE

To make an alliance with a foreign settlement you need surplus stock to give as a tribute to your good intentions. Once the alliance is made, you have access to the allied captain's settlements and resources, and vice versa.



### RECRUIT

Your captain recruits soldiers from a conquered settlement. The percentage of the population recruited depends on the captain's posture.



Ah, I remember this classic from the halcyon days of the Amiga. It's more like a standard strategy simulation than a proper 'god game'. You can't change the landscape, or even build new villages – all you can do is conquer and control what's already there. Nevertheless it's still very engrossing to play.

Initially the gameplay simply involves attacking enemy villages, ransacking their food stores and recruiting what people are left alive. However, as the levels get harder you really need to use some of the more subtle commands to allocate your resources efficiently. Things get more and more interesting as you recruit more captains and start trading and forming alliances, although it takes a lot of patience and determination to reach this point. *Powermonger* is a great game, but one for true strategy buffs alone.

**PHIL**

# PIGGER

## COMMANDS

### EQUIP MEN

Equips your captain and his followers with items and weapons invented in settlements. Hand-weapons are distributed among the troops, while cannons and catapults are carried by the captain and can be used in trade and making alliances. However, the more stuff he carries, the slower he moves around the land.

### EQUIPMENT STORAGE

Similar to Food Storage, enabling your captain to drop off surplus items which can then be collected and used by other captains.

### TRADE

Your captain trades surplus inventions with a settlement in return for food or other inventions. How much you get depends on your captain's bartering ability.

### BATTLE

Your captain and his followers attack the chosen target. You can attack settlements, towers and individuals to bring them under your control. You can also attack sheep to increase your food supply, and chop down trees to stop your enemies using them for inventions.

### SYSTEM

Brings up the options menu, enabling you to retire from the current land (if you control the majority of the population, you achieve victory), replay the current level, return to the main world map or play a random land.

The compass tells you which way you're looking - you can rotate the view to look at the terrain from any angle. You also need to rotate to see your other captains.



I don't enjoy many strategy games, but I did like the Populous ones so my hopes were raised for the similar-looking Powermonger. The graphics are certainly better than the average strategy sim, and I had great fun rotating the isometric view and zooming in to view things in close-up. On the other hand, the soundtrack is surprisingly sparse, mainly consisting of a bird song so realistic that I was looking out of the window trying to spot the two-legged tweeter!

One good thing about Powermonger is the walk-through tutorial in the manual that gets you started, attacking a couple of tiny villages on the first level. Trouble is, after this I was completely lost. My main problem was food, which I kept running out of, causing my followers to wander off into the wilderness. I did manage to recruit a couple more captains, but by this time I had no troops left to command! I'm afraid it all got a bit too complex for a strategy duncer like me, and things weren't helped by the irritating controls. The view scrolls jerkily and often doesn't move until about a second after you've pressed the D-pad, so you end up moving it further than you wanted. As if this wasn't annoying enough, the map kept appearing when I didn't want it, and wouldn't appear when I did. After a while it all got too much for me and I wanted to shoot that bloody bird!

DAZ

It's more like a standard strategy simulation than a proper 'god game.'

OVERALL %

81



Once you've selected the next land you want to conquer, this impressive animation sequence appears, rotating round and zooming into a contoured 3-D model of the relevant terrain. Hmm, this looks like a nice quiet place for a bit of pillage...



You start out with just the bearded captain on the left, but as you conquer new villages you can recruit new captains like the eye-patch-wearing baldie. The captains sit around the land 'table' which you can scroll, rotate and zoom in and out of.

## on the button

Move pointer up, or scroll map upwards  
 Scroll up and right  
 Move pointer right, or scroll map  
 Scroll down and right  
 Move pointer down, or scroll map downwards  
 Scroll down and left  
 Move pointer left, or scroll map  
 Scroll up and left

**A**  
 Selects command or target. Hold this down and press left/right to rotate and up/down to zoom in and out.

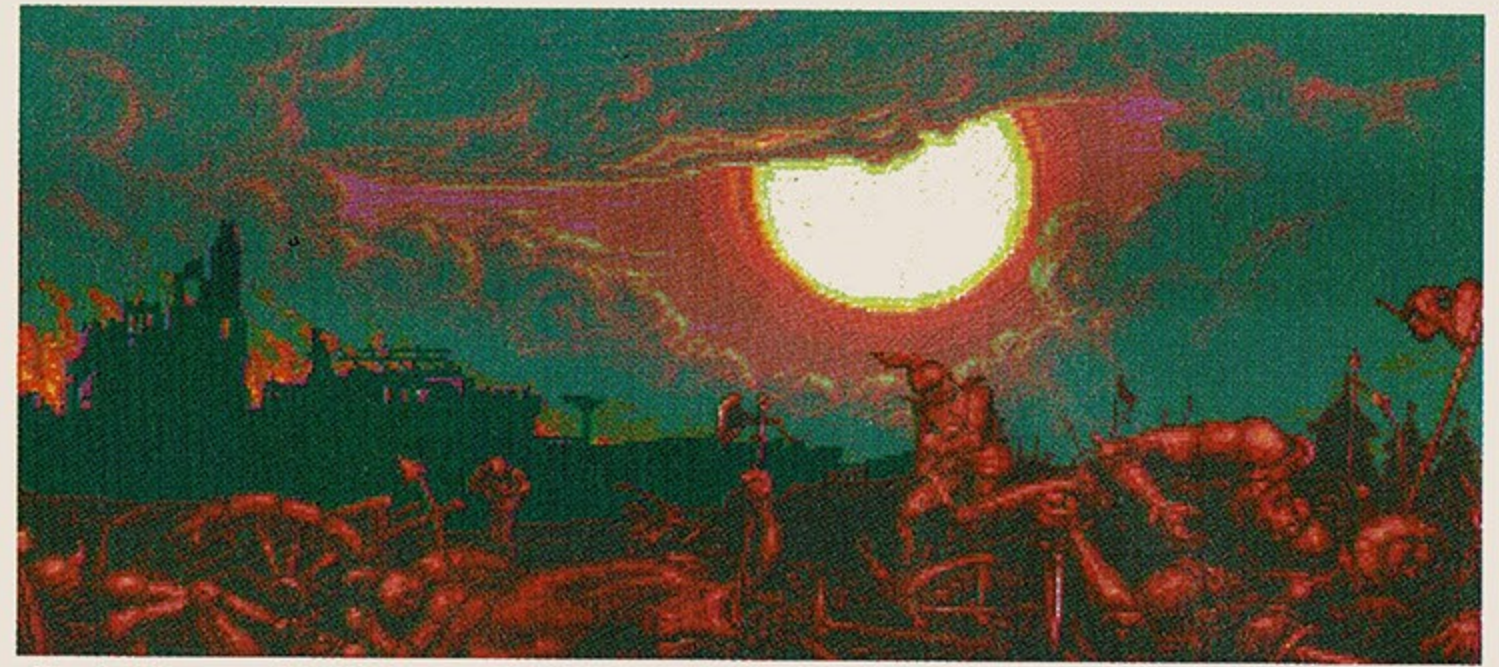
**B**  
 Toggles between pointer and scrolling modes. Press it twice to bring up the overview map.

**C**  
 Highlights the line of icons at the bottom of the screen, enabling you to select from 20 commands.

MOSE POWER



You can get an idea of the incredible size of this game from the world map where you select the next area to conquer. Yes, that small red square represents just one land!



The full horror of battle is revealed in this animated scene, shown when you are finally defeated. Never mind, the game gives you a password every time you conquer a land, or you can save up to four game positions.



Brrrr! The Powermonger world has realistic seasons, so every so often it will rain or snow. Food is scarce during winter time, so you need to stock up. You can hide caches of food in the wilderness – don't worry, they can't be found by your enemies.

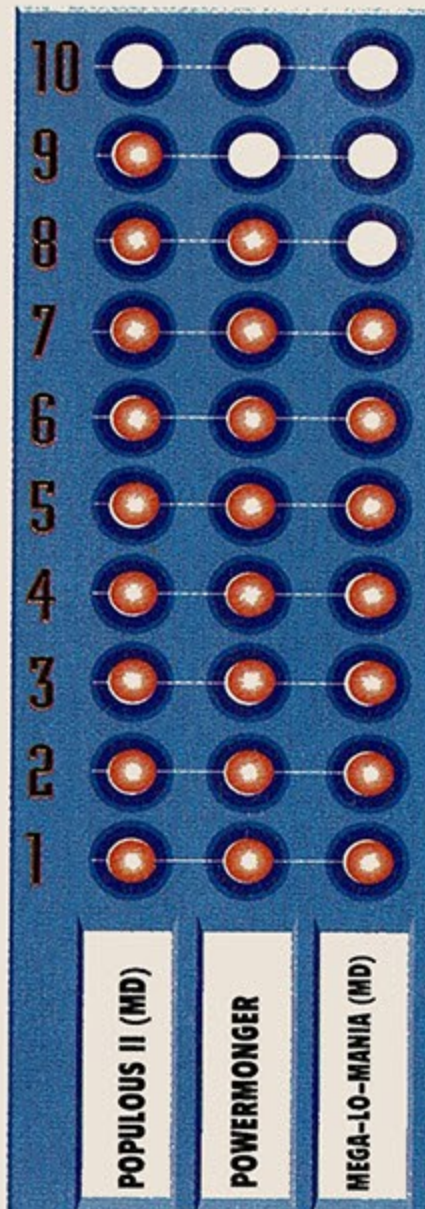


Scrolling around the isometric 3-D land, you can easily get lost. So the pop-up overview map comes in very useful, as you can simply flick the view instantly to any location. The map can show land height, people, objects and settlements – select one of the four icons below it.

# MP

## FINAL VERDICT

"Powermonger improves on the Mega Drive version considerably with a better screen layout, bigger levels and improved presentation. One remaining flaw is the jerkiness of the scrolling, but it's still a sound strategy game."



# POWERMONGER

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SOUND	61	
ADDICTION	83	

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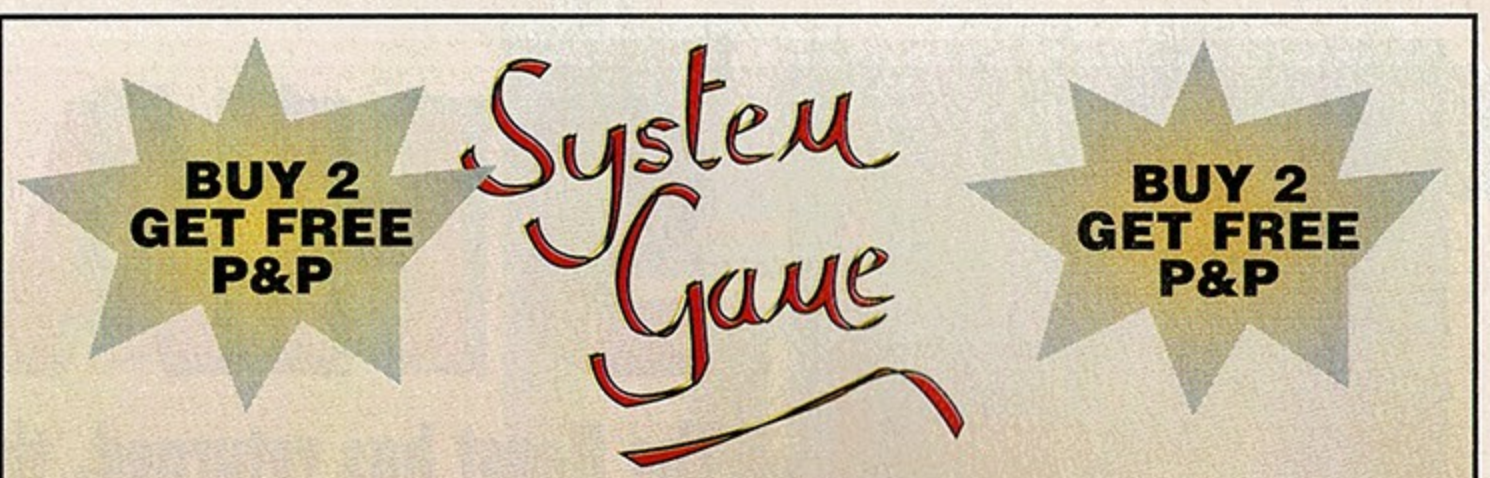
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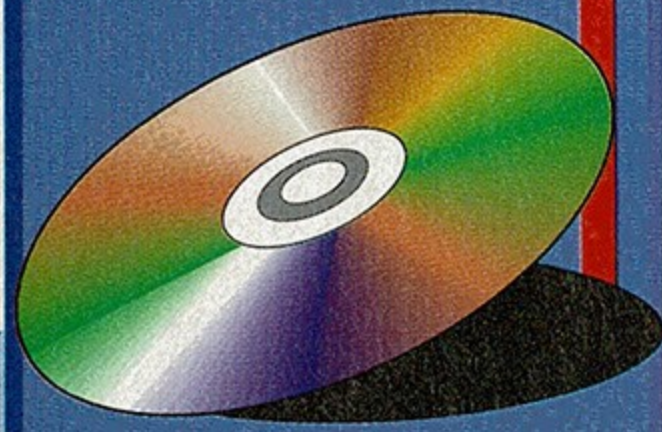
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# REVIEW



# SHADOW OF THE BEAST

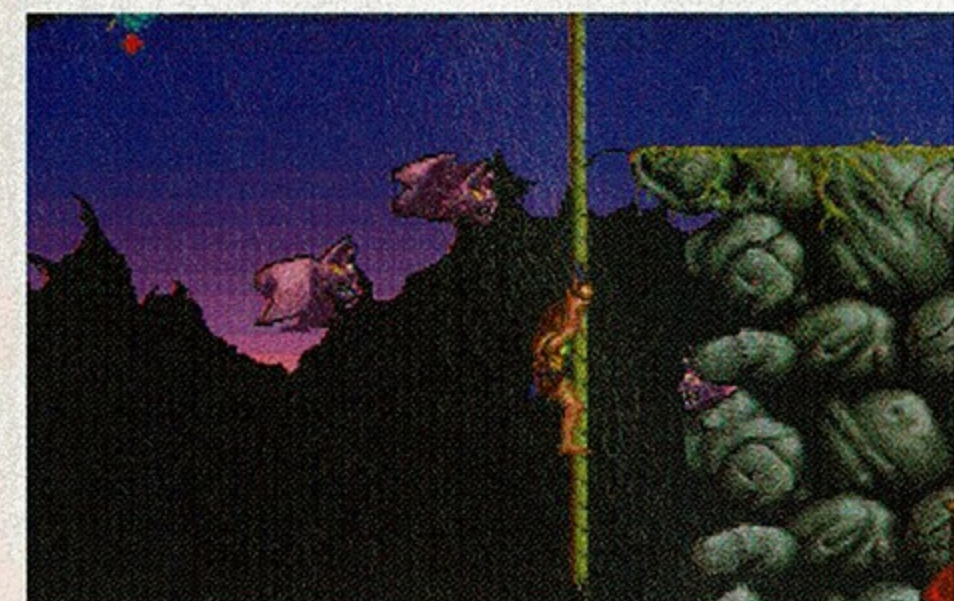
The Beast has returned, this time making his debut on CD. Only the shining beacon that is MEGA POWER can save the world from eternal darkness...



Don't worry, this giant blue dragon creature is quite friendly. His name is Barloom and he gives you a useful parchment when you return his lost amulet.



After going up in that primitive lift, you come under attack from these huge vampire bats. Quick, wap 'em with your whip or just run for it.



The hero is very good at climbing up and down ropes. But as he needs both hands to grab it, he can't use his whip at the same time. So those bats are bound to get him.

Once upon a time there was an evil Beastlord, a dark sorcerer who ruled the land with an iron fist. But then a brave human hero, who'd been transformed into a goat-man by the Beast, embarked on an epic adventure to defeat the evil one. That was in Psygnosis's legendary *Shadow Of The Beast* game, originally released on the 16-bit computers in a massive box containing a free T-shirt! It was later converted to console, including the Mega Drive.

Although a massive commercial success, the first *Beast* game was flawed by its linear nature and shallowness. Appearing again firstly on 16-bit computers, the sequel rectified these faults for a far more interesting adventure. It was also released as a Mega Drive cart some time back and now finally makes it to the Mega-CD with a host of visual and sonic enhancements.

The *Beast* games always were a visual treat with their sumptuous backgrounds, but the Mega-CD version goes one better with some gorgeous rendered 3-D animation sequences. These appear when the muscular hero enters certain points in the landscape, taking him to a new location. Scenes include going up in a primitive stone lift, creaky doors and portcullises opening, and an atmospheric journey through a dimly lit underground cavern.

The game's weird atmosphere also benefits from a superb CD-quality soundtrack. A variety of music tracks accompany the action, ranging from ambient synth tunes to more upbeat rhythmic pieces. The aural ambience is further enhanced by

plenty of sampled speech when the hero meets the many other characters throughout the game. You can turn this off if it gets annoying.

The action itself mainly involves running and jumping around the multiway-scrolling landscape. Along the way you come up against many hazards including angry spear-throwing woodsmen, giant axe-wielding warriors and an assortment of large and very weird monsters. These can be dispatched with a quick crack of your trusty whip, although most require several hits. By collecting golf coins found in treasure chests, the hero can buy better weapons including throwing axes, plus strength potions to replenish lost energy.



This game isn't just a simple hack-'em-up, though. Far from it. To get anywhere you need to solve elaborate puzzles to obtain essential objects. You also need to talk to other characters to get advice on overcoming traps. Others will help you more directly, including an old man who says he can make a spell to defeat the Beast, but only if you bring him a parchment and a magic ring.

Somehow you have to find out which tasks to perform when to get the right objects/advice to help you overcome the next puzzle until you ultimately face the Beast once again.



"Please gentlemen, let me cross your bridge." But these giant axe-wielding warriors only understand one thing - crack them with your whip several times to knock them off.



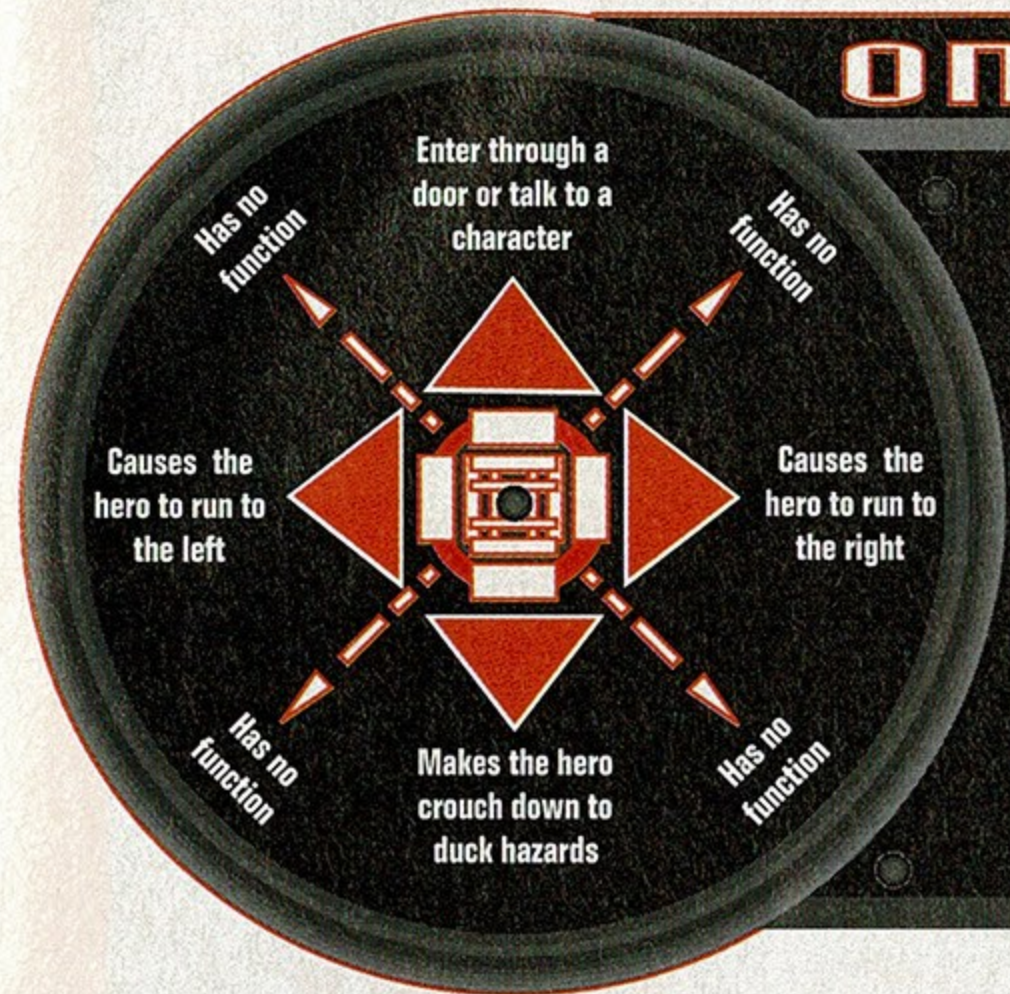
This map shows the interior of the Karamoon Inn, where you can meet lots of interesting folks. Some sell you items or give you advice, while others just try to cadge a drink.

# THE BEAST II

OVERALL %

**83**

## on the button



- A** This toggles between your items and weapons which are shown at the top left of the screen.
- B** Pressing this uses the weapon or item currently selected. For example cracking your whip or using a key.
- C** The all-important jump button for leaping over hazards and gaps in the scenery. The hero grunts as he jumps.

**You get splendid rendered 3-D scenes every time you reach a new location**

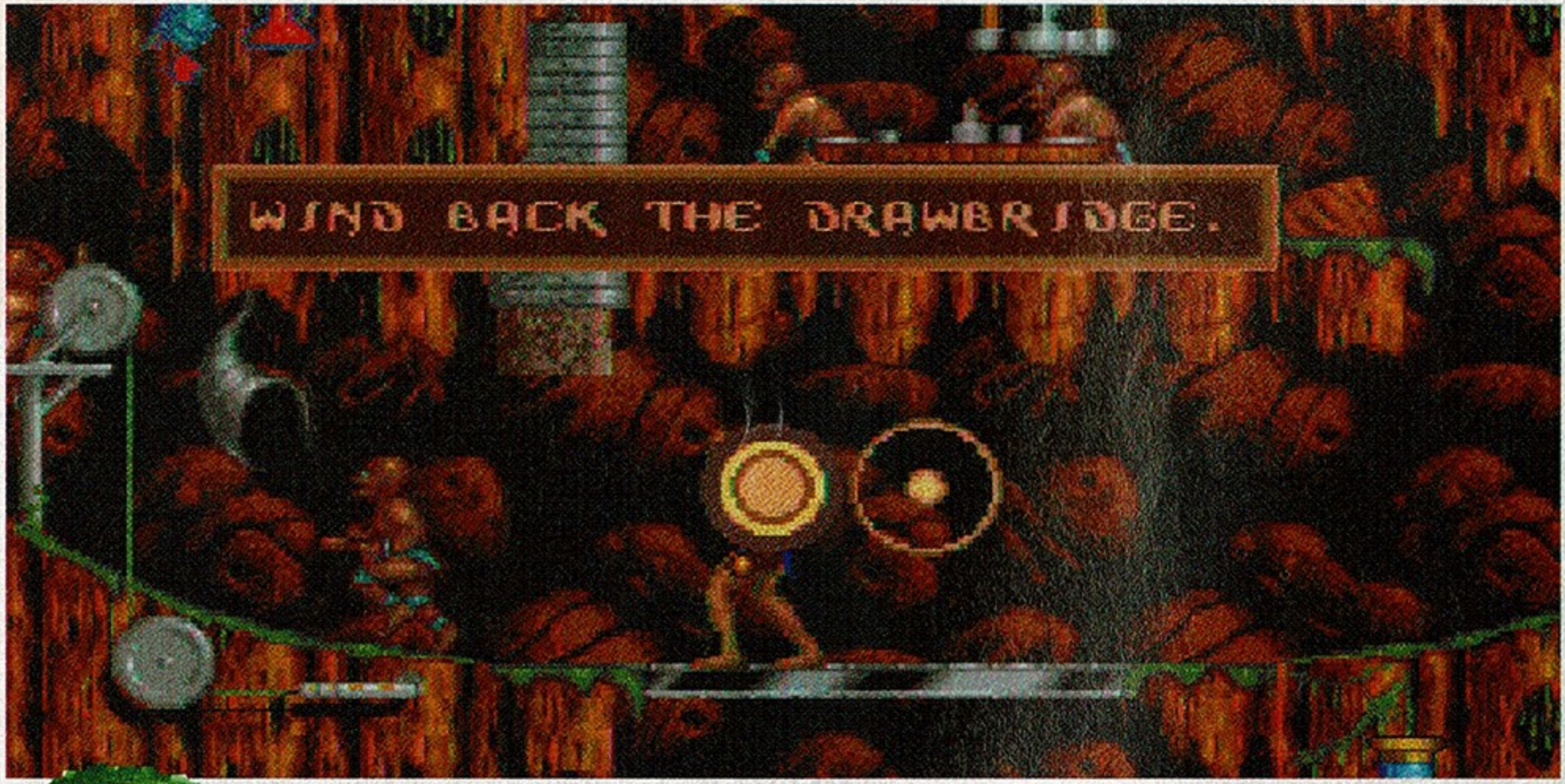


Although the gameplay isn't very different from previous versions, *Shadow Of The Beast II's* Mega-CD incarnation is undoubtedly its best. The game always was very strong in the graphical and aural departments, and now it's even better. As well as the scene-setting intro sequence, you get splendid rendered 3-D scenes every time you reach a new location. My favourite has to be when you come out of the dragon Barloom's castle: thick wooden doors creak open and the portcullis gradually winds up to reveal a beautiful riverside scene.

Even better is the sound. The music really is gorgeous, changing to suit the mood of the current location – although the 'elevator music' in the Karamoon Inn is a bit too naff! Then there's the sampled speech uttered by every character you meet. All of them have different voices and accents, and it's much more atmospheric to hear them talk rather than just reading captions.

Combined with the already proven gameplay, the many CD enhancements make this one beast of an adventure. It seems *Shadow Of The Beast II* and the Mega-CD were made for each other – and the £35 price tag is the icing on the cake.

**PHIL**



Not having played the Mega Drive cart, I approached the CD version of *Shadow Of The Beast II* with an open mind. On the whole I found it an enjoyable experience, combining tough arcade action with puzzles and character interaction. The puzzle sections themselves aren't brain-bendingly difficult, but you also have to work out the right order in which to do everything. For example, you have to obtain some throwing axes before venturing below ground into the goblins' dungeon, so you can kill the bloke behind the door before he winds back the drawbridge.

Unfortunately this is where the game's few flaws come in: there are one or two points where if you don't act quickly enough, you're completely stuck and can't get any further in the game; eg if a demon cuts the only rope leading upwards. This can lead to frustration, but the glorious graphical interludes and fabulous soundtrack help to overcome it and draw you back for another go. Most of all I liked the sampled speech, although some of the sillier voices sound like characters out of the old *Vicky The Viking* cartoon – remember that?

**DAZ**



MEGA POWER

In this scene from the exciting intro sequence, the evil Beastlord (otherwise known as Daz White) uses his magic staff to turn himself into a horrible winged creature.



Fail in your mission to rescue your baby sister and this scene appears showing the Beast holding her in his arms and chuckling to himself. What a nasty man.



Inside the goblins' dungeon the hero gatecrashes on the goblin guards' dinner. Rudely interrupted, they cart him off to a prison cell.



Phew! That was a close shave. The hero leaps over that spiky block which slides down the slope. He must whip the key to his right to release it from its chain.



This is just one of the devious puzzle sections in the game. By flicking those three levers, you can control this strange machine. But what do you do with it?

Just one of many rendered 3-D scenes appearing at various locations, this shows the primitive stone lift about to go up – it's almost as low-tech as the infamous Paragon one!



Another scene from the animated intro shows the Beastlord's hands coming through the cottage ceiling to grab not this woman, but your new-born sister.

# MP

## FINAL VERDICT

"Although the action is very similar to previous versions of the game, this one benefits from a load of slick presentation extras, making it that much more atmospheric. And at just £35, such an epic adventure is good value for money."

10  
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DRACULA  
BEAST II  
WOLFCHILD

# SHADOW OF THE BEAST II

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medium access

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GAMEPLAY	80
GRAPHICS	89
SOUND	92
ADDITION	86

**OVERALL**

# 83

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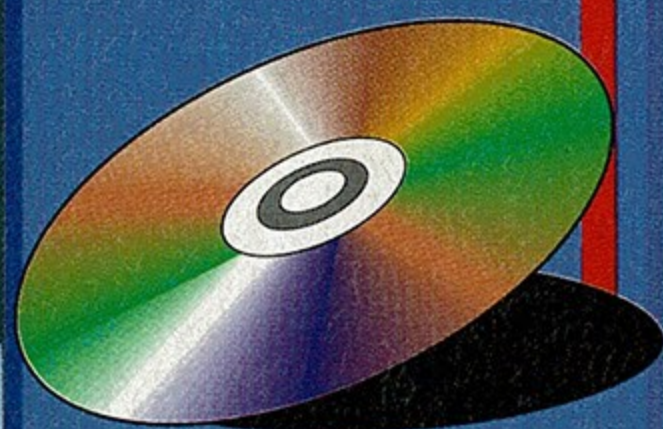
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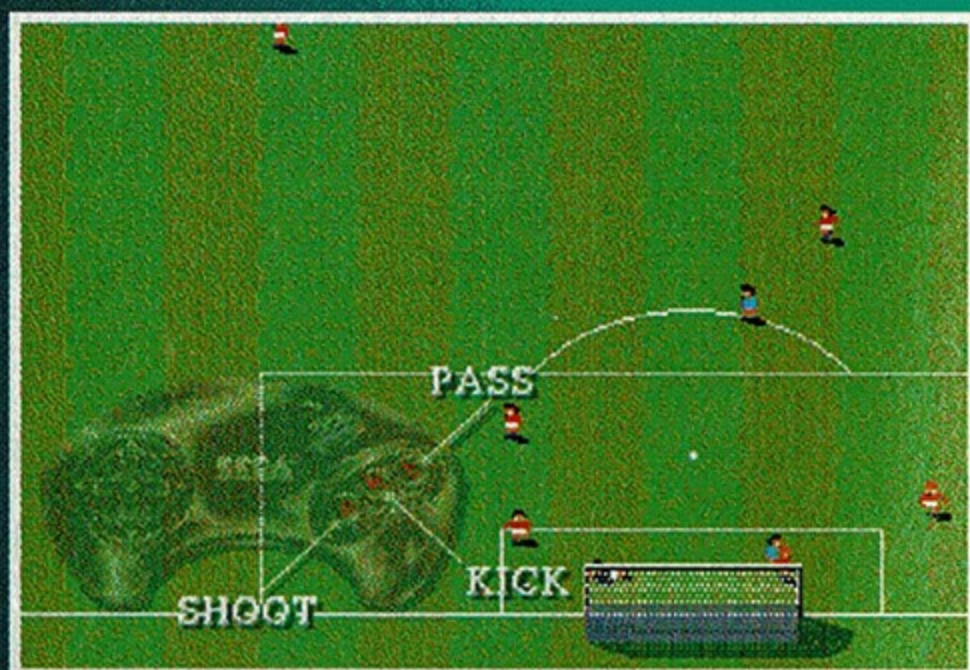
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# PREVIEW

# SENSIBLE SO



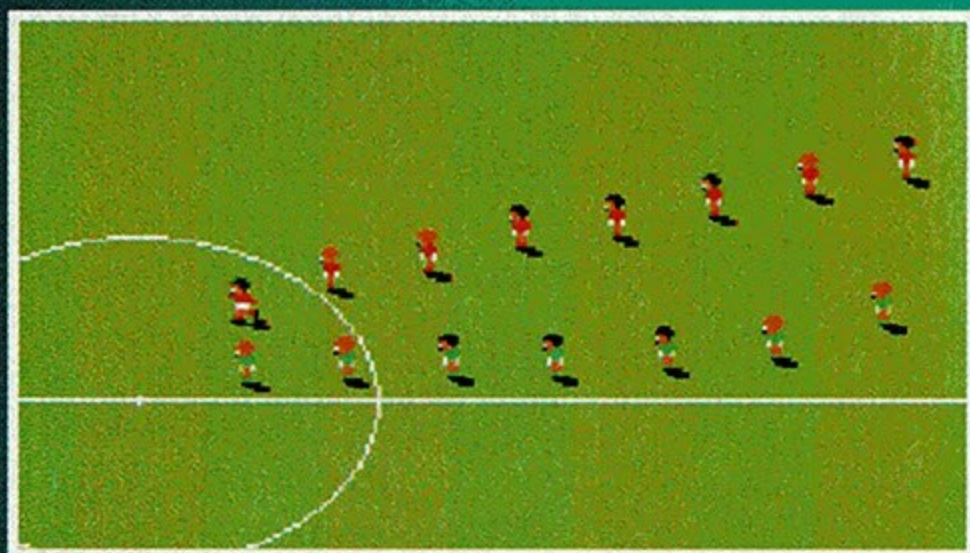
The crowd roars with delight as the Mega-CD prepares to make its soccer debut. Naturally the MEGA POWER team can't wait to get on the pitch...



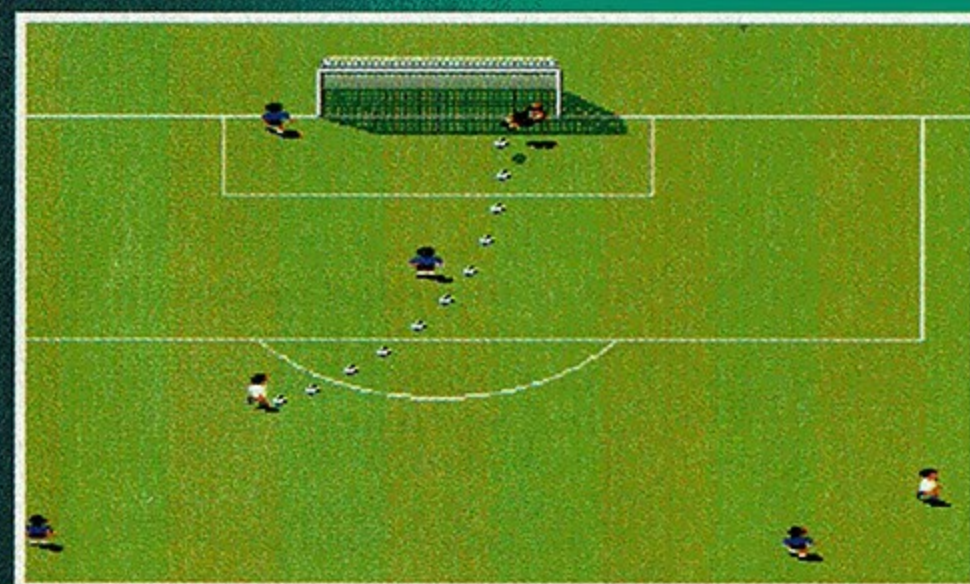
The demo mode has an on-screen joystick to show you how to control your players. You can use all three buttons, or just use B: tapping it to pass, holding it down to shoot.



As in the cartridge game, before each match you get to see these two players in the relevant colours. If the colours clash, one side will automatically use its second strip.



As the capacity crowd cheers, both teams stride out onto the pitch. Soon the referee will blow his whistle and the match will kick off. The tension is certainly mounting, Brian.



This doctored screenshot shows how you can swerve your shots dramatically by applying aftertouch. Psygnosis plan to make the computer-controlled goalies harder to beat on CD.

It's pretty amazing, isn't it? After all those football games that have streamed onto the Mega Drive in the past year or so, that the Mega-CD hasn't yet kicked off even one soccer sim. Well, that's all about to change with the Mega-CD version of the classic *Sensible Soccer*.

Although brilliantly playable, the game's release on cartridge last Christmas was somewhat overshadowed by the simultaneous appearance of EA's *FIFA International Soccer*. But with no footy competition at all on CD (EA have no plans to convert *FIFA*), at last *Sensible Soccer* looks set to get the limelight it undoubtedly deserves.

The original cart was released by Sony, but for some reason (probably too busy with their upcoming releases) they didn't want to handle the CD version, so those Liverpoolian footy nutters at their subsidiary Psygnosis took it up.

Of course, the obvious problem with converting *Sensible Soccer* to CD is how do you possibly improve it? Well, you don't – at least not in the gameplay department. The exciting action is virtually identical to the cartridge version, with tiny player sprites zipping around the scrolling overhead-view pitch at high speed. One thing that the guys at Psygnosis did want improved was the automatic goalkeepers which are being made much tougher to beat, resulting in more realistic scorelines.

As usual with sports-sim conversions, the CD really does its stuff when it comes to the presentation and sound. The game begins with an amazing intro as the camera pans and zooms round a floodlit Wembley stadium, gloriously portrayed in rendered 3-D. Of course, this is accompanied by a booming theme tune, and there's CD-quality music

throughout the game's many presentation screens and menus.

Where the enhanced CD sound really comes in, though, is for the roar of the crowd. This was achieved by recording a real crowd at the Tranmere Rovers football ground. Apparently, the first time the Psygnosis guys attempted to do this they arrived late, and by the time they'd lugged their high-tech recording gear into the stand, they'd missed the only goal of the match! Luckily they persevered and have recorded some brilliant FX – although some of the chants were too rude to use without getting a '15' certificate! Every time a goal is scored, not only do you get a deafening crowd roar, but one of several special animated sequences accessed from the CD.

Off the pitch, the game retains all the extensive options of the cartridge. You can choose from a massive array of European club teams and national sides although, as in the cart, the players' real names have been altered slightly for legal reasons. As before, though, you can edit them (along with the team strips) and even save your customised setup. As well as competing in set tournaments such as the European Cup and World Cup qualifying stages, you can create your own custom leagues and cups with as many teams and human players as you please.

*Sensible Soccer* on Mega-CD certainly looks like a result, especially as Psygnosis have followed EA's lead and made the CD version a fiver cheaper than its cartridge counterpart. But if you're still unsure, just wait for the exclusive CD demo of the game which will appear on the July issue of MEGA POWER!



Another impressive rendered 3-D intro, panning and zooming round a different stadium. This one looks a bit like an old Roman amphitheatre – it's probably owned by one of the big Italian clubs. They don't build stadiums like this in Britain, Brian – you just don't get the same level of facilities. Marvellous!

# SOCCER



Cor! They've even changed the Sensible Soccer logo for the sexy 3-D intro. Now it's all wibbly wobbly - very fancy footwork, eh?



The England players line up their wall to defend a free kick. Ain't they hard?, none of them are holding their balls! Not like them cissy Continental players who wear tights!

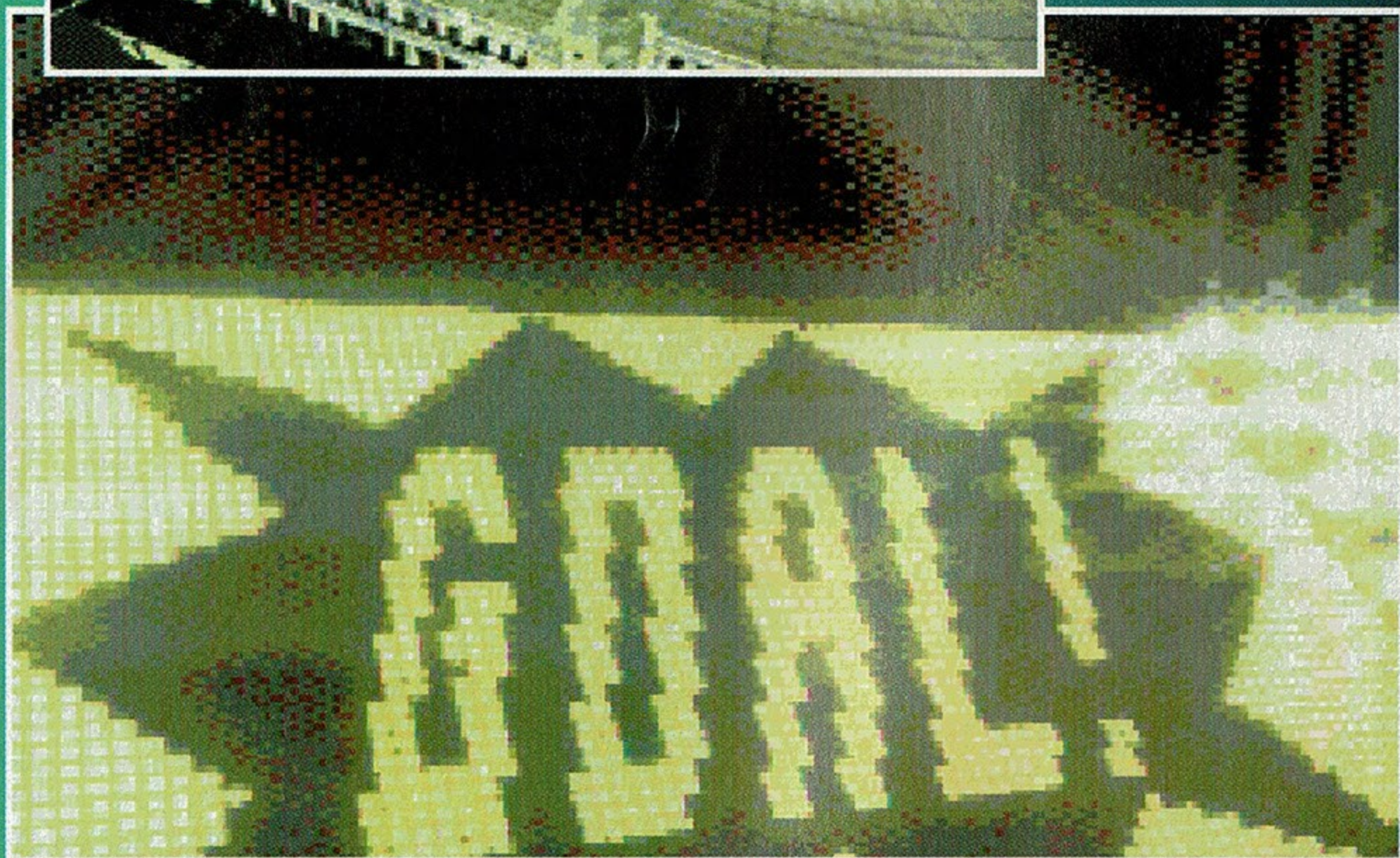


The Italians have a free kick in a dangerous position just outside the penalty area. But what's that other ball doing behind the goal line?

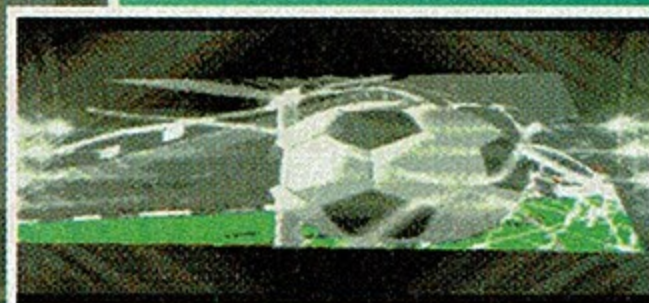


(Above) Northern Ireland have earned a corner kick. I wonder if Billy Bingham's boys can possibly beat the European champions Denmark?

(Left) This marvellous introduction sequence shows a floodlit Wembley stadium in all its glory. Now there's a sight to behold: the Mecca for all English footy fans.



After every goal, you'll see this impressive rendered 3-D animation of the ball smashing into the back of the net while the crowd goes crazy. You can turn this off if you prefer.



## SENSIBLE SOCCER



1-2 players



quick access



save tournament

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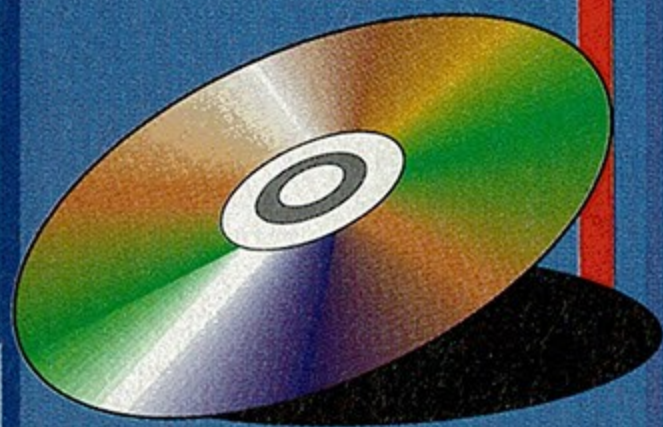
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A N T I C I P A T I O N

finished

0-50

# PREVIEW



# SPACE ACE

Following the graphically spectacular *Dragon's Lair*, ReadySoft are converting another of their LaserDisc coin-ops to CD. Mega Power takes a sneak look at this ace-looking game...



The fearless Space Ace braves the sparks flying all around him to throw up a rope to rescue his beloved Kimberley. Is she worth it? You bet!



Ace makes a run for it as the evil Borf sends that huge sharp metal thing crashing into the scenery. Quick Ace, jump to the right before you get crushed.



Zapped by the Infanto ray, Ace has been turned into a geeky kid with sticky-out ears. He's still a dab-hand with the laser gun, though. Blast 'em, Ace!



This giant blue bearded blubber mountain is the evil alien Borf. He plans to take over the Earth using his dreaded Infanto ray. Only Space Ace can stop him.

If your jaw dropped to the floor at the superb Disney-style animated scenes of *Dragon's Lair*, prepared to be launched into orbit when you see *Space Ace*. It certainly looks like Canadian software house ReadySoft have got another winner with this conversion of their classic LaserDisc arcade machine.

The story line follows the familiar format of a brave hero out to rescue a gorgeous gal and save the world from an evil villain. However, unlike *Dragon's Lair's* medieval-style setting, this time it all takes place in space. The blond square-jawed hero Space Ace is out to save his beloved Kimberley from the clutches of the alien Borf – a huge bearded guy reminiscent of the Bluto villain in *Popeye*, except he's got blue skin. This evil tyrant wants to conquer the earth using his devious special weapon, the Infanto ray, which reverts its victims to helpless babies.

Just as Ace seems to have rescued Kimberley, he is zapped by the dreaded ray, but only enough to turn him into a geeky adolescent. Somehow the much-weakened hero must find a way of saving his girl and the earth from Borf. This entails a mad chase through flying saucers and alien planets as Ace tries to find and destroy the Infanto ray. The epic adventure takes Ace through many animated scenes where you have to perform the right joypad movements at exactly the right time to avoid being floored by an explosion or eaten by a slaving alien creature. Perhaps most impressive is the nonstop nature of the exciting action – there are no stages or levels, just one continuous adventure.

Whether you love or hate this type of game, you have to admire the quality of the cartoon animation. Created by professional animators at the Sullivan-Bluth studios, the coin-op's animated sequences have been converted to Mega-CD with hardly any loss in quality. Unlike *Dragon's Lair*, they've been digitised straight from the laser disc onto Exabyte types for extra brightness and crispness.


With arguably the best graphics ever seen on the Mega-CD, and a dramatic orchestral soundtrack and sampled speech to match, *Space Ace* looks like another showpiece game from ReadySoft.




The rugged Space Ace holds onto the lovely Kimberley while things explode all around. But this is before he's zapped by the Infanto ray and turned into a weedy adolescent.




## SPACE ACE



1 player



quick access



continues

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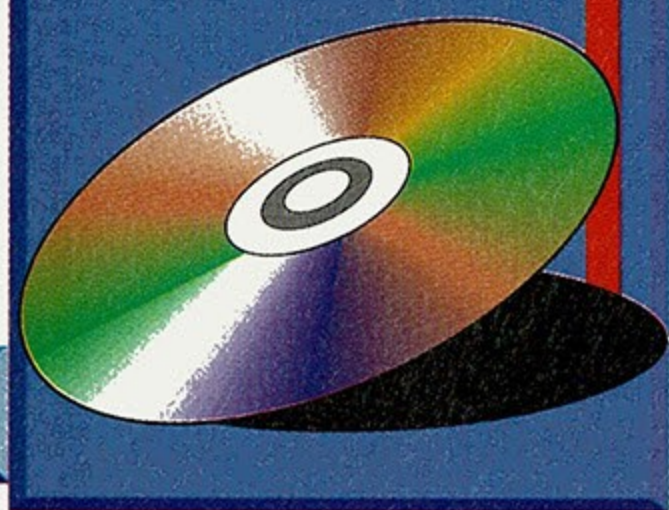
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# REVIEW



# THIRD WO

The whole world is on the brink of thermonuclear war and one wrong move could result in Armageddon. Mega Power has its finger on the Start button...

**D**esigned by Micronet in Japan, this ambitious strategy game has been converted to English language for release in the US by Extreme. It's the first pure strategy offering on Mega-CD, requiring a combination of diplomatic, economic and military decisions.

As leader of any of 16 world powers (ranging from Israel to USA), your aim is to take over most of the world – either militarily or economically in five varied scenarios. However, you have to do this without provoking an all-out nuclear war, so diplomacy and economic aid is needed to placate other world powers.

In every monthly game turn, you can make a certain number of commands, depending on the size of your nation. As most decisions cost money, you're also limited by your country's budget – to build up cash, you can simply wait a number of turns. Commands are accessed by pull-down menus, representing different areas of government.

National decisions include manipulating the media to increase government popularity, increasing law and order, and developing industry by pumping in billions of dollars. International commands let you make or break three different types of agreements with other countries: peace, security and trade.

The Economic menu enables you to invest in territories to try to gain economic control. Selecting a region on the world map brings up a close-up of the territories contained. For an economic takeover, you need to pump huge sums of money into the chosen territory's stock market, real estate, manufacturing and transport industries. To make it

easier, you can weaken targeted countries' economies by aiding terrorism or even revolution.

Military options let you recruit troops, form new armies and develop high-tech weapons – you can even nuke other countries if you like, although you'll face huge international criticism and abrogation of treaties. The best idea is to invade smaller countries first (the game tutorial recommends starting with Iraq and Libya!) with a number of your armies, ships and planes. If the destination is overseas, some of these may not even make it to the landing stage.

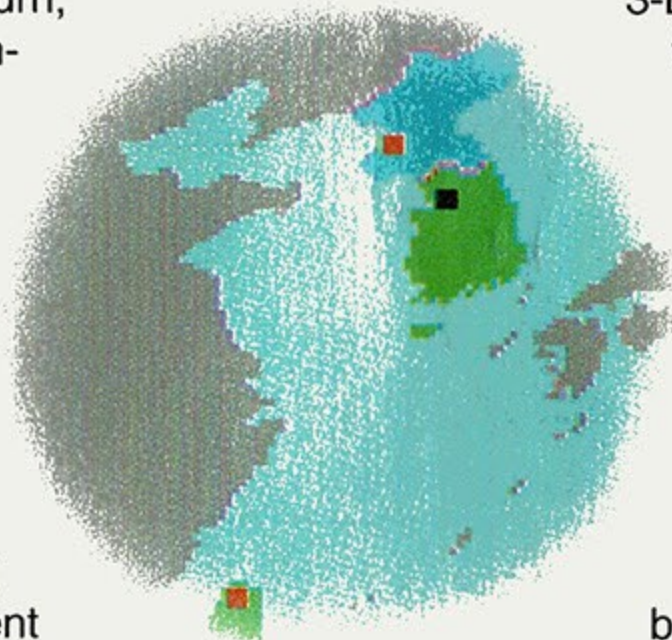
The resulting land battle is viewed in isometric 3-D. You simply click on your units to tell them where to move and fire. A supposedly useful feature here is the ability to send all units to a location, although they don't move very intelligently and some get stuck behind buildings or trees.

Once units get within range of the enemy, the action really starts as each side regularly fires at the other automatically. Clicking on any unit shows you how much more damage it can take before exploding. The extent of damage depends on the units involved: obviously a battle tank will make quick work of enemy jeeps. The game manual contains tables of statistics for all the many different types of units. To aid your forces on the ground, you can call in either your planes or boats to launch an attack on a small area of terrain – but you can only do this once in any battle.

Even when you achieve victory and take control a territory, it's not usually the end of things. Nearby countries may re-invade, or you may even lose the territory to a revolution. To conquer the whole world you'll need not only brilliant military strategy, but also excellent diplomacy and the ability to use your nation's limited resources to best effect.

MILITARY	DN	INTL	NATL	INFO	OPT.
RECRU TROOP	FORCES TO DEPLOY				DN 3
DEVEL WEAPD	DESTINATION	LONDON		700K	
FORM UNITS	ARMIES MOBILIZED	16	18	50%	
SUPPO FORCE	SUPPORTING SHIPS	191	58%		
DEPLO ABROA	SUPPORTING PLANES	100	43%		
AIR STRIK	SUPPORTING SATELLITES	50	48		
ARMY	COST OF OPERATIONS	40.4B	88		

Before going into battle, you have to choose how big an invasion force to send. You can mobilise up to 16 armies, as well as loads of different ships, planes and satellites.



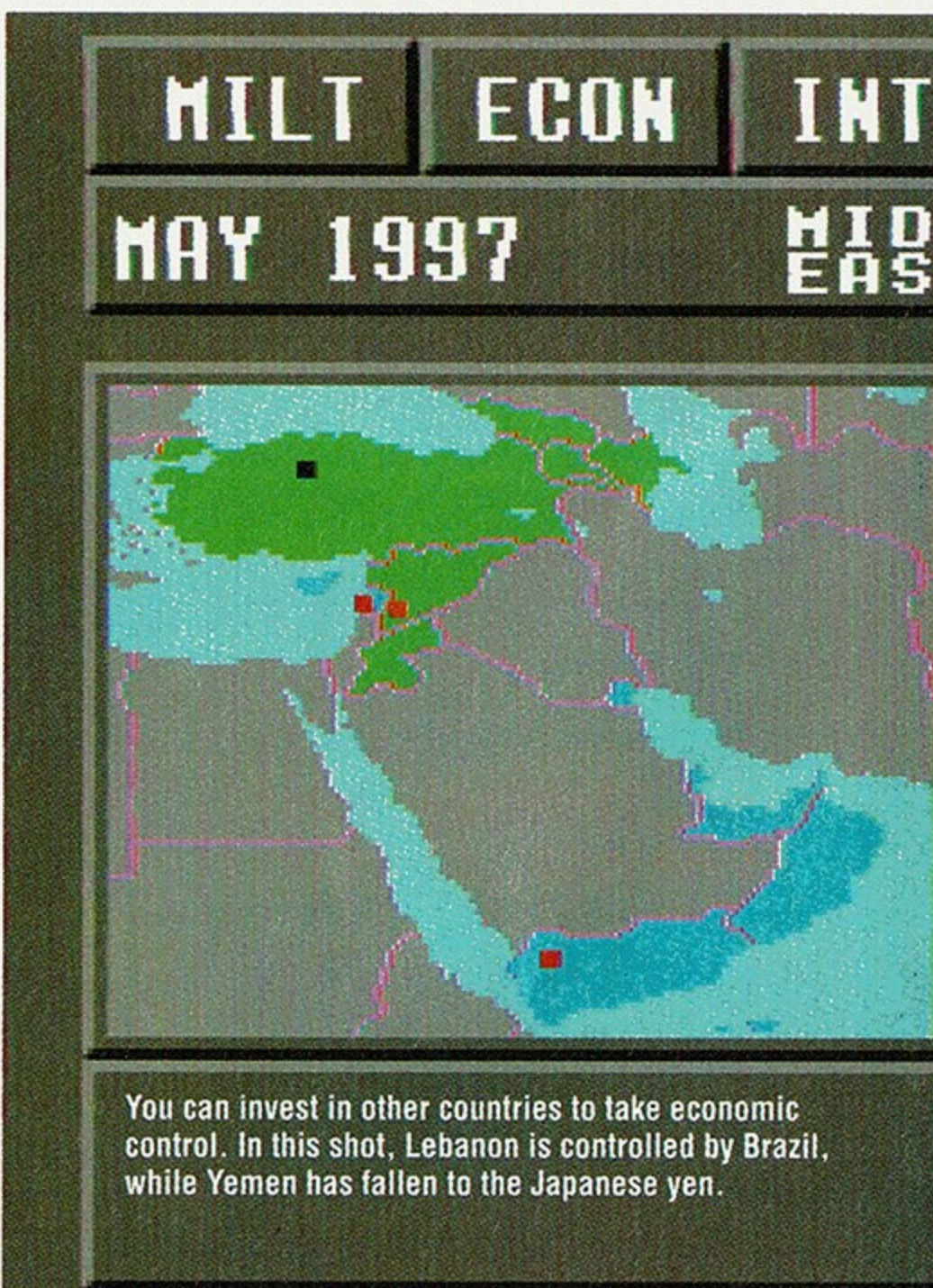
Uh oh, you've successfully invaded Pakistan, but a nervous China has just decided to take it back. As their forces outnumber yours dramatically, you may as well surrender.



The isometric battle section. The top-left window has several options, including firing on enemies/buildings/both, calling in your air force or navy, and surrendering.

MILT	ECON	INT	DOMESTIC POLICY	WFO	OPT.
AUG 19	INDUSTRY R&D				ECON 6
	AMOUNT INVESTED	67.4B	26100K		
	GNP	+000.5%	1.5B	50%	
	SUPPORT FOR GOV	+000.2%	58%		
	NATIONAL MORALE	-000.1%	43%		
	LEVEL OF LAW/ORDER	-000.1%	7.4B		
ARMY	193	NAVY	275	AIR	3002
			SPACE		88
COMMANDS REMAINING: 4					

Without fear of inflation you can invest billions into your country's industry to increase GNP and government support. This subsequently increases your monthly spending budget.



You can invest in other countries to take economic control. In this shot, Lebanon is controlled by Brazil, while Yemen has fallen to the Japanese yen.

# WORLD WAR

**OVERALL:**  
**81**



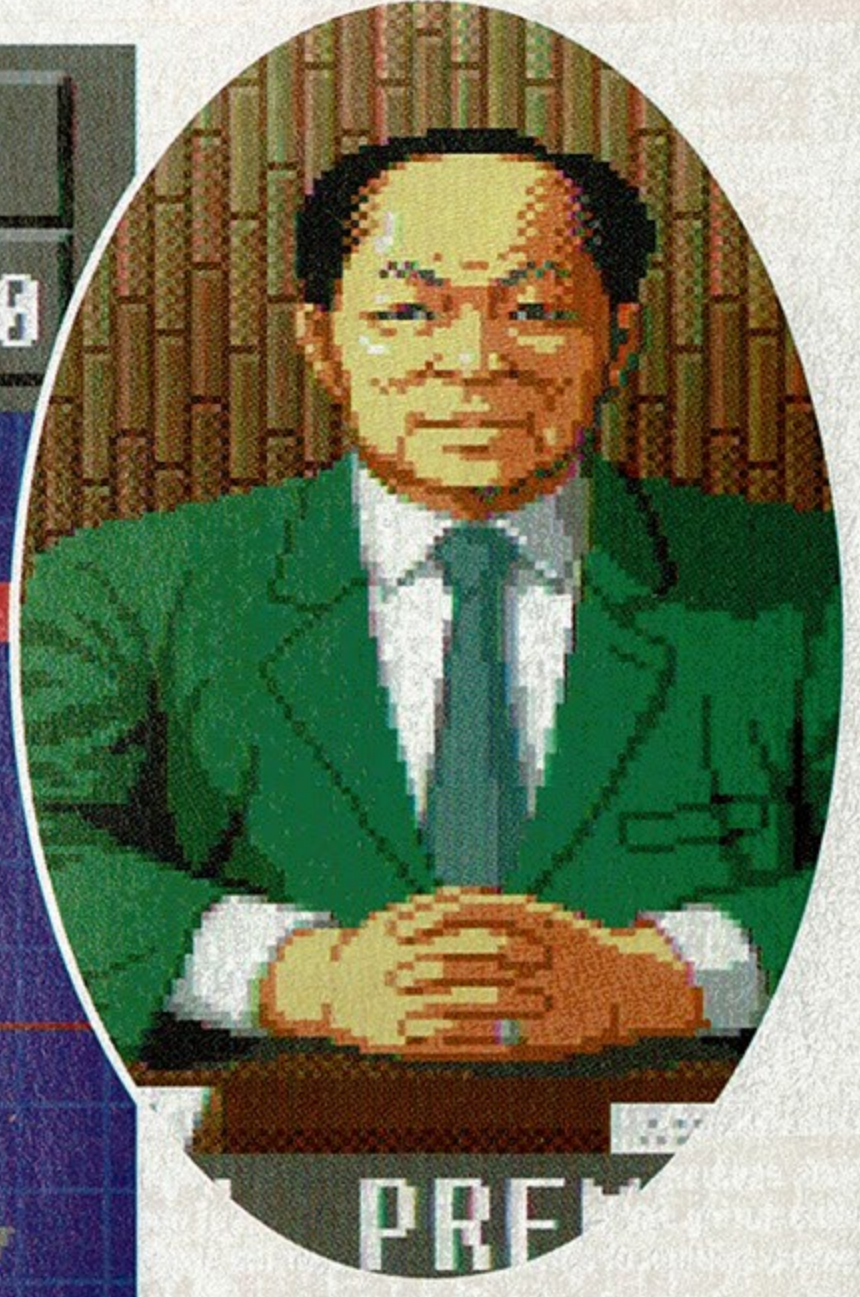
This reminds me of the old Balance Of Power strategy game on the 16-bit computers a few years back. The main difference is that I found Third World War much easier to get to grips with. The fairly slim manual explains everything very well and I was soon enjoying my place as a powerful world leader. Maintaining popularity at home isn't much of a problem (just the odd bit of media manipulation now and again), and the diplomatic options are a bit limited, so the main attraction lies in building up your armed forces and invading other countries. Unfortunately, the actual battle section is a bit disappointing as the tactical options are very limited, so battles are almost always won by the stronger force. There are plenty of different types of military units, all detailed in the game manual, but in the heat of real-time battle it's very difficult to use them strategically. It's a pity, as the rest of the game is fascinating as you witness the unravelling of global events. And I'm sure budding megalomaniacs will relish the chance to build their own empire.

PHIL

**the main attraction lies in building up your armed forces and invading other countries**



Sit back and watch world events unravel on the global map. As well as countries invading each other, this often shows good news including a cure for AIDS!



(Above) Ambassadors from various countries pop up to thank you for economic aid or scorn you for invading their allies.

**MOSAIC POWER**



### on the button

Moves the cursor up the screen

Moves the cursor down the screen

Moves the cursor to the left

Moves the cursor to the right

**A**

This button isn't used much during the game. It only comes into play in scrolling the battle map around.

**B**

Press this button to cancel a wrong command or return to the main menu. Even great leaders make mistakes.

**C**

This is the main button to use. It activates the currently selected command, including firing your nukes!



A game of draughts is usually enough to make my brain ache, so strategy games aren't really my pot of yoghurt. So it was a great surprise when I found myself getting totally engrossed in Third World War. It's so easy to pick up and play. For my first go, I had a go at controlling Britain, but this wasn't the most inspired choice of nation to try and take over the world with! Switching to America, I soon enjoyed invading small countries and laughing in the face of international criticism as I nuked Baghdad!

But I really mucked up when I tried to invade Canada twice on the trot, so I had a go at trying to gain economic control of the world with Japan. Investing in foreign stock markets and stuff isn't as much fun as the military aspect, but I was still glued to the screen. There are a few flaws in the game, such as the lack of information available about your controlled territories, but on the whole I can recommend it as a fun-to-play tactical teaser – and a particularly good introduction for strategy novices like myself.

DAZ

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS			
U. S. A.			
NON AGGRES-SION PACT			
SECURITY TREATY			
TRADE AGREEMENT			
U. S. A.	RUSSIA	JAPAN	GERMANY
CHINA	FRANCE	UNITED KINGDOM	INDIA
SOUTH AFRICA	BRAZIL	AUST-RALIA	CANADA
IRAQ	ISRAEL	SAUDI ARABIA	LIBYA

You can see which countries have secured agreements with each other at a glance. The USA is friends with most people, apart from the Russians and Chinese.

MILT	ECON	INTL	NATL	INFO	OPT.
MAY 1997		U. S. A.	MILT 8	ECON 6	6
		POPULATION	226100K		
		GNP	5701.5B		
		SUPPORT FOR GOV.	50%		
		NATIONAL MORALE	58%		
		LEVEL OF LAW & ORDER	43%		
		LEVEL OF INTL TRUST	20%		
		BUDGET AVAILABLE	81.6B		
ARMY > 192		NAVY > 267	AIR > 3394	SPACE > 88	
COMMANDS REMAINING: 4					

The good ol' USA has got the biggest Gross National Product in the world, so you've got a nice big budget to spend each month. You're only allowed four commands per turn, though.

MILT	ECON	INTL	NATL	INFO	OPT.
MAY 1997		LIBYA	MILT 5	ECON 3	3



This map shows that Libya (the pink bit) currently has partial control over some of its neighbours – if it was total, it would all be in pink instead of orange.

SOUTH KOREA		INTL	INFO	OPT.
\$\$		A	MILT 8	ECON 6
			SOUTH KOREA	
			NORTH KOREA	
			TAIWAN	

To gain economic control over another territory, you have to control all four areas of its economy: stock market, housing, manufacturing and transport. To gain control of one of these, you need to knock its coloured bar right down to zero by investing billions of dollars. The stronger the target economy, the harder this is to achieve.

MILT	ECON	INTL	NATL	INFO	OPT.
MAY 1997		U. S. A.	MILT 8	ECON 6	6

The American flag is proudly flying across the globe. You've already conquered Iraq and Iran, which should make Russia and China pretty nervous.

# MP

## FINAL VERDICT

"This is one strategy game that's very easy to get into, even for novices. It does have its flaws, including the rather limited isometric battle section, but in the main it's a fascinating study of global diplomacy. Engrossing stuff."

10  
9  
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MEGA-10-MANIA  
THIRD WORLD WAR  
POPULOUS II

# THIRD WORLD WAR

1 player

quick access

save position

available in USA

GAMEPLAY	80
GRAPHICS	75
SOUND	81
ADDITION	83

OVERALL

# 81

INSTANT ACCESS

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16

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# SEGA PRO

## Issue #32 on sale

# 21 APRIL



# AX101

Another space shoot-'em-up zooms in from the land of the rising sun. But will this one blow the MEGA POWER team's brains out?



Zooming at high speed over icy landscapes, you come up against these alien craft which try to ram your ship. Blast them before they smash into you.



As you fly upside down over a rocky canyon, your aiming cursor flashes to show you have one of the alien ships in your sights. Your lasers are fully recharged so a quick blast will destroy it.



Now you're in trouble. Those yellow polygons flying towards you are enemy bullets. Shoot them before they hit home and reduce your shield even further.



When the screen border starts flashing red, you know your shields are almost out. As you fly through all that space debris you simply cannot afford another hit.

**M**ega-CD FMV blasters... First there was *Sewer Shark* with its crummy video quality. Then there was the long-awaited *Silpheed* using polygon graphics for its 3-D backdrops, which were again constantly accessed from the CD. More recently the much-hyped *Microcosm* took us inside someone's body in spectacular *Fantastic Voyage* style. Now comes another contender for the 'ultimate shoot-'em-up', but can *AX101* overcome its predecessors' problem of very limited gameplay?

As the game's impressive rendered intro shows, the Earth is under attack from a fleet of alien spaceships. You are one of four crack pilots sent to destroy the aliens with high-tech AX101 space fighters. The game certainly scores big in the presentation department with a host of lengthy rendered interludes to illustrate the story line as you progress through the levels. The blasting action itself is viewed from your cockpit, taking place in a smallish window surrounded by status panels. As the rendered 3-D backdrops are constantly accessed from CD, you have no control over the set path which your ship follows. Instead you simply move a cross-

hair around the screen to target the alien spaceships which zoom about. These regularly unleash polygon bullets which must be shot before they reach your craft and damage its shields. Your lasers work in two ways: you can either hold down the button for constant fire, or let the lasers recharge and then unleash a much more powerful shot – a good tactic for the tougher enemies.

You also have a limited number of smart bombs for when the going gets really tough... and it certainly does. The blasting starts out in space, then takes you into the nooks and crannies of a huge alien mothership before transporting you down to a planet's surface to zoom through narrow rocky gorges. Later levels take you back out into space, through an asteroid belt and inside an alien ship. Things get more hazardous along the way as harder-to-kill enemies unleash clusters of bullets and missiles. An action-packed blaster, *AX101* is currently only available on import, and requires a Japanese Mega Drive and Mega-CD to work. The official UK release will follow soon, complete with English speech from your co-pilots.



I'm not really a fan of these 3-D shoot-'em-ups which seem to use fancy CD-accessed video footage to tart up otherwise very simplistic gameplay. *Silpheed* was the epitome of this, and *Microcosm* wasn't really a great advance. Even so, I reckon *AX101* must be the best FMV blaster yet. The wonderful rendered intro and lengthy interludes set the scene perfectly – I only wish I could understand the Japanese speech, but this problem will obviously be rectified in the official UK version. These scenes are certainly ample reward for getting through the stages, and a great incentive to keep playing. At first I was disappointed by the simple action – you don't even get to move a ship round the screen – but I must admit it did grow on me as I progressed to the more interesting later levels. All the same, I reckon *Soulstar* will blow this limited type of shoot-'em-up out of the water with its stunning scaled graphics and the freedom to explore 360° levels.

PHIL



Oh wow! I enjoyed Silpheed when others said it was just a souped-up Galaxians, and I liked Microcosm even more. You see, while Smart Ales may complain about simplistic shooting gameplay, I really like my games simple. This is especially the case when it comes to shoot-'em-ups - I want to relieve tension by blasting loads of aliens to bits without having to think about it too much. So AX101 is right up my street. It's got lots of no-nonsense blasting and some really neat visuals too.

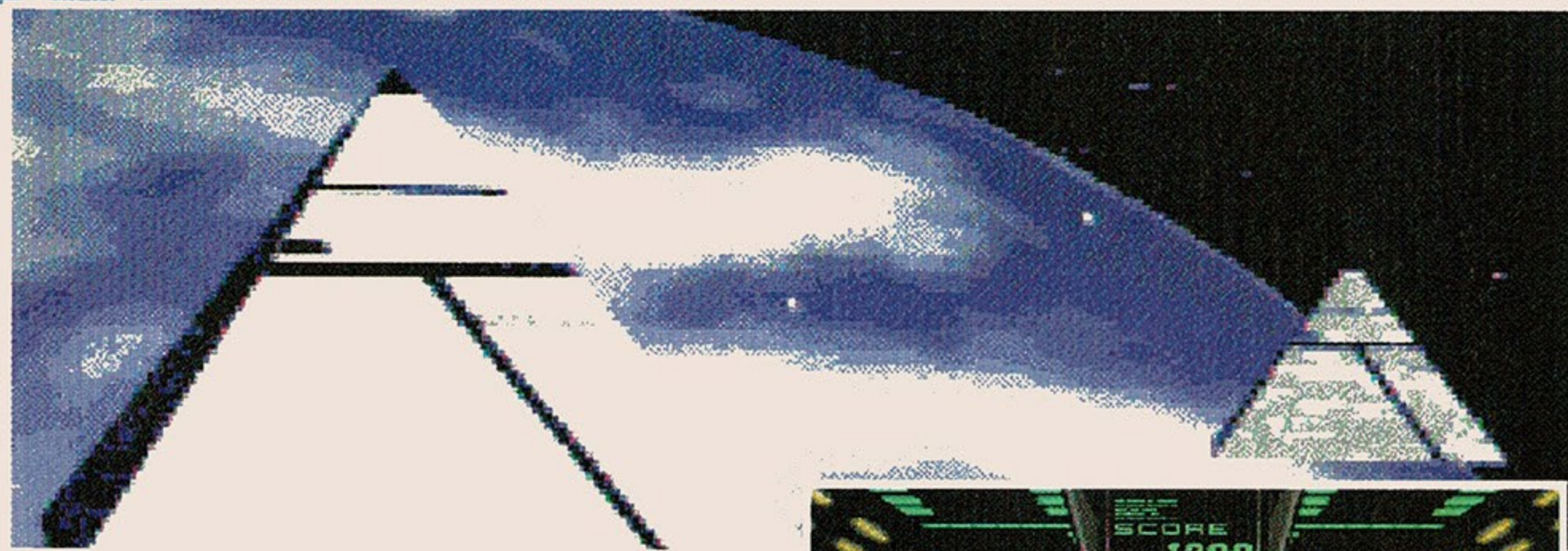
I was certainly impressed by the sheer amount of animated 3-D scenes between the levels, although I obviously didn't understand all that funny Japanese speech - if you no compredo the lingo I'd wait for the English or American version.

Most of all, AX101 is one of those games that seems to get better the more you play it, the pace hotting up as you reach the even more graphically impressive later levels. It'll certainly keep me playing until I complete it.

DAZ

**OVERALL %**

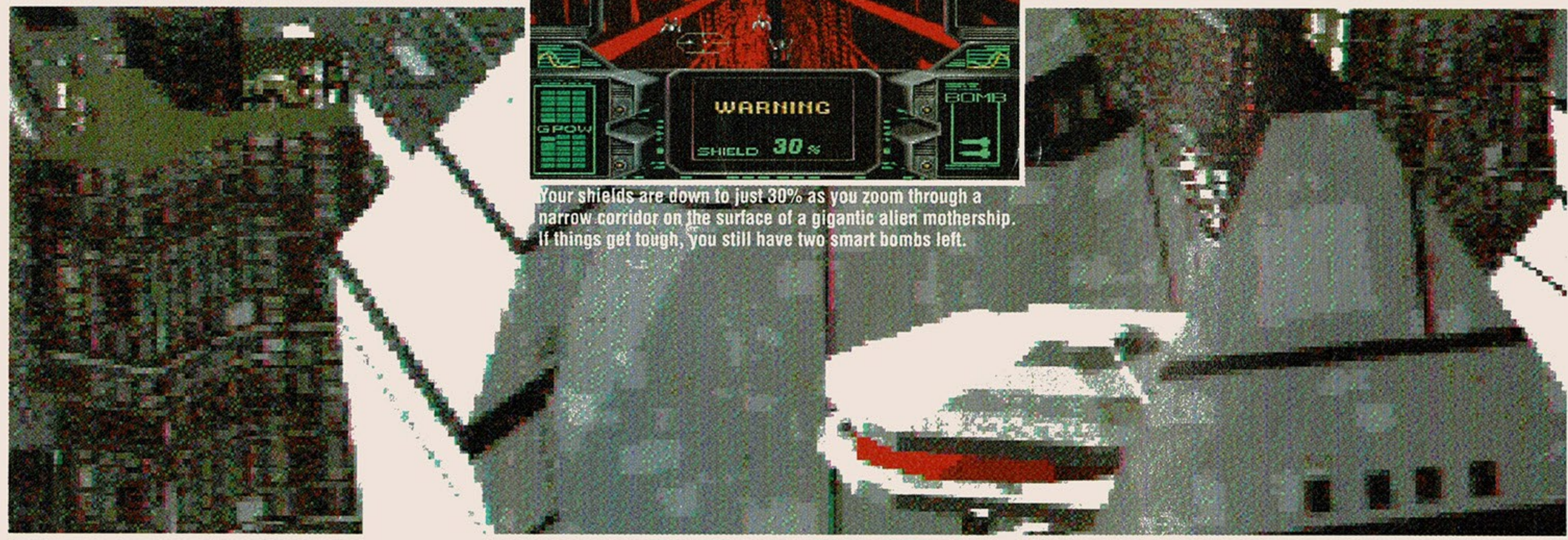
**80**



(Above) The lengthy animated intro shows the aliens arriving in these weird pyramid ships. (Below) When they land on the earth they open up to reveal flying saucers which wreak havoc.



Your shields are down to just 30% as you zoom through a narrow corridor on the surface of a gigantic alien mothership. If things get tough, you still have two smart bombs left.



One of those games that seems to get better the more you play it

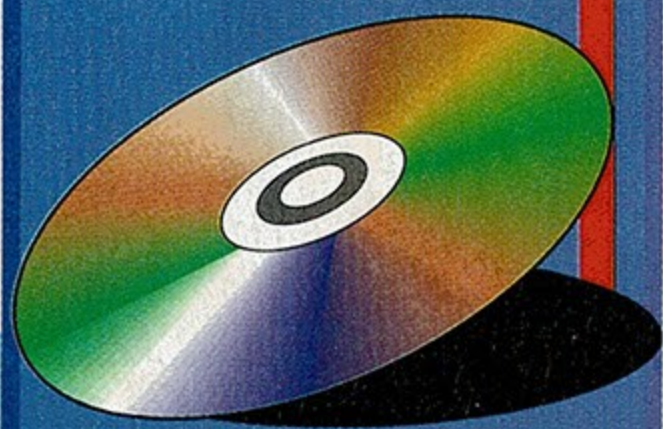
# MP

## FINAL VERDICT

"As in previous FMV shoot-'em-ups such as *Silpheed* and *Microcosm*, the 3-D blasting is pretty simple stuff. It's still pretty addictive though, especially as there are lots of neat new baddies to see on later levels."

10		9		8		7		6		5		4		3		2		1	
SILPHEED		MICROCOSM		AX101		AX 101										MICRONET IMPORT OUT NOW		INSTANT ACCESS	
1 player		quick access		3 continues		available in JAPAN													
GAMEPLAY										78		OVERALL <b>80</b>							
GRAPHICS										88									
SOUND										83									
ADDICTION										82									

# REVIEW



# TOMCAT ALLEY

The MEGA POWER top guns put on their Aviator shades and climb into the cockpit for Sega's latest Full Motion Video extravaganza...



If you've seen the movie *Top Gun*, you'll soon get the gist of *Tomcat Alley*. But rather than playing the part of a top fighter pilot, you get to be the plane's Tactical Officer – which basically means that you select the targets and fire the weapons while your pilot does all the complicated flying.

Before each mission you meet your colleagues, including the female pilot known as Ratchet (apparently, you don't want to know why!) who is the love interest in this stylish story of air-to-air combat. You are briefed on your mission objectives by the commander, who threatens to take away your wings if you mess up. Missions include blowing up a Russian bomber, shooting down squadrons of enemy fighters, rescuing colleagues and destroying ground targets such as bridges.

Once in the air, there's a stylishly directed video sequence of the pilots and exterior views of their planes (à la *Top Gun*) before you get to choose your first waypoint – simply select the desired destination on your Head-Up Display. After another flashy video sequence, you get to see the 'bandits' on your HUD and have to

target one. Following another FMV clip, the enemy plane appears: you have to get your cursor over it to lock on as it weaves around the screen. As soon as you get a lock, fire that missile quickly before you lose it. If all's well you see one of several neat clips of the enemy exploding.

However, miss your target and you may have to take evasive action when it fires back at you. A warning flashes up on screen accompanied by an audio alarm and you need to quickly select the chaff/flare icon at the bottom right of your HUD to escape.

Basically that's all there is to it, except the



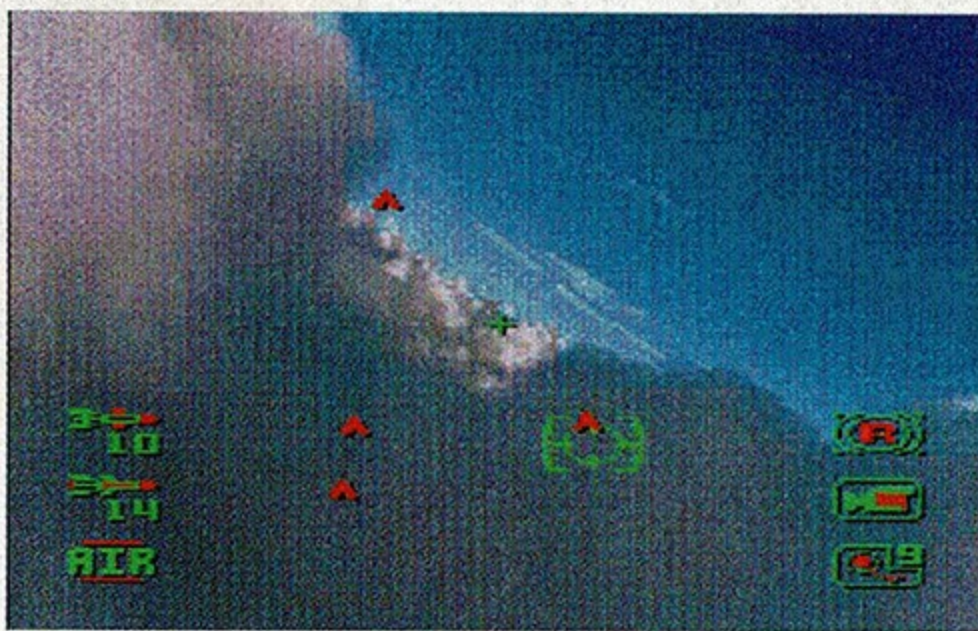
If you closely analyse the gameplay in *Tomcat Alley*, you realise that you don't actually do that much: just selecting targets and then trying to hit them.

However, such is the style and verve of the FMV surrounding this simple task, that you don't really notice any limitations in the gameplay as you become totally engrossed in the whole thing.

The scenes down at the airbase might be the usual FMV stuff with a corny *Top Gun* rip-off plot even incorporating your character's lust for his female colleague. But once in our plane, you can only admire the superb aerial video sequences which cut quickly between various views of the planes, pilots and spectacular midair explosions. You are soon caught up in the excitement of the air-to-air combat, particularly as you fumble in panic to hit the chaff/flare icon when suddenly confronted with an enemy missile. Then there's the mad chase around the screen as you try to get your cursor over the enemy fighter to lock on – the satisfaction you get when that plane finally explodes is immense.

I can tell you, I was sweating buckets as I stared at the screen, such is the degree of concentration required. Not only is *Tomcat Alley* a visual spectacular, it's also a darn addictive game.

PHIL



Before each mission, you get a full briefing from your commander who points out the targets on an impressive 3-D computer-generated map which pops up from the table.

later missions get trickier as you come up against ground-based enemies as well as the fighters. And when you reach the primary target, such as a bridge, you have only one chance to score a direct hit – miss and the mission is aborted, much to your commander's annoyance.

Thankfully there's a facility to save your game position, and you need all the help you can get to keep your wings and maybe even get a special assignment with the lovely Ratchet.



# ALLEY

You are soon caught up in the excitement of the air-to-air combat

OVERALL: **90**



Flying over the clouds, you chase an enemy MiG. You have to quickly move your aiming cursor over it to lock on before firing. The red arrows on your radar are other bandits.



If you let Buzz and Ratchet's plane get destroyed, they eject and you have to go on a special rescue mission. Find your comrades and the choppers come in to pick them up.



This impressive explosion is just one of many shown when you get your missile on target. Miss and it could well be your plane getting blown up.



I once applied to join the RAF, but they said I lacked the basic bodily coordination needed to be a mechanic, never mind a fighter pilot. So when I saw Tomcat Alley, I thought here's my chance to prove those geezers wrong as I take on bandits at two o'clock and all that lark. After being stunned into silence by the jaw-dropping aerial FMV scenes — those bogeys like an expert. At first I did find it tricky to lock onto the target long enough to get my missile away, but you do get the hang of it after a few goes. Things get even better as you get further into the game and take on ground targets — it reminded me of those Stormin' Norman videos in the Gulf War. An extra incentive to keep on playing is the wonderful Ratchet, who pretends she hates you, but you can tell by her teasing comments that she's interested. Apart from enjoying the scintillating action, you just have to keep going to see if she succumbs to your charms! This game's sure to be a huge hit.

DAZ



When you fire, the video shows the launch button being pressed, followed by the missile zooming through the air.

The stunning aerial footage shows the planes from all angles as you head into the danger zone.

## MP FINAL VERDICT

"Tomcat Alley even outguns *Ground Zero Texas* to be the best Full Motion Video game yet. The gameplay may be simple, but the sheer intensity of the aerial combat action is utterly gripping. An ace example of what can be done with the genre."

## TOMCAT ALLEY

10 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

9 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

8 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

7 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

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5 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

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3 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

2 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

1 player

quick access

save game

available in USA

GAMEPLAY	86
GRAPHICS	94
SOUND	90
ADDITION	91

**OVERALL**

# 90

INSTANT ACCESS

AFTERBURNER 3

TOMCAT ALLEY

COBRA COMMAND

may 1994

41

ISSUE 10

Mega POWER

# REVIEW

# VIRTUA RACING

At last it's here! The MEGA POWER crew jump into the cockpit of this long-awaited coin-op conversion and take it for a spin...

**V**irtua Racing first appeared in the arcades back in autumn 1992, its superfast polygon graphics and highly realistic racing feel instantly attracting a dedicated following. The question we've pondered ever since is if and when we'd be able to play the ultimate racing game at home.

Another question was whether the Mega Drive could do it justice, bearing in mind the machine's inherent problems with polygon graphics. This has been solved with the inclusion of a special SVP (Sega Virtua Processor) chip in the cartridge, enabling the game's polygon graphics to move infinitely faster. In fact, the 16-colour scenery rushes towards at a rate even faster than on the coin-op itself! Of course, the inevitable downside of this is the £70 price tag – but the game turns out to be well worth it for true *Virtua Racing* fans.

As in the arcade machine, getting to grips with your car is initially a tricky process as you skid all over the place and the other cars ram you into the trackside barriers and signs. Far from being frustrating, however, it's such an exhilarating, fun experience that when you cock it up you can't wait to get back out on the track and try again. And if you master the automatic transmission, you can reach even

higher speeds in the tougher manual mode.

Just like the coin-op, you can watch the action from any of four switchable views, including the tricky in-seat one. If you manage to win a race, you can even see a replay of the whole thing. There's also a full list of lap and race times, including records for all three tracks – if you get too good, there are three skill levels to master.

The piece de resistance has to be the inclusion of a split-screen two-player mode. Although the rumours of a linkup multiplayer option (by connecting Mega Drives together) proved to be false, this is still one of the best two-player games around, even rivalling *Street Fighter II*. Like that game, it includes a clever handicap mode so racing novices can compete fairly against experts.

Considering the massive technological differences between the Mega Drive and arcade machine, this spectacular conversion of *Virtua Racing* is an astounding achievement. It'll be interesting to see how the enhanced Mega Drive 32 *Deluxe Version* (on cart and CD) can possibly improve on it – more tracks and better sound, maybe?



## MP

### FINAL VERDICT

"A great conversion of the classic coin-op and easily the best racing game yet on the Mega Drive. The SVP processor increases the cart price, but does the business in providing the superfast polygon graphics needed for exhilarating speed."

VIRTUA RACING

SUPER MONACO

## VIRTUA RACING

1-2 players

16Mbit + SVP

three skill levels

available in UK

GAMEPLAY	93
GRAPHICS	94
SOUND	80
ADDICTION	90

# OVERALL

# 92

INSTANT ACCESS

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ISSUE 10 42 may 1994

# STREETS OF RAGE III



Sega's long-running beat-'em-up series returns with its biggest instalment yet. The MEGA POWER bruisers go out looking for a fight...

**T** Back in 1991, Sega unleashed the original *Streets Of Rage* scrolling beat-'em-up with plenty of simple playability but ultimately lacking challenge. Upgrading to a 16Mbit cart, the sequel improved on it and incorporated teamplay and versus two-player modes. Now comes the third game in the series, which is bigger still at 24Mbit. Like most beat-'em-ups nowadays, it's also compatible with the six-button joystick.

This time Axel, Blaze and Skate are joined by the cyborg Dr Zan (replacing Max from the second game) in a bid to destroy an evil crime syndicate. You get to choose your character(s) for a one- or two-player game. Each fighter has different abilities and moves – eg Zan's extending arms and Blanka-style electrocution – and two characters can even interact with each other to

perform special cooperative manoeuvres.

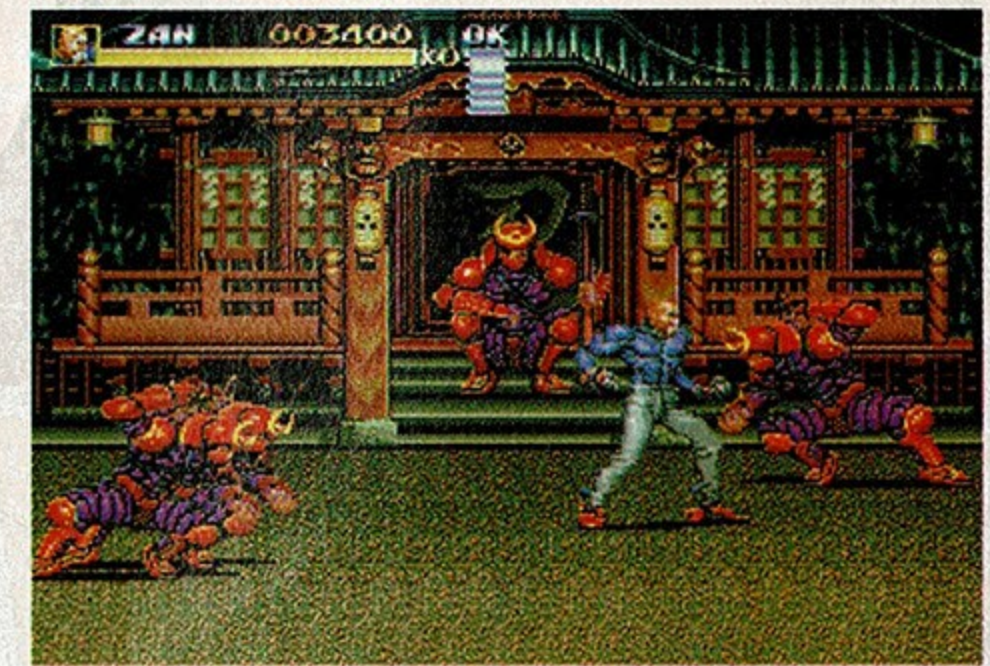
All these tricks – and the use of collected baseball bats, knives and sticks – are needed to inflict pain on the countless baddies which constantly swarm on screen. There are seven themed levels in all, each divided into three horizontally scrolling stages and ending with a superbaddie.

Nothing revolutionary, then, but this is still one very playable beat-'em-up – particularly in two-player mode. Great fun can be had trying out all the special moves which are very well animated. There are also an impressive number of sprites on screen at once and the backdrops have been enhanced, although there's perhaps not enough interaction with them. Possibly the best aspect of all is the soundtrack, with some excellent rave tunes and crunching FX accompanying the frenetic action.

The best *Streets Of Rage* game yet, if not that different from its predecessors.



I dunno about you but this looks more like *Streets of Flab* than *Streets of Rage*. Mind you though, if you ate that much lard, I bet your belly wouldn't arf rage!



That geezer on the left reminds me of my Auntie Dolly. She wasn't much good at fighting, but could she rave or what? But she'd like a good fight outside the chip shop.



I never saw my Auntie Dolly doing this but Uncle George said that she was really good at it!



Watch out Hong Kong Phooey, coz Daz White's out to get ya! Yeaahh. This game's great coz it don't make my brain hurt.



That lightning lad's really knocking 'em dead with his "I can eat 20 light bulbs and fart like a donkey" trick.


## MP

### FINAL VERDICT


"Despite boasting some really neat graphics, this is very much in the mould of its predecessors. Nevertheless it's a classic example of a beat-'em-up and definitely the biggest and best in the *SOR* series."

# STREETS OF RAGE III


SEGA  
£49.99  
OUT NOW




1 player



24Mbit



continues given



available in UK

STREETS OF RAGE	10
STREETS OF RAGE III	9
STREETS OF RAGE II	8
	7
	6
	5
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	2
	1

GAMEPLAY	85
GRAPHICS	86
SOUND	91
ADDICTION	80

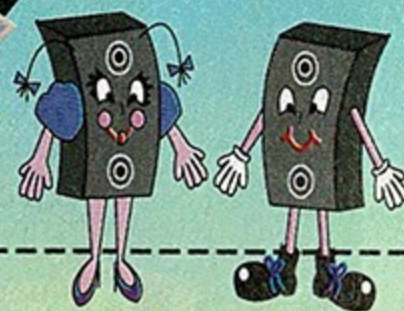
OVERALL

# 83

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# GAMEBUSTERS

Welcome to the game-busting grotto of MEGA POWER. If you need infinite lives, invulnerability or are looking for secret levels, this is the place to come. Of course, we're always on the lookout for new tips, so if you have some for any Mega-CD game, please do send them in. The sender of the best tips of the month will receive a free MEGA POWER sweatshirt.

## AFTER BURNER III

### Extra speed

On the options screen, put the view mode on Cockpit and the Rolling Mode to Free. When you take off, perform a 45° turn to fly much faster.

## BATMAN RETURNS

### Level select

On the options screen, highlight the 'driving only' section. Hold the pad LEFT and press B. Repeat this for all the options: when you reach the bottom, start going up the list again, repeating the procedure. A jingle sounds to confirm the cheat. During play, press START and then C to select the level.



## BLACK HOLE ASSAULT

### Secret game

Enter your name as AZY and highlight mission BHA. Enter AZY and you will start to play *Black Ball Assault!* (Try entering your name as BIGNET and press START while fighting an opponent...)



### Invincibility

Enter your name on the options screen as MUTEKI. Select operation BHA, enter you name as MUTEKI again and start playing. You're now invincible.

### Cheat

Enter your name as BIGNET. When you meet an opponent, press START to make him drop to the floor.

### Secret animation

Input your name as FOMA and select mission BHA.

## CHUCK ROCK

### Passwords

Level 2 - GJFKFN  
Level 3 - PDPKKN  
Level 4 - JWNTXF  
Level 5 - TSFVNP

## COBRA COMMAND

### Level select

On the title screen, press LEFT, RIGHT, A, B and C. Now press LEFT or RIGHT to change level.

## EARNEST EVANS

### Stage skip

Pause the game and press UP, A, DOWN, B, LEFT, A, RIGHT, B. Now unpaue.

### Warp

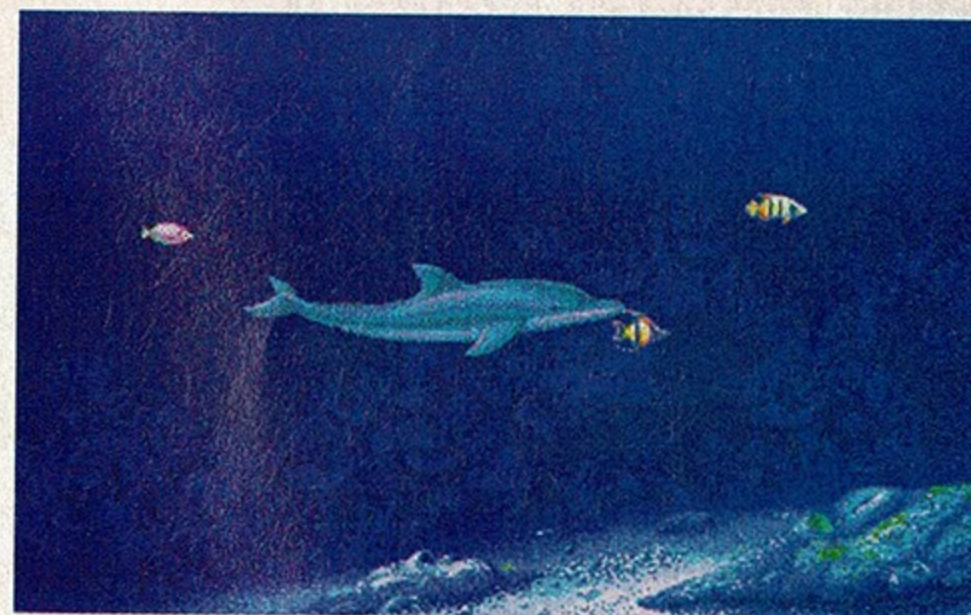
Climb the wall to the left of the starting point on Stage 6. When you are out of the screen you will warp to the boss on this stage.

## ECCO THE DOLPHIN

### Level passwords

Here are the passwords for all the levels, including the extra ones on CD...

Undercaves	GMRIQDCM
The Vents	IUEINLDP
The Lagoon	GRTJZYJF
Ridge Water	OVDJDSL B
Open Ocean	GM YMDLSI
Ice Zone	GMBRHSLU
Hard Water	UKZFHSL S
Cold Water	SYQJHSL Z
Open Ocean 2	CCVFFSL M
Island Zone	ALZBESL S
Deep Water	IHPFDSL P
Volcanic Reef	ADLYESL T
Ship Grave	INWUGSL U
Wreck Trap	WJHQGSL L
Sea Of Silence	IZSXGSL F



Deep Gate	AKNBHSLI
Marble Sea	QSOMFSLQ
The Library	WBTXFSLV
Deep City	UNIQFSLN
City Of Forever	WASUFSLB
Jurassic Beach	ONNB JPLY
Pteradon Pond	WPVXIPLL
Origin Beach	AQZIJPLG
Trilobite Beach	GKGFJPLK
Dark Water	GZIU KPLR
Deep Water 2	GAAGDPLP
City Of Forever	YLQQZNL M
The Tube	MNEYEL LB
The Machine	SKZNELLO
The Last Fight	KANZFLLX

### Level select

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

### Code

Enter SHARKFIN and press START. Your sonar now kills jellyfish and you don't need to go up for air.

### Infinite lives

Enter the code NIHPLODS

### Invincibility

During the explanation of the next level, hold A and START. Unpause and you'll be invincible.

### Blue whale control

Press UP, A, DOWN, LEFT, B, LEFT, C, C, DOWN when you swim Ecco next to the blue whale on Level 10. You can now control the whale.

## FINAL FIGHT

### Auto punch

Enter the options screen and highlight exit. Hold down RIGHT, A, B and START for automatic punching.

## HEAVY NOVA

### Hidden bonus

In versus mode, if you manage to kill a guardian without losing any energy you'll get one million points!

## HOOK

### 99 lives

Drop to the bottom of the first pit in the caves on level five. Walk right and swim under the rocks to the leaf and 3-up. Pick them up then kill yourself. Just repeat the technique to top up your lives to the max.

## JAGUAR XJ220

### Level skip

Go to 'name entry' on the options screen. Delete the current name and input MAR, then choose World Tour and select a race. When the race starts, pause the game, then press A, B and C together to win.

## KRIS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO

### Hidden scene

On the caller screen, press A, B, C and RIGHT.

## MARKY MARK: MAKE MY VIDEO

### Hidden scene

Hold A and C. Press START to go to the U-Direct mode and then A, B, C and RIGHT to see Marky Mark and his girls.

## NIGHT TRAP

### Extra footage

To see this, you have to complete the game first. When you see the words 'In Memory of Stephen D Hossefield' press UP, A, A, A, A, A to see the hidden sequence.

## ROAD AVENGER

### Level select

From the start, push UP to access the options screen, then press A six times. Now just play the game as usual.

### View mode

Push UP to access the options screen and press A five times, B five times and then press A to watch each level being played through.

### Pause mode

Push UP to access the options menu and press A four times, B once and A once. You can now pause the game by pressing START.



## SEWER SHARK

### Continues

Once you get to Exterminator or Beach Bum, press A, C and START on the 'game over' screen to continue.

## SILPHEED

### Stage select

During the opening demo press DOWN, DOWN, UP,

UP, RIGHT, LEFT, A, B, START. You can only play on the stage selected.

### Replenish shield

Press RIGHT, LEFT, A, RIGHT, UP, C, B, DOWN, LEFT, B, A, UP, START during opening demo. In the game, press A to restore your shield one notch.

### Ten continues

When the demo starts press RIGHT, UP, A, B, C, LEFT, LEFT, DOWN, C, A, START.

### Secret voice test

On the title screen, move to Option with pad one. Hold A, B and C on pad two and press START on pad one.

## SONIC CD

### Level select

On the title screen press UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, B to access a level select. It's tricky to get this cheat working, so try pressing the buttons gently.

### Special level

Go to Time Attack and play every level. On the options



screen there will now be something called D.A. Gardens. Select this and you'll see Sonic's world which you can rotate and enlarge as Tails and some birds fly by. You can also hear any music from the game.

## TIME GAL

### Passwords

1991AD - SHKXGJWF  
2001AD - XPTMCSHD  
2010AD - ZVYFLGQT  
3001AD - QWCDHRKT  
3999 AD - PLQTVMXY  
4000 AD - LKDWBSYF  
4001 AD - KVGPRZCW

### Level select

On the menu screen press UP, UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, UP. Go into the game and you can start on any level. START pauses the action and C takes you to end of the current level.

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## WOLFCHILD

### Level skip

On the options screen, press A, B, A, C, A and B to hear an explosion. Now press the following (keeping the buttons held down until the level appears)...

Level 2 - Press START  
Level 3 - Hold B and press START  
Level 4 - Hold C and press START  
Level 5 - Hold B, C and press START  
Level 6 - Hold A and press START  
Level 7 - Hold A, B and press START  
Level 8 - Hold A, C and press START  
Level 9 - Hold A, B, C and press START

## WONDER DOG

### Passwords

Dogsville - MYSTIC  
Dogsville - ANKLES  
Loony Moon - LEDZEP  
Planet Weird - REEVES  
Planet Foggia - PIXIES  
Planet Kninus - WOOPIE



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# CD

## what have you been missing?

Welcome to MEGA POWER'S 14-page guide to Mega-CD software.

Whether you have only just got your machine or are wondering what to spend your hard-earned cash on next, this A-Z of games should prove to be a valuable index to one of the fastest evolving and most exciting game market places around. Each month we'll be adding new games to this section for a 'living guide'.

Read, absorb, and amaze your friends with your new-found knowledge...



## The Adventures Of Willy Beamish Sega Dynamix £1mport



**T**ake on the role of Willy Beamish, schoolboy games nut. You eat, sleep and breathe video games, and all you want from life is to win the 'Nintari' Video Games Championship. The problem is, this year's tournament takes place on a school day, and you're going to have to skive off in order to enter. And unless you're very careful, you're going to get caught in the act. Practising your favourite Nintari game in your room will help set you up for the Championship, but unless you can keep away from teachers and so forth, you're never going to win!

*Willy Beamish* was very successful on PC and, like *Rise Of The Dragon*, we can expect to see more of these conversions in the future (*Leisure Suit Larry* is a cert). The control system is the same as *Rise Of The Dragon*; point and click with multiple-choice sentences for conversation, and the game also enjoys a rather natty line in animation. On the downside, while *Rise Of The Dragon* has a strong plotline, *Willy Beamish* doesn't. That, added to a painfully long loading time and the fact that if you cock up, you're dead meat, means that *Willy Beamish* takes a lot of patience to play.

## Afterburner III Sega £39.99

**P**ilot your F-14 Tomcat through various war zones, killing foreign pilots and ground crew in a selection of explosive ways. Far from being the third in a continuing and improving series, this is very similar to the second game. It boasts three different play styles, but all these are basically the normal game with a different set of stats to them.

Graphics are pretty simplistic with some very bland backgrounds. The sprites are big and there are some great explosions to look and listen to, but the only really neat graphical touch is the way your view switches to an enemy's cockpit whenever they get a lock onto you.

It's a decent enough blast, with plenty of aircraft and bombing runs to keep your adrenaline rushing, but without the soundtrack and a tiny bit of scaling, there's nothing here that couldn't have been done on a cartridge.



## Batman Returns Sega £39.99

**T**ake the dull side-scrolling platform cartridge game, chuck it on a CD and voilà, you almost have *Batman Returns*. Luckily, what saves this game's bacon is the fact that Sega decided to make some use of the Mega-CD's extra processor by adding on a driving section. Viewed from behind the Batmobile, you control the car as members of The Penguin's Circus Gang try and force you off the road with other cars, bikes, missile launchers and even a huge refuse lorry. The sprite scaling is particularly impressive as the gang's trucks go up in flames when you fire at them and force them off the road.

Certainly only worth buying for this section, unless you're a really forgiving sort who can stand the iffy platform beat 'em up!



## Annette Again Wolfteam £1mport

**R**emember Earnest Evans? Well, Annette popped up in his game, 'coz she's his girlfriend. *Annette Again* is the sequel to her original game, *El Viento*, and this time Earnie make a cameo appearance.

Whilst *El Viento* provided some limited enjoyment, the sequel doesn't live up to the promise of the original. Following in the same sword 'n' sorcery mould, it's nothing more than a sprawling beat-'em-up, with the accent on the sword rather than the sorcery. The gameplay is typical hack and slash fare, and there's really nothing new here. If you got *Golden Axe* in your Mega-CD bundle, stick with that.



## Bill Walsh College Football EA Sports £39.99

**P**reviously released on cartridge, this classic American football simulation has only a few CD enhancements. The soundtrack was beefed up, including a booming theme tune, cheering crowd and crunching hitting FX. Then there's a load of video clips of master coach Bill Walsh, giving you advice on tactics and even how to choose a college!

Bill's chats aren't exactly enthralling, but the game itself as playable as the cartridge version – mainly because it's identical. It's a very realistic simulation of the sport, improving on EA's previous gridiron games with better strategy and computer intelligence. It also has a lower pitch perspective and 4 Way Play compatibility.

Some may moan about the lack of CD extras; but with the price £5 cheaper than the cart, you can't really complain.





**C**ore chucked out the instruction booklet for this CD sequel and put the whole thing on the disc itself. This includes a spectacular cartoon intro that's as funny as it is impressive – certainly one of the best seen on Mega-CD.

The action is much the same as in the cartridge version. This is a no-nonsense cutesy platform game, with the baby caveman hero clubbing his way through horizontally scrolling levels and coming up against huge (but still cute) dinosaurs. The cartoon-style graphics are very colourful, but the infant hero has little charm. A lot of the sparkle of the first adventure has been lost and the soundtrack is particularly disappointing after *Chuck Rock* on CD.

Not the best of sequels, and not a great improvement on the cart version, but still a fairly playable prehistoric romp.

## Chuck Rock 2: Son Of Chuck Core £44.99



## Chuck Rock Sony £39.99

**T**here was Chuck, sitting quietly one day watching the box while the love of his life, Ophelia, was hanging out the washing. Suddenly Chuck's arch enemy, Gary Gritter, kidnaps his woman and runs off! Never one to sit around when his woman has been dragged away, Chuck sets off after Gary through five prehistoric levels, each with a number of separate stages, belly-butting and kicking his way past dinosaurs and other monsters before reaching his final showdown with Gary.

While there's very little here that isn't on the original cartridge, Chuck's 'Ooga Booga' and the myriad of cartoon-style sampled sound effects make it far better than its original incarnation. Chuck's animation is fantastic and while it's a bit of a pain constantly topping up on food to increase your energy level – some of the prehistoric birds are just impossible to hit – there's no doubt that *Chuck Rock* has heaps of gameplay.



## Devastator Wolfteam £import

## Cobra Command Sega £39.99

**O**riginally bundled with the Mega-CD, along with Sega's Classics CD, *Cobra Command* is also available as a stand-alone game. Hugely popular on import when it first came out, Wolfteam's animated point-and-click interactive game really showed players the Mega-CD's potential.

You take the controls of a helicopter gunship and fly from the cockpit as you take out international terrorists. From the skies above New York to Easter Island and the terrorists' secret base, it's up to you to knock their hardware out of the sky, and decimate their land forces.

The graphics are all animated in the style of a cartoon, which means that your actual interaction is limited to moving the on-screen gunsight left, right, up and down in response to your co-pilot's orders, or the flashing green arrows that appear on screen to direct you. Targeting the enemy aircraft and land forces isn't easy, although the speed your sight moves can be altered in the game options. Get your aim wrong, and you'll be treated to a lovely series of animations of your chopper exploding and ploughing into the ground. The sound is excellent, while those animé-style graphics really give the game atmosphere. Unfortunately, the point-and-click nature of the game means it eventually becomes dull unless you activate a level-skip cheat.



**A**s 'assault suits' feature in more and more cartridge games, it was only a matter of time before they hit the Mega-CD too. Here you control a hefty assault suit which is meant to be massive but, for some reason, appears as a titchy – albeit highly mobile – sprite. Like all platform shooters, you can grab power-ups and health add-ons to improve your chances against the massive enemies you'll face off against, while you're also armed with a large grappling hook. Don't ask us why.

The graphics are pretty enough, even with that small main sprite, and the side-scrolling is smooth. But aside from that now-standard CD-quality sound, there's nothing here that couldn't have been done on an 8 or 12 Meg cartridge, so why bother sticking it on a CD?



# CD



# PREVIEW



## Double Switch Sega £44.99

**D**esigned by Digital Pictures, the folks that brought us *Ground Zero Texas*, this comes as something of a disappointment. It's very similar to *Night Trap* as you watch Full Motion Video clips and try to catch the villains by activating traps at precisely the right moment.

This time the spooky action takes place in a dilapidated mansion, where the hero Eddie (played by *Lost Boys* star Corey Haim) has been imprisoned in the basement by baddies who want to steal the house's hidden treasure. It's up to you to catch them using Eddie's high-tech security system, switching between cameras to follow the action in each room.

The simplistic gameplay entails a mad rush round the rooms to catch the villains in time – one mistake can be fatal. Sadly this means you don't have time to appreciate the FMV clips and follow the plot properly.



## Dracula Sony £39.99

**A** classic story told many times on film and now on the Mega-CD. You play Jonathan Harker, currently residing at Castle Dracula, home of you-know-who, and it's your job to rid the world of the blood-sucker and all his minions.

For those of you who have been on Mars since 1992, *Dracula* is the platform licence of the film which Sony originally released for review purposes many months ago. Let's just say that the game had some reasonably serious flaws which led Sony to withdraw it, following a series of rather unkind reviews. At last, a software producer which listens to its critics!

Although this new and improved version of *Dracula* has had sufficient adjustments made, it's still essentially a side-scrolling beat-'em-up, give or take a bit of FMV. Harker has a number of fightin' moves available to him with which you can whump the various evil doers who come your way. The digitised backgrounds look a treat, and even the animation is now slicker. But in the end, it's all still too simplistic to provide a long-term challenge.



## Dracula Unleashed Sega £49.99

**N**ot to be confused with Psygnosis's *Dracula*, this is a two-disc adventure with 85 minutes of FMV clips. You play the role of the American hero Alexander Morris, searching around vampire-infested Victorian London as he tries to solve the mystery of his brother's murder.

Travelling around the city is done by horse and carriage, choosing a destination from your address book – you collect more addresses, clues and items as you progress. Entering each location brings up a certain FMV sequence, depending on what time it is and sometimes what object you're holding. You just have to sit back and watch the results as there's nothing to do during the video clips.

A nice spooky atmosphere is created, although it's marred by some dreadful ham acting and hilarious attempts at Cockney accents. The adventuring gets a bit repetitive too, as you often have to resort to trial and error to be in the right time at the right place.



## Dune CD Virgin £44.99

**T**he planet Arrakis, also known as Dune: homeworld of rebel Paul Atreides and the unique Spice that expands the mind and makes space and time travel a piece of cake. The only problem is, the Harkonnen race want to control the Spice, and they're willing to kill everyone on Arrakis in order to get it. As leader of the Fremen, it's your job to use your special powers to gain control of the Spice and defeat the Harkonnen once and for all.

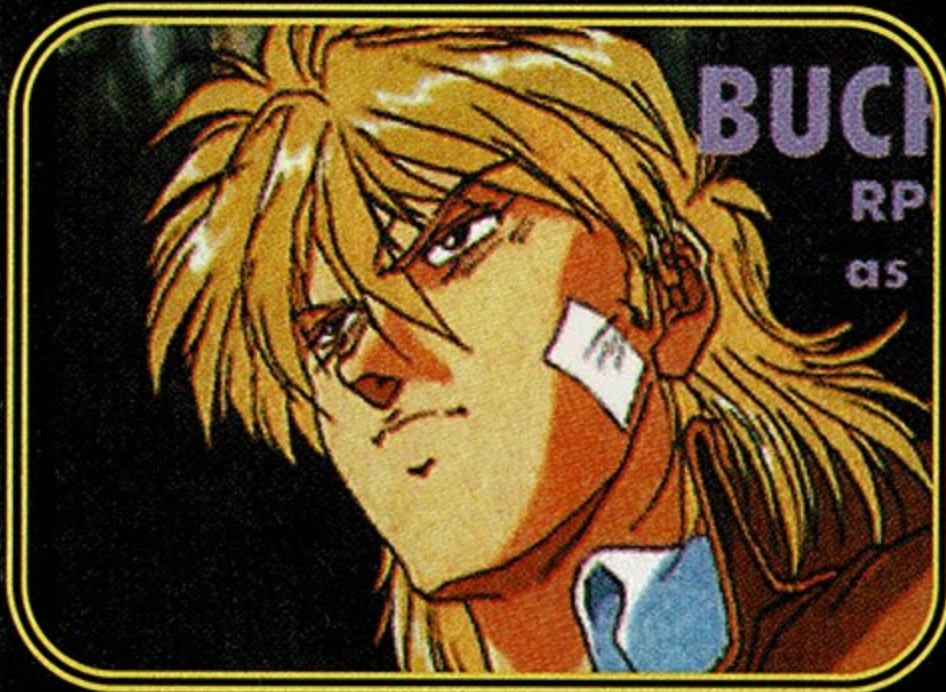
Based on David Lynch's film of Frank Herbert's ultra-successful Dune novels, *Dune CD* is remarkably faithful to Lynch's narrative. Using a point-and-click interface, you view the action in first-person perspective and move within the game by selecting destinations on a main map. Meeting characters allows you to question them, while some of the characters will join your cause. Questioning people will take you to further destinations, although this can become a bit linear in the long run, as you feel the game decides what you do next, and not you the player.

In-game graphics are stunning, with beautiful animation on the characters as they address you. The only slight annoyance is the game's lengthy CD access time. A great title if you're a fan of adventure games, but not much cop if you're a frantic shoot-'em-up fan.



# IV

**Earnest Evans**  
**Wolfteam**  
**£Import**

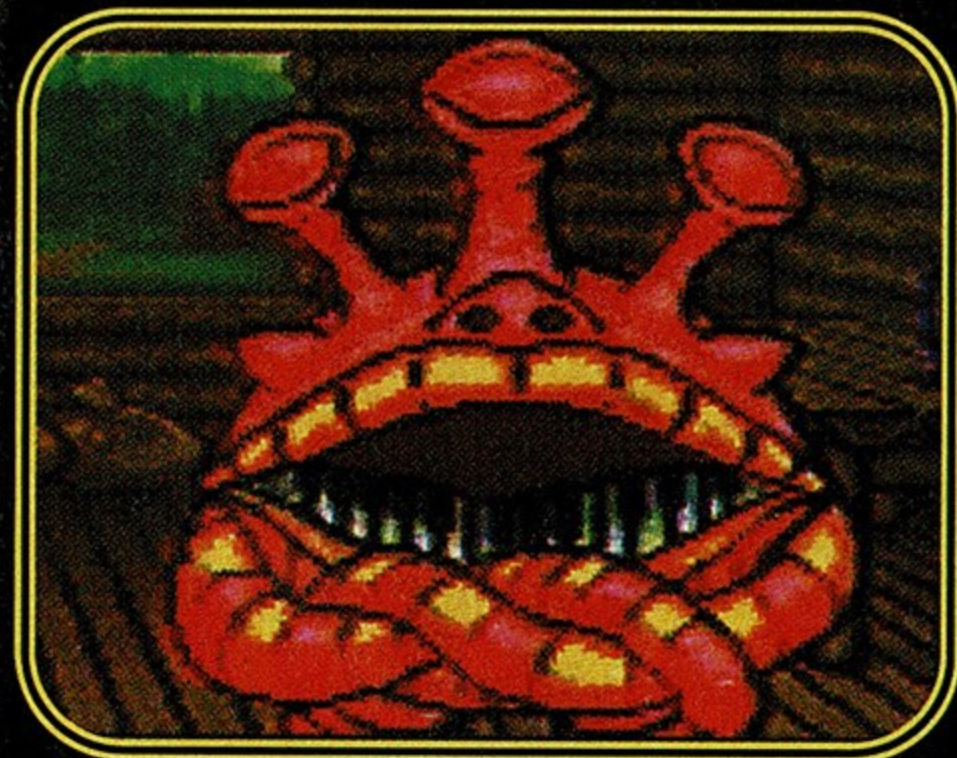


**O**ne of the first and still one of the best. Impressive graphics and weird animation that made the main character look like a Bill and Ben puppet gave us an early taste of what the CD might be capable of. It was also the first sight for many of the Japanese Manga-style cartoon graphics. Packed with challenging gameplay and well-rendered adversaries, *Earnest Evans* was excitingly different and still possesses a quirky originality today.

Great storyline, lovely cartoon sequences and a pumping soundtrack won this game a place in many a gamer's heart.

**Funky Horror Band**  
**Sega**  
**£Import**

**U**h! Is the standard reaction to this game. Spaced-out and loaded with outlandish Jap humour, this game is virtually unplayable for anyone outside of Japan. It is a text-intensive RPG and as such you spend most of the time staring at screens that resemble take-away menus. Great soundtrack though.



**Ecco The Dolphin**  
**Sega**  
**£39.99**

**D**uring a storm, Ecco loses track of his dolphin pack and has to travel the oceans solving puzzles and enlisting the help of other creatures in order to find his friends.

Little different to the cartridge version, *Ecco* is basically an underwater puzzle game which sees you swimming around caves and trying to avoid enemies like jellyfish, sharks and octopuses whilst using your sonar to locate clues and special crystals. To be honest, this is one of those games that you'll either love or hate.

The graphics are absolutely gorgeous, and they haven't been tweaked for the CD. Indeed, if you discount a little Library FMV section, all that is really different is the stunning sound. The gameplay is limited, given the complexity of the task you face, with Ecco headbutting (it makes a hideous noise!) enemies and finding his way around with sonar beeps. The only problem is that unless you really, really love puzzle games, this could become tiresome after a while. Still one of Sega's best products, though.



**Final Fight**  
**Sega**  
**£44.99**



**F**uy and Mike Haggar make it onto the CD in a classic conversion of Capcom's arcade beat-'em-up. Whether you play it in two-player mode or on your own, *Final Fight* is a tremendous game, with heaps of gameplay despite having only *Streets Of Rage*-type special moves.

Each of the characters has their own style of fighting; Haggar is a bullish wrestling type, while Cody is a dirty elbow fighter and Guy does martial arts. There are hordes of Mad Gear gang members to take out, and the fighting action is fast and furious. Health power-ups hide in bits of scenery and whenever an enemy drops a weapon, you can pick it up to use it yourself. The bosses aren't too tough, but you'll still need to be good, especially as the game progresses.

The graphics are great, and don't lose too much depth given the Mega-CD's limited palette, while the sprites are big and meaty. For added enjoyment, there's even a time-attack feature which, like most of the game, features a pounding rock soundtrack. All in all, a kickin' beat-'em-up,

## Ground Zero Texas Sony £44.99

**S**et in the quaint Texas border town of El Cadron, you play the part of a tactical expert investigating the growing number of disappearances from the town's population. You soon discover that the place is crawling with aliens. Armed with special weapons you go in after the murderous space monsters and soon find yourself slap bang in the middle of a science-fiction meets the wild west shoot-out.

Directed by Dwight H Little, the man behind big movies like *Halloween 4* and *Rapid Fire*, *Ground Zero Texas* is a brilliantly interactive blaster. With over 110 minutes of movie footage and four different locations, the gameplay never really gets boring. On each level, you switch between cameras to shoot it out against the aliens and watch some very impressive FMV clips with decent video quality. Your friends will be impressed.



## Heavy Nova & Black Hole Assault Sega £39.99

**H**heavy *Nova* and its sequel *Black Hole Assault* are both rather odd robotic beat-'em-ups. Like *Street Fighter II*, both games are one-on-one affairs for either one or two players. There are a number of metallic fighters on offer, and each has a limited number of special moves available to it – if you can get them to work, that is.

All that aside, the thing you really need to know about both *Heavy Nova* and *Black Hole Assault* is that as games, they're both a shuddering pile of splk. The concept of battling robots may be a good one, but the limited graphics and dreary gameplay mean that these aren't worth looking into. Wait for *Rise Of The Robots*.



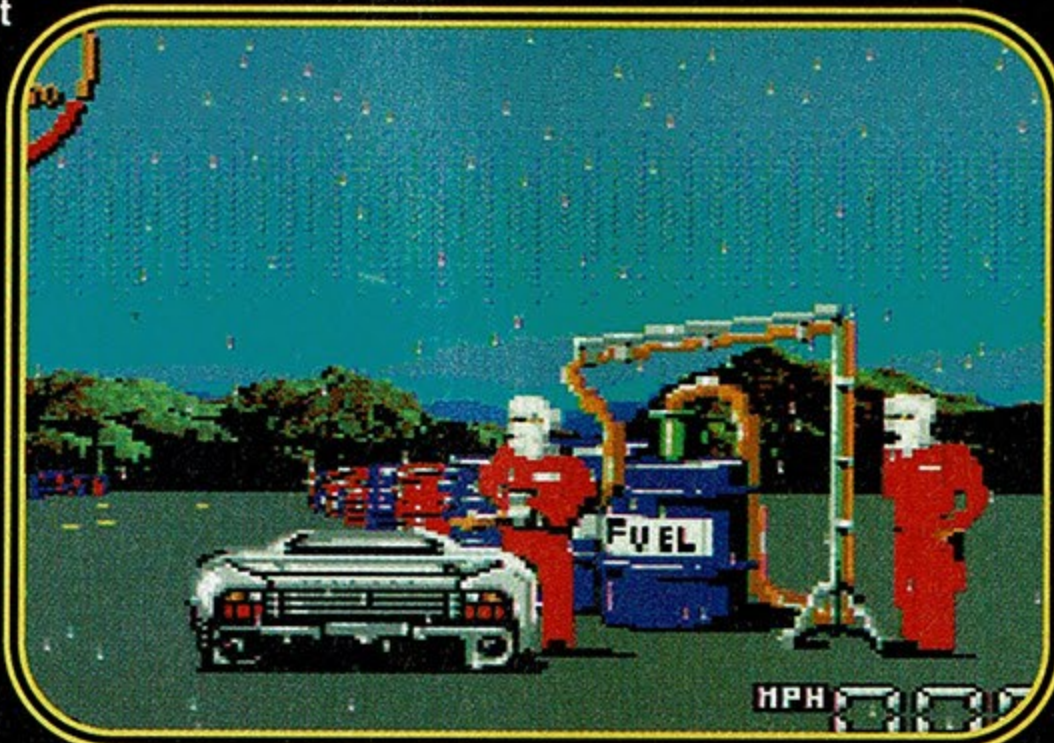
## Hook Sony £1import



**U**nless you've suddenly just inherited £500,000 or so, then this is the closest any of us will ever get to driving the world's fastest production car, the Jaguar XJ220. Compete for money on the World Tour and improve your car's specs along the way, as you visit 16 different countries around the world. Alternatively, you can compete in the Grand Prix game for Championship points, although in this mode you can't select the order in which you visit the 16 courses. There's even a Track Edit mode to fiddle about with when you're not racing solo or with a mate.

The action is viewed from behind your car, a fairly hefty silver sprite. Unfortunately, that's about as good as the graphics get. The locations you visit are all virtually identical – unless all 16 countries feature a similar mountain range! – and visually bland. And, far from making use of the Mega-CD's scaling abilities... well, see for yourself. Coupled with access times from hell, this makes *Jaguar XJ220* a non-starter.

## Jaguar XJ220 Sega £39.99



**P**eter Banning, mild-mannered dad and lawyer, never imagined that he would go back to Neverland, home of Peter Pan and Captain Hook. In fact, he couldn't even remember being there in the first place. But when his children are kidnapped by the evil Hook, it's time for Banning to be reminded of his past life as Peter Pan and regain the Golden Sword in order to free his children. Battling fierce pirates, skeletons and even giant worms, Peter has to fight his way through 11 levels of mayhem before reaching his old enemy for the final battle.

Attractive graphics, although the sprites are a little titchy, and an amazing soundtrack are the highpoints in *Hook*. It's an addictive little game with simple gameplay and an addictiveness which keeps you coming back to it; although with infinite continues it's relatively easy to finish.

The main criticism is that old chestnut about *Hook* being a game that, with the exception of the odd fancy graphic and that soundtrack, could easily have been crammed onto cartridge – and since has been.



# CD

## Joe Montana's NFL Football Sega £44.99

**M**ilking their licence even though Joe isn't with the 49ers any more, Sega bring the NFL to the CD. Take your favourite team from the full choice of 28 through a full season and into the Superbowl play-offs while Joe provides you with help every now and then. Those of you familiar with previous Montana games will know the controls and the playbook which, while not as user-friendly as *Madden's*, is just as good.



The skill level can be altered and you can play solo or against a mate. The graphics make reasonable use of the Mega-CD, with the players and pitch scaling, while there's the obligatory CD sound. While generally great, the graphics can be a little blocky at times, and it must be said that the playability of the Montana games was never up to the standard of EA's efforts. However, there are plenty of nice touches here to keep you interested, including great FMV clips of Joe giving you hints and tips.

## Jurassic Park Sega £49.99

**C**ompletely different from the cartridge version, this massive adventure offers a first-person perspective of the huge dinosaur-infested park. You have 12 hours (real-time) to collect at least one of every species of dinosaur's eggs and take them to the incubator in the visitors centre. As well as searching for eggs and shooting rampaging dinosaurs, there are plenty of logical puzzles to solve using collected objects.

The graphics are a real treat, with the impressive landscape panning smoothly as you turn round. The only flaw is that the dinosaurs themselves are a little too cartoony to be truly terrifying. However, the eerie atmosphere is enhanced by a superb QSound soundtrack and there's even some FMV clips of palaeontologist Dr Robert T Bakker providing educational dinosaur information.

Maybe there's not quite enough action to keep you hooked for eons, but this is certainly one of the more atmospheric Mega-CD games around.

08:37:12  
E S



## Lethal Enforcers Konami £54.99

**T**his one was a real blast in the arcades, and looks set to do the same on consoles. You take the role of a rookie cop out on the streets and facing down bank robbers, terrorists and Chinese Tongs. Armed with your large blue light gun

(included in the purchase price), it's down to you to rid the streets of the scum. As you complete the levels, you have the chance to sharpen up your targeting in bonus rounds, and during the game you can power up to different guns such as Magnums, shotguns and machine guns by firing at their icons. The bad guys are out in force, and it's all too easy – and tempting – to hit a cop or an innocent victim with a stray shot. Do well enough, and you'll climb through the ranks. Fail a level and you'll have to repeat it.

The six levels vary in location from a bank to the airport, and although the game doesn't exactly require the brains of a master strategist, you will need to be sharp and quick. The Full Motion Video is fairly good, although it's still a little grainy and not a patch on the real arcade game. With sampled gunshots and that adrenaline rush, though, it's still great fun. The only real question is its longevity.

## Lunar – The Silver Star Sega £Import

ATTACK  
NALL  
RUN



**T**his epic Japanese RPG has four cutesy characters making a fantastic journey in search of the evil Black Dragon. Friends Alex, Ramus, Luna, and the magical catlike creature Nall, travel around the scrolling overhead-view countryside. At various points they run into helpful characters who can be questioned, and mutant creatures who attack in gangs. Encountering the latter results in a simple battle sequence where you have to tell each character whether to attack, retreat or use magic. Weapons and other useful items can be purchased or bartered in the shops in the many villages around the land.

*Lunar* is a truly massive adventure, packed with everything you could want in a quality roleplaying game. The superb storyline and challenging puzzles should keep you totally engrossed until you manage to finish it. Undoubtedly the best RPG available on the Mega-CD.

# VI

# CD



## Mad Dog McCree American Laser Games £Import



## Make My Video Sega £44.99

**W**hat more can be said about this game? A smash hit in the arcades, the conversion to CD is more than a little ropy but still possesses all the humour and action of its predecessor as you run around town gunning down outlaws and saving the sheriff from gangs of marauding hoodlums.

The game uses a lot of static-backdrop shoot-outs along with plenty of FMV sequences. Unfortunately the graphics in both are appallingly grainy, so it's often hard to see where the baddies are in time. This is made even worse when playing with a joypad, as you sometimes can't move your cross-hair across the screen fast enough. It's all very frustrating and particularly disappointing for fans of the classic coin-op.

**U**nder this banner we include everyone who has released CDs so far, from Marky Mark, INXS, C+C Music Factory to Kriss Kross. The format for each is essentially the same. Your CD comes with three music videos of the artist's top songs, and you are given the opportunity of playing around with them using the Make My Video editing suite. Mix the actual video



footage with other clips, rotate, flip, sing-a-long-a-Max: you name it, and it's here. The format changes a little bit from CD to CD, but the basic idea remains the same.

Sega are obviously thinking about new ways to explore video-gaming, but with a mere three songs to each disc, and the fact that you can only save one video at any one time, the enjoyment has to be fairly short-lived.

## Microcosm CD Psygnosis £44.99



**E**ver fancied yourself as Dennis Quaid? Well now's your chance, as you relive the films *Fantastic Voyage* and *Inner Space* by taking an armed micro-submersible inside a human body!

The first thing that hits you are the intro graphics. Psygnosis staff were blue-screened and digitised into the opening shots, and it's exceptionally well done. And it doesn't stop

there, either. Viewing the action from your ship, you'll have to wipe out various bacteria and antibodies, all out to attack your craft. Powering up your weapons gives you a better chance against them, as well as the end-of-level guardians. With each stage featuring a different area of the body, the background graphics are tremendous, although you can't really interact with them, aside from smashing into the sides.

The problem with *Microcosm* is that it's a bit deceptive. Whilst it looks ultra slick, in actual fact it's just a basic shoot-'em-up. What makes it different is the well-pitched difficulty curve, and the adrenaline rush you get playing it. A very simple, addictive game that might be linear, but it's a good blast all the same.

## NFL's Greatest Sega £Import

**T**he chance to pitch classic Dallas and San Francisco teams against each other in *Full Motion Video*? It's certainly a mouth-watering prospect for most American football fans. Of course, it's all too good to be true...

Without doubt one of the worst Mega-CD games ever made, this incredibly simplistic strategy game has you selecting from a limited array of offensive and defensive plays. You then sit back and watch a vaguely relevant video sequence taken from the NFL's archive footage of the two teams.

The FMV is the worst ever seen on the Mega-CD. For some reason the video clips are designed to run in a tiny window on the screen, so when expanded to full-screen they look so blocky you can hardly tell what's going on. Even worse, there are surprisingly few different clips, so you soon get tired of seeing the same ones again and again. Avoid this game like the plague.



## Mystery Mansion Sega £49.99



**A** brother and a sister are wandering through a wood when the girl sees a butterfly and decides to chase it. She follows the insect into a mysterious mansion and disappears. It turns out that the owner of the house has been enticing people in and turning them into butterflies! You take the role of the brother as he explores the spooky old house in search of his sibling.

This 3-D adventure features impressive rendered graphics as you walk through the mansion's many rooms and hallways. Ported down from a powerful computer, the graphics look a bit grainy, but move smoothly enough. Also, you're not quite free to explore as you please, as the game often guides your view to important objects, updating the screen as you move towards them.

The best thing about *Mystery Mansion* is its intense atmosphere, aided by a superb soundtrack with lots of spooky FX and sampled speech. Every room is crammed with detail, with lots of furniture and objects, so there's always something interesting to discover. Unfortunately, for an adventure it's all far too easy to complete – mainly due to the way you are given obvious clues for what to do next, eg fetch and object from a certain room. What a shame.





## NHL Hockey '94 EA Sports £39.99

**A**nother classic Electronic Arts sports sim gets converted to CD with only aesthetic enhancements. These include a very impressive full-screen FMV intro, video clips of the teams in action and a souped-up soundtrack (even down to the tacky organ tunes!). They've also sampled Ron Barr talking for ages about the teams and player matchups.

The action itself is identical to the cartridge version, but that's no great problem when it's this playable. Some ice-hockey aficionados may be

miffed at the omission of fighting sequences, but this is the most realistic hockey sim yet. Improvements over previous EA hockey games include better sprite animation, 4 Way Play compatibility and net-minders who come out of their nets to start quick counter-attacks.

It's a pity they couldn't have incorporated a full NHL season for the CD version, but it's still great value with all the extras for a fiver less than the cart.



## Night Trap Sega £44.99

**T**eenage girls have been disappearing at the home of Mr and Mrs Martin. The authorities have sent you in as part of SCAT (Sega Control Attack Team) to find out what happened to the girls and keep the Martins' five new guests safe and sound.

To help you out, the whole house is wired with hidden cameras and booby traps which you can use to keep track of the girls, the Martins and the mysterious intruders known as the Augs.

Allow the girls to be kidnapped, or let Augs take over the house and your boss comes on line to pull the plug on you: Game Over.

Aside from the media hype and its '15' certificate, *Night Trap* still shines as a good example of the FMV/interactive genre. The involving, strategic gameplay might not be everybody's cup of tea, while the 'save the scantily-clad girls' concept might not be politically correct these days. However, the game is atmospheric and enthralling, so if you don't mind girls in their undies, grainy FMV and a great soundtrack, then this is for you.



## Night Striker Taito £Import

**H**ere's a game to buy for someone you don't like. *Night Striker* received seriously bad reviews from all and sundry. Aside from the Japanese manual and iffy plot, what you have here is a very dodgy hybrid of *Batman Returns* driving and *Lawnmower Man* flying. If, of course, *Night Striker* was of comparable quality. It's not. Enemy planes and trucks are massive bitmapped affairs that



scale about as well as a Game Gear game. The colourful backgrounds almost make up for things, but since they're usually obscured by massive flickering bitmapped explosions, you don't get to see them too often. While it might be relatively smooth, it ain't fun to play

## The Ninja Warriors Taito £Import

**T**his is a walking beat-'em-up of the lowest order. The sideways scrolling may be smooth, but the appalling lack of variety in the gameplay and the minimal number of moves available to your characters means that unless you're absolutely desperate for a two-player ninja game, you should avoid this one like the plague.

The graphics are very poor, although your main sprite isn't too badly defined. But the range of moves (ha!) can make things appear jerky at times. Yet another CD that wouldn't look out of place on a Master System cart. Stick to *Revenge Of Shinobi* on the Sega Classics disc, or better still, pick up *Final Fight*.

# CD



## Prince Of Persia Sega £39.99



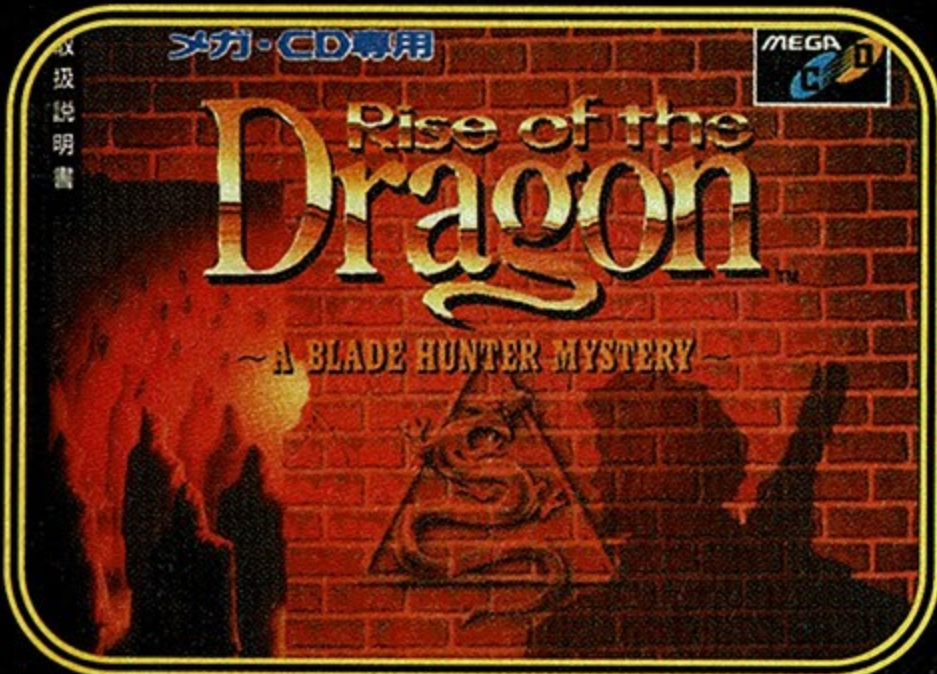
**T**he sinister Grand Vizier Jaffar has taken over your kingdom and chucked you into the deepest, darkest dungeon. Worse still, he plans to marry the Sultan's daughter – your bird – in an hour, and if she refuses to marry, he'll kill her. Vikes! You've only got 60 minutes to save the Princess. It's up to you to climb, swing, jump and fence your way to the evil Jaffar's inner sanctum, killing guards, solving puzzles to open doors and avoiding traps along the way.

*Prince Of Persia* ranks alongside *Lemmings* in terms of gameplay and the number of systems it has now appeared on. The Mega-CD version is essentially the same as it is on every other format. With one exception... it looks very rough. Not only does the SNES game look far prettier and include extra levels, but the Mega-CD version isn't even as smooth as the 8-bit Master System one! It's still a fine puzzle game if you can get past the fiddly controls, and there's some lovely rotoscoped graphics on the main sprite, but with 650 Meg of space on a CD, you'd be well within your rights to expect something a bit flashier.

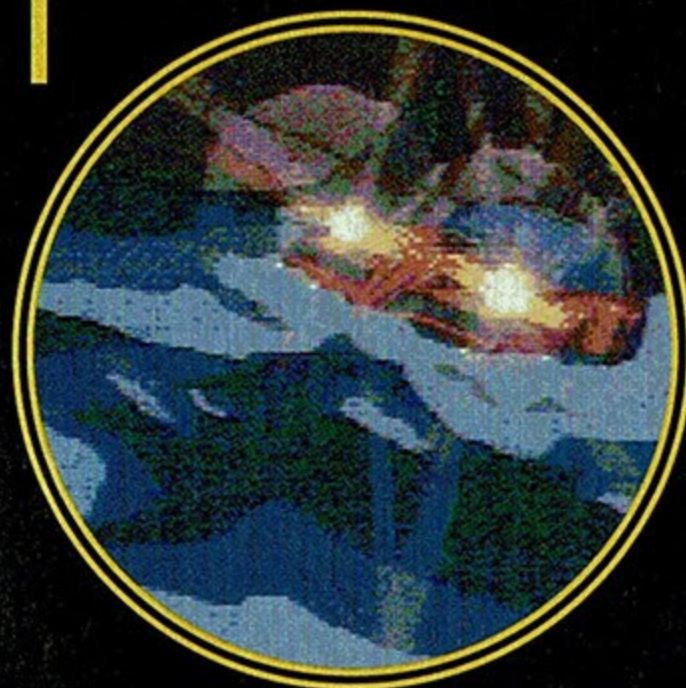
## Rise of the Dragon Dynamix £Import

**Y**ou're Blade Hunter, futuristic PI in this sexy cyberpunk adventure game. The mayor's daughter has died after taking some weird new drug, and he wants you to discover who manufactured it. Travelling across the city via the underground, you visit bars and break into criminal's houses in your search for clues before meeting up with the real villains.

Very successful on both PC and Mac, *Rise Of The Dragon* is split into two types of gameplay. There's the point-and-click side, which allows you to explore, add things to your inventory and talk to other characters by giving you multiple-choice replies. Plus there's an arcade shooting section. There's so much depth to this game that any review would be too short. The graphics are fantastic: it's like a graphic novel. True, there's isn't a lot of animation, but it all looks very slick, right down to your dripping tap. The only problem with the game is the CD access time. Other than that, *Rise Of The Dragon* is a challenging, thoroughly enjoyable title.



## Road Avenger Sega £44.99



**D**irected by Ron Stein, the man behind the fight scenes in the Rocky and Raging Bull movies, this FMV game puts you in the boots of 'The Kid' as he attempts to win the world boxing title.

The most obvious thing is that the FMV is all in black and white but, as in Raging Bull, this seems to add to the incredible atmosphere. While the lengthy pre-fight scenes are full of clichéd boxing humour, the fights themselves are dramatic and brutal. Viewing everything in first-person perspective, you see your boxing gloves superimposed on the video footage of your opponent as he ducks and dives around the ring. Connecting with punches is very tricky at first, as you have to throw the right punch at the right time. Thankfully, the handy training mode puts arrows on the screen to help you.

It's all a very novel and enjoyable experience and the nearest thing yet to actually getting in the ring without fear of getting hurt. The only problem is that with only four fighters to beat, the long-term appeal is very limited.



## Prize Fighter Sega £49.99

**F**rom Wolfteam, the people who brought you *Cobra Command*, *Road Avenger* follows a similar line, except that you're now in the seat of a rather nifty car instead of a gunship. It's your job to hurtle through the streets and country roads, wasting thugs who leap onto your bonnet etc, and trying to keep your car on the road as bad guys attempt to force you off. Tight control of your brakes and turbo booster are the order of the day.

Whilst *Cobra Command* was a little let down by the limited gameplay, *Road Avenger* is much improved. The action is fast and furious, accompanied by a thumping soundtrack that keeps that adrenaline pumping. There are accidents all around you, and hitting pedestrians only adds to the buzz. One neat touch is the way the viewpoint suddenly shifts to let you watch the carnage you've caused along the way.

The animated graphics are fantastic, with some mega explosions and crashes, and plenty of new and gripping ways for you to die as you smash into buildings and so on. Far more polished than *Cobra Command*, this is still essentially a point-and-click affair with tweaked gameplay. It's great fun, but those eight levels won't last forever.

## Robo Aleste Sega £39.99

**W**hat we have here is the Mega-CD's first vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up, viewed from overhead – obviously – as the hero Nobunaga and his jetpack hurtle over scenic countryside chock-a-block with

bad dudes all out to shoot your assault suit out of the air.

Although the programmers have made some effort to use the MCD's sprite-scaling chip, it isn't really done to any great extent. You mainly notice it as you plunge into level one, and when the bitmapped enemy ships descend to your height. Other than that, the graphics are remarkably Mega Drive. Although some of the backgrounds are impressive, you spend a lot of time simply trying to spot your sprite on those levels and, while there are a fair selection of baddies to waste, you soon find out that this is simply a mindless blaster.

Really, other than some nice sound effects and tunes, this is a barely average shoot-'em-up in what has always been a crowded market. With so many good ones on the Mega Drive, why on Earth would you want a mediocre shooter for your Mega-CD?

## The Secret Of Monkey Island JVC £1mport

**M**onkey Island was the adventure game for PC, Amiga and Mac owners, and now you can play it on the Mega-CD. You take the part of Guybrush Threepwood, apprentice pirate. To prove yourself able and willing, you're set a series of challenges by your pirate mates. Complete these, and your pirate membership card is in the post.

Simple controls – that point-and-click affair again – with multiple choice for dialogue makes Monkey Island a piece of cake to play. But it's the humour that makes the game so addictive. Even as you wander around the travelling circus or visit the ghost pirate LeChuck, you'll be laughing. This is not an adventure game to be taken seriously. The graphics are top notch, with some excellent music and spot effects. It even makes those old CD loading delays worth sitting through.



## Sega Classicm CD Sega £n/a

**I**ncluded in the original bundle for the Mega-CD, this CD contains five classic Mega Drive games. The only problem is, none of them have been enhanced in any way. What you get is *Streets Of Rage*, *Columns*, *Revenge Of Shinobi*, *Golden Axe* and *Super Monaco GP*.

For the uninitiated, *Streets Of Rage* was Sega's first classic walking beat-'em-up. It looks a bit jaded now, when compared to *Final Fight* and so on, but it's still great. Select from three police fighters and clean up the streets. Great graphics and some classic tunes. *Columns* was Sega's answer to *Tetris*, a gripping puzzler which sees you basically lining up columns of jewels to clear the screen. Very, very annoying and addictive. *Revenge Of Shinobi* is a great hack-and-slash platform game. Again, it looks a bit dated now, but the gameplay still brings tears of joy to some reviewers' faces. *Golden Axe* is beginning to look ropy, although this conversion of Sega's big arcade hit is still a very playable hack-'em-up. And finally, there's *Super Monaco GP*, still a great racing game, although it isn't as quick as *F1*.



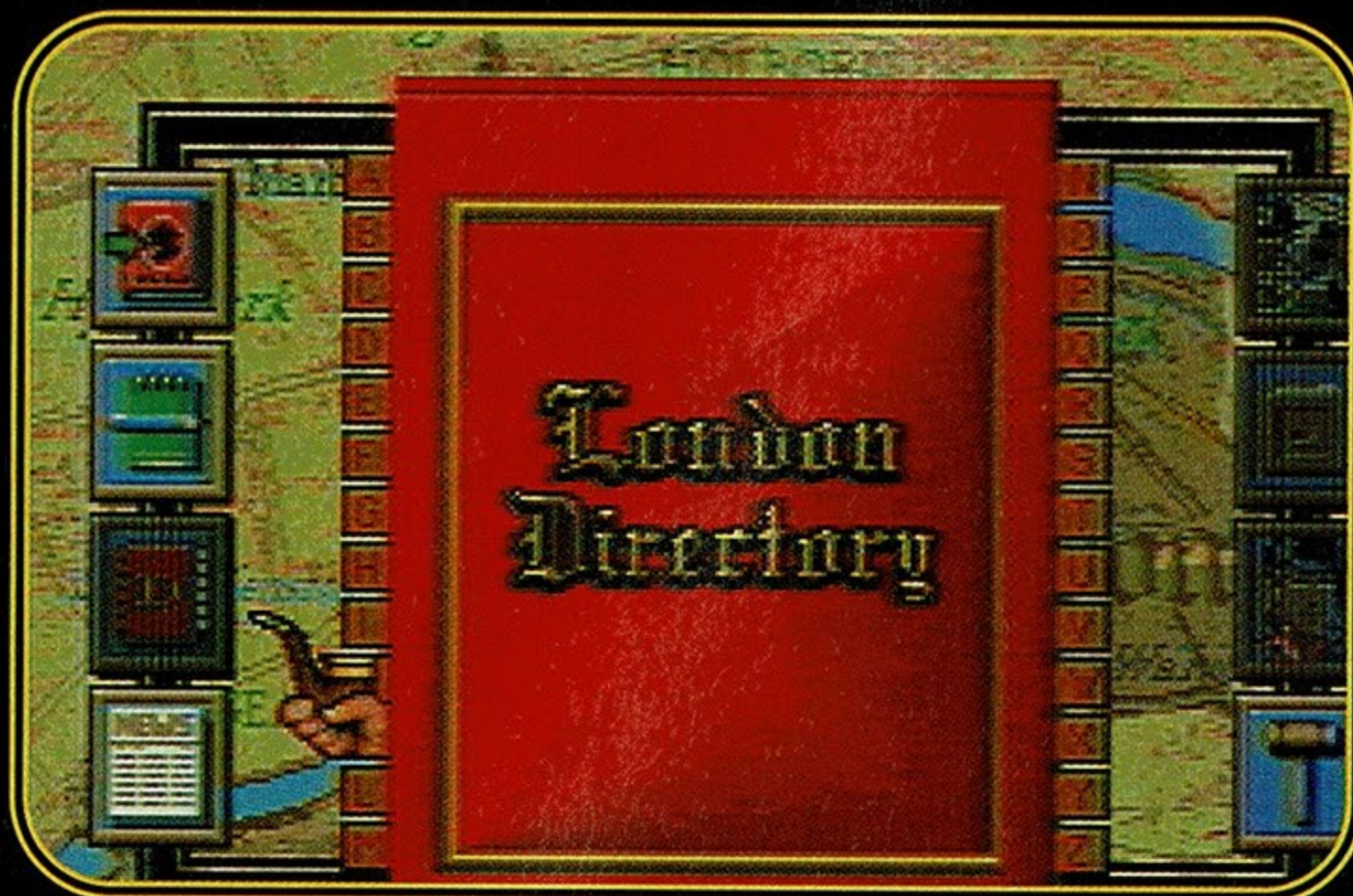
## Sewer Shark Sony £39.99

**W**elcome to the sewers, Dogmeat. The drains have been overrun by hideous, mutated creatures, and you and your team are in charge of cleaning the place up. Piloting a heavily armed sewer buggy modified by your co-pilot Ghost, you've got to follow the sewers, blowing away mutated rats and taking the right turns at various junctions. Get it wrong and you'll end up ploughing into a brick wall.

The first-person cockpit view is simply laid out with a cross-hair and directional indicator. Cock things up and the view will switch to Ghost as he slags you off. Gameplay-wise, *Sewer Shark* is very similar to *Cobra Command* and that game's lack of interaction. The Full Motion Video, however, leaves a lot to be desired. Given that this is a CD, you'd expect a far better soundtrack too, although the voice samples are all clear enough.



## Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective Vol. 1 Sega £44.99



**H**ere's a novel way of utilising the Mega-CD's storage capacity and FMV capabilities. Take over the mantle of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous detective Sherlock Holmes in three celebrated cases of murder and intrigue, by questioning characters and piecing together the clues.

The icon-driven interface is easy to use. You have a main map, a London directory, The Times archive and other reference files at your disposal. Putting your clues together will lead you to various witnesses and suspects, all of whom you'll need to question. This is where the FMV takes over, with each character dropping clues and red herrings left, right and centre. Put the right ones together, and the beak will tell you how well you've done.

Elementary. At least, it sounds simple. In actual fact, this is a tough, challenging game. What it lacks in sprite scaling and rotation, it more than makes up for in atmosphere and difficulty. It might not be *Thunderhawk*, but it's a different angle on Mega-CD software.

# CD



## Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective Vol. 2

Sega  
£44.99



**H**olmes returns with three more cases to solve in a neater, improved sequel. Whilst the first game was good, the additional little improvements *Vol 2* has received make quite a difference.

Included with the CD is a mini-newspaper, crammed with useful info – a nice touch. While the gameplay remains largely unchanged, the in-game graphics have been improved: even the FMV sequences seem slicker. Three cases may not seem like much for a sequel, but they're all equally involving. If you liked the first outing, then this will appeal to you too.

## Silpheed

Sega  
£44.99

**G**alaxians with prettier graphics is a cruel way to describe this game, but it fits. Piloting your small craft through massive alien ships and over planets, it's up to you to destroy the unending hordes of alien craft that approach you. Although only armed with wing blasters to begin with, power-ups and a between-levels weapons-select screen allow you to build up your armaments.

Forget the comparisons to *Starfox* on the SNES, because *Silpheed* is a cut above it and in a different type of category. The big, fractal and polygon-generated planets and ships look stunning, and some of the 12 levels provide a real challenge, even if the bosses do lack a bit of oomph from time to time. Interaction with the backgrounds isn't quite as good as it could be, with only certain levels allowing you to really get into the graphics, as it were.

If there are any problems with *Silpheed*, it's the occasional jerkiness that creeps in. As a single-player blast with great graphics and sound, plus simple but effective gameplay, it's damn good, but the ultimate in shoot-'em-ups it ain't.



## Sonic CD

Sega  
£44.99

**S**onic debuts on the CD in style in this massive 63-odd level blast. This time the evil Dr Robotnik has developed a time machine and travelled back to change the past, thus altering the future. To reverse his nefarious plans, Sonic has to travel through seven zones destroying the devices Robotnik has planted.

As usual, there's a special stage, and this one is in the style of a *Mario Kart* race, viewed from behind Sonic as you charge around a track jumping into UFOs in order to collect precious Time Stones. Miss out on these, and it's possible for Robotnik to travel through time and replace his evil machines to alter history once more!

Each zone consists of the usual three levels, with an obligatory boss level as its last. This time, though, Sonic can run fast enough to travel through time and, by hitting either a Past or Future signpost, you'll zip through time to that era. This not only makes the game a lot harder, but also increases its life span from the standard 24 levels to 63. The gameplay is as usual, but *Sonic* is so playable that it's impossible not to enjoy it. A nice intro cartoon, great soundtrack and that wicked special stage are the icing on the cake.



## Spiderman Vs The Kingpin

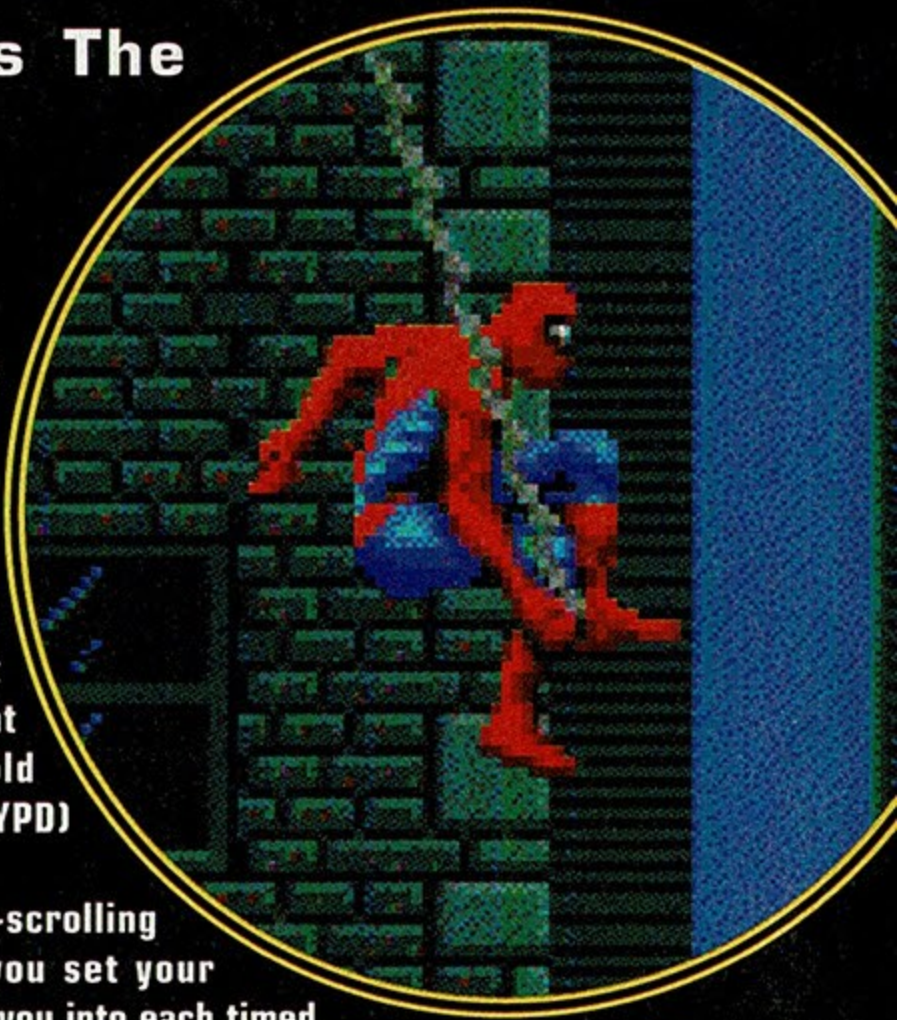
Sega  
£Import

**T**he Kingpin has planted a nuclear bomb in New York and framed Spiderman! Our webbed hero only has 24 hours to locate the bomb before it wipes out the city. As if that isn't bad enough, all his old enemies (as well as the NYPD) are out to get him!

Eight levels of multiway-scrolling webbery await you once you set your difficulty. Story screens lead you into each timed round, and to progress to the bosses you have to waste all the baddies on each level.

After fights, you can renew your energy back at your apartment, but this does eat up time. Web cartridges can be bought by taking photos of the bosses and selling them to the Daily Bugle. Spiderman can kick, punch and web his victims, as well as swing from web ropes.

Basically an enhanced version of the cart with nicer intro screens, and not much else apart from CD-quality sound. Hardly a big improvement over the cartridge, but worth looking at if Spidey platformers are your thing.





### Stellar-Fire Dynamix £49.99

**R**emember Atari's old coin-op, *Battlezone*? Then you'll know what to expect. The year is 2206, and the cybernetic Draxon are out to assimilate all life in the galaxy. As the commander and sole survivor of the Stellar 7 Force, it's your job to fly around the surface of various moons, blasting the Draxon to smithereens while collecting the moon crystals needed to proceed. Luckily, your ship is fairly well-armed with a main cannon, and there are hidden power-ups for you to discover throughout the levels.



It may sound exciting, but this simplistic shoot-'em-up is extremely repetitive and laborious. All you can do is steer left and right, change speed and blast anything that moves – for some reason your space fighter can't take off. The only indication of speed is the dots that rush towards you on the barren landscape. Let's

face it, the graphics are truly awful, with sparse and messy polygon enemies on a featureless moon surface. Maybe Dynamix should stick to making point-and-click adventures?

### Switch Sega £Import

**U**nlikely to ever be released officially, *Switch* is a wacky game that adopts a very simple one-button playing method. As the strangely drawn Switch, your mission is to get through the levels by pressing a number of switches in the right order. Some help you

progress, some send you back to where you started. It is a process of elimination, and quite often success is due more to luck than skill. The graphics and crazy Japanese humour more than compensate for the random nature of the game itself, although it is difficult to see what they went mad about.



Highly original and backed up by a brilliantly varied soundtrack, *Switch* is definitely a game worth checking out, if only for its novelty value.

### Thunderhawk Core £44.99

**A**t last, a real game for the Mega-CD. *Thunderhawk* places you in the cockpit of a helicopter gunship armed with chain guns, rockets and missiles as you fly through ten theatres of operation, each with three to five missions for you to complete on the way. From the snowy wastes of Alaska to the heat of the Middle East, your job is to avoid the enemy and destroy your primary targets at all costs.

You're briefed on each mission before you start, and a map and radar screen in flight allow you to plot your course and, should you stray too far, your co-pilot will tell you which way to head.

Core Design are the first people to really make any use of the Mega-CD's sprite scaling and rotating capabilities, which means that this game really kicks. The bitmapped ground tilts and rotates like nothing you've ever seen from Sega, while you waste texture-mapped tanks, choppers and trucks – you name it, and if it's enemy military hardware, it'll be here somewhere. Add a CD-quality soundtrack with great sampled sound, a stunning intro and simplistic but addictive gameplay, and you've got one good reason to stomp up for the Mega-CD.



### Terminator Virgin £44.99

**A**lthough boasting completely different level layouts from the much earlier cartridge version, *Terminator*

predictably uses the same platform shoot-'em-up format. You step into the shoes of gun-toting hero Kyle Reece who goes back in time to save Sarah Connor from the dreaded Terminator. It only vaguely follows the plot of the classic movie, as Kyle runs and jumps around large labyrinthine levels, blasting Skynet cronies and, of course, robotic Terminators. There are also the usual plentiful gun power-ups to find and tough end-of-level bosses to defeat.

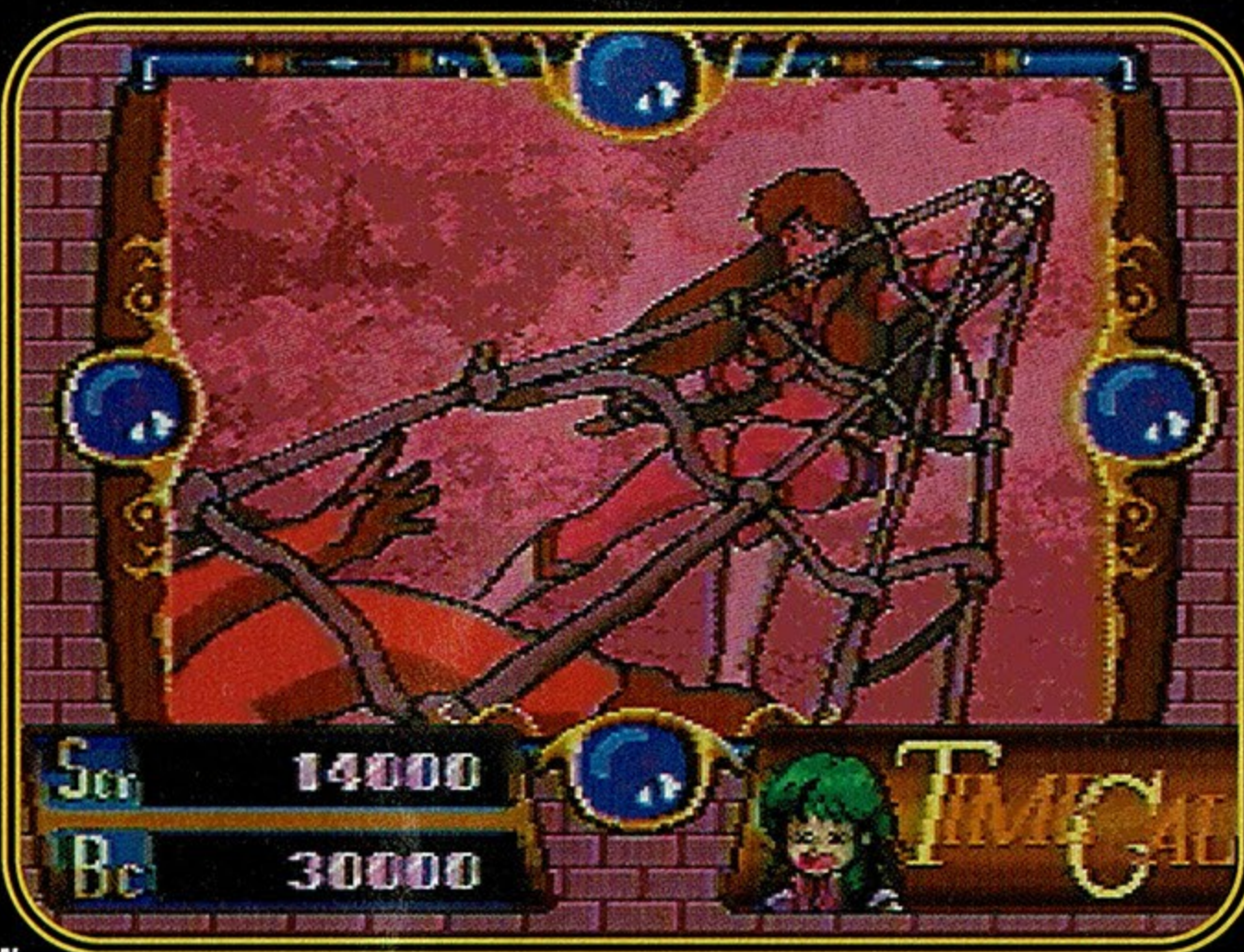
As a standard shoot-'em-up it's all playable enough, but hardly uses the CD to any great extent. The one thing that does benefit is the thumping rock soundtrack. On the other hand, the Full Motion Video clips taken from the film are disappointingly grainy.

Not a bad blast, but a bit of a missed opportunity.



## Time Gal Sega £44.99

**A**nother cartoon game from Wolfteam, and another limited interaction point and clicker. As the title suggests, you play Time Gal, a tasty little thing with a penchant for hot pants and bikini-style tops. And, with a name like Time Gal, it's only logical to assume that you can travel through time, which you do. You're tracking a fugitive from justice who has escaped in a time machine. Naturally, this makes your job less than easy, even though you can follow him throughout the ages. Various monsters will try to block you, all easily killed with your little laser.



The control system is the same as the other Wolfteam games, although they've introduced a random element here which means that if on one stage you initially pushed to the left to move, on another game you may have to push to the right. This at least improves the longevity of the game and keeps you on your toes.

Otherwise it's all very similar to the other animated interactive games we've seen, although the graphics are slick and the soundtrack is as good as we've come to expect from those Wolfteam programmers.

## Wolfchild Sega £39.99

**L**on Chaney Jnr time, as a scientist's son is hideously mutated into a wolf and goes off to seek vengeance against his father's killers. Sound familiar? *Wolfchild* was a not-particularly-well-received Amiga game, long before it made it onto Mega-CD.

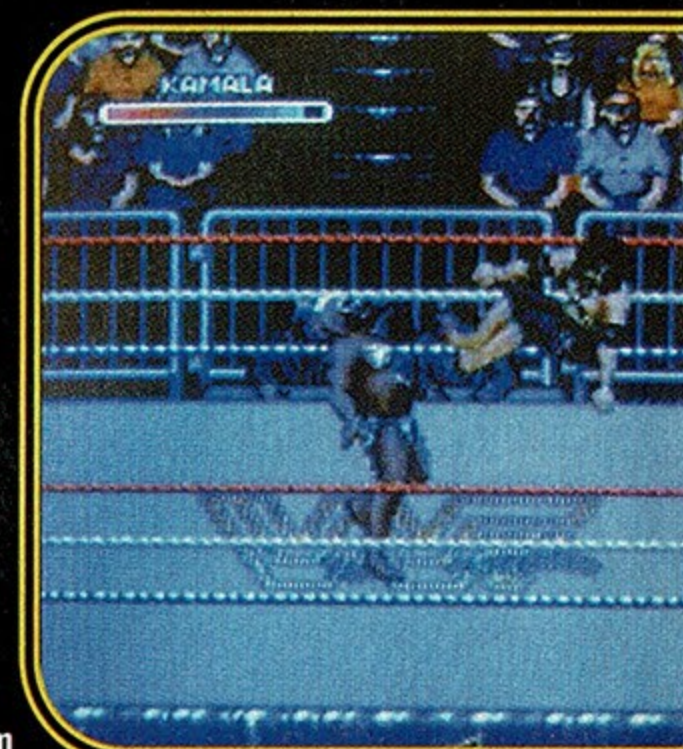
As sideways-scrolling platformers go, the nine-stage *Wolfchild* is pretty much what we've come to expect: standard gameplay, mediocre graphics and sound, with occasionally suspect collision detection. The hero is armed with various weapons, which you can power up along the way, although they would be far better if the game was a tad more challenging.



As far as utilising those old Mega-CD chips goes... forget it. Fancy intro aside, this could easily have appeared on cart instead. And what a shame it wasn't, because now it has to compare with *Sonic CD*. And there's just no competition at all.

## WWF Rage In The Cage Acclaim £44.99

**A**claim's wrestling romp is very similar to their *Royal Rumble* Mega Drive cart. CD extras are limited to some grainy, colourless FMV clips of the real wrestlers in action, plus some rather better sampled wrestler introductions and hilarious pre-bout taunts.



The other main difference is that you get 20 wrestlers to choose from instead of 12 in *Royal Rumble*, and some of the match options are different. You get the usual one- or two-player modes, a no-ref brawl contest, plus the chance to challenge all the other wrestlers to become WWF champion. The special Steel Cage mode is actually a bit of a dud. Two wrestlers are locked in a cage and the first one to climb over the top and escape is the winner. Unfortunately, this usually lasts only a few seconds as once the opponent is floored you can easily make your getaway.

On the whole, though, *Rage In The Cage* is as playable as its cartridge counterpart *Royal Rumble*. All the usual WWF features are incorporated, such as gouging eyes, jumping from the cornerposts, fighting outside the ring and even knocking over the ref. It's a lot of fun, especially with two players.

## Wonderdog JVC £1import

**T**his was Core Design's first CD effort for JVC's Wondermega, the Mega Drive/Mega-CD combo that was launched in Japan. As such, it's something of a showcase for the MCD's storage capabilities, as the lovely animated intro shows - it'll have you watching open-mouthed at the quality.

Covering seven worlds, each with a series of zones, *Wonderdog* is another platform romp. As with most platformers, in the final zone of each world you meet up with an end-of-level



boss; in this case, they're usually very silly, too. Firing stars at his enemies, Wonderdog runs and leaps around the screen, picking up sets of ears (don't ask) to replenish his lost energy. There are heaps of secret rooms to find in this side-scroller, and the whole thing is password-coded to make life easier.

As a first attempt, *Wonderdog* shows the kind of thing Core had in mind for the Mega-CD, and there are obvious visual links with the *Chuck Rock* games. If the difficulty level had been a bit more severe, *Wonderdog* would have been a classic, but it's just another pretty, not very tough platform game.

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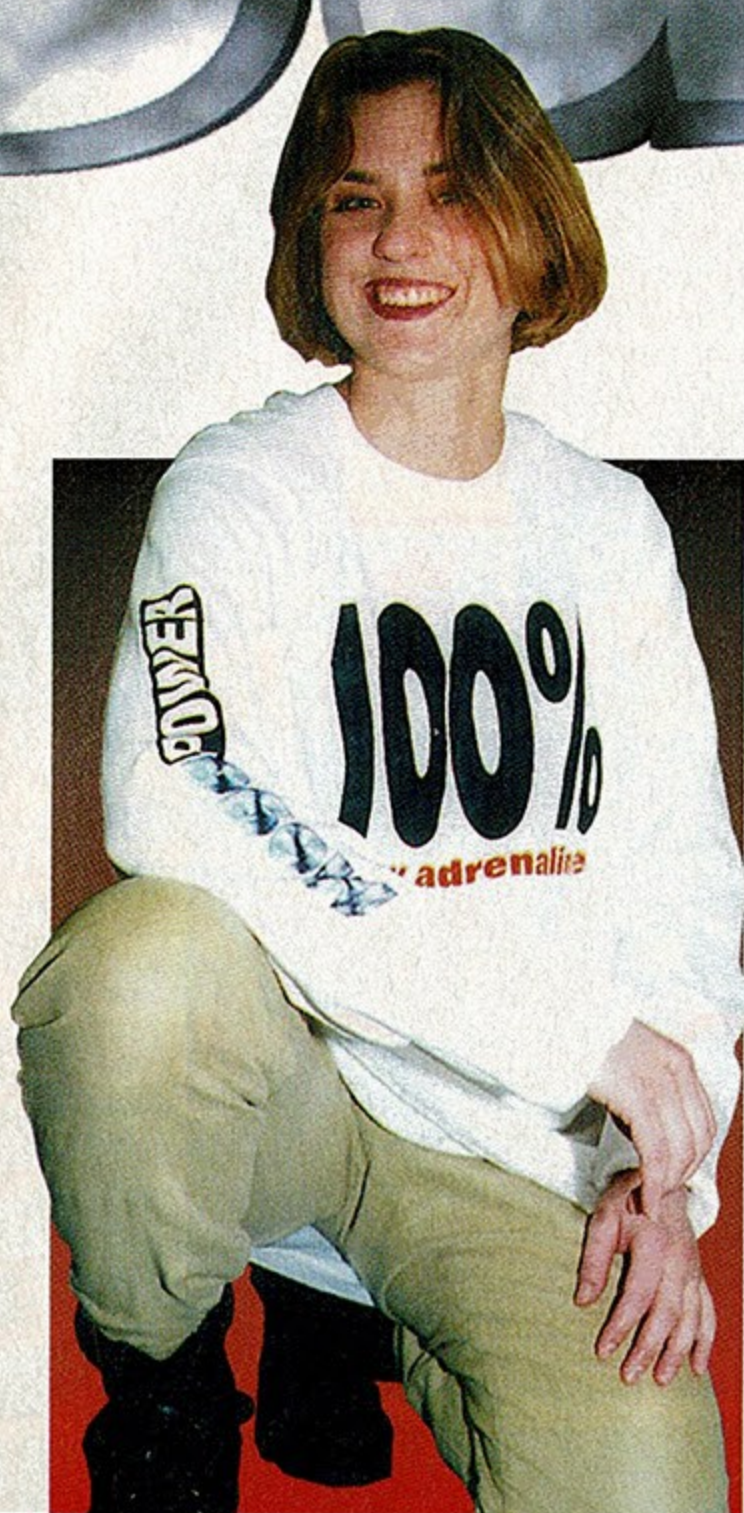


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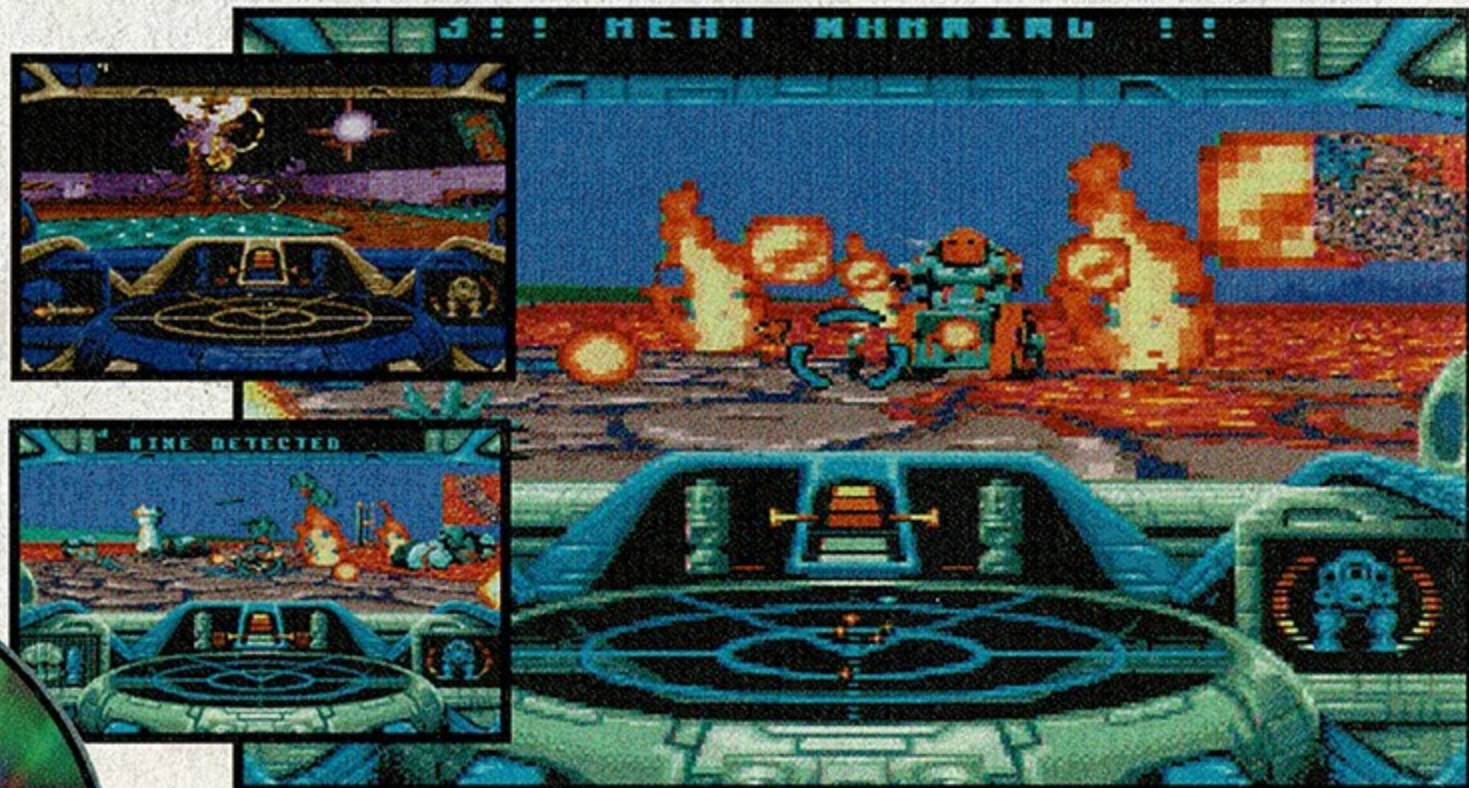


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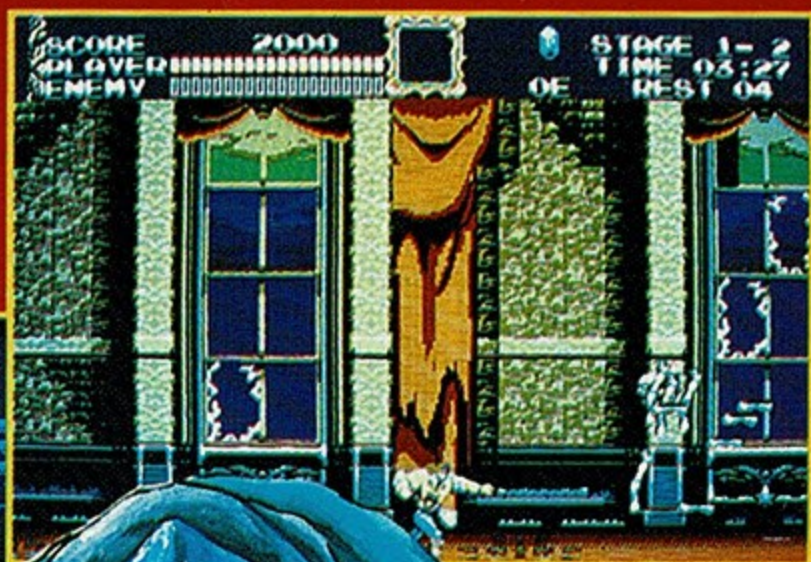
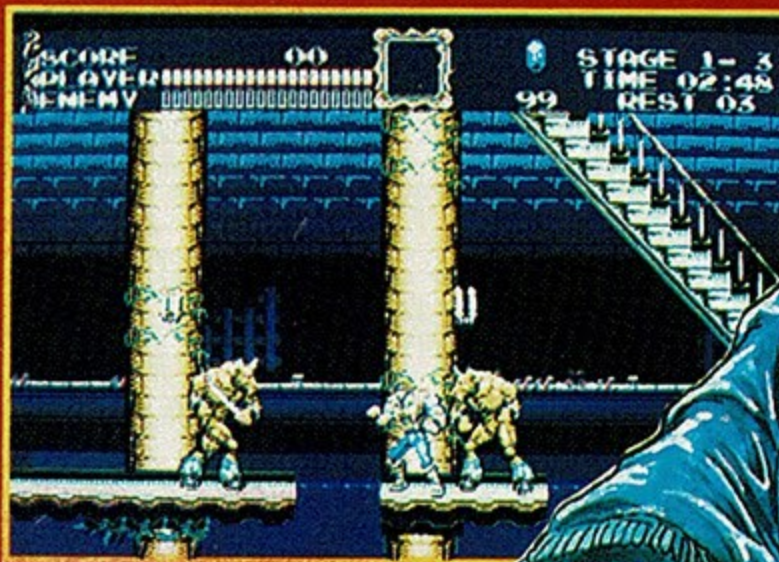
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