

VIDEO GAMES

THE ULTIMATE GAMING MAGAZINE

FDC 50080

X MEN!

Fists and fun in
Capcom's radical
coin-op conversion!

PLUS:

Street Fighter Alpha
Darkstalkers

Fighting-mad monster
mayhem issue!

TEARING IT UP
IN THIS ISSUE
DIE HARD TRILOGY
MAGIC CARPET
DESCENT 2
HANG ON GP
DARIUS GAIDEN
NAMCO CLASSICS
RIDGE RACER R
SUPER MARIO 64
KING'S FIELD
NIGHTMARE CIRCUS
BAD MOJO
JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE
AND LOTS MORE!

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Display until Mar. 20, 1996



WIN!
A signed Aerosmith guitar!
Inside!

THE BOTTOM



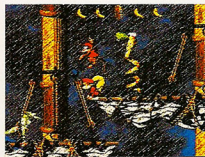
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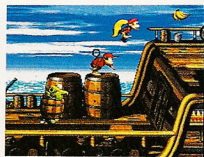
Diddy's back and better than ever.

Fasten your seat belt.

This **monkey's** coming full throttle. Donkey




Torrential rain, bloodthirsty pirates, and now your ship is sinking...have a nice day.



Dixie twirls her ponytail to fly chopper style—talk about a buzz cut!

Kong Country 2™: Diddy's Kong Quest™. Sleek, stylish and fully loaded. With

ACM graphics, 32 megs and so many **new Levels**, it even outperforms last year's

model. But don't take our  word for it. Let Diddy take you once around the park — sunken pirate ships, roller coasters, beehives. (Watch the **sticky stuff!**)



Guess who's back in town.

Or take his new pal Dixie for a spin—literally. This chimpette flies! There are other special moves too, like the **Buddy Toss** (please kids, don't try this at home). We even threw in a bunch of multiple endings. But hey, what do you expect from the **biggest evolution** in history. Except another game that leaves everything else far behind. (Ever been behind a monkey? It ain't pretty.)



Look alive! There's more hidden stuff than ever.



Now there are smarter Kremlings out to slap your monkey around. Ouch!

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MUT CONT

DEPARTMENTS

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PRESS START

A new console? That's right. Apple develops the "Pippin" technology. See pictures of this new marvel, which Bandai has bought. Also, Namco's newest arcade games: finger-lickin' good.

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PC-ZONE

Our favorite Brit reviews some of this month's best PC titles. H.R. Giger fans will want to check out *Dark Seed II*; *The Hive* has you battling giant insects; and now there's even a Windows program for stupid people.

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TIPS & TRICKS

The best tips, the best way.

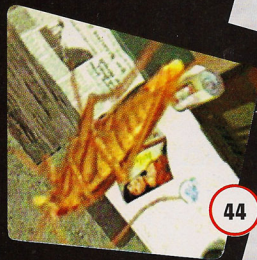
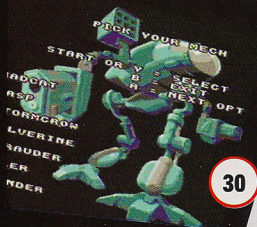
Sports fans: Chris B. will be blowing the lid off *FIFA '96* for the PlayStation, as well as codes for *Madden '96* on the Genesis. We're talkin' so many codes that you'll puke. "Holy tips and trickery, Batman!" That's right, learn the Caped Crusader's most intimate cheats for *Batman Returns*.

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SOUNDBOARD

Get an interesting cross-section of VideoGames readers (at which point you can become very afraid).

Proof positive that America's school's definitely aren't doing their job. Gabe reveals the horrors and incoherent ramblings of our most sick and twisted readers (well, not exactly, but they are a little strange).



ANT ENTS

FIRST LOOK 42

Sammy, the Video Games soothsayer, sheds some light on the best of those yet to come.

Ridge Racer Revolution, King's Field, Fade To Black, Street Fighter Alpha, Darkstalkers

PLAYSTATION

Descent 2, Hang-On GP, X-Men, Darius Gaiden

SATURN

Super Mario 64

ULTRA 64

Johnny Bazookatone, Cyberdillo

3DO

Nightmare Circus

GENESIS

The Hive, Magic Carpet 2, Bad Mojo

PC-CD ROM

POWER REVIEWS 80

A plethora of reviews that won't steer you wrong.

More PlayStation goodies are coming at you, like *A-Train*, *Zero Divide* and our Game of the Month, *Alien Trilogy*. Also, check out *Bust-A-Move*, *Thunderstrike 2* and *Cutthroat Island* on all your other favorite platforms.

SPORTSWIRE 93

Get a box seat, order some peanuts and check out the world of sports gaming.

The Mighty Ditka has left on a pilgrimage and his most trusted disciple, Steve, is there to chronicle this crusade for football enlightenment. Also, find out how Acclaim has managed to bleed more profit out of its *NBA Jam* title.

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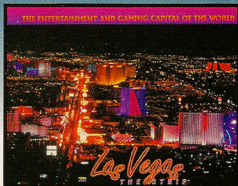
2/67 - LADIS NIGERIA
HEIGHT: 255 LBS
RICKETS: 1989

34 - HAKEEM OLAJUNJUN

PRESS START

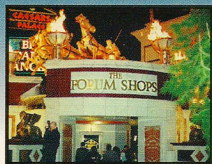
INTERNATIONAL WINTER CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW

In Las Vegas
The Entertainment and Gaming Capital of the World



The Consumer Electronics Show is a bi-annual convention that was at one time considered the mecca for both video-game publishers and consumers. But Winter CES '96 Las Vegas did not prove to be the video-game hotspot it may once have been. The reigning hype at this CES

and Louis Vuitton are also worth visiting. Three: Namco CyberStation. You get to play great Namco arcade games like *Tekken 2* and *CyberCycles*. It was a disappointment to find neither *Rave Racer* nor *Alpine Racer* at the Namco arcade itself, but since CyberStation is a Namco arcade, they won't not have them for long.



was not the advent of Nintendo's Ultra 64, but Sony's presentation of the Digital Video Disc.

At least the Strip still supplies plenty of kicks. The next trip to Vegas that your parents happen to take, make sure you get in on the action and insist that you stay in Caesar's Palace. There are several advantages



to staying at Caesar's. One: Cleopatra's Barge Night Club and International Coffee Bar. You probably aren't old enough to actually enter Cleopatra's Barge, but by hanging out in front of the place, you might be able to meet a couple of amicable freaks while listening to the house band play covers of Shaggy's *Boombastic* and Salt 'N Pepa's *Shoop*. Watch the dancefloor (the barge) actually move up and down in the water and artificial fog. Two: Gucci. If you get the urge to purchase a new pair of Gucci

shoes, you have only to visit Caesar's indoor mall, which feels more like you're on the set of *Clash of the Titans* than in an actual mall. The ceiling is painted with a surreal sky that would have you

believe you're outside...but on another planet. This is also where you'll find the fountain whose statues actually start to move at certain times of the day. Versace

The only place where *Alpine Racer* was to be found was off the strip, at the Hard Rock Hotel's arcade, Baby Rock. If you've not played *Alpine Racer* yet, you've missed out on a good time. *Alpine Racer* is an amazing ski simulator and a more immersive experience than you'd think possible. You actually feel as if you're skiing. You hang onto grips that serve as ski-poles and stand on plastic panels that serve as your skis. You control the skier on the screen in front of you by moving the panels with your feet. It's fun because you get to move your butt.



Other arcades worth looking into include: The Oz Arcade at MGM Grand, Mutiny Bay at Treasure Island, and Sega's VirtuaLand at the Luxor. Oz is okay, but the white tiger theme at Treasure Island is pretty darn sexy, as are Siegfried and Roy themselves. You can win stuffed white tigers at Mutiny Bay by throwing balls at targets and hitting those targets in the right spot. You know how it is.



Sega's VirtuaLand at the Luxor is all about being aboard an Egyptian spaceship. You will no doubt have a good time,

simply because the arcade is next to the ice cream. Try the Swiss Chocolate Orange flavor at Swensen's. It's good. You'll find *Virtua Cop 2*, *Tekken 2*, *Indy 500*, *Fighting Vipers*, *Virtua Fighter 2*, and even a *Killer Instinct* machine and a couple of wacky motion simulators.



PRESS START



FOXY!

Fox Interactive Gets Down to Business.

The main attractions at previous Consumer Electronics Shows have customarily been the Sega and Nintendo exhibits, which comprised everything from flashy lights, lots of smoke, and several arcade machines, to women dancing around in skimpy outfits—a veritable freak show that seemed to take up a good half-acre on the convention floor. With neither Sega nor Nintendo in attendance, this year's convention was less than lively. Cellular phones filled the floor, and one was hard-pressed to find any electronic games whatsoever.

But in a Desert Inn penthouse suite, Fox Interactive discreetly introduced several intriguing titles, expected to be released throughout the year. Twentieth Century Fox Entertainment is the marketing and distribution entity for both Fox Interactive and Magnet Interactive Studios. Fox Interactive announced the release of *Die Hard Trilogy*, *The Simpsons Cartoon Studios*, *The X Files*, *The Simpsons Virtual Springfield*, *Alien Trilogy*, *Aliens vs. Predator*, *Independence Day*, and *Planet of the Apes*.

DIE HARD TRILOGY

Available May '96

Sony PlayStation

Sega Saturn

Windows 95 CD-ROM

Three different types of gameplay represent the three *Die Hard* feature films. It's essentially three games in one. You're after international terrorists. *Die Hard*: You play as John McClane in the Nakatomi Plaza. You have to work your way up from the garage to the Penthouse, searching halls, offices, and a ballroom for hidden bombs, grenades, and machine guns. *Die Harder*: A first-



person perspective shooter that takes place inside Washington/Dulles Airport. Shoot down enemies in the baggage claim area and Duty Free Shop. *Die Hard with a Vengeance*: a driving game in which you get to race down the streets of Manhattan looking for stashed bombs that you have to find and diffuse. You have access to 15 different vehicles, from a Yugo to a Ferrari. You'll be presented with various hazards: changing stop lights, gridlocked traffic, double-parked vans, NYPD squad cars and various pedestrians.



THE SIMPSONS CARTOON

Available May '96

Windows and Macintosh CD-ROM

You can create original animations from *The Simpsons*. Work with more than 5,300 hand-painted animation cels, allowing you to put just about any of your favorite *Simpsons* characters (even Sideshow Bob or Apu) in any situation you want. First select a setting from over 35 backgrounds, fades, textures and patterns. Also: 17 animated characters, 250 moving and stationary props, 20 special effects, and 30 songs, music selections and sounds. A save feature enables you to keep your animations on floppy disk.



ALIEN TRILOGY

Available Spring '96

Sony PlayStation

Sega Saturn

PC CD-ROM

The *Alien Trilogy* game is based upon the three *Alien* motion pictures. It's a first-person perspective shooter in which you must face alien monsters, as well as killer egg pods, face huggers, and the Queen Alien herself.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Available Fall '96

Sony PlayStation

Sega Saturn

Windows 95 CD-ROM

Build a fleet comprised of F-18s, French Eurofighter 2000s, and Russian MIGs in order to decimate an alien armada intent on destroying the entire world. The action takes place in New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Moscow and other world centers and features fully rendered 3-D environments. The feature film will premiere in July '96.

X-FILES

Available 1997

Windows 95 and Macintosh CD-ROM

Help FBI agents Mulder and Scully solve *X-Files* mysteries. Chris Carter, the show's creator, is working with the developers to create a full-motion video title that allows you to search through files, access Mulder and Scully's computer database, examine clues and evidence, interview witnesses, and interact with characters from the show.

PLANET OF THE APES

Available 1997

Sony PlayStation

Sega Saturn

Windows 95 CD-ROM

The apes rule the planet and humans are an endangered species in the post-apocalyptic setting provided you by the *Planet of the Apes* video game.

PRESS START

SONY MAKES GAMES FOR YOU.

Sony/Psynopsis also made an appearance at the Consumer Electronics Show. A few interesting titles comprised its exhibit, but Sony indicated that much more would be seen during the Electronic Entertainment Expo that will take place in May in Los Angeles.

G-Police

Available March 1996

Sony PlayStation
PC CD-ROM

You sister was a G-Police officer and has mysteriously disappeared. So you decide to assume a false identity and enlist in the G-Police. Search the city in real-time 3-D: harbors, power stations, malls, airports, sports stadiums. Travel in gyrocopters, block hoppers, and riot vans. Do damage with strobe guns, gas grenades, rocket launchers, and particle beams.

Sentient

Available Fall 1996

Sony PlayStation
PC CD-ROM

Sentient is an RPG that has something to do with a space station, a plague, and a couple of murders, with a resurrection in between.

Chronicles of the Sword

Available Second Quarter 1996



Sony PlayStation
PC CD-ROM
Chronicles of the Sword is an adventure game featuring big, burly

knights, Middle-Age style.

Between this game and *Sentient*, RPG fans should get some kicks.



Power Sports Soccer

Available Second Quarter 1996

Sony PlayStation

Your soccer team wants the European Cup. You can change your team's strategic directives and customize each player's behavior and characteristics (physically, technically and mentally). An abundant team database

includes teams from England, France, and Germany.

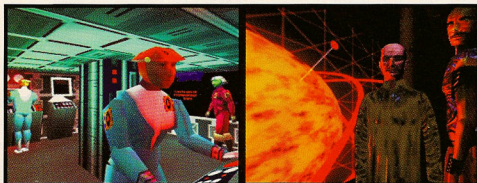


Formula One Racing (working title)

Available Fall 1996

Sony PlayStation

A racing game currently under development, with more than 20 tracks. It's officially licensed from the Formula One group, featuring the world's fastest racing cars.



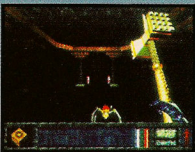
PRESS START

THE CD-ROM STUFF AT CES

FROM MAGNET INTERACTIVE STUDIOS

Hellraiser

Available Summer 1996
MS-DOS CD-ROM
Find your way out of Virtual Hell, occupied by Pinhead and his Cenobite Apostles. You'll be



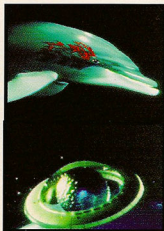
tormented by Pinhead's dominion of Pain, Desire and Temptation. Gameplay that combines role-playing and action in a real-time 3-D environment.

Bluestar

Available Summer 1996
Windows 95 CD-ROM
You're not Flipper. You're not Ecco. You're Abacus, the 21st-century space dolphin,



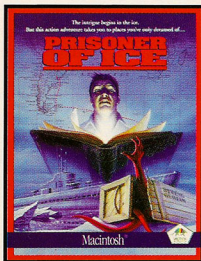
teamed up with scientists aboard the Bluestar space station. But something's gone wrong on Bluestar, and Abacus has to solve the mystery.



FROM I-MOTION

Prisoner of Ice

First Quarter 1996
Macintosh CD-ROM
Prisoner of Ice is based on the works of H.P. Lovecraft. You play John Ryan, an American agent around the time of World War II. The Prisoner of Ice, a hideous life form created by the Nazis as part of a plot to further plans for world domination, must be uncovered and stopped by Ryan.



Chaos Control

First Quarter 1996
Macintosh CD-ROM
A shooter in which you're cast as Jessica Darkhill, who must save

Manhattan from a swarm of unfriendly aliens. The graphics are stunning, a combination of 3-D graphics and Japanese animation.

Alone in the Dark 3

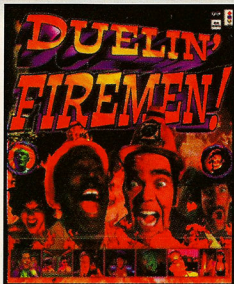
First Quarter 1996
Macintosh CD-ROM
In this, the third title in the *Alone in the Dark* series, you, as Edward Carnaby, "Supernatural Private Eye," are set to investigate Hill Century Studios' movie set, the ghost town of Slaughter Gulch. The movie's crew is missing. Go get 'em.



FROM RUNANDGUN!

Duelin' Firemen!

Available 1997?
Windows 95 CD-ROM
Chicago has been on fire since 1995, and banjos are ablaze. Choreograph your way from safehouse to safehouse, where you may find reprieve, if not from the heat, then from the agonizing foreknowledge of certain death.



FROM POWERHOUSE ENTERTAINMENT

Collision

Available Second Quarter 1996
Windows 95 CD-ROM
Collision is a live-action, futuristic car-smasher game, what Powerhouse Entertainment refers to as a MOVIEGAME title, developed using the company's proprietary FastLANE live-action video technology.

FROM HER INTERACTIVE

Sweet Valley High

Available Fourth Quarter 1996
Windows 95 or Macintosh CD-ROM
Based on characters and settings from the *Sweet Valley High* book series. Choose to play as one of twin sisters Jessica or Elizabeth Wakefield, who join friends on a class trip that leads to their Sweet Sixteen birthday party. If you like the TV series (and who wouldn't?), you'll want to look into this title.

PRESS START



32-X EXPIRES!

Sega finally pulls the plug on its big mushroom-shaped disaster!

After nearly two years of stuttering software releases and increasingly unimpressive games, Sega is about to put the doomed 32-X Genesis upgrade into early retirement. The confusing and ill-conceived unit has finally proved too expensive and too unpopular for a mass audience.

Sega's initially admirable goal was to offer Genesis owners a logical upgrade from 16- to 32-bit, but the machine was doomed to failure for a number of reasons. For one thing, it never received any kind of support from the Japanese arm of the company. Although the 32-X (called the Super 32-X in Japan) was released in the Far East, it was poorly supported, and the Genesis (called Mega Drive in Japan) base was never very big to begin with.



The lack of good Japanese arcade conversions and the high cost of producing carts for the 32-bit system proved discouraging to both consumers and third-party software houses alike. To date, only a couple of 32-X titles have met with any kind of success or critical acclaim. Notable exceptions include *Doom* and *Virtua Fighter*. Sadly these were not enough to keep the machine afloat and Sega has finally stopped production of both the machine and new software. The last titles to emerge from Sega Of America will include *Spider-Man Web Of Fire* and *T-Mek*. Third-party support has already dwindled away to nothing and the upgrade is almost certainly doomed to end up in bargain bins and discount stores. Sega fans looking to pick up a bargain could well see some amazing deals as the machine is discounted. There are 40-plus games available for the console, some of which

PRESS START



could be worth buying a (cheap) 32-X for. Technical problems with the add-on meant that although faster, the games never really looked that much different from Genesis titles. Sound effects and music were often identical to those found on the standard Genesis and the overall effect was often perceived as "not 32-bit enough".

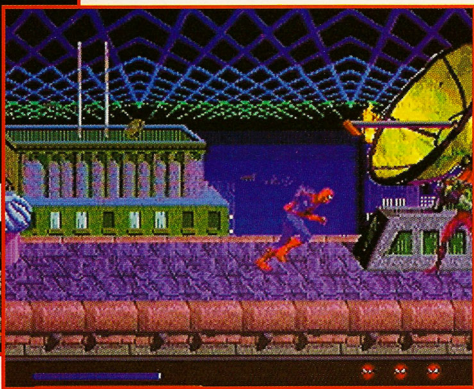
Less surprising is the news that Sega has also abandoned support for the similarly ill-supported Mega CD add-on.

Again, bargains will be found as the machine is discounted, and could represent a better buy. There are dozens of fabulously playable Sega CD games available. Unfortunately, very few Sega CD 32-X titles ever appeared, so buying both add-ons for your Genesis could prove to be a costly mistake. But what does this mean for Sega and the Saturn?

Well, it could turn out to be good news. Sega wants to concentrate its efforts on promoting its (proper) 32-bit console as well as supporting the regular Genesis (Sega already has at least 15 new games under development). This means that much of the confusion surrounding the Sega brand has been removed.

This also marks the beginning of a new era for Sega. It plans to release its previously protected arcade titles on PCs, utilizing the new graphics accelerators rapidly becoming available. PC owners with the right equipment will soon be able to play games like *Virtua Fighter* and *Daytona USA*.

Will Sega ever make games for the PlayStation? Very unlikely. Sega needs to keep its console titles exclusively on Sega consoles, and when Ultra 64 shows up in April, there'll be even more necessity for exclusivity. Until then, stay tuned to *VIDEOGAMES* for the full story.



INPUT

THE NEW DAWN Competition means big benefits for gamers.

Sega and Sony can battle for years to come. They can make all the claims they want, but we'll be happy as long as the bickering continues. Why? Because competition is good. As a matter of fact, the level of quality we're seeing in the new generation of games is better than anyone could have expected. Many cynics predicted that the low cost of CD manufacture would lead to a crop of shoddy games. In fact, the opposite is true.

Sure, there are some stinkers out there, but generally, the games we see on 3DO, Saturn and PlayStation are much bigger, better and brighter than any we've seen before.

The introduction of 3-D graphics has been viewed by many (perhaps most vocally by Nintendo) as a fad, a simple trend that would wane and die. The fact is that convincing 3-D worlds are fast replacing the scrolling, artificial Mario Worlds and Sonic Lands of our generation. Even (intrinsically) 2-D games are

enhanced by 3-D technology. Just look at *Skeleton Warriors* or *Tekken*. Neither of these games really relies on 3-D, and could easily be produced as two-dimensional, traditional style games. However, the 3-D graphics add much to the speed, realism and atmosphere. How can that ever be a bad thing?

Even Nintendo, the biggest advocate of conventional game styles, is now coming out in support of the 3-D world. The controller for the Ultra 64 console has been specifically designed with 3-D in mind.

So, the fact that Sega, Nintendo, Sony and 3DO are all tearing each other's throats out is pretty good news for you. As long as they do, the games will (have to) get better and better and better. And hey, there's only two or three years until the next format war erupt, so chin up, eh? By that time, we'll all be immersed in utterly convincing 3-D worlds.

—Frank O'Connor
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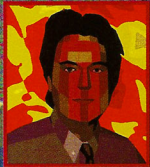
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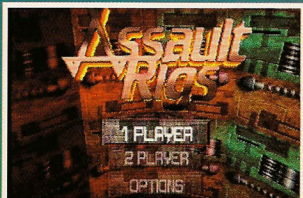
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WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

ASSAULT RIGS STUFF!



Sony Interactive is about to unveil the most eagerly awaited 3-D tank/random violence-related adventure game. **ASSAULT RIGS** gives you the chance to "be" a crazed tank driver, armed to the teeth and very unhappy. Why? Because it's fun. Now, to celebrate this launch, Sony Interactive (the software house formerly known as Psygnosis) is giving away the following: **One Sony PlayStation, One Sony 14-inch color TV, one Sony link cable and two copies of ASSAULT RIGS.** Why? So that you can try out the impossibly cool two-player link-up feature, complete with specifically designed link up levels. All you have to do to win is think of a caption for the picture above.

TO ENTER:

Send a postcard (no envelopes, please) with your caption, name, address and age to:
ASSAULT RIGS CONTEST
c/o VIDEOGAMES Magazine
PO Box 17379

Beverly Hills, CA 90209-3379

Entries must be received by April 31, 1996. Mutilated, incomplete or illegible entries will be disqualified. Sponsor is not responsible for late, lost, postage due or misdirected entries.

ELIGIBILITY AND LEGAL STUFF: Contest is open to residents of the United States and Canada. Employees of Sony Interactive Entertainment, its affiliates, subsidiaries, participating retailers, advertising/promotion/publicity agencies, L.P.P. Inc., printing suppliers and the immediate families of each are not eligible. Contest void where prohibited, restricted, or taxed by law. Contest subject to all Federal, State and Local laws and regulations. Taxes on prizes, if any, are the sole responsibility of the prize winners. Winners will be announced in the July '96 issue of VideoGames.

PLAYSTATION IN CONTROL!

The standard pad made by Sony is one of the best controllers to appear for a while. That, however, hasn't stopped third parties from trying to make a good thing even better. The only real problem with the Sony controller is the D-pad, which sometimes hurts the thumb and obstructs diagonal movement. We'll take a look at some would-be conquerors from Ascii, Innovation and some neat add-ons from Sony.

ASCII

Ascii has made a name for itself by making quality controllers that are well designed and packed with features. The company has definitely risen above the ranks of competing third-party controller makers.

ASCII SPECIALIZED JOYSTICK

Ascii's first entry in the joystick arena was the Advantage joystick for the NES.

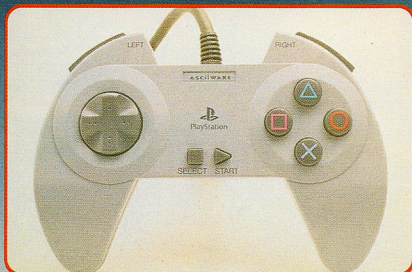


Released by Nintendo and designed by Ascii, it remains one of the best joysticks ever. The Specialized Joystick follows the style of the PlayStation,

just as the Advantage was designed to look like an NES. It has all the neat turbo switches for each button, plus a button for slow-motion. The buttons are aligned in a four-by-four arrangement, which makes it suitable for fighting games. The turbo switches are color-coordinated and laid out to match the button configuration. The Start, Select and slow-mo buttons are located at the top right corner, which makes them a little hard to access. The joystick is of the clicking variety and is pretty well-sized. Clicking joysticks are great for some games, but a hindrance for others. The metal base of the 'stick isn't as heavy as it should be, which gives the disturbing impression that the thing is mostly hollow. Overall, it's a good solid stick, but not ideal for every game.

ASCII PAD

There are two versions of the Ascii pad for the PlayStation. One features turbo and slow-mo buttons and the other one doesn't. Of all of the third-party jypads, this one feels the most durable.

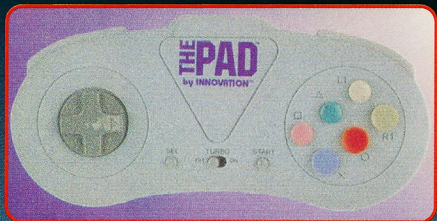


The button layouts are identical to Sony's, with the exception of the extra turbo and slow-mo switches. The design of the pad is slimmer than Sony's and doesn't have rounded handles. The D-pad is very responsive and comfortable, if a little on the small side. The Start and Select buttons are located in the same place as Sony's and are soft rubber. The main weakness of this pad are the L1, R1, L2, and R2 shift buttons, which are much too narrow. This was done so you can hit the top shifts with one finger, but it's somewhat awkward to hit the proper shift button accurately in the heat of battle. But, overall, this is a great jypad and features an extra long cord. If you can get used to the design, it'll give you the best control out there.



THE PAD BY INNOVATION

I was somewhat skeptical about these pads, but as soon as I fired up the PSX, I was pleasantly surprised. The controller is huge and similar in style to the SNES controllers, with similar button layout. It follows the three-by-three formation required for fighting games, the top buttons being smaller than the lower ones, to avoid confusion. The buttons are colored to match the shapes we've become accustomed to and the Start and Select buttons are located in the default area between the D-pad and the action buttons. The larger size gives it a rather hollow feel and it feels generic. The D-pad is the best feature of this controller and it works well with all the games we tested on it. Overall, I found



myself going back to The Pad quite often and I'd recommend it to the cost-conscious gamer.

THE PAD: PROGRAMMABLE by INNOVATION

This is basically the same as The Pad, except that this puppy allows you to program move sequences. The coolest thing about this is that it stores those moves on the PSX memory card, which means you can store a huge amount of moves as long as you have more memory cards. Innovation also sells pre-programmed cards for hits like *Tekken* and *Mortal Kombat 3*, but they don't come cheap. The three *Tekken* cards will run you a cool \$99.95! There's a list of games you can buy cards for, and the nice guys at Innovation also include a moves sheet for all the fighting games available for the PSX, so you don't have to buy them. The Programmable Pad also feels sturdier than the regular pad and



retains the same design scheme. There are four special moves buttons and a slot selector which changes the moves the buttons will perform for you. The abundance of buttons can get a little confusing, even with different sizing, but you can get used to it. Overall, this is a purchase for those unable to master fighting-game moves, but it's a solid pad to boot.

THE SONY MOUSE

Sony has released this slick new pointing device so that fans of *X-Com* and *Discworld* can have an easier time getting around. You can't help but be impressed with the high production values, which result in a sturdy feel and reliable accuracy. The Sony Mouse comes with a nice mousepad bearing the PlayStation logo. It has a two-button layout similar to a PC mouse, and a rounded shape for manual comfort. It played well with *X-Com*, but I preferred it for *Discworld*. The Mouse is also compatible with shooting games like *Revolution X* and the upcoming *Die Hard Trilogy*. If



you have games that are mouse-compatible, it's highly recommended that you get ahold of this great peripheral.

SONY MULTI-PLAYER TAP

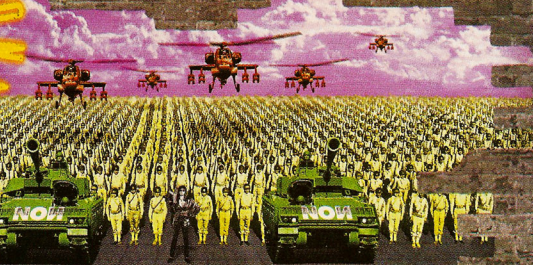
This has got to be one of the best multi taps ever. Not only can you plug in more players, but also multiple memory cards as well. There are no games that take advantage of this feature yet, but can you imagine the possibilities! Each player would have his or her own stats, record and control preferences on their card. The tap has a weird V shape that resembles a boomerang. It's quite hefty and might knock someone out if you're not careful! The extra weight is really needed however, since you have everyone pulling on their controllers and the tap acts as a security weight for the PlayStation. Overall, since this is the only multi-tap available, this is the one to get. Even if there were others, this would probably be the top dog anyway.



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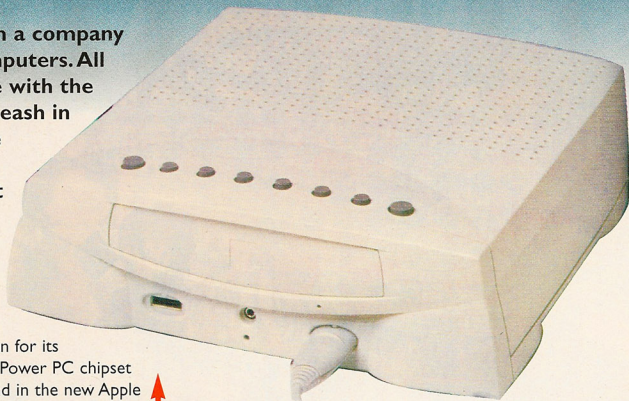


APPLE POWER!

64-bit gaming from an unlikely source: competition for Nintendo and 3DO?

Apple has always been a company associated with computers. All that is set to change with the new machine it plans to unleash in late 1996. The Pippin, as the technology is codenamed, will become the third 64-bit console to be released in '96. Of course, the launch will take place in Japan, presumably after Ultra 64 and possibly before M2.

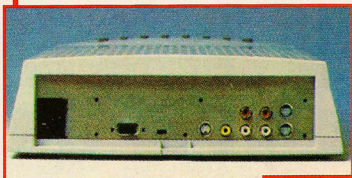
Pippin is the name Apple has chosen for its Power PC-based console system. The Power PC chipset is a 64-bit powerhouse, currently found in the new Apple range of computers. Bandai was the first company to snap up the rights to the Pippin system, impressed by



both its sheer processing power, as well as Apple's well-known commitment

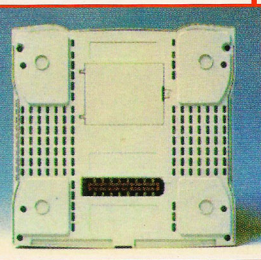
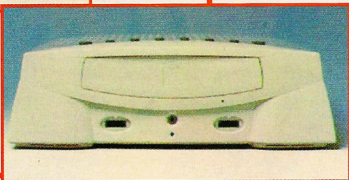
to the world of video-game consoles. Bandai's earlier attempt, the Bandai B-AX, failed to make any kind of impression. Power Player should do better business.

The machine has not been designed from the ground up as a games machine, but rather as a powerful, all-purpose set-top box, with multimedia, games and internet facilities in mind. The internet function will be powered by Apple's Geo Port

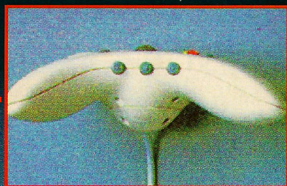


ment to excellence.

The Bandai console will be named the Power Player, a tad more exciting than "Pippin" at least. This marks Bandai's second foray into



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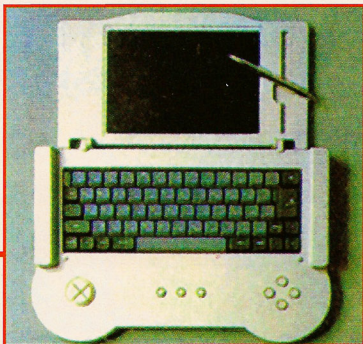
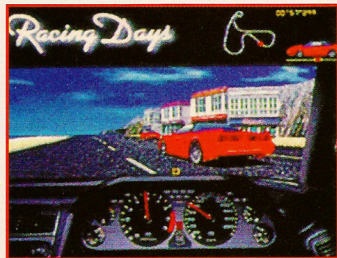
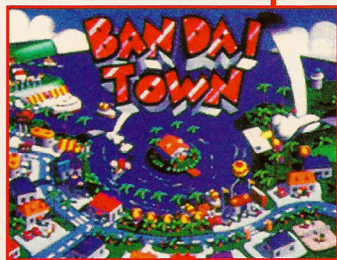
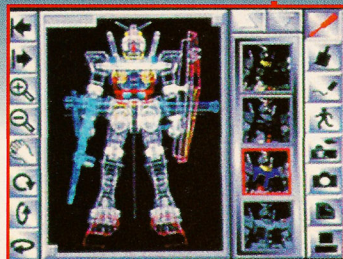


technology (basically a built-in Modem) and will be largely compatible with the Macintosh operating system.

Bandai is keen to promote the fact that Power Player can compete with PlayStation or Saturn in terms of sheer processing power, and the console will be launched with at least three titles written specifically, as well as a number of Power Macintosh port-overs. The first Power Player games will be *Racing Days*, (a *Ridge Racer* lookalike) *Bandai Town* (a *Populous*-style sim) and *Gundam 3D* (big fighting robots, *Mechwarrior* style). And games like *Doom*, *X-Wing* and *Dark Forces* will all make likely candidates.

One of the coolest (and most expensive) features found on the Power Player is the quad-speed CD ROM drive, twice as fast as either PlayStation or Sega Saturn. This should ensure that loading times are nowhere near as annoying as they can be on some systems.

No release date has been announced for a US version of the Power Player, but it may well be snapped up by a company other than Bandai. And with all that Power PC technology on board, will it be possible to upgrade your console to a fully fledged Power Mac? Neither Apple or Bandai will confirm or deny, but it seems like a logical enough idea. And at an estimated US price of under \$500, it could be the cheapest path into Power computing available.

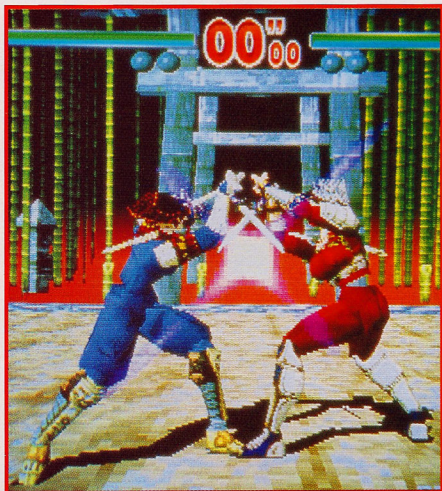


PRESS START

NEWS

Namco Releases Three New Arcade Machines

In the early '80s Namco was a name recognized in arcades as a hallmark of quality. Heck, the company created *Pac-Man*, for pete's sake. In the '90s, Namco has once again made a name for itself in the arcades, only this time it's been with advanced fighting games like *Tekken* and *Tekken 2*, and realistic racing games such as *Ridge Racer*, *Rave Racer*, and *Cybercycles*. There's no doubt about it; if you slouch on into the local Flipper Flapper nowadays, you're more than likely to be plugging a few quarters into a Namco release. This spring, Namco's releasing three new machines to suck the quarters out of your pocket: *Soul Edge*, *Dirt Dash*, and *Time Crisis*. *Soul Edge* and *Dirt Dash* are variations on Namco's tried and true formula for creating fantastic fighting games and racing games, but *Time Crisis* explores a genre which until now has been dominated by Sega's *Virtua Cop* series—the gun game. Here's a preview of what to expect:



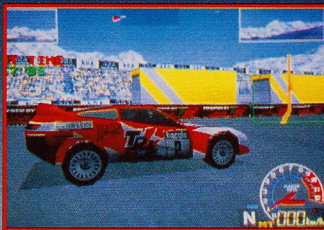
Soul Edge: Namco's new fighter will have *Tekken* fans drooling into their boots. It's the 15th century and everybody wants to control the destiny of the world. Clans from across the globe battle against each other to find the fabled Sword of Salvation, while others seek the Sword of Destruction. Nobody seems to know what this mystical artifact really represents, and only one will ultimately find out: the winner of *Soul Edge*. As of press time, the number of selectable characters in the game was undetermined, but from what we've seen so far, this is Namco's most advanced fighting game to date. Each character is polygon-based, but they're texture-mapped so well that you'd be hard-pressed to tell. The lighting effects are breathtaking an, in addition to the stunning graphics innovations, each character has its own fighting style and weapons to use. As in *Toshinden*, there is a sidestep feature, as well as the expected special moves and combos.



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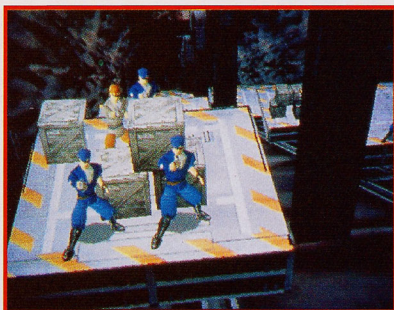
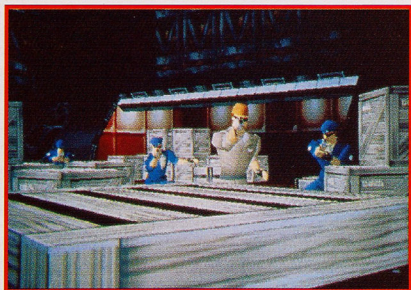


Dirt Dash: Namco's taking a different direction with its new driving-sim. Whereas games like *Ridge Racer* and *Rave Racer* were contests of pure speed and icy-cool driving skill, *Dirt Dash* challenges you to drive in such dangerous locations as jungles, snow-covered mountains, and the modern city. You can choose between three cars: a sports car, a 4x4 truck, or a dune buggy. The driving action is wild and wooly, baby! When you're off-roading, you can run into such obstacles as trees, lakes, rivers, and rickety bridges. The game features "feedback" steering, which accurately simulates what your car's handling would be like on the game's different surfaces. In addition, the game is filled with great graphic touches and beautiful sound.



Time Crisis:

If blowing away polygon guys with a hefty plastic gun is your idea of a fun date, then you should check out Namco's newest addition to this hot genre. While it would be hard for anyone to top the near perfection of Sega's *Virtua Cop* and *Virtua Cop 2*, Namco's trying its darndest. You are Richard Miller, special agent in charge of rescuing the President's daughter from the bloodthirsty madman, Sherudo Garo. Sounds like a run-of-the-mill gun game so far, right? Well, Namco has thrown a little spice into the recipe with the addition of a pedal which, when stepped upon, allows your player to assume attack position. When the pedal is released, you can crouch behind objects or duck behind walls for protection, so not only are you supposed to be shooting madly at your enemies, you must also think strategically and take cover when you can.



The BUZZ

Industry News You Can Trust

Atari Jaguar owners may be a little concerned to hear about the recent shake-up at Atari headquarters. The Jaguar software division has effectively been closed down, meaning that very few new Jaguar games will be produced in-house. Although we're usually careful not to print scare stories, this is exceptionally bad news for Atari's "64-bit" machine.

The official line from the Atari supremos is that development will be continued using third-party resources. Now, while many programming teams have produced Jaguar games, the incentive seems to be slipping away. And sharp-eyed Jag owners will have noticed that there has never been a true third-party release on their machine. Although games like RAYMAN belong to different companies, Atari has always taken responsibility for production and distribution of carts.

Atari's new plan of attack is to become a software producer for other platforms, starting with the PC and moving to rival consoles very soon. This is great news for console owners who have previously been denied access to Atari games like TEMPEST 2000, ALIEN VS PREDATOR and the like. However, it does look very much like a near-complete abandonment for the Jaguar system. Especially surprising since they finally launched the Jaguar CD, once considered the only salvation for the flagging console's fortunes.

The first title rumored to be released for another system will be TEMPEST 2000, based on Atari's now ancient coin-op and the brainchild of Llama-obsessed pie-freak, Jeff Minter. The game is addictive, attractive and features an awesome soundtrack, so PlayStation, Saturn and PC owners can all look forward to a rare treat.

One other piece of bad news regarding the Jaguar is the demise of a deal between Atari and Virtuality, supposedly supplying Jaguar owners with a head-mounted VR display. The system was previewed at the E³ show last year, but differences between Atari and Virtuality led to the cancellation of that project. Atari insists that research will continue, but in what form remains unclear.

Rumor also has it that Jaguar 2 development will continue, but it's widely believed that Atari wishes to remove itself from the hardware manufacturing business, in the face of strong competition from giants like Sony and Sega.

ULTRA STORAGE SHOCKER!

Nintendo is believed to be putting the finishing touches to its Bulky Storage Unit. Effectively a weird, CD-type drive for the Ultra 64. The machine will be based on Magneto-Optical technology, similar to that found in Sony's Mini Disc Player. This will allow players to read and write large amounts of data to and from their games.

At present, industry pundits claim that the machine will have a storage capacity of 64 Megabytes. To put that in perspective, the average CD can hold 655 Megabytes, which makes the Nintendo system seem remarkably underpowered. However, the Nintendo compression system should ensure that the games will look more than equivalent to their CD rivals, and more interestingly, you'll be able to save data.

Rumors already abound of a Nintendo Internet system, allowing players to download new information that will affect their copy of a game. The first releases for this system will include DRAGON QUEST and ZELDA, both predicted to be absolutely revolutionary in scope.

STRANGE THINGS AFOOT IN THE WACKY WORLD OF SEGA

Sega took something of a spanking in the American video-games market over the Christmas period. Not only did its Saturn console fare poorly compared to the PlayStation, but the company also lost out to Nintendo in a surprisingly healthy 16-bit Christmas period.

The latest rumor over at Sonic HQ concerns a potential hardware deal with electronics giant Matsushita. Matsushita, you may remember, bought out 3DO's M2 technology, surprising the gaming industry. A Japanese financial newspaper recently reported that Sega was having talks with Matsushita. The report went on to suggest that Sega was actually conducting feasibility studies on a piece of finished hardware. Although both Sega and Matsushita are quick to deny any such agreement, the rumor persists, suggesting deeper involvement than either party is prepared to admit.

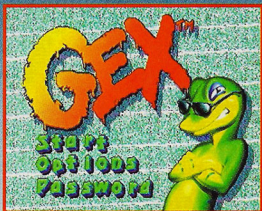
One theory suggests that Sega may adopt M2 technology as an upgrade to the the Saturn machine, giving Sega slightly more muscle in the war for technological superiority. This problem is going to hit hard when Nintendo launches its 64-bit machine in April, and when Matsushita actually unveils a finished M2 console.

Sega is having similar troubles in Europe, where Saturn sales have been slow. The company has also pulled its Nomad handheld machine, stating that Game Boy had too large an installed base to compete successfully with.

In Japan however, a healthy Christmas period put the Saturn in a slight lead over the PlayStation, with far more games available. Sales of VIRTUA FIGHTER 2 and VIRTUA COP were predictably huge, with even the VIRTUA FIGHTER calendar selling out on day one. However, both Sega and Sony expect to lose ground to Nintendo when the Ultra 64 finally rolls out in stores.

PRESS START

It's all for charity... (But we don't like to talk about it)



If you know 3DO games, then you probably know Crystal Dynamics. *Slam 'N Jam*, *Samurai Shodown*, *Off-World Interceptor*, *Star Control II*, *The Horde*, and *Total Eclipse* were all published by Crystal Dynamics for the 3DO. Crystal Dynamics

was poised and ready to publish games for the new 32-bit systems introduced last year, namely the Sega Saturn and Sony PlayStation, and has since

released *Solar Eclipse* for Sega Saturn, *Total Eclipse Turbo* for PlayStation, and *Off-world Interceptor Extreme* for both Saturn and PlayStation.

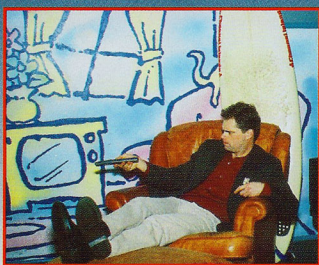
Gex, perhaps its most popular and most publicized title, is now available for 3DO, Sega Saturn, and Sony PlayStation. Gex is based on the story of a gecko. You know "gecko"—that small, harmless, tropical, nocturnal, insectivorous lizard from the

family Gekkonidae. Well, Gex is a particular gecko who resides in Hawaii. He spent a brief period in Encino, California, where the rest of his family moved after the death of his father, who died in a rocketship explosion—something involving a lot of tapioca. Gex inherited millions from his uncle, moved back to Hawaii, and set himself up in a mansion with the world's large television set, as that's what he liked to do best—watch TV, preferably *Charlie's Angels* and *Three's Company*—weird '70s



stuff. One day he was sucked into the Media Dimension by Rez, Lord of the Media Dimension, via his television. The point of the game is to escape the Media Dimension by collecting remote controls hidden throughout the various levels of this platform/action game. Anyway, Gex talks. He's a talking gecko, and his voice is the voice of comedian, Dana Gould. Recently, around Christmas time, Crystal Dynamics sponsored a "Gexmas" charity event featuring a stand-up comedy act by Dana Gould himself, as well as beer, wine and vegetables.

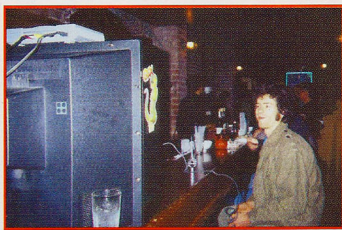
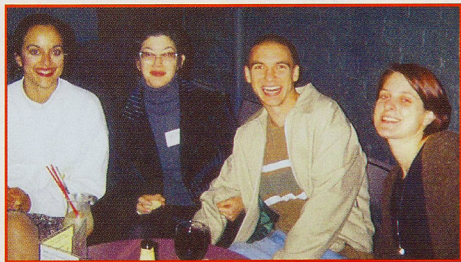
Attendees took part in a little bit of imbibition, ate carrots, and laughed. 16-bit video game cartridges were collected and distributed to children's hospitals. As you read this, there may be quite a few sick kids in



hospitals playing games like *Bubsy*. A few 16-bit systems like the Super NES were spotted in the toy bins as well. Gexmas is about giving.

Crystal Dynamics will soon release the following games: *Solar Eclipse* (Sony

PlayStation), *Blazing Dragons* (Sony PlayStation, Sega Saturn), *3D Baseball* (Sony PlayStation, Sega Saturn), *Slam 'N Jam '96* (Sony PlayStation, Sega Saturn), and *The Horde* (Sega Saturn). Also watch for *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain* (Sony PlayStation, Sega Saturn). It's about vampires!



GABE'S DREAM GAME GALLERY

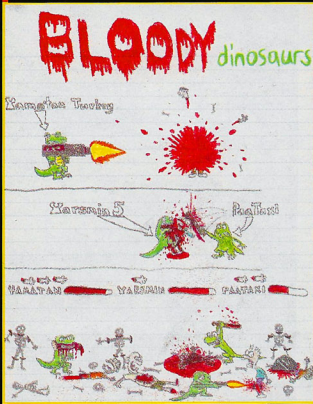
The museum of video games that never were, but just might be.

Gabe's Dream Game Gallery is open once again, and this month we've got a ton of video-game treasures for your perusal. I'm a little upset, though. You want to know why? I'm getting kind of sick of drawings on lined paper, kids! If you want somebody to take your Dream Games seriously, make that extra effort to find a piece of typing paper and commit your great idea to a nice, bleached surface. This isn't to say I won't look at Dream Games drawn on school-paper, but I have to admit that I'll look at the other stuff first. Anyway—on to the Dream Games!

BLOODY DINOSAURS

By Justin Boldaji

No, it's not a game about an Englishman's hatred of thunder lizards ("Bloody dinosaurs!"), it's quite literally about bloody dinosaurs. They're reptiles that even *Jurassic Park* wouldn't have. *Bloody Dinosaurs* is the creation of Justin Boldaji



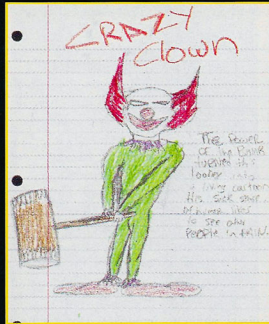
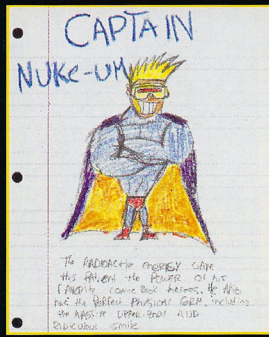
of Kill Devil Hills, NC. You might recognize his name from the Soundboard section of our mag; he's made quite a few appearances in the last couple of months. This kid's crazy, but we like him. The three dinosaurs are Yamatan Turkey (?), Yarsmin 5, and Paataxi. We're not quite

sure what the point of the game is, besides beating the crap out of unsuspecting mammals, but it sure looks cool. Check out the pictograms of Yamatan Turkey kneecapping a poor schlub with a .45. Paataxi doing a *Casino* on a unsuspecting passerby, and Yarsmin chomping on the drumstick of a screaming prole. It's violent and pointless, so of course I'd like to play it.

ATOMIC ASYLUM

By Pete Weaver

A nuclear bomb has been dropped on a lunatic asylum for no particular reason at all and, instead of killing everything in a 20-mile radius, it has bestowed super-powers on the residents of this podunk

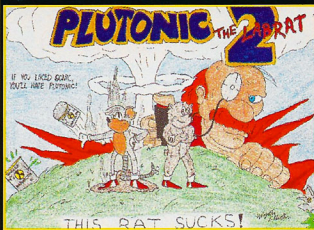


Bedlam. Great, I can see it now: kids all around the globe are going to be detonating nuclear devices in their backyards to gain super-powers. It's a bad road, children. Don't walk down it. *Atomic Asylum* is yet another fighting game, but it's wacky, so it's kind of like playing *Clayfighter* with real folks. Besides *Crazy Clown* and *Captain Nuke-um*, you can play as a "Rambo wanna-be", a "chef with a flair for slicing and dicing", and a "pyromaniac". These are Pete's words, not mine. Not the most original and exciting idea to come down the pike, but he's on the right track. Word to your mother, Pete.

PLUTONIC THE LAB RAT

By Wyatt Elliott

In the grand tradition of Mickey Rat, Skid Row's answer to Mickey Mouse, comes *Plutonic the Lab Rat*, the mutant antithe-



sis of all the goodness that Sonic the Hedgehog represents. *Plutonic* creator Wyatt Elliott (another frequent contributor to *Soundboard* and the *Dream Game Gallery*) cites the films *The Naked Gun* and *Hot Shots* as two of his main inspirations for his parody of Sega's popular mascot. *Plutonic's* main man is Pals the Guinea Pig and his nemesis is Dr. Robotlik (I get it). As Wyatt puts it (and I quote), "This game would be large on laughs, high on fun and low on intelligents." Um, Wyatt, that's spelled "intelligence", for your information. I suppose Wyatt is the perfect guy to make this game because it's certainly lowbrow enough for a man of his "intelligents".

GABE'S DREAM GAME GALLERY

FARA BLADE

by E. Glassman

As you may know, Gabe's Dream Game Gallery normally won't print ideas for "new" *Mortal Kombat* characters because, for the most part, they stink like a three-day-old fish in the New Orleans summer sun. They suck. They're boring. They show a stunning dearth of imagination. But I just couldn't resist printing E. Glassman's Fara



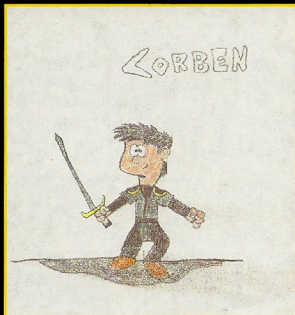
Blade. His description of the character was just too lurid to pass up. Apparently Shao Khan made a clone of Sonya (duh) and made her his mistress (woo woo). Fara's in charge of torturing Shao Khan's collection of souls. Zowee. Fara is the ultimate sadistic fantasy, and I'm kind of worried about the Glassman's sanity, but from what he's written about Fara, I'm certain that this is one young man with a very interesting life ahead of him.

CORBEN

By Nick Adane

"I'm a RPG FREAK," begins the letter from Nick Adane of Ethel, MS, "but I'd really like to make them. Do you think you could hook me up with SquareSoft?

I've got some pretty good ideas." Really? So what are they, Nick? All you sent was this picture of Corben, the lead character in your game. No explanation, no plot synopsis, no maps, nothing. I'm afraid I can't



recommend you to SquareSoft without more info. Sorry. But thanks for the nice compliment about my beard (Nick said it was "slammin"). When I started growing it in college, people thought I looked stupid, but now I frequently get stopped on the street and asked if I'm Amish. I'm not, by the way.

DOGGIE DEFENDERS

By Bennie Overton

"My creation is Tiny and Jeff. They are trying to save their dog Niko from the evil Glider. They have secret powers." Hmm. Dear readers, your guess is as good as mine on this one. All I know is that this Dream Game came with a nice note from Bennie's mom explaining that he was only 6 years old and that it was his fondest wish to be included in the Dream Game



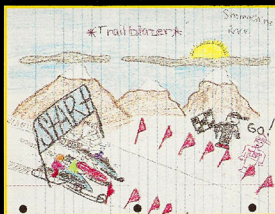
Gallery. Being the soft touch that I am, I couldn't help but oblige her. Aren't Tiny and Jeff cute? I just wish I could tell what they were.



TRAILBLAZER

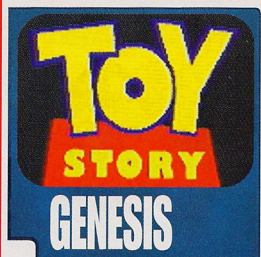
By Latoya Y. Coaltrain

From the wilds of Selawik, Alaska comes Latoya Coaltrain's *Trailblazer*, an action-packed racing-sim in which you and a friend race at a breakneck pace across the wilds of the Arctic. Besides having a cool name (Latoya Coaltrain! That's so cinematic!), Latoya's got what a dozen other game designers lack: originality. The idea of a snowmobile race is simple, yet intriguing. I want to know more. I want to fly across the snow on a Polarix XLT. I wanna rock!



TIPS & TRICKS

If you have any tips or tricks that you haven't seen printed anywhere else, put them on a piece of paper or a postcard and send them to us at VIDEOGAMES, Attn: Tips & Tricks, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. If you're the first to tell us about a valuable new tip or trick, we'll print it and send you a cool new controller for your Super NES of Genesis, courtesy of STD Entertainment!

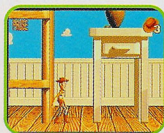


Stage Skip!

At the start of the game, wait for the Toy Story title screen that shows Woody glaring at Buzz Lightyear while the words "PRESS START" are flashing; then spell the word "abracadabra" on the control pad by pressing **A, B, Right, A, C, A, Down, A, B, Right, A**. You'll hear Woody yell, "Hot! Hot! Hot!" to confirm the code. Now start the game; when you want to skip a stage, just hit **START** and press **A** while the game is paused to warp immediately to the end!



Press **A, B, Right, A, C, A, Down, A, B, Right, A**; you'll hear Woody yell, "Hot! Hot! Hot!"



Now during the game, hit **START** to pause and press the **A** button.



You'll warp immediately to the end of the current stage!

Invincibility!

Toy Story too tough for you? Here's a top-secret cheat to keep you safe from harm. First, complete the game's first stage; then, at the start of the second stage ("Red Alert!"), you must collect the three stars above the toybox. Now move to the right and collect four more stars for a total of seven; if you accidentally grab more than seven, the cheat won't work. Once you've collected seven stars, jump into the toybox and hold **Down** on the D-pad for six seconds. You'll see Woody's health star begin to spin around, indicating that you are now invincible for the rest of the game!



In the game's second stage, collect exactly seven stars...



...then jump into Andy's toybox.



Next, hold **Down** on the D-pad for six seconds.



You'll see the health star start to spin.



Now you're completely invincible!

HINT HOTLINES!

Are you still having trouble with your favorite game? Well, VIDEOGAMES doesn't give out tips over the phone—but here is a list of people who do:

Nintendo of America Inc. (206) 885-PLAY

HOURS: Monday through Saturday—4 a.m. to midnight (Pacific Standard Time) Sunday—6 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time)
COST: Standard long-distance rates to Redmond, Washington, apply.
TIPS: Nintendo's game counselors field questions about any licensed game for the NES, Super NES or Game Boy.

Sega of America Inc.

(415) 591-PLAY
HOURS: 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) seven days a week
COST: Standard long-distance rates to Redwood City, California, apply.
TIPS: Sega's game counselors field questions about any Sega game for the Genesis, Sega CD, Game Gear or Master System. Questions about third-party games are not covered by Sega's counselors; they will, however, refer you to the appropriate phone numbers for tips on licensed titles.

Atari Corp. (900) 737-ATARI

HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
COST: 95¢ per minute
TIPS: Atari's Game Line offers Touch-Tone menus with recorded messages of tips and strategies for recent Atari games for the Lynx and Jaguar.

Turbo Technologies Inc.

(310) 337-6916
HOURS: Monday through Friday—9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time)
COST: Standard long-distance rates to Los Angeles, California, apply.
TIPS: TTI's game counselors field questions about any NEC, TTI or Working Designs game for the TurboGrafx-16 or Duo.

Electronic Arts (900) 288-HINT

HOURS: 24 hours a day, seven days a week
COST: 95¢ for the first minute, 75¢ each additional minute
TIPS: Recorded messages provide tips and passwords for Electronic Arts games; game counselors may also be available during normal business hours.

U.S. Gold (Flashback Gameline)

(900) 288-GAME
HOURS: 24 hours a day, seven days a week
COST: 85¢ per minute
TIPS: Touch-Tone menus of recorded messages offering tips and strategies for U.S. Gold's Flashback for the Genesis and Super NES.

Data East (900) 4545-HELP

HOURS: 24 hours a day, seven days a week for recorded messages, or 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) Monday through Friday for optional game counselor assistance
COST: 95¢ for the first minute, 75¢ each additional minute
TIPS: Tips and strategies for Data East's Shutdown for the Super NES are the primary resource, but help is available for many other Data East titles.

Extra Difficulty Setting

At the *Biker Mice From Mars* title screen/main menu, grab Controller 2 and press **Up, X, Left, Y, Down, B, Right, A, Up, X**. You'll hear Karbunkle laugh to confirm the code. Now start the game, in either the Main Race or Battle Mode. When you reach the menu where you choose the difficulty setting, you'll find that there's a new "Super Hard" difficulty option.

Press **Up, X, Left, Y, Down, B, Right, A, Up, X** on Controller 2.

Now you can access a "Super Hard" difficulty level.



Secret Cheats

At any time during the game, press the **START** button to pause. When the pause menu appears, hold the **L1** and **L2** buttons for approximately ten seconds; this will "lock" the red rectangular cursor in place. If you can still move the cursor up and down with the D-pad, then you need to hold **L1** and **L2** a little bit longer. After the

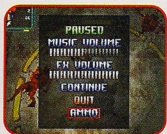
cursor is locked up, continue to hold the **L1** and **L2** buttons and enter the following codes: **Down, Right, O, Left, Right, O** gives you a new option called "Ammo" and **Right, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, Δ, O** gives you a "Health" option. Use these new options to refill your ammunition or energy meter at any time during the game!



Press **START** to pause the game.



Hold **L1+L2** for ten seconds (or until the cursor locks up), then press **Down, Right, O, Left, Right, O**.



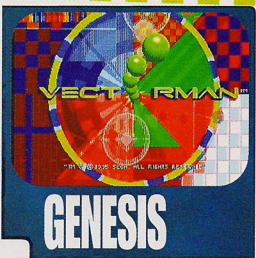
Continue to hold **L1+L2** and press **Right, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, Δ, O**.



Now you have two new options, "Health" and "Ammo".



Use them to power-up at any time during the game!



Level Warp

Here's another *Vectorman* cheat that we didn't catch in our last issue. While the game is paused, spell the words "call a cab" on the controller by pressing **C, A, Left, Left, A, C, A, B**. Vectorman will turn into a small arrow. You can move the arrow around the screen to any location in the

current stage, and while you can't blow up any TVs, you will be able to destroy most enemies just by touching them with the arrow. Best of all, you can move the arrow all the way to the end of a stage and change back into Vectorman by pausing the game and entering the "call a cab" code again!



1 Pause the game and press **C, A, Left, Left, A, C, A, B**.



3 You can drag the arrow all the way to the end of the stage.



5 ...you'll change back into Vectorman!



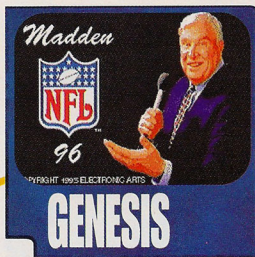
2 Vectorman will turn into a small arrow which you can move anywhere with the D-pad.



4 Then, if you pause and enter the "call a cab" code again...



6 The arrow can even destroy certain enemies just by touching them.



SECRET TEAMS

As far as we can tell, there are exactly 100 hidden teams in the Genesis version of Madden NFL 96. Most of them are classic NFL and AFL lineups, some are All-Pro squads and several are teams from the little-known World League of American Football. To find them, simply access the "Team Selection" screen and enter one of the codes listed here. The cheats work for either team; so if, for example, you wanted to pit the '76 Vikings against the '95 Barcelona Dragons, you'd just put the NFL cursor on the left side, enter the Vikings code, then move the cursor to the right and enter the Dragons code. All codes are entered with the **A**, **B** and **C** buttons; have fun!

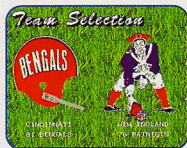
- AABBCCA—'80 Atlanta Falcons
- AAABCAC—'70 Baltimore Colts
- AACAAB—'68 Baltimore Colts
- AACACBA—'64 Baltimore Colts
- AACBBBC—'65 Cleveland Browns
- AACCACB—'93 Buffalo Bills
- AAACAAA—'92 Buffalo Bills
- ABAACAC—'91 Buffalo Bills
- ABABBBB—'90 Buffalo Bills
- ABACACA—'73 Buffalo Bills
- ABACCCC—'85 Chicago Bears
- ABBACAB—'77 Chicago Bears
- ABBBBBA—'66 Chicago Bears
- ABBCACB—'63 Chicago Bears
- ABBCCCB—'88 Cincinnati Bengals
- ABCACAA—'81 Cincinnati Bengals
- ABCBBAC—'93 Dallas Cowboys
- ABCCABB—'92 Dallas Cowboys
- ABCCCCA—'78 Dallas Cowboys
- ACAABCC—'77 Dallas Cowboys
- ACBABB—'75 Dallas Cowboys
- ACACABA—'71 Dallas Cowboys
- ACACCB—'70 Dallas Cowboys
- ACBABC—'89 Denver Broncos
- ACBBBAA—'87 Denver Broncos
- ACBCAAC—'77 Denver Broncos
- ACBCBB—'62 Detroit Lions
- ACCBACA—'67 Green Bay Packers
- ACCBACC—'66 Green Bay Packers
- ACCCAAB—'80 Houston Oilers
- ACCCBA—'69 Kansas City Chiefs
- BAAABBC—'66 Kansas City Chiefs

- BAABACB—'62 Dallas Texans
- BAACAAA—'90 Los Angeles Raiders
- BAACCAC—'83 Los Angeles Raiders
- BAABBB—'80 Oakland Raiders
- BABBACA—'76 Oakland Raiders
- BABBCCC—'67 Oakland Raiders
- BABCCAB—'91 Los Angeles Rams
- BACABBA—'84 Los Angeles Rams
- BACBABC—'79 Los Angeles Rams
- BABCBCB—'68 Los Angeles Rams
- BACCCAA—'84 Miami Dolphins
- BBAABAC—'82 Miami Dolphins
- BBABABB—'73 Miami Dolphins
- BBABCCA—'72 Miami Dolphins
- BBACBCB—'71 Miami Dolphins
- BBBABAB—'76 Minnesota Vikings
- BBBBABA—'74 Minnesota Vikings
- BBBBBCB—'73 Minnesota Vikings
- BBBCBCB—'69 Minnesota Vikings
- BBCABAA—'85 New England Patriots
- BBCBAAC—'76 New England Patriots
- BBCBCBB—'79 New Orleans Saints
- BBCBCBA—'90 New York Giants
- BCAAACC—'86 New York Giants
- BCABAAB—'70 New York Giants
- BCABCBA—'68 New York Jets
- BCACBBC—'80 Philadelphia Eagles
- BCBAACB—'60 Philadelphia Eagles
- BCBBAAA—'79 Pittsburgh Steelers
- BCBBAC—'78 Pittsburgh Steelers
- BCBCBBB—'75 Pittsburgh Steelers
- BCCAACA—'74 Pittsburgh Steelers
- BCCACCC—'75 St. Louis Cardinals
- BCCBCAB—'94 San Diego Chargers
- BCCCBB—'81 San Diego Chargers
- CAAAACB—'66 San Diego Chargers
- CAAACCB—'63 San Diego Chargers
- CAABCAA—'94 San Francisco 49ers
- CAACBAC—'89 San Francisco 49ers
- CABAABB—'88 San Francisco 49ers
- CABACCA—'84 San Francisco 49ers
- CABBBCC—'81 San Francisco 49ers
- CACBCAB—'78 Seattle Seahawks
- CACAABA—'79 Tampa Bay Buccaneers
- CACACBC—'91 Washington Redskins
- CACBBCB—'87 Washington Redskins
- CACCBAA—'83 Washington Redskins
- CBAAACB—'82 Washington Redskins
- CBAACBB—'72 Washington Redskins
- CBABBCA—Hall of Fame I

- CBACACC—Hall of Fame II
- CBBAAB—'95 All-Madden
- CBACBA—'95 AFC Pro Bowl
- CBBBBC—'95 NFC Pro Bowl
- CBCCACB—'95 Amsterdam Admirals
- CBAAAA—'95 Barcelona Dragons
- CBACAC—'95 Frankfurt Galaxy
- CBBCBBB—'95 London Monarchs
- CBCCACA—'95 Rhein Fire
- CBCCCC—'96 Scotland Claymores
- CCAACAB—'95 EA Sports Team Madden
- CCABBB—All '50s
- CCACAC—All '60s
- CCACCC—All '70s
- CCBACAA—NFL Players Association I
- CCBBBAC—NFL Players Association II
- CCBABBB—NFL Players Association III
- CCBCCCA—NFL Players Association IV



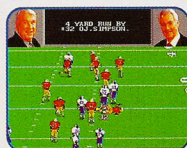
Enter the codes at this screen to find the hidden teams.



Some of them appear with the old-school team logos!

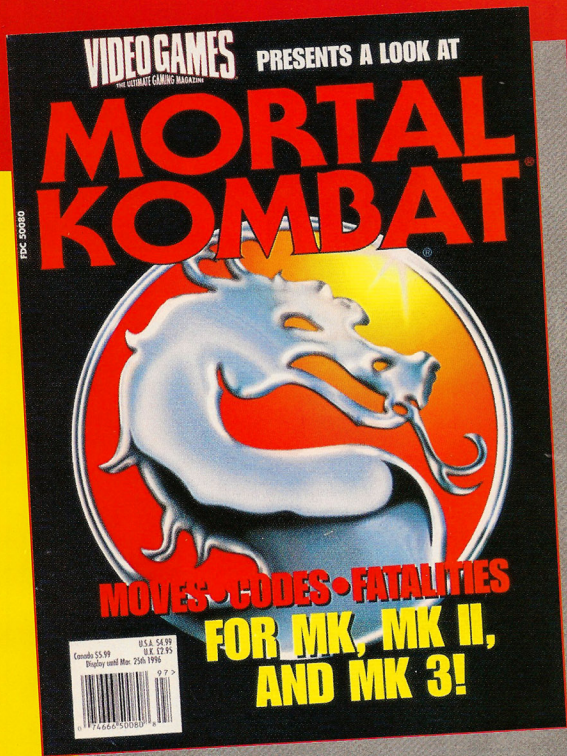


Choose the '66 Bears to get Ditka at tight end!



Or slash through the defensive line with the '73 Bills and their Hall-of-Fame running back!

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TAVG83

Stage Passwords

Choose "Options" from the title screen, then select the Password entry screen and enter any of the following codes to start at different stages.



Mission 1—BMBRMN



Mission 2—65CB16



Mission 3—BIGBND



Mission 4—FSPRNG



Mission 5—YHWX11



SUPER NES

Unlimited Ammo

At the password screen, enter the code **MIR0G3**; you'll automatically return to the title screen. Now start a game, and you'll find that your ammunition is never used up!



Enter the password **MIR0G3** and start a game.



You now have unlimited ammo for all weapons!

Invincibility

To access an invincibility cheat, you must first enter each of the five mission passwords shown above as well as the "Unlimited Ammo" password; after entering each one, return to the password entry screen again and put in the next one. Once all of those passwords have been registered, return to the password menu a seventh time and enter the code **MKWFL1**. Now start a game, and you'll see that your 'mech's health meter will never register any damage!

Enter the "Infinite Ammo" code and all five mission passwords, one at a time.



Then return to the password screen and enter the code **MKWFL1**.



Start the game and you'll be completely invincible!



Play as an Enemy Mech

Turn the game on and wait for the Tiburon Entertainment logo to appear. When it does, press **Down** on the D-pad, then **A**, then **X**. Next, go to the password entry screen and input the code **XTRM3K**. You'll be taken to a secret menu screen where you can choose to play the game as any of six different enemy mechs instead of the default MadCat!

ENEMY 'MECHS



Press **Down** on the D-pad, then **A**, then **X**.



Then access the password screen and enter the code **XTRM3K**.



You'll get this top-secret mech-select menu!



WASP



STORMCROW



WOLVERINE



MARAUDER



ULLER



THUNDER



Invincibility

Choose "Options" from the title screen, then enter the "Jukebox" mode. Enter the following code by placing the red checkmark cursor on each number in order and pressing **C**:

3, 12, 17, 2, 2, 10, 2, 7, 7, 11

Remember to press the **C** button at each number. If you've done this correctly, you'll hear Sketch say, "Oh, yeah!" Now press **START** to exit the jukebox and start the game; you'll see that your energy bar will never go down!

Choose the following numbers in order and press **C** at each one: 3, 12, 17, 2, 2, 10, 2, 7, 7, 11.



Now start the game; you'll be completely invincible!



You'll hear Sketch say, "Oh, Yeah!" when you enter the last number.



Stage Select

As above, choose the Jukebox and enter the following code by placing the red checkmark cursor on each number in order and pressing **C**:

14, 15, 18, 5, 13, 1, 3, 18, 15, 6

Remember to press the **C** button at each number. If you've done this correctly, you'll hear Sketch say, "Oh, yeah!" Now highlight a number from 1 to 6 and press **C** to warp to different

stages as follows:

- 1—Episode 1, Part 1
- 2—Episode 1, Part 2
- 3—Episode 2, Part 1
- 4—Episode 2, Part 2
- 5—Episode 3, Part 1
- 6—Episode 3, Part 2

Press **START** to exit the jukebox and start the game; you'll start at the stage you chose!



Choose the following numbers in order and press **C** at each one: 14, 15, 18, 5, 13, 1, 3, 18, 15, 6.



You'll hear Sketch say, "Oh, Yeah!" when you enter the last number.



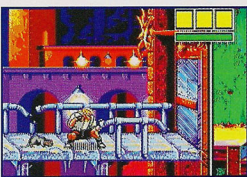
Next, highlight a number from 1 to 6 and press **C**, then press **START** to exit.



When you start the game, you'll begin at the stage you picked!

Secret Fart

In most of the game's "panels," you can make Sketch pass gas by rapidly pressing **Down** on the D-pad. It seems easier to do this if there are no enemies on the screen.



Press **Down** rapidly and repeatedly.



You'll see and hear Sketch cut a mean one!

TIPS & TRICKS

GAME GENIE CODES

Codes for use with Galeob's Game Genie Video Game Enhancers

Donkey Kong Country 2: Diddy's Kong Quest

Super NES

E6EE-A7D7 + 6DAF-12EB + 6D8D-C33E — MASTER CODE MUST BE ENTERED

C2A1-CE5B—Infinite lives

D465-3D67—Start with three lives

DB65-3D67—Start with 10 lives

F665-3D67—Start with 25 lives

7F65-3D67—Start with 50 lives

1765-3D67—Start with 99 lives

D4A1-437C—Getting 100 bananas gives you two extra lives

D9A1-437C—Getting 100 bananas gives you five extra lives

EEC2-1A1D—When your last monkey is hit, the other one returns

DD6C-C7D4—Pressing **SELECT** while paused exits any level, not just completed ones

626D-4EBD—Start with more Kong Family Coins

C2B9-1297—Kong Family Coins don't get used up

626D-432D—Start a new game with more Kremcoins

C2B9-1297—Kremcoins don't get used up

EDD0-735A—Mega-jump for Diddy

E7D0-735A—Super-jump for Diddy

E1D0-735A—Diddy jumps higher

EDD0-735A—Diddy doesn't jump as high

EDD0-735A—Diddy jumps much lower

EDD7-5AEA—Mega-jump for Dixie

E7D7-5AEA—Super-jump for Dixie

ESD7-5AEA—Dixie jumps higher

EBD7-5AEA—Dixie doesn't jump as high

ECD7-5AEA—Dixie jumps much lower

EFDD-535A—Mega-jump for Rambi

E7DD-535A—Super-jump for Rambi

ESDD-535A—Rambi jumps higher

ECDD-535A—Rambi doesn't jump as high



Cheat Mode

Start a game in any mode. When the fight begins, press the **P** button to pause. Then, at the "Pause" menu, hold the **L** and **R** buttons on top of Controller 1 and press **C**. A secret "Cheat Codes" menu will appear! Enter any of the following passcodes to get different effects—but please be aware that some of the cheat codes listed below may crash the game or even reset the 3DO machine in certain situations.

TEAM—Shows a photo of the *Foes of Ali* design team.

PREBEG—Shows a photo of European middle-heavyweight champion Ivan Prebeg.

CROWD—Removes the crowd from the background to speed the game up slightly; enter the code again to restore the spectators.

ZIPPY—Speeds up the game's frame rate slightly.

AIAT—Changes Boxer 1 into a computer-controlled fighter; enter the code again to regain control with Controller 1.

AIBT—In a one-player game, this code makes Boxer 2 playable with Controller 2; enter the code again to return control of Boxer 2 to the computer. In a two-player game, this gives control of Boxer 2 to the computer; re-enter the code to restore Controller 2. (This is a great cheat for one-player games—particularly in Tournament or Career mode—because it allows you to top your opponent from fighting back.)

PADC—This code activates Controller 3 for special cheat functions; let's hope you've got a third controller! Once you've entered this code, the buttons on Controller 3 will have the following effects:

A: Knock down Boxer 2 for six seconds.

B: Cut the right eye of Boxer 1. Press this button three times and the referee will stop the fight.

L button: End the current round and immediately advance to Round 10.



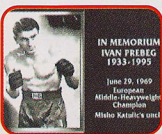
At the pause menu, hold **L** and **R** and press **C**.



Enter the password "ZIPPY" to speed up the game's frame rate.



The password "TEAM" lets you see the game's designers.



Try "PREBEG" to see this memorial photo



"AIAT" and "AIBT" can toggle computer control on or off for both fighters.



With the code "PADC" entered, you can knock Boxer 2 down by pressing **A** on Controller 3.



"PADC" also allows you to cut Boxer 1's right eye with the **B** button on Controller 3...

Low Blows

You may have thrown a few low blows from time to time by accident, but here's how to do them on purpose: Point the D-pad diagonally in the **Down/Left** position and press **A** to throw a low blow with your left hand, or point **Down/Right** and press **B** for a low right. Don't do this too often or you'll be penalized; you can also be disqualified for low blows.



...or press **L** on Controller 3 to warp directly to Round 10!



Hold and press **A** (or hold and press **B**).



Whoops! Heh heh...hope the ref didn't see that!

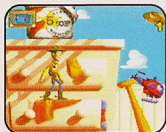


**Invincibility
+ Stage
Skip**

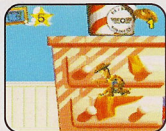
In the game's first level ("That Old Army Game"), walk to the right until you reach the rubber ball that's next to the chest of drawers with the bucket of army men on it. Jump on the ball and gently tap to the right to land on the bottom drawer. When you're standing on the bottom drawer, hold **Down** on the D-pad for about six seconds. You'll see Woody's health star begin to spin in the upper left corner of the screen, indicating that you are now invincible for the rest of the game! With this code in place, you can also skip any stage as follows: Simply hit **START** during the game, then press the **SELECT** button while the game is paused. You'll be warped instantly to the end of the current stage!



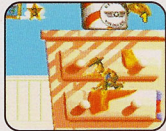
Jump on the ball and carefully tap **Right**...



...to land on the bottom drawer.



Once you're there, hold **Down** for six seconds.



You'll see the health star begin to spin; now you're invincible!



With this code in place, pause the game and press **SELECT**...



...to warp to the end of the current stage!

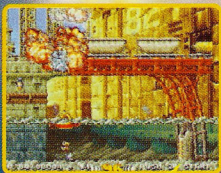
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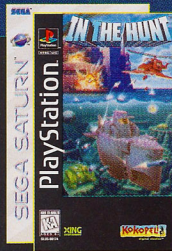
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Infinite Continues!

When you lose your last life and the Game Over/Continue screen appears, press **Up, Down, Right, Left**. (Note: This only works if the number of continues remaining is three or less.) If you've done it correctly, you'll see your continue counter jump to 10! Repeat this code to reset the counter to 10 whenever you're running low on continues.



When the counter shows three continues or less, press **Up, Down, Right, Left**.



You'll end up with 10 continues whenever you want them.

Infinite Lives

At any time during the game, press **START** to pause, then enter the following code while the word "PAUSE" is on the screen: Press and hold the **A** button, press **B+Right** on the D-pad simultaneously and release, press **R+diagonal Down/Left** on the D-pad and release, press **C+Y+Z** simultaneously and release, then release **A**. Press **START** to continue the game; you'll see that your life counter has jumped to 20! You can repeat this code at any time to keep your life counter maxed out at 20.



Pause the game, hold **A**, press **B+Right** and release, press **R+Left** and release, press **C+Y+Z** and release, then release **A**.



Press **START** to unpause. You now have 20 lives!



FMV Fiesta

To watch all of *BlackFire's* full-motion video sequences, enter the following code while the words "PRESS START BUTTON" are flashing on the title screen: **Z, A, Z, A, B, A, B, Y, C, A, C, A**. The intermission scenes will automatically start up; press **A** to stop any scene and skip to the next one.



Press **Z, A, Z, A, B, A, B, Y, C, A, C, A**



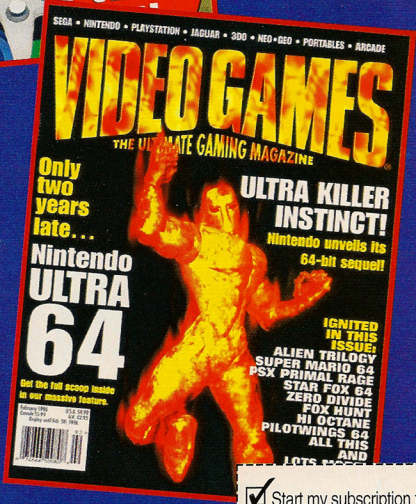
You'll be treated to an eight-minute overdose of full-motion video footage.



This dramatic chase scene is our favorite!

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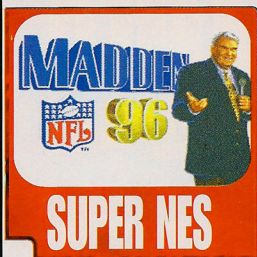
Signature

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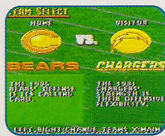
OFFER EXPIRES JULY 20, 1996.

A3600

Secret Teams



Highlight your favorite team and enter the code as shown...



...to activate a hidden "classic" team with powerful skills.

To find a few dozen hidden teams in the Super NES version of *Madden 96*, you'll need to follow some specific instructions. At the "Team Select" screen, enter one of the following codes while the '96 version of the indicated team is on the screen:

- '75 Cardinals—Highlight the Cardinals, press **A, B, B, A**.
- '80 Falcons—Highlight the Falcons, press **L, Y, B, R, A**.
- '73 Bills—Highlight the Bills, press **A, L, A, B, Y**.
- '85 Bears—Highlight the Bears, press **Y, A, B, B, A**.
- '81 Bengals—Highlight the Bengals, press **R, A, L, L, Y**.
- '65 Browns—Highlight the Browns, press **A, L, L, R, B**.
- '78 Cowboys—Highlight the Cowboys, press **B, A, R, B, Y**.
- '77 Broncos—Highlight the Broncos, press **B, R, A, R, Y**.
- '62 Lions—Highlight the Lions, press **B, A, R, R, Y**.
- '67 Packers—Highlight the Packers, press **B, A, Y, B, A, L, L**.
- '80 Oilers—Highlight the Oilers, press **A, R, A, B, Y, A**.
- '68 Colts—Highlight the Colts, press **B, A, L, B, A, L, L**.
- '69 Chiefs—Highlight the Chiefs, press **B, L, L, Y, R, A, Y**.
- '72 Dolphins—Highlight the Dolphins, press **L, R, B, B, B**.

- '76 Vikings—Highlight the Vikings, press **B, R, A, L, L**.
- '85 Patriots—Highlight the Patriots, press **R, A, Y, B, A, R, Y**.
- '79 Saints—Highlight the Saints, press **Y, A, L, L**.
- '86 Giants—Highlight the Giants, press **L, B, L, A, R, R, Y**.
- '68 Jets—Highlight the Jets, press **A, R, R, A, Y**.
- '77 Raiders—Highlight the Raiders, press **B, Y, B, Y, L, A**.
- '60 Eagles—Highlight the Eagles, press **L, L, L, Y**.
- '78 Steelers—Highlight the Steelers, press **A, L, Y, B, R**.
- '68 Rams—Highlight the Rams, press **B, A, R, L, Y**.
- '81 Chargers—Highlight the Chargers, press **A, Y, R, B, A, L, L**.
- '84 49ers—Highlight the 49ers, press **B, A, Y, A, R, Y, A**.
- '78 Seahawks—Highlight the Seahawks, press **A, L, A, R**.
- '79 Buccaneers—Highlight the Buccaneers, press **Y, A, R, R**.
- '82 Redskins—Highlight the Redskins, press **L, Y, B, R, L**.
- NFLPA Free Agents—Highlight the Panthers, press **L, Y, B, R, A, R, Y**.
- Tiburon Gotcha—Highlight the Jaguars, press **A, Y, B, A, B, Y**.
- EA Sports—Highlight the All-Madden team, press **B, A, L, L, SELECT**.

15-Second Quarters

To play a super-short game with just one minute on the clock, go to the "Game Setup" menu and highlight the "Quarter Len." option, then press **Y, A, Y, A, R** on either Controller 1 or 2. The quarter length will be set to a mere 15 seconds!



Highlight "Quarter Len." and press **Y, A, Y, A, R**.



Now you can play a short game with 15-second quarters!

Super Bowl Win Screen

To see a sneak preview of the victory ending that appears when you win the Super Bowl, go to the "Game Setup" menu and press **A, Y, A, Y, L**.



Press **A, Y, A, Y, L** at the "Game Setup" menu.



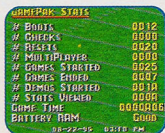
You'll see this Super Bowl victory screen.

Reset Game Stats

To access a programmer's secret debugging screen, hold the **START, SELECT, L, R** and **A** buttons on Controller 2 while turning the game on. Once you're at the hidden "Gamepak Stats" screen, you can clear the battery-backed memory by pressing **Down, B, Y, L** and **R** simultaneously; this will erase all of your records and stats, which is a good way to make your older brother really mad.



Hold **START +SELECT +L+R+A** on Controller 2 and turn on the Super NES.



You'll see this hidden cartridge statistics screen.

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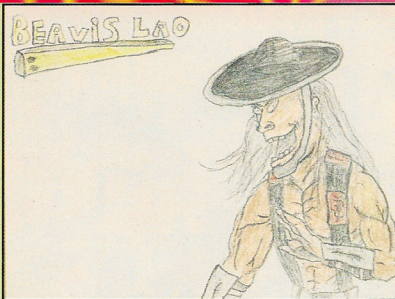
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For some reason, James Shanks of Newport News, VA had a creative fit and drew this picture of Beavis as Kung Lao. Why? Only his psychiatrist knows!

GOD'S ARMY

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

Why are Judeo-Christian-based video games being censored from the video game market? Since a lot of games, especially RPGs, contain themes from paganism, witchcraft or the occult, as well as a rating system that's supposed to allow more freedom to software developers, I don't see why the Judeo-Christian-based video-gamer should be left out. If any are being developed for the next-generation systems, please tell me, or better yet, print an article on it.

—Mark Price
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada

Hmm. Swami Gabe read some tea leaves, threw the bones, studied some entrails, and consulted Baal, but he couldn't get a satisfactory answer to your question. My estimation of the situation is thus: It's pretty lame to dismiss games which have fantasy elements as containing "themes from paganism, witchcraft, or the occult" because these "boogey-words" automatically put the developers of these games on the defensive. Wouldn't you be kind of ticked if I described a game in which you help your neighbors (a nice, but not exclusively Christian theme) as being "some sort of creepy, moralistic exercise in

Christian decency"? I thought so. By the way, I hear Trinity Gameworks of Waco, Texas is developing The God Squad, a 3-D "Doom-style" game for release on the PlayStation by Easter '96.

WISCONSIN: THE DULLEST STATE

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

Hey guys! Things in Wisconsin couldn't have been more dull until...I got my PlayStation! I gotta tell ya, it's the best system out there. I've been playing since the days of Pong and I've never been happier with a system. Now...down to my real reason for writing you guys: In your September '95 issue, you published fatalities, etc. for the PlayStation version of MK3. I was noticing that some of the names didn't match up with the characters and in some shots, neither character had any life left. My question is: Is it possible to only do fatalities, etc. without actually fighting?

—Vern
Oregon, WI

Au contraire, Vern. The fatalities published in the September issue were for the arcade version of MK3. The fact that the moves for the arcade and PSX are identical means nothing. You were wrong. The fact that some of the names in the picture didn't match up with the characters and the wired lifebars can be ascribed to one thing: a freaky MK3 machine. We have access to things like that, see?

ROME LICKS SALTY ICE CREAM CEMENT

Dear Carbon-Based Life Forms,

Can I call you egg? When in doubt consult the toaster. Watch for falling cranberries. Do you chic-a-chic-a doo doo doo

HOLSTROM IS KING

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

I was just wondering if Zach Meston, your contributing editor, used to review games for *Heavy Metal* magazine back in the '80s? If he did, he could be my evil twin. Watch out! He is the reason I lock myself in my house for days on end and play video games. Watch out! Okay, back to the real world. I want a good tank sim on the PlayStation or the Saturn. Do you guys at VIDEOGAMES see any tank sims for any system in the future?

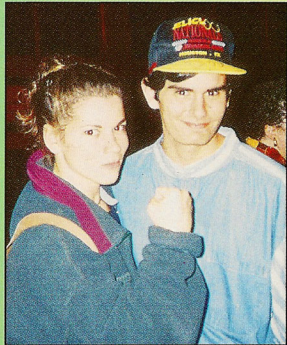
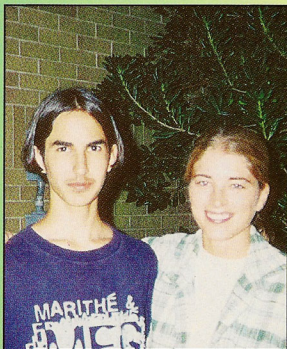
—Mike Kidd
Baltimore, MD

Swami Gabe has gone into a trance and he's looking into the future...I see, I see...I see a game called Shellshock! It's designed by Core and it's coming to the PlayStation in February. Yes! It is a tank game and it features a rap soundtrack. Word. By the way, the spirits tell Gabe that the video-game reviewer you're referring to is not our own Zach Meston, but rather the talented cartoonist John Holstrom. His work in *Heavy Metal* was brilliant, wasn't it?

do? Avoid the clowns at all costs, they will follow you forever. Remember there is no escape from the hideous schnoupe-dorkan cologne beast and always remember the bomb is in the funnel cake and I can't emphasize enough, stop the clock before it's too late. Ultimate fun, picture of evil man.

—Some Headcase
Albuquerque, NM

Your attempted surrealist poem was pathetic. Swami Gabe and his gang of Situationist thugs are coming to your house to stomp you for committing the ultimate sin; boring us. Prepare to be over-intellectualized to death!



Sebastian Lopez of Beaumont, Texas (A favorite spot of Swami Gabe's. It's near the border of Texas and Louisiana and Swami Gabe makes it a point to stop at a

McDonalds there every time he's on the road between Austin and New Orleans) sent us these pictures of him and his brother with two of the cast members of the Rayden touring company of the *Mortal Kombat* live tour. According to Sebastian, the show was fantastic, and you can tell how happy he is from these snapshots. That's Sebastian in the hat, standing next to the actress who played Sindel. Oooh. She's cute! Sebastian's brother Donald is hanging with the actress who portrays Princess Kitana. Hubba hubba.



Wyatt Elliott of Rockford, IL sent us this nifty envelope art. It speaks for itself.

KARLOFF IS DEAD (BUT NOT FORGOTTEN)

VIDEOGAMES Mag.

Your mag is awesome! I know you hate beggars, so I won't ask for a Saturn or PlayStation. Do you guys like *Vectorman* as much as I do? I just can't beat Day 17. Your MK3 guide helped me because I got it for Sega. I gotta go. My dad wants to watch *The Mummy* with Boris Karloff in it. This sucks. Bye.

—Saker Alexander
Youngstown, OH

What?! You're complaining because your Pop's cool enough to want to watch *The Mummy*, a horror classic, with you? Whoa! Some kids just don't appreciate the good things in life.

GREEDY SPOILED CHILD

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

Every Christmas I write a humongous Christmas list. My record has been 712 items, set in 1994. To help me beat my record this year, I was wondering if you would send me a list of every video game system and every video game in the world.

—Ben "Donut" Hassenger
Lansing, MI

Donut, you must be sniffing rubber cement. I

OLD SPORTS FOGGY

Editor,

Why do video game makers hate us over-40 baby-boomers? Don't they realize that there are fifty million of us and we're at the height of our earning years? I'd love to spend a bunch of my loot on sports-oriented video games but all they offer are modern-day teams and players. We don't care about the overpaid dope-addicts of the 1990s sports. Our heroes were the underpaid drunkards of the 1950s and '60s.

Why can't they offer the teams of our era? I don't think there ever was a better season for "races" in the various pro and college sports than in 1967. Why not start out with that year? All they have to do is offer different years with ready-made games.

—Walt Karwicki
York, PA

Great suggestion, Walt. Swami Gabe and Geoff Higgins (the VG sports editor) often discuss what it would be like if you could use the Brooklyn Dodgers in a baseball game, play the first Superbowl, or control greats like Sandy Koufax or Babe Ruth. As a matter of fact, games like Madden '96 and NBA Live '96 feature classic players and teams if you can find the cheats to activate them. Is this the beginning of a trend? We hope so. By the way, I resent you calling the sports heroes of the '70s "drunkards". They were pill freaks, first and foremost.

really don't feel like spending the remainder of my brief existence on this planet cataloging every video game in the world so that you can add it to your "list". Personally, I find the idea of a 712 item Christmas list to be extremely distasteful. Don't you think that it shows you to be the slightest bit greedy?

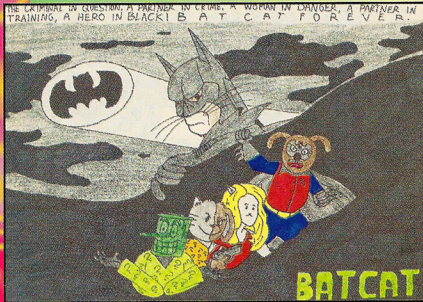
P.S. Is there going to be an *Earthbound 2*?

Answers to your questions!

- 1) Keep working on that art, Leon. You're only 10, after all.
- 2) Betty got her column by just being the cool cat that she is.
- 3) The PlayStation is an excellent Christmas present. Swami Gabe is getting one for all of his loved ones.
- 4) Is there going to be an *Earthbound 2*? I sure hope not.

A and B repeatedly and very quickly. I figured since I was way behind in points, I would cheat and use the auto-fire capability of this controller. I plugged the controller in and suddenly, the screen became all snowy. After about half a second, the SNES shut down and would not turn on again. I checked the circuit breakers, but none of the circuits were tripped. So now my faithful, three-year-old SNES was broken. I ask you now, what should I do? Bag it, and try for an upgrade such as a PlayStation, or fix it?

—Mike Stever
Quakertown, PA



Yet another drawing by Wyatt Elliot of Rockford, IL. I'm starting to get sick of this guy, even though the art's cool.

TOGETHER, THEY ARE THE SUPERFRIENDS

Dear Awesome VG Editors,

Hi! I'm Leon! I'm Carl! I'm Tristen! And I'm Celia! We're all writing this letter together! Your magazine is cool! We rated who is the coolest editor and we say it's Betty!

"Betty's cool!"
"Really cool!"
"Yeah!"

Each of us has a question for you. Please answer:

- 1) Leon: I drew the envelope art. Is it good?
- 2) Carl: Hey Betty, why did you get your own column?
- 3) Tristen and Celia: Is the PlayStation a good Christmas present?

—Love,
Leon, Carl, Tristen and Celia
Kent, WA

I have about four sports games for Super Nintendo. I am not writing to say that the games are bad, just easy. For example, about two weeks ago I bought *NHL '96* all because of your October article. I can now beat the expert level. Not just that, but on the practice mode, when I only have one skater and the opposing team has five, I can beat them by three points. Do you know of any games that are more challenging for SNES?

—Justin Hawwer
Loudonville, NY

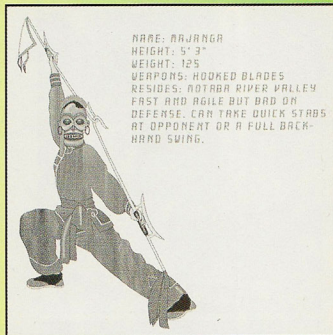
I'm afraid that no video game can challenge you, Justin. You must move above and beyond these childish things and set to work on something that'll really stretch the synapses of your noggin: answering the great questions of the universe! Why are we here? Why is there good and evil? Who put the bop in the bop-shoo-bop-shoo-bop? Who wrote the book of love? You know, philosophy!

SHOCKING!

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

Last year for Christmas, I received a pair of SN ProPad controllers with the clear shell for Super Nintendo. Recently, I was playing *NFL Quarterback Club*. I was in QB Challenge mode, trying for distance. If any of you've played this game, you probably know that to throw long, you must press

Mike, it is quite possible to experience a power surge without the circuit breakers tripping. That's what might have happened, but I'm not sure. I don't see your controller frying your SNES, though. As to your question regarding an upgrade, I say why the heck not! Get on your knees and beg, dog!



Mike sent this picture of a new MK character called Majanga. It's groovy and quite pagan.

VG GOES TO THE MOVIES

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

I was thinking that in your next issue you could do a little section on movies like *Silence of The Lambs*, *Halloween II*, *Congo*, *Jurassic Park*, *Casper*, *Man of The House*, and *Goof Troop: The Movie*. It would be cool if you did.

—Matt Fowler
Schenectady, NY

That's a pretty odd list of films there, boss. How in Baal's name (pagan reference there) did you come up with such an odd list of films? Are they your favorite movies of all time? If they are, I'd suggest going to a different section of the video store to expand your movie-watching horizons. Swami Gabe suggests that you start with the film *Slacker*, then move on to such classics as *The Bride of Frankenstein*, *The Killing*, *The Palm Beach Story*, and *Matewan*. But in the final equation, this is a magazine about video games, so I'll move on now.



Justin Boldaji of Kill Devil Hills, NC, just relayed us some shocking news: He has just married Betty! When Swami Gabe asked Betty for confirmation of this rumor, she said, "Who the hell is Justin Boldaji?" Upon further examination, the wedding picture Justin sent turned out to be a crude fake collage. Pretty sneaky, Justin, but not sneaky enough to fool Swami Gabe.

WE DON'T BELIEVE IN BIRTHDAYS

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

I was playing *MK3* in the arcade and I stunk. I was wondering: Since my birthday was November 6th, do you think I could have a free issue of *Tips and Tricks* like the one pictured below?

—Justin McNeill
Hilo, HI

No. Happy birthday!

I LOVE NORTH CAROLINA

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

I felt so utterly disgusted and insulted about a comment in your December 1995 issue of VG. On page 97 the words, "What is it about you guys from the Carolinas, anyway?" appeared. I live in the mountains of North Carolina, so I guess that you can infer that I would get upset about this comment.

Don't get me wrong, I buy your magazine. But still, the only reason I do is because I can find a code or two that I need. Most of the time I do not need your magazine because I have a subscription to *Gamepro*.

I have one question for you: Why do you act like rude, childish teenagers?

—Kevin Jones
Warrensville, NC

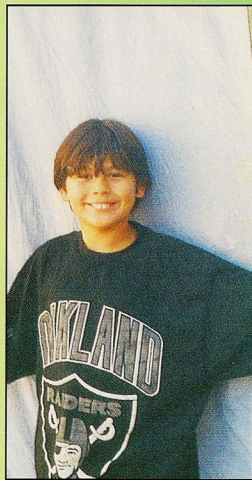
Swami Gabe is confused and dismayed. He only asked about the Carolinas because that month he had received an inordinate amount of odd mail from that part of the country. Don't take it so seriously, Kevin. What is it about you guys from the Carolinas anyway?

MARK (A CHILD FROM BAKERSFIELD)

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

I played *Ultimate MK3* and I liked it. Can you please put the moves and the fatalities and the animalities and the stage fatalities in the January magazine? My name is Mark.

Mark
Bakersfield, CA



This is Mark. What an adorable little moppet.

Sorry, Mark, the moves for *Ultimate MK3* didn't make it into our January issue, but we'll do our best to get them in an upcoming edition. Cool? Cool.

FREE SUPER NINTENDOS FOR ALL!

Dear VIDEOGAMES,

I was wondering if you would give me a Super Nintendo. My parents won't get me one. My dad says a Genesis is better than a SNES. If you do give me one, give me a rapid-fire controller and I want two games: *Contra III* and *Aaah! Real Monsters*.

—Seth Basler
Harrisburg, PA

My, my, my. Full of requests today, aren't we, Seth? While you're asking, would you like to have Swami Gabe's car (a 1975 Plymouth Brougham) and a million bucks in cash? You would? Get in line, sonny! We here at VG aren't in the business of just giving stuff away to just anybody, so don't hold your breath waiting for a free SNES to arrive in the mail: It ain't coming.

First Look

Ultra 64

Super Mario 64

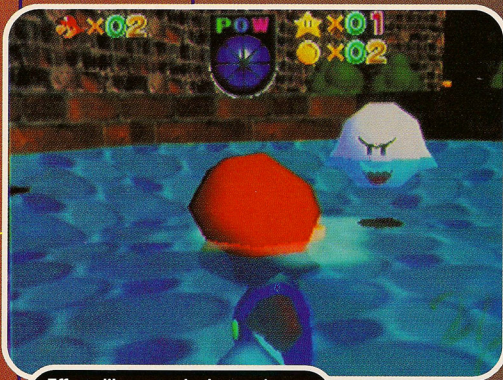


Our bemused Italian hero surveys the scary castle grounds. What evil lurks here?

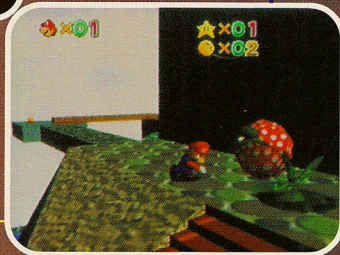




1 Player 3-D Platform/Adventure Game
Developed by Nintendo
Published by Nintendo
Available April 1996



Effects like water look stunning on the powerful new machine.



Nintendo is promising that *Super Mario 64* will be the best video-game experience ever made. A lofty claim, but one that might well prove true. *Super Mario* is currently around 50 percent complete, but work is speeding up and Nintendo hopes to have it ready for Japanese release in April. Americans will be pleased to learn that they get the machine at the same time. Is it worth the wait? Well, we here at VIDEOGAMES certainly think so.

Mario's first 3-D adventure takes place in Mario World, a place Nintendo fans have come to call home. Mario World is a weird and wonderful environment, packed full of dinosaurs, mushrooms and an awful lot of turtles. The turtles in this game are your main foes, led by the despicable Bowser (king of the Koopa kids). Your mission is to find Bowser and put an end to his shenanigans once and for all (or at least until a sequel shows up).

Because the game is presented in 3-D, many of the Mario-mechanics have changed. For one thing, he can now

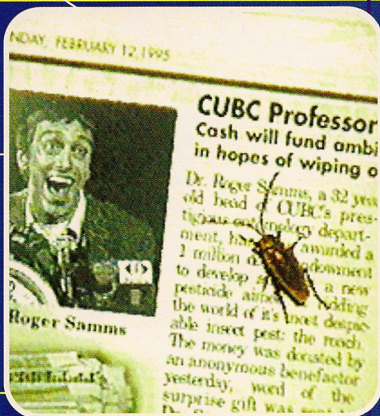
run in any direction (using the 360-degree analog joystick) and careful control is a must. Like the other *Mario* games, our hero also gets the chance to try out less conventional environments, like undersea levels, and aerial sections. Although Mario can change his abilities by collecting magic mushrooms, his main abilities are running, jumping and grabbing things. He can grab bad guys and throw them at other bad guys, which sounds simple, but is in fact enormously difficult and scary. Mario goes from level to level by leaping into magic tapestries, which warp him to his next task. The ripple effect as you hop through a tapestry is one of the most impressive graphic effects ever seen in a game.

Music and sound effects are typically wacky, with Mario finally having gained a voice (he screams in a very high pitched tone when hurt). The sheer size of the game, coupled with the awesome 3-D graphics, mean that this is going to be epic stuff. It may look like a kids' game, but be sure of this: *Mario in 3-D* is a taxing experience, but a very enjoyable one. If the final version is even slightly better than this 50-percent complete one, then we can have no complaints. And if this represents the general quality of Ultra 64 games, then put me down for a machine.

First Look

PC CD-ROM

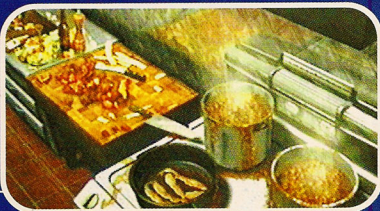
Bad Mojo



You have to find out who you are and why exactly you were turned into a cockroach by the mysterious locket supposedly given to you by your mom.

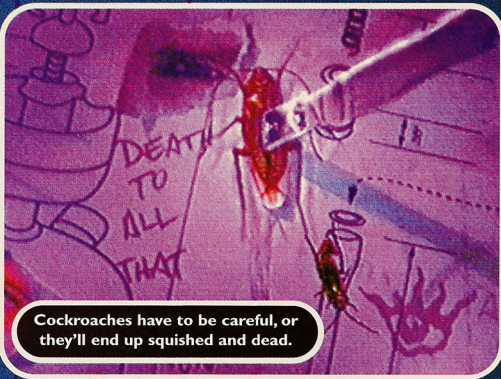


You may run into some particularly surreal situations.

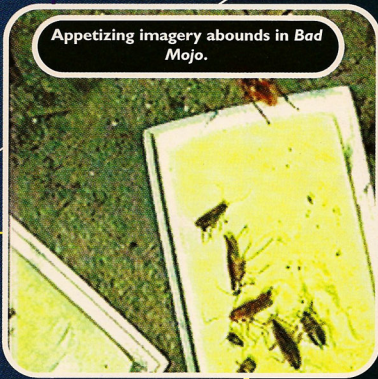




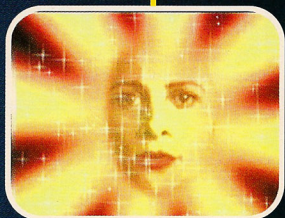
1 Player Strategy/Adventure Game
Developed by Pulse Entertainment
Published by Pulse Entertainment
Available January 1996



Cockroaches have to be careful, or they'll end up squished and dead.



Appetizing imagery abounds in *Bad Mojo*.



You are Roger the cockroach. Up until five minutes ago you were Dr. Roger Samms, a wormy little freak of an entomologist living in a hellhole apartment above a seedy little bar in San Francisco who also happened to receive a million-dollar grant for some sham bug experiment—a million dollars with which you were planning to abscond to Mexico. But then you were turned into a roach by some mysterious power emanating from a locket that was supposedly given to you by your mother. You picked up the locket, purple rays started to issue forth from it; you felt as if you were being struck by lightning, you fell over, and ta-da!—you went from orphan to freak to roach. Thanks, Ma.

Now you've got to figure out just exactly what it is that's going on—an already difficult task made more tedious by the fact that you're a cockroach. But actually, being a cockroach

is kind of fun. You get to crawl through 780 3D-rendered scenes, interspersed with 35 minutes of full-motion video. Your bug can crawl up walls, through holes and down pipes, and you control your bug from a mostly top-down perspective. It's easy to maneuver; the cursor keys move the roach up, down, left, right and diagonally. It's that simple. The rendered scenes are high-resolution, gritty portrayals of the darkest, dirtiest corners of the bar, where you'll come across dead rats oozing with blood and beheaded catfish that talk.

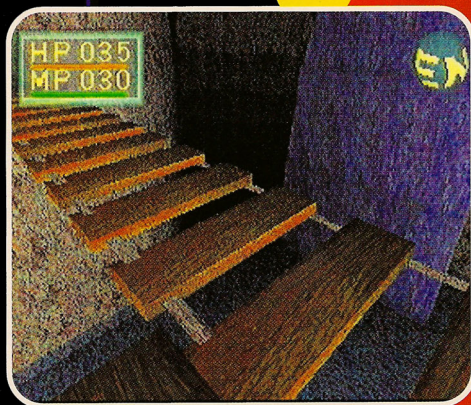
But these things are pretty innocuous compared to hungry cats, hungry rats and hungry spiders, as well as hazardous wastes, fly paper, roach traps and a vacuum cleaner that will suck you into oblivion. You have to use your smarts and manipulate various objects to avoid an untimely death. You can die up to four times before being returned to the beginning of the game.

Friendly characters will provide valuable clues, also to be found in newspapers, trash, letters and old photos. *Bad Mojo* includes several possible outcomes, depending on which of its puzzles you can figure out. So if you're down to get dirty, you very well may want to check out this game.

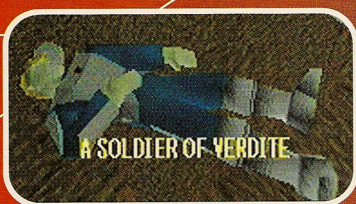
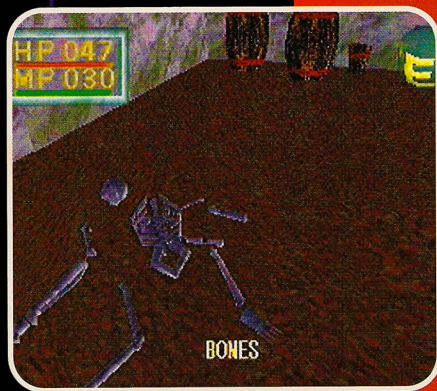
First Look

Playstation

Kings Field



Kings Field (the US version) features better graphics, cooler bad guys and a lot more action than the original Japanese incarnation.

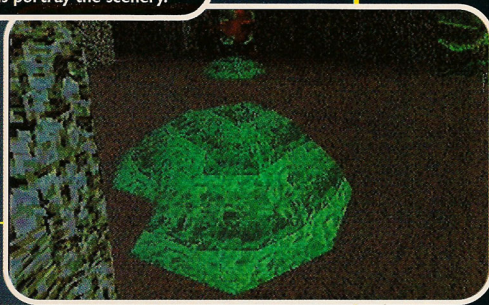




1 Player 3-D Action/ RPG Game
Developed by Ascii
Published by Ascii
Available Feb 1996



Clean, fluid, texture-mapped polygons portray the scenery.



Prepare yourself to enter a world where you fight with swords and shields and do battle with hideous creatures. This sounds like it could be any RPG game, but *King's Field* adds a neat little twist. All your battles and exploration take place via first person. You can look up and down in this fully 3-D playing field.

There have been other 3-D view games, but *King's Field* definitely gets credit for creating a more immersive experience. This is achieved by the ability to interact with other characters who advance the story and add a human touch to dreary dungeon life. The attacking system is a little hard to get used to at first, but soon you'll figure out how to hit the enemy and avoid getting whacked yourself.

You work your experience up the same way by hacking up the enemies and collecting gold. The sound effects you hear while walking around the dungeon are extremely well-

done and on par with the atmospheric stuff found on *Doom* for the PSX. The enemies first kind of walk around and don't really bother you unless you get close. Later on though, things really start to get hairy. The monsters you fight come in all types of sizes and shapes. This adds a lot to the game and keeps different areas looking fresh (Well, as fresh as dungeons can look). One of the other stand-out features of this game is that it's long! Battling monsters takes a while, and navigating the dungeon without a speed button can be mighty inconvenient. Still, I'm glad that the PlayStation is getting its first RPG and *King's Field* is a good entry.

One of the really interesting things about the American release is that the version released over here is actually called *Kings Field 2* in Japan. It was felt that the first game lacked the depth and action that more sophisticated American players require.

So all in all, we get the best deal here. A better, more playable and graphically superior experience. All that's missing is the smell of blood.

First Look

PlayStation

Die Hard Trilogy



Die Hard Trilogy features possibly the most impressive graphics of any PlayStation title so far. The 3D driving sequence is leagues ahead of even *Twisted Metal*. Yipee-ki-yay! Or something.





1 Player Action/Shooting/Driving Game
Developed by Probe

Published by Fox Interactive

Available May 1996



Variety? Try three totally different game styles.



The *Die Hard* films have turned into a worldwide film franchise, made Bruce Willis an über-superstar and made Century City an interesting, if not a hip, place to visit in Los Angeles. While film adaptations aren't our favorite type of games here at VG, we thought we'd give you a peek at what might turn out to be one of '96's hottest games, the Fox Interactive release *Die Hard Trilogy*.

The version we saw was far from complete and the game won't hit the shelves until March of this year, but we were so impressed by what we witnessed that we had to let you guys in on the skinny. Based on, obviously, *Die Hard*, *Die Hard 2* and *Die Hard: With a Vengeance*, *Die Hard Trilogy* somehow manages to pack all three films into one cohesive game on one disc. Talk about value!

In the *Die Hard* segment of the game, you control John McClaine as he makes his way through the Nakitomi Plaza building. (Trivia buffs out there take note: Fox Interactive's offices are located in the building featured in the film. No kidding!) The interface in this section of the game can only

be described as a cross between *Doom* and *Loaded*. You guide John from slightly above and behind him, so you have a panoramic view of his surroundings. As you move through doors, walls don't disappear; they fade. Everything can be destroyed (you should see the explosions!). Plus, you can jump over cars, roll to avoid enemy shots, shoot machine guns, and throw grenades...it's absolutely mind-blowing.

The *Die Hard 2* portion of the game is quite similar to *Virtua Cop* only, well, better. Blood splatters the walls as you dash through Dulles Airport blowing away terrorists. In addition to a bevy of weapons to select from, you have 45 degrees of leeway with which to move your gunsight. This means that if a wily gun-nut is plugging from the edge of the screen, you can actually move your line of sight to find him and then blow the sucker away. Excellent!

Driving is the name of the game in *Die Hard: With a Vengeance*. You must drive through New York in various cars and locations looking for hidden bombs, the graphics routines on these stages are spectacular. Cars are thrown into the air as you collide with them, the texture-mapping is New York-accurate, and, well, it just looks and plays great.

First Look

Playstation

Magic Carpet

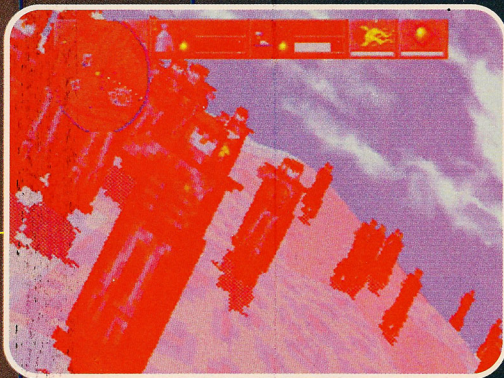


3-D graphics are slightly improved on the PC version, and that cuts down on the chunkiness of the enemy characters.

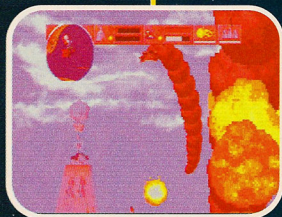




1 Player Action/Adventure Game
Developed by Bullfrog
Published by Electronic Arts
Available Spring 1996



I hate bugs. Especially 300lbs-plus bugs, with stings.



Bullfrog is widely considered to be one of the most innovative and inventive software houses in the world. Its games, ranging from the thoughtful *Populous*, to the highly-charged *Syndicate*, have generated both critical acclaim and a great deal of money. One of its biggest ever PC titles, *Magic Carpet*, is nearing completion on the PlayStation. This will be the first chance for PlayStation owners to undertake a truly epic task. Sure, there's a couple of cool adventure titles on the PlayStation, but nothing with the kind of pedigree that *Magic Carpet* has. *Magic Carpet* may look like a regular shooter, but it takes a great deal of thought and planning to get anywhere.

But they need to think, don't they? PlayStation owners' minds are all filled with explosions and fast cars and stuff like that. What they really need to do is get out their special strategy pants and start exercising the old gray matter: *Magic Carpet* has more than its fair share of action, though. You control a young man on a quest for love, glory and magic,

not unlike Aladdin. Mind you, Aladdin never got to race around the skies of ancient Persia shooting stuff with big bolts of Plasma.

Now all this shooting is fun, but the hard part is dealing with your castles (which you have to build and protect) and your magic (which you have to nurture and expand). The key to the game is mana, a mystical energy which you'll find floating around, or in the remnants of dead foes. The magic can be used to build on your territory, or to defeat the numerous evil villains, including rival wizards and dragons.

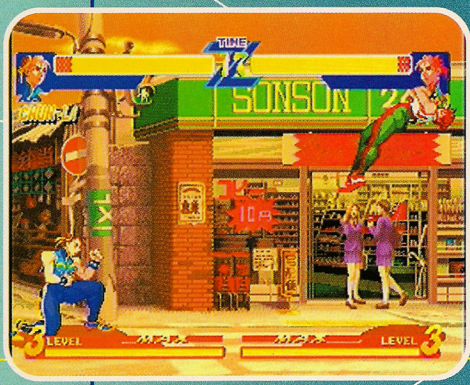
Bullfrog's graphic techniques are obviously still enmeshed in the PC style that the company is accustomed to and it seems as though several PlayStation abilities have been left untapped in this conversion. Sound and music, however, have been vastly improved, thanks to the PlayStation's superior processing power.

One thing that *Magic Carpet* proves though, is that the PC is far from the ultimate games machine. The PlayStation version is faster, smoother and more playable and, it works with the PlayStation mouse. With this, *Syndicate* and *High Octane* on its record, Bullfrog could turn out to be one of the leading lights on PlayStation.

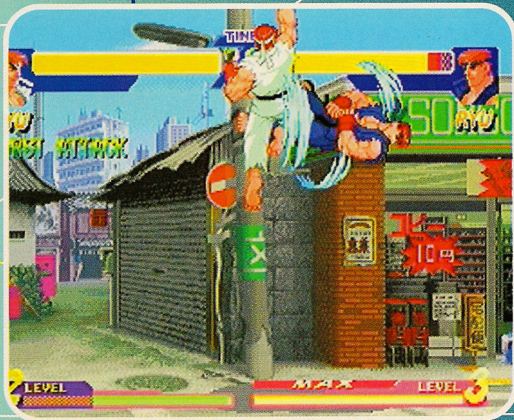
First Look

PlayStation

Street Fighter Alpha



Not only does the Street Fighter Universe now contain new characters, it also contains a love interest for bad guy M. Bison, whom you may remember had an affair with Cammy!

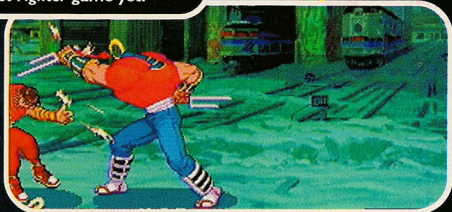
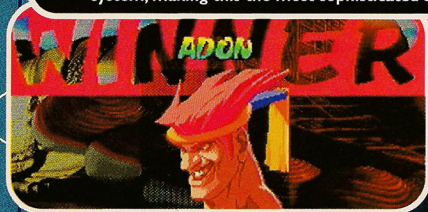




1/2 Player Fighting Game
Developed by Capcom
Published by Capcom
Available Spring 1996



New fighting features include Alpha-counters, juggling and an all-new combo system, making this the most sophisticated *Street Fighter* game yet.



Pow, kerblaam, kapow! It's kick-ass time again. Which is good, because we like fighting games a lot. Now, *Street Fighter Alpha* is widely considered to be among the best ever. For *Street Fighter* trivia fans, this game is set before the original *Street Fighter* game. As a matter of fact, in Japan, the game is called *Street Fighter Zero*, indicating the timeline rather more clearly.

The graphic style marks something of a dramatic change for Capcom. This is very different even from *Darkstalkers*, with some very cartoon-like characters and backgrounds, even more so than the previous games. The quality of animation has also improved. This is a great deal better-looking than the previous Capcom fighting games, with smoother movement and more convincing fighting techniques than ever before.

One of the coolest features of the game is that it gives new players a chance to try their hand with the old characters. You could try Birdie, the British punk rocker, or Adon, the evil Thai kickboxer. Sagat is there too as are Ryu, Ken, Guile and many of your *Street Fighter 2* favorites.

One of the more unusual additions to the fighting team is

a guy I like to call, well, Guy. Yup, the orange-suited hero from *Final Fight* finally crosses over into the *Street Fighter* series of games. Already established as a cool hero in *Final Fight*, he has become a firm favorite with *Street Fighter Alpha* arcade players.

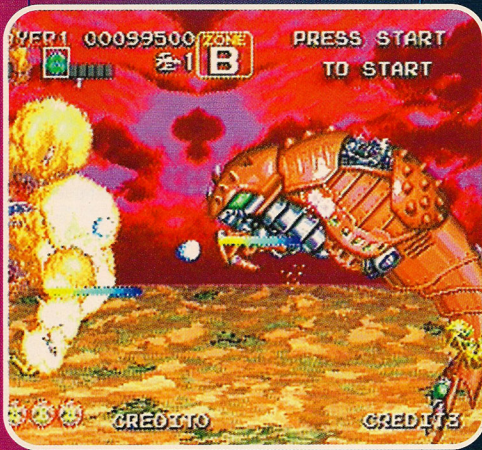
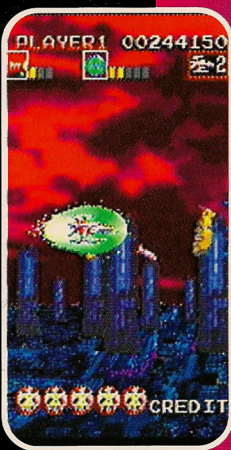
The mechanics of the game are identical in most respects to all the other *Street Fighter* games. Ryu has his entire set of old moves, as well as a couple of new ones. The big differences are in the way combos work and a brand new feature called Countering. This allows you to break combos, or turn an opponent's attack back onto him or her.

Although this affects the long-term strategies a lot, almost any player will be able to pick this up immediately and have at least limited success, and that's just a string in its bow.

In a world packed with 3-D fighting games, it's nice to know that the traditional style of gameplay can still be presented with traditional graphics. *Street Fighter Alpha* isn't going to sell to many PlayStations—that's for games like *Tekken* and *Toshinden*—but it will keep a lot of arcade fighting fans very happy indeed. And it may even bring a little tear to the eye of the arcade historian, pining for the days when games were, quite frankly, nowhere near as good as they are today.

First Look Saturn

Darius Gaiden



A long time has passed since we saw a good, honest, wholesome shooter. You know, without the bells and whistles afforded by 3-D technology, and polygons and stuff. Nope, *Darius Gaiden* is a refreshing blast from the past, and just in time to catch the mood of spring. Yup, the mood of wanton destruction and impossibly powerful weapons.

It couldn't be any more conventional if it tried. *Darius Gaiden* is as straightforward as they come. The screen scrolls from right to left as you (in your tiny spacecraft) deal with the marauding bad guys.

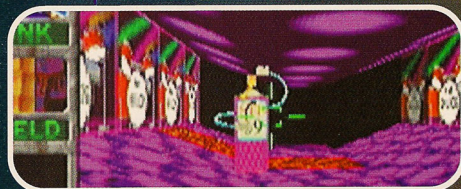
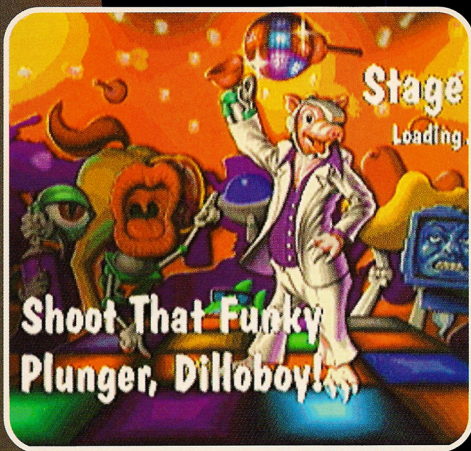
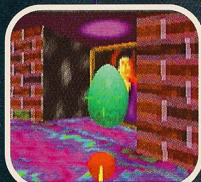
If there is anything original about *Darius Gaiden*, then it has to be the bad guys. To say they're fishy would not only be an understatement, but also a shockingly bad pun. Yup, the *Darius* baddies are from some mysterious undersea kingdom in the darkest reaches of space.

Your mission is to shoot them all. Every last one of them. If you don't think you have enough weapons, then shoot formations of bad guys to reveal more of them. And that's it really.

1 Player Shooter Game
Developed by Taito
Published by Acclaim
Available Spring 1996

First Look 3DO

Cyberdillo



Does the idea of funky disco armadillos dancing the night away in boogie shoes, while wandering through nightmarish Day-Glo corridors, shooting wandering cans of hairspray, UFOs, and lava lamps (deep breath...) sound like your cup of tea? Believe it or not, there is a game that mad—with your name on it.

Cyberdillo, developed by the funky folk at Pixel Entertainment is a kooky 3-D adventure through the wasteland of '70s pop-culture. Thou art a humble armadillo, wandering in the desert when a Cadillac comes along, hits you, and ruins your day. Instead of leaving you to die, you're brought to a lab and, like Steve Austin, you are built into something bigger, faster, and stronger. A cyberdillo!

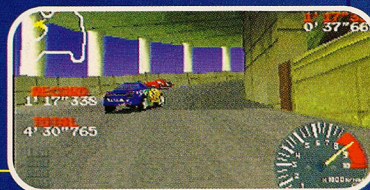
The game's a 3-D adventure game similar to *Killing Time*, *PO'ed*, and *Wolfenstein 3-D*. You're armed initially with only a plunger gun, but as you make your way through the seven missions searching for esoteric items (wigs and bellbottoms are just two examples) you can find more powerful guns and eradicate the evil *objets d'art* which pursue you.



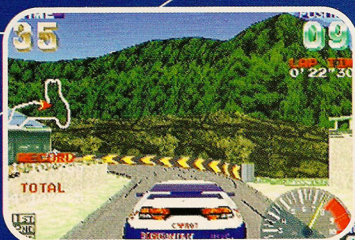
1 Player Action Game
Developed by Pixel
Published by Panasonic
Available February 1996

First Look PlayStation

Ridge Racer Revolution



Ridge Racer has been described (by me) as the single best racing game of all time. Ridge Racer Revolution is a marked improvement. Do the math.



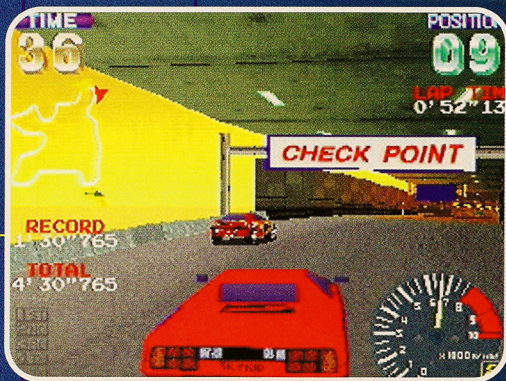


1 Player Driving Game

Developed by Namco

Published by Namco

Available Spring 1996



Ridge Racer is possibly the best driving game ever to appear on a 32-bit console. Some might argue that *Daytona USA* is more complex and detailed, but they're mad. Mad I tell you. *Ridge Racer* is faster, smoother and more fun. Only problem is, it didn't have enough tracks and there wasn't a two-player mode. Well, in part, both these problems have been solved by the sequel, *Ridge Racer Revolution*. Although it only has one track, *Ridge Racer Revolution* is bigger, more intricate and has more of the sneaky options that added variety in the first game. And best of all, *Ridge Racer Revolution* has a two-player mode, accessible to those players lucky enough to have a link cable, another PlayStation and another copy of the game.

Another thing that makes this an altogether more pleasurable experience than *Ridge Racer* is the addition of a rear-view mirror. One of the things that made *Ridge Racer* so

tough was the fact that you never knew when you were about to be overtaken. That problem no longer exists and the strategy involved adds to the gameplay variety.

Ridge Racer Revolution really comes into its own when you play it as a two-player game. The PlayStation gives you a variety of options, but a straightforward head-to-head race is an experience you'll never forget. Because you're using two TV sets, you never know where your opponent is until he's right behind you; this is the feature that made PlayStation *Doom* a real blast.

There are brand new mixes of the old *Ridge Racer* tunes, but Namco has added some new music tracks that are actually a whole lot better. Although the frame rate hasn't been improved at all, the new track looks a lot more interesting and less blurry than the old one; the city sequence is particularly stunning. If you don't already own *Ridge Racer* (and that's pretty unlikely) then *Ridge Racer Revolution* represents a better buy. *Ridge Racer* freaks will probably want both, and in many respects, this is just an upgrade to the original.

Ridge Racer 2 won't show up on the PlayStation, since this is so similar, but *Rave Racer* is Namco's next big project for the PlayStation. (after *Tekken 2*) Let's hope it's as good as this.

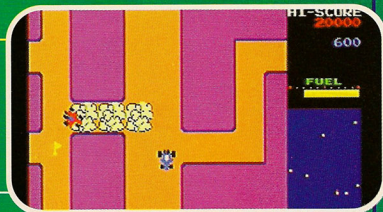
First Look

Playstation

NAMCO Museum Piece

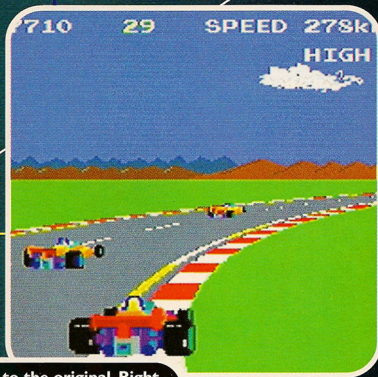


The interface is designed, appropriately enough, like a museum. Choose your favorite old-school Namco game and get playing.

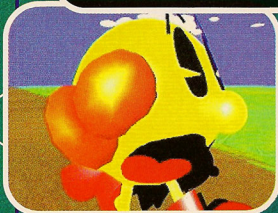




1-2 Players Old School Game
Developed by Namco
Published by Namco
Available Spring 1996



Each of the games contained in this collection is identical to the original. Right down to the surround artwork and the hidden Easter eggs.



It can't take you back to *Malibu Grand Prix*, circa 1980, but *Namco Museum* will give all the new-school game players out there a taste of what old school gamers refer to as "classics". This is a game that's all about kicking back in a green beanbag chair, drinking Jolt cola and listening to the *Circle Jerks*, while playing some of the most repetitive yet challenging games of all time.

But playing a bunch of old games isn't all that *Namco Museum* is about. Along with arcade versions of *Pole Position*, *Galaga*, *Pac Man*, *Bosconian*, *Rally X*, *New Rally X*, and *Toy Pop*, the museum is an actual palace of learning. Inside, you can take a virtual tour where you can see different displays relating to all the games. Did you know that *Pac Man* was originally going to be called *Puck Man*? Or that you could get *Rally X* T-shirts? Well, if you didn't, you'd learn this all in the *Namco Museum*. In addition, you can check out the game art, music, sound effects, and a wealth of other trivia.

The real treat, however, lies in playing *Pac Man* at three in the morning, obsessed with seeing the next intermission. To aid you, the Museum lets you control the dipswitches on the

arcade games, allowing you extra lives, and changing the difficulty. Also, you can pause the game, a feature that was never in the original arcade versions. If you had to pee when you were on level 20 of *Bosconian*, you had to stick it out, there's no way that you'd give up your place to the little feaster who was watching. Also, you don't have to keep going back to the bartender asking for change, because all the credits in *Namco Museum* are free.

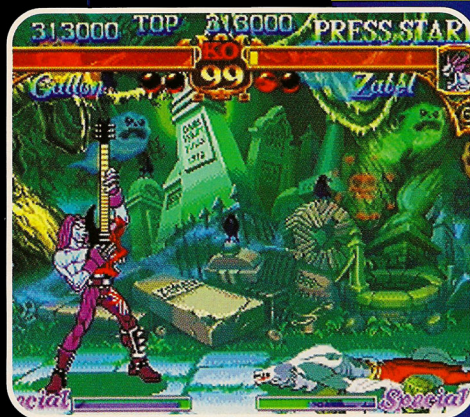
Perhaps the most interesting aspect of *Namco Museum* is that there's actually a sense of history given to these games. To realize that *Doom* is just a souped-up version of *Pac Man*, and that *Pole Position* is actually harder than *Daytona*, are quite revealing aspects of the video-game industry at large. It really shows how far ideas and the conceptualization of them have grown since the early days of the video-games industry. It shows that creativity often has nothing to do with technology, more with the making of money makers that take a lot of quarters.

Ah, but forget about all that intellectual stuff. *Namco Museum* is for those of you who want to have some fun. They're coming out with a *Volume 2*, so let's hope they put *Ms. Pac Man* on that one. It won't be like playing at Jumbo's Clown Room, but it sure will be fun.

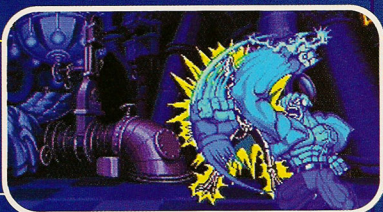
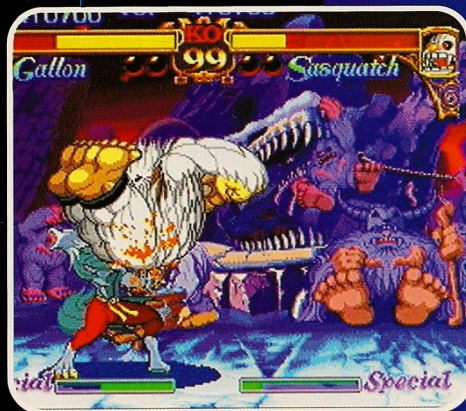
First Look

PlayStation

DARK Stalkers

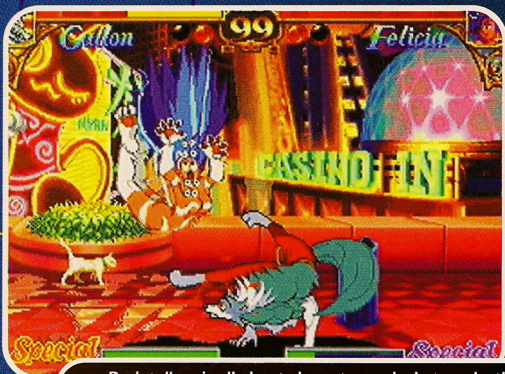


Although the Street Fighter format is getting (very) old now, Darkstalkers has a new look, a new feel and new features. Cool stuff, all of it.





1-2 Player Fighting Game
Developed by Capcom
Published by Capcom
Available Spring 1996



Darkstalkers is all about character, and what a selection! From Demitri, a Transylvanian Vampire, to Morrigan, a Scottish Succubus.



Have you ever asked yourself if Frankenstein, in a fair fight, could beat Dracula? Would a grudge match between the Wolfman and the Mummy satisfy your craving for conflict amongst the greats of horror films? Universal Pictures attempted to answer questions like these in films such as *Frankenstein vs. the Wolfman* and *Abbot and Costello Meet Dracula*, but you can answer it yourself at home with Capcom's *Darkstalkers*.

The long-awaited conversion of Capcom's killer coin-op *Darkstalkers: The Night Warriors* is about to be released on the Sony PlayStation, and what we've seen so far, in the latest version to cross our PSXs, is going to make a lot of fighting game fans very happy campers. If you're not familiar with the game, *Darkstalkers* puts you in control of one of ten original monster characters. There's

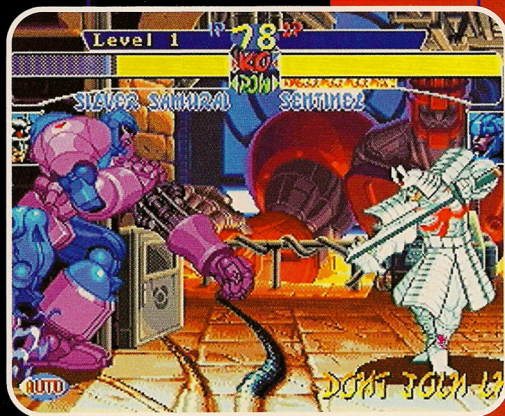
Demitri Maximoff, a deadly but suave vampire; Rikuo, an ancient merman on a quest to find others of his race; Victor Von Gerdenheim, the massive artificial man; Lord Raptor, a rock and roll zombie (that's new); Anakaris, the ancient Egyptian mummy; Jonathan Talbain, a young man cursed with lycanthropy (that means he's a werewolf, you dolts); Bishamon, a Samurai ghost; Morrigan Aenslaed, the Scottish succubus witch; Felicia, the cat-woman, and Sasquatch, a hunk of freezing fur from Canada, eh.

Darkstalkers is filled with the fluid fighting action that brawl fans have come to expect from Capcom. Not only are the animation and character design top-notch, the game controls are extremely fluid and intuitive. The game features mid-air blocking, charged special moves, and a new combo system, whatever that means. There's also a success meter for the success-minded kids out there to measure their, uh, success with. No matter what happens (barring earthquakes, world war, meteors striking the ice caps, or alien invasion), this game will be huge. Look for it at your local game store soon.

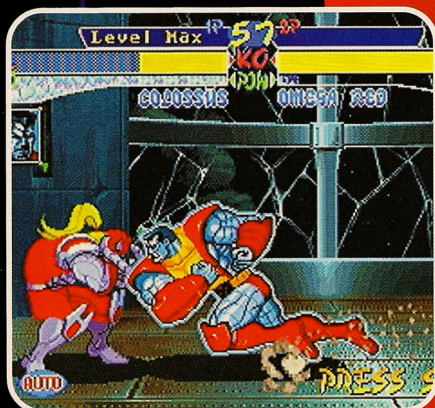
First Look

PS-X Saturn

X-MEN CHILDREN OF THE ATOM



X-Men: Children of The Atom recreates the intense action of the comics' Chris Claremont/John Romita Jr. era. If you're wondering, that was a pretty action-packed era, mate.





2 Player Fighting Game
Developed by **Capcom**
Published by **Acclaim**
Available **Spring 1996**



Animation quality ranges from silky-smooth to disappointing, depending entirely upon the character's actions.



Fighting games really need to have some kind of hook if they're going to stand out. Now Capcom, which is very good at making fighting games, has always come up with some way to make its one-on-one fighters stand out from the crowd. With *Street Fighter*, it was the overall concept; with *Darkstalkers*, it was the cool characters, and with *X-Men*, it was a combination of both. Now that the Saturn version of *X-Men* is finally available, we get the chance to see how well this style of game works on the Saturn. No 3-D, no fancy effects, just sprite-based fighting and thumping action. OK, so your mother won't approve, but Professor Xavier will.

Now, the violence in the game is tempered by the cartoony nature of the graphics, with every single character being very close to his or her comic-book counterpart. All your favorite X-Men, good guys and bad guys alike, are in the

game. There are a couple of exceptions that fans of the comics and cartoons may find odd, but the fighting crew is well balanced and pretty comprehensive.

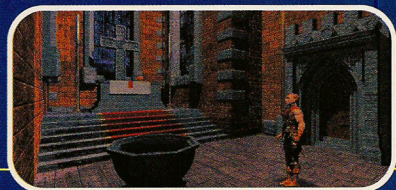
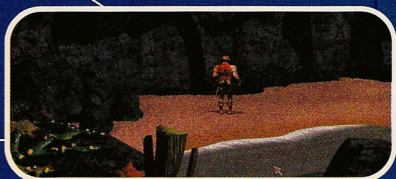
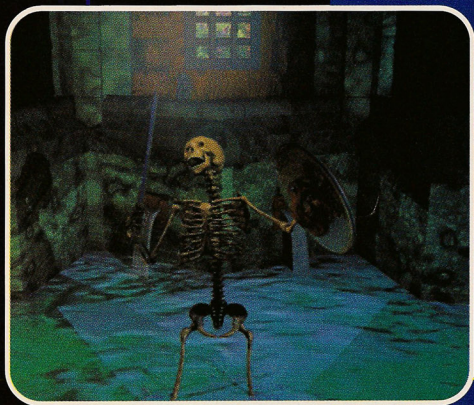
Each character bears more than a passing resemblance to one of the guys from *Street Fighter*. Wolverine, for example, plays like a cross between Guile and Ryu. Although this might sound lame, the sense of familiarity is welcome. The controls are not the only thing "borrowed" from the *Street Fighter* series of games. Combos, combo breakers and juggling are all present and correct. The sound effects and music are virtually identical to the arcade game and add to the game's atmosphere.

The graphics use a style that falls somewhere between *Street Fighter Alpha* and the *X-Men* comic books, but Saturn owners may find the flatness dull after 3-D spectacles like *Virtua Fighter 2*. Don't let the olde-worlde graphics put you off though; this looks like being one of the slickest, most addictive fighting games available and should keep you playing (especially in two-player mode) for months to come. Oh, and word has it that a couple of features are present in the Saturn version that aren't even in the coin-op.

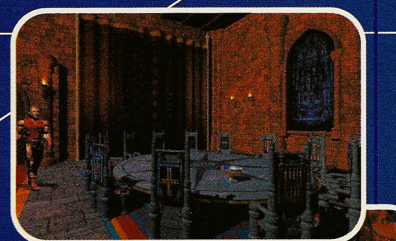
First Look

PlayStation

Chronicles of the Sword



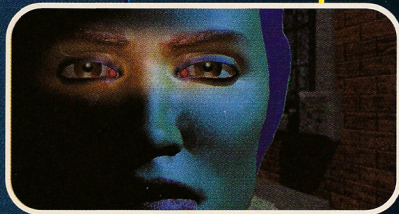
Each screen is pre-drawn, in the way that only adventure games can get away with, but the overall effect is very atmospheric.





1 Player Adventure Game
Developed by Dimension Creative Design
Published by Sony Interactive
Available Spring 1996

3-D rendered characters make the action seem more realistic.



Adventure games have been around since the dawn of time, or the dawn of video games, at least. They always seemed like the perfect vehicle for adventure fans to explore the magical worlds they read about. Infocom (the people who brought you *Zork*) was among the first companies to fully exploit the adventuring potential of a video game. In those days, you got to say things like, "Take Bottle" to which the computer invariably responded, "I do not understand that request". Oh what fun it was. Nowadays though, the adventure game has come on a lot, with 3-D graphics, stereo soundtracks and more depth than ever before.

Chronicles Of The Sword is a fine example of the genre. It's produced by Psygnosis, now known as Sony Interactive, and takes place in the time of Arthurian legend. You get to play the part of Gawain, the Green Knight.

Gawain, while King Arthur was fighting for England, tended to get in a lot of trouble on his own. Demons, holy grails, that kind of stuff. In the Sony PlayStation game, Gawain has

perhaps bitten off a little more than he can chew. Why? Because he's got himself tangled up with some dame. Dames is always trouble, see? Even in Arthurian lore. Morgana, the dame in question, is perhaps a little more trouble than most. Believed to be in league with the devil, she's trying to thwart Gawain's attempts to create peace in the land.

Why? Who knows? What we do know is that *Chronicles of the Sword* is a beautiful point-and-click adventure, kind of like *Monkey Island*, but with wonderful, 3-D rendered graphics.

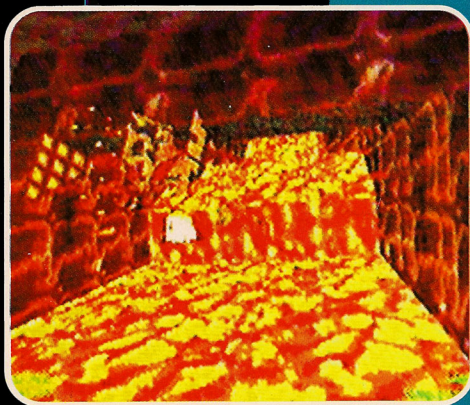
All the good guys, bad guys and incidental guys are animated cleanly and smoothly, thanks to the wonderful advances made in polygon technology. Gawain especially looks very nice as he wanders around the screen.

There are over 100 exquisitely detailed locations, taking you from the green fields of England, to the moribund darkness of Morgana's lair. The backgrounds are often just as well animated as the character sprites and the overall feeling of quality is very high.

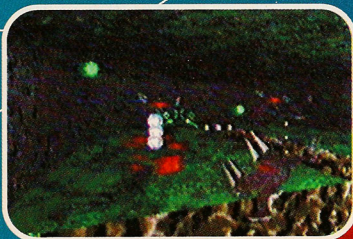
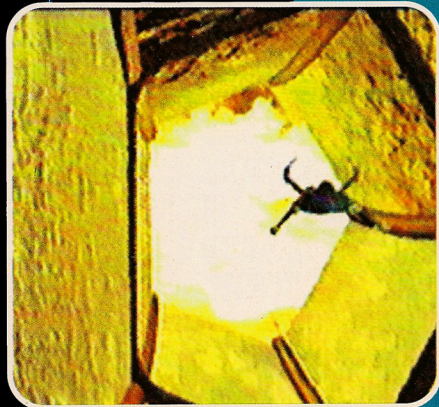
Music is good, with a nice mix of medieval tunes and startlingly accurate sound effects. The fact that the adventuring and puzzling is sometimes broken up by action-packed battle scenes also helps and, all in all, this is a nifty game.

First Look PC, PSX, Saturn

Descent 2



Blast your way through level after level of high-octane space action.





1 or more Players 3-D Shooter Game
Developed by Interplay
Published by Interplay
Available March 15

Pilot your space craft across barren planetary surfaces



"Hey, what does that little red button do?"



Descent for the PC was one of Interplay's more popular titles. Now you can get that same adrenaline-pumping action for the PC, Saturn and PlayStation in the new **Descent 2**. For those of you unfamiliar with the original, **Descent** is a true 3-D, multiplayer shooter that mixes cool sound, fast-paced action and tasty graphics, resulting in a roller-coaster ride of a game. **The best thing about Descent is that you have total control over your highly maneuverable spacecraft.**

The story goes something like this: You are a pilot in your little craft of destruction. You are flying into the bowels of the Earth to kill bad guys. The problem is, you'll have to do all of this without James Mason to help guide you. But then again, you've got a whole bunch of high-tech navigation equipment, from ultra-sonic wave emitters to infrared beams. All James had was a compass and a duck.

Descent 2 will feature the same quality gameplay and visual style of its predecessor. The colors are vibrant and the

lively elements add a whole new level to the gaming experience. From the flowing lava to running water. What has been added to part two are 30 deeper, more mind-blowing levels of excitement. On top of the new levels, there are 30 new monsters, each smarter, faster and more deadly than the first title's enemies. But don't worry, **Descent 2** comes equipped with 13 new weapons of massive, destructive power, to handle these superior baddies.

While the release of **Descent 2** will only be for the PC at first, the Saturn and PlayStation versions will follow shortly thereafter. To tide you over till then, Interplay has been kind enough to schedule the release of the original, which is currently available on Mac, on both of these platforms. Windows 95 means the game runs quickly and smoothly on PC with the minimum of installation, but PlayStation owners will have an even easier time with the game. The fact that home consoles can now outperform even high-end PCs means that porting this kind of game is not only easy, but almost a necessity. So, strap on your special space shoes and get ready for the ride of a lifetime. Thousands of feet into the core of an unstable planet.

First Look

Saturn

Hang On GP

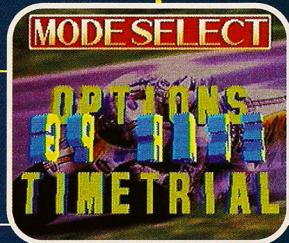
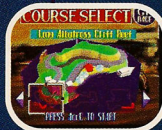


Hang On's mixture of fast action and strategic racing makes a welcome change from the standard three-laps-and-it's-over stuff.





1 Player Motorcycle Racing Game
Developed by Sega of Japan
Published by Sega
Available February 1996



The classic motorcycle game *Hang On* makes it way to the Saturn, with all the upgraded features you'd expect from 32-bit version. The main thing that's been changed from the arcade is the type of race you compete in. The arcade and Genesis versions had you riding a long, non-connecting stretch of road with turns. The '95 version has you racing courses similar to *Daytona*, with a choice of six tracks. You start out with two bikes and will be able to select more later.

Hang On GP '95 is a definite improvement over *Daytona* in the sense that the action flows fluidly and pop up is fairly

minimal. The track scenery is very well done, with more than a passing resemblance to *Ridge Racer*. The second set of three tracks are longer versions of the first three and there might be other ways you can race the courses, for instance with mirror or backwards tracks.

The bike you control is very responsive, with good sliding mechanics that are easy to learn. Sega has given you the option of using the steering wheel controller, which adds some neat thrills. You can play the game from three views which include first-person, behind the bike and a farther behind the bike view. Endless hours of excitement can be had when combining the first-person view with the steering wheel controller and lean your body left and right to simulate the rocking motion of your bike. Keep an eye out and prepare to hang on!

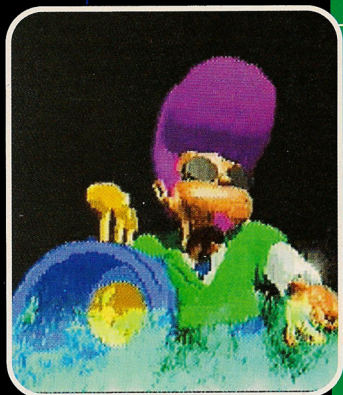
First Look

Saturn

Johnny Bazookatone



Johnny challenges the devil to a rock 'n' roll holy war.

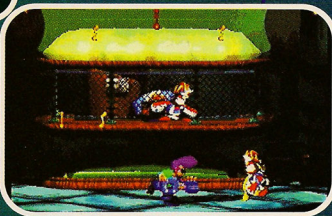




1 Player Platform/Action Game
Developed by US Gold
Published by US Gold
Available Spring 1996



Johnny Bazookatone proves metal fans right: rock is a weapon.



The ruler of the stygian depths is not a happy demon. L Diablo, the miserable (but sartorially splendid) almighty master of the Underworld is deathly bored and the only way he can combat his boredom is through the weaving of sinister schemes. He's latest is perhaps the most sinister of all, for he's conspiring to take over all of the world's music. Enter Johnny Bazookatone. He is the world's biggest rock star, and his concerts have become city-wide, world-wide events, adored by the masses. With his trademark guitar Anita by his side, Johnny is unstoppable. L Diablo knows this, so he sends his four Impmen of the Apocalypse to steal Anita and give him the power of the powerchord. His musical ambitions fail, but in retaliation, he kidnaps all the world's greatest musicians. As Johnny Bazookatone, you must rescue them for music to return to the world.

That's the premise behind U.S. Gold's newest adventure for PlayStation, Saturn, and the 3DO.

Normally we wouldn't give this much attention to any game in our Press Start section, but Johnny Bazookatone looks poised to be the next *Earthworm Jim*, whatever that means.

Its graphics are beautiful, it sounds great, and is packed with the type of humor that makes embittered writers like us chuckle till we can't chuckle no more. Any game that features disco-dancing demons, kung-fuimps, evil cooks from Hell's Kitchen and about a million other pop culture references (ranging from *Star Trek* to the classic western *Johnny Guitar*) makes us go all gooey inside.

One of the coolest things about Johnny Bazookatone (both the character and the game) is Johnny's ability to slow his fall using his gun. As you plummet to what might ordinarily be your death, you can blast your machine-gun downward, allowing you to control both your direction and your rate of descent. This adds a lot more to the game than you might think and makes this more than an *Earthworm Jim* clone.

First Look

PlayStation

Return Fire



The 3DO engine is basically intact but slightly smoother and more responsive. And yes, the music is still bonkers.





1 Player Action/Strategy Game
Developed by Disney Interactive
Published by Time Warner Interactive
Available March 1996



The smooth scaling and 3D objects lend a simple game some depth.



Toward the end of 1994, 3DO owners were fortunate enough to benefit from the release of *Return Fire*, an amazing strategy game which distilled decades of military action games into a manic version of "Capture The Flag." The gaming press went hog-wild over *Return Fire*'s smooth interface, its easy controls and its great replay value. Time Warner Interactive is doing the smart thing this Spring by allowing owners of the Sony PlayStation and the Sega Saturn to join in the militaristic fun.

The conflicts take place on a series of unidentified islands in the middle of the ocean. The enemy has no face or national colors, he simply has a flag—a flag which you must do anything to recover. The road to getting back your flag is a hard one, because your enemy is also trying to get it; so in addition to offense, you have to think about defense. From your bunker hideout, you can launch helicopters, tanks, ASVs and Humvees. Each has its own special abilities, and part of the strategy of the game involves deciding which vehicles to use at which juncture. For example, your tank is great for mow-

ing down enemy installations, but it's almost useless when you're under air attack. Your Humvee is speedy, but it has almost no armor; so you must keep it in reserve until you locate the enemy flag and are ready to transport it back to base and so on and so forth....

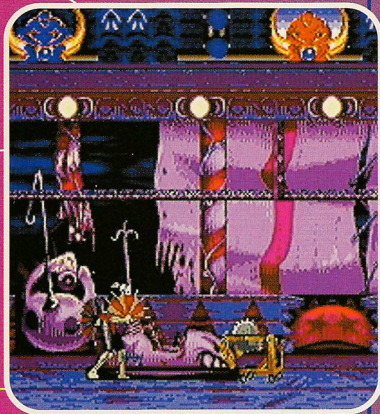
This version of *Return Fire* has many new features which improve on the original. There's a zoom feature which lets you see your vehicles lay waste to island paradises up close, a full-screen feature, map-by-map passwords, an improved radar and improved scrolling.

In addition to the new features, one of the most important old features from the 3DO version has been kept intact: the music. One of the most attractive elements of *Return Fire* in its original incarnation was the use of great classical themes to accentuate the action, and happily, they're still here. When you're doing a Patton in your tank, you'll be treated to the sound of Holst's "Mars: Bringer of War"; as you're playing cowboy in a chopper, you'll be able to riff on *Apocalypse Now* by listening to Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries"; the list goes on, and all the pieces sound great. Look for *Return Fire* sometime in late March, and remember: Men make funny noises when you run them over with a tank; so do it often and with relish.

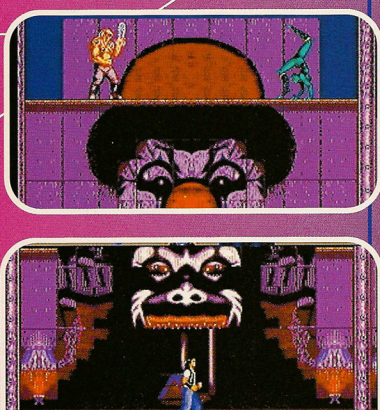
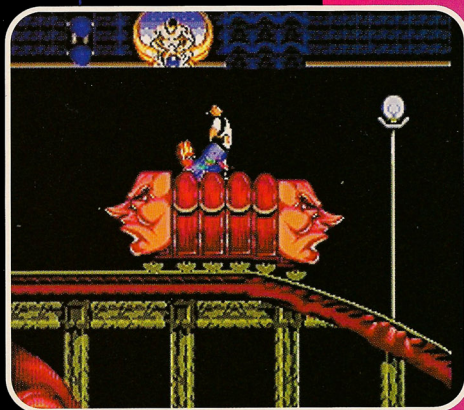
First Look

Genesis

Nightmare Circus

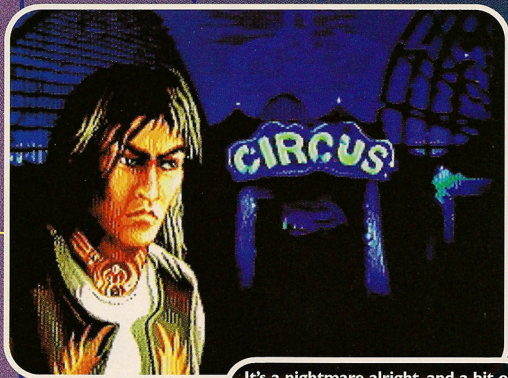


The psychedelic graphic look of *Nightmare Circus* lends a great deal to the atmospherics. It also plays pretty weird too.

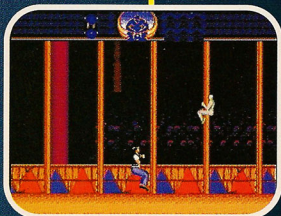
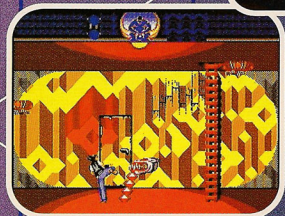




1 Player Platform/Adventure Game
Developed by Funcom
Published by Sega
Available March 1996



It's a nightmare alright, and a bit of a circus too.



A far cry from *Sonic the Hedgehog*, *Nightmare Circus* is Sega's most recent and perhaps most intense 16-bit endeavor, featuring the inclusion of a debug menu, or "tweaker", that allows you to modify most of the variables found in the game. You can access the "tweaker" at any point in the game to adjust almost all of the physical attributes in that level: gravity, air acceleration, air friction, number of enemies, damage and impact powers, fallback speeds, ambush radii, jump heights, projectile speeds, and hundreds of others. The player can customize the game in this way by means of a battery back-up RAM. This is the stuff that's usually only accessible to programmers.

You play Raven, a young Indian Shaman Warrior, who's looking to smite The Jester with some vengeance. A paranormal circus in the middle of the desert provides the backdrop for *Nightmare Circus*. The original circus burned down at the hands of the evil Leto Diablo, or the Jester. Diablo owned

and operated the circus. When it no longer generated profits and in fact, became a financial burden, he decided to go with insurance fraud—take out policies on all of the performers, then kill them "by accident." But the entire circus burned down, roasting hundreds of townspeople, including members of your tribe. You're mad, plus you've got over a 100 moves, including special abilities, and more than 150 animation sequences. Raven can jump, walk, run, crawl, lie on the floor, swing from lamp posts, and do it all backwards, too. Crawling backwards is more fun than it sounds.

The game is comprised of four areas, any of which can be accessed at the opening scene, but once you've chosen an area, you must complete its sub-levels and defeat its boss in order to proceed. The Ticket Office area functions differently; you can clear this one piece by piece. Collectively, there are 13 levels and over 1,000 paths through the game. You'll encounter the likes of ravenous maggot-men and sinister puppets. The gameplay varies from strategy to puzzle and from action to fighting. There's plenty of stuff to keep you busy. The game also includes one- or two-player options. You'll be fascinated by the complexities which this dark, intriguing game has to offer.

PC ZONE

BY JOHN PATTERSON

PREVIEWS

And Never the Twain Shall Meet



At last! A game with a sense of humor about the tensions between the sexes. Well, I say "tensions", but the name of this game is *Gender Wars*, so maybe things are a little more serious than I thought. In an irresistible scenario, it seems that the sexes are so alienated that a state of war has existed between them for two centuries. Each gender has control of a city that provides them with military resources (*military*? It's that bad?), housing and food from agricultural zones. Because of the length of time that this state of affairs has been in force, the sexes have degenerated to virtual parodies of themselves, and much of the humor in the game derives from this. The aim of the game is to complete a number of missions in order eventually to capture the citadel of the opposing sex (it's weird just writing about this...). With infiltration, subterfuge, violent attack and strategic defense the order of the day, players will find that the 32 missions—heavy on the overdrawn gender stereotypes, please—and 16 game sectors should keep them busy, engrossed and entertained all at the same time. "You sexist pig!" "Shaddap, ya stupid cow!" OK, children, settle down now.

For more information, call SCI at (310) 577-1158

Slave to the Pyramid thang...

Anyone who's experienced the hellish depths of addiction to a particularly entrancing computer game will want to hear a little more about



Icebreaker, a new hybrid for Mac and PC. I myself was once a helpless slave to the narcotic pull of *Apeiron*, one of last year's finest discoveries, so I was more than ready for this new entry to the genre. Set in an abstract land of vibrantly colored pyramids and tricky terrain, *Icebreaker* offers 150 levels of non-stop challenges. Your job is to clear each new and different level while conquering a horrible cast of pyramids, each of which has an evil personality of its own. Levels are wittily monickered, with names like Green Pyramids and Ham, Key Lime Die and The Fire Swamp. So prepare to be cast into an infernal pit of addiction that's as bad as any opium den or methadone program—even if it does have a customizable soundtrack.

Icebreaker, from Magnet Interactive and 20th Century Fox, retails for \$39.95.

Let's Butt Heads

With Multiplayer action currently the hottest buzz-word in computer gameplay, and with every office network in the nation pulsating to the illicit sound of games like *Doom*, it's time to pity the poor home gamer, stuck in his little suburban house, knowing that he's kicked the computer's AI ass a thousand times and championing at the bit for the chance to take a poke at a more challenging opponent—and preferably a living, breathing one.

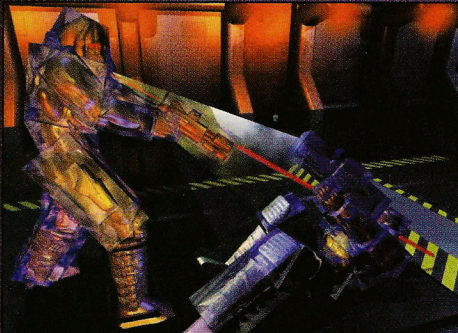
Well, for the PC gamer, at least, the wait is over: FormGen's *Head 2 Head* game kit offers all that a PC gamer needs to link up with a friend and play network games right away. It contains a specially designed, 30-foot serial cable to connect your PC to a friend's, plus a CD loaded with three multiplayer shareware hits: *Doom: Knee-Deep in the Dead*, the epicly violent and visceral *Rise of the Triad: The Hunt Begins* (a prequel to *Dark War*) and the real-life fantasy/strategy game *WarCraft: Orcs and Humans*. The *Head 2 Head* cable is designed for maximum speed and can perform lightning-fast file transfers thanks to its LapLink XL Super High Speed File Transfer utility. And it's compatible for use with most multiplayer games and flight simulators. The loge has already started to appear on all compatible games, so string it across the backyard fence to your neighbor's house or just link up with the person in the office down the hall. Either way, the opportunity to play against a cunning, fallible and unpredictable human being will add a whole new dimension—and hours of new gameplay—to games like these.



For more information, contact FormGen at (602) 443-4109

Nothing Succeeds like XS

Yeah, I know. You hate me for that headline. Sue me. XS is a new Arcade action game from SCI that should keep us lethal fighting fans flexing our muscles and issuing loud, bestial war cries. With 60 opponents to square off against, each with their own fighting style and AI, and 20 lethal arenas in which to pound seven shades of sherbet out of them, you'll have to think fast and fight



hard to stay in the running. The arenas range from industrial plants and cargo spaceships to underground caves and city streets. Your main means of protection is an energy shield powered by your "Hard-light Generator. Otherwise you're gonna have to rely on swift reactions, cunning strategy and a choice of good weaponry. Developed using SGI workstations and motion-capture technology, XS can be played with up to four players in network or modem scenarios, although the game simulates a network game even in one-player mode. Ladies and Gentlemen, prepare to kick the asses of your enemies!

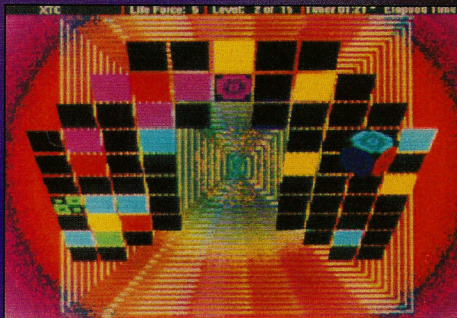
For more information, call SCI at (310) 577-1518

RPG o' Magic



RPG fans out there will be glad to hear of a new addition to their genre of choice. *Kingdom o' Magic* is designed to give the RPG a boot up the behind, containing as it does three separate "quests", *Traditional*, the wittily named *Magnificent 7111*, and *Slightly Bizarre and Twisted* (love that "slightly"...). With two playable characters, Sydney the Snakeman or Shah-Ron, your time in the Silicon Graphics-designed 3-D game environment that is the *Kingdom O' Magic* will be enlivened by a ton of gags, 90 intelligent in-game characters, and over 100 different locations, and it's virtually impossible to play the same game twice, so the playability value is solid. Chubby innkeepers, disco dancers, weird wrestler-type dudes and strange mutant hybrid creature populate the land and they should keep you smiling.

Endorfun, fun, fun, fun...



Endorfun? Sounds pretty wacky and tripped-out, huh? Well, it is, but in a good way (not to mention a goodie-goodie way, but hey...) In this new game, you maneuver a three-dimensional, six-colored cube upon which pulsating, colored squares called appear. The objective is to guide the cube, using the mouse or the direction keys, so that it lands on a life force with the matching color on top. You'll find you need to make deliberate, calculated decisions before you run out of time or find yourself surrounded and trapped by non-matching squares. You can choose whether to compete for best time, highest score or the largest amount of "life force". This game is supremely addictive, containing as it does hundreds of different levels, each with their own kaleidoscopic imagery and original music—the Endorfun Suite, created by The O Band, primal jazzbos who create (uh-oh...) "affirmative, positive" world music. We at VIDEOGAMES don't normally endorse that kinda touchy-feely vibe, but it's part of a game that has the potential to entrance and then enslave you—and we're always ready for that!

For more information, call Time Warner Interactive at (818) 295-6600



PERIPHERALS . . .

Virtual Four-i's

It's been a long time coming but it seems that the age of affordable home-virtual reality gaming may suddenly be upon us. At least, that's the claim being made by Virtual i-O, and,

taking into account a very flexible definition of that oft abused adjective "affordable", that claim may have some merit. The Seattle-based company has just released its Virtual i-Glasses, an eight-ounce virtual reality headset for the PC that provides head-tracking, full-color, three-dimensional video and computer-generated images. The Virtual i-glasses can project an image comparable to an 80-inch monitor viewed at a distance of 11 feet. The see-through optics of the headset don't require any tiresome, frustrating adjustments, and the head-tracking technology

enables the user to view full 360-degree environments. They're also supported by Windows 95. Virtual i-O is currently working with leading software developers—like LucasArts, id Software, Bullfrog

Productions and Parallax

Software—to ensure that there will soon be a wide range of 3-D, immersive games available that are

compatible with the X-Ray-Spex.

Oh yeah, about that "affordable" debate: The PC version retails for \$799, and a video-only unit for TV and video will leave you a mere \$599 lighter. You decide.

For more information, contact Virtual i-O at (206) 382-7410

Joystick Division

The hunt for a decent joystick for your PC gaming purposes can be a frustrating one when your needs and demands are over-met. Some of them are just way too complicated. The Advanced Gravis Phoenix and Suncom's intimidatingly named Iron Eagle each had so many features that it almost felt like you needed a minimum of ten

year's experience with NASA just to look at them. And they had so many buttons that you needed to be either Charlie

Parker or an octopus to get the most out of them. Let's return to Earth now however, with three simple(ish) flight-sim-friendly joysticks from the good folks at CH Products; each offers the gamer realism, reliability and a righteous (but not too righteous) bundle o' functions.

In ascending order of complexity and sophistication then, we have the F-16 Flightstick, a meat 'n' potatoes joystick for beginners, featuring three fire buttons, a trigger, rotary throttle and trim controls. Its bigger brother, the Combatstick, offers two four-way, five push buttons and a trigger, plus trim controls and a rotary throttle. At the top of the line (drumroll, please...) is the programmable Fighterstick. This baby has no fewer than four four-way switches, three push buttons and a trigger. With the look and feel of a real F-16, the stand-alone 'stick also provides 16 programmable functions and four game port buttons, plus all those same trim controls and rotary throttle. In addition, CH Product's forthcoming Pro Throttle, when used in conjunction with the Combatstick, will activate 14 button functions and, in conjunction with the Fighterstick, will make available a total of 40 programmable functions (that's 20 on the Throttle, 20 on the 'stick.

On second thoughts, better not lose that octopus just yet.

For more information, call CH Products at (619) 598-2518

Giger Countdown



H.R. Giger, the Swiss surrealist artist who'll always be remembered for his set and creature design in the original *Alien* and who also devised the bio-mechanical mon-

ster in last year's *Species*, has now come to freak out your desktop in a new screensaver for the PC. Developed by Giger himself in concert with Cyberdreams Inc., the screensaver will feature SVGA graphics, animation sequences, eerie music and sound effects, plus a short story from renowned master of sci-fi, Harlan Ellison. Giger gets the official VIDEOGAMES seal of approval for his uniquely sick and demented contribution to late 20th-century Terminal Culture. Way to go, H.R.!

For more information, contact Cyberdreams at (818) 223-9990.



The Dig



The Lucas/Spielberg generation (i.e., everyone on the planet under the age of 30) is gonna be stoked with this latest piece of work from LucasArts, the same people who, in the last year alone, have given us *Dark Forces*, *Full Throttle* and *Rebel Assault II*.

The Dig—“based on a concept by Steven Spielberg”, as the hype puts it—puts you in the not inconsiderable moonboots of NASA veteran Boston Low (a breathtakingly stupid name) who must land a team of geologists on a rogue asteroid that’s been nuked to a standstill in space, thereby halting its passage towards Earth. Our boy Boston, in the company of geologist Ludger Brink (boy, these guys could kick ass at the Stupid-Name Olympics)



and journo Maggie Robbins, then proceeds to examine the Asteroid and the three of them are cast into an adventure that takes them (and you) to the nethermost outskirts of the universe, to a hostile and desolate planet. Your task is to make sure that you and your companions can somehow get home safely. To do that, you’re going to have to solve dozens upon dozens of puzzles and visit in excess of 200 locations and try to uncover the fate of the planet’s previous occupants, a highly advanced civilization that’s simply disappeared.

The interface is simplicity itself: just point-and-click to talk, gather and just progress—and that’s all there is to it. The graphics are stunning. With Industrial Light and Magic special effects and some impeccable light-sourcing, we’re talking top-of-the-line stuff here. The character animation is excellent, with smooth movement and accomplished voice-acting. Plus the orchestrated score is what you’d expect from the folks who hired John Williams to do *Star Wars*—filled with atmosphere, but not enough to capsize the project.

If there’s a problem here, it’s that *The Dig* is too short. You’ll probably be able to knock it off in a weekend or so. But, as with life itself, it’s good while it lasts.



TOP TEN LISTS . . .

Top 20 IBM PC Games (MS-DOS, Windows)

1. *Microsoft Flight Simulator* by Microsoft
2. *Myst* by Broderbund
3. *Command & Conquer* by Virgin
4. *Phantasmagoria* by Sierra On-Line
5. *Ultimate Doom: Thy Flesh Consumed* by GT Interactive
6. *Mortal Kombat III* by GT Interactive
7. *Doom II* by GT Interactive
8. *NHL Hockey* by Electronic Arts

9. *Need For Speed* by Electronic Arts
10. *Mechwarrior II* by Activision
11. *NASCAR Racing* by Papyrus
12. *Dark Forces* by LucasArts
13. *Crusader: No Remorse* by Origin
14. *Caesar II* by Sierra On-Line
15. *Pinball* by Sierra On-Line
16. *Hardball 5* by Accolade
17. *Ascendancy* by Logic Factory
18. *Fury 3* by Microsoft
19. *Star Trek: Next Generation: A Final Unity* by Spectrum Holobyte
20. *Sim City 2000 Collection* by Maxis

Top 10 Macintosh Games

1. *Doom II* by GT Interactive
2. *Myst* by Broderbund
3. *Dark Forces* by LucasArts
4. *Star Wars Rebel Assault* by LucasArts
5. *Sim City 2000* by Maxis
6. *Links Pro* by Access
8. *Top Ten Pack* by Electronic Arts
9. *Sim City 2000 Collection* by Maxis
10. *Master Juggler* by Alsoft

(Top Ten Lists courtesy of PC Data)

REVIEWS

Welcome to the wacky world of game reviews. Since Video Games is the oldest, wisest games magazine in the business, it's pretty much a certainty that our game reviews are the coolest. Why? Because we have no lives. No girlfriends, no hobbies, no distractions. Just games. Which is sad for us, but good for you. Now you can head to your local games emporium and say loudly, "Sir, I demand a new video game as recommended by Video Games Magazine!"

THIS ISSUE:

Yikes! Yoinks! The games are getting better and better. I remember in my day (back when it was all just fields) when games looked bad and made noises like *ping* and *boink*, and we were grateful even for that. Nowadays, games sound like movies (Skeleton Warriors, for example) and look like real 3D worlds (A Train being a fine example). Plenty of PlayStation, ample Saturn and all the purchase info you could ever want. Go read.

1

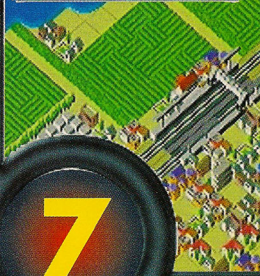
We can't wait for the day when a game comes into the office that actually merits the dreaded "one." It'll be bad. A festering boil on the buttocks of gaming.

10

A "ten" would be nice too. That way we could all laugh and cry and bond. A game that will bring the world together in peace and harmony. And love as well.

A-TRAIN

SIMULATION • 1 PLAYER
PUBLISHER • DEVELOPER: MAXIS



Sim-heads take note: Maxis, the whiz-kid-kid company behind such classics as *SIMCITY*, *SIMWORLD* and all the other SimGames out there is at it again. This time, the objective is simple: Become a business mogul by creating a huge railroad empire.

A-TRAIN works the same as all other Maxis sims. You start with nothing and build. Lay down track and buy up land to ensure you have the controlling interest in the area. As you grow, the town around you grows. Soon, if you're lucky, a bustling city will have developed around you.

This is another fantastic sim from Maxis. All of the excitement of creating your own world is there. Careful planning and savvy business deals will ensure your success. Reap the benefits of smart decisions by seeing a wonderful metropolis expand around you. One of the cooler features in this game is a first-person, 3-D trip in one of your trains. You can travel along one of your routes, check out the scenery and see how things are looking.

All in all, A-TRAIN is an enjoyable game that, while not for everyone, will certainly appeal to fans of other Maxis titles.

PLAYSTATION

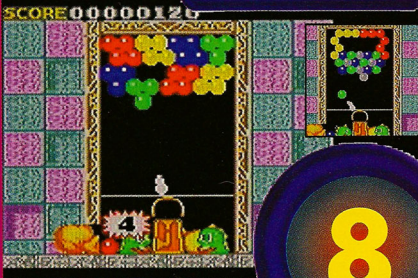
7

BUST A MOVE

PUZZLE • 1-2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER: SEGA • DEVELOPER: TAITO
(708) 520-9280

The ever-popular *Bust-A-Move* is now available for those who own Game Gear. Although not an exact translation, like the 3DO and other versions, it maintains the high playability level that made this game such a hit. The limitations of the Game Gear hinder this title not a bit, unlike others for the system. Graphics and sound, while not so great, are purely utilitarian (although better music would certainly increase one's level of enjoyment).

Bust-A-Move is definitely a game that you'll want if you own this portable. As enjoyable as any other puzzle game, *Bust-A-Move* has the kind of replay value that made *Tetris* the classic that it is.



8

GAME GEAR

THUNDER STRIKE 2

3-D SHOOTING/FLYING: 1 PLAYER
PUBLISHER: U.S. GOLD • DEVELOPER: CORE

Swoop in for
the kill!



9

One of my favorite Sega CD games was *AH3 ThunderStrike*, and I can definitely say that *Core* has taken it to the next level. You have mountainous terrain to fly over with great-looking enemy vehicles and craft that move around in real 3-D.

The difficulty has been cranked up as well as the intensity. The music is more reserved now but is still of good quality, especially some of the more bass-laden tracks. I guess you could say this is the equivalent of *Warhawk* on the Saturn, but that's not quite true. *ThunderStrike* is longer and requires more strategy in attacking. It does suffer sometimes from pop-up, but considering the vast play area, it's not a bad trade-off. Run out and grab a copy!

SATURN

ZERO DIVIDE

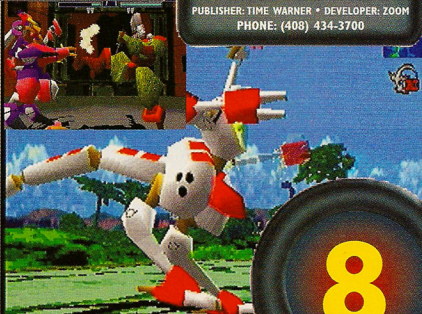
One of the most popular 3-D fighting games in Japan, *Zero Divide*, is now available here in the States. This is one of the most difficult fighters to date. There are eight characters and two bosses, all of whom are tenacious fighters—even on easy!

The story sounds a lot like the cartoon *Resbot*. A hacker has released a virus called XTAL into an important information database. The countries of the world must insert their own viruses to combat XTAL.

What sets *ZD* apart from other fighters is its fighting style. First off, you can create some wild combos with a myriad of different moves, including jumps and throws—not bad. Also, massive amounts of damage to certain areas of your opponent will destroy “units” of his body, hindering his fighting ability. On top of that, you can now use the edge of the ring in your battle tactics. Drop off the edge and hang there, and then spring back up, fists flying. This is an easy way to throw your opponent off guard.

ZD also contains a ton of secret stuff that we haven't even figured out yet. Add this to an already amazing fighting game and you've got the most bang for your buck out there.

FIGHTER • 1 TO 2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER: TIME WARNER • DEVELOPER: ZOOM
PHONE: (408) 434-3700



8

PLAYSTATION

SKELETON WARRIORS

PLATFORM/ACTION • 1 PLAYER
PUBLISHER: PLAYMATES
DEVELOPER: NEVERSOFT



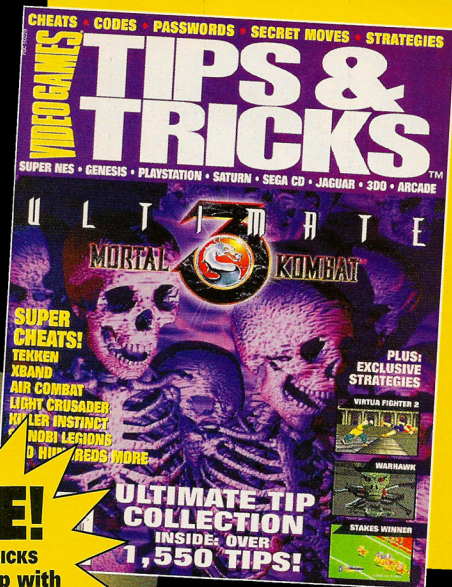
8

Good Lord! After months of dull Saturn games, the 32-bit Sega machine is finally getting its share of nifty software. *Skeleton Warriors* is a fine example of what can be achieved with even conventional game styles on the powerful platform. “Borrowing” heavily from *Rastan* and games of that ilk, you play the part of a sword-swinging warrior on a quest to retrieve half of a powerful crystal from some bad guy. The plot borders on retarded, but the game most definitely is not. 3D backgrounds and foregrounds (à la *Clockwork Knight*) portray the violent, fast-paced fun. You have a sword, a gun, a shield and a couple of tricks up your sleeve. The baddies don't have a chance. Music? The best ever heard on the Saturn. Seriously. It's creepier than a big bag of creepy things with a special reason for making you nervous. Cool!

SATURN

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TAV663

MORTAL KOMBAT II

FIGHTING • 1-2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER: Acclaim • DEVELOPER:
Midway

FATALITY



6

Acclaim cashes in on *MKII* once again. The most overrated of fighting games can now be played, in all its flawed glory, on the Sega Saturn. So if you're a member of the teaming masses of MK-heads and happen to own a Saturn, I'm sure you're pitchin' a tent right about now.

This is a great version of *MKII*. The sound and graphics are, to say the least, stunning. Almost an exact translation of the arcade game, it would seem that some of the dialogue is missing, from player names to "Round One". No biggie. With big characters, technicolor red stuff and a little faerie dust, *Mortal Kombat II* will please all.

"Why the 6?" you ask? Well, for one, it's *MKII*. Also, it's dated. It's the 3-D generation pal; sprite-based fighters are going the way of the dodo. On top of that, it's two years old, having been succeeded by *MK3*, another woefully flawed fighter. Granted, *MKII* is a better game than *MK3* (which isn't even available for the Saturn), but come on, haven't you outgrown this game yet?

SATURN

PRIMAL RAGE

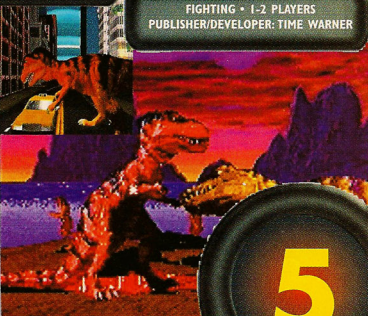
Another flawed but popular fighting title is *Primal Rage*. Now available on PlayStation, this prehistoric blood-fest will please all those of you who are tired of *MK* but not savvy enough for *Tekken*.

For the most part, *Rage* on PlayStation resembles its arcade counterpart. Fine graphics and playability will keep coin-op loyalists satisfied, although they might be a little disenchanted with the sub-par sound. *Primal Rage* suffers mostly from loading time, which shows up in the most unwanted of areas, resulting in uneven gameplay, sure to annoy those of us who are impatient. There's actually load time between the "final blow" to an opponent and the exploding heart. Was this really necessary? Increase the initial load time a jot before interrupting gameplay for an effect that can be described as unnecessary at best.

Two new features of interest are Tug of War mode and Endurance mode. In ToW, every hit decreases your opponent's energy, while replenishing yours. You must string together many more blows than your opponent to win the contest. Endurance mode allows you to choose several combatants to battle with—pretty standard stuff.

This, along with the problems that limited the coin-op version in the area of playability, make this a tedious title. Not worth the money.

FIGHTING • 1-2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER/DEVELOPER: TIME WARNER



5

PLAYSTATION

ADVERTISER INDEX

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STAR FIGHTER

FLIGHT SIM • 1 PLAYER
PUBLISHER/DEVELOPER: Studio 3DO



7

The space-age flight sim is one of the fastest growing and least needed genre of game around. With so many *Shockwaves* and *Total Eclipses* out there already, I dreaded having to play this game. I was happy to discover that *Star Fighter*, although not the white knuckler I'm sure Studio 3DO was aiming for, was a step above the competition.

It's not exactly what *Star Fighter* has that the others don't; it's the style which makes this title more palatable. The look of the game and the plane control are very different from other flight sims. For starters, the environment looks "softer" and more lush. Add the seemingly out-of-place, laid-back music score, and you've got *Top Gun* meets the *Relaxation Guy*.

Ship control is some of the smoothest and most realistically responsive to date. While it's no piece of cake to operate, you're allowed to ease into the game, which has mission-based gameplay that starts you off doing minute tasks to get the feel for your ship. It isn't until after a few missions that you're forced to save the world.

Overall, a standout title for such a weary genre. Let's just hope it doesn't start multiplying into unwanted sequels, like other flight sims we know....

3DO

WARRIORS OF FATE

FIGHTER • 1-2 PLAYERS
Publisher/Developer: CAPCOM



7

These kinda games are always fun to play. Simplistic? Yes. Outdated? Maybe—but they're always enjoyable. Capcom's *Warriors Of Fate* has made the jump from the arcade to the PlayStation, and doesn't miss a beat.

The gameplay is simple enough: Walk along and beat people up, à la *Double Dragon*. Choose from one of five warriors, each equipped with their own weapon, whether it be a sword, bow or fists. The story isn't all that important and neither is tact. Just charge into battle and start whippin' butt.

The graphics are bright and cheery, but the lack of animation frames makes the player movement a little choppy. To keep things interesting, you can pick up extra weapons along the way, and even mount a horse for some extra speed and power. That, along with a plethora of big bosses and multiple endings (which arrive too soon), makes *Warriors Of Fate* great fun to play. A version is also going to be available for Saturn.

PLAYSTATION

SAMURAI SHODOWN 3

FIGHTING • 1/2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER: SNK
DEVELOPER: SNK



8

SAMURAI SHODOWN is one of the best reasons for owning either a Neo Geo or a Neo Geo CD. As a matter of fact, it's a pretty good reason for going to an arcade as well. The sequel met with similar critical acclaim, enhancing both the graphics and the gameplay of the first Samurai Shodown title.

Fans of the series will be ecstatic to learn that those fun guys at SNK have finally released the third game in the series. *Samurai Shodown 3* takes the original concept and combines it with features from other SNK games. These include teams, combos and all new characters. The graphic and fighting style has changed dramatically and purists may well be disappointed.

However, the new (improved?) gameplay features a level of depth that hasn't been present before and there seems to be a lot more to learn.

NEO-GEO CD

GAME OF THE MONTH!

Never been a big fan of space creatures. I'm sure that there are generous warm-hearted space critters out there, but I've yet to see any of the fluffy nice variety. Nope, the space aliens I get to see tend to be voracious, vicious, vindictive villains, with big nasty teeth, claws and slime. I think you know what kind of aliens I mean. And perhaps the most typically nasty type of alien is the kind found in the movie *Alien*. Yup, now you get the chance to kill a bunch of 'em.

Alien Trilogy has been a long time coming. Probe started developing this game a couple of years ago for Acclaim, before PlayStation and Saturn technology was widely available. The new 3-D technology meant that *Alien Trilogy* in some respects went back to the drawing board. The fruits of this labor are now evident though and frankly, it's been worth the

wait. *Alien Trilogy* is fantastic.

The game follows the plot of all three movies with varying degrees of accuracy. Most of the game (at least in terms of pace and atmosphere) is like *Aliens*, the second movie.

This means lots of *Doom*-like action of course. That's a fair comparison too. You wander around the claustrophobic levels, hunting aliens, solving puzzles and generally being as violent as possible.

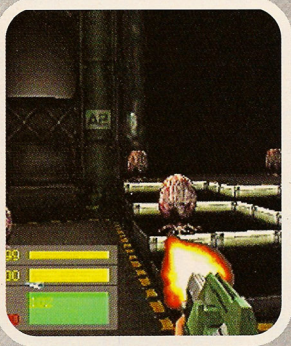
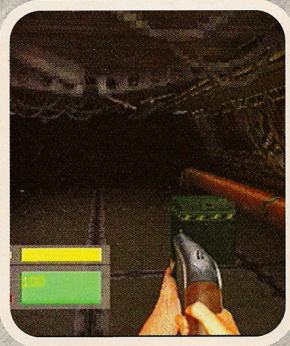
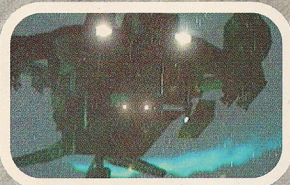
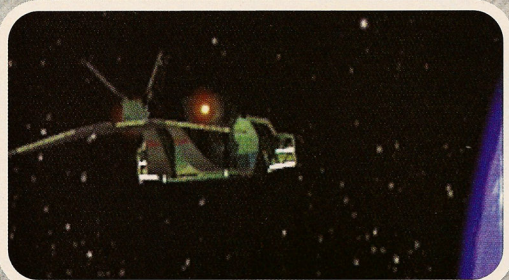
The puzzles aren't too tricky, and mostly involve either trial-and-error, or simple tasks like finding the correct sequence of switches to open a door. The simplicity of the game, combined with amazing sound, smooth visuals and sheer size, mean that this is one of the ever growing number of essential PlayStation releases.

If you want a game that's going to last for more than a couple of weeks, and you already own *Doom*, then this is a pretty obvious choice. If you're scared of the dark, or have a weak bladder, then avoid at all costs.



Aaagh! Face-hugger, can't breathe! Smile looks ugly!

FIGHTER 1-2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHED BY SEGA
DEVELOPED BY SEGA



RPG ATTACK

A monthly guide to the world of RPGs. This month we take a look at some 32-bit prospects and a 64-bit hopeful.

by Wataru Maruyama

SUPER ZELDA

Zelda is not yet in a playable form, but what's there is totally unbelievable. Nintendo has stated that the scenes you see here are how the battles will look. The camera won't be free-floating, but you should be able to view the action from any angle, as in *Mario 64*.

Aside from *Super Mario Kart*, this is my most heavily anticipated game on the Ultra. I've followed the *Zelda* series from its earliest appearance on the Game & Watch through the NES and later on the SNES. My favorite is the second game on the NES, because it had more interaction with other characters. It wasn't the traditional top-down view, but it broke new ground in Action/RPG design.

This footage would indicate that Link has a wide range of fighting moves and techniques that number more than some entire 3-D fighting games! The potential of this game is tremendous and has me counting the days to a dream Christmas in '96.

Developer: Nintendo of Japan
Available: Christmas '96
System: Ultra 64



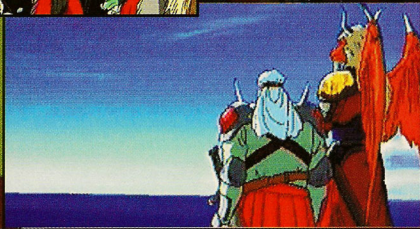
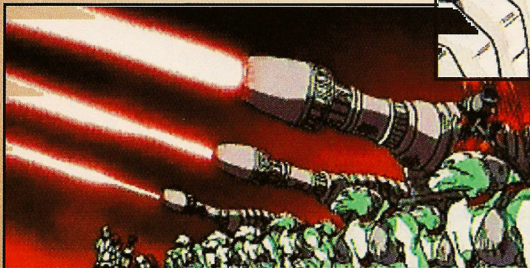
FEDA REMIX

You might recall a while back, when SNES owners wished for a game like *Shining Force* (Genesis) and instead got a game called *Feda*, developed by some of the same people who were responsible for *Shining Force*.

For those of you unfamiliar with the earlier game, *Shining Force* was a RPG/Simulation game in a style similar to military sims moving on grids. *Feda* had more RPG elements to it and the battle screen was similar, but didn't show your own character. The Saturn and PSX versions feature the obvious jump in graphics and sound, with the addition of cinema scenes. The story revolves around the main character who becomes disillusioned with the army he's fighting for.

It's not known at this point if the game will be ported over here, but it looks hopeful.

System: Saturn, Playstation



DEVIL SUMMONER

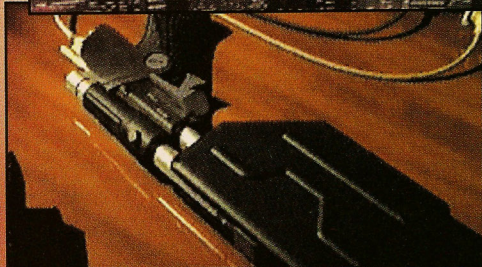
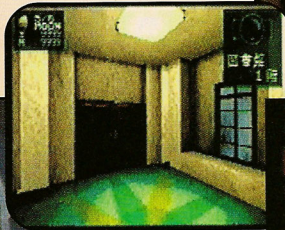
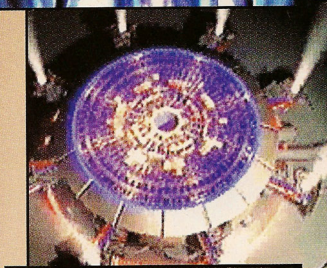
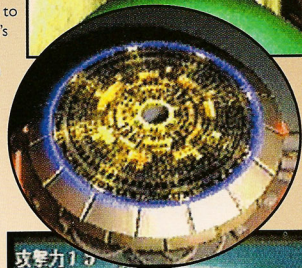


This popular series appeared on the PC engine (Turbo Grafx) and Super Famicom (SNES) in Japan and now makes its debut on the Saturn. It's still unknown whether the developers (Atlus) will keep all the demons and satanic theme, but I'm really glad that it's coming out here at all.

Most of the screenshots you see before you are from the opening, and they demonstrate the cool attention to detail and the fleshed-out world that's been carried over from previous installments. The battle takes place in first-person, similar to *Phantasy Star*, but without seeing your onscreen character from the rear.

You move around beautifully rendered 3-D corridors and interact with bizarre shop owners and rival characters. It would be nice if Atlus released two different versions so that the American audience can appreciate the game the way its creators intended. Either way, I'm sure the complex character interactions and mature drama can be retained in a satisfactory way.

Developer: Atlus
Available: Dec. (Japan) Spring (U.S.)
System: Saturn



RPG NEWS

The Nintendo Ultra 64...the ultimate RPG machine?

After seeing the *Zelda* demo on the Nintendo 64 and the *Final Fantasy* mock-up, I can safely say that the Ultra will be a powerhouse in the RPG department. Simply making a new *Zelda* and *Final Fantasy* will guarantee a devoted audience, thanks to the quality of previous installments. The graphics wouldn't have to be incredible, due to the strong dramatic story (*Final Fantasy*) and ingenious puzzle design (*Zelda*) which would be accompanied by great music.

The fact that the games can look this good is outrageous. There may have been concerns about the storage capacities of cartridges, but look how long and complex

Zelda and the *Final Fantasy* series on the SNES are. Nintendo's one company that won't ignore the RPG market in America, as evidenced in their SNES line up. Of course, Sega has a strong library of RPGs available in Japan that have been virtually ignored, with the exception of *Virtual Hydlide* and *Mystaria*.

The Ultra will be released in April in Japan and an undetermined date here in the States. *Zelda* is set for Christmas '96 and *Final Fantasy* will arrive sometime soon after launch (which I kind of doubt, but I have my fingers crossed anyway).

REVIEWS

3DO

3-D action RPG | 1 Player
Publisher: SSI
Developer: Lion Ent.

Death Keep

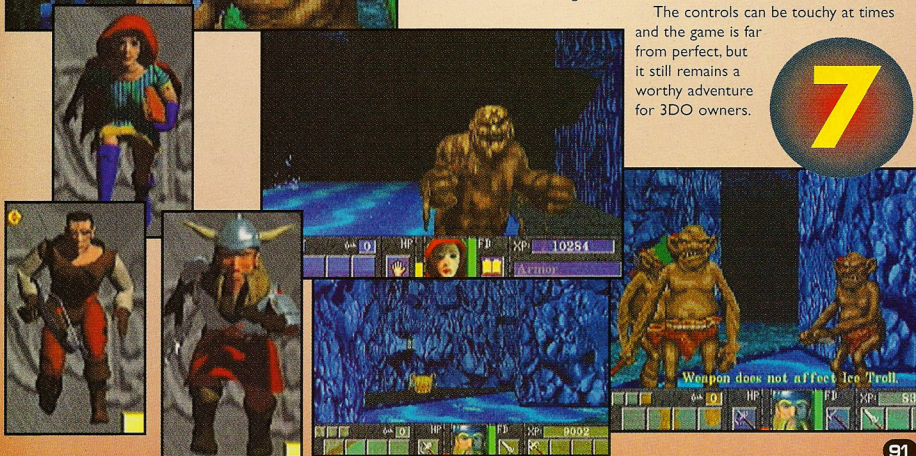


Death Keep is a 3-D RPG set up in the same style as the earlier *Slayer* title, but vastly improved. The 3-D movement is very smooth and the dungeon graphics are very well done. You still use an awkward, invisible strike attack, but the addition of shooting and throwing weapons in the later levels adds a key technique.

I didn't think too much of *Slayer*, but the way it put you in the game had potential. Now, with *Death Keep*, they've got it right. Nothing's scarier than wandering through a creepy dungeon with hideous monsters roaming about. The music complements the action and ranges from a blend of medieval toons to dungeon moans.

The controls can be touchy at times and the game is far from perfect, but it still remains a worthy adventure for 3DO owners.

7



next month in

VIDEO GAMES

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BOX SCORE

I've reported about several different baseball games in the works for the 32-bit systems, but to date, I've only seen two: *World Series Baseball* and *Triple Play '96*. So which of them is worth buying?

Actually, if you own the Saturn, you already should have WSB. It's a great game and the only one of its kind for the system. But, if you're like me, then you've become a little disenchanted with it. If you'll notice, the rating I gave WSB in this month's Box Score is lower than the one that I gave it when I initially reviewed the game. The simple fact is that the flaws which make this game annoying are well disguised. So, for those of you who haven't bought the game, here's a comparison with the new *Triple Play*.

The biggest difference you'll find between the two is that WSB is more of an arcade game than a sim. It's much easier to hit and the play isn't very accurate. Only in the world of WSB can you be thrown out running to first on a ball hit into the outfield. Only in WSB will you see balls hit to the wall that are only singles. Only in WSB will pitchers like Maddux and Clemens run out of gas after four innings. WSB is so full of holes that you'll think you're looking at a waffle ball.

Most of these problems can be attributed to the fact that the playability was not tweaked before release in the US. Japanese baseball tends to be a little different in philosophy and style from its American counterpart; pitchers are commonly replaced more frequently over there, for one. Whatever the reason, it makes for an exasperating experience.

Triple Play is another story, though. This is a great game

that will put a smile even on Mikey's face and he hates everything. Every little nuance of our Great American Pastime is simulated, from proper balancing in the mechanics of gameplay, to stats and real ball parks. What you get is the type of realism found in WSB's predecessor, WSB '95 for the Genesis.

Stats is another area where you get ripped off in WSB. Only a few categories are kept track of, and, to make things worse, they're set up in a way which makes it difficult to compare (which is really the only reason you want stats to begin with). Also, the team's stats aren't kept, so you can't make broader comparisons on how you are doing. What WSB should have done was to maintain the high level of statistics that were found in the Genesis version.

Triple Play has the stats that WSB doesn't. Once again, I have to say that *Triple Play* resembles WSB '95 more than WSB itself does, remembering that baseball's a game that's just as much about its stats as it is about the play itself.

The graphics and sound of WSB are much better than *Triple Play*'s. The commentators in WSB will blow you away, even though there are occasional mistakes in calls and player name pronunciation. Also better in WSB is ease of play. WSB is a smoother game, with less to worry about in the way of necessary buttons. The plus here is that less time is spent worrying

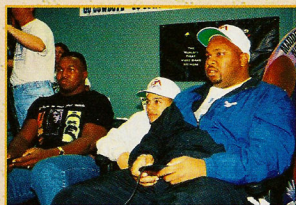
about what you're pressing and more about what you're actually playing.

The last area is multiplayer capability. WSB really takes a hit here; all it has is a one- or two-player option. *Triple Play*, however, will allow more players to participate. You can play so that the first person to hit the "player switch" button gets to control the fielder, or you can designate which players will control what positions on the field (this is a much better way). The results of this kind of multiplayer action? Tons and tons of entertainment value that just isn't available for WSB.

In the end, both of these baseball sims get "B"s, but for different reasons. WSB is a more enjoyable, better-looking arcade baseball game, about which fans of simulators will find much more to cheer about in *Triple Play*. I guess you win either way.

EA X-MEN

Those boys at EA are always up to something. In a clever promotion they ran with *Catapult*, they stoked the fires of the Dallas/San Fran rivalry by holding an X-Band football competition between players from both organizations. The game was played by 49ers Derrick Deese and Nate Singleton, and Cowboys Robert Jones and Larry Allen. I'll spare you the details of the game, itself, but it appears that the 49ers not only own the Cowboys on the field, but also on the game console. The final score was 22-7 in favor of San Fran. Cheer up Dallas, you've still got Deion.



BOX SCORE

GRAPHICS
SOUND
REALISM
PLAYABILITY
CHALLENGE
REPLAY VALUE
OPTIONS
STATS
LICENSE
TOTAL



TRIPLE PLAY '96

8	9	6	9	9	8	6	5	8	8
7	7	8	9	9	9	7	8	8	8

SAD NEWS ON THE HOME FRONT

It doesn't take a genius to put two and two together. The initial delay of EA Sports' *Madden* and hockey titles no doubt had a little (maybe even a lot) to do with the release of Sony Sports' *Face-Off* and *Game Day*. When games as stellar as Sony's hit the streets, reassessments must be made. EA's not dumb. You don't become the biggest and best sports development team by releasing sub-par products. Unfortunately, we recently received a press release from EA Sports telling us exactly what we didn't want to hear. Check this:

"As we conducted the final product reviews of 32-bit hockey and *Madden* PlayStation titles, we determined that although the products looked spectacular, the gameplay needed additional refining in order to meet the level of quality expected from EA Sports titles. Rather than ship products that we didn't believe represented the high standard that consumers have come to expect from EA, we have decided to delay the release of our 32-bit hockey and *Madden* products until the fall, when we can assure customers that the games not only look good, but will provide high-quality play for the life of the product. We know this will be a great disappointment to many who were eagerly awaiting them, however, EA Sports' commitment to quality was a critical factor in achieving our #1 market position in the sports category and we are not willing to jeopardize that standing by shipping products that fall below our standards for outstanding gameplay."

You may be bummed out, but you have to applaud EA for knowing when to regroup. *Face-Off* and *Game Day* will keep you plenty occupied until the next football and hockey seasons kick off. It's nice to know that EA Sports still holds quality above cashing in quickly. Just think, with six extra months to tweak these games, they're really going to kick butt.

DITKA WATCH



ART HISTORY

with the Sensitive Sports Guy

Hi. My name is Norman Todd Tuckwilla and I'm a sports fan, but with a sensitive side. These nice people at *VIDEOGAMES* magazine were kind enough to hire me so that I could put my art history degree from Antioch to good use. Many sports fans out there don't realize that there is much more to sports than sweaty men and women. The sports culture dates back more than a millennium. As far back as the Babylonian empire, the influence of sport has been readily apparent, showing up in everything from leisure-time activities to art.

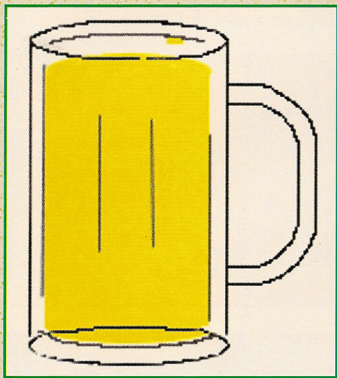
Unearthed in Hamurabi's tomb in the early 19th century was this wall painting of Mike Ditka. Ditka, who can be found embedded in the culture of almost every civilization from the beginning of time, has

been the focal point of both anthropological and archeological groups from Bonn, London, Venice and Chicago. While still unsure of the exact meaning of the find, both the Bonn research team and the Chicago group hypothesize that it is part of some ancient "code". Using information already known about the people of Babylon, it is clear that Ditka was seen as some sort of power figure.

As you can see, there is a wealth of historical and cultural enlightenment just waiting to be discovered in the area of sport. Please journey with me as I reveal the fascinating world of art history sports. Next month we will jump ahead in time and discuss one of Michelangelo's lesser known pieces, entitled "And Bill Spoke".

PLEASE READ THIS DISCLAIMER!

In the last issue, the guys here at VIDEOGAMES thought it would be funny to change what I'd written a little, in order



“SUDS”

to make me out to be...uh, how can I put this...?—“different” from what I actually am, you know...“special”. My preview of *Toukon Retsuden Wrestling* reads: “As if in response to my last feature on “Old-School” wrestling, this Japanese import rides in on a white horse and carries me off to a land full of chili dogs, hot women and studs.” That last word should say “suds”, not “studs”. At no point in my life have I ever yearned to be in a place populated with said “studs”.

I'd also like to draw attention to an error of syntax in my preview of *Game Day*. It should read, “...linemen cutting off cornerbacks and linebackers...”, and not “...linemen and corners cutting off linebackers”. Corners are also defensive players and don't spend their time obstructing linebacker movement.

Just wanted to point this out before anyone mentioned it. I'd hate for Master Ditka to get wind of such mistakes.



“STUDS”

You guys have been sending me letters with your ideas for new sports games. Most of them have sucked, but some were genuinely good. A little word of advice to the masses: Don't even bother picking up the pen and expending any energy if you're going to send me games that involve killing people, MK characters or ninjas. Those are the stupidest concepts since the child-proof cap. I want clever sporting ideas, not your latest fighting wet dreams. Save all that stupid stuff for Gabe's fruity section.

Here are some of the ideas you came up with:

Dustin Hlekamp (Is this your last name. What are you, a Viking?) wants someone to come out with a hunting game. Apparently PC is something our friend Dustin isn't big on. Now, I'm not sure you can call hunting a sport. I mean, seriously, what kind of competition is it to shoot a deer? Give him a gun too, and maybe you've got yourself a sport. Or maybe make the player stalk his prey with a knife, or use his bare hands.

Josh Saban, who describes himself as a “very happy subscriber” thinks there's a market out there for a Monster Truck

GAMES WE'D LIKE TO SEE

really like to see: games based on popular movies.

How much fun would Rollerball be to play? What a great movie! You've got James Caan, iron balls topping speeds of 100 mph and no penalties in the play-offs. One of the great action movies, *Rollerball* would make a superb game.

Another sweet game would be one based on the cult-hit, *Death Race 2000*. Sony's *Twisted Metal* is almost there, but the sporting element is gone. Points for hitting people, that's the name of the game. Nail that nun and it's 250 big ones. This game mixes some of the best elements from car racing to blood to depravity. This is a game I'd like to see.

I finish this month's section off with what I think would be the best hockey game ever: *Slap Shot Hockey with the Hansen Brothers*. What a perfect time to release a game like this. The Hansens have a new line of Bud Ice commercials, and hockey season is reaching its apex with the upcoming playoffs. This is a game that would completely disregard old-time hockey and would focus on goofing. Every player on the ice is a complete cement-head and you get to take control. Now that's a game I'd lay down money for.

game. The kid's from Maine though, where all there is to do is fish for lobster and hit the L.L. Bean outlet store.

D.J. Jones seems to be bubbling over with good ideas. He thinks there should be water polo, field hockey and wally-ball games. I'm not so sure he's wrong, either. The former two sports are pretty big and require a lot of skill, while the latter is just great fun to play.

Air hockey is Justin Leeper's bright idea. It's a good one, but it has already been done. It's called *Shufflepuck* and is available on the Mac.

Here's one reader who places a lot of faith in the folks at EA Sports. James McArdle of NY thinks they should make a surfing game. Get all of the pros in there and have them travel to all of the world's hottest surf spots. Now that's a good idea, even if it has already been done.

A couple of readers hit on an idea that I was thinking about: Roller derby. Now that's a cool game. But take it one step further: How about a game based on *Rollerball*? This brings me to what games I'd

SCOUTING REPORT

SCAM 'N JAM

Leave it to Acclaim to find a way to squeeze a few more dollars out of a concept. If you're one of those drones who still think *NBA Jam's* a cool game, then you'll be happy to know that *College Jam*, a new hoop game from Acclaim, will allow you to exploit your favorite college players in that oh-so-familiar arena of 2-on-2 super-action.

Looking like nothing more than a complete copy of *NBA Jam* with different player names, *College Jam* will undoubtedly be a hit, despite my pleas to stop the insanity. Expect this title to start springing up on systems other than the PlayStation and probably thereafter mutate into its own tourney edition and so on, and so on, and so on....

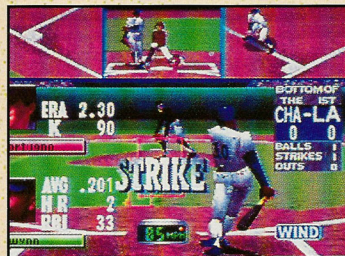
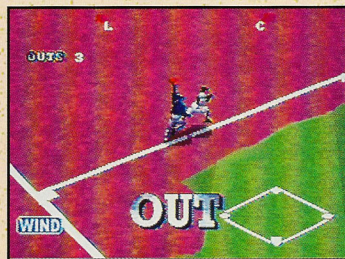


KONAMI SPORTS BASEBALL

If you've been reading *SportsWise* regularly, then you'll know that Konami Sports is for real. With the release of its first two sports games, *NBA In the Zone* and *Goal Storm* (as I write this, I haven't yet seen *Full Contact*), they managed to go from complete obscurity to dominance in the 32-bit sports market (kinda like the Magic did in the NBA, except that Konami's emergence is a welcome change).

Well, it's nearing Spring Training and you know what that means: Everyone and their mother's gonna to release a baseball game. Konami will be releasing its baseball title a little earlier, in late March or early April. *MLBPA: Bottom of the 9th* is another winner. Judging by these pictures, *Bottom of the 9th* looks like it'll have some of the best graphics around. On top of the graphics, there will be killer sound and play-by-play announcers living up the game.

I haven't seen any gameplay yet, but check out the features this game will have: all 700 MLB players; 3-D, intuitive batting—with more variables: you can now control whether or not you hit a fly or a grounder—multiple playing modes; training mode; texture-



mapped players. All it needs now are some seriously extensive stats and we'll have a ticket to Paradise, where Ripkin's an immortal and players frown on arbitration.

SLAM 'N JAM '96

Crystal Dynamics is on the right track with its 3D *Baseball '95* and *Slam 'N Jam* for the PlayStation and



REVIEWS CONTINUED

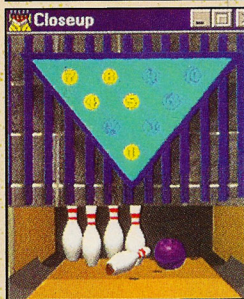
PBA BOWLING

I don't usually pay any attention to computer games, but since so many readers have written in asking about a bowling game, here's one. *PBA Bowling* is for the PC and works with Windows '95. Graphically, the game looks pretty cool and the audio is excellent; the sound of the ball rolling and hitting pins is amazing.

All the features you'd expect are in there: singles, teams, tournament/league mode and the ability to customize your player. The game's main setbacks are in the animation variety and physics.

On the animation side, there's only one for each of the situations, whether it be a strike, gutterball or the like. One arm-pumping animation makes a game—not. Bowling ball and pin physics is one area that really needs some attention to detail, much like the ball physics in pinball. The pin scattering in *PBA Bowling* looks way too predetermined, and needs to be based more on the effects of wood on wood and ball on wood.

If these two areas got some work, this would be a great bowling sim.



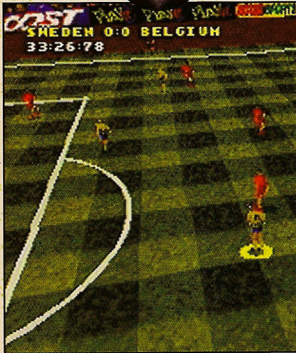
VR SOCCER Worth the wait.

For about six months now, I've been telling you about this development team, VR Sports. I showed you screenshots, told you about my trip down to see them, and even gave you my initial impressions of the games they were developing. The only thing I haven't done is tell you anything solid about their playability. Well, now your wait is over. I've finally had a chance to play *VR Soccer* for the PlayStation, and I like what I see.

Last issue I compared *FIFA* to *Goal Storm* and revealed that, in fact, *FIFA* had now been one-upped. Not to keep going after EA, but comparison time is here again, and they're the guys you have to beat in order to make it.

Like I said last issue when comparing *Goal Storm* and *FIFA*, sim-nuts will likely still pick *FIFA* over *VR Soccer*. It plays more realistically and has more "stuff" packed in. But we also all know that soccer is a boring sport with a small American audience. Realism may not be the best way to endear our consumers toward this game. *VR Soccer*, like *Goal Storm*, is much more fun to play. The action is fast-paced, player response is excellent, and the graphics are some of the best going, with smooth, realistic character animation and sharp details. What you get is a more eye-pleasing soccer game with that arcade playability that will attract all types of competitive game players.

Which game should you buy? Hard to say. But when I picture a couple of guys up at four in the morning, sweating over a fierce futbol match, I see *VR Soccer* on the screen, not *FIFA*.



MORE GOLF

OK, so this is the second PC game I've reviewed this month. I'm sorry, but I was running out of new games. Sports titles are a little sparse right now. Since there seem to be so many golf nuts out there (that's the only reason for the over-abundance of golf sims out there) I might as well give them a peek of another dimpled-ball pastime.

Microsoft Golf is the title of this newest golf sim. Usable on Windows 95, *MG* features such courses as Torrey Pines and the ever-popular Firestone Country Club. I'm not going to bore you with the mechanics of this game. It's golf, for heaven's sake. How much interface could there possibly be? What I will tell you is that the graphics are pretty and the sound appropriate. One cool feature is the ability to play through the net with your golfing chums across America. Just think, you and 40 of your closest PC-owning friends can break up into four-somes and play away! With a six-pack of Old Milwaukee it couldn't get much better than that.

If you really feel that you need another golf game, by all means go get this one. But come on, it ain't that expensive a sport. For the price of this game, you could hit the links in real life and maybe get a little sun and exercise.



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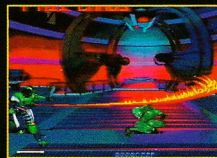
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