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MEGA POWER



AUG 1994
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ISSUE 13
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THE **ONLY** GUIDE FOR SEGA MEGA-CD OWNERS!

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

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**NO
FIFA CD
DEMO?**

If you are missing your copy of the playable FIFA Soccer Mega-CD demo, ask your newsagent for a copy immediately!

EXCLUSIVE!
FLYING NIGHTMARES

**MEGA DRIVE 32
REVEALED!**

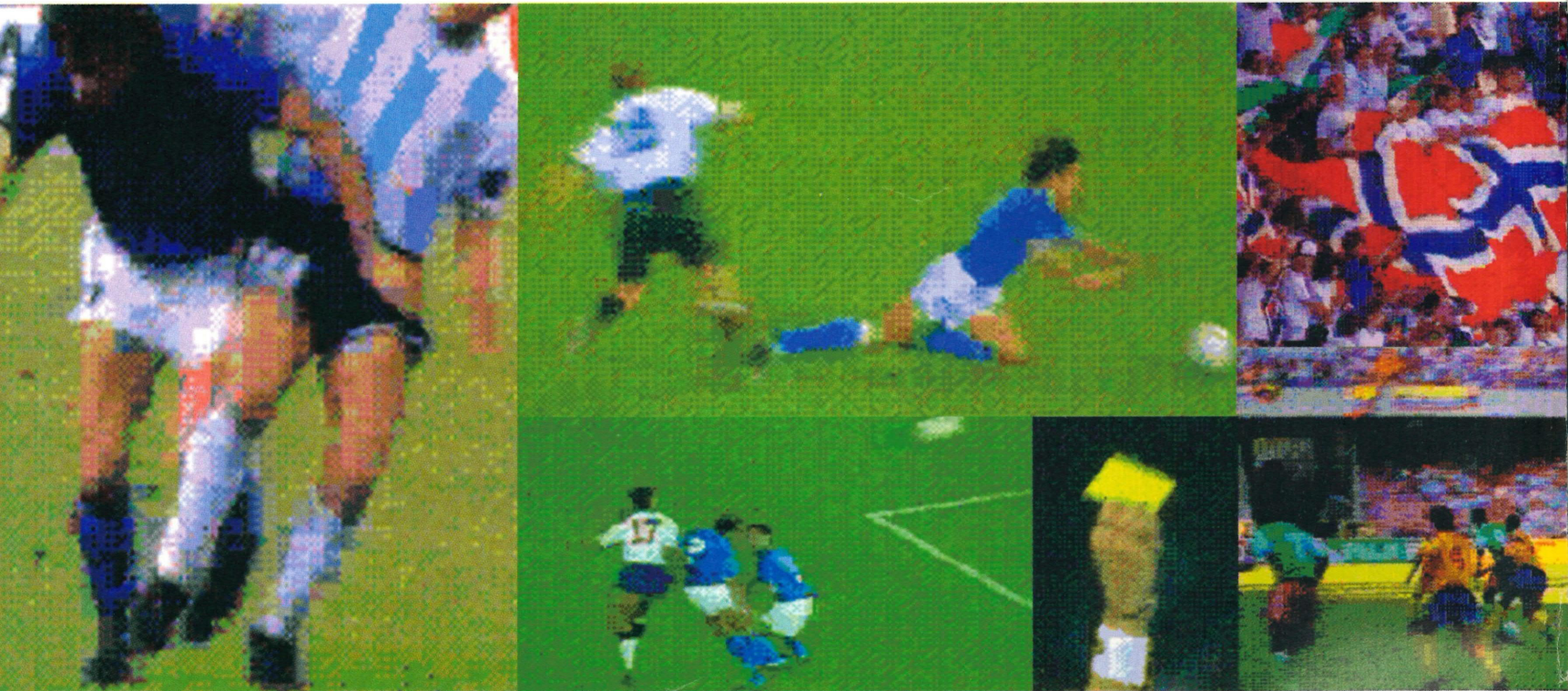
PREVIEWED:
MORTAL KOMBAT II
BC RACERS
DARKSEED



FEATURED

FIFA SOCCER CD • FLYING NIGHTMARES • BC RACERS
MORTAL KOMBAT II • DARKSEED • SUPER STREET FIGHTER II • STAR WARS CHESS
THE ANIMALS • MARIO ANDRETTI • MASKED RIDER 20

INSIDE



All images shown are actual screenshots



PRESS

s t a r t

It's football fever once again in MEGA POWER. Following last month's smashing *Sensible Soccer* demo, we went to great lengths to bring you yet more spectacular soccer action with *FIFA International Soccer*. It's a vast improvement over the already excellent cartridge version and we're sure you'll appreciate the enhanced playability and features as you play this month's demo. Check out our full review in this issue.

Speaking of football, the CD version of *World Cup USA 94* has been slightly delayed and we couldn't squeeze a review in – we'll give you the lowdown on US Gold's official licence next month. Nevertheless, it's incredible, isn't it?: you wait ages for a Mega-CD footy game, then three come along at once!

Waiting is something we Mega-CD owners have had to get used to, and unfortunately this summer is proving no exception. The number of CD games that have been delayed till the autumn is astonishing, hence the lack of reviews this issue, but at least it means we'll be inundated with software in the runup to Christmas.

One of the titles we've been eagerly awaiting is Core's *Soulstar* (as featured on the MP#10 cover disc), but sadly it's still not quite ready for review. The programmers are still tweaking the gameplay, including replacing the tank vehicle with a much better Walker – fingers crossed, we should have a review of the finished game next month.

Meanwhile it's all change again at MEGA POWER. Mark Kendrick has taken over the design, and we've got editorial contributions from some of the most trusted games reviewers in the business. Read on and enjoy.

phil king

phil king

Phil has been looking a little bleary-eyed in the morning lately. However, this had nothing to do with his love life – he'd been staying up late to watch those midnight World Cup matches! Foody fan Phil is delighted that we managed to get a FIFA demo for this month's MEGA POWER and he's even been replaying the World Cup fixtures on it.



nick merritt

Editor of our sister magazine *Sega Pro*, Nick certainly knows his Sega games. He also knows his onions. But one thing he hasn't yet realised is that if you spend all day in the blazing hot sun without so much as a dab of sun cream, you're going to end up like a boiled lobster! Looking uncannily like a victim of Raydentricity, Nick managed to sneak into Acclaim's offices to preview *Mortal Kombat II*.



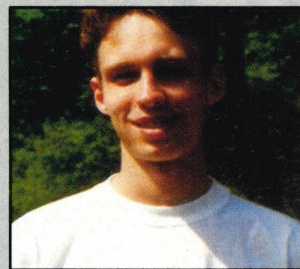
jason johnson

Known as the fastest writer in the West, Racin' Jason recently had a brief stint on *Gamesworld* magazine before moving back to *Sega Pro* and *Mega Power*. It must have been all those naff Nintendo games that put him off, or maybe it was the incessant teasing about his schoolgirl friends? We'd better not go into that, though.



mark hill

When it comes to providing the latest Mega-CD and Mega Drive tips, Mark's the man. He's been doing this job on *Sega Pro* for a good while and now he's brought his tipster talents to MEGA POWER. Nobody knows games like Mark knows games: he's completed more than Phil's had hot dinners. His only weakness is his love of Swindon Town FC!



Extra-special thanks to DREAM MACHINES in Hartlepool (0429 669 459) and VIDEO GAMES CENTRE in Bournemouth (0202 527 314) for supplying our import games.

MEGA POWER

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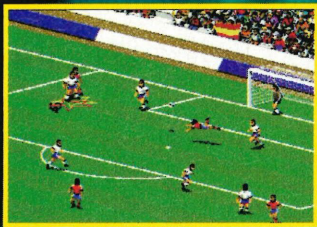
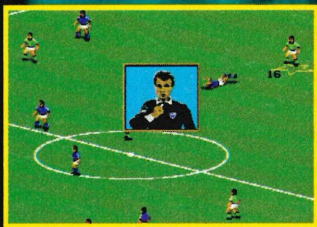
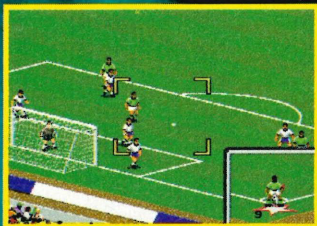
MEGA

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FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

Discover how to play your *FIFA Soccer* demo with our full list of instructions and controls, then read our review of the finished game.

COVER DISC

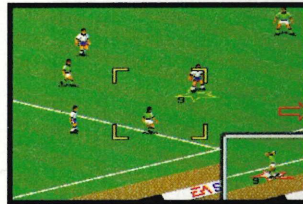


reviews



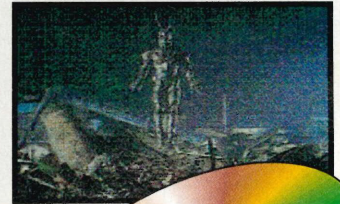
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Fantasy football becomes reality in EA's CD conversion of their celebrated soccer sim.



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An interactive movie game flies in from Japan. It's weird, but is it wonderful?



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Luke Skywalker and friends battle it out with the Empire on a chequered board!



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An exclusive work-in-progress report on Domark's hot new flight sim.

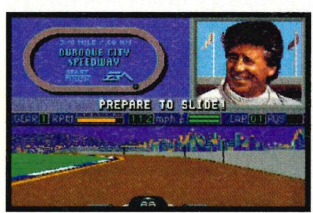
POWER 13

EVENTS



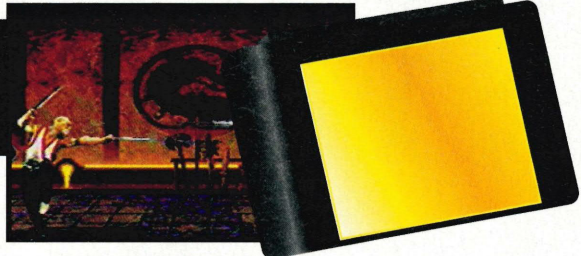
SUPER STREET FIGHTER II36
The world's greatest beat-'em-up gets four new characters and more special moves.

MARIO ANDRETTI RACING38
The veteran racing driver gives advice as you drive Stock, Sprint and Indy cars.



DARKSEED28
Is this HR Giger-illustrated adventure the most frightening game yet?

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It's yabba dabba doo time as Core's wacky stone-age racing game zooms into view.



MORTAL KOMBAT II34
The sequel to the brutal beat-'em-up looks even gorier. Prepare to be shocked.

MEGA DRIVE 32

feature

We bring you the lowdown on Sega's new 32-bit add-on and a whole range of cart and CD games for it.



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MEGA POWER

POWER NEWS

MIND THE QUICKSAND

One of the very first video games is set to make a comeback. Activision's Pitfall! was a huge hit on the old Atari 2600 console, way back in 1982. Other Pitfall games appeared during the Eighties, but only now is the legendary platformer due to make its debut on the Mega Drive and Mega-CD.

Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure features 14 levels of platform action as Harry Jr swings his way through the Mayan jungle to rescue his kidnapped father. Along the way he uses his power sling to ward off animals and Mayan warrior spirits, and even finds time to bungee-jump, swim and skateboard.

The smoothly animated sprites and detailed backdrops are certainly a far cry from the original. In fact, the amount of memory needed for Harry to run across the screen once is more than the entire Atari 2600 game required! There's even an exact replica of the original Atari version in a hidden level of the new game.

Activision have used top Hollywood artists, with animation by Kroyer Films (FernGully) and thudding sound FX by Soundelux Media Labs (Cliffhanger, In The Line Of Fire, Home Alone). Get into the swing of things when the game is released for Mega Drive and Mega-CD this November.



MORE CONVERSIONS

Psynopsis have announced that two of their new Mega Drive games will be converted to the Mega-CD. Flink is a classic platform-puzzle game set in a magical land of wizards and trolls. There were no less than 55 scrolling levels to explore in the cartridge version, and there should be some extra ones on CD.

Getting through the levels involves jumping on baddies' heads, climbing ropes, solving puzzles and casting puzzles. Mega-CD Flink should be a lot of fun when it appears in November.

The other title to get the CD treatment is Hardcore, a platform shoot-'em-up set on a futuristic alien planet. The hero can pick up many different weapons during his travels, and can even angle his gun to fire upwards or behind. As well as blasting aliens, there's a puzzle element as you have to clear certain areas first and use cards to open doors. Designed by Digital Illusions, the people behind the top-notch Amiga games Pinball Dreams and Lionheart, it should have extra

sections and improved sound on CD. Get ready for Hardcore in October.

Meanwhile Psynopsis are changing the name of one their other CD titles. Due to copyright problems in the US, Scavenger 4 will now be known as Novastorm. The sequel to Microcosm, this 3-D space shoot-'em-up will blast off in November. The Mega-CD version of the platform beat-'em-up Second Samurai is also set for a November release.



SEGA'S XMAS LINE-UP

As well as the Mega Drive 32 add-on, Sega are set to unleash a tidal wave of great games in the runup to Christmas.

Talking of tides, Ecco The Dolphin will make a splash in his second adventure.

In Ecco: Tides Of Time, Ecco returns with a new companion, Trellia, to reconstruct Asterite and save the world from the evil Vortex. 25 puzzling levels are promised, including a 3-D section, morphing and a password save. The game will appear this autumn on both Mega Drive and Mega-CD.

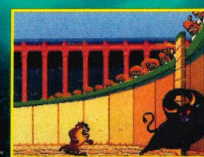
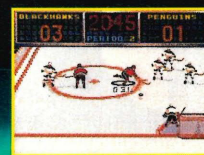
Meanwhile Sega's other big hero Sonic is starring in his fourth Mega Drive adventure. Called Sonic & Knuckles, it co-stars the blue echidna who made his villainous debut in Sonic 3. Get ready to jump for joy in October.

Mega-CD titles due this autumn include standard versions of the Mega Drive 32 FMV titles Midnight Raiders and Fahrenheit (see this month's feature), plus a terrorist shoot-'em-up called Surgical Strike and Wirehead, an adventure which puts you in moral dilemmas and classic sitcom situations. There'll also be CD versions of NHL All-Star Hockey '95 and 36 Great Holes, a golf sim starring Fred Couples. Best of all is the CD conversion of the beat-'em-up Eternal Champions which features new moves and four new characters.

Due on both Mega Drive and Mega-CD is The Adventures Of Batman And Robin. Based on the TV cartoon series, this Christmas release has you battling against classic enemies such as The Joker.

Other Mega Drive-only titles on their way are Taz In Escape From Mars (where the cartoon hero has new improved moves), Jurassic Park - Rampage Edition (a souped-up version, faster with extra levels) and Ratchet & Bolt (split-screen action for two players who control badly built robots).

Finally, Sega's Mega-CD backup RAM cartridge is due to appear this autumn. You'll be able to save your game positions to this device, instead of using the Mega-CD's meagre amount of internal battery-backed-up memory.



CD SLAMDUNK

Acclaim are set to release a Mega-CD version of NBA Jam. Details have yet to be confirmed, but we can expect an even better sampled in-game commentary ('He's on fire!' etc) and lots of extra presentation to go with the already spectacular graphics and gameplay.

The coolest basketball game around, NBA Jam has already been a smash hit on cartridge, mainly thanks to its superb two-player mode – or even four-player with the Sega Tap adaptor. An enhanced CD version was always a possibility, but only now has it been confirmed. Get ready to tip off when Mega-CD NBA Jam slams onto the court in October.



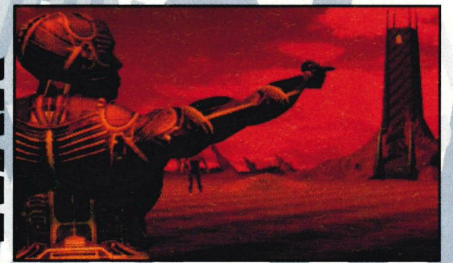
AMERICAN RELEASES

At last month's Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago, many new Mega-CD titles were revealed, although most are unlikely to get an official release over here. Titles to watch out on import later this year are...

Penn & Teller's Smoke And Mirrors (RPG based on the wacky magicians) and Rapid Deployment (two-player Battletank simulation), Crime Patrol, Space Pirates and Mad Dog II (three coin-op conversions from American Laser Games), NFL: Trivia Challenge (sports quiz), Kingdom – The Far Reaches (RPG), Kamikaze Comics (weird arcade adventure), Panic (classic puzzler), Bike Messenger, One-On-One Basketball, Dai Bing (beat-'em-up), Corpse Killers, Sid & Al's Incredible Toons (puzzler), Revengers Of Vengeance (hack-'em-up), AD&D Eye Of The Beholder (brilliant RPG), Brutal (arcade adventure), World Championship Rally (racer), Snatcher (RPG), Trivial Pursuit, Clue (Cluedo board game), Loadstar (shoot-'em-up), Cadillacs & Dinosaurs, Darkride, Championship Soccer '94, ESPN Baseball Tonight, Jeopardy! (TV gameshow), Wheel Of Fortune (TV gameshow), ESPN Sunday Night NFL, Exterminators, Mickey Mouse (edutainment), No Escape, Prime Evil, Iron Helix (strategy), Spectre VR (space shoot-'em-up), Double Dragon V: The Shadow Falls (beat-'em-up), Troy Aikman's NFL Football, Ivan Stewart's Super Off Road Baja 1000 (racer) and Vay (RPG).

Looking further ahead still, some very interesting Mega-CD titles are due for 1995, including Sim City 2000 (city-building strategy game), Lost Vikings (humorous puzzler conversion), Fatal Fury Special (beat-'em-up), Myst (conversion of the brilliant PC strategy game) and Akira (RPG based on the Japanese cartoon hero).

VIRTUAL WORLD WAR



Sales Curve Interactive are converting their PC CD-ROM game Cyberwar to the Mega-CD. The unofficial follow-up to The Lawnmower Man, it features all the characters from the science-fiction film. You control Dr Angelo as he tries to escape from the virtual reality cyber centre.

As with its predecessor, there are spectacular 3-D graphics galore as you try out ten different game types. These range from steering through 3-D tunnels to solving elaborate puzzles, and each is visited two or three times. To add variety, actions are viewed from different camera viewpoints, so it looks different each time you play. Also, unlike animated games like Dragon's Lair, mistakes don't necessarily mean instant death – you just lose a certain amount of energy. Note that the shots shown here are from the PC version: the Mega-CD game will look slightly grainier when it's released next year.

As for The Lawnmower Man, although the game is now completely finished, it won't hit the shelves until January.

POWER DATES

Month	Title	Developer	Platform	Region	Title	Developer	Platform	Region	Title	Developer	Platform	Region	
July	Battlecoops	Core	Mega-CD	UK	Addams Family Values	Sony	Mega Drive	UK	Lion King, The	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK	
	Chaos Court	Sega	Mega Drive	UK	Another World 2	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK	Micro Machines 2	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK	
	Chaos Engine, The	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK	BC Racers	Core	Mega-CD	UK	Mighty Max	Sony	Mega Drive	UK	
	Flashback	Sony	Mega-CD	UK	BC Racers	Core	Mega 32	UK	MLBPA Grand Slam				
	Heimdall	JVC	Mega-CD	USA	Bill's Tomato Game	Psygnosis	Mega Drive	USA	Baseball	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	
	In. Sensible Soccer	Sony	Mega Drive	UK	Boo!	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK	Novastorm	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK	
	Itchy & Scratchy	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	Dino Din's Soccer	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK	Pinkie	Tengen	Mega Drive	UK	
	Marko's Magic Football	Domark	Mega Drive	UK	Dragon	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK	Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure	Activision	Mega-CD	UK	
	Ragnacenty	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan	Earthworm Jim	Playmates	Mega Drive	UK	Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure	Activision	Mega Drive	UK	
	Shadow Of The Beast II	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK	Eternal Champions	Sega	Mega-CD	UK	Psycho Pinball	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK	
	Virtual Bart	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	Evo Squad	Playmates	Mega Drive	UK	Rock 'N' Roll Racing	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK	
	Who Shot Johnny Rock?	ALG	Mega-CD	USA	Hardcore	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK	Second Samurai	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK	
	World Cup USA '94	US Gold	Mega-CD	UK	Hardcore	Psygnosis	Mega Drive	UK	Second Samurai	Psygnosis	Mega Drive	UK	
					Jurassic Park: Rampage Edition	Sega	Mega Drive	USA	Sensible Golf	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK	
					Kawasaki Superbikes	Time Warner	Mega Drive	UK	Space Ace	Readysoft	Mega-CD	USA	
August	Flashback	Sony	Mega-CD	UK	Lemmings 2	Psygnosis	Mega Drive	UK	Star Gate	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	
	Flying Nightmares	Domark	Mega-CD	UK	Lethal Enforcers II	Konami	Mega-CD	USA	Syndicate	EA	Mega Drive	UK	
	Incredible Hulk, The	US Gold	Mega Drive	UK	Links	Virgin	Mega-CD	UK	True Lies	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	
	Jungle Book	Virgin	Mega Drive	UK	Marko's Magic Football	Domark	Mega-CD	UK	Ushra Monster Truck Wars	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	
	Mega Race	Mindscape	Mega-CD	UK	Megaswiv	Time Warner	Mega Drive	UK	WWF: Raw	Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	
	Soulstar	Core	Mega-CD	UK	Mighty Morphin: Power Rangers	Sega	Mega-CD	USA					
	Star Wars: Rebel Assault	JVC	Mega-CD	Japan	NBA Jam	Acclaim	Mega-CD	UK					
					NFL '95	Sega	Mega Drive	USA					
	September	Animals, The	Mindscape	Mega-CD	UK	New Breed	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK	Adventures Of Batman & Robin	Sega	Mega-CD	USA
		Battle Fantasy	Micronet	Mega-CD	Japan	Radical Rex	Activision	Mega Drive	UK	Adventures Of Batman & Robin	Sega	Mega Drive	USA
		Bubsy II	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK	'Rescue'	Psygnosis	Mega Drive	UK	Baby Boom	Sega	Mega-CD	USA
		Burning Fist	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan	Rise Of The Robots	Time Warner	Mega-CD	UK	Baby Boom	Sega	Mega Drive	USA
		Dark Seed	Cyberdreams	Mega-CD	UK	Rise Of The Robots	Time Warner	Mega Drive	UK	Daytona USA	Sega	Mega 32	UK
		Dynamite Headdy	Sega	Mega Drive	UK	Shadow Of Atlantis	Sega	Mega-CD	USA	Discworld	Psygnosis	Mega-CD	UK
		'EA Sports Tennis'	EA Sports	Mega Drive	UK	Shaq Fu	EA	Mega Drive	UK	Doom	Sega	Mega 32	UK
Ecco 2		Sega	Mega Drive	UK	Skeleton Krew	Core	Mega Drive	UK	Fahrenheit	Sega	Mega-CD	UK	
Flintstones, The		Sony	Mega Drive	UK	Sonic 4	Sega	Mega Drive	UK	Fahrenheit	Sega	Mega-CD 32	UK	
Hybrid Front		Sega	Mega Drive	Japan	Sparkster	Konami	Mega Drive	UK	Fred Couples's				
Hyper Road Monarch		Sega	Mega Drive	Japan	Surgical Strike	Sega	Mega-CD	USA	36 Hole Golf	Sega	Mega 32	UK	
Lawnmower Man, The		Tengen	Mega Drive	UK	Taz In Escape From Mars	Sega	Mega Drive	USA	Heimdall 2	Core	Mega-CD	UK	
Mortal Kombat II		Acclaim	Mega Drive	UK	Tiny Toons:				Mary Shelley's				
Mr Tuff		SCI	Mega Drive	UK	Acme All-Stars	Konami	Mega Drive	UK	Frankenstein	Sony	Mega-CD	UK	
Pirates Of Dark Water		Sunsoft	Mega Drive	UK	Urban Strike	EA	Mega Drive	UK	Midnight Raiders	Sega	Mega-CD	UK	
Ragnacenty	Sega	Mega Drive	UK	Virtua Racing: Deluxe Version	Sega	Mega 32	UK	Midnight Raiders	Sega	Mega-CD 32	UK		
Rolling Thunder 3	Namco	Mega Drive	Japan					Mighty Morphin: Power Rangers	Sega	Mega Drive	USA		
Shadow Run	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan					Mortal Kombat II	Acclaim	Mega-CD	UK		
Shining Rogue	Sega	Mega Drive	Japan					NHL All-Star Hockey	Sega	Mega-CD	USA		
Sink Or Swim	Codemasters	Mega Drive	UK					Ratchet & Bolt	Sega	Mega Drive	USA		
Starblade	Namco	Mega-CD	UK					Soulstar	Core	Mega 32	UK		
Star Wars Chess	Mindscape	Mega-CD	UK					Star Wars Arcade	Sega	Mega 32	UK		
Star Wars: Rebel Assault	JVC	Mega-CD	UK					Virtua Fighter	Sega	Mega 32	UK		
Super Kick Off 3	Anco	Mega Drive	UK					Wirehead	Sega	Mega-CD	UK		
Tinhead	MicroProse	Mega Drive	UK										
Ys: Master Of The Sun	Sega	Mega-CD	Japan										
Zero Tolerance	Accolade	Mega Drive	UK										
October	36 Great Holes	Sega	Mega-CD	USA									

MEGA POWER

The next LEVEL



You want arcade-quality graphics on your Mega Drive and Mega-CD? Sega reckon their new Mega Drive 32 add-on has what it takes...

Where do video games go from here? The Mega Drive is still going strong, but has recently come under threat from a whole new generation of 32-bit (and even 64-bit) wonder-machines. For the last year it seems everyone's been speculating on which of these will be the 'next big thing'.

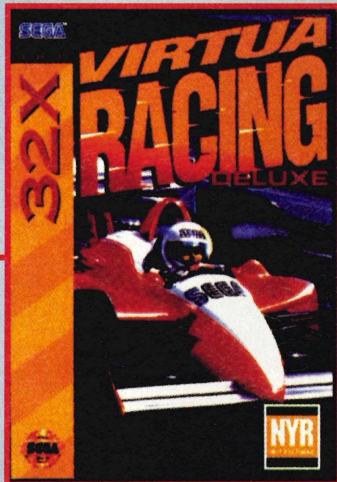
First there was the CD-based 3DO which, although technically impressive, has still to prove itself in the market place. This was followed by the Atari Jaguar, a 64-bit cartridge machine with a lack of big-name software support. Other yet-to-appear super-consoles include the Sony PS-X, Nintendo's Silicon-Graphics-based Project Reality, and Sega's own 32-bit 'Saturn' CD machine.

The one big problem with most of these machines, however, is their hefty price tags which should put off a lot of gamers. Sega themselves admit that the £350 Saturn will be a high-end multimedia machine aimed at a different market than their previous consoles. Which is why they've come up with a less-costly alternative for games fans: the Mega Drive 32.

MEGA DRIVE 32 GAMES

VIRTUA RACING DELUXE
(24Mbit cart)

■ Choose from three different cars and six courses in the souped-up version of the classic racing coin-op. Sega promise four different racing views and graphics which move twice as fast as those in the standard Mega Drive game.



DOOM
(24Mbit cart)

■ Based on the classic PC game. A first-person perspective 3-D shoot-'em-up where you wander around a selection of futuristic locations, killing monsters with guns and chainsaws. Graphics are superb, with texture-mapped corridors setting new standards in smooth scrolling and realism.



Plug-in power

An add-on device rather than a stand-alone machine, the Mega Drive 32 slots into the cartridge port of your Mega Drive. Although containing much of the Saturn's hardware, including two 32-bit RISC processors, the MD32 should retail for a modest £150 when it appears this autumn.

It also incorporates a special video processor for massively improved graphical capabilities, enabling conversions of new Sega coin-ops such as *Star Wars*, which would be impossible on a standard Mega Drive. Indeed, the MD32 can produce texture-mapped polygon graphics with up to 32,768 colours on-screen simultaneously. It can render up to 50,000 polygons per second and incorporates Mega-CD-style hardware scaling and rotation.

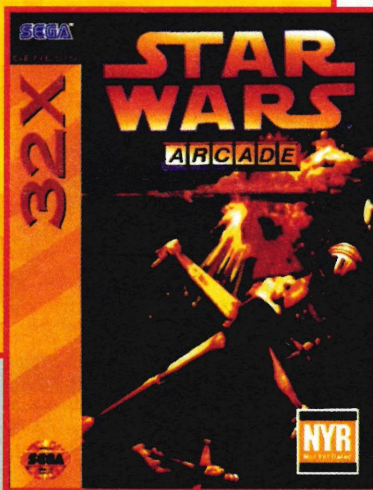
Speaking of the Mega-CD, the MD32 can also enhance that device's capabilities. A special range of MD32 CD titles will feature much crisper, smoother Full Motion Video which Sega claim is near-VHS-quality. As yet there's no news of whether the big MD32 cart titles like *Virtua Racing Deluxe* and *Doom* will also make it onto Mega-CD 32; but with them being converted to CD for the Saturn, it could still happen.

Meanwhile Sega are planning a huge launch for the MD32 this Christmas, and there'll certainly be no shortage of software available for it with around 30 titles already in development. Together with the impressive technical specifications and incredibly low price point, this should ensure the MD32's success. Forget those much-vaunted super-consoles, it looks like the future of gaming is already here!

STAR WARS ARCADE

(24Mbit cart)

■ This faithful conversion of the brilliant arcade machine has you piloting an X-wing fighter. Undertake a near-suicidal mission through four exciting 3-D levels, blasting away at Empire forces as you head towards the Death Star.



FAHRENHEIT

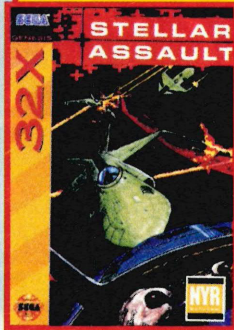
(CD)

■ You play a fireman in this red-hot Full Motion Video game. Bravely enter burning apartment blocks, train wrecks and chemical plant explosions as you try to save lives and extinguish the flames. There'll also be a standard Mega-CD version, but the MD32 one will boast better-quality FMV.

SUPER MOTOCROSS

(16Mbit)

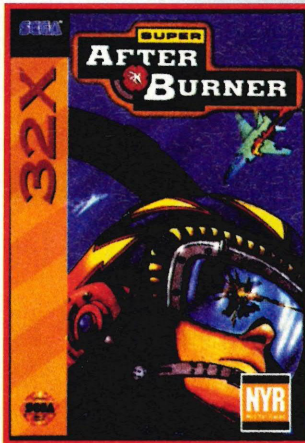
■ All the thrills of the real sport as you tear up the track on three different classes of motorbikes. See your way around 15 bumpy courses from two different perspectives as you avoid obstacles and perform 30 foot high leaps.



STELLAR ASSAULT

(24Mbit cart)

■ This fast-flying 3-D space shoot-'em-up puts you in the cockpit of your chosen starfighter. One interesting feature is the ability to replay your entire game from almost any perspective.



CYBER BRAWL

(24Mbit cart)

■ A 3-D fighting game reminiscent of *Virtua Fighter* as the camera zooms in to follow the combat action. However, this game includes armour and weapons as well as the usual acrobatic moves and attacks.

SUPER AFTERBURNER

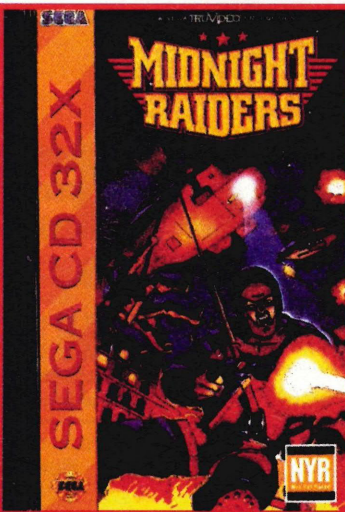
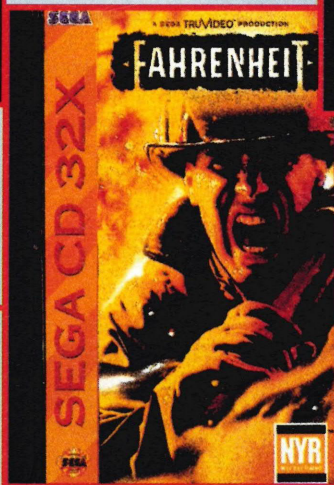
(24Mbit cart)

■ The classic arcade blaster gets souped up with realistic 3-D graphics and booming sound FX. Pilot your F-15 through war zones, firing guns and sidewinder missiles at enemy planes.

TEMPO

(24Mbit cart)

■ Control a hip grasshopper, grooving to the CD-quality music as you gobble cassettes and CDs. Morph into different creatures and vehicles as you battle against the insects on Planet Rhythma.



MIDNIGHT RAIDERS

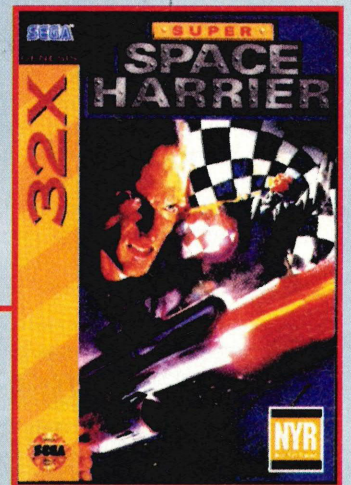
(CD)

■ Fly an AH-64 Apache helicopter, flying under the cover of night to rescue a kidnapped government official. Live-action FMV puts you in the cockpit for realistic aerial combat, and on the ground for urban warfare. Also available for standard Mega-CD.

SUPER SPACE HARRIER

(24Mbit cart)

■ Another old coin-op favourite gets the 32-bit treatment. Blast your way through superfast 3-D levels, taking on space ghouls, multi-headed reptiles and wicked wizards.



TECH SPECS

The Mega Drive 32 is based on the same 32-bit chips used by the Saturn and Sega's new Titan range of coin-ops (*Virtua Fighter*, *Daytona USA* etc).
CPU: 2 x Hitachi 32-bit SH2 RISC processors running at 23MHz/40MIPS
Co-Processing: Mega Drive's Motorola 68000 and a new VDP video processor
Graphics: Dual frame buffers allow 50,000 polygons per second. Texture mapping, hardware scaling and rotation
Colours: 32,768 on-screen simultaneously
Memory: 4Mbit RAM in addition to Mega Drive and Mega-CD
Video: Able to overlay a plane of graphics over Mega Drive video. High resolution FMV on Mega-CD
Audio: Stereo digital audio with programmable sample rates. Audio mixing with Mega Drive 32 sound
Price: £150
Available: Autumn-Christmas 1994

TOP TITLES



high street charts

Compiled by Gallup in association with ELSPA



1	(1)	5	Ground Zero Texas
2	(NE)	1	Mortal Kombat
3	(3)	7	Lethal Enforcers
4	(2)	7	Sonic CD
5	(5)	6	Night Trap
6	(7)	6	Thunderhawk
7	(RE)	4	Microcosm
8	(4)	3	WWF Rage In The Cage
9	(6)	6	Silpheed
10	(RE)	5	Final Fight

independent charts

Compiled with the help of Dream Machines



1	(2)	2	Heavenly Symphony
2	(1)	2	Mortal Kombat
3	(5)	4	Rise Of The Dragon
4	(3)	6	Lunar - The Silver Star
5	(NE)	1	Wing Commander
6	(4)	4	Tomcat Alley
7	(9)	3	Microcosm
8	(6)	4	Revenge Of The Ninja
9	(10)	5	WWF: Rage In The Cage
10	(8)	5	NHL Hockey '94



1	(1)	5	FIFA International Soccer
2	(4)	2	Virtua Racing
3	(2)	3	PGA European Tour Golf
4	(3)	4	Sonic 3
5	(NE)	1	World Cup USA 94



1	(NE)	1	Super Street Fighter II
2	(1)	4	Virtua Racing
3	(2)	2	Star Trek: T.N.G.
4	(3)	4	Streets Of Rage 3
5	(NE)	1	World Cup USA 94

RECOMMENDED

Phil and Mark reveal the games they've been playing this month...

BATTLECORPS

mega-cd

The first of Core's new 3-D Mega-CD games, Battlecorps uses an even better graphics system than Thunderhawk. You control a Walker-style vehicle, striding around 16 huge levels with texture-mapped landscapes and buildings. You need your wits about you as robotic enemies attack from all directions, but you also need to use your limited weapons wisely. With dramatically different terrains, an excellent guitar soundtrack and intense blasting gameplay, it's one hell of a great shoot-'em-up.

phil: "I've been playing this all month long - it's a really tough challenge."

mark: "Spectacular graphics and sound, with great gameplay to match."

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

mega drive

After the appearance of Street Fighter II: SCE last year comes this souped-up version. There are numerous extra features, including new moves, four new characters, and a special bonus points system to reward clever combinations. The graphics have also been improved with more detailed sprites, more colour and four new backdrops. With a tough one-player challenge and fun two-player mode, this is the ultimate one-on-one beat-'em-up.

phil: "I'm not very good at it, but I'm still completely hooked!"

mark: "Lots of new features and fighters make it even more playable."

FIFA INT. SOCCER

mega-cd

This conversion of the classic footy game has all the CD glitz with a dazzling intro sequence, FMV clips and Dolby Surround Sound for that big match atmosphere. For good measure, there are also 16 extra teams and a new league option. Unlike most CD conversions, the gameplay has been completely revamped. It's now much easier to play a passing game and you can score more varied goals with powerful headers and close-range volleys.

phil: "A big improvement on the cartridge - much more playable."

mark: "My all-time favourite footy game has just got even better."

MEGA POWER PRESENTS...

FIFA
INTERNATIONAL
SOCCER

CHAMPIONSHIP
E D I T I O N

It's kick-off time again with another festival of football. Read on to discover how to play your FIFA International Soccer demo and check out our review for the final score...



MEGA POWER

FIFA

INTERNATIONAL

SOCCER

CHAMPIONSHIP

E D I T I O N

THE DEMO

Our exclusive *FIFA CD* demo lets you play a two-minute exhibition match with one or two players (or four if you have a 4 Way Play adaptor). Note that although the league and tournament options appear, and can even be accessed, you can't play in these modes.

The demo starts with the full FMV introduction sequence. To skip this, press **START** twice. Press **START** again to bypass the title screen and the Game Setup screen appears. To play a match press **START**, then choose both teams using the D-pad.

Press **START** again to access the Control Setup screen: choose which team you want to play for by moving your controller icon to the left or right. For a one-player game, leave one of the controller icons in the middle – the computer will play the unselected side. For a competitive two-player match, move your controller icons to opposite sides. If a 4 Way Play adaptor is plugged in, four controller icons appear on screen.

Press **START** and the Game Configuration screen appears: to begin the match, press **START** again. In a one-player game you control the man under the yellow star. To pause the game, press **START** to return to the Game Configuration screen where you can change tactics or view an instant replay. Have fun!



BALL CONTROL

Now lads, let's have a good clean game, none of that play-acting or you'll be off. Before kick off, check the official FIFA directives on how to play...

D-pad: Moves your currently controlled man around the pitch. It's also used to direct kicks and headers, and to apply swerve by moving it just after shooting.

Without the ball...

Button A: Sliding tackle or header, depending how high the ball is.

Button B: Switches control to your nearest player to the ball.

Button C: Press it repeatedly to speed up your running.

Button B+C: Shoulder-charges an opponent – watch out, you could get booked or even sent off!

With the ball...

Button A: Chips the ball – hold it down for more power. Move D-pad after kicking to apply swerve.

Button B: Passes the ball to a team-mate. Hold for extra power. To back-heel, press B with the D-pad in the opposite direction to which you're running.

Button C: Shoots automatically towards goal. Hold for increased shot power. Use D-pad to apply aftertouch.

Button B+C: One-touch passing movement: your player passes to a team-mate (indicated by a cross) who then knocks it back for a one-two.

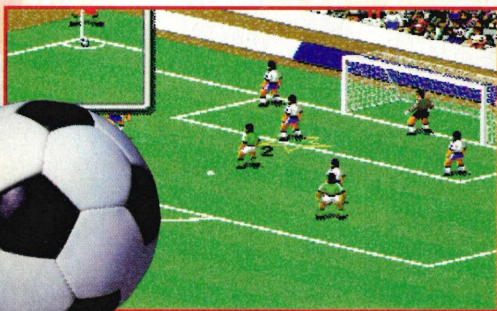
Ball in the air...

Button A, B or C: Header, volley or bicycle kick.

Goalkeeper...

Button A or B: Tap to throw ball out to team-mate, or hold down to kick upfield.

Button B: Dive for the ball, with D-pad to determine direction (only with manual goalies selected).



Button C: Brings up direction box at goal kicks. Position this where you want to kick the ball, then press A.

Goal Kick/Corner/Throw-in...

Button A, B or C: Kick/throw towards centre of direction box.

Penalty Kick...

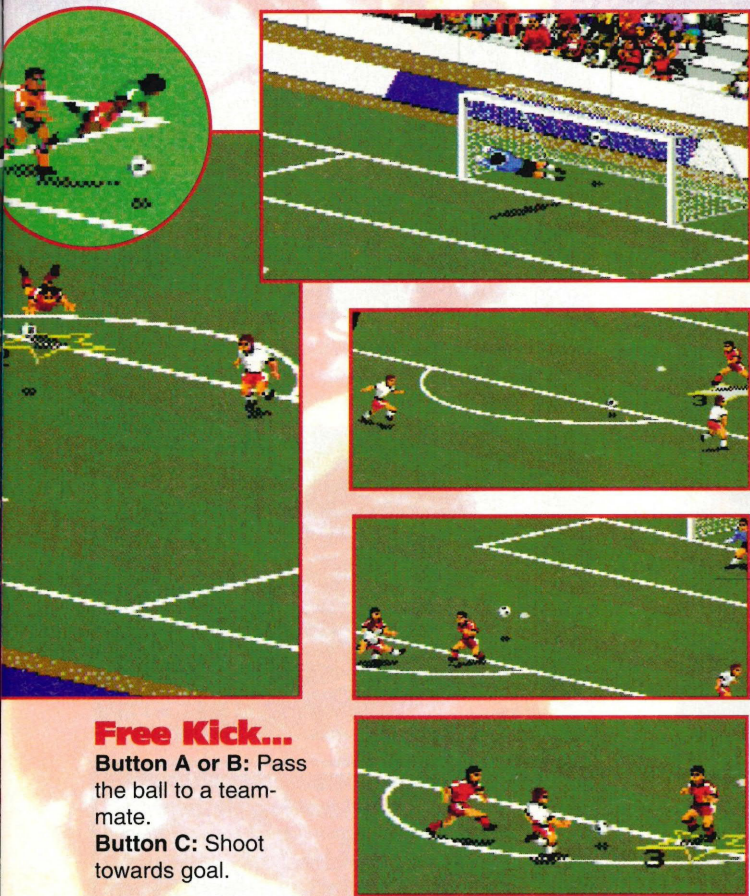
Button A or C: Shoot at the goal (direct with D-pad).

Button B: Swap penalty taker for another player.

GET ON THE CASE

■ Our special cutout inlay lets you 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).



Free Kick...

Button A or B: Pass the ball to a teammate.

Button C: Shoot towards goal.



OVERSEAS READERS

■ You can obtain a copy of the *FIFA Soccer* 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 #13 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... tel: +44 202 299900; fax: +44 202 299955.

THE DEMO

■ Mega Power presents a playable demo of EA Sports' *FIFA International Soccer: Championship Edition* on Mega-CD. Enjoy two-minute matches against the computer or a friend, playing for any of 64 international teams. A superb big-match atmosphere is created by the spectacular graphics, sampled crowd FX and skilful gameplay. What a tremendous goaaaaaahhhhh!!!

CONTROLS

- D-pad: Moves your currently controlled player around the pitch. Move it just after shooting to apply swerve.
- Button A: Chip; slide-tackle/header
- Button B: Pass; switch between players
- Button C: Shoot at goal; press repeatedly to run faster
- Button B+C: One-touch pass; shoulder charge

CREDITS

- Many thanks to Electronic Arts for all their cooperation.
- Special thanks to Nick Channon.
- *FIFA International Soccer* © 1994 Electronic Arts.
- EA Sports and EA Sports logo are trademarks of Electronic Arts.

SIX



MEGA POWER PRESENTS

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER
PLAYABLE DEMO



SIX

MEGA POWER PRESENTS

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

PLAYABLE DEMO

MEGA POWER

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

DISC 6

SIX

FIFA SOCCER CD

SIX

SIX



REVIEW



'Ere we go again. But as an 'over the moon' Phil King discovered, this is more than your average CD conversion...

Choose Controller



Choose who's controlling who before the match. With a 4 Way Play adaptor up to four players can join in the fun.



Everyone must know I'm a Sensible Soccer fan, and FIFA CD isn't about to change my mind - but it comes very close. It's certainly a big improvement over the cartridge version.

Before, it was much too easy to score with long shots - very frustrating for the defending team - but now the balance has been redressed and you can score more easily from closer range. Another flaw was the ineffectiveness of headers. Not any more it isn't: just watch those players dive, John Aldridge style, to send the ball rocketing into the net!

Best of all, it's now possible to play a proper passing game instead of just hoofing hopeful long balls upfield: this makes the four-player mode more fun, too. The one-touch passing was a bit of a dud in the original and no-one bothered using it, but here it works much better so you can do clever one-twos to break through the defence.

These improvements alone make for a much more skilful, satisfying game of football - never mind the CD presentation, new teams, superb crowd sounds and extra options such as the league. Now this is what I call fantasy football!

PHIL

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION

OVERALL: 99

All the team tactics options are still here. As well as selecting your side's formation you can set the pitch areas your players will patrol.

Football fever has gripped the world during the last month and it's set to do the same with the Mega-CD. Not so long ago, there wasn't a single soccer sim on the machine, but now there are two (with one more, *World Cup USA 94* on its way). Last month we took a look at the CD version of *Sensible Soccer*, which featured enhanced sound and lots of nice intros. Well, *FIFA CD* does all this and more.

There's a superb intro (even by CD standards) which mixes rendered graphics with excellent video footage from the 1990 World Cup finals. The other big presentational enhancement is the Dolby Surround Sound: not only is the crowd more responsive to what's happening on the pitch, but you get all sorts of extra FX such as singing and even Brazilian drums beating away in the background! Needless to say, it does a lot for the match atmosphere.

The most important improvements, though, have been made to the gameplay itself. Not only are matches played at a slightly faster pace, the whole pattern of play is different. Due to improved artificial intelligence routines for the positioning of players, it's now much easier to play a passing game. Although the controls are exactly the same as in the cartridge version, some of the possible manoeuvres have been made more effective. This includes the one-touch

passing, where you pass to a team-mate who then knocks it back, and the spectacular diving headers which are now powerful enough to score with. You can also hit the net from close range, which was nearly impossible before, so there's much more variety in the goals scored. To celebrate these, there are all-new electronic scoreboard animations.

Another upgrade is the infinitely more sensitive aftertouch. The game has been sponsored by Adidas who are promoting their new Predator football boots which give you more power, control and swerve. Obviously the blokes on the pitch are wearing them as you can now do really bendy banana shots: this is also useful for swinging those crosses into the box. They've even included the Predator TV ad, which can be viewed at half time, along with FMV highlights of other matches.

Not content with all these features, EA have thrown in 16 extra teams (making a total of 64) and a new eight-team league option (as well as the standard World Cup-style tournament and playoffs). There are also hidden extended play modes to discover,

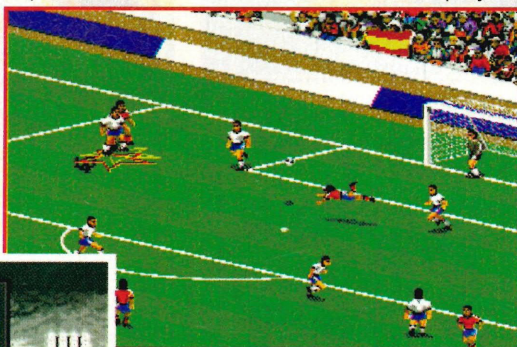
such as five-a-side matches and invisible walls around the pitch. At the end of the day, what more could you possibly want?

...a big improvement over the cartridge version.

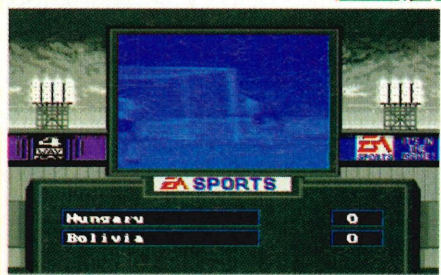


(Left) Your striker knocks the ball in the back of the net. It's now far easier to score from close range.

A cynical foul causes the 'injured' player to roll around in agony. The ref blows for a free kick.



(Above) The diving headers are much more powerful than in the cart version.



(Above) You can view FMV highlights of the other matches.



(Right) It's kick-off time between Italy and Ireland. Will it be another upset?

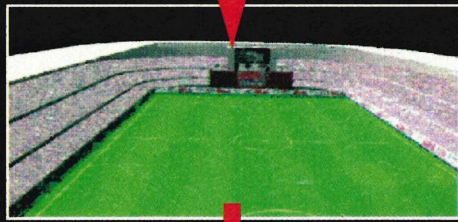
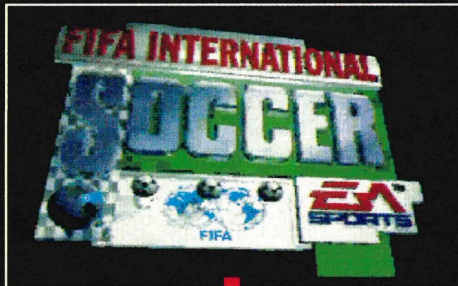


REVIEW



The gameplay has been tweaked so it's easier to pass the ball around. Here you're doing a one-two with a team-mate.

The impressive intro sequence features rendered graphics and lots of FMV footage from Italia '90.



The main menu offers even more choice, adding an eight-team league option.



Options galore are yours for the choosing, so you can tweak all the rules. You can also select Dolby Surround Sound for that special crowd atmosphere.



(Above) As before, you can choose your starting line-up from a squad of fictional players.

At half-time you can watch the full Adidas Predator TV ad.



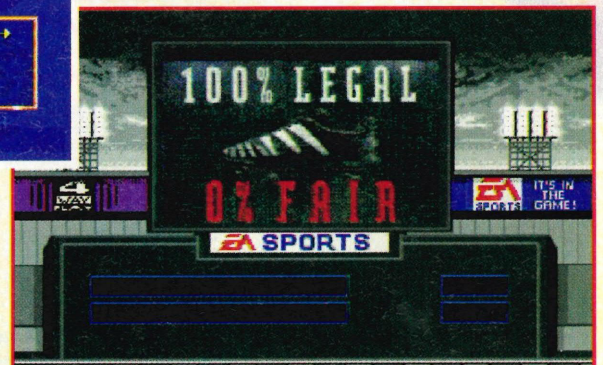
One of my all-time favourite games has been made even better. If you thought FIFA was good on cart, the CD version will astound you.

The superb intro sequence, with the EA logo blowing up and lots of FMV of Italia '90, puts you in the footy mood and heralds a spectacular game of skill and flair.

You're presented with an even bigger range of options than before. All the cart's features are included, such as the tournament mode, 4 Way Play and many strategic options, plus a few new ones. The addition of a league is a boon for those who like multiplayer tournaments with their mates. Of course, there's the inevitable CD-accessing between menus, but it's only a few seconds to wait. And all the benefits of CD can be heard with the brilliant Dolby Surround Sound: the atmosphere is electric as the crowd cheers and groans.

As for the gameplay, it's even better than ever. It's easier to play a passing game, the goalies fumble more often, and shooting is more skilful with the aftertouch – get it wrong and your shot will fly well wide of the target. With top-notch playability and presentation, this is simply the best football game I've ever played – get it now!

MARK





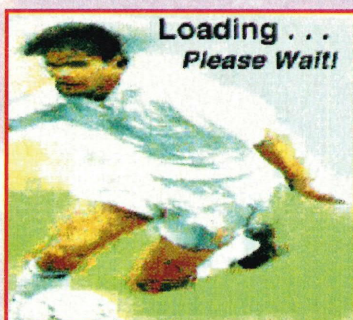
Another spectacular diving header is viewed again using the excellent instant replay option. You can rewind, fast forward and even follow a player.



(Above) The keeper makes a brilliant diving save. Goalies can be computer- or player-controlled, and they make more fumbles and mistakes than before.



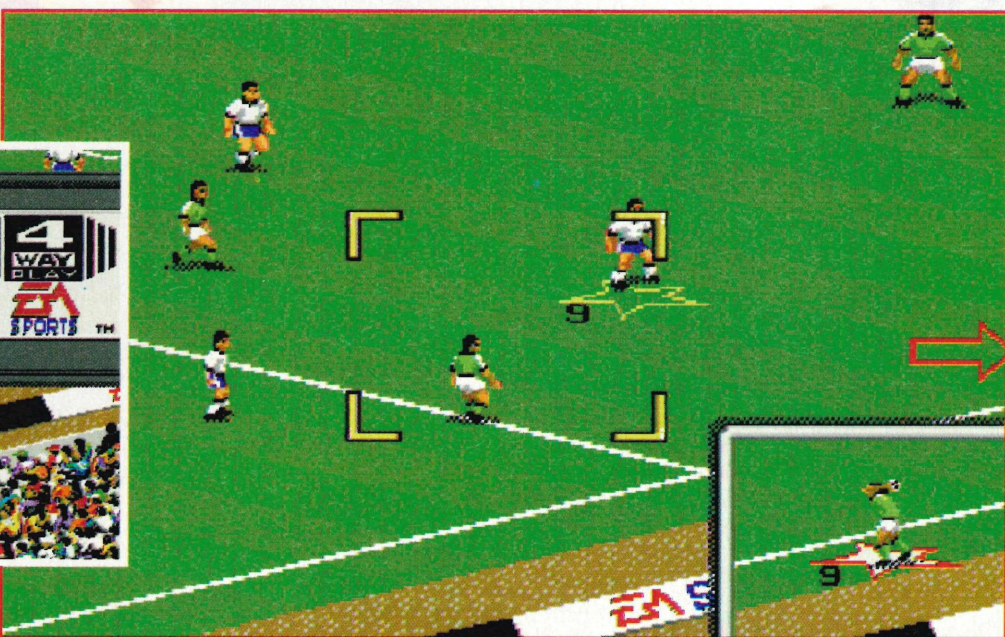
The electronic scoreboard celebrates a goal with an animated sequence. These have all been changed from the cartridge version.



(Above) As well as selecting a formation and how far up/back your players move, you can choose from several overall strategies.



(Left) There are now 64 teams to choose from, including All-Star sides from all six continents.



MAD

An excellent conversion. Not only does it feature the usual CD extras such as FMV and improved sound, it also improves significantly on the cart's gameplay.

10
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1

SENSIBLE SOCCER
FIFA SOCCER
J LEAGUE (MMD)

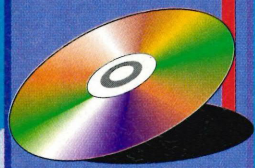
FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

EA SPORTS £49.99 OUT NOW

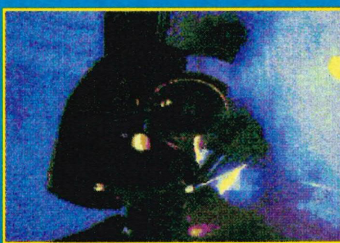
1-4 PLAYERS MEDIUM ACCESS SAVE TOURNAMENT UK RELEASE

GAMEPLAY	95
GRAPHICS	93
SOUND	94
ADDICTION	96

OVERALL 95



While *Rebel Assault* prepares to blast into view, a different sort of Star Wars licence makes its move. Jason Johnson thinks hard about its chances...



The evil Darth Vader plays a queen in this game!



THE SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS' STAR WARS CHESS



amassed with Darth Vader playing queen (!) to the Emperor's king. If you remember the Star Wars action figures you'll have a fair idea what to

thankfully there's an option to turn them off.

At first, playing on the 3-D battleground is a little confusing as you struggle to recognise a knight from a bishop, so if you're a newcomer to the world of chess the standard 2-D setup is a godsend. Progressing onto the more exciting game is only a matter of time, made all the quicker with easy controls and instant pick-up-and-play-ability.



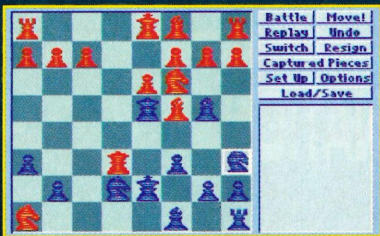
Incorporating the *Chessmaster* games engine, the challenging gameplay is sure to test even the most proficient chess player. This doesn't mean you'll be hard-pushed to win a game on the easiest setting, but as you become more Nigel-like, *Star Wars Chess* will really come into its own. The CPU mind is brilliant and with the renewed interest in chess and a new Star Wars movie in the pipeline, this brave title could fare well.

expect. Towering over the playing board, or not as in R2-D2's case, the characters look all set for an exciting rebel assault.

Animated battles

When playing in *Star Wars* mode perhaps the most exciting attribute, apart from the grand music, is an animated sequence after every capture (the taking of a piece). A Jeff Minter-style sequence (hyperspace star effect with a psychedelic influence) catapults you into a chequered platform screen with the two pieces facing each other, ready for battle. Light sabres, spiked clubs and high-powered laser guns, as well as a fair whack of fisticuffs, decide the winner. After a while the novelty of watching these battles may wear a little thin, so

You can use the traditional 2-D board view if you prefer.



Now that we have your undivided attention, MEGA POWER can reveal an out-of-the-ordinary Mega-CD title is homing in on Sega's currently lucrative hardware target. Mindscape/Software Toolworks are aiming at gamers who like to exercise their grey matter rather than their trigger finger. Ever-popular on the home computer formats, does chess stand a chance of success here?

As with most chess games, *Star Wars* has two views: standard newspaper style and 3-D. However, the latter is really spectacular, featuring all those classic Star Wars characters as the pieces. The Rebels are led by Luke Skywalker (king) and Princess Leia (queen), with eight R2-D2s for the pawns. On the opposite side of the board the evil Empire forces have



Chewbacca battles it out with a Stormtrooper in one of the excellent animated sequences.

STAR WARS CHESS

MINDSCAPE ETBA OUT SEPT

1 PLAYER

MEDIUM ACCESS

SAVE

INFORMATION
0444 246333

GET THIS...



LOW LIFE SCUM...

PREVIEW



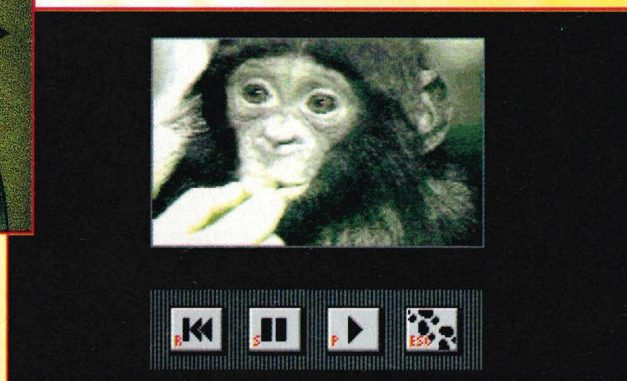
Jason Johnson goes for a walk on the wild side and wrestles with lions, tigers and naked sewer rats!



THE The main menu is a map of the San Diego Zoo. Simply move the cursor around to choose which area you want to visit.



(Left) View video clips of dangerous animals from the safety of your armchair. You can even watch two rhinos mating!



THE ANIMALS

Rewind and fast-forward to watch all sorts of animals in action in the fabulous video sequences.

Now this is a new one. An interactive library for the Mega-CD, whatever next? Mindscape, with a little help from the lads and lasses at San Diego wildlife park, have put together a fascinating and admirable edutainment title. Originally released about a year ago on the PC CD-ROM this is the first disc of its kind in the UK for the Sega unit. Can it muster enough interest to broaden the use of what's predominantly a games platform?

First and foremost the amount of information stored for easy reference is astounding. Hundreds of film clips, colourful still-frame photographs and clear speech samples are at hand. Text files are abundant and the amount of educational value *The Animals* holds is exceptional. If it's an edutainment title you want, this is the only one I've ever seen for the Mega-CD and it's both entertaining and informative.

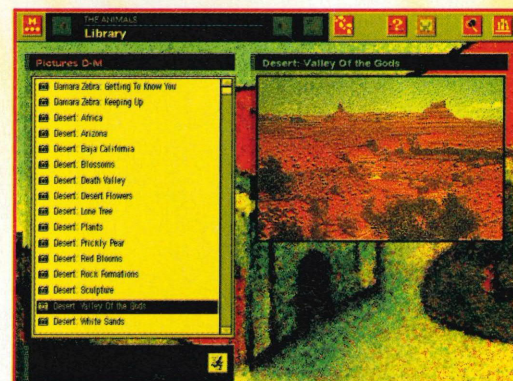
As is so often the case with Mega-CD releases, the graphics come under very close scrutiny. After all, the gameplay's far from important this time round, is it?! Full Motion Video sequences, though not full-screen, are adequate. One extra special selection of film footage lets you listen and watch the San Diego

wildlife park keepers in action. A real joy.

You will now probably have decided whether this a worthwhile buy. For the parents of you reading this article it may provoke a certain amount of interest, as with wildlife and natural history fans. It's well presented, very informative and if you're at all interested in broadening your geographical knowledge this will prove a fascinating adventure time and time again.




The Animals is packed with reams of interesting information about all those wild beasts. It's easy to access using the on-screen icons.




(Above) There are thousands of still pictures to view at your leisure.




THE ANIMALS




1 PLAYER



MEDIUM ACCESS



N/A



**INFORMATION
0444 246333**

**MINDSCAPE
ETBA
OUT SEPT**



SEGA™

MEGA-CD

CORE
DESIGN LIMITED

Check out your capability for the 'corps by playing our demo in the following stores . . . Beatties & Virtual Reality, Game, Virgin, Tomorrows World (Hull) and Mr. Disk (Birmingham).

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The finished graphics have yet to be incorporated, so it'll look a lot smoother and better than this.



Phil King climbs into the cockpit of what promises to be the fastest console flight sim ever...

Flying Nightmares

Flight simulations have never really taken off on the consoles, despite shifting hangarfuls of units on home computers – particularly the PC. However, Domark hope to change all this with the release of *Flying Nightmares*: a co-production between their in-house Kremlin programming team and Panel Comp of Ludlow. Although based on Domark's top PC game *AV8B Harrier Assault* (which was originally the title of this version), it's being completely overhauled for the Mega-CD.

For a start, the PC's polygon graphics will be replaced by much more impressive texture-mapped ones for the ground and objects. The latter includes other planes, helicopter gunships, battleships, tanks and enemy bases: over a hundred different objects and vehicles are promised.

So far these new graphics have yet to be incorporated: the game is currently using old graphics from *MiG 29*. However, the 3-D graphics engine to run them is complete. *Flying Nightmares* producer Gary Patino comments, "The texture-mapping has four levels of detail; so the lower you fly, the more you can see". In the finished version you'll be able to see everything from a multitude of angles. These include from a fired missile, of an enemy target, and exterior views of your plane. Gary adds, "We're toying with idea of having a virtual cockpit, where you can pan the view left and right. But we don't know if we'll have enough memory for it."

Island conflict

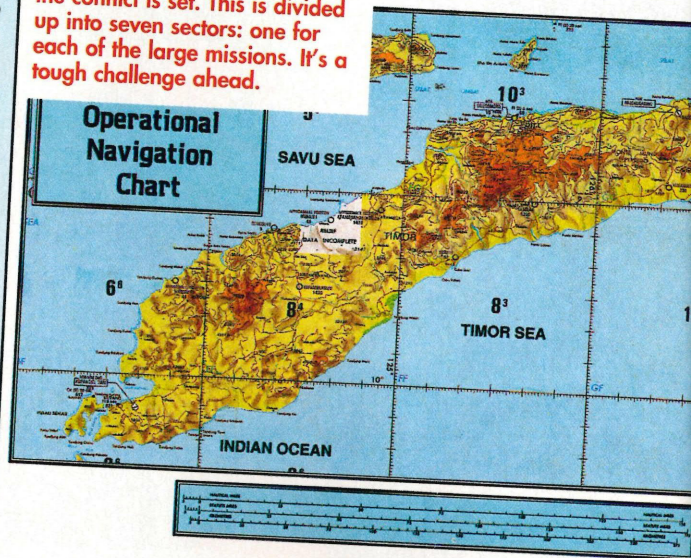
The game scenario is the same as the PC version, based on the Indonesian invasion of the island of East Timor in 1975, with you flying an AV8B Harrier jet from the deck of the USS Tarawa. However, the seven large missions are being completely designed from scratch, rather than simply using the PC ones. These will involve flying to waypoints to carry out certain tasks – you'll need to achieve a certain percentage success rate to complete the mission.

Plenty of variety is promised as you get to destroy bases, dogfight with enemy fighters, protect road convoys and chase Hercules planes. There will also be sea battles as you attack a harbour full of texture-mapped battleships and aircraft carriers. Night scenarios are also to be included, where you use a special infrared view.

Your Harrier is armed with high-tech weapons such as laser-guided missiles, cluster bombs (great for destroying enemy runways) and radar-jamming pods. It also flies like its real-life counterpart: by adjusting the jet nozzles you can even achieve a vertical take-off and hover in midair! If this sounds a bit complicated, don't worry; there will be novice options for automatic landing and that tricky midair refuelling.

The arcade feel will be enhanced by spectacular Full Motion Video sequences for the game introduction and various death scenes – including crashing into a hill, splashing down in the sea and the pilot ejecting. With the excellent CD soundtrack (see box) and superb texture-mapped graphics, *Flying Nightmares* should be the best-presented and most accessible flight sim yet – and the first really successful one on a console.

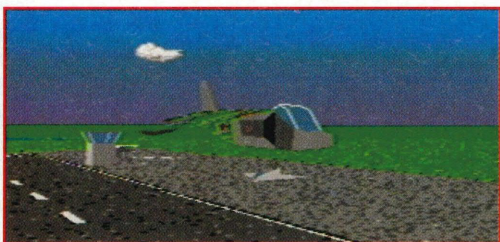
The map of East Timor where the conflict is set. This is divided up into seven sectors: one for each of the large missions. It's a tough challenge ahead.



Blasting enemies and buildings results in lots of flaming debris.



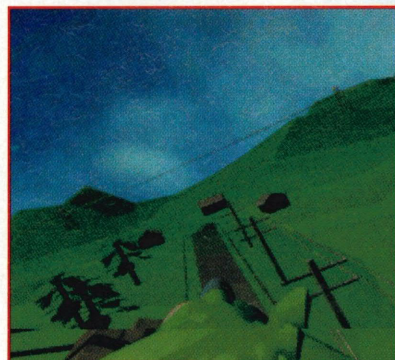
You have lots of views to choose from and an arsenal of weaponry at your disposal.



Piloting a realistic-handling Harrier is a tricky business, so there'll be an automatic landing option for novices.



The cockpit has a realistic array of dials and displays, including the essential radar.

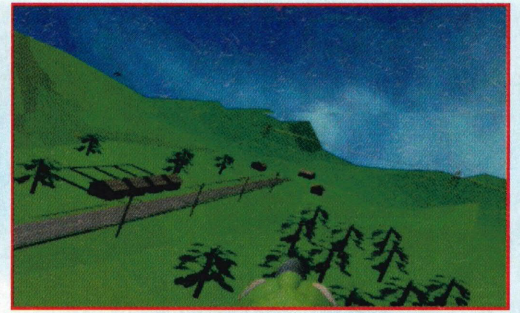


Another superb intro sequence. Note that these shots are taken from the PC – they'll appear slightly grainier on Mega-CD.

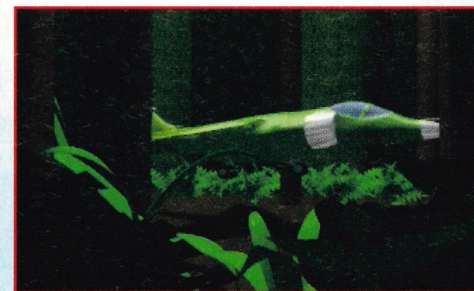
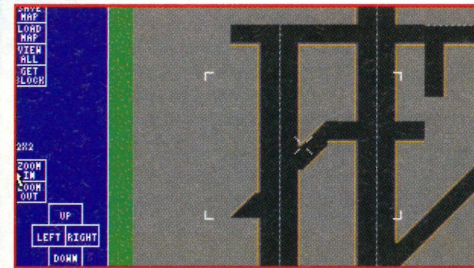
SOUNDS GREAT

Usually for a flight simulation, *Flying Nightmares* will feature an extensive CD soundtrack. High-flying pilots will be able to choose between six in-game soundtracks created by musical maestro Mike Ash, ranging from ambient jinglings to hardcore rave – “something to suit everyone”.

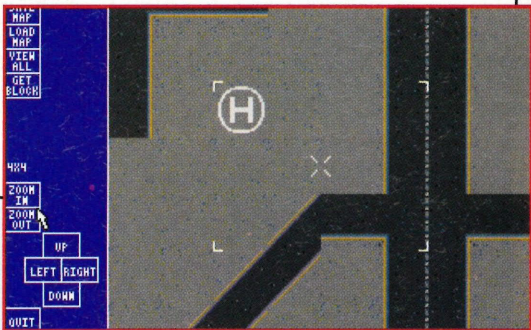
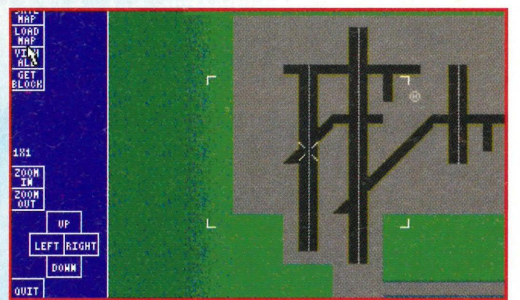
Domark have also enlisted Jesus Jones frontman Mike Edwards for a storming rock title track. It took two days to create at his Camden Town recording studio and features lots of screaming guitars with a techno-rock backing. A huge fan of video-games, Mike has also been signed up to produce some special Sonic The Hedgehog audio tracks in Japan.



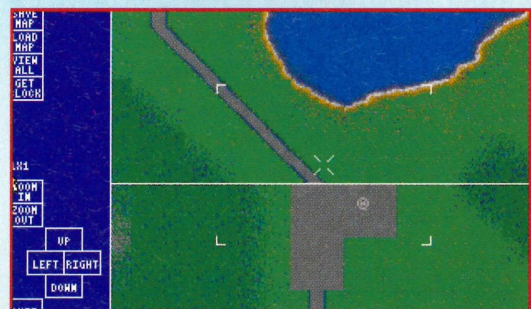
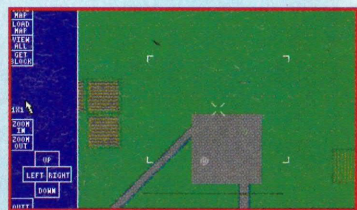
You can choose between several different camera views, including external ones of your plane.



One of the impressive rendered 3-D sequences, designed to give the game an arcade feel.




These programmer screens show how the mission maps are put together. They won't be in the finished game.




The scenery has four levels of detail – the game switches between them as you fly up and down.

MOSA POWER


FLYING NIGHTMARES




1 PLAYER



MEDIUM ACCESS



SAVE GAME



INFORMATION
081 780 2222

DOMARK
£TBA
OUT SEPT

REVIEW



You thought Alien was frightening? Welcome to Japan's sense of horror, or is it unrestricted humour? Jason Johnson finds out.

MASKED RIDER ZOO

Undoubtedly the most admirable attempt at conveying movie-like graphics and story line to a Mega-CD game was *Ground Zero Texas*. Not only was the multimillion pound budget a gob-smacker, the incredibly believable acting was an unexpected bonus.

Japanese designers have still to learn the talented art of combining Full Motion Video with a, how shall we say it, game. Early examples of binnable Mega-CD software from the Orient have to be... well, hold on a minute, there aren't that many. Apart from *Silpheed* and *AX-101*, which didn't dare use even a smidgen of FMV, we haven't seen much in the UK. The Americans are more to blame (*Mad Dog McCree*, *Dragon's Lair*, *Prize Fighter*) for the low expectations bestowed upon imported Sega discs.

So, it would appear the Japanese are pushing new boundaries, or have the importers decided to plunge for an extra import title this month? Toei are the development company responsible for this Manga-esque film cum game, so was it worth all the effort?

An exceptionally impressive example of Japanese film making, the movie behind the game is dazzling. It's fast-moving, action-packed and, above all, thoroughly enjoyable despite continuous Japanese gibberish. The story is intriguing, the action gory and an example of fantasy-adventure at its finest.

Set over a number of scenes, you play a variety of people - or things, to be more accurate. The opening sequence features a young Japanese lad on his way to school. He looks into the sky and a meteorite descends towards him. It stops, circling him in an uninviting manner. The boy panics, legs it, and the 'game' begins.

Rapid successions of left and right D-pad jostling, depending on the arrow flashed on screen, secures survival. In later fighting scenes, icons tell you which button to press to perform the

right fighting move. One mistake and you lose a predetermined amount of life. Too many errors and you're back to square one.

Anyway, as I was saying, you're frantically pressing away when everything is still. You wait for something to happen and a flashing icon brings you back to your senses. What do I do here? Unless you've studied the instruction manual, which is all in Japanese, you're stumped. Ah, of course, rapidly press all three buttons until the energy bar scales to maximum power. How stupid of me.

...gameplay is completely sacrificed on the altar of great Full Motion Video

And so the game continues in a similar manner when suddenly three lines of lingo, marked A, B and C respectively, appear. What do I do now? Select one of the three and the film skips to its relevant scene where you may end up playing as the Masked Rider. This is all very well, but unless you can read Japanese it makes

this very clever addition a complete waste of time.

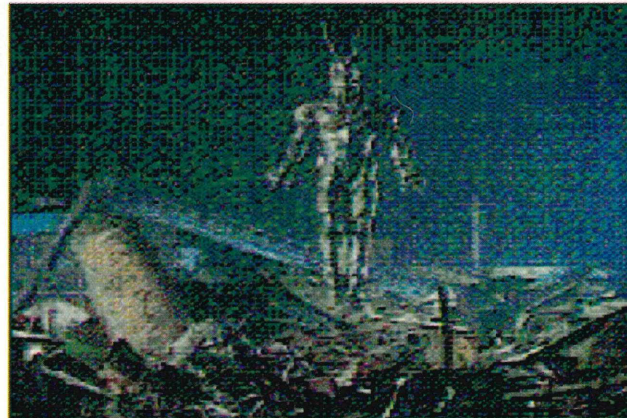
The movie footage in *Masked Rider* may be excellent, but how much enjoyment can you get out of a game you can't fully understand?



Nice FMV, shame about the game. Maybe it'd be better if we could speak fluent Japanese. Then again, the gameplay's so shallow - simply reacting to on-screen icons - that it doesn't really matter.



This smiling Japanese kid is about to get caught up in a weird adventure as the Masked Rider fights it out with a strangle alien creature.





(Left) Our cute little kid gets attacked by the alien creature. (Above) After a few battles with the Masked Rider, he looks 'armless enough! You need to make all the right moves, though – get it wrong and your life meter is rapidly reduced.



It's just as well the bug-eyed Masked Rider is on hand to save the day. He may look like an oversize mosquito, but he can use his fighting skills to squash his alien opponent.



OVERALL %
20



I've never been a fan of these 'interactive' movie games – I didn't even like Dragon's Lair. The trouble with them is that the gameplay is completely sacrificed on the altar of great Full Motion Video. Masked Rider is no exception. The FMV is particularly good, showing the fighters performing all sorts of spectacular stunts. The main trouble is, for most of the time you're just sat there watching it, rather than actually getting involved. When the interaction does come in, it's of the typical 'follow the on-screen arrows and icons' type, basically a simple reaction test. Not only is this mind-numbingly shallow, but you're concentrating on the icons so much that you can't really enjoy the resulting action. In fact, it's more fun to watch someone else playing. Masked Rider is one of the most pointless Mega-CD titles I've seen.

PHIL



How many times have you read comments like "the Full Motion Video is great"? Quite a few, I'll bet. Granted, the graphics are very good and FMV is often outstanding, but with so little gameplay how can a £59.99 price tag be justified? Videos look and sound better, and often cost a fraction of the price, so where's it all going wrong?

Okay, so you can't interact with a film, but the interaction in this particular title is practically nonexistent. Game time is unfairly divided in favour of the viewing mode – sit back and watch the film footage – and you occasionally interact during chases and fights.

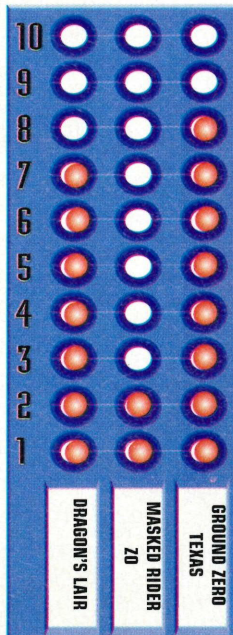
Remember when the Mega-CD was first launched, followed by a series of gorgeous looking, but totally unplayable reaction adventures? And still we're bombarded by trashy games that are about as enjoyable as pulling off your toenails.

On a positive note (it can't be all bad, can it?) the interaction is superior to the majority of similar games in that you are required to make decisions at regular points. Press A, B or C and the film changes, depending on your decision. Sometimes, you even die immediately. Unfortunately, unless you read Japanese it's completely useless and leaves you frustrated and unfulfilled. Ah well.

JASON

MP

"The Full Motion Video may look good, and there are some exciting fighting scenes, but the gameplay is virtually nonexistent – even if you can understand what's going on."



MASKED RIDER 20

SEGA
£59.99
OUT NOW



1 PLAYER



MEDIUM ACCESS



CONTINUES



JAPAN RELEASE

GAMEPLAY	18
GRAPHICS	82
SOUND	70
ADDICTION	12

OVERALL
20



Jason Johnson embarks on a blood-curdling adventure into the fantastic mind of H R Giger...

DARKS

Pushing aside the onslaught of football games (it's World Cup fever, you know), a thinking person's title is soon to be launched for the Mega-CD. *Dark Seed*, critically acclaimed on its original Amiga and PC platforms, is a horror adventure that oozes atmosphere.

You play Mike Dawson, a journalist who's just moved into a Victorian-styled mansion. The house may look beautiful, but it is full of sinister secrets. As the adventure progresses, Mike creates a portal to the dark world of an ancient, dying civilisation. This is where H R Giger's artwork comes in to create a sinister scenario, contrasting perfectly with the brighter graphics used for the normal world. There are over 75 locations in all, containing character animation created by digitising real actors.

Eerie sampled speech and sound FX will be a definite improvement over the original floppy-disk-based computer games. The extra storage space on Mega-CD makes it the perfect format, unlike the Mega Drive which would have suffered from lack of available memory. So, it's safe to conclude presentation will be almost identical to the recent CD32 and PC CD-ROM versions.

Pointing the way

Control is via a standard point-and-click setup, commonplace to the PC and Amiga, but less popular on the Mega-CD. It works extremely well and searching the visually spectacular screens for clues and objects is a much-needed change from simple D-pad-oriented games like *Dragon's Lair*, don't you think?

One of the most important aspects of *Dark Seed* is that you have to remember you're controlling



I wonder who, or what, lives in a house like this? Surely nothing quite as sickening as Lloyd Grossman?



HR Giger artwork is used to create a unique atmosphere as you step into a dark dimension of unspeakable horrors.

Mike, so it's not 'you' in the driving seat. Well, you are, but whatever you see on-screen has to be pointed out to the adventurous journalist, making you think just that little bit harder. For example, forgetting to point-out the inscriptions on a tombstone, even though you know what it says, will delay Mike's thinking process and possibly hinder progress.

Another thing to remember is that every action cause a reaction, just like *Sim City*, and this makes everything all the more difficult to predict. Take one wrong step and you may be thrown into prison, left to rot in eternal hell, or you could slide into a hidden world. Good job there's a RAM save facility, eh?

Art of the game

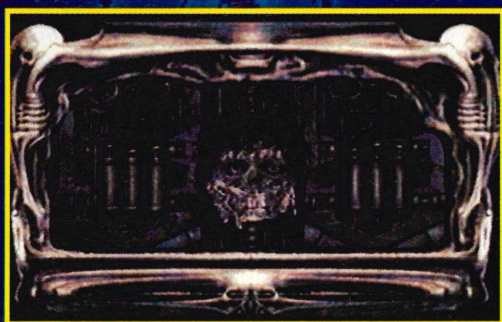
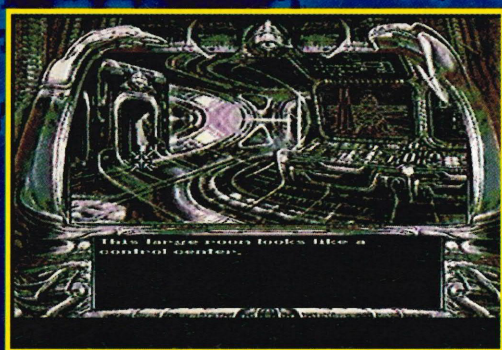
Dark Seed is one of the best-looking games ever. The sheer amount of work put into translating H R Giger's catalogue of masterpieces from canvas to digitised images is phenomenal. Mike Dawson's house is just the icing on the cake as it ominously shadows the walkway outside, much like the horrific home used in *Amityville*. Every screen is a treat to look at, whether in the good or evil world, which you fall into later on.

Graveyards and underworld caverns lurk everywhere, all in Giger's typical fantasy art style. Animated sequences (they're particularly creepy) and, of course, the digitised Mike sprite are all Gigeresque and this predominantly monochrome colouring is perfect considering the Mega-CD's limited palette. As you can see from the screenshots, this is a title to look out for... you have been warned!

Yuk! Terrifying scenes lurk around every corner as you explore the strange dark realm inside Mike Dawson's Victorian mansion.



(Below) Uh oh! This looks very spooky. You've got to be careful as death, or even worse, is always on the cards. Thankfully you can save your game position, but it's still a scary adventure.



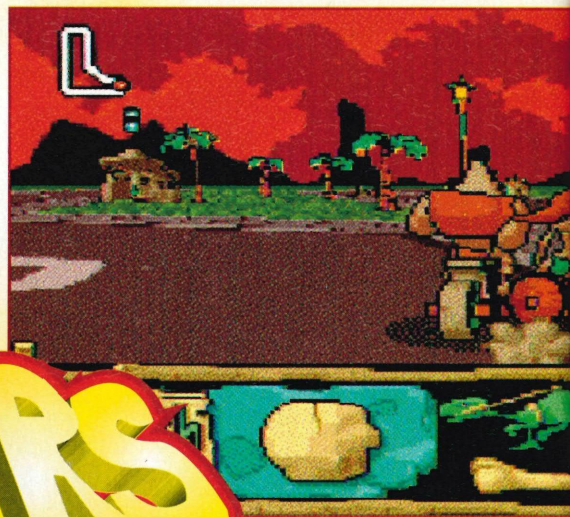
(Above) Giger's weird art mingles weird aliens with industrial machinery. (Right) A dark lesson in human anatomy.

PREVIEW



Phil King races back in time to see how Core's latest Mega-CD masterpiece is evolving...

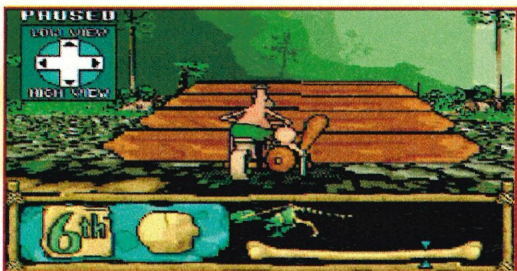
RACERS



Ride through these traffic cones to find a shortcut through the city.

So far Core Design have made a massive impact on the Mega-CD market with superb 3-D shoot-'em-ups such as *Thunderhawk*, *Battlecorps* and the forthcoming *Soulstar*. Now the successful Derby-based software company are applying the same spectacular 3-D graphics wizardry to create a racing game with a difference.

Imagine The Flintstones crossed with *Mario Kart* and you have *BC Racers*. Set in prehistoric times,



In one of the jungle races, Chuck Rock and son prepare to launch their bike off this bridge.

it's already a game with a history. It was originally titled *Chuck Rally - Rocky Racers*, but Core recently decided to replace the old platform heroes Chuck and Chuck Jr with two new characters, Cliff and Roxy.

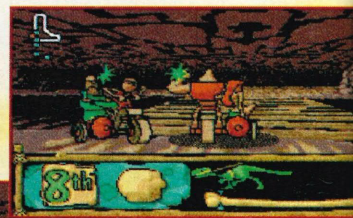
Shades-wearing Cliff must be the coolest cave-man ever. His cave-babe Roxy certainly thinks so: she just loves riding in the sidecar of his dino-powered dirtbike. Cliff has always dreamed of owning a top-of-the-range boulderdash bike, so when millionaire playboy Millstone Rockafella offers one as the prize to the winner of a wacky bike race, Cliff signs up immediately - taking Roxy along for the ride.

Wacky races

The competition is tough, though, with Cliff and Roxy racing against seven bikes and 13 zany characters. There are six sidecar pairings, any of which you can choose to race with, and the huge dinosaur biker Stiggy Saurus. There are four skill

levels, each comprising an eight-race championship. So there are 32 different tracks in all, set in eight environments: city, night (featuring a neat headlight effect), desert, jungle, swamp, blizzard, caves and volcanoes. Each of these will have different hazards including dinosaurs stampeding across the track, dino-driven conveyor belts, huge chasms, rivers and even coffins rising out of the ground.

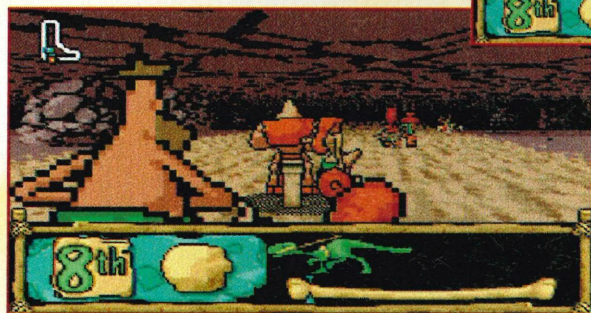
Hitting these slows down your dino-bike, as does colliding with opponents. To deal with these, you can punch with either of your characters. Crashing also reduces your boulder energy, which in turn depletes your dino-power and hence your top speed. To replenish energy you can



(Left & Above) The cave levels feature bridges over huge chasms. The ceiling is created using a clever mirror effect.

ROCKY RACERS

There are eight racing sidecar teams in the game, each with different strengths and weaknesses...



CLIFF HANGER & ROXY



The heroes of the game, Cliff and Roxy are the ideal cave-couple. Bikini-clad Roxy may look a real babe, but she packs a mean punch.

Team: Cliffhagin' Howlers Inc
Strength: Medium
Speed: Medium
Manoeuvrability: Medium
Weapon Power: Medium

AXLE ROADS & WILLY MAMMOTH



A strange couple of characters. Willy looks like a cuddly toy elephant, but his tusks are sharp.

Axle is always likely to cause a riot.
Team: Crash 'n' Burn Cars
Strength: Medium
Speed: High
Manoeuvrability: Low
Weapon Power: Medium

BOB HARDLEY & JIMI HANDTRIX



Another couple of rockers, these cool guys are as fast on the track as Jimi's guitar playing - he just loves to swing it at racing rivals.

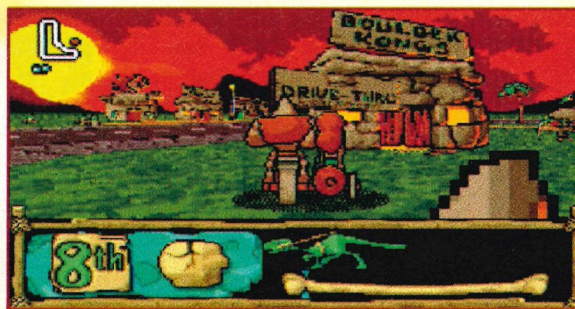
Team: Hardley Dinosaur
Strength: Low
Speed: High
Manoeuvrability: Low
Weapon Power: Low

BRICK JAGGER & GARY GRITTA



These are the two bad dudes in the game and they like to race dirty. They also have the best stats, so they should race to number one.

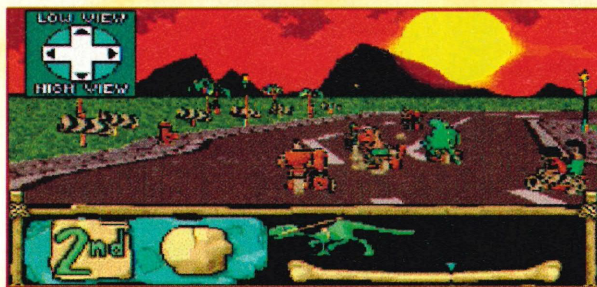
Team: Datstone Motors
Strength: High
Speed: High
Manoeuvrability: High
Weapon Power: High



(Right) Granite Jackson and Teena Burna have just won a race – what a saucy pair of girls, eh?

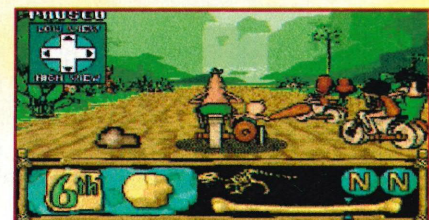
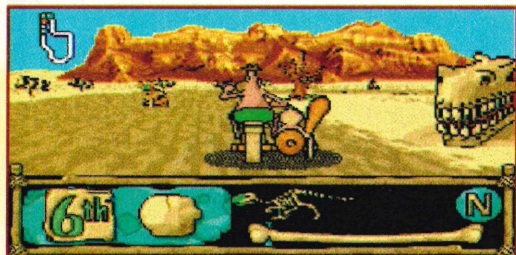


(Above) The game is full of wacky humour. (Below) The Chucks ride through the desert.



(Above) You can choose to view the action from up in the air.

(Below) Another photo to celebrate Cliff and Roxy winning a race.



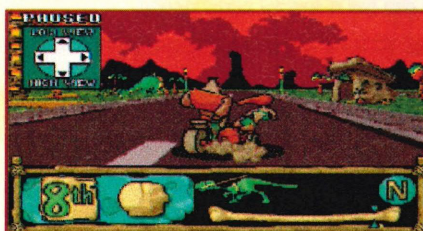
(Above) Little Chuck Jnr swings his club at racing rivals on a jungle track.

simply run over the huge joints of meat in the pits. Nitros can also be collected for a quick boost down the straights. Another neat *Mario Kart*-style touch is the hidden shortcuts which you can use to your advantage.

Cartoon cavemen

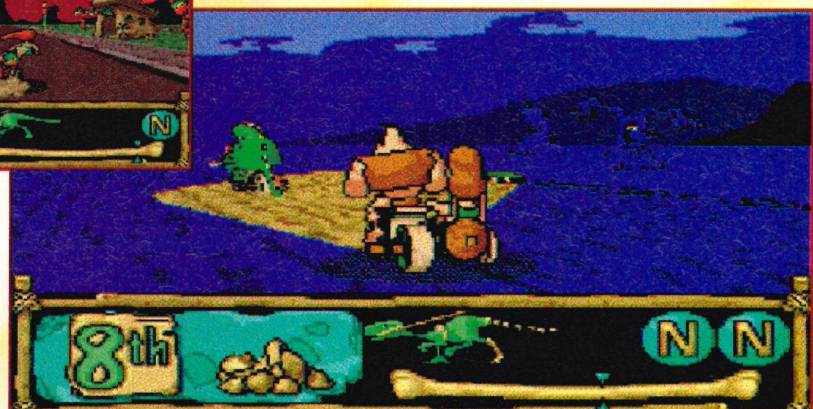
Programmer Dan Scott and graphic artist Toby Gard have been working rock-hard on the game since January. So far only a couple of the tracks are completely finished, but it's already looking good with some brilliant cartoon graphics which use the Mega-CD's famous sprite scaling abilities as they move in and out of the screen. In true *Virtua Racing* style, there's also a choice of viewpoints: from directly behind the bike, and an aerial view.

The game has undergone many design changes, one of which is the dropping of the planned split-screen mode. Dan explains, "We thought of doing it, then I made a few calculations and it would just be too slow. If we'd done it like *Thunderhawk*, in just 16 colours [rather



(Above) Roxy leans over to help the bike round corners.

The spooky graveyard races take place at night. This is tricky as you can only see clearly within the beam of your headlight.



SADO-TOOTH TYGER & SID VISCIOUS

A real hardnut team with Sado steering the bike and looking even more viscious than his green-haired punk passenger. Don't get in their way.

Team: Cave-punk Cars Corporation
Strength: Medium
Speed: Medium
Manoeuvrability: Low
Weapon Power: Medium



STIGGY SAURUS

This huge dinosaur is the only single racer and the only

one you can't control.
Team: Bike-o-saurus Inc
Strength: Low
Speed: Low
Manoeuvrability: Low
Weapon Power: Low



GRANITE JACKSTONE & TEENA BURNA

The disco divas are determined to prove women drivers are the best. Low-cut dresses should keep other drivers' eyes off the road.

Team: Dirtybike Corporation
Strength: High
Speed: Medium
Manoeuvrability: Medium
Weapon Power: Low



CHUCK ROCK & CHUCK JNR

Although relegated from the starring role, the two Chucks make a cameo appearance. Cute little Jnr smashes opponents with his huge club.

Team: Chuck Motors
Strength: High
Speed: Low
Manoeuvrability: Low
Weapon Power: Medium



PREVIEW

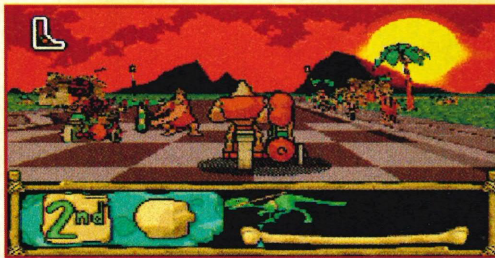


Axel and Willy ram into the back of Cliff and Roxy, whose bike energy is perilously low.



(Above) Whoah! It's wheel-to-wheel action as you come up behind Brick & Gary and Stiggy.

The starter waves his flag at the beginning of a night race. Just watch him run out of your way!



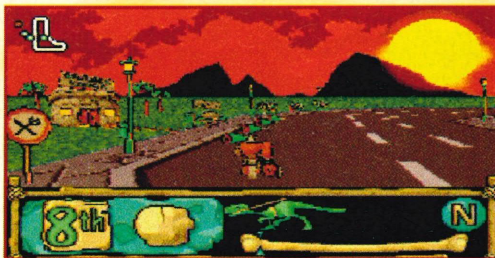
Revvng up on the starting grid. Time it exactly right and you can get a special boost ahead.

▶ than 64], then maybe we could have done it."

Instead, the two-player option is now cooperative, with one player controlling the bike and the rider's punching, while the second does the passenger's punching and leans left or right to help the bike around corners.

This mode is yet to be incorporated, as are the planned animated game intro and a spectacular FMV sequence when you accumulate enough race points to win the boulderdash bike – this can only be done on the very hardest skill level. However, all the backdrop graphics are now complete, so Dan and Toby are now concentrating on using them to piece together the remaining tracks.

BC Racers is on schedule for an October release, and with its combination of prehistoric humour and exhilarating action, the game looks set to claim pole position in the Mega-CD racing stakes.



(Left) Top up your energy in the pits. (Right) Mount the kerb to run over pedestrians!



OVERALL RANKINGS			
CLIFF & ROXY	27	Pts	
JIMI & BOB	12	Pts	
S&DO & SID	10	Pts	
GARY & BRICK	07	Pts	
GRANITE & TINA	04	Pts	
CHUCK & JNR	03	Pts	
AXEL & WILLY	01	Pts	
STIGGYSAURUS	00	Pts	

PRESS START BUTTON

Championship points are earned by finishing in the top three. There are four skill levels with eight races each.

GRANITE GRAPHICS

BC Racers uses an awesome array of sprites and track scenery, created on an Amiga using *Deluxe Paint III* and *Real 3D*. The same bike graphic is used for all eight teams, with the various rider sprites masked appropriately for a perfect fit when they're overlaid. The bike has 16 rotational frames, five of which are used for the characters under your control. As different punching and leaning animations are required for each of these angles, this means that the main bike uses around 50 different frames of animation in various combinations.

There are unique trackside objects for each type of environment, and every graphic has three differently shaded versions so it appears brighter as it gets closer on-screen – or night-time objects which appear blue until illuminated by your bike's headlights. Roadside scenery includes jokey shops like Woollyworths and Boulder Kong, and bizarre statues of cavemen getting killed in a multitude of ways.

All the sprites and scenery are scaled on-screen using a similar 3-D graphics engine to *Battlecorps*, slightly altered to suit the game. Graphics man Toby Gard has also discovered a clever technique to mirror the texture-mapped ground, using a different palette, to create a different ceiling image for the cave levels.

BC RACERS

CORE DESIGN
£44.99
OUT OCT



1-2 PLAYERS



QUICK ACCESS



CONTINUES



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PREVIEW



MORTAL KOMBAT II



After last year's Mortal Kombat media hullabaloo, Acclaim are keen to avoid adverse publicity about the even gorier sequel. But Nick Merritt was determined to rip through to the heart of it...

Let's consider the word 'sequel'. To be honest, it hardly inspires a huge amount of confidence, does it? Names like 'Robocop 2', the new Seal album and anything with Steven Segal in it hardly give us much to get excited about.

So when Acclaim phoned me and said, 'Hey, get yourself down here and check out *Mortal Kombat II*', well, let's just say the needle on the old enthusiasm meter didn't exactly stray into the red zone.

However, even I can be wrong occasionally (but don't tell too many people). *Mortal Kombat II* is looking like it's going to deliver a swift kick in the nuts to the likes of *Super Street Fighter II* and of course, its own younger brother, *Mortal Kombat*.

the original arcade code from *MKII* creators, Bally-Williams. So all Probe have really had to do is make sure it works properly, get the timing right and tweak the graphics to ensure the best balance between quality and gameplay is achieved. And this they appear to have done.

Drained of blood

If you've managed to sneak down to an arcade recently, you'll have noticed the changes to the original game - the new characters, the extra gore and the improved fighting moves. And as far as the gore is concerned, you certainly won't notice too much of it from these screenshots.

The reason for this is that Acclaim don't want



New character Baraka has two blades which he rubs together to produce sparks. Here he takes on old favourite Scorpion.

people to concentrate on this aspect of the game at this stage. They would much rather have people talking about the great graphics and the gameplay - and there is, of course, the problem of the ever-circling tabloid press, always on the lookout for a soft body to pick over.

However, although we can't print the pictures, we certainly can talk about it. All the gore, fatalities and special moves are being included from the arcade version. This is a significantly bloodier game than the first *MK*, although there are lighter moments too: the babality moves when the player gets transformed into a screaming infant, the hidden game of Pong when you play your 250th game, and the friendship moves which turn the likes of Liu Kang into a shimmering disco dancer.

Let's turn to happier matters - the gameplay. If there was one weakness of the first *MK*, it was that the game looked like a Jean-Claude Van Damme but fought like a primary-school teacher. I'm pleased to report that this fatal flaw has at last been dealt with.

The old characters have a few new tricks up their sleeves. Here Sub-Zero freezes a pool of water on the ground for his opponent to slip on.



MORTAL KOMBAT

The range of fighting moves has been beefed up considerably with a wider range of attacking and defensive moves, four finishing moves and sundry other stuff. There's also the now-mandatory hidden characters - Smoke and Jade hang around in the background but if you know the right code, you can bring them fully into battle. And of course, there's the subgame Pong (the first-ever video game, created by Atari-founder Nolan Bushnell.)

Gore-geous graphics

Luckily, the rest of the graphics look a lot better than Pong, being direct ports from the arcade version. You know, it really is quite amazing how the Mega Drive is measuring up graphically now. When I saw *MKII*, I initially thought it was the SNES version I was looking at. The range of colours, the detail and the smoothness of the sprites and parallax all combine to amaze you even more as to what the humble Mega Drive can do these days. These screenshots, being static, don't quite give you the idea of what I'm talking about, but there are levels where the clouds flow past the window more smoothly than a glass of wine down an alcoholic's throat - and this is while 19 other things happen on screen at the same time. Very impressive.

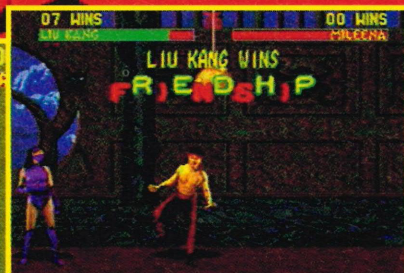


Martial arts master Shang Tsung can now be controlled by the player. Here he appears in a younger incarnation than in the first game. As well as firing up to three fireballs at once, he can morph into any other fighter.

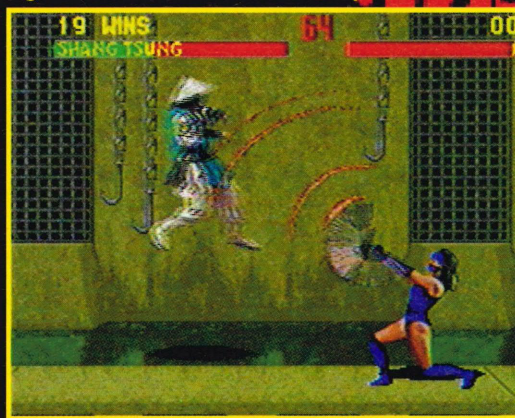
So would you believe it? It actually does look like Acclaim have come up with a sequel which is a big improvement over the original. It's fun to play, there's plenty of gore if that's your thing and the characters have an excellent range of moves to play around with. *Super Street Fighter II* had better take notice - *Mortal Kombat II* is coming out fighting.



There are 12 fighters to choose from, including new ones like The Green Reptile (the secret character in *MK*), ex-wrestler Jax, and Kung Lao (who uses his hat as a weapon).



(Above) As well as gory fatalities, you can achieve hilarious babality and friendship victories. (Left) New fighter Kitana uses her fan as a lethal weapon.



CD SEQUEL?

At the moment, Acclaim can't confirm whether there'll be a Mega-CD version of *MKII*. But if there is, we can expect the same sort of presentational enhancements seen in *Mortal Kombat CD*, with improved graphics and sampled sound FX. If there is a CD version, it's likely to appear later in the year, after the simultaneous release of cartridge formats. There may well also be a special Mega 32 version of the game.



MORTAL KOMBAT II

ACCLAIM
ETBA
OUT SEPT



1-2 PLAYERS



24 MBIT



CONTINUES



INFORMATION
071 344 5000



The world's favourite beat-'em-up has just got even bigger and better. Mark Hill tries out some special moves..

When a beat-'em-up that had taken 50% of all arcade takings in a single year arrived on the console scene, SNES owners were given the first pleasure of playing the conversion in their own homes. Capcom's promised MD version was left a little late, but when it did arrive it was a superb conversion incorporating the extra Hyper and Championship play modes.

Three years on from the arcade addiction that ignited the world, welcome to the next level: *Super Street Fighter II - The New Challengers*. Inside Capcom's mighty 32Mbit cart, there's enough hot action to melt the plastic casing enclosing such ingenious microchip technology. Four new fighters, new special moves for both the old fighters and the new additions, enhanced graphics (plus four new backgrounds), 3-D Q Sound, and a rewarding new bonus points system.



New characters T Hawk (huge Red Indian) and Cammy (British secret agent) battle it out.

old favourites such as Ryu and Ken have additional secret weapons. Ryu can now turn his blue magic into a flaming red mass to frazzle any opponent. Ken can grill the opposition too, but this time in the shape of a flaming Dragon Punch.

SSFII is a sequel that turns a one-on-one bout into even more of a contest. The new combo bonuses are perhaps the most rewarding feature. If Ryu attacks an opponent with the initial punch, followed quickly by the Dragon Punch, a '4-hit combo' message flashes onto the screen. This is very satisfying: it's likely to inflate your ego and humiliate your opponent even more!

...the promise of a near perfect arcade conversion has been kept

To gamers who judge a game on its merit as opposed to its price, *Super Street Fighter II* deserves all the attention. Arcadwellers will no doubt be familiar with the new challenges derived from four new additions to the line-up of fighters. Cammy, Fei Long, T Hawk and Dee Jay - four new names to learn, over ten more special moves to try out. It's not just the four fighters that draw in interest either:

The unmatched rivalry is further enhanced by three more bonuses. If a player gets out of a dizzy spell untouched, a 'recovery bonus' is awarded. Similarly, if a player can pull off a special move in a recovering position, a 'reversal bonus' flashes up. There's also credit given to the fighter who draws first blood. Capcom call this a 'first attack bonus', something that causes players to be very careful of their initial strategy!

SSFII is yet another world-beating beat-'em-up that's second-to-none for challenges. Adrenaline, strategy, heated rivalry, personality - Capcom's summer heavyweight must surely have it all!

...CAMMY



CANNON DRILL - down, down-towards, towards and kick.

...DEE JAY



DOUBLE DREAD KICK - away for two seconds, then towards and kick.

...T HAWK



THE HAWK - jump in the air, then hold all three punch buttons.

...FEI LONG



REKKA KEN - away for two seconds, then towards and kick.

NEW SPECIAL MOVES



FRONT KICK - towards, down,



HYPER FIST - down for two seconds, then up and punch.



THUNDERSTRIKE - towards, down, down-towards and punch



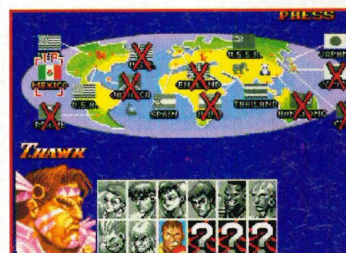
RISING DRAGON KICK - away, down, down-away and kick.



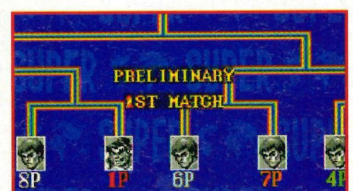
SPINNING KNUCKLE - away, down-away, towards.



MAX OUT - away for two seconds, then towards and punch.



The character selection screen. Choose your fighters and arena.



Up to eight players can compete in the tournament battle.



This top-notch coin-op conversion looks set to sell even quicker than its predecessor. Many game upgrades improve little if at all over the originals, but SSFII is a worthwhile one. For a start, you get four completely new characters to master: my favourite has to be the pig-tailed Cammy with impressive kicks and spins to rival the great Chun Li. It's good that they've upgraded the old characters too, so all of them have new moves to discover.

This all leads to a greater challenge in solo mode, with new subgames to enjoy too. There are also special challenge modes where you can really test your reactions, trying to pull off lots of combinations or knock out an opponent in the fastest time possible. But, as with the original SFII, the main attraction is the competitive two-player mode which will keep you coming back time and time again.

If there's one weakness, it's the appallingly garbled speech that sounds like a gargling Dalek. The only other question is whether it's really worth forking out for if you already own SFII:SCE. Great game, though.

PHIL



Old favourite Ryu performs his dragon punch on new challenger Fei Long.



Ryu's fireballs are more spectacular. Here he roasts new fighter Dee Jay.

As in SFII:SCE you can both play the same fighter.



(Above) Smashing barrels in one of the bonus rounds. (Below) Cammy scores a bonus for flooring Ken.



Brazilian mud monster Blanka flips our against E Honda.



Dee Jay earns a recovery bonus for regaining consciousness before he received another attack from Russian wrestler Zangief.



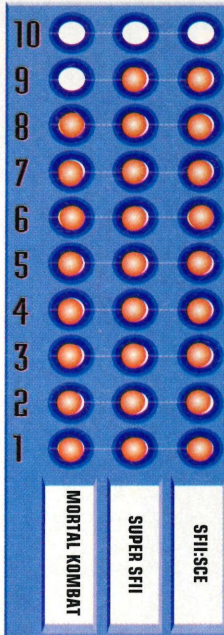
I must say this is yet another Capcom classic that leaves all other beat-'em-ups in its wake. Four new fighters, loads of new moves, enhanced graphics – the promise of a near perfect arcade conversion has been kept. The most appealing thing about the title is its ability to keep players coming back for more. Not only is this a fight, it's a war to the bitter end. Strategy plays a big role with the technical joystick commands required from the player, and the new 'bonuses' awarded during a bout make each contest even more interesting! When you can fight for pride and gain a lot of satisfaction, you know this is a title worth its weight in gold.

I don't think there is any other beat-'em-up with quite the same differing personalities this offers either. You have 16 different cultures from the British Cammy to the Brazilian Blanka. The scenes differ, the moves differ, the style differs – it's the ultimate beat-'em-up choice. The price may be high, but then you could end up with Dragon and pay the price of a missed opportunity. This is the best beat-'em-up I've ever had the pleasure to play.

MARK

MP

A worthwhile upgrade with four new fighters and lots of new moves to master. The combination and recovery bonuses spice up the beat-'em-up action which is as playable as ever.



SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

SEGA
£TBA
OUT JULY



1-2 PLAYER



32Mbit



CONTINUES



UK RELEASE

GAMEPLAY	92
GRAPHICS	90
SOUND	80
ADDICTION	94

OVERALL

92

REVIEW

MARIO ANDRETTI RACING

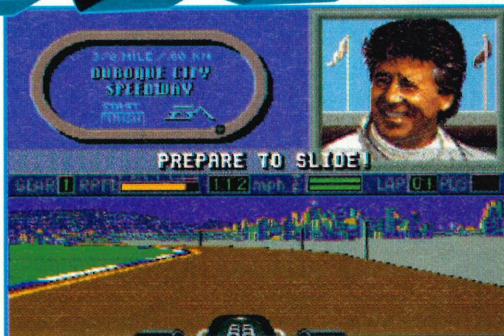
Jason Johnson talks racing with Indianapolis 500, Daytona 500 and Sebring 12-Hour Sports Car Classic champion Mario Andretti.

Sprint, Stock and Indy cars provide the biggest thrills in American motor sport. Classic races such as the Indianapolis and Daytona 500 attract crowds from all corners of the globe. This is the game endorsed by the man who has made history in all three racing formats, Mario Andretti. The EA Sports division, in association with High Score Productions and Stormfront Studios, puts you in the driving seat.

The first thing you notice about the game is the blandness of the graphics. They could never be called outstanding or innovative. This is somewhat of a surprise considering the amount of visual wonder High Score and EA Sports concocted for *FIFA International Soccer*. Could it be that this American motor-racing sim has been given far less time and effort?

Overall, yes, *Mario Andretti Racing* is a run-of-the-mill title that, after its 'quieter than a mouse' entry into the MP offices hasn't caused anyone to rave about it. Except your humble author, oh brothers. I think it's great fun and worthy of a fairer mention. Having spent a considerable amount of time gunning for the prestigious championship title I can honestly say this is far more playable than *Virtua Racing*, not to mention a damn sight better value for money.

Mario's (what a geeky name!) compilation of 15



The veteran racing driver Mario Andretti gives his expert advice on how to get around the corners on each circuit.

race tracks, each considerably different from the last. Granted, a few are simple ovals with nothing to do but avoid the opposition. The twisting raceways, however, are full of danger and require a considerable amount of driving skill.

You're given a choice of Sprint, Stock and Indy cars, available in

a rainbow of colours. Not only do they all look different, they actually handle very differently as you throw them around the hairpin bends and put your foot down on high-speed straights. The racing feel is brilliant, especially in the Sprint cars as you realistically skid around corners. The fun factor is well above average and, for a welcome change, the sound FX aren't too bad.

So, having tested the various cars and circuits,

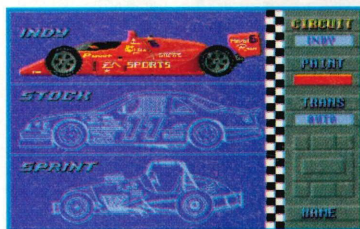
it's about time we entered the main challenge: the career mode. Progressing through three main stages, starting with the Sprints, you jostle for the top position. Along the way you'll race against 10 CPU-controlled opponents. Prize money is for the taking and building up your motor is all part of the fun. Serious speeds can be reached in the later stages and you may well transform into a real boy, or girl, racer.

In addition a two-player option provides split-screen fun, whilst endless options ranging from a Mario Andretti tutor to multiple viewpoints and an action-replay facility should keep most gamers happy.

Summing up, *Mario Andretti Racing* is an average racing game that has several neat features. It lacks the polished quality we've come to expect from the EA Sports label, but dedicated motor-racing fans will be hard-pushed to find better. A worthwhile purchase that should keep you

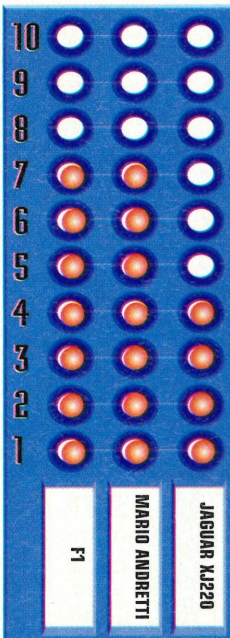
occupied until *Daytona USA* comes to console town.

Choose your car and compete head to head in the split-screen two-player mode.



MP

Not a bad racer, featuring a good one-player challenge and fun split-screen two-player mode. But it's still not quite up to the high standards we've come to expect from EA Sports.



MARIO ANDRETTI RACING

EA SPORTS
£49.99
OUT NOW



1-2 PLAYERS



16 MBIT



PASSWORDS



UK RELEASE

GAMEPLAY
GRAPHICS
SOUND
ADDICTION

81

69

73

77

OVERALL

78

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MORTAL KOMBAT II

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BARAKA SCORPION SUB ZERO JAX SHANG TSUNG ALSO FEATURING SHAO-FU DEEP SPACE NINE DARK SEED
BATTLE CORPS COMBAT CARS WORLD CUP USA '94 FIFA CD MARIO ANDRETTI RACING EDITED BY NICK MERRITT
ART DIRECTOR CLAIRE HENDRICK WRITTEN BY MARK HILL JASON JOHNSON WITH ASSISTANCE FROM PHIL KING



A PARAGON PRODUCTION



FEEDBACK

This month our regular letters section discusses some interesting topics, including the Mega 32 and video-game jargon. What do you reckon about this or anything else? To make your point, write in to: Feedback, MEGA POWER, Paragon Publishing, Durham House, 124 Old Christchurch Rd, Bournemouth BH1 1NF.

ON THE CARDS?

Dear Mega Power,

I am quite happy to see that the magazine has taken a new direction. Particularly since I have just bought a Mega-CD.

I do, however, have one minor gripe. Why do you print the covermount CD demo inlays on a page of the magazine itself?

I am sure many readers, like myself, do not want to cut up the magazine with a pair of scissors. So I would like to suggest that you supply a separate piece of card with the inlay details printed upon it.

You may even wish to consider supplying such cards for all the demos released already!

Kevin McGuire, Lasswade, Midlothian

● **A nice idea of yours, Kevin. However, it would be impractical to covermount a piece of card on the magazine as well as the disc – there'd be hardly any room left for the cover image! We have considered putting the disc in its own slimline case, but unfortunately the cost would be prohibitive. Anyway, what's wrong with cutting the inlay out of the magazine? – as it's double-sided, you're not losing anything important from the other side.**

ASK ME ANOTHER

Dear Mega Power,

First of all I would like to say congratulations on being the best mag around and the only one to have a Mega-CD demo.

1. Will there be any demos of *Flashback*, *Tomcat Alley*, *WWF: Rage In The Cage*, *Mortal Kombat* and *Another World 2*?

2. Will *Mortal Kombat 2* be coming out for Mega-CD?

3. Is it true that the Mega 32 will have better graphics and it can handle more information than the Saturn?

4. What game will the Mega 32 have with it when it comes out?

5. When will the RAM cartridge be out for the Mega-CD, so I can save games?

6. How much will the Mega 32 cost?

Trevor McFarlane, Mixenden, Halifax

● **1. It's a bit late now for *Tomcat Alley* and *Mortal Kombat*, but the other games are all distinct possibilities. Indeed, we should have a *Flashback* demo on the next issue.**

2. **Yes, the game's appearing on umpteen different formats in September.**

3. **No, but its graphics should measure up well to both the Saturn and Sega's Titan coin-ops – there may be slightly fewer polygons for 3-D graphics. The Saturn will boast extra hardware, including a 64-bit video chip. It also benefits from having a (rumoured quad-speed) CD drive, making it a true multimedia machine. For £200 more, it should be better than the Mega 32!**

4. **Sega haven't yet revealed what it'll be bundled with. It could well be *Virtua Racing Deluxe* or *Virtua Fighter*.**

5. **It appeared in Sega's latest US catalogue, but Sega Europe have yet to announce whether it'll be officially available here. See this month's news section for more info.**

6. **Around £150, whereas the Saturn will cost around £350.**

PARALLAX WHAT?

Dear Mega Power,

Okay I confess I never did buy all the issues of Mega Power – just the issues with a demo CD. But now that all Mega Power issues in the future will have a demo CD, I will be buying every one.

Now to get to the point of this letter. I have some questions I would like you to answer for me.

1. When are *Flashback* and *Another World 2* coming out for the Mega-CD? And will we see a demo CD of these games?

2. On some games like *Sol Feace* and *Final Fight*, there is a lot of flickering. Do you know what causes it?

3. Could you please show us what the inside of a Mega Drive 1 and Mega-CD 1 look like and tell us what the different parts do?

4. I played a game on my mate's Amiga called *Dark Seed*. I quite liked it – will it be coming out for the Mega-CD?

5. Which three of the following CD titles should I buy?: *Batman Returns*, *Silpheed*, *Ecco*, *Chuck Rock 2*, *Jurassic Park*, *Ground Zero Texas* and *Tomcat Alley*.

6. In all Sega mags when they review games they use words like sprites, sprite scaling, scrolling, parallax scrolling, and collision detection. What do they mean? It would make it more easy to understand what they are going on about if you could please explain.

John Kattri, Smethwick, W Mids

PS. Keep up the good work and the demo CDs.

● **1. An official release date is yet to be announced for *Flashback*, but it's likely to be in the autumn. *Another World 2* has been put back**

until October. We hope to have a *Flashback* demo next month. *Another World 2* may well follow on a later issue.

2. **No, there shouldn't be any. Maybe your discs need cleaning?**

3. **Who cares what the bits do? All most people want to do is play the games. Plus we don't fancy opening up our office machines!**

4. **Oh yes, see the preview in this issue.**

5. **Definitely *Ground Zero Texas* and *Tomcat Alley*, plus maybe *Ecco*.**

6. **All this jargon can get a bit confusing, so here are some definitions...**

● **Sprite: One of the animated graphics which moves around the screen – the hero, enemies, spaceships etc – as opposed to backgrounds, platforms and other static items.**

Sprite Scaling: Reducing or expanding the pixels in a sprite to make it appear to move in and out of the screen. The Mega-CD has built-in hardware sprite scaling (faster and requiring no extra complex programming routines), used extensively in 3-D games like *Thunderhawk* and *Battlecorps*.

● **Scrolling: This happens when the background graphics move horizontally or vertically across the screen. For example, a side-scrolling game might have you walking along, with the scenery moving past while your character remains in the centre of the screen.**

● **Parallax Scrolling: This is when different levels of background (and sometimes foreground) scenery move at different speeds to create an illusion of depth. Emulating real-life perspective, the closer scenery moves faster than that in the distance: watch out for this effect when you're going along in the car!**

● **Collision Detection: This determines when sprites or other graphics hit each other; for example, when you smash your spaceship into an alien. If the collision detection's dodgy, you might appear to hit something, but nothing happens – so you could just pass straight through an object!**

I hope that's explained everything. Do any other readers have any jargon they don't understand? Or maybe you'd like to suggest some new words for various aspects of video-gaming? Please do write in and tell us.

COFFEE ANYONE?

Dear Mega Power,

First of all I would like to say that the magazine's new look is excellent and impressive and I can see that a lot of hard work goes into every issue. I am also a Mega-CD owner who can't afford to spend £50+ on a CD game every time a new release comes out, and I'm sure that a lot of people agree with me.

When I saw a copy of Mega Power on the shelf with a CD attached, I wasted no time in purchasing it. I said to myself, "At

last a mag dedicated to the Mega-CD, beating the crap out of other mags" (not mentioning any names).

The cover games are pretty good and the reviews and tips are great, especially the news section. I would like to thank all those responsible for this change, hoping that will keep the quality and standards of the magazine very high, pleasing all their readers such as myself.

Gareth Hunt, London

PS. Say hello to everyone out there who knows me.

● **Cheers Gareth. You're not by any chance the guy who does the Nescafé commercials? I'm sure everyone remembers you from the New Avengers – I bet it was great working with Joanna Lumley!**

Glad you like the magazine anyway. We certainly aim to maintain the quality of Mega Power and strive to improve it wherever possible. It's our special blend of beans, you know.

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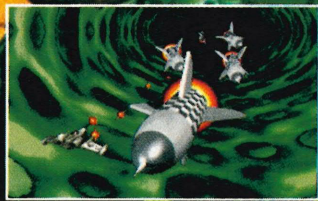
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Fly two full missions of Core Design's ground-breaking Mega-CD helicopter blast-'em-up and then sit back and watch eight demo scintillating missions. Drool over the graphics. Be amazed at the action. Live the experience. Note that although MP#4 is sold out, the *Thunderhawk* demo is still available!



DISC 2: PSYGNOSIS DEMO

Enjoy three great Psychosis games on the one disc. See a rolling demo of Microcosm. Chase wabbits galore in the playable demo of the hilarious *Wiz 'n' Liz*. And, finally, play the first level of the cartoon arcade adventure *Puggsy*.



DISC 3: SOULSTAR DEMO

Play the first three stages of Core Design's phenomenal space shoot-'em-up. You go from deep space, onto a planet surface and then back out to space. A graphical masterpiece with great action and superb sound effects.



DISC 4: BATTLECORPS DEMO

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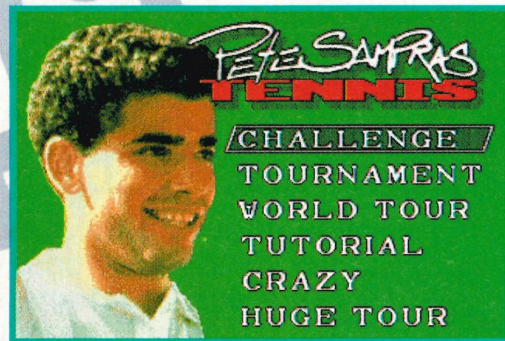


DISC 5: SENSIBLE SOCCER DEMO

Score with our fully playable demo of Psychosis's stunning soccer sim. Play one-minute matches against the computer or a friend, introduced by stunning rendered sequences and accompanied by over a hundred different crowd FX. You can use all the game's options, including all the leagues and cups!

MEGA POWER

GAME BUSTERS

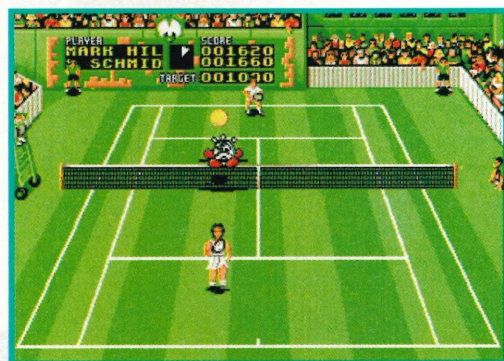


PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS

Hidden Options

Hidden within *Pete Sampras Tennis* are two bonus games. They are called *Crazy Tennis* (starring Dizzy!) and the *Huge World Tour*. To access these, do the following:

First select the *World Tour*, then choose a player. Enter your name, select 'yes' to enter a password, then put in ZEPPELIN as the password. Go back to the main screen and see the two extra options displayed.



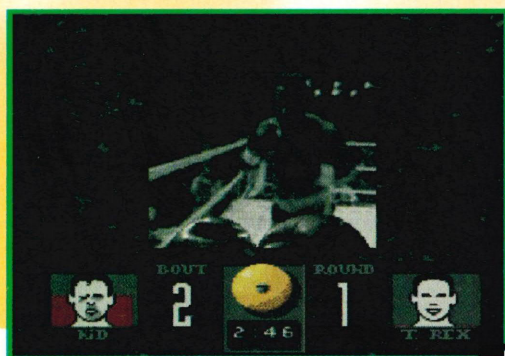
Welcome to this month's Gamesbusters section, now presented to you by expert tipster Mark Hill. Firstly, many thanks to all of you who have sent in your tricks of the trade. Whether it's a guide, a series of maps, a programmer's cheat or a cocktail stick, tips is what we're after!

Remember, the sender of the month's best tip will win a Mega Power sweatshirt - so what more of an incentive do you need... a ham sandwich? All letters to the usual address please.

PRIZE FIGHTER

Hidden Video Scenes

On the options menu press and hold A, B, C and RIGHT. You must press the buttons in that specific order and continue holding each button down until the hidden sequence begins.



DOUBLE SWITCH

Hidden Video Clip

Play through the game until you reach act III. Sit back and loose the game, and when the 'Game Over' video clip starts to play, quickly press LEFT, A, UP, RIGHT, A on controller 1.

Ahmad Aret, Amman, Jordan

THUNDERHAWK

Infinite Armour And Weapons

Pause the game and push UP, RIGHT, LEFT AND DOWN. Infinite armour and weapons should now be yours.

GROUND ZERO TEXAS

Shooting Advice

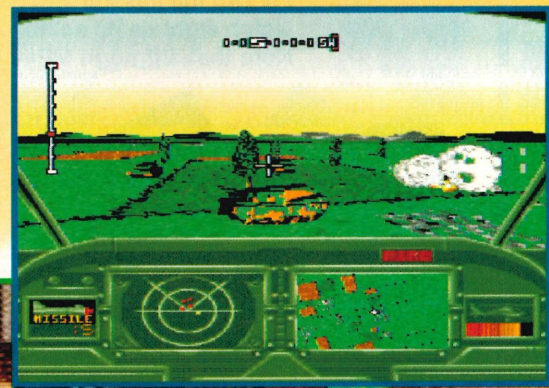
If you move the cursor constantly from left to right on the shooting screens, the cursor should automatically be dragged

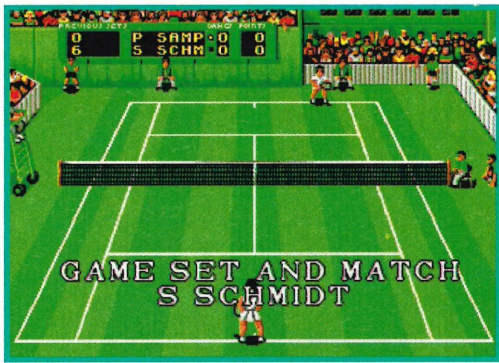
towards an enemy when it pops up. All you need do is press the fire button for an easy target.

CLIFFHANGER

Level Skip

Using control pad 2, press START, C, B, A, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT on the title screen. You can now skip levels by pressing C on pad 1.





Crazy Tennis

Play against the computer or with a friend and collect icons to give you the ability to perform many amazing tricks. Both players must reach the target score in the time allowed for them to continue to the next round. The competitor with the highest score when time runs out wins. The time allowed to reach the target score will decrease as you progress.

The controls for this are the same as the normal game except for serving. The ball is served automatically from a machine that appears in the centre of the court on the appropriate side. The icons are collected simply by running over them. Effects from icons last only a few seconds – these include big ball, speed up, ball control (incredible aftertouch), and slow down.

Huge Tour

This second secret option allows you to compete in a full season's tour of the world. Up to eight



World Tour Passwords

- | | | |
|----|------------|-----------------|
| 1 | START | (Stuttgart) |
| 2 | CAR | (Tokyo) |
| 3 | VEGAN | (Washington) |
| 4 | STAR | (Dusseldorf) |
| 5 | LCD | (Paris) |
| 6 | WALL | (Montreal) |
| 7 | SINKORSWIM | (Barcelona) |
| 8 | SHELF | (San Francisco) |
| 9 | WINDOW | (Bombay) |
| 10 | POOL | (London) |
| 11 | LUCKY | (Zurich) |
| 12 | HOUSE | (Memphis) |
| 13 | CUE | (Milan) |
| 14 | DURHAM | (Barcelona) |

players can take part at any one time – each with their own passwords!

To play, select the number of players competing and enter their passwords if they have them. Each person continues the season at the point where they left off. If no passwords are entered, a new season is begun. Firstly, choose which player you would like to be. You begin ranked 35, your aim is of course to become number one.



BATTLETOADS & DOUBLE DRAGON



Stage Select

To select any stage and access a total of 10 lives, just do this trick. Choose one or two play-

ers from the title screen. When you're on the character select screen, take pad 1 and press DOWN, UP, UP, DOWN, C, A, B. You'll hear a sound that confirms the trick has worked. The Mega Warp screen will appear.

ROAD RASH II

Choose Any Bike With Cash

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THE TERMINATOR

Secret Menu

Hold the D-Pad to the RIGHT on the title screen, then press B, C, B, B. Release the D-Pad, and press START to find the secret menu.



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PRINCE OF PERSIA

Various Cheats

Start playing a level, pause the game, then enter the following on the joypad:

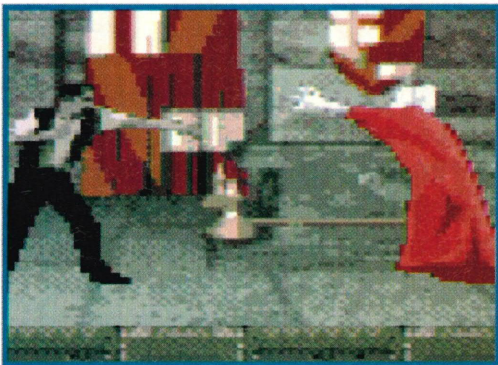
CACBBACC Add an extra energy point.
 AABACAAC Open all the gates on a level.
 ABACCACB Kill all the guards on the screen.
 BAABCBBB Start and earthquake.



STREETS OF RAGE 3

Stage Select

Hold down button B on the Selection Menu, then press and hold UP. With both of these held, and the word 'Option' highlighted, press START. A tone will confirm the cheat has worked. You can now choose 'Stage Select' from the options menu and select a starting round.



DRACULA

Stage Select

At the beginning when the battlefield is scrolling, enter this code with pad 1: DOWN, RIGHT, A, C, UP, LEFT, A. You'll hear a laugh. Start the game and push START to pause. Then look at your score and press UP on the pad to get the level you require. Press START again to begin.



TOEJAM AND EARL 2

End Credits

Play this through to level seven, make a note of the password, then reset your machine. Now change to 'Kids' mode, and put the password back in. Earthlings now take one or two hits die rather than eight or nine! Anyway, you could try entering 'TJ-AND-EARL!' as the password because this will take you to the end credits.



SKITCHIN'!

Warps

On the Denver course, at 3.6 miles, jump into the billboard advertising a 'Burger + Drink' on the right-hand side. You will be warped to San Diego. After qualifying in San Diego, you now skitch in Seattle.

In Seattle, at 3.5 miles, jump into the billboard with a lady's face and you will be warped to Los Angeles.

In Los Angeles, at 1.8 miles, jump into the billboard 'Buy Things' on the right-hand side.

You will be warped to Toronto.

In Toronto, qualify in this race to go to Detroit.

In Detroit, qualify again for the race to go straight to Chicago.

In Chicago, at 6.8 miles, jump into the Billboard 'Don't Drink and Skitch' on the left-hand side. You will be warped to Miami.

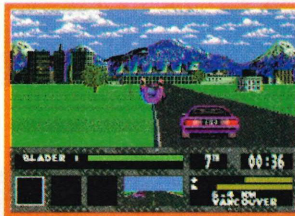
In Miami, qualify to go to the last race in New York. In New York, finish in the top five to become World Champion Solo Skitcher.

Julian White, Essex

DRAGON'S REVENGE

Passwords

10 Balls LTGLAKD
 15 Balls XMH5AQQ
 20 Balls D7Q4ADM
 25 Balls D8Z4AIY
 30 Balls D994ANB
 LEVEL 2 (5 Balls) LBRCRE2
 LEVEL 3 (6 Balls) X32KWNE
 LEVEL 4 (7 Balls) DKASW8Z
 LEVEL 5 (8 Balls) EK13YVI
 LEVEL 6 (9 Balls) FKSB8W2



MEGA TURRICAN

Secret Hidden Level

There is a very special method you can use to find a hidden level in *Mega Turrican*. Go through the first stage and collect every single diamond. Leave even one diamond behind and this cheat won't work!

Throughout the game ensure that the last two digits in your score are double zeros (00). When you get to the elevator that travels down, don't shoot any enemies or your score will change. Just avoid them!

On reaching the bottom, run to the right to find the hidden level. You will be able to collect diamonds, power-ups, 1-ups etc. Expect a bonus score at the end of the level too.

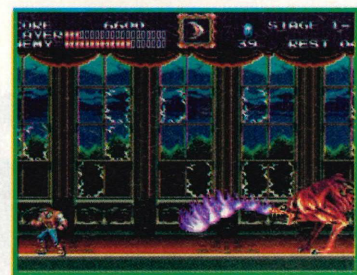


CASTLEVANIA

Expert Mode

On the second title screen press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT,

LEFT, RIGHT, B then A. You should hear a ringing sound. Now go to the options screen and change the difficulty to expert mode.



Final Boss

To fight Dracula straight away, enter this password:

AXE	NONE	NONE	AXE
AXE	NONE	EMBLEM	NONE
JEWEL	AXE	JEWEL	NONE
NONE	NONE	JEWEL	AXE

VIRTUA RACING

Mirror Courses

When the Sega logo flashes up, press and hold A, B and UP simultaneously, then press START. The 'Mirror' mode will be activated. A separate box will appear with the words 'Virtua Racing' written backwards inside.



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CD

The background of the entire page is a vibrant, abstract composition. It features a stack of CD-ROMs in the foreground, with the top disc showing its characteristic rainbow iridescence. Behind the discs, there are several glowing, semi-transparent spheres in various colors like blue, green, and yellow. The overall lighting is warm and energetic, with a color palette dominated by reds, oranges, and yellows, creating a sense of digital energy and excitement.

what have you been missing?

Welcome to MEGA POWER'S 15-page guide to Mega-CD software.

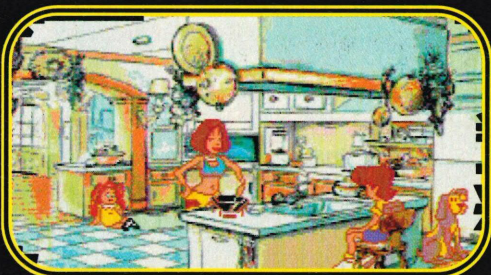
Whether you have only just got your machine or are wondering what to spend your hard-earned cash on next, this A-Z of games should prove to be a valuable index to one of the fastest evolving and most exciting game market places around. Each month we'll be adding new games to this section for a 'living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

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



The Adventures Of Willy Beamish

Dynamix
£1import



As schoolboy games nut Willy Beamish, 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. 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!

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, a painfully long loading time and instant death if you cock up, means you need a lot of patience to play.



Annette Again

Wolfteam
£1import

Remember 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.



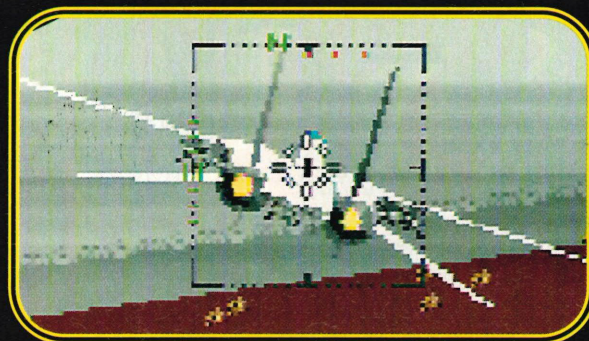
Afterburner III

Sega
£39.99

Pilot your F-14 Tomcat through 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 these are basically the normal game with a different set of stats.

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, but apart from the soundtrack and a tiny bit of scaling, there's nothing here that couldn't have been done on a cartridge.



AX-101

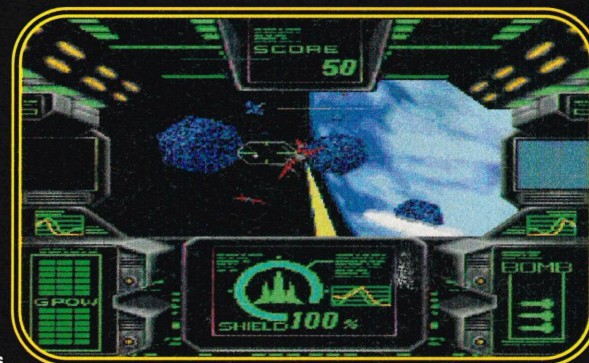
Micronet
£1import

This 3-D space blaster scores big in the presentation department with a host of lengthy rendered interludes to illustrate the alien invasion story line.

Viewed from your cockpit, the blasting action takes place on impressive rendered backdrops. You have no control over the path your ship follows, instead simply moving a cross-hair around the screen to target the alien spaceships. Starting out in space, the many levels take you zooming through narrow rocky gorges, through an asteroid belt and even inside huge alien motherships.

Though the gameplay is limited, this visually attractive shoot-'em-up is surprisingly addictive – more so than Silpheed and Microcosm.

Note that this Japanese release only works with an Asian MD and M-CD – the US version should be out soon, but there's unlikely to be an official European release.



Batman Returns

Sega
£39.99

Take 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!





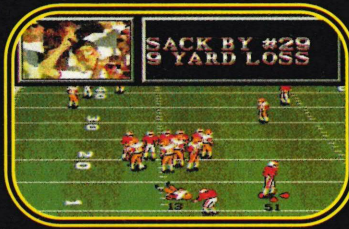
Battlecorps
Core Design
£44.99

Even better than *Thunderhawk*, this awesome 3-D shoot-'em-up features 64-colour texture-mapped graphics to make your jaw drop. You control a Walker-style device, striding around six dramatically different terrains ranging from hot lava to icy wastes. In each of 13 huge levels, you're attacked by all manner of robotic enemies such as tanks, gun turrets and even mechanical caterpillars. The action really hots up as you take on an endless stream of adversaries, with spectacular explosions going on all around you. It really feels like you're in the middle of a war! Thudding sound FX, sampled speech and a funky soundtrack complete the polished presentation. With vicious gameplay to match, *Battlecorps* really has got it all.



Bill Walsh College Football
EA Sports
£39.99

Previously 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 is 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.

At £5 cheaper than the cart, the CD version is good value.



Chuck Rock 2: Son Of Chuck
Core
£44.99

Core 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 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.



Cobra Command
Sega
£39.99

Originally bundled with the Mega-CD, *Cobra Command* is also available as a stand-alone game. 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.

The sound is excellent, while those animé-style graphics really give the game atmosphere. Unfortunately the point-and-click action becomes dull unless you activate a level-skip cheat.



Chuck Rock
Sony
£39.99



Chuck's arch enemy Gary Gritter has kidnapped his woman. 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 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.



Dark Wizard
Sega
£ Import

Despite being set in the 'golden lands of Cheshire' this swords-and-sorcery strategy game is one to take seriously. You don't have to be anorak to appreciate the amount of detail in the game, including reams of stats for the characters in your travelling party. The strategy's pretty good too as you venture through each overhead-view landscape, using your weapons and magic spells on all sorts of mythical monsters, demons and sorcerers. It's also very satisfying as your characters earn experience points which eventually increase their level and class, enabling them to use more advanced weapons and spells.

The game's only weak point is that the adventuring aspect isn't fully exploited: you can visit towns to buy and sell things, but you can't really interact with the people there. *Dark Wizard*'s still an engrossing game, though, with a big challenge for strategy buffs.



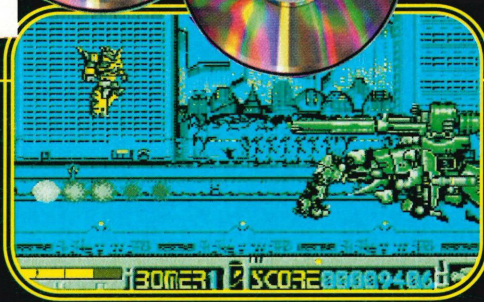
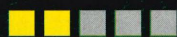
CD



Devastator Wolfteam £ Import

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're also armed with a large grappling hook – don't ask us why.

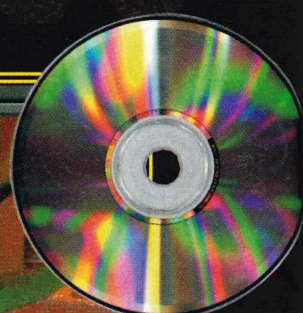
The graphics are pretty enough, even with that small main sprite, and the side-scrolling is smooth. But aside from that now-standard CD-quality sound, there's nothing here that couldn't have been done on an 8 or 12 Meg cartridge, so why bother sticking it on a CD?



Double Switch Sega £44.99

Designed 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.

Dracula is the platform licence of the film which Sony originally released for review purposes many months ago. The original game had some reasonably serious flaws which led Sony to redesign it.

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 fighting moves available to him with which you can whump the various evil-doers. 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.



Dragon's Lair Readysoft £ Import

This 'move and hope for the best' animated adventure isn't everyone's cup of tea, but its graphical brilliance can only be admired. It uses the same spectacular cartoon sequences as the LaserDisc coin-op, albeit a bit grainier, accompanied by an equally dramatic soundtrack.

You guide the swashbuckling hero Dirk through 26 scenes in a medieval castle to rescue Princess Daphne. Rather than controlling Dirk directly, you have to press the right direction or fire at precisely the right time to avoid hazards and kill monsters. This usually involves a lot of trial and error, which can be very frustrating, but the incentive to see the next scene keeps you playing.



Dune CD Virgin £44.99

As leader of the Fremen, you battle against the evil Harkonnen to control the magical Spice substance on the planet Arrakis.

Based on David Lynch's film of Frank Herbert's ultra-successful Dune novels, this adventure 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 for adventure fans.



Dracula Unleashed Sega £49.99

Not 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.

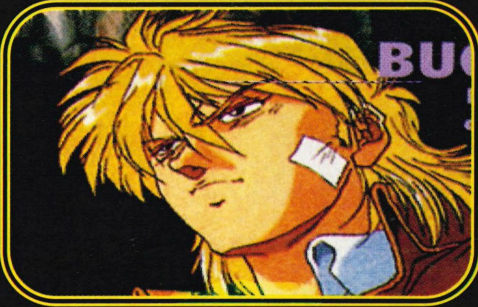
A nice spooky atmosphere is created, although it's marred by some dreadful ham acting and hilarious attempts at Cockney accents. The adventuring gets a bit repetitive too, as you often have to resort to trial and error to be in the right time at the right place.



Earnest Evans
Wolfteam
£ Import

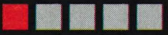
One of the first and still one of the best. Impressive graphics and weird animation that made the main character look like a Bill and Ben puppet gave us an early taste of what the CD might be capable of. It was also the first sight for many of the Japanese Manga-style cartoon graphics. Packed with challenging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

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



Funky Horror Band
Sega
£ Import

Uh! 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

During 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 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 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

Cody, Guy 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. 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 with big, meaty sprites. 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.



CD



Ground Zero Texas

Sony

£44.99

Set 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.



Heavenly Symphony

Sega

£ Import

This comprehensive simulation of Formula One racing accurately recreates the 1993 Grand Prix season, with all the real cars and drivers. You get to drive through a whole season of 16 races, each with the authentic number of qualifying and practice sessions. Go into the pits and you can alter all your car's settings to suit the current track.

The driving action is just as impressive, the scaled 3-D scenery zipping past at an exhilarating rate. It takes real skill to get a good racing line round the corners to achieve good lap times. This realism creates an intense challenge as you push your car to the limit to try and catch your computer opponents. The icing on the cake is a whole load of FMV sequences, plus a brilliant play mode where you emulate a real driver's performance from each of the 1993 races.



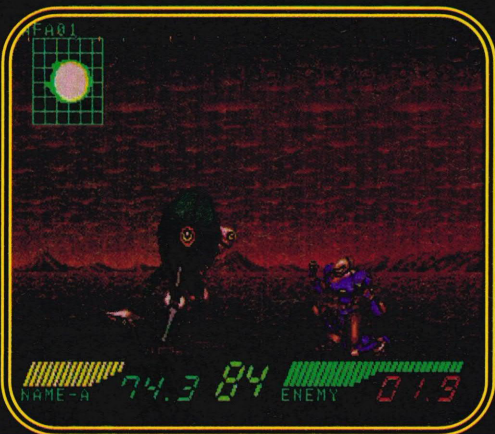
Heavy Nova & Black Hole Assault

Sega

£39.99

Hheavy 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 spelk. 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

£ Import

When his children are kidnapped by the evil Hook, it's time for the grown-up Peter Pan to return to Neverland. 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 and an amazing soundtrack are the highpoints in Hook. It's an addictive little game with simple gameplay that keeps you coming back; although with infinite continues it's relatively easy to finish.

The main criticism is that, with the exception of the odd fancy graphic and that soundtrack, the game could easily have been crammed onto cartridge - and since has been.



Jaguar XJ220

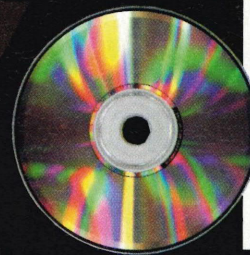
Sega

£39.99

This is the closest most 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. 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.





CD

Joe Montana's NFL Football

Sega
£44.99

Take your favourite team from the full choice of 28 through a full season and into the Superbowl play-offs. 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.



Lethal Enforcers

Konami
£54.99

You take the role of a rookie cop out on the streets, blasting villains with your large blue light gun (included in the purchase price). 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 to hit a cop or innocent bystander with a stray shot. Do well enough, and you climb through the ranks; fail a level and you 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 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 arcade game. With sampled gunshots and that adrenaline rush, though, it's still great fun. The only real question is its longevity.



Jurassic Park

Sega
£49.99

Completely 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.

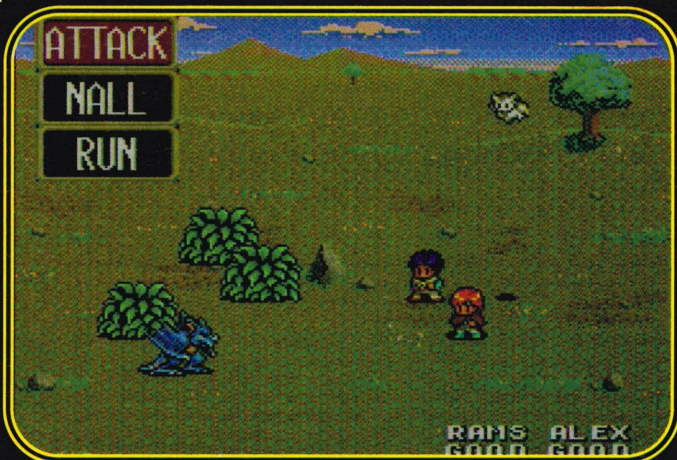


Lunar – The Silver Star

Sega
£ Import

This 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 story line and challenging puzzles should keep you totally engrossed until you manage to finish it. Undoubtedly the best RPG available on the Mega-CD.



CD



Mad Dog McCree American Laser Games £Import

What 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.



Make My Video Sega £44.99

Under 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.



Mystery Mansion Sega £49.99

Known on import as Mansion Of The Hidden Souls, this 3-D adventure features rendered graphics which, although a bit grainy, move smoothly enough as you walk through the spooky mansion's many rooms and hallways. 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 an object from a certain room. What a shame.



Microcosm CD Psygnosis £44.99

Ever 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 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 and 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, apart from smashing into the sides on some levels.

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 blaster.



The Ninja Warriors Taito £Import

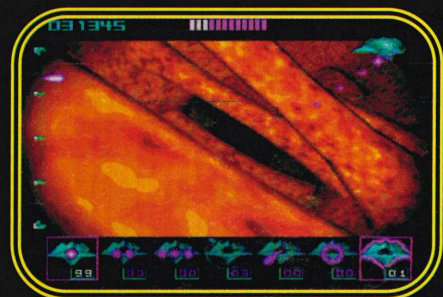
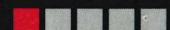
This is a walking beat-'em-up of the lowest order. The sideways scrolling may be smooth, but the appalling lack of variety in the gameplay and the minimal number of moves available to your characters means that unless you're absolutely desperate for a two-player ninja game, you should avoid this one 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.



NFL's Greatest Sega £Import

The chance to pitch classic Dallas and San Francisco teams against each other in Full Motion Video? Sadly 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. The video clips are designed to run in a tiny window, 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.





Mortal Kombat
Acclaim
£49.99

Yet another enhanced CD version of the cart, but this one's worthwhile. Although the beat-'em-up gameplay's identical to the cartridge, the graphics are much improved. Not only has the number of frames been doubled for smoother animation of the digitised fighters, but there's now as much blood and gore as in the arcade machine, without the need to input a special blood code. The fighting backdrops are also better, including the authentic pit with heads and bodies impaled on the blood-stained spikes!

It all looks very slick and it sounds just as good with CD music accompanying the brutal action, along with the odd bit of sampled speech. The only downside is the slight delay for CD accessing before each bout. Apart from this, and the rather steep price, *Mortal Kombat CD* is bloody good fun.



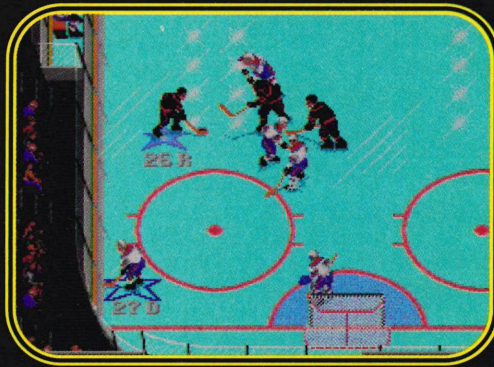
NHL Hockey '94

EA Sports
£39.99

Another classic Electronic Arts sports sim gets converted to CD with 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 cart, but that's no great problem when it's this playable. Some 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 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

Teenage 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

Here'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.



Powermonger
Electronic Arts
£44.99

You are a medieval general, just landed on foreign shores. Populated by warring tribes, this huge world is divided up into no less than 195 territories for you to conquer. 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 - which is still sadly very jerky.

Initially gameplay involves attacking enemy villages, ransacking their food stores and recruiting more soldiers. But things get more interesting as you recruit more captains and start trading and forming alliances. Apart from the often-irritating controls, *Powermonger* is a great game for real strategy buffs.



CD



Prince Of Persia

Sega
£39.99

The 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 in an hour – and if she refuses, he'll kill her. 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 other formats, 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.



Prize Fighter

Sega
£49.99

Directed 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 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 limited.



Puggsy Psygnosis £44.99

This funny arcade adventure gets the usual 'CD enhancement' treatment for an improved soundtrack and cartoon intro.

You guide the alien Puggsy around a strange planet, collecting useful objects to solve puzzles in 51 levels.

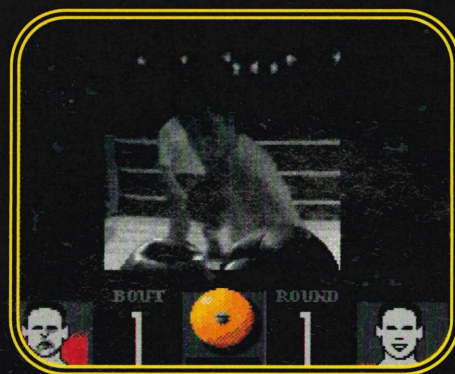
The game may not look all that impressive at first, but play it and you'll be pleasantly surprised. The more you explore, the more you find. Puggsy offers a highly original challenge and is a pleasure to play.



Revenge Of The Ninja Renovation £Import

Although the hero is reminiscent of Dirk from Dragon's Lair, the rest of this similar game isn't in the same league. The cartoon sequences are jerkily animated and roughly drawn, giving you little incentive to keep playing.

The action is akin to Dragon's Lair as you select a direction or press fire at the right to avoid hazards, but it completely lacks any challenge. On Easy level, an arrow appears to tell you exactly what to do; even in Difficult mode the word 'action' pops up to tell you when to move. This might lessen the frustration, but it also destroys the game's lastability.



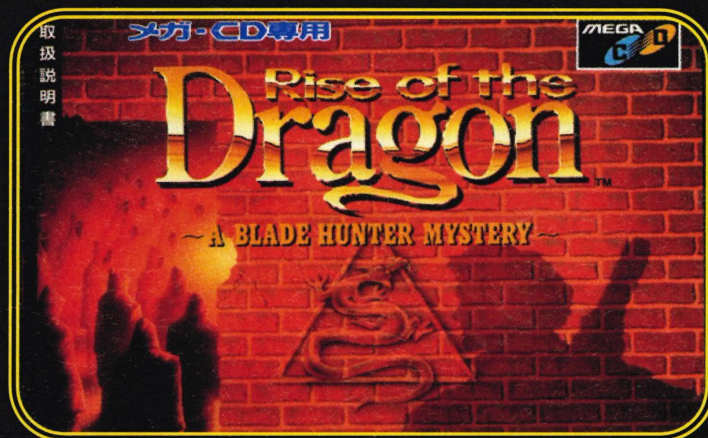
Rise Of The Dragon

Dynamix
£44.95

You'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.

Now available officially, 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.



Robo Aleste

Sega
£39.99

What 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.

Other than some nice sound effects and tunes, this is a barely average shoot-'em-up.



Sensible Soccer

Psygnosis
£34.99

Sports sims are always difficult to convert from cart to CD. You can't really change the gameplay much, so you have to concentrate on beefing up the presentation with animated intros and CD music.

Although this is inevitably the case with *Sensible Soccer*, with rendered 3-D stadium scenes accompanied by thumping tunes, when the gameplay's this good it doesn't matter one jot. With tiny sprites and a classic overhead view of the pitch, it may look inferior to *FIFA International Soccer*, but it has much better long-term playability. This is due to the almost infinite number of ways you can score goals: whether it's by a clever passing move, delicate dribbling or crossing the ball into the box and doing a diving header, it's always very satisfying when you hit the net. The one meaningful improvement in the CD version is the excellent crowd sounds which provide that authentic match atmosphere. There are over a hundred different sampled FX, including classic chants such as "One-nil, one-nil..." and "We all hate Derby..."! Best of all, the CD is a fiver cheaper than the cart.



Sega Classics CD

Sega
£n/a



Included 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



Welcome 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 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



Road Avenger

Sega
£44.99

From 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.



The Secret Of Monkey Island

JVC
£Import

Monkey 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.



CD



Shadow Of The Beast II

Psygnosis

£34.99

The Beast games always were a visual treat, but the Mega-CD version goes one better with some gorgeous rendered 3-D animation sequences appearing throughout the game. The weird atmosphere also benefits from a superb CD-quality soundtrack, including plenty of sampled speech when you meet other characters.

The action mainly involves running and jumping around the multiway-scrolling landscape, fighting spear-throwing woodsmen, giant axe-wielding warriors and an assortment of weird monsters. You also need to solve elaborate puzzles to obtain essential objects, and talk to other characters to get advice on overcoming traps.

Though the gameplay remains largely unchanged from previous versions, Shadow Of The Beast II's Mega-CD incarnation is its best.



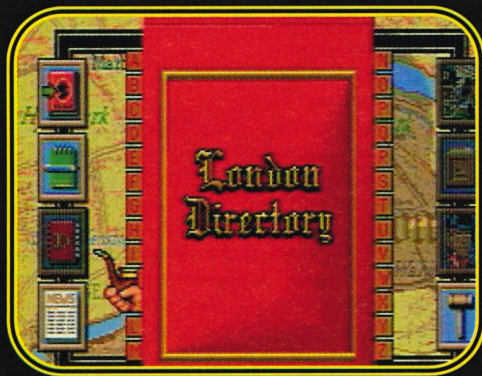
Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective Vol. 2

Sega

£44.99

Holmes 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.



Spiderman Vs The Kingpin

Sega

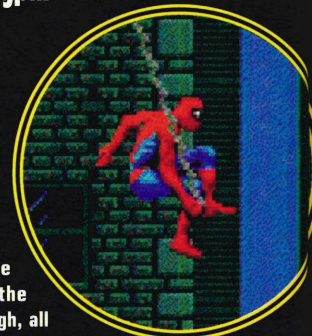
£Import

The 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.

Spiderman can kick, punch and web his victims, as well as swing from web ropes. 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.

Basically an enhanced version of the cart with nicer intro screens, and not much else apart from CD-quality sound.



Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective Vol. 1

Sega

£44.99



Here's a novel way of utilising the Mega-CD's storage capacity and FMV capabilities. Play the role 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.

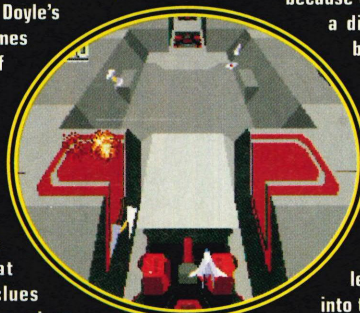
Elementary. At least it sounds simple. In actual fact, this is a tough, challenging game. What it lacks in sprite scaling and rotation, it more than makes up for in atmosphere and difficulty.



Galaxians 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. Interaction with the backgrounds isn't as good as it could be, with only certain levels allowing you to really get into the graphics, as it were.

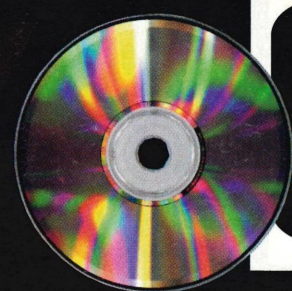
If there are any problems with Silpheed, it's the occasional jerkiness that creeps in. As a single-player blast with great graphics and sound, plus simple but effective gameplay, it's damn good, but the ultimate in shoot-'em-ups it ain't.



Silpheed

Sega

£44.99



Sonic CD Sega £44.99

Sonic 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.



Switch Sega £Import

Unlikely 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.



Third World War Extreme £Import

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.

Easy-to-use pull-down menus are used to make your many domestic, international and military decisions. 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 isometric battle section is a bit disappointing as the tactical options are very limited, so the bigger force nearly always wins. It's a pity, as the rest of the game is fascinating as you witness the unravelling of global events.



Stellar-Fire Dynamix £Import

Remember 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?



Terminator Virgin £44.99

Although 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.



CD



Thunderhawk

Core

£44.99

At 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 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.



Time Gal

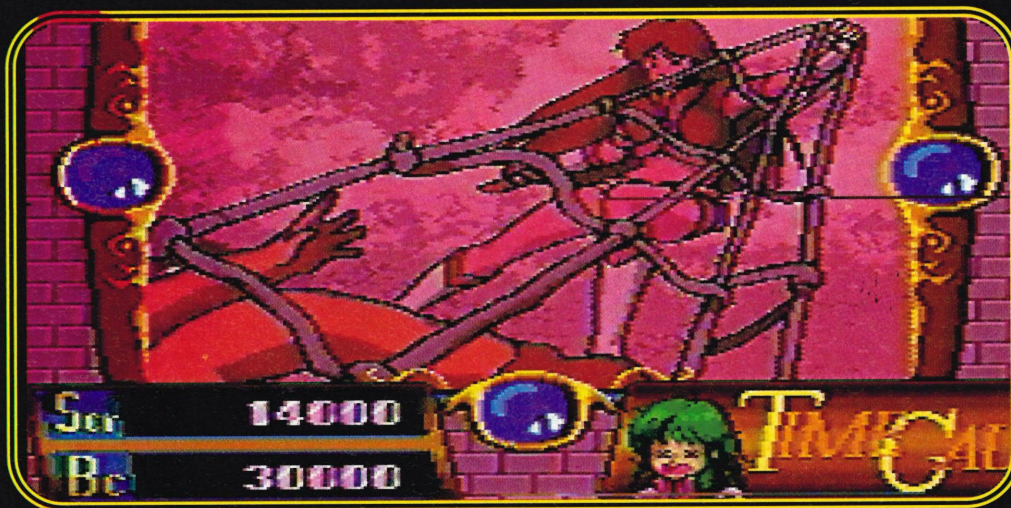
Sega

£44.99

Another 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

Lon 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.



Tomcat Alley

Sega

£44.99

In this visually stunning FMV game, you play a jet fighter's Tactical Officer – selecting targets and firing weapons while your pilot does all the complicated flying.

Missions include blowing up a Russian bomber, shooting down squadrons of enemy fighters, rescuing colleagues and destroying ground targets such as bridges. You are briefed on your next objective by your commander in a neat video sequence – there's even a corny sub-plot as you try to woo your gorgeous female co-pilot 'Ratchet'.

Once in the air, the action really hots up with some stylishly directed video sequences cutting quickly between the pilots and exterior views of their planes. The gameplay involves choosing waypoints, selecting enemy planes to attack, then trying to lock your aiming cursor onto the elusive target as it zips around the screen. Get it right and you see one of several neat clips of the enemy exploding.

Simple it may be, but the brilliant video clips draw you completely into the world of air combat and really get your adrenaline pumping. Not only is Tomcat Alley a visual spectacular, it's also a darn addictive game.



Wonderdog

Sega

£44.99



This 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.

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.



WWF Rage In The Cage

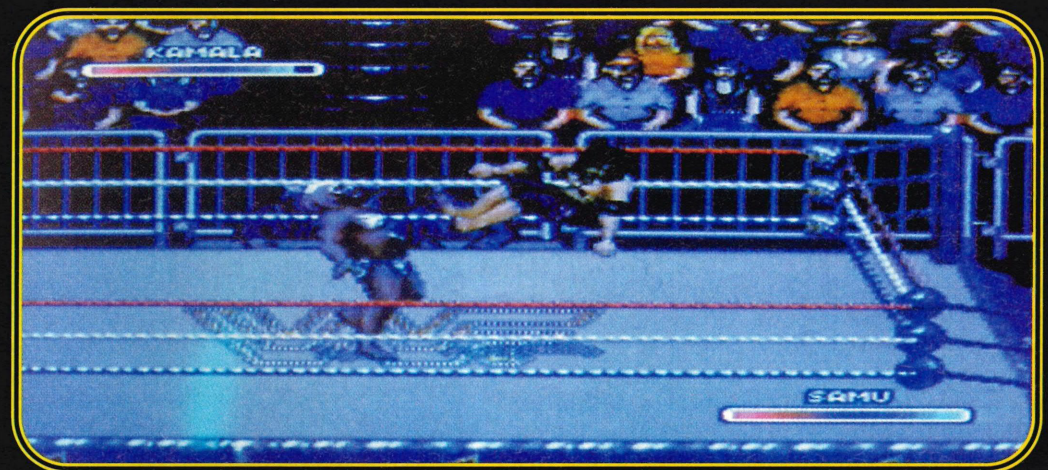
Acclaim

£44.99

Acclaim'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.



Mega POWER

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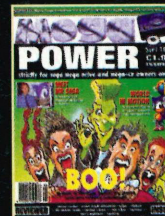
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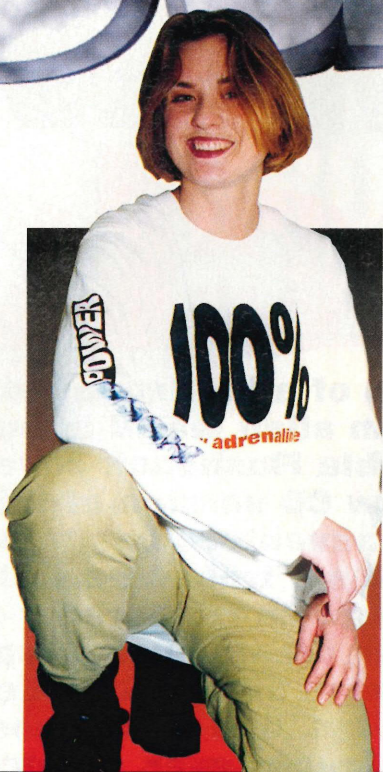
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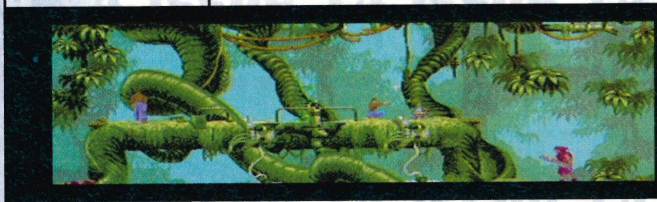
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