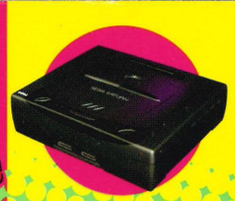
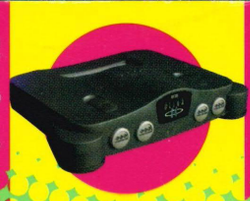
Super Mario 64 Exclusive Preview!


Saturn

PlayStation


Ultra 64

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Ultimate

Futu...es

First Reviews!

Saturn
- Sega Rally

3DO
- PO'ed

PlayStation
- Ridge Racer Revolution

There's absolute freedom of movement...

Jaguar
- Super X

Saturn
- X-Men

PC CD ROM
- 11th Hour

PlayStation
- Shellshock

Exclusive!
- Virtua Fighter 2 tippage

Mario's gone 3D

...exceptional gameplay performance...

...a fun experience never witnessed before

...incredibly realistic graphics

...Nintendo 64 delivers beyond our expectations

Ultra 64

Exclusive pics and details from the launch of the decade

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MARTINI RACING
MICHELIN
MICHELIN
PIRELLI

The final game in Sega's winter assault has arrived. And *Sega Rally* is bloody BRILLIANT – see our review, beginning on page 58 for the full facts and pictures.

And that's not all. We've managed to pull off one of the most eagerly awaited of PlayStation reviews – the sequel to *Ridge Racer*. Turn immediately to page 68 to see if this game really is 'the best thing ever'.

But by far the most important features of Ultimate this month are the pages devoted to Nintendo's Ultra 64. The machine you've been waiting for is here. We've just come back from Japan and bring you the hottest information and screenshots of the games the industry are flipping for. And we give you an exclusive preview of the best of these – *Super Mario 64*!

Marcus Hawkins (Editor)

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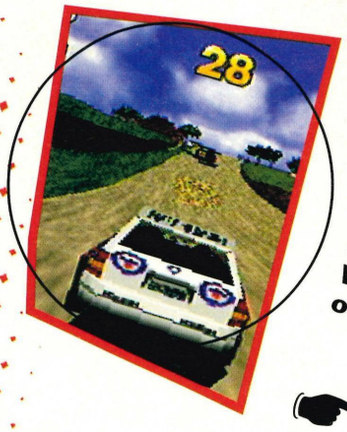
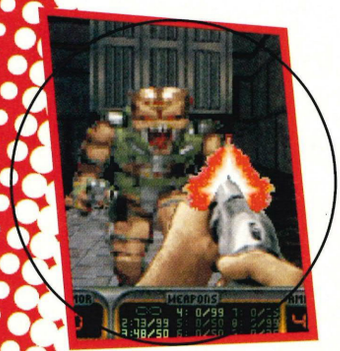


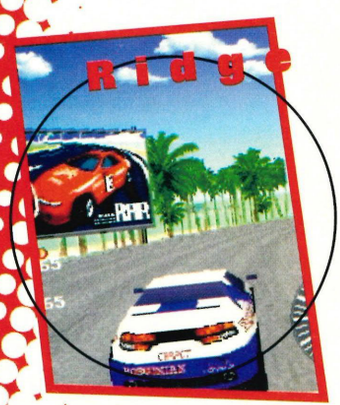
Sega Rally 58

Have Sega made up for the disappointment that was *Daytona USA*? Is *Sega Rally* arcade perfect? Is it a *Ridge Revolution* beater? Is it a *Ridge Revolution* beater? What's it bloody like? Consume our massive review now!



Duke Nukem 62

Yet another *Doom*-clone claiming to be a *Doom*-beater. This time it's for the PC. Does it steal *Doom*'s crown? Go to page 62, go directly to page 62, do not pass GO, do not collect £200. In fact, don't do anything – just go!



Racer Revolution 68

The sequel the whole world's been waiting for crashes into the Ultimate office just a few days after *Sega Rally*. It's the Ultimate showdown, there can only be one winner. What are you doing hanging around here?

X-Men 72

With the same game-engine as *Street Fighter Alpha*, *Darkstalkers* and *Marvel Super Heroes* AND a stunning array of bonkers special moves, can *X-Men* really be anything other than completely brilliant?

Section 1

Up-front

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The hottest, most up to date news going: Two Tenkaku, Rise 2, Skyhammer, the best of the month's video CDs – Plus! Virtua Fighter 2 tipped to high heaven. It's packed!

Section 2

Specials

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Ten massive pages on Nintendo's Ultra 64 – all the games, all the pics, all the facts. Plus! Silicon Graphics and how they will affect the Next Gen.

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Reviews

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The best Next Gen reviews in the business: Sega Rally, Duke Nukem, Ridge Revolution, Maps O' Death, X-Men...

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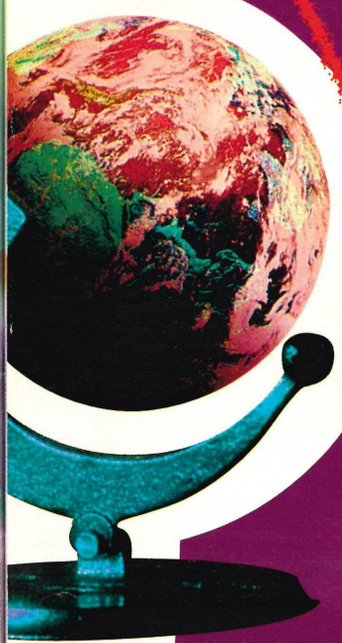
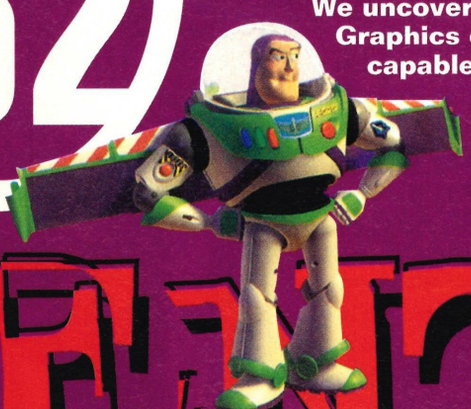
Super Mario 64

As this Ultra 64 title has been trumpeted as: 'The best videogame in history,' by the president of Nintendo, Hiroshi Yamauchi, we thought we'd secure an exclusive preview. Tuck in...



Silicon Graphics

We uncover just what it is that Silicon Graphics do, what their workstations are capable of and why the whole set up costs so bleedin' much. Oh, and we discover the gaming implications of it all as well...



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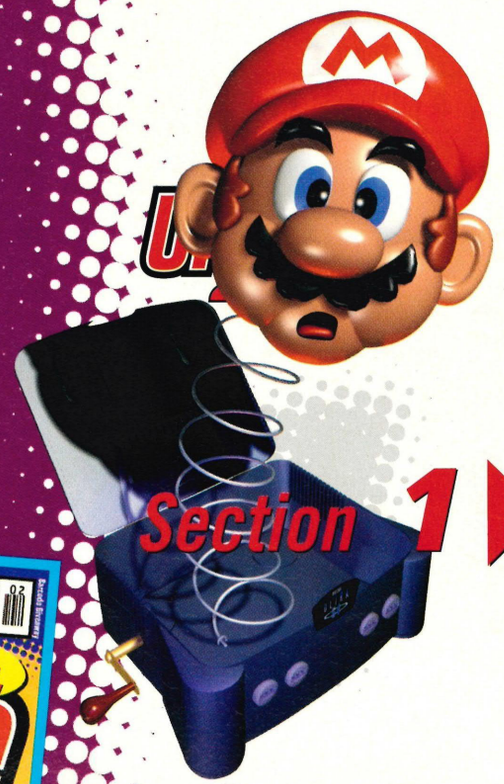

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Virtua Fighter 2

Tipped Right Up!

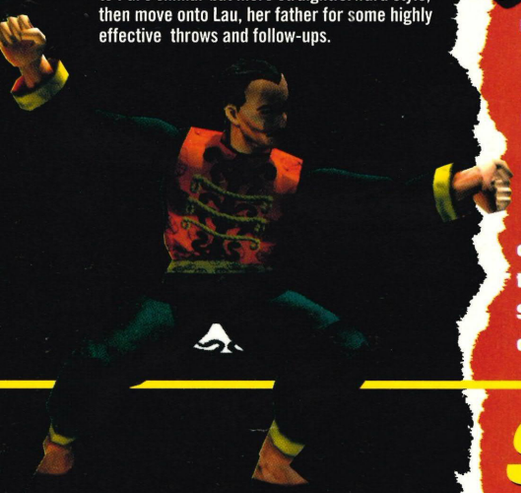
We thought it would be rather top this month to devote the next 10 Ultimate Update columns to guiding you through this exceptional Saturn beat-em-up (we can give it more room than in a CD-sized guide, you see). You'll find each character presented with a large assortment of their special moses (with a few top combos where necessary). And here's a key to the abbreviations...

P .....Punch
K .....Kick
G.....Guard
QCR Quarter-Circle Right
SCR ...Semi-Circle Right
down/forward etc.....
Diagonal Down/Forward
down+K etc .....
Down and Kick together

And remember, practice does and *will* make you perfect. Try 'em out...

Lau Chan

The gentleman of the combatants in *Virtua Fighter 2* certainly has a phenomenal amount of combos at his disposal. He's one of the most effective characters in the air and is a master of the follow-up. If you're a beginner, get used to Pai's similar but more straightforward style, then move onto Lau, her father for some highly effective throws and follow-ups.



Double punch	P, P, P
Downward swipe	up+P
Punch-heel kick	P, K
Punch-crescent	P, K+G
Punch-sweep	P, hold down+K+G
Double punch-straight kick	P, P, K
Triple punch-crescent	P, P, P, K
Triple punch-backward kickflip	P, P, P, back+K
Triple punch-sweep	P, P, P, hold down+K
Elbow strike	forward+P
Overhead elbow	down/back+P
Forearm strike-double punch	down/back+P, P, P
Forearm strike-heel kick	down/back+P, K
Forearm strike-crescent	down/back+P, K+G
Forearm strike-sweep	down/back+P, hold down+K+G
Lifting palm-double punch	down/forward+P, P, P
Lifting palm-crescent	hold down/forward+P, K+G
Lifting palm-sweep	hold down/forward+P, back+K+G
Knife hand-punch	down/foward+P, P
Knife hand-double punch	down/foward+P, P, P
Knife hand-double punch-crescent	down/forward+P, P, P, K
Knife hand-double punch-sweep	down/forward+P, P, P, down+K
Dashing knife hand	down/forward, down/forward+P
Backflip	up/back
Backward kickflip	up/back+K
Aerial cartwheel kick	up/forward+K
Crescent kick	K+G
Sweep	hold down+K+G
Snap kick	forward+K
Sliding attack	forward, down+K
Rising heel kick	hold down, release+K
Hopping jab	up, P while asc
Hop kick	up, K while asc
Hop and sweep	up, K while desc
Short jump kick	up/forward+K+G
Overhead hammer	hold up, forward+P whileasc
Take-off kick	hold up, K
Mid-air kick	hold up, K while asc
Landing kick	hold up, K while desc
Drop kick (front)	hold up, forward+K whileasc
Drop kick (rear)	hold up, back+K while asc
Turning heel kick (facing away)	K
Turning heel slide (fa)	down+K
Turning double low punch (fa)	down+P
Waterwheel drop (up close)	P+G
Piggyback drop (up close)	back+P
Head slam (up close)	back, forward+P
Sideways throw (up close)	back, down+P+G
Foot stomp	down/forward+K
Single flying stomp	up+P
Double flying stomp	hold up+P

Sega start partying!

Sega Japan recently organised a private party, which Ultimate attended. It was a low-key exhibition held in order to introduce their latest arcade games.

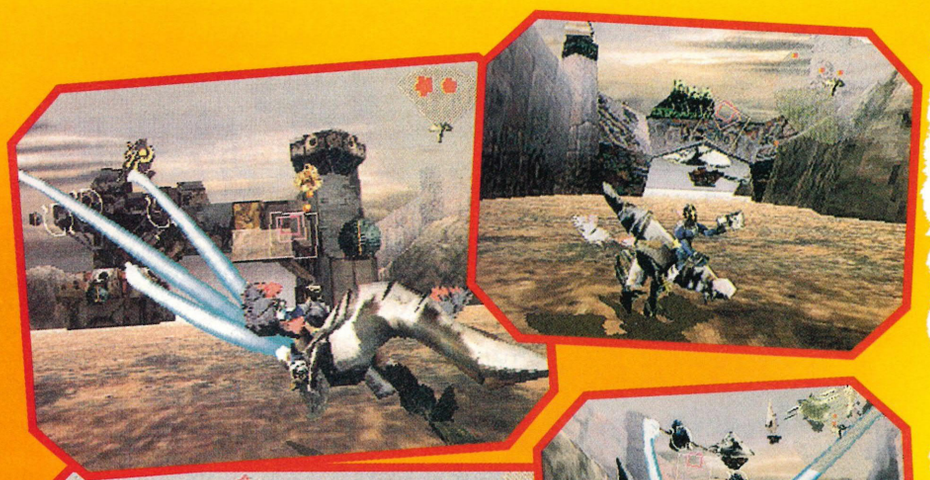
Mr Nakayama, president of Sega Japan, welcomed all the guests (mainly distributors), and most were there to see the latest and near complete version of *Manx TT*. In comparison to the one on show at the JAMMA show (see issue 13 for report), all the stages are available and the cabinet settings are finished. The finished arcade machine itself will be available for the relatively cheap price of ¥1,980,000 (approx. £14,500). Not bad.

▲ Is it better than *Virtua Fighter 2*? Could be...

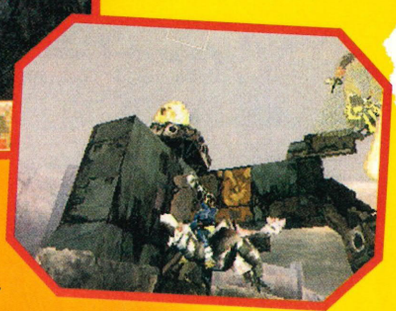
Virtual On was also officially launched at the party. Now, all the robots are available (only a few were selectable come JAMMA) in this top two-player combat game. The finished cabinet will actually contain two Model 2 boards. A live-screen will also be added to the coin-op, which will give a third-person view of the fight. This live-screen, which requires an additional Model 2 board (bringing the total up to three in the complete coin-op!), still isn't finished and was running a rolling demo. The last big title to be shown was the *Virtua Fighter*-esque *Fighting Vipers* (a beat-em-up which is based on Sega's VS board, which is only slightly cheaper than that used in *Virtua Fighter 2*).

During the party, a lot of rumours were knocking about concerning future Saturn releases. The next wave of arcade conversions will be *Fighting Vipers* and *Virtual On* (as we'd predicted). The *Virtual On* development team are currently considering how to bring the essential two-player element most effectively to the Saturn (as it really needs two screens to succeed). Initial development of the conversion has already begun, although surprisingly a Saturn version of *Manx TT* wasn't talked about (perhaps because one of the main pulling factors of the game as it stands is the realistic cabinet). We're confident a home version will appear in '96, though. As always, we'll keep you informed.

Panzer Dragoon Zwei



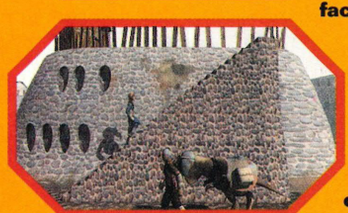
▲ Expect an early summer release for this scorcher.



▲ Sharper graphics, smoother animation, more freedom of movement and an even sillier name.

One Saturn game that probably drew the largest assortment of different opinions (you either loved it or hated it... or you thought it was *alright*), *Panzer Dragoon*, is getting a sequel early this year.

The new *Panzer Dragoon Zwei* – yep, that's *Zwei* – looks even better than the first shoot-em-up, and also allows you greater freedom of movement. For instance, you can shift your viewpoint up, down, left and right to a much greater extent – there are scenes where you can look down at a huge warship or up at a plane as you are attacking them. You can also look back at the dragon itself, as before. All this should contribute to the game not feeling as restrictive as the original.



The dragon itself is currently very small. This is because the game's storyline follows the story of the dragon growing up. So, the cinematic intro shows the baby dragon in the sky practising his/her flying skills.

This is also reflected in the game. The sequel has a new feature called Ground Mode. This allows the dragon to run on the ground itself. So, as the baby dragon clearly can't fly very well, the game kicks off on a ground stage. In fact, these first screenshots are all taken from the ground mode – looks drop dead sexy, doesn't it?

Machine.....Saturn
Publisher....Sega
Developer...In-house
Style.....Shoot-em-down
Release.....TBC
Country.....Japan

Ultimate UPDATE

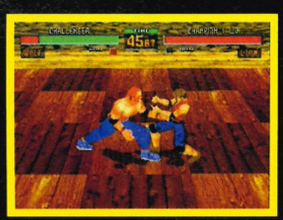
Ultimate's Essential Buys Of The Month

What a line up! The best ever version of *Doom*, Sega's well realised *Virtua Fighter 2*, the innovative *Psychic Detective*, the oddly fun *Powerdrive* and the *Doom*-tastic *Duke Nukem*. Here they are – this month's essential Next Gen buys...

Doom – PlayStation

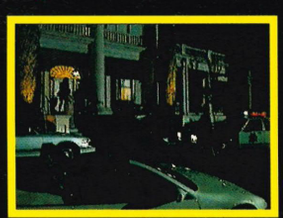
Ultimately: 96%

Virtua Fighter 2 – Sat



Ultimately: 92%

Psychic Dick – 3DO



Ultimately: 83%

Powerdrive – Jaguar

Ultimately: 73%

Duke Nukem – PC

Ultimately: 88%

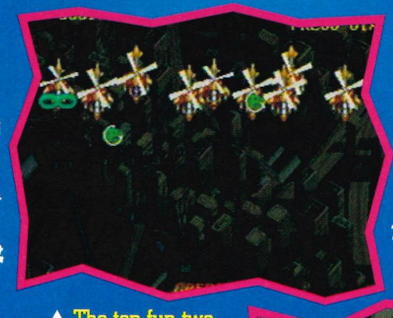
...TRUE LINES... T•HQ are gearing up to blast into the Next Gen with several new titles this year. The first is *In The Hunt*, which has

Shun Di

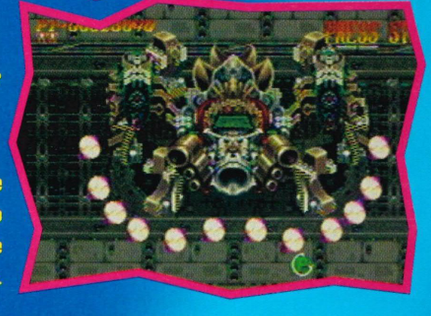
The old man sticks out from the bunch with his strange fighting style, and is probably more suited to the experienced player (his recovery time is slow and his single hits don't do that much damage). But he has a huge range of moves, although a great many are timing-lead. You're going to need oodles of patience.

Running punches	forward+P
Punch-high elbow-uppercut	P, P, P
Two hand push-swing	P+K
Uppercut	down/forward+P
Lunging punch	hold down, forward+P
Backpush	down/back+P
Twisting back hook fist	back+P
Roll away	back
Backflip	up/back
Handstand	forward, SCR, back
Handstand-kick	forward, SCR, back, K
Cartwheel kick	forward, forward+K
Mule kick	up+K
Scorpion kick	down+K+G
Sacrifice scissors kick	up/forward+K
Turn around hammer	up, P while asc
Hopping thrust sweep	up/forward, K while desc
Hopping kick	up/forward, K while asc
Hopping corkscrew punch	up/forward+P
Side step backwards	down/back+G
Side step backwards-backfist	down/back+G, P
Side step backwards-two handed push	down/back+G, P+K
Side step forwards	down+G
Step backwards-tuck in belly	back+G
Step backwards-uppercut	back+G, P
Dodge forwards-slap and spin	down/forward+G, P+K
Jumping back hammer	up+P
Backward jumping back hammer	up/back+P
Jumping hammer	hold up, forward +P whileasc
Jumping spin kick	K+G
Jumping spin kick-sideways push	K+G, P
Breakdance sweep 1	down/back+K+G
Breakdance sweep 2	hold down+K+G
Breakdance sweeps (when drunk)	down+P+K, K, K
Slow sweep	down/back+K+G
Backwards hopping kicks	back+K+G
Low back kick	down/back+K
Low back kick-fall face down	down/back+K, G
Low back kick-heel kick	down/back+K, K
Twist kick-jumping spin kick	down/back+K, K+G
Sit down-low kick	down. down, K
Rear punch (facing away)	P
Rear sitting punch (fa)	down+P
Rear Cossack dance sweep	down+K
Turning shin kick	down/back+K
Dances with punches-drink (up close)	P+G
Tripping elbow drop (up close)	PKG all together
Somersaulting heel strike	up+P
Roll-elbow drop (opponent down)	hold up/forward+P

Two Tenk



Sony Music Entertainment will soon be releasing a classic-style shoot-em-up in Japan, around the time *Kileak The Blood 2* hits the stores (very soon).



▲ The top fun two-player option gives this a real edge over the competition.

▶ Yep, some of the bosses can take up nearly the entire screen. Amazing.

The game is very Japanese orientated, as you have to destroy wave upon wave of enemies who are trying to take out Osaka. And it's your job to defend the city, and in particular, its famous tower, from which the game gets its name. Understand?

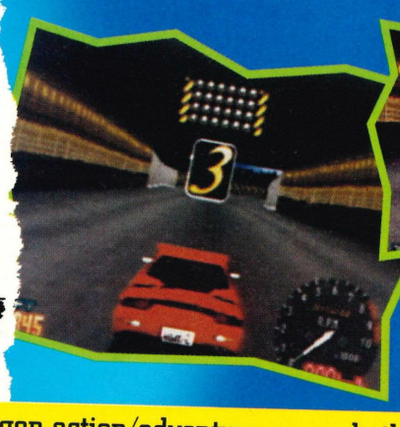
You get to choose from three different ships: Kuidaolegger is a Gundam-type robot armed with a laser rifle, while Crab and Shouliber take the form of, ahem, crabs. These two come complete with a Liquid Blaster and Mash Blaster respectively. Each of these weapons can be

Dead-Heat

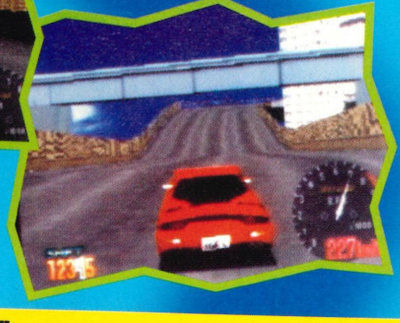
The Saturn's getting *Ridge Racer*! Okay... it's not. But it is getting a racing game with some very similar elements.

As in *Ridge*, you get to race in and around a cityscape (which features frighteningly similar tunnels), and the speedometer is certainly reminiscent of Namco's classic. However, the cars are distinctly different. There are three basic ones to choose from: Dark Nebula, Mad Piper and Rapid Fire. These are regular cars, and although not as sporty as those in *Ridge*, they do look somehow better.

Dead-Heat Road also features three tracks, with each race being introduced by a simply goi-gous Japanese lass, who takes on various 'fantasy' guises, such as a nurse, secretary etc. There are ten of these beauties, each sitting next to you (in the car, obviously) during a race and giving you a bit of encouragement. If you do well, you're the lucky recipient of a 'sexy' kiss, which is much better than *Ridge Racer*'s replay mode (so our Japanese correspondent is convinced).



▲ H,mm, a tunnel. *Ridge Racer*, anyone?

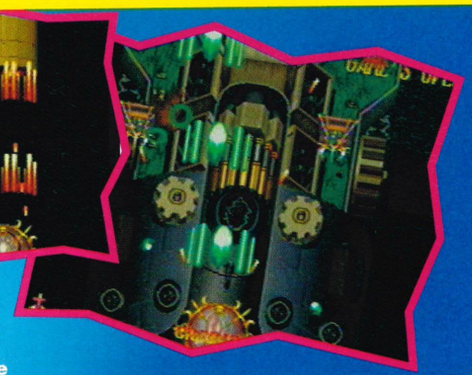


▼ At least there are a lot of good, fast straights in this.

.TRUE LINES... a 'very Japanese' 3D polygon action/adventure game, both for the PlayStation. 'There are currently no plans for T•H

been enhanced by Xing for the western world and should receive a US release within a month. They are also readying ▼.....

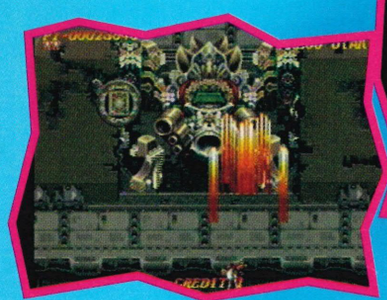
aku



upgraded up to four times. Of course, as in *Raiden* and other shoot-em-ups in this genre, there'll be plenty of power-ups to collect. And there's a fair whack of these in *Two Tenkaku*. In addition to the traditional upgrade bonuses, you'll be able to obtain: regular missiles, homing missiles, full weapon power-ups, Sussano bomber item and Tenkaku beams. This final one is the ultimate power-up, but the Sussano bomber item is also an essential (and rather mystical) one to pick up. Once you trigger this, all the enemies on the screen will be consumed by fire. In this fire, you'll be able to see the god Sussano praying. Not bloody half bad. We look forward to reviewing this one.

▲ Some of the lighting effects are distressingly good.

▼ Guns are great, guns are fab – but gimme a power-up!



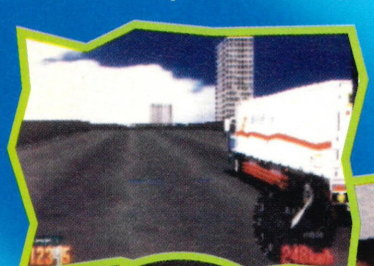
▲ Now how's that for a top bleeding power-up?

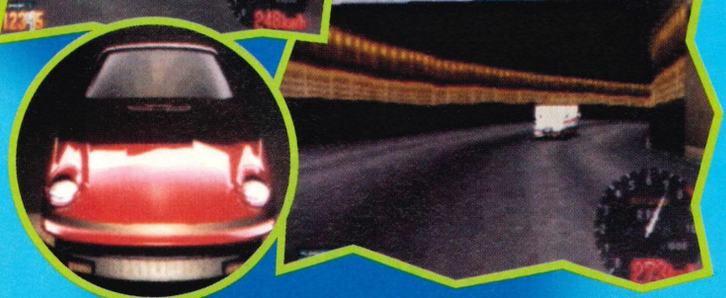
Machine.....PlayStation
Publisher....Sony
Developer...In-house
Style.....Scrolling shooter
Release.....January '96
Country.....Japan

Road

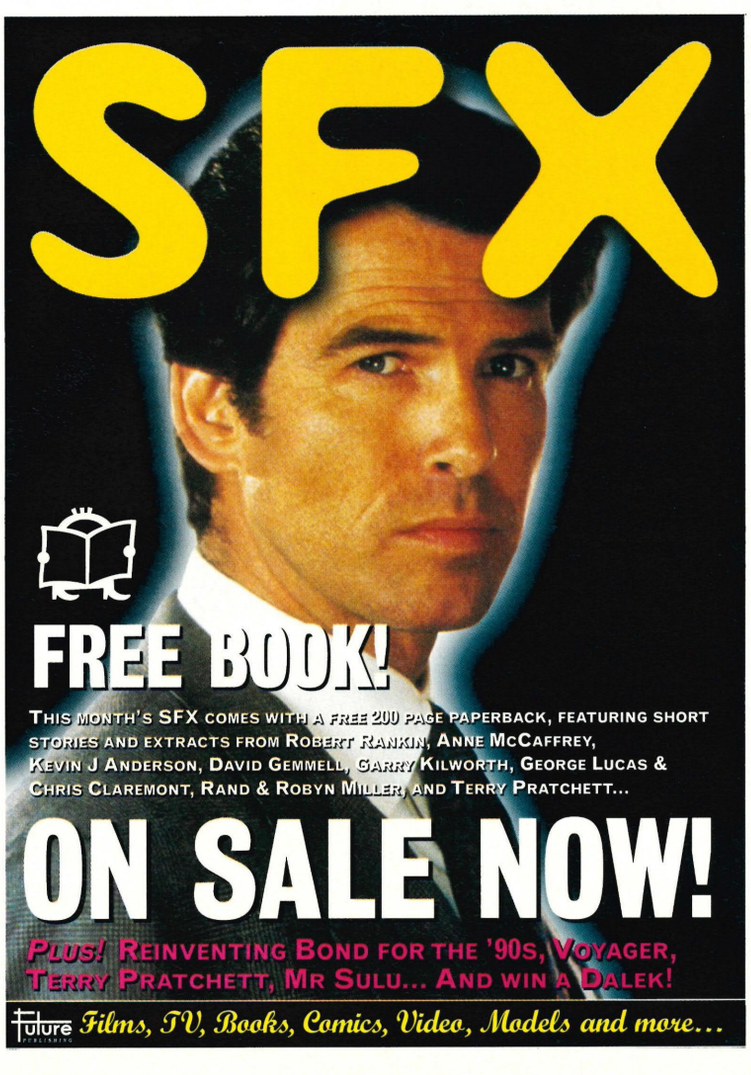
Pack-in-Video, the publishers, have also seen fit to include a two-player option along the lines of *Sega Rally* and *CyberSled*, whereby the screen is split in two horizontally. And it's still fast and very playable in this mode. Maybe the Saturn is slowly turning into the driving fiend's machine. Then again, so is the PlayStation...

Machine.....Saturn
Publisher....Pack-in-Video
Developer...In-house
Style.....Take a wild guess
Release.....January '96
Country.....Japan





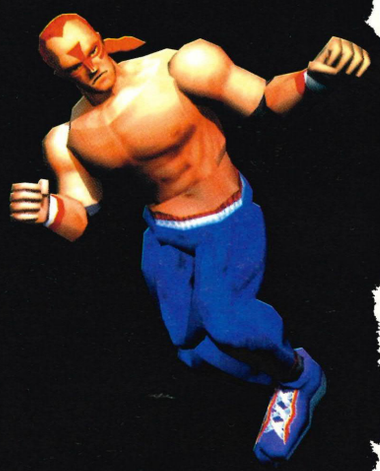
to release any Saturn titles,' a source told Ultimate.....



Ultimate UPDATE

Wolf Hawkfield

The wrestling wonder is certainly a lot tougher an opponent than in the original game, and he can be one of the most satisfying of fighters to play as (thanks to his array of energy-sapping close moves and throws). Being one of the fastest runners in *VF2*, it's good to dash in and surprise them with a body blow. But learn to pull off his throws and you're well away.



Double punch-uppercut	P, P, P
Double punch-high elbow strike	P, P, forward+P
Uppercut	down/forward+P
Uppercut from low position	hold down/forward+P
Uppercut-body blow	down/forward+P, forward+P
Running clothesline	forward, forward+P
Dashing shoulder ram	back, forward+P
Backhand slap	back+P
Body blow	forward+P
Drop elbow	back+P+K
Two hand upward slap	hold down, forward+P
Punch-kick combo	P, K
Side kick	down/forward+K
Roundhouse	K
Roundhouse	forward+K+G
Low kick	down+K
Scissors kick	K+G
Somersault heel smash	back, forward+K+G
Knee	forward+K
Flying knee attack	forward, forward+K+G
Knee-shoulder ram	forward+K, back, forward+P
Sliding attack	forward, down+K
Drop kick	up/forward+K
Elbow drop on fallen opponent	down/forward+P
Back body splash	up/back+K
Hopping double fist hammer	up+P
Hopping jab	up, P while asc
Hopping side kick	up, K while desc
Overhead hammer	hold up, forward+P whileasc
Drop kick to front	hold up, forward+K while asc
Drop kick to rear	hold up, back+K while asc
Take-off jump kick	hold up+K
Mid-air kick	hold up, K while asc
Landing kick	hold up, K while desc
Turning punch (facing away)	P
Turning low punch (fa)	down+P
Turning punch crouching (fa)	hold down+P
Turning kick (fa)	K
Turning kick crouching (fa)	hold down+K
Turning sliding attack (fa)	down+K
Grab side kick (counter)	down/back+P
Backfall suplex (up close)	P+G
German suplex (up close)	P+G
Body slam (up close)	forward+P
Twirl and hurl (up close)	back, SCR, forward+P
Ghostbuster (up close)	down/forward, down/forward+P+K
Frankensteiner (up close)	up/forward+K+G
Double arm suplex (up close)	down/back+PKG all together
Tombstone (up close)	down/forward +PKG all together
Torso takedown (up close)	down+P+G
Variation suplex (up close)	PKG all together

◀ *Rise 2*'s 28 robots were rendered on top-notch workstations and really are very shiny indeed.

▲ The PC version is currently the furthest down the production line.

◀ *Rise 2*'s got projectile moves aplenty, robots now being able to lob fire, ice, plasma, acid, lightning and bullets at each other. Bingo!

Rise 2 Resurrection

How dare they? *Rise 2*? The follow-up to one of the worst games of all-time? What can possibly be going through their minds? Perhaps memories of the vast amounts of cash that they made from *Rise 1*. Ah, now we understand. *Rise 2* then – what a brilliant idea.

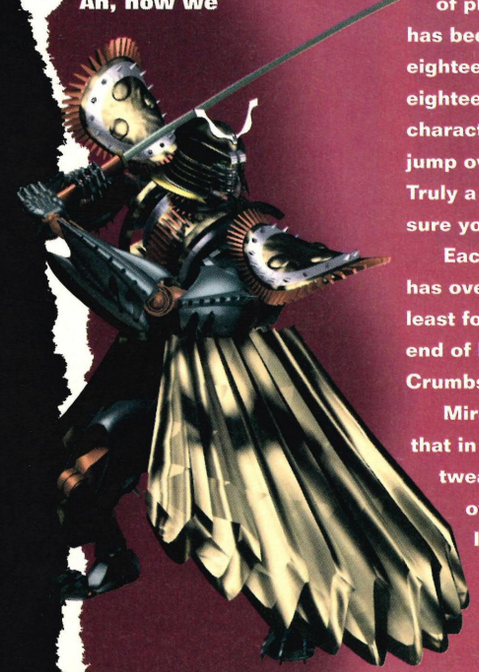
The thinking behind *Rise 2* has been to make it 'good' instead of being 'bad'. Something they failed to think of last time.

For a kick-off the number of playable characters has been increased eighteen-fold – to eighteen – and the characters can now jump over each other. Truly a revelation, we're sure you'll agree.

Each of the game's 28 robots has over 30 moves, including at least four special moves and an end of battle termination move. Crumbs! Another revelation.

Mirage are keen to point out that in addition to the cosmetic tweakage, a severe rewrite of the Artificial Intelligence routines has taken place too, meaning that it is now impossible to finish the game using only one punch move. And again, a revelation.

Our First impressions indicate that *Rise 2* will be a great improvement on the abysmal original, but quite how much of an improvement can only be ascertained once we give it the gloves-off Ultimate review treatment very soon.



Machine.....PlayStation

Publisher....Acclaim

Developer...Mirage

Style.....Beat-em-up

Release.....February '96

Country.....UK

TRUE LINES... Codemasters' *Sampras Extreme* for the PlayStation is shaping up very nicely, we'll have a preview next issue

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A load of old balls it ain't!

Release Date: 3rd November 1995 SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

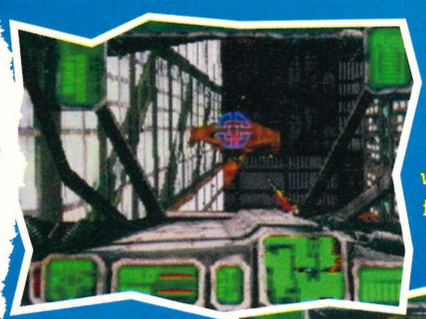
.TRUE LINES... Our Japanese correspondent reports that Apple have just unveiled the first game for their Pippin console at ▼.....

UPDATE

Pai Chan

A great many *Virtua Fighter* players despise Pai, mainly because she is considered a bit weak and can easily be ringed out. But she still has a well-balanced selection of moves, and comes armed with some of the most devastating throws. She also has the fastest pounce in *VF2*, but don't try pulling them off every time an opponent goes down as her range and recovery time is poor.

Triple punch	P, P, P
Punch-kick combo	P, K
Punch-crescent	P, K+G
Punch-sweep	P, hold down+K+G
Double punch-heel kick	P, P, K
Triple punch-crescent	P, P, P, K
Triple punch-backwards kickflip	P, P, P, back+K
Triple punch-sweep	P, P, P, hold down+K
Dodging punch-running punches	down/back+P, P, P
Dodging punch-crescent	down/back+P, K+G
Dodging punch-sweep	down/back+P, hold down+K+G
Dodging punch-double punch-crescent	down/back+P, P, P, K
Dodging punch-kick combo	down/back+P, K
Dodge-punch-double punch-sweep	down/back+P, P, P, hold down+K
Downward chop	down/forward+P
Backflip	up/back
Backward kickflip	up/back+K
Hopping jab	up, P while asc
Hopping double fist hammer	up+P
Hopping side kick	up, K while desc
Snap kick	forward+K
Rising heel kick	hold down, release+K
Crescent kick	K+G
Reverse crescent kick	back+K+G
High lunging leg thrust	forward, forward+K
Jumping hammer	hold up, forward+P while asc
Crane stomp	hold up, forward+K while asc
Take-off kick	hold up+K
Mid-air kick	hold up, K while asc
Landing kick	hold up, K while desc
Back drop kick	hold up, back+K while asc
Single jumping sparrow kick	up/forward+K
Double jumping sparrow kick	up/forward+K, K
Jabbing footwork	back, back+P
Wrist twist (up close)	P+G
Falling DDT (up close)	forward, down+P
Stomach throw (up close)	back, down+P+G
Reaping throw and punch (up close)	forward, forward+P+K
Pushover (up close)	back, forward+P
Cartwheel over low opponent (up close)	forward+PKG all together
Turning low double punch (facing away)	down+P
Turning punch from crouch (fa)	hold down+P
Turning heel kick (fa)	K
Turning heel slide (fa)	down+K
Grab-throw counter attack (high)	back+P
Grab-throw counter attack (mid)	down/back+P
Punch fallen opponent	down/forward+P
Jumping knee pounce	up+P
High jumping knee pounce	hold up+P



▲ Oi! brown spodge, you're ruining our nice city! Gercha!

▶ Lots of choice weapons are yours for the taking. Take them NOW!

▶ Ah ha, now we have you in our sights!

Skyhammer

Rebellion, developers of *Alien Vs Predator*, are about to unleash their latest creation for the Jaguar. Its name is *Skyhammer*, it's a 3D flight game and it's looking a mite tasty.

Set in the year 2051 you play the role of a ruthless mercenary, taking care of dirty work for the highest bidder. Assassinations? No problem. Rescues? Right you are then. Nipping down the shops for half a pound of sprouts? You betcha. No job is too tough 'cos you are a *Skyhammer* and you don't take any nonsense from anybody. Alrighty?

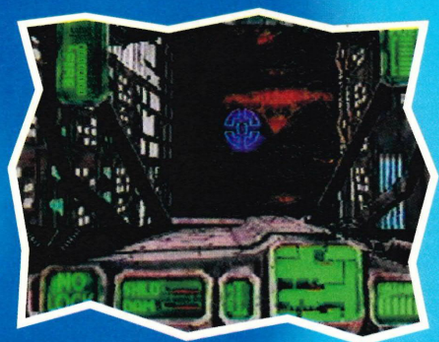
A once great city has fallen under the control of three vast corporations. Its streets are dark and foreboding, a once golden age of prosperity having long since passed, leaving only the stench of decay in its wake. And driven by despair the once placid populace have transformed into a violent and thoroughly unpleasant bunch. It's all a bit like Hartlepool.

These streets form your battleground as you bomb around in your ship picking up good things and killing bad things – of which there are many. However, lurking amongst the numerous enemy craft are good guys who're on your side, helping you carry out your task. Advanced AI routines mean that they'll take a lead from your actions and work as a team with you. Good job your targeting and weapons systems are linked, avoiding a potential friendly fire incident isn't it?

We're sure Rebellion won't mind if we say that *Skyhammer* reminds us of the PC smash (and imminent PlayStation release) *Descent*. Both games offer the player complete freedom of movement through a texture-mapped, claustrophobic 3D environment.

The game uses a specially developed 3D engine and from your comfy seat in the cockpit the city streets loom out of the darkness, both quickly and smoothly. The old 'darkness' trick is used cleverly to cut down the amount of scenery that needs drawing, which helps to keep the game speedy. How very cunning.

If you recognise the screen-shots, that's because we ran some in issue one, when it was known as *Hammerhead*. Here's hoping *Skyhammer* fulfils its promises and finally ends the Jaguar's 'good game' famine.



Machine.....Jaguar

Publisher....Rebellion

Developer...In-house

Style.....Shoot-em-up

Release.....TBC

Country.....UK

...TRUE LINES... the Multimedia '95 show. The game? *Racing Days*, a racing game that uses the Pippin's analogical track-ball.....

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..TRUE LINES... The 3DO company recently acquired Cyclone Studios, the top developers responsible for the likes of *Captain Quazar*

UPDATE

Lion Rafale

Balancing speed and strength, Lion is certainly an ideal choice for the beginner. Perhaps the best way to succeed is to continually block and learn how your opponent fights. He has a superb array of sidekick moves, backed up with a rather eye-catching array of punches. The key is to keep low and be unpredictable – Lion is quick, so he can get out of situations fast if need be.

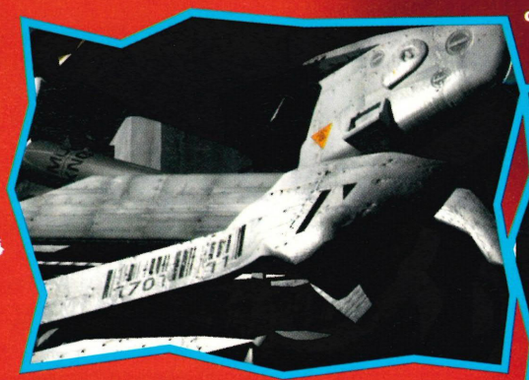
Elbow strike	forward+P
Punch-elbow thrust	P, P
Punch-elbow thrust-backfist	P, P, P
Low forward creeping peck	down/back+P
Low thrusting peck	down/back+P, P
Long range fist thrust	forward, forward+P
Uppercut-downward swipe	down/forward+P, P
Jumping downward swipe	up/forward+P
Backward jumping downward swipe	up/back+P
Swinging arms	up+P
Poke head (above)	back+P
Poke head (direct)	forward+P+G
Cartwheel backwards	up/back
Duck-sideways step	down/back+G
Duck-close in	down/forward+G
Short range low wind-up	P+G
Long range low wind-up	down/forward+P+G
Knee	forward+K
Dancing kicks	up+K, K
Side kick	down/forward+K
Low swipe kick	down+K
Spin-high kick	forward, forward+K+G
Spin-low kick	down/forward+K+G
Cartwheel spin kick	up/forward+K
One-handstand kick	down, down+K
Sweep	hold down, K+G
Side spin-low trip	G, down/forward+P
High spinning side attack	G, forward+P
Low swipe kicks	down+K, K
Low swipe-high spin kick	down+K, K+G
Overhead hammer jump	hold up, forward+P while asc
Drop kick to front	hold up, forward+K while asc
Drop kick to rear	hold up, back +K while asc
Landing kick	hold up, K while desc
Hop kick	up, K while asc
Hop and slide	up, K while desc
Hopping jab	up, P while asc
Turn-side kick	back, back+K+G
Turn punch	back, back+P
Turn high back thrust	back, back+K
Trip (up close)	P+G
Piggyback attack (up close)	P+G
Frontal piggyback (up close)	forward, SCR, back+P+G
Reaping throw (up close)	back+P+K
Grab and fling (up close)	forward, forward+P+G

Beltog

This rendered little beauty is the latest epic to come from the house of Genki, the developers of *Kileak The Blood* (and its sequel, soon to be released in Japan). Sony Music Entertainment (SME) released the original *Kileak* in Japan, but decided to go it alone this time round, giving this the name *Jupiter* while they began initial R&D. And now they've decided to call it the oh-so catchy *Beltogger 9*. Words really do fail us...

The game is set sometime around the second half of the 21st Century (presumably nowhere near Buck Rogers though). A strange (aren't they always) disease is spreading through the universe. Pickmanz virus – named after the scientist who discovered it – causes its victims to suddenly lose their marbles and become very, very dangerous. And it can't be cured. Scientists have recently determined that the virus is spilling from small black holes that have appeared, which in turn appear to be paths to another universe...

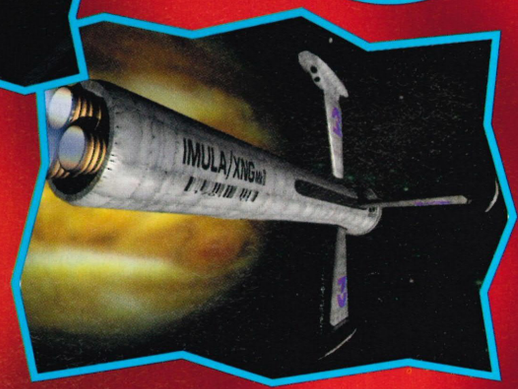
The Universal Marines have been given the task of fighting this virus. You take on the role of Sal, a sergeant in the Marines. Your girlfriend is suffering from the virus, and, knowing she can't escape, she winds up topping herself. History moves inexorably on and the government announce that the disease has ceased spreading. However, Sal's unit has been ordered to complete a



▲ Look – that thing's got a barcode on it!

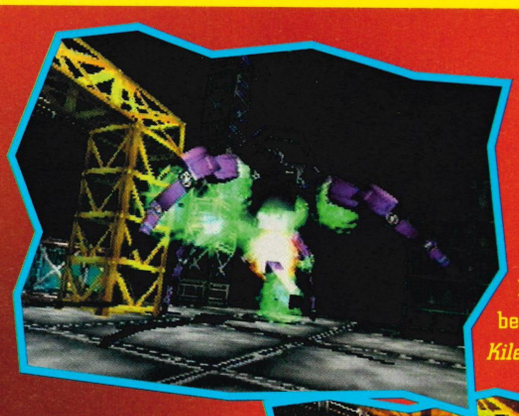
◀ Is it an arm? Is it a leg? Um... it's a piston!

▼ The graphics are as smooth as an egg.

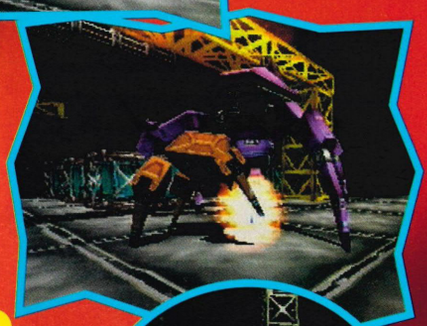


and *Battlesport*. Cyclone will keep their name, but be based under Studio 3DO's development arm, which is a good thing.....

ger 9

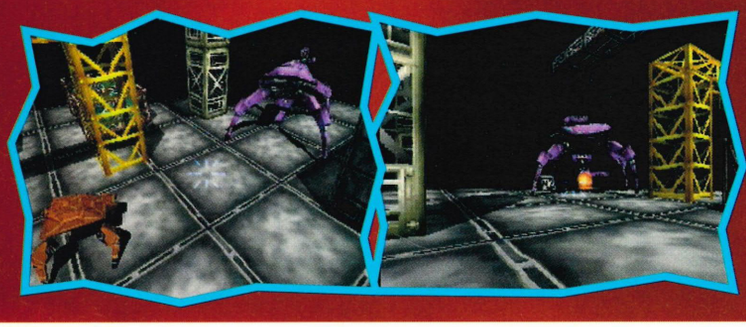


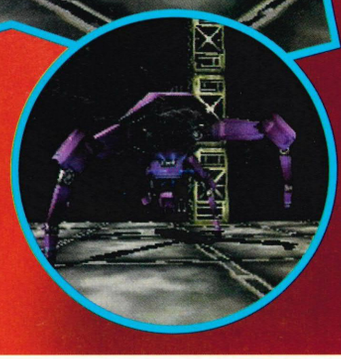
◀ This looks much better than *Kileak* for sure.



very important mission. The Universal Marines are going to Beltogger 9, a small planet near Jupiter... Blimey!

Genki certainly specialise in robot adventures, but those featured in this story aren't of the typical, stereotyped mobile-suit design. These are more stocky in build, come armed with more realistic weapons and move with impressive fluidity. The graphics are clearly an improvement, with highly detailed scenery and gorgeous animation. The spider robot, for instance, moves about like a real animal, and when it gets shot by another robot it collapses slowly (backed up with a great variation in the way it dies). There's no room for simple explosions in *Beltogger 9*. Hoorah!





Machine.....PlayStation

Publisher....Genki

Developer...In-house

Style.....Robot-fest

Release.....Summer '96

Country.....Japan

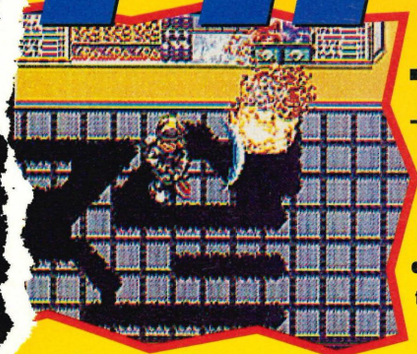
UPDATE

Kage-maru

Kage is undoubtedly one of the most popular characters in *VF2*. He may lack the more deadly moves, but he's pretty darned fast and very easy to get to grips with. Master the Ten Foot Toss and learn to follow-up with quick kicks.

Double punch-uppercut	P, P, P
Elbow strike	forward+P
Slashing fist	back, forward+P+K
Slashing fist-horizontal fist	back, forward+P+K, P+K
Slashing chop	down+P+K
Slashing chop-downward chip	down+P+K, P+K
Chopping fist	crouch, forward+P+K
Chopping fist-horizontal fist	crouch, forward+P+K, P+K
Triple punch-spinning mid kick	P, P, P, K
Triple punch-backward kickflip	P, P, P, back+K
Hopping chop	up+P
Backflip	back/up
Backward kickflip	back/up+K
Cartwheel backwards	back+G
Roll forwards	back, SCR, forward
Roll forwards-sweep	back, SCR, forward+K
Roll forwards-kick low	back, SCR, forward+P
Roll backwards	forward, SCR, back
Roll backwards-sweep	forward, SCR, back+K
Roll backwards-kick low	forward, SCR, back+P
Hop kick	up+K when asc
Hop and sweep	up+K when desc
Heel kick	down+K+G
Backheel sweep	forward, forward+K
Rising knee	crouch, forward+K
Low sliding heel kick	down+K
Flying corkscrew kick	forward, forward+K+G
Flying catapault kick	forward, forward+P+K+G
Back thrust	back+K+G
Sliding attack	back, QCR, down+K
Heel smash on fallen opponent	down/forward+K
Shoulder throw (up close)	P+G
Torso takedown (behind up close)	P+G
Ten foot toss (up close)	back+P
Reaping throw (up close)	back, forward+P
Toka throw (up close)	PKG all together
2.5 somersault-buttslam	hold up/forward+K
Flip over knee (facing away)	up+K
Turning double low punch (fa)	down+P
Turning sliding low kick (fa)	down+K
Grab incoming fist (counter)	down+P
Turning downward slap(facing opponent)	back, back+P
Turning upward slap (fo)	back, back+P+G
Turning high back thrust (fo)	back, back+K
Turning toe slide attack (fo)	back, back+K+G
Head dive pounce (short range)	up+P
Foot pounce (medium range)	up+P
Knee pounce (long range)	up+P

Firemen



▲ *Firemen 2*: The original (on the SNES) was received fairly well. A good omen?

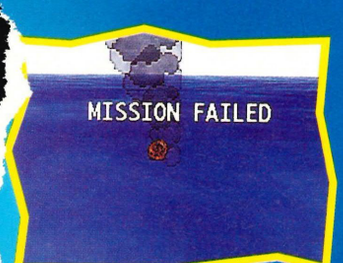
The PlayStation is set to be the first console to carry the sequel to the popular SNES hose-em-down, *Firemen* (possibly the only game of note to emerge from the Japanese Human School). Wahey!

As in the first game, you are a – wait for it – fireman, who must battle to save people and property with the help of another. The two 'weapons' at your disposal are an extinguisher and fire-hose, each being dedicated to extinguish a particular size of fire.

This time 'round, the scorched lung action doesn't take place in a simple skyscraper, but has you running

Sidewinder

Namco's *Air Combat* on the PlayStation is in for a bit of a scrap come January, thanks to a new dogfighter from Asmik.



Sidewinder uses a smaller screen than *Air Combat*, with the area of vision being a lot tighter. Of course, there are two choices of view, and you will be aided by a Head Up Display or HUD, as it's known.

A nice feature is that you can follow the missiles you unleash right up to when they hit the target. But, unlike other games which feature this option, it doesn't take up the whole screen and interrupt the game. Instead, it is restricted to the small monitor at the bottom-right of the cockpit control panel. Locked targets are also displayed on this screen – a handy device, we think.

There are 20 missions to complete, and a tasty menu of fighters on offer, including an F14, F15, F16, F18 and more. There are currently three different modes to choose from:

Floating Ru

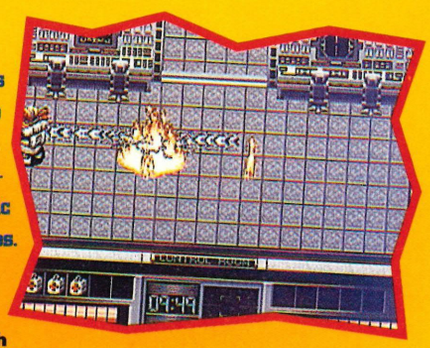
▲ And look – the traditional 'hearts for energy' gag. Chipper.

There are numerous original PlayStation games in Japan that make use of 3D polygon engines. *Jumping Flash* certainly showed the magic that could be worked with a bit of thought invested in the gameplay and a seductive 3D environment, and *Floating Runner* is attempting to shift the genre on a step.

Basically, the game is divided up into sections. Between two jumping phases, you'll have to attempt an 'action' phase. These

er to release it in a few days time together with their other flagship SNES platformer, *Yoshi's Island*. Why? We have no idea.....

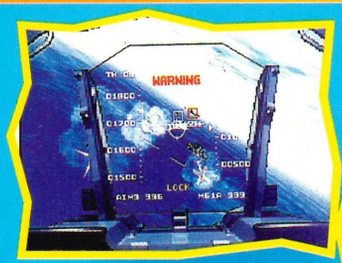
2

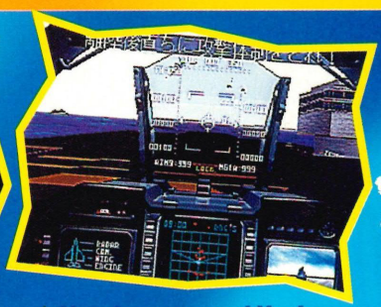


▶ Hopefully, this should be tops. The PlayStation needs a bevvy of playable 2D-come-isometric 'blasters'. Oh yes.

around a museum, an aquarium and a theme park. There are two characters in the game (either controlled by the CPU or by a real-life mate, would you believe). So, while Pete (yep, there's none of that Recall, Bayleaf, Sicknote nicknaming nonsense going on here) is keeping the flames under control, Daniel is opening doors and chopping through obstacles with his axe. It's your task to rescue all the people from the three locations, and you're given a proximity life detector to help you. And the good thing is that it's a multi-scenario game with different endings. This could be a massive hit later in the year, we'll have more very soon.

Machine.....PlayStation
Publisher....Human
Developer...In-house
Style.....Char-em-up
Release.....TBC
Country.....Japan



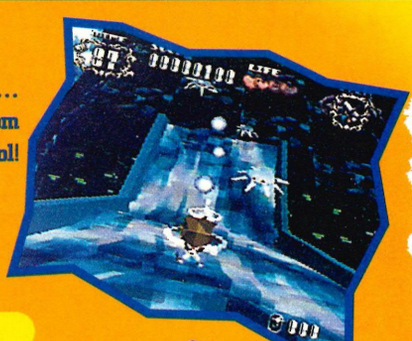


▲ Now that... is a real Head Up Display and a half.

Mission mode, Dogfight and a Training mode which features different stages to those in the game itself. The good news is, that *Sidewinder* can be played across linked PlayStations – the two-player vertical split-screen in *Air Combat* did it no favours. We'll bring you a review as soon as is humanly possible. You can count on that and no mistake.

Machine.....PlayStation
Publisher....Asmik
Developer...In-house
Style.....Dogfighter
Release.....January '96
Country.....Japan

ner



▶ Aah! Cute things... KILL THEM! Shoot them with your polygon pistol!

take place on the ground, with you shooting energy balls to kill all the enemies having a pop at you. Sounds jolly.

There are lots of different backgrounds which the action spills over and the polygons are huge and colourful. It may be aimed at the younger players out there, but we reckon it will be a right old laugh – let's face it, *Jumping Flash* wasn't particularly challenging. Expect good things, we do.

Machine.....PlayStation
Publisher....XING
Developer...In-house
Style.....Jumping thing
Release.....January '96
Country.....Japan

Next Month!

An essential guide to Thunderhawk 2 on the Saturn

You want more? How about a stonking info-packed supplement telling you everything you need to know about 3DO games?

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Plus more tips 'n' cheats than you can fill a small pair of trousers with!
PlayStation
3DO
Jaguar
PC CD ROM

You may have noticed in issue 14 of Ultimate that we gave you a handy CD-sized guide to PlayStation *Doom*. As you're flicking through this steaming issue in your hands, you will notice the essential guide to *Virtua Fighter 2* strewn about its front bits. And starting next month, you'll be getting a friendly shove through your favourite games. Do you know what that means? We've given in to your demands at last...

Yep, we've succumbed to the great God Tipster, and from now on we'll be providing you with essential cheats, tips and in-depth guides to the very latest Next Generation games – all in one handy pull-out section. Wave goodbye to other mags' watered-down advice – we've got the SOLUTIONS!!

r Industry's Villain Of The Year. This isn't Ultimate's opinion, we just try and report the news. Okay Sega? Could try harder.....

...TRUE LINES... It's an Ultra overload! Not only are Nintendo on the verge of releasing the Ultra 64, Sun Microsystems are br

Akira Yuki

The hardest of the *Virtua Fighter* characters to master, Akira packs some deadly attacks. You'll probably find experienced players legging it forwards to avoid Akira's quick opening attacks, so be wary when playing him. He's the character you must practise with over and over again to be able to use his surprising power effectively.

Jab	P
Low jab	down+P
Double jab	P, P
Hopping punch	up, P
Uppercut	down/forward, down/forward+P
Punch and body blow	P, P
Dashing elbow strike	forward, forward+P
Super dashing elbow strike	forward, forward, forward+P
Dashing palm strike	down, forward+P
Double palm strike	down, back, forward+P
Elbow strike	forward+P
Dashing body check	back, forward, forward+P+K
Power uppercut	down/forward, down/forward+P
Jumping stomach punch	up+P (opponent on floor)
Ground punch	down/forward+P (opponent on floor)
Punch-kick combo	P, K
High kick	K
Low kick	down+K
Side kick	down/forward+K
Knee	K+G, G while holding K
Hopping kick	up, K
Jumping kick	forward, forward+K
Double jumping kick	forward, forward+K, K
Jumping hammer	hold up, forward+P while asc
Jumping drop kick	hold up, forward+K while asc
Back drop kick	hold up, back+K while asc
Take off kick	hold up+K whil asc
Landing kick	hold up+K while desc
Jumping kicks	forward, forward+K, K
Counter attack (high-level)	G, back+P
Counter attack (mid-level)	G, back/down+P
Counter attack (low-level)	G, down+P
Stun palm (up close)	Press P, K, G at same time
Stun palm of doom (up close)	All, back, down/forward+P+K, back+P
Trip-double punch (up close)	P+G
Break stance (up close)	forward+P+G
Trip 1 (up close)	back+P+G
Trip 2 (up close)	down+P+G
Surprise exchange (up close)	back/down+P+G
Shake 'em up (up close)	back+P+G
Shake 'em up harder (up close)	down+P+G
Close-in ram (up close)	forward, back, forward+P+K
Pull in-push out (up close)	back/down, forward+P
Backwards uppercut (up close)	back/down, forward+P+K
Stumbling throw (up close)	back, down+P+G
Reverse body check	back, forward/down+P+K
Turning knee bash	down+K (opponent behind you)
Turning low sweep	G+K (opponent behind you)
Turning overhead hook	down+P (opponent behind you)
Turning punch (crouching)	G+P (opponent behind you)

Scavenger

Scavenger are an American games developer based in LA and were responsible for the top Mega Drive titles *SubTerrania* and *Red Zone*. But time marches on and three of their new 32-bit games currently approaching completion are looking a bit tasty. In no particular order they are...

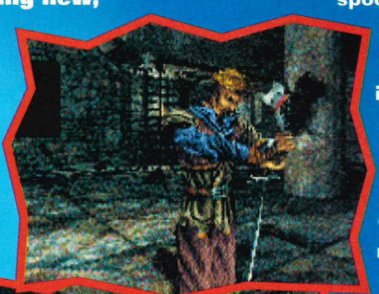
Into The Shadows

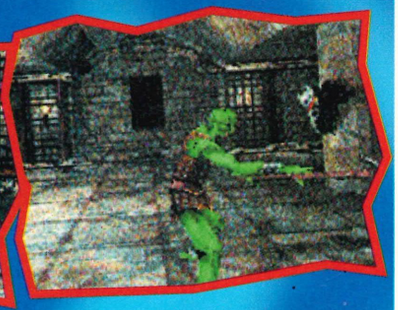
The PC already has first-person perspective games coming out of its ears, but that hasn't stopped Scavenger from creating *Into The Shadows*, a game which may at first appear to be offering nothing new, but has more than a few surprises up its polygonal sleeves. Oh yes.

It's essentially a *Doom*-style game with a generous portion of Dungeons & Dragons-type magical spookery and scary dungeon-as-maze exploring thrown in. But *Into The Shadows* is no boring, plodding adventure. Oh no. The accent is firmly on action, the creepy dungeons being inhabited by loads of different scary beasts, including wizards, elves and spooky skeletons, all of whom are baying for your blood and sorely in need of a taste of cold steel.

Amazingly the in-game baddies are constructed from a miserly 100 to 350 polygons with clever texture-mapping being used to give the appearance of many more. Cunning n'est pas? One of the game's most notable features is the fluidity of the characters movement, motion-capture techniques were used to keep it realistic while expert programming keeps it smooth 'n' speedy. Well done Scavenger. We love you, we do.

At this early stage there's not an awful lot of 'game' in there but we've been assured that that's all going to change dramatically. Good-oh.

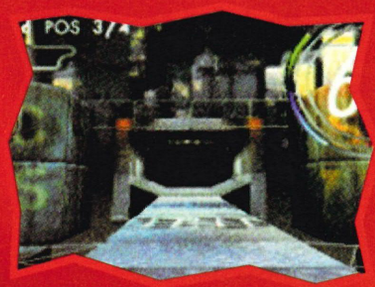




▲ Alright there matey? Nice vest.

Machine.....PC CD ROM
Publisher....Scavenger
Developer...In-house
Style.....Hack-em-up
Release.....TBC
Country.....US

Scorcher



What do you do if you want to make a racing game for the Saturn but don't want people to say, 'What? Another bloody racing game?' Well you could take a leaf out of Scavenger's book and set the whole thing in a dark twisty-turny tube.

Because there isn't much room to manoeuvre in this tube, rather than the more usual neck and neck jostling for position that you get in other racers, the way to get ahead in *Scorcher* is to avoid the many traps that await you in the tube's dark and twisty depths. Stationary vehicles and deadly pits lie ahead and only sharp reactions and an eagle-eye will stop you from hurtling headlong into them. Phwoar!

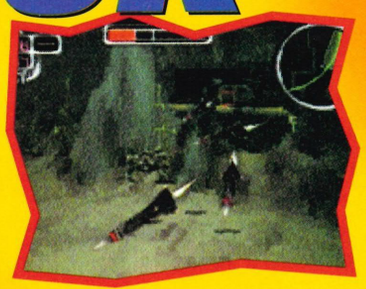
Everything moves scorchingly fast (hence *Scorcher*) and since the scenery emerges from the dank, dark recesses of a tunnel stretching out ahead of you, there's no discernable screen redrawing. Everything just kind of glides out of the darkness, objects being more brightly illuminated the closer they get. Very clever.

▲ A truck looms out from the darkness.

The game currently runs at a slippery 30 frames per second and Sega have been so impressed with the speed and detail of the graphics that they've been sending early demo versions of the game to other developers to show them what effects can be achieved on the Saturn. They'll be giving them a gold star and letting them sharpen the pencils next.

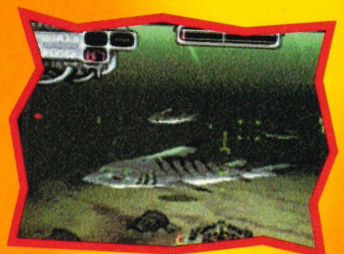
Machine.....Saturn
Publisher....Scavenger
Developer...In-house
Style.....Racing
Release.....TBC
Country.....US

Amok



It's a 3D blaster isn't it? Ah yes, but it's underwater! In *Amok* you fly a sub about (if you do 'fly' subs) and let loose torpedoes in the direction of other craft. Dislike wildlife? Well *Amok* makes real all your shark and manta-ray killing fantasies. Give the slippery buggers one from us, why don't you?

It would have been very easy to make a flying 3D game, turn it all blue and then say 'Ooh look, it's underwater,' but Scavenger have shirked such pathetic short-cuts and made everything look suitably dark, aquatic and wet. Totally new gaming concept hits Saturn first shocker!



Machine.....Saturn
Publisher....Scavenger
Developer...In-house
Style.....Shoot-em-up
Release.....TBC
Country.....US

What's So Funny?

8.2.96

http://www.futurenet.co.uk/entertainment.html

NEW! The Comedy Magazine Comedy Review

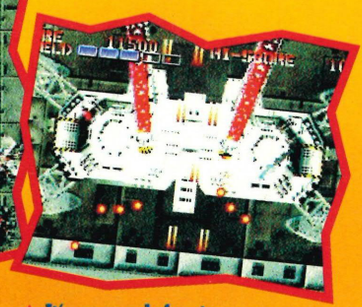
Jeffry McWild

The key to success with our Jeff, is to play defensively. If you try the offensive approach, you're going to be in trouble because of his slow speed. So, learn to block and come out with a throw or a quick stab. This is the only way to succeed against the faster opponents.

Double punch	P, P
Double punch-uppercut	P, P, P
Squatting punch	down+P
Hopping double fist hammer	hold up+P
Hopping jab	hold up+P while asc
Hell Stab	down+P+K
Uppercut(s)	down/forward+P, (P)
Uppercut from low position	hold down/forward+P
Elbow strike	forward+P
Drop elbow	back, forward+P
Lunging drop elbow	back, down/forward+P
Dashing low elbow-uppercut	forward, forward+P, P
Elbow-hammer combo	forward+P, back+P
Head butt	forward+P+K
Thrusting head butt	down/back, forward+P+K
Flying butt attack	PKG all together
Head butt-hell stab	forward+P+K, down+P+K
Punch-kick combo	P, K
Low kick	down+K
Side kick	down/forward+K
Hop kick	hold up+K while asc
Hopping heel smash	hold up+K
Hopping side kick	hold up+K while desc
Toe kick	down+K
Toe kick-hammer	down+K, P
Toe kick of doom	down+K, hold down, QCR, forward+all
Frontal foot thrust	forward, forward+K
Heel axe	forward, down+K
Knee	forward+K
Foot stomp	down/forward+K
Take off jump kick	hold up+K
Overhead hammer jump	hold up, forward+P while asc
Distance drop kick jump(front)	hold up, forward+K while asc
Distance drop kick jump (rear)	hold up, back+k while asc
Mid-air kick	hold up+K while asc
Landing kick	hold up+K while desc
Fireman's carry (close up)	P+G
Power slam (close up)	forward+P
Body press (close up)	back+P+G
Crucifix piledriver (close up)	down/forward, down/forward+P+K
Backbreaker (close up)	back, forward, forward+PKG together
Iron claw (close up)	down+P
Triple knee bash (close up)	hold down, forward+K
Powerbomb(close up)	down/forward+PKG
Triple head butts(close up)	back, forward+P+K (x3)
Turning heel slide (facing away)	down+K
Turning roundhouse (facing away)	K
Turning punch (facing away)	P
Turning low punch (facing away)	down+P
Turning crouch punch (fa)	hold down+P
Turning crouch roundhouse (fa)	hold down+K

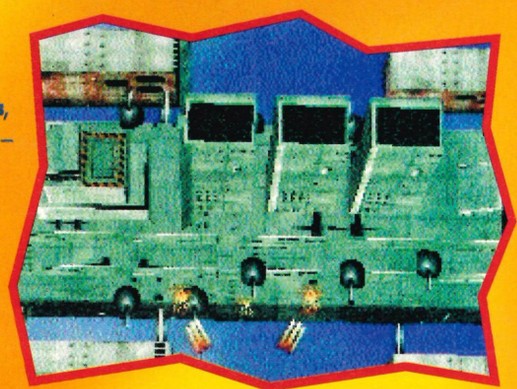
▲ It's big, it's bad, and you must shoot it many, many times. Do so.

▲ The slightly whiffy vertical scroller never smelt so good.



▲ It's as much fun to shoot the scenery as the bad guys.

◀ Big planes, little planes – everyone must die.



Stahlfeder

Top blasting action is soon to hit the PlayStation in the shape of *Stahlfeder* from developers Santos. It's an all-new example of that old arcade favourite, the vertical-scrolling shoot-em-up. So what new stuff does *Stahlfeder* throw into the mix? Well, not a lot actually.

It seems primarily concerned with taking the best bits of previous gaming highs and condensing them into a single solid and satisfying blast. It's not what it does that impresses, more the fact that what it does, it does incredibly well.

All the usual features are in there. Lots of juicy power-ups, bonkers super-powerful weapons, changing themes between the levels and some awesome 3D, polygon constructed, end of level bosses. Nothing particularly ground-breaking there then, but the cracking gameplay more than makes up for this. That and the fact that the whole thing is a bit of a treat on the visual front.

The game is of course 2D, your ship and the baddies on one plane with the ground below being on another. However, a real sense of 3D is introduced thanks to the fact that enemies can swoop upwards, towards your view point, nearly filling the screen, then plummet down to ground level, hugging the terrain for a while before returning to your 'height' just in time for a thorough hammering.

Your destructive urges aren't only satisfied by the bringing down of airborne assailants either, you can opt to give the scenery a hard time too. In fact most of the landscape and its numerous features can be rendered asunder with gunfire. Factories and buildings disappear in magnificent explosions and even the trees and grass aren't safe, bursting into flames after catching a stray bullet or two.

We're really looking forward to getting our hands on the finished product 'cos *Stahlfeder* reeks of quality, and that's a very pleasant smell indeed, if you ask us – which you often do.

Machine.....PlayStation
Publisher....Santos
Developer...In-house
Style.....Shoot-em-up
Release.....January '96
Country.....Japan

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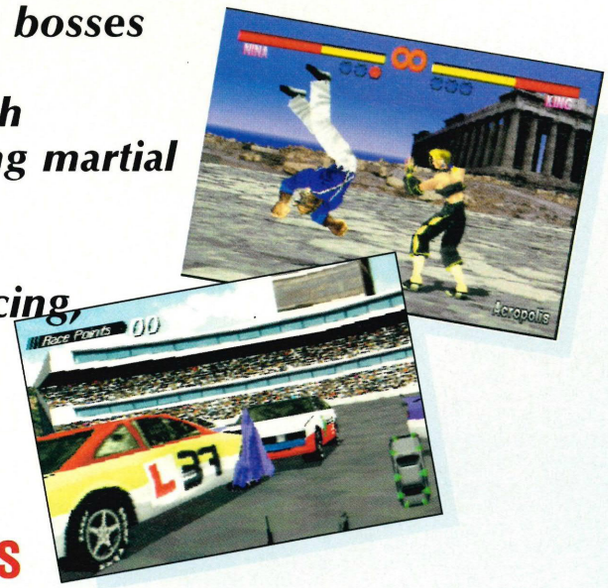

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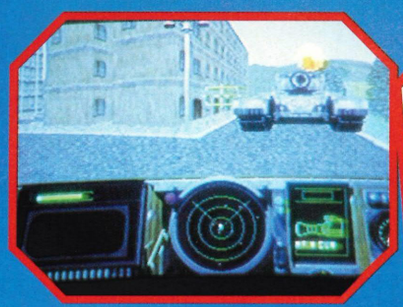
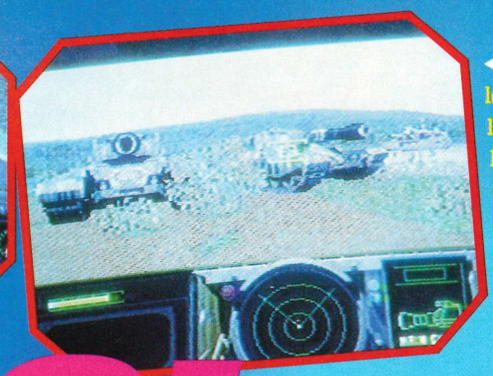
Sarah Bryant

Perhaps the most frequently selected fighter in Japan, and there's no doubt she's pretty easy to learn. She's also incredibly fast, which in turn makes her combos effective, while her height and long reach make it pretty easy for her to defend from a lot of attacks.

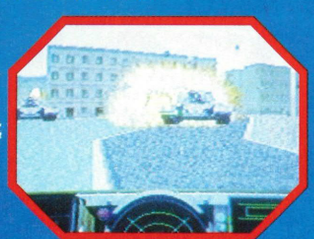
Elbow strike	forward+P
Elbow-knee combo	forward+P, K
Turning punch	back, back+P
Downward backfist	down/forward+P
Running punches-hook	P, P, P
Dodging punch-punch-hook	down/back+P, P, P
Triple punch-hopping toe kick	P, P, P, up+K
Dodging punch-kick combo	down/back+P, K
Triple punch-short rising kick	P, P, P, up+K
Punch-kick combo	P, K
Triple punch-kickflip	P, P, P, back+K
Punch-side kick	P, down+K
Triple punch-rising knee	P, P, P, K
Dodging punch-side kick	down/back+P, down+K
Dodging punch-punch-kick	down/back+P, P, K
Double punch-kick	P, P, K
Dodging punch-double punch -kickflip	down/back+P, P, P, back+K
hopping toe kick	down/back+P, P, P, up+K
Dodging punch-double punch -rising knee	down/back+P, P, P, K
Backflip	up/back
Kickflip	up/back+K
Knee	forward+K
Rising knee	down, forward+K
Lunging knee	forward, forward+K
Double kick	back+K
Shadow kicks	down/forward+K, K, K
Big punt	down+K
Roundhouse	up+K
Forward jumping roundhouse	up/forward+K
Snap kick-side kick	down+K, K
Axe kick	down/back+K+G
Tornado kick	up/forward+K+G
Downward crescent kick	K+G
Turning jump kick	back, back+K
Crouching side kick	down+K+G
Spinning heel kick	down, back+K, K
Kick fallen opponent	down/forward+K
Kick-punch	K, P
Turning sweep (facing away)	down+K
Instant turn around	down, back+K, G
Belly suplex (up close)	P+G
Torso takedown (up close)	P+G
Bulldog (up close)	forward, forward+P
Clothesline-suplex (up close)	f, f, P and f+G



▲ You can't park there mate, shift it – NOW!



◀ Use your scanner, lock-on target and let 'em have it. Pretty simple at the end of the day.



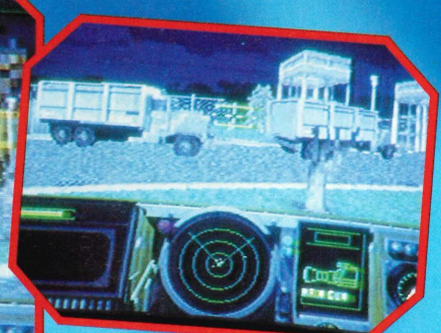
Shells

Let's get tanked up! Tanks a bunch! Tanks a million! Tanks a lot! Right, that's the tank gags out of the way let's get on with the game.

Shellshock **from Core Design is a tank game – in case you hadn't guessed. In 1994 a Special Forces unit protecting a civilian convoy came under heavy artillery fire. No they didn't really, this is the scene-setting scenario bit okay? Where were we? Oh yes, ahem. Their requests for back-up were ignored and all involved got a thorough pasting. Only five men survived. Such was their miffedness and low-down badass nature that they decided to form a five man mercenary team uncompromisingly committed to combating terrorism, fighting oppression and exposing corruption worldwide. So, they'd been watching the A-Team then.**

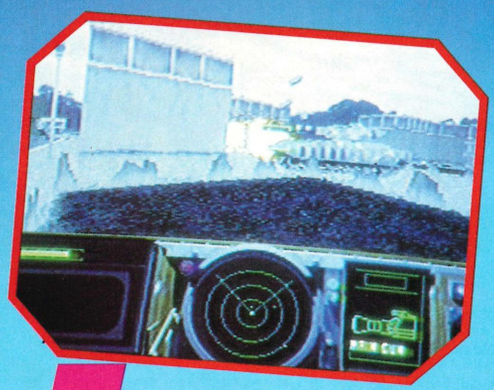
After setting up shop in the derelict state correctional facility on the fictional Jackson Island, New York they christened themselves 'Da Wardenz' (read it a few times, you'll get it. Yes? Not too obvious is it?) and 'in a world without justice they are the last line of defence'. By all accounts, anyway. Hmmm.

You must serve a tour of duty with Da Wardenz proving your tank-handling worth in a variety of missions set in fictional trouble-spots from around the world. Staying in bed all day



▲ Trucks! Buildings! Is there no end to *Shellshock*'s graphical majesty?

...TRUE LINES... It's a little known fact, but Acclaim's *Turok The Dinosaur Hunter* for the Ultra 64 was also on display at the Shos



shock

umpteen different weather conditions, from steaming jungles to frozen arctic wastes.

Back at base after each mission, in addition to putting your feet up for a bit, you can upgrade your tank to new heights of destructive might with extra armour and armaments. And if you're not in a hard-man moody sulk, you can talk to the other chaps in the team and discuss tactics over a cup of tea and a hob nob. On the PC version an eight-player link-up mode is in there too, for and your mates to make tracks in a multi-player game and blow the hell out of each other.

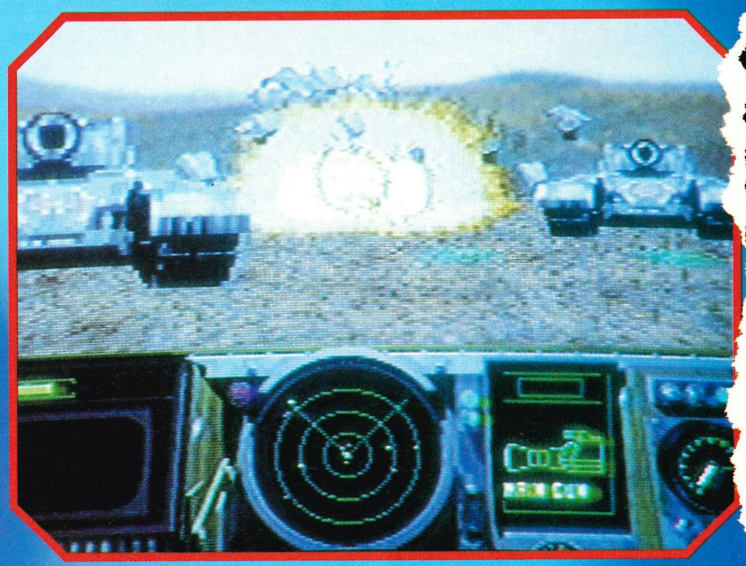
It promises to be tanktastic and tankmungous and it's coming soon – formats below.

watching the telly is not an option 'cos Da Wardenz have an M-13 Predator battletank with your name on and you must propel it into battle at once!

The game is seen from a first-person, in-tank perspective and the surrounding terrain is drawn with depth-cued fractals meaning that the landscape not only looks real but moves quickly and smoothly too.

There're twenty missions to have a bash at, covering a wide variety of topics, including escorting convoys, rescuing hostages and general all out ass-kicking war. And, due to the action taking place all over the world you get to fight over many different terrains and in

Machine.....PSX/Sat/PC
Publisher....Core Design
Developer...In-house
Style.....Action
Release.....February '96
Country.....UK



hinkai show in Japan. We got a tiny peek of a very early version, but couldn't get any shots because it looks fairly primitive so far.

Hippy Hopppey

Hello. My name's MC Norman and I'm really into all that modern housey-housey and hippety-hoppity music. I love it, I do. Every Thursday at seven you can bet I've got my flat-cap on backwards and my hearing aid pumped right up for *Pop Of The Tops* on the television. And on pension day I take all my money straight down to *Top Chewns* gramophone recordings shop and blow the lot on the latest kickin' slices of hot wax for my Dansette. After I've bought my snuff and a tin of Whiskers though, obviously. Oh, and paid my Christmas club money.

In order to feed my insatiable rave appetite it seems I may have to purchase one of those new fangled gaming consoles in order to facilitate the playing of *Shellshock* from Core Design. I've just been perusing its particulars and apparently it features seven 'phat' tunes, three of which include the wrapping, sorry, rapping of Bar-None (aka William Floyd) who, it says here, is a famous San Fransisco 49er. By which I assume they mean he plays American football rather than is an American gold prospector at the turn of the century. I'm not certain.

There's apparently going to be a record released of said 'phat' tunes including a German version of one of the tracks featuring German rapping. Ooh, that's nice, isn't it? Tiddles is rather partial to a spot of Euro Hardcore. Aren't we all.

You're quite lucky to catch me in actually, I'm normally down the over-60's disco at the social club about this time, but the battery's flat in my invalid car. I don't suppose you could give me a jump could you? Oh, I see. Alright then. Bye.

From the makers of...

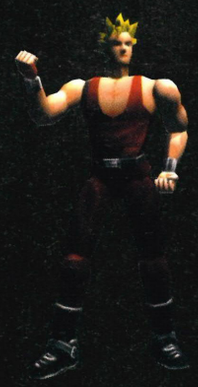
Core design, *Shellshock*'s creators, have a bit of a history of top war-gaming action. They're responsible for *Thunderhawk* which, as we mentioned last month, was, pretty much, the only good thing on Sega's Mega CD upgrade for the Mega Drive. Oh, alright, it *was* the only good thing.

They've recently completed *Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2*, a sequel for the PlayStation, Saturn and PC CD ROM and what a belter it is too. We awarded it a very reasonable 86% last month. During the month we had the pleasure of seeing the PlayStation version as well and it looks absolutely identical, if not a tad better. Good work. With Core's evident 3D Next Gen gaming skills you can be sure that *Shellshock*'s going to be terrific. We can't wait. Where is it? Let us at it!? Quick, quick, quicker! Hurry! Get on with it! Now, now, now!

UPDATE

Jacky Bryant

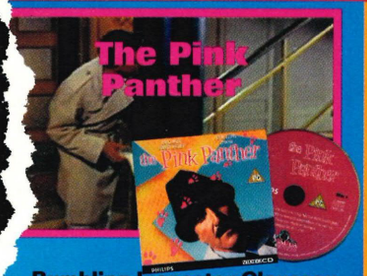
The beauty of controlling Jacky is the way you can confuse your opponents, as he's one of the most versatile characters to pull off your own combos with. He's a bit average in the speed department, but top with low attacks.



Triple punch	P, P, P
Two punches-elbow	P, P, forward+P
Hook	forward/down+P
Turning hook	back, back+P
Elbow strike	forward+P
Dodging punch	G, P
Backfist	back+P
Low backfist	down/back+P
Low backfist-elbow	down/backP, foward,forward+P
Bitch slap	P+K
Hopping hammer	up+P
Brainbuster (up close)	P+G
Bulldog (up close)	forward,forward+P
Turn away hook-backfist	back, back+P, P
Double punch-backfist	P, P, back+P
Low spinning backfist	back/down+P
Dodging punch-sweep	G, P, down+K
Punch and sweep	P, down+K
Double punch-elbow-heel kick	P, P, forward+P, K
Short pounce	up+P
Long pounce	hold up+P
Punch-sidekick (close range)	P, K
Double punch-low backfist	P, P, G, down/back+P
Punch-crescent kick (long range)	P, K
Backflip	back/up
Kickflip	back/up+K
Roundhouse-heel kick	K, K
Knee strike	forward+K
Punt kick	forward, forward+K
Toe kick	down+K
Crescent kick	K+G
Lightning kick	down+P+K (to 4 extra Ks)
Soccer Kick	forward/down+K
Spinning mid-kick	back, forward+K+G
Side hook kick	back+K
Crouching side kick	down+K+G
Crescent sweep	K+G, down+K+G
Spinning half crescent	back, back+K
Trip and hammer (up close)	forward, back+P+K
Double punch-elbow-kickflip	P, P, forward+P, up/back+G+K
Double lightning kicks	down+P+K, K (add up
Reverse hook (facing away)	back+P
Reverse low punch (facing away)	down+P
Reverse sweep (facing away)	down+K
Overhead hammer jump	hold up, forward+P while asc
Drop kick jump (front)	hold up, forward+K while asc
Drop kick jump (rear)	hold up, back+K while asc
Rising sweep (on floor)	hold down+K
Twist away and sweep (on floor)	G, hold down+K while twisting
Roll and low mule kick (on floor)	back, hold down+K while rolling
Turn away kick-sweep	back, back+K, down+K
Twist away and kick (on floor)	G, K while twisting

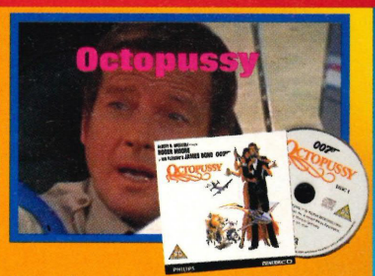
The best of this month's Video CDs

This month sees the start of a regular roundup of the latest Video CDs. You'll need an MPEG compatible CD-i, Saturn or PC to view these beauties. Cheers Philips!



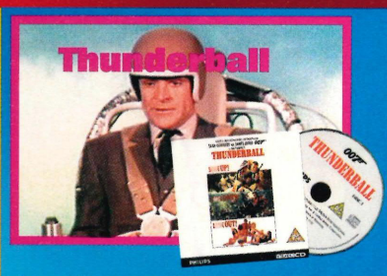
Bumbling Inspector Clouseau (Peter Sellers) makes his screen debut in this, the first and most reserved of the series. Sir Charles Layton steals a diamond while the inadvertently successful Inspector Clouseau steals the show. Plot matters not a jot in this almost slapstick farce. If it wasn't for Sellers' perfectly ridiculous characterisation this would have sunk without trace, robbing us of the mixed, but sometimes brilliant sequels.

1963 • Blake Edwards • 111 mins • £18



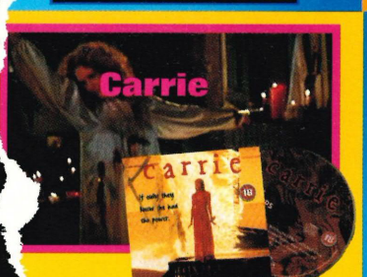
An aging Roger Moore relies solely on his eyebrows to do the acting for him in this lightweight bit of Bondage. The opening scene is a classic, Bond escapes heat-seeking missiles with the help of the world's smallest jet plane – but it's downhill all the way from then on culminating in a ridiculous and tension-free ending. Stupid gadgets, silly plot AND the *rumps* count is down to just two!? Could this be a symptom of the series' demise in the years since?

1983 • John Glen • 125 mins • £18



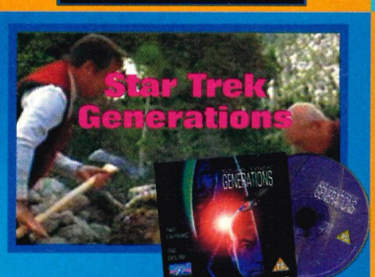
Sean Connery stars in the fourth Bond installment which sees the series shift from being plot driven to hardware led. SPECTRE are holding the world to ransom after stealing two nuclear bombs and only one man can stop them! All the cliches are here: The casino scene, the shark-infested pool and gadgets galore. The suitably snoggable Domino (Adolfo Celi) is the Bond girl, the underwater scrap is top and the jet-pack is simply funny.

1965 • Terence Young • 124 mins • £18



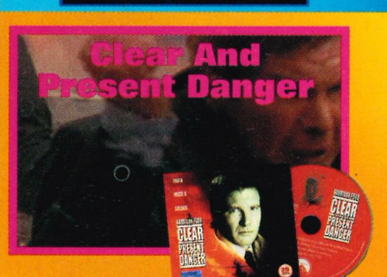
Carrie is trying to cope with the advent of puberty, High School victimisation and her telekinetic powers in this stylish and unsettling horror flick. With the constant tension build up, shocking last act and much imitated closing scene this may appear dated to some, but is the '70s at its best.

1976 • Brian DePalma • 94 mins • £18



There's an episode of The Simpsons where the family are watching a trailer for the new *Star Trek* film on TV, *Star Trek 57: So Very Tired*! The Trekkie crew took heed from this and decided to officially replace the old crew with the *Next Generation*. Kirk has never looked more ridiculous, Data attempts light comedy and the Enterprise is destroyed. Good special effect, laughable acting.

1995 • David Carson • 113mins • £20



The third in the Jack Ryan trilogy sees Harrison Ford appointed as acting CIA Deputy Director of Intelligence. Maybe director Philip Noyce should have asked his advice on how to pace this, the most disappointing of the three. The film seems more concerned with middle aged conversation than it does with action and as a result spoils the three stunning action-packed set pieces that shine.

1994 • Philip Noyce • 136 mins • £20

The Console Barometer

Meet the nose 'cos the nose is here, the nose to entertain you – N . O . S . E – nose to entertain yooooooooou! Yes this month, Console Tam brings her excitable nose to Ultimate. Swoon as it sniffs out the snoggability of each...

For the second month running, the Saturn is judged top of the heap by our console fortune indicator. Sega's answer to *Ridge Revolution*, *Sega Rally* narrowly beat its rival in terms of playability which is quite an achievement. And then there's *X-Men*! Yes two, tip-top, cream of the crop Sega releases in one game-mongous month. Can they stay at the top though in the face of the fast climbing Ultra 64?

9/10

Just when we thought that things had started to quieten down in camp PlayStation, one of the most eagerly awaited sequels in videogame history turns up and, largely, lives up to our expectations. We're talking about *Ridge Racer Revolution* with its two-player link-up and rear-view mirrors. Credit is also due for *Doom* cleaning-up in the Christmas charts.

9/10

The Ultra 64 leaps above the 3DO for the first time after our far too sexy exclusive *Super Mario 64* preview. Add to that all the other screen-shots and seems that Nintendo haven't been bluffing for two years, after all. It could have reached eight points if it wasn't for the uncertainty of its release date.

7.5/10

The 3DO stays on six points, after last month's long awaited price drop, thanks largely to the gagingly good *Maps 'O Death* and *Psychic Detective*. Another rumoured price drop hasn't done its cause much harm either. Things are certainly starting to pick up.

6/10

With last month's shock news that the Virtual Reality add-on makes users feel queezy and the fact that the one reviewable game this month is rubbish, the Jaguar slips further down the bottom of the heap.

3/10

Many thanks to *Console Tam* and her excitable nose-ometor. She knows how to sniff out a bargain and no mistake.

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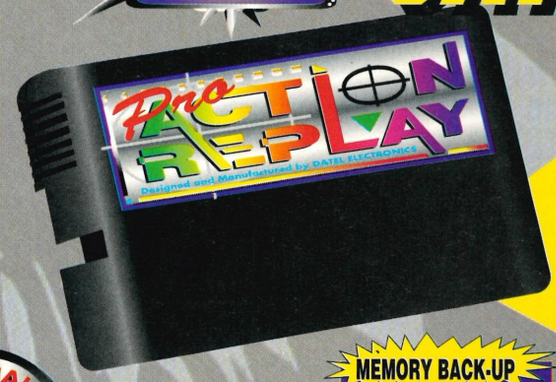

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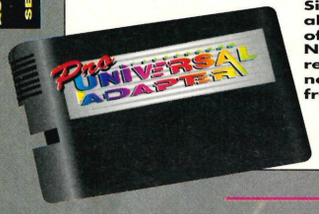

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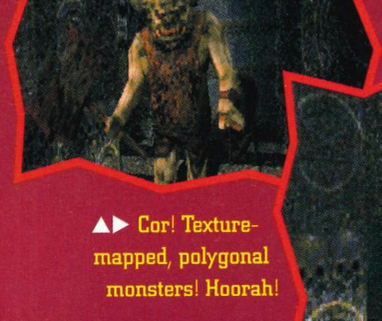
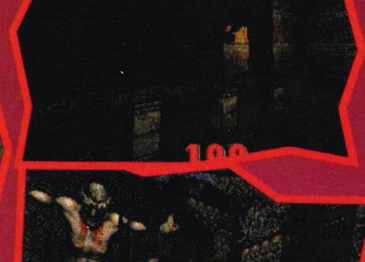
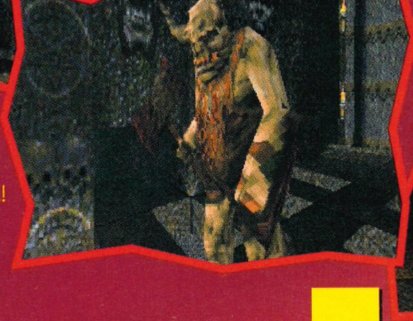




▶ Finally a game that makes *Doom* look dated.



▲▶ Cor! Texture-mapped, polygonal monsters! Hoorah!

Quake

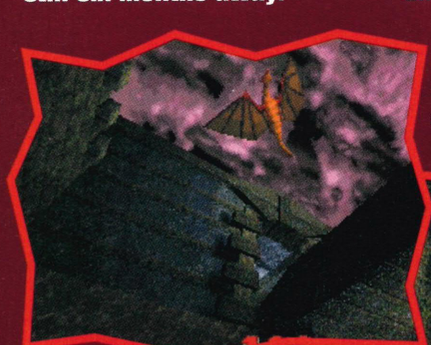
The release of *Quake*, id's long awaited follow-up to the mighty *Doom*, is drawing closer and closer. The *Quake* hype-wagon has started its long downhill journey into reality, and is picking up speed all the way thanks to the titbits of information and new screenshots id keep 'leaking' onto their Internet site. Mind you, the finished game is almost certainly still six months away.

Quake is a totally different kettle of bananas to *Doom*. It features highly complex lighting algorithms which will cast shadows of the characters in real-time onto the walls and floors. And the 2D bit-mapped sprite characters of *Doom* are to be replaced with much more complex and realistic texture-mapped polygonal figures.

Due to the additional computing power required to create *Quake*'s ultra-real world, it had been presumed that a top-spec PC would be required to run the game. However, Jay Wilber of id software assures PC owners that '*Quake* will run on your machine as well as *Doom* already does.' Good news for PC types then, but what about the rest of gaming kind? Eh?

Well, as revealed exclusively in our December issue, in a very shrewd move, Nintendo have secured the rights for an Ultra 64 conversion. The inclusion of *Quake* in the Ultra's line up is yet another jewel in its already sparkly crown. It seems unlikely that id and Nintendo will have *Quake* ready for the machine's launch however, but by the time the Ultra hits Europe in around September it should nestling up alongside it on the shelves, a couple of months behind the PC version, no less.

Nintendo are doubtlessly dancing a merry jig at the prospect of such a long-awaited game being available on either £1000+ PC or sub-£250 Ultra 64. The PlayStation, Saturn and 3DO have *Doom* (3DO – imminent, Saturn – still to be confirmed) while the Ultra 64 gets its big brother *Quake*. Nintendo are bound to use this as proof of the superiority of their hardware. Nice one Ninty, what a comeback!



▲ When it comes to attention to detail, id are the masters.

Machine.....Ultra 64 & PC

Publisher....GT Interactive

Developer...id

Style.....Hack-em-up

Release.....Summer'96

Country.....UK

Wireplay
The games network from BT
Wireplay and the Wireplay device are trademarks of British Telecommunications plc.

Duel in Cyberspace!

Got yourself a PC and a modem? Well, thanks to BT's new system you can do battle with gamers from around the world down your phone line. The system, called *Wireplay*, requires no specialist hardware and there's no subscription charge either. Users will only pay for time that they're connected to the central server, at a rate which is hoped to be the same as that for a local call. If the service is a success it'll become available to all BT customers by Summer.

The first time you call you must register, telling the system, amongst other things, who you are, your nickname, what network compatible games you have and even your 'skill level'. Once registered you can challenge other users to a duel on games such as *Doom*, *Descent* and *Virtual Pool*.

What's more, if you state your preference for a certain game, *Descent* for example, and someone else asks the system to find them a 'partner' it will call you on your normal phone line and ask if you want to play. Although the idea of 'Pagan Beast' from New Jersey challenging you to a *Doom* deathmatch at two in the morning doesn't sound like our idea of a good time.

BT plan to give away the software required for the service free, which will add *Wireplay* options to your games, with new games which display the *Wireplay* logo featuring compatibility built-in. Just make sure to ask a grown-up before you call or if it's your phone bill, make sure you call from work.

Internet access without a computer?

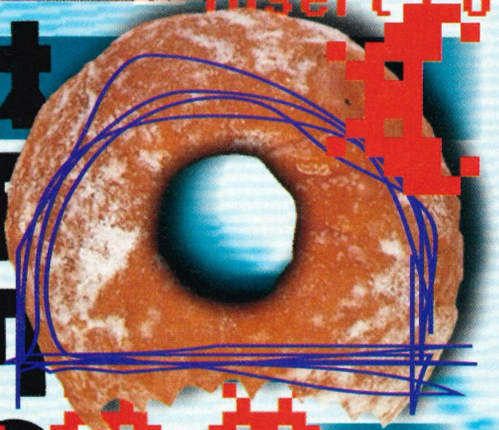
Access to the Internet without expensive computer hardware will soon be possible if Larry Ellison of Oracle has his way. He wants Apple to manufacture $200 terminals which can be used to access the Internet in exactly the same way as from a machine costing many times the price. Top stuff.

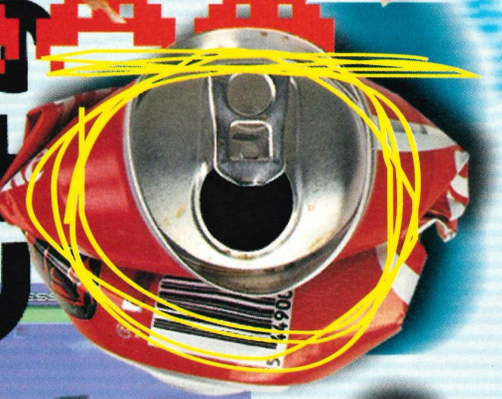
It's quite obvious really. Why buy an expensive computer, expensive modem and internet software to download information when all you need is a dedicated keyboard/modem hybrid with built in software which connects to your TV? It's simple really.

If Apple accept Larry's plans (and Ultimate think they'd be crazy not to) Internet access will finally be cheap 'n' easy for everybody. Nice one Lazzer!

..TRUE LINES... Virgin's *Earthworm Jim 2* ad campaign will appear in, amongst other places, pub toilets. Lovely.....

TRUE LINES... What's this we've been hearing about Shigeru Miyamoto developing a hand-drawn 2D *Mario* game for the Ultra 64? More news on this as, and when we get it...





▶ You really want to fill these guys (or is it girls?) with lead.

◀ You want to get out a bit more mate. Live a little, eh?

Got a grudge aga

Join the...

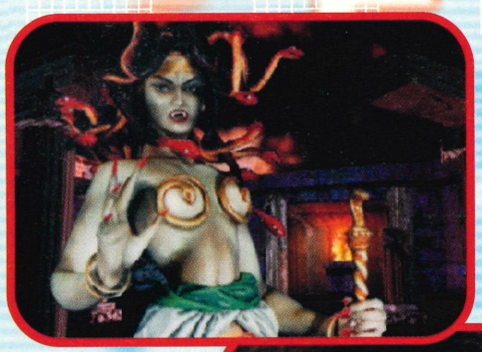
Crypt

The beginning of '96 is certainly shaping up to be a time of cloning in the arcades. Namco and Sega are continually having a pop at imitating each other in the driving, beat-em-up and shooting arenas, and this is beginning to rub off.

Konami's *Crypt Killers* (or *Henry Explorers* as it's ker-azeily known in Japan) is one such effort. This is a shoot-em-up that's rooted in the style of *Virtua Cop*, and certainly has its work cut out against Namco's eye-catching *Time Crisis* (complete with pedal for dodging in and out of cover on-screen) and Sega's goyyy-geous *Virtua Cop 2*.

The main difference between this and its peers is that three people can play alongside each other (it's a fairly large cabinet and screen). The shotguns hold eight rounds of ammunition and can be reloaded by using the pump-action.

As opposed to the modern cops and robbers feel of the other games, *Crypt Killers* opts for a fantasy setting (complete with polygonal story-telling floating head at the start). And perhaps that causes you to suspend disbelief a bit too much. One element it does have in its favour is the way you can select the stage you wish to start on (from a choice of eight), rather than the linear approach preferred by the others. It also throws up a choice of directions to move in within a stage at



▶ Wahey! The spirit of Ray Harryhausen is being kept alive!

▶ Women with wings should be avoided. Or shot to smithereens.

▲ Ooh, lovely lady. Well, okay, slightly dodgy, green lass.

◀ Big fishes with razor-sharp teeth are the least of your worries. Blast 'em!

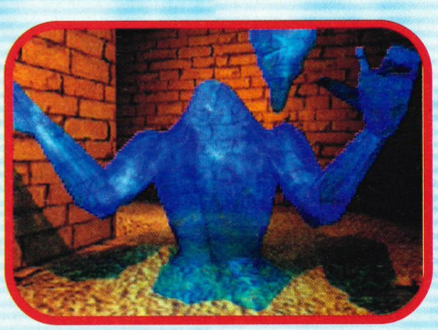
inst underground chambers?

Killers

certain points (rather like in *Revolution X* and *Rail Chase 2*). Combining these two facts, it should have a pretty lengthy life expectancy.

One criticism already being levelled at *Crypt Killers* is the slackness of the graphics. The game features a mixture of bitmaps and polygons (a forest for example, is made up of polygonal trees while the enemies tend to be bit-mapped). Some of the larger bosses are constructed from polygons, but there are no real-time 3D polygons in the game. They would have been a good thing...

But *Crypt Killers* has certainly been on the receiving end of praise for the variety of stages and possibilities within these. So we may, at some point, even see a conversion to the home systems. That rests with you, though, and what your response to it is. If the game is warmly received in the arcades, then the chances are it'll be appearing on a PlayStation, Saturn or even Ultra 64 near you. Who can tell?



▶ Can you shoot things you can see the wall through? Hmmm...

Country.....US

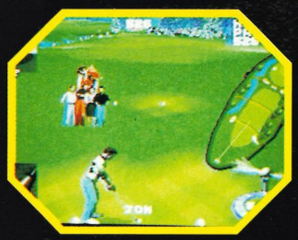
Publisher....Konami

Developer...In-house

Style.....Blast-em-up

Release.....Out now

Players.....3



The Scottish Open Virtual Golf

This golf title from Core Design of Derby received a pretty healthy mark when we reviewed the PC version and it's set to be released on the Saturn and PlayStation in February.

It's been designed as a golf videogame rather than a golf simulation, a trait that's sure to make it more accessible to the pad-happy console generation (it's certainly more user-friendly than a great many golf games we can think of). To add to this 'arcadey' feel, the gameplay has been simplified down to the basic follow-through of drive, chip and putt. But there are five game variations to play in and four different courses of eighteen holes to choose from (two amateur and two professional). A flip-map option means that the existing courses can be played in reverse, bringing the total up to eight.

There's a Practice option (which only allows you to attempt the amateur courses until you've reached professional status), a Tournament mode (played over four rounds of 18 holes against 60 computer-generated golfers), Skins Challenge (where you compete for prize money), Derby Scramble (where you take it in turn to hit the same ball) and Shoot Out (an elimination-type round). So there should be plenty to offer the thirsty Sony/Sega-owning golf enthusiast.

Ultra 64 Latest

Primal Rage crew are joining the Dream Team

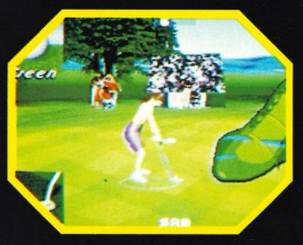
Nintendo have announced that Time Warner Interactive will begin to develop software for the Ultra 64.

They will start developing a 3D hockey title starring Wayne Gretzky (star of their previous hockey games), for release next autumn. It will be based on their coin-op hockey game, to be launched in the arcades in the spring. All-time NHL scoring leader and four-time Stanley Cup champion (?) Gretzky will help design the mechanics of the game. In fact, his own style of skating has been digitized to be included in the game.

The game itself will be a three-on-three plus goalie competition situated in a 3D rendered environment (a rink, one would assume). There's a floating camera which concentrates on the gameplay and can move 360 degrees around the rink. Time Warner Interactive are concentrating on making it as realistic and fluid as possible, with a library of hockey-specific skating moves making the action entertaining to play through, while real NHL players' names, statistics, profiles and physical likenesses lend the game authenticity (though, that's only going to be really relevant in the US).

'It's a pleasure to announce Time Warner Interactive as a member of the Nintendo Ultra 64 Dream Team,' says Howard Lincoln, chairman of Nintendo US. 'The amazing technology inherent in the Ultra 64 hardware makes it the perfect system for producing sporting titles. We're confident that this title will help make Nintendo Ultra 64 the system of choice for video sports players.' Dan Van Elderen of Time Warner Interactive reiterates this last point: 'It's powerful enough to handle a true 3D sports game and recreate the excitement of the arcade experience.' Sounds like a goody to us.

..TRUE LINES... Although not confirmed, THE Games are still insisting that an April '96 UK launch for the Ultra 64 is possible.....



That's NOT all folks!

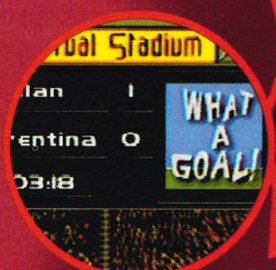
Electronic Arts are also contributing to the Ultra 64 Dream Team. They are set to develop an exclusive version of *FIFA Soccer* for Nintendo's system.

It's expected to be a bit of a stunning game too, featuring incredibly realistic players (with motion-captured animation we would imagine), hundreds of international teams and, of course, a control method which will be ideally suited to the revolutionary joypad.

'Electronic Arts look forward to breaking new ground in sports videogame realism by fully exploiting the Ultra 64's capabilities and creating a version of *FIFA Soccer* that will make players feel like they have been transported to the centre of the stadium,' says Larry Probst of Electronic Arts.

So, the Ultra 64 is certainly shaping up to be a real heavyweight in the sporting stakes. We'll just have to wait and see how good they are.

◀ These shots are from the PlayStation version.



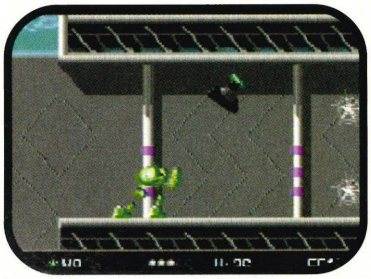
Have a HAPPY New Year

With Sega Power's Tips Special

VectorMan SUSSED!

Virtua Fighter 2 SOLVED!

Sega Rally SORTED!



SEGA POWER

What else do you need to know?

Out on sale January 18th

Gadgets

Bug detector

Give bugs the elbow with this gadget, and we're not talking fly-spray. No Siree, we're talking state-of-the-art crime busting equipment here...

Scared the KGB may have secreted a fiendish listening device in your pasty? Well wave this gizmo over it and see if it gets the all clear before you wolf it. It'll even tell you what delicious filing you opted for. Not really, but the sequel might – or something.

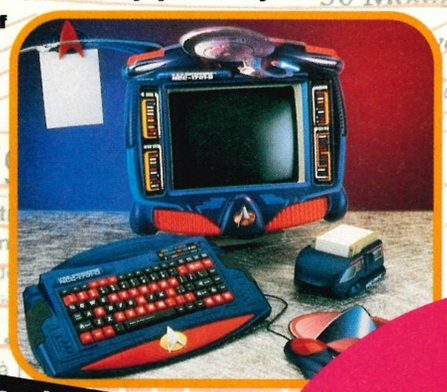
Lorraine Electronic Surveillance on 0181 558 4226 will sort you out with one.

Star Trek

Trekies! Have we got the just the thing for you. Why not jazz up your boring computer with these Trek mental goodies. There's a shuttle-craft shaped mouse with mat, a frame for your monitor and a keyboard which has 'Space - The final frontier' written on the space bar. Which, we hate to admit, is actually quite funny. Damn.

You can win a full set if you tell us how many Star Trek movies there've been. Send your answers to 'I'm Trek-mental' at our usual address.

To buy a set it'll cost you £140 from shops nationwide. Phone 01225 448019 for details.

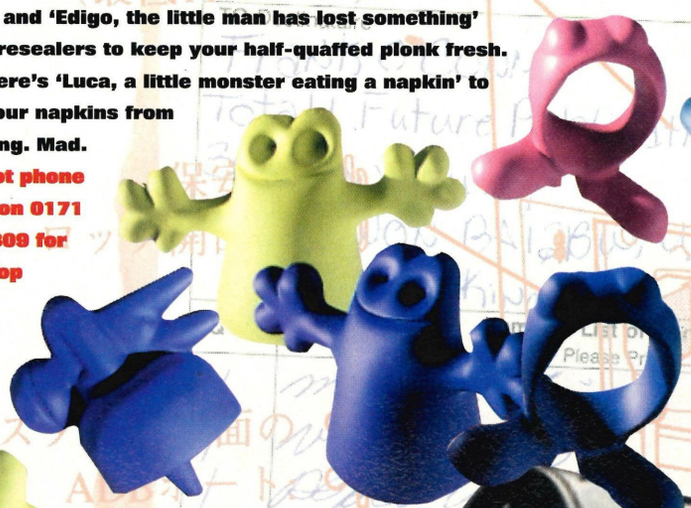


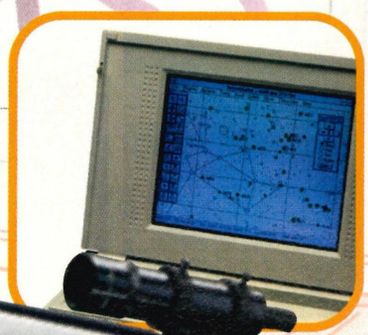
We at Ultimate are most partial to a spot of Bondage. James Bondage that is.

Bottle tops and napkin rings

Alessi, purveyors of super-chic household gadgetry bring you 'Carlo, a little ghost on the top of a bottle' and 'Edigo, the little man has lost something' bottle resealers to keep your half-quaffed plonk fresh. And there's 'Luca, a little monster eating a napkin' to stop your napkins from escaping. Mad.

Why not phone Alessi on 0171 584 9809 for more top stuff?





Face mask

Arrgh! What's happened to that girly's face! Oh, it's alright she's just giving her eyes a bit of a pamper with a cooling face mask. She just bunged it in the fridge for a bit then slapped it on the front of her head. Guaranteed to give you an ice-cream headache.

Yours for £12.95 from Gadget Shop. Or phone 01482 880880.

Computer telescope

Mr David Bowie, the pop singer, once sang: 'There's a Starman, waiting in the sky.' But what is he waiting for? Perhaps you could find out with one of these computer controlled telescopes. The software has all the features of the night sky programmed into it. Pick a point in space and it'll point the telescope at it for a closer look automatically! Ah yes, but can it spy through your neighbour's windows?

Contact Telescope House for more info on 0171 405 2156.

Phone dialler

Pressing a few buttons too tiring? Got a memory like a goldfish? Well you can program 13 of your very favourite telephone numbers into this little whotsit and dial them at the press of a button. Just hold it to the 'mouth-piece' and it'll play the right tones for you. Thing is you have to remember which of the 13 is which. Oh bugger.

It's only £6.95 from Gadget shops. Phone 01462 860860 to order one.

Top soundz

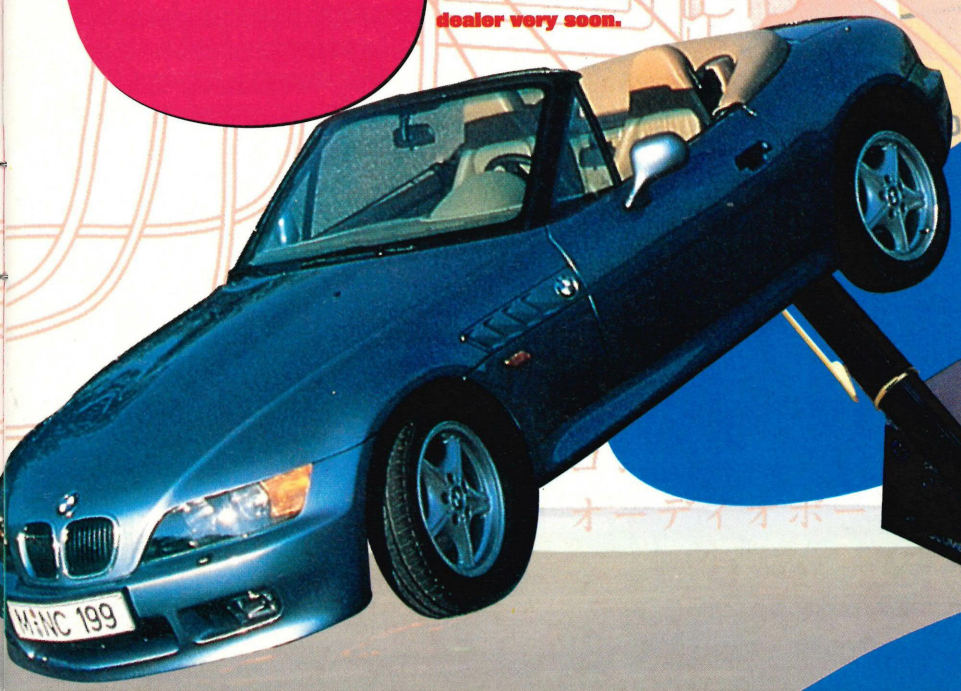
Play any one of 50 CDs instantly with this wicked, wild and well versatile N501-F mini system. There's even a quick play slot where you can audition a new purchase and decide whether to add it to your collection or take it back to the shop and pretend your Mum bought you it for your birthday but you already had it (not that we've ever done that).

It's £900 from Pioneer dealers. Ring 01753 789789 for your nearest stockist.

BMW Z3

More Bondage! Look at this lovely motor. This is the new BMW Z3 coupe. It's got a 1.8 litre, 16 valve engine producing 140 bhp and it's James Bond's car in *Goldeneye*. Though its total on-screen time is only about two minutes. Even so, we're going to be straight down the shops to get one when they arrive in the UK later this year. It's just soooooo tasty!

Yours for £23,000. Contact you nearest BMW dealer very soon.



Bugs

Bondage vibe in the area! See those innocuous looking household objects? Well they're bugs and that black box is a receiver for them. Leave one of the suckers lying about then listen in to other people's juicy gossip from your underground bunker from which you plan to conquer the world, THE WORLD I TELL YOU! HA HA HA!

Give Lorraine Electronic Surveillance a call on 0181 558 4226 to become a budding Bond.

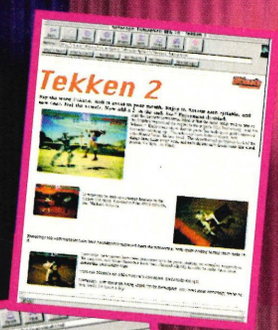
FutureNet Ultimate Future Games

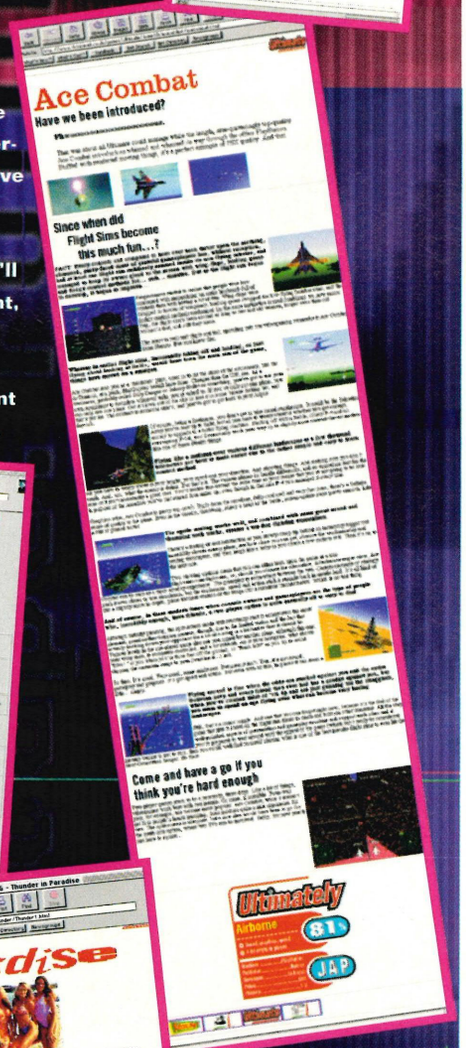
Ultimate Future Games – Europe's biggest-selling Next Gen videogame magazine – is part of the Next Generation itself! Of course!

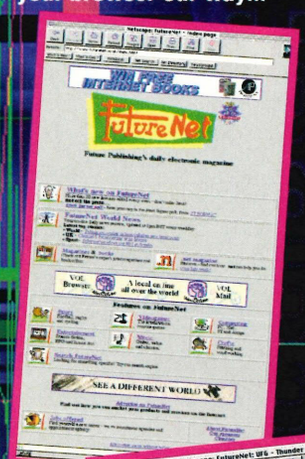
Accessed as part of the huge FutureNet site, you can talk to the experts, see the very latest previews and reviews and even subscribe! Oh yes!

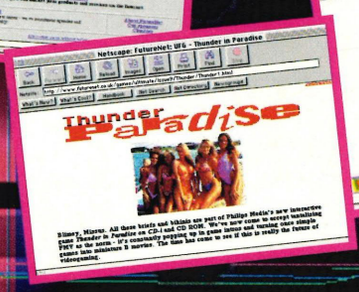
FutureNet also has the most up-to-date worldwide news service on the information superhighway and lets you dive into oodles of other top all-knowing magazines.

To get connected you'll need an Internet account, such as Demon or Cityscape, or a direct college connection. Point your browser our way...



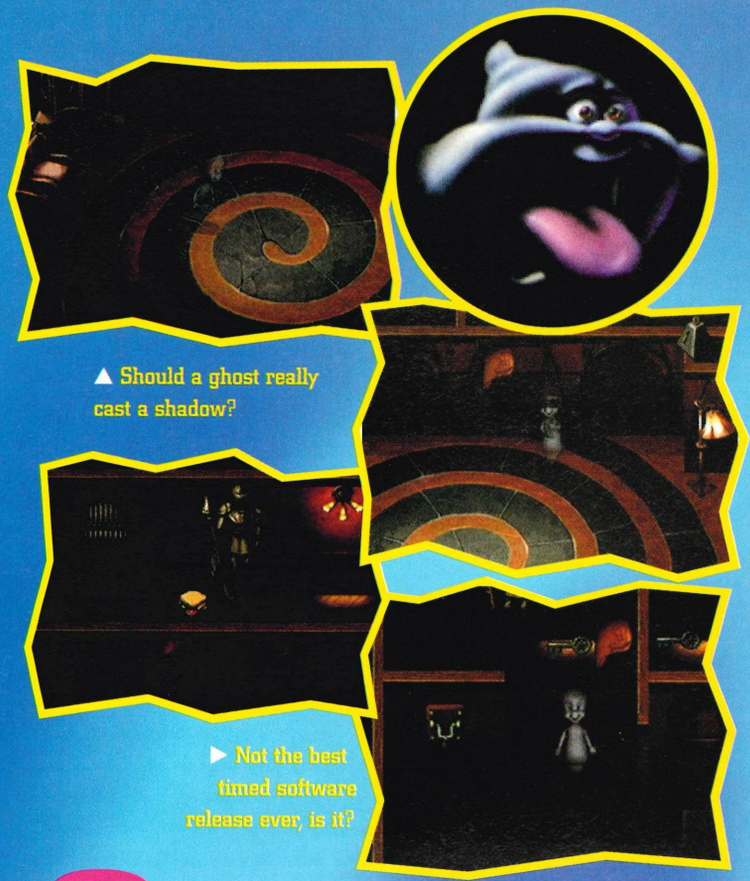






Point your World Wide Web browser at:

http://www.futurenet.co.uk



▲ Should a ghost really cast a shadow?

▶ Not the best timed software release ever, is it?

Casper

You've read the book, you've seen the film. Oh alright then you've seen the film at least, in any case, soon you'll be able play the game on your Saturn.

Guide Casper, everyone's favourite dead little boy, around his house solving puzzles and completing tasks which will allow you to make friends with the house's new human occupants. How cute. You must give them a present to prove that you're not a scary ghost, but are, quite literally, a friendly ghost instead. The game appears to be sticking fairly close to the movie's plot, but most of the time you're wandering (if you can wander without any legs) in an effort to figure out how to open doors and treasure chests.

Fiddle with a suit of armour and it may open a door. Go through into a room and open the chest. Take the key from the chest and use it to open that locked door on the other side of the house – all that sort of business. During our initial peek at the game we were strangely reminded of the SNES classic, *Zelda*. *Casper* even shares that curious isometric perspective. The sprites look nicely animated from what we saw and have just the right degree of see-throughness about them to cause the girls passing through our office (as they are prone to do) to think Casper looked 'sweet'. Right you are then...

It's all a bit sissy really, but if you even vaguely enjoyed the film then this game will be right up your alley.

Machine.....Saturn

Publisher....Interplay

Developer...FunCom

Style.....Action/adventure

Release.....February '96

Country.....UK

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NINTENDO ULTRA 64
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MICRO MACHINES 2

Massive review inside

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1995
THE BEST
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EVER!
Week-by-week
review inside.
Plus a look ahead
to 1996

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FREE! GIANT
Year Planner

"And to all you Jag owners – buy a PlayStation – start living." Yep, John Bennett's strong views copped himself and his lovely wife/mum/lass a swish new Panasonic 3DO and three games last month. So unplug your fingers from your ears! Write! Write! Write! Double quick!

U-mail,
Ultimate Future Games
30 Monmouth Street, Bath,
Avon BA1 2BW.
U-mail on E-mail:
mhawkins@futurenet.co.uk

Star Letter
in Association with Panasonic

U-Mail

Anger

What are Nintendo playing at? We've been promised the Ultra 64 for what seems years and where is it? Where the bloody hell is it? It's frustrating that companies seem intent on announcing release dates, only for them to slip further each time they get nearer. I must say I am very disappointed in Nintendo. The SNES is my favourite console, and I'm sure that all you PlayStation and Saturn owners will be foaming at the mouth once you get a look at *Super Mario 64* and *Pilot Wings 64*. But the delay is frustrating and is sure to cause a few people to buy a lesser console. What's gone wrong with Nintendo?
Kirsty Medway, Leeds

Well, the Ultra 64 has been one of the most closely guarded of new machines, with Nintendo keeping things so closely to their chests, they were walking around like secretive little Pamela Andersons. Very little information was available about it prior to the unveiling ceremony and much of the talk of release dates was speculative. There have been delays with the software (much of it isn't even 50% complete) and Nintendo have put immense pressure on developers and publishers to keep their gobs shut. Would you rather have a hardware publisher promise lots by an unrealistic deadline only to not deliver? We think not, be patient readers – it's coming...

Download

I have noticed recently that some people are concerned about the loading times of CD-based games... Why?

I'm farty enough to remember the good old days of the Speccy/C64 and cassette-based software. I fondly remember loading a game and nervously watching the loading screen build up for three hours, then that heart-stopping moment when the screen goes blank for the final three hours of the loading process. The sweaty palms, the nervous tension, the near orgasmic anticipation... It was fantastic.

Of course, what follows is the ultimate disappointment when you actually play the game and find out it's actually pretty crap. Forget carts, quad-speed CD drives and instant gratification. Make loading times longer, that's what I say. Think of it as foreplay!
Jim Tuffnail, Rushden, Northants

Aah, yes. We too remember the blue and yellow wibbly bits around the borders of Spectrum loading screens, and the way you had to get the volume *just* right. Things have moved on since, and now there's the hassle of loading and configuring PC games. The problem with the consoles is the way they tend to have to access the game at certain points. But we're now part of the generation that wants results immediately – play a Neo Geo CD game and you'll experience intense frustration, watching that bar crawl across the screen. The Ultra 64 could remedy this, though. Sorry, but your foreplay's going to be pretty brief in the future...

"We the SCAFGM (Scottish Clan Against Foreign Games Manufacturers), feel it's about time Britain released its own super console. So without delay, I give you... the Wok!"
L.J., Peebles, Peebleshire

Who's Laughing Now?

When I used to use my SNES (before getting my PlayStation), I used to buy most SNES mags. But the best one had to be Super Play.

I've been reading Ultimate from issue 10, when I got my PlayStation and have always thought it was a great read, in the style of Super Play.

Well, after four months I've sussed that you have the same publishers, God I'm slow. Stopping buying Super Play was like losing an old friend, so it's great to find a new friend in the guise of Ultimate. Keep up the good work. Most mags just annoy people of my age (24), but yours isn't childish, and is very, very informative.
Gary Sharp, Bannf

Cheers, mate. Super Play is still going you know. They're our big-eyed, purple-haired mates, from up the wooden hill...

▲ Yes, one of these and three games – just for scribbling words!

Inquisition

I have every issue of your ultimate mag and I would like to say what a brilliant job you, the Ultimate crew, are doing blah, blah, blah.

Now down to business, would you be kind enough to answer a few questions for me pretty please?
1. Are there any plans to bring out an adaptor for the PlayStation to play English games on an imported machine?
2. Are you going to bring the crossword back?
Adam Day, Bournemouth

There are indeed plans afoot to produce some sort of adaptor to allow play of imported games on a UK machine and vice versa. This is likely to come from the people who brought the Action Replay to the machine. The delay is being caused by the obvious difficulty in getting around the hardware itself (the Saturn has a nice handy cartridge port, for instance).

There are no plans to bring the crossword back, admittedly, but take a gander at the quiz-type-compo at the rear of this issue...

"I have not seen your mag for ages and if you have stopped doing it can I buy one of your machines? But not the Mega Drive, because I've got a Mega Drive and a SNES."
Mark Lodge, Corsham

If you want to moan or question the industry specifically, then send your hot, steaming prose to 3RD Degree – see page 96 for further details...

TRUE LINES... Five interactive guitar tutorial CD ROMS featuring the legendary Paul Gilbert (eh?) will be released next month.....

Samurai Shodown – Blades Of Blood

Yes, it's another beat-em-up from SNK, and a sequel at that. But this one is sure to set the pulses of Neo Geo owners everywhere racing, as it's the third in the most renowned of SNK's series'.

The story of *Samurai Shodown 3* revolves around Zankurou the Demon, who at one stage embarked on a quest of genocide. But now he's stopped THE KILLING. He now only fights those who fight him.

There are 12 characters to choose from, with seven oldies and five newies: Shizumaru Hisame is a boy searching for his past, Basara is an executioner, Rimururu is a 'sentimental ice maiden', Gaira Caffeine is the rowdiest monk under the sun, while Shiru Amakusa Tokisada is Heaven's fallen angel of destruction.

There are new elements to the gameplay as well. You now get to choose the alignment (good or evil) of your character. There are no throws in the game (these have been replaced by Guard Drops) and now there's some provision made for blocking in the mid-air. Wahoo!

The *Samurai Shodown* series is certainly gearing up for another assault on the home (see *Samurai Shodown RPG* next month).

Machine.....Neo Geo CD
Publisher....SNK
Developer...In-house
Style.....Beat-em-up
Release.....January '96
Country.....Japan

Brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr

Oh yes! It's that freezing time of year, but it doesn't have to be that way. Lisa here saves herself the embarrassment of cold-induced pointy bits with a toasty Ultimate T-shirt. For just £7.50 you too can prevent certain bit of your anatomy from taking your friends' eyes out. Best get one in really...

Ultimate T-shirt UFGTSH

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Violence Debate Rages

7th Level, publishers of award-winning computer titles, such as *Monty Python's Complete Waste Of Time*, *Take Your Best Shot* and *Battle Beast*, are calling for the electronic entertainment industry to stop using blood and gore to sell videogames to 'kids'. Spoil-sports!

They point out that the Next Gen systems allow ever more realistic scenes of violence. Citing *Mortal Kombat 3* and *Killer Instinct* as examples of this trend, they indicate how in their own beat-em-up, *Battle Beast*, they are trying to put across an idea of caring for the environment: a cartoon-like quest that has you killing deadly toads before taking on the evil Toadman. And all this to create awareness of one of Britain's rarest amphibians, the natterjack toad.

'There is absolutely no need for some of the violence contained in the new breed of games,' says Lars Nordhild Ronning from 7th Level. 'If developers use a little more imagination they could produce titles that were both original and acceptable for the young.' That told 'em, didn't it?

▲ Is Killer Instinct really too violent? Let us know...

US Top Ten

There are seven new entries in the US Top Ten this month. And perhaps it's a bit surprising to see that the ever-reliable *Madden* goes straight in above another newy, *Tekken*. It's that sporty time of the year, so it's no wonder that half the chart is taken up by EA and Sega Sports, particularly on the Genesis (Mega Drive). But what of the Saturn? Very interesting.

1 John Madden NFL '96.....Genesis
2 Tekken .....PlayStation
3 NBA Live '96.....Genesis
4 Twisted Metal.....PlayStation
5 Warhawk.....PlayStation
6 John Madden NFL '96.....SNES
7 NBA Live '96.....SNES
8 Mortal Kombat 3.....SNES
9 Jumping Flash.....PlayStation
10 Prime Time Football.....Genesis

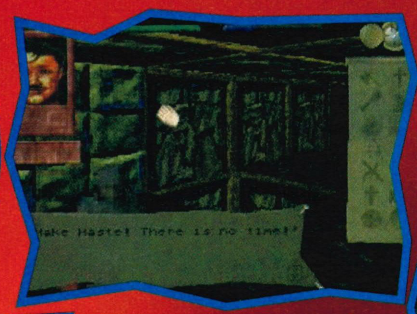
EDGE

Nintendo 64
The inside story

No other hardware launch has been as clandestine. No other gamebox has so much to live up to. **Edge** reports from Tokyo on the debut of Nintendo's 64bit machine and interrogates the visionaries behind it

Voted **Magazine of the year**
IN/IN
Industry awards

Issue **twenty-nine** onsale
12 January 1996 at selected newsagents



◀ The icons allow you to quickly access 'things'.

◀ Hmm. It's all a bit spooky and green for our liking.

◀ Some sort of mirror. It scares us!

Towers 2 – Plight Of The Stargazer

The Jaguar is finally set to get an RPG. And about bloody time too. It boasts over 350 creatures to interact and scrap with, and 600+ items to pick up, admire and shove in your furry nap sack (all hail the Great Inventory).

You begin the quest shipwrecked on Lamini, and while waiting for your boat to be repaired go off exploring. You learn that Lord Daggan, a geezer who once was top bod around these parts, locked himself away in his tower, and when questioned ended up burning down the village.

But when anyone was sent to sort him out, they never returned. Thieves have been spotted leaving the tower though, weighed down by huge bags of cash. And yep, you've guessed it, you decide to head into the tower and take on Mad Bloke. As a Brucie bonus the people of Lamini will let you keep anything you find and build you somewhere to live. Put your very existence out on a limb and you get a house. Brilliant. Just like real life.

The game goes for a 3D engine, but curiously only gives you the chance to select from four heroes when you begin a new game. But, aha-ha!, each gets a randomly generated selection of statistics each time (covering the traditional Games Workshopified Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity and Constitution). The game screen is constructed for comfort, allowing you to simply click on icons to check your statistics, sleep (to restore health and mana) and load/save games etc.

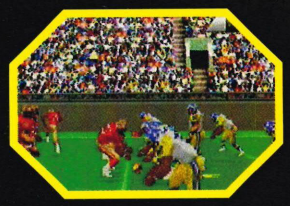
At last, something on the Jag with a bit of meat.

Machine.....Jaguar (cart)
Publisher....JV Enterprises
Developer...In-house
Style.....RPG
Release.....March '96
Country.....US

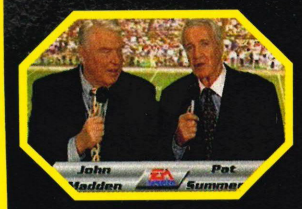
...TRUE LINES... The recently launched Penguin Electronic Publishing on the Net (www.penguin.co.uk) has an extract from Bill Gates' (*Windows '95*) new book.....

Madden '96

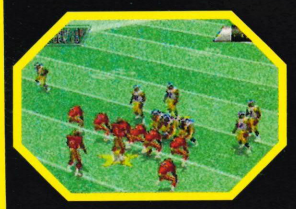
The PlayStation's sport catalogue is growing thanks to EA Sports. But what about a corking Sony version of ever-playable *John Madden*? It's *almost* here, but reports from our sources in the US say that this version may not be quite up to scratch. Still, it does have all 30 NFL teams (with All Madden, Super Bowl and Hall Of Fame teams available via secret codes) all 30 NFL stadiums (3D rendered, of course) and stats coming out of its ears...



▲ Yep, there's motion-captured animation afoot...



▲ Old Madders and Pat are inseparable in the '96 version.



▲ There are over 240 offensive and defensive plays.

Japan Top Ten

No real surprise that the number one spot is taken by the latest installment of the deliriously popular *Romancing Saga* series on the Famicom (SNES). The relatively cheap *Virtua Fighter Computer Graphics* CD (basically a Saturn disc full of *VF* images) is also beginning to creep up on the rest...

1 Romancing Saga3..... Super Famicom
2 Beyond The Beyond.....PlayStation
3 King The Spirits.....Saturn
4 Super Puyo Puyo 2.....Saturn
5 In The Hunt.....PlayStation
6 Tokemeki Memorial (Forever With You) .....PlayStation
7 Yoshi's Island.....Super Famicom
8 Secret Of Mana 2.....Super Famicom
9 King Of Boxers.....Saturn
10 Virtua Fighter CG.....Saturn

UPDATE

Bluffer's Guide to... Digital Pictures

Why specialise in digital films then? Well, Digital Pictures was launched in 1991, by Tom Zito. He and his team had originally been involved with creating the NEMO project, an interactive television system developed between 1985 and 1988. Hasbro sunk $24 million into the project, but lost interest. Tom then licensed back the technology and began to turn it into videogames. Previously, Tom had worked at Axlon, Nolan Bushnell's (inventor of *Pong*) toy company and had spent some time at NYU's film school. That explains why 'interactive movies' have become Digital Pictures' trademark.

So what've they done?

Well they first released *Night Trap* way back in '92 when Sega brought out their Mega CD. The violence and scantily-clad lass content of the game drew complaints from the mainstream media, but the title went on to sell 250,000 copies (and due to its release on other formats continues to sell). They then followed this up with *Sewer Shark* (which has reputedly sold 750,000 copies). Other successes from around this period include *Ground Zero Texas*, *Double Switch* and *Prize Fighter* (Urgh!). '94 saw them following these titles up with *Corpse Killer*, *Slam City With Scottie Pippen* and *Kids On Site*.

They're specialists then?

Oh yes! They're the only software company which concentrates 100% on FMV. In fact, in October 1993, The Directors Guild Of America signed them to the first ever live action interactive film and videogame contract. They've developed some top technology to aid them in getting the best possible results onto CD: InstaSwitch handles 'smart interleaving and buffering of CD data', which basically speeds up the action. They've also invested $2 million in DigiChrome, a process which allows large amounts of video to be compressed to fit on a CD.

So what about the future?

How about *Maximum Surge* on PC CD ROM, Saturn and 3DO and *Quarterback Attack With Mike Ditka*, for PC CD ROM, Macintosh CD ROM, Saturn and 3DO. All their titles are distributed by Acclaim.

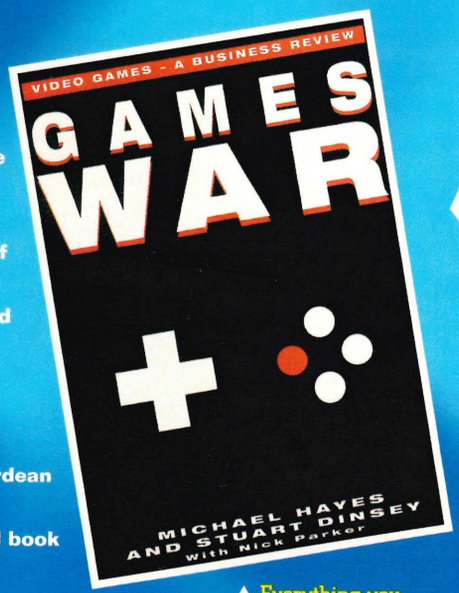
Scrap! Scrap!

Now out in the shops is a book dedicated to the 'battle' that is currently raging in the videogame industry, as well as covering all the significant developments between 1987 and 1995.

Games War is, admittedly, aimed at people who are already in, or hope to enter, the industry, and as such the price reflects this. £25 is certainly a little steep (particularly as the excellent *Game Over* is now available in paperback), but this does set out to tackle the whole industry and comes furnished with some rather interesting tables and graphs (did you know, for instance, that the all time estimated UK top selling game 1990-1994 was *Sonic 2*?). Still, Ultimate gets a brief mention and it's certainly jam-packed with facts.

Game Over, by Michael Hayes and Stuart Dinsey, is published by Bowerdean Publishing and is available in all good book shops now.

At 16p per page, though, it might be an idea to wait for the paperback version to hit the streets.



▲ Everything you ever wanted to know about the current home-gaming boom.

I-War

This 3D futuristic combat game should be heading for a Jaguar near you at some point early this year. You may recognise it, as its working title was *Redemption* (which we think was a much sexier name). It then became known as *Netwar*, but it's staying as *I-War*. We hope...

In the game you have been placed inside a computer where you must destroy viruses, stop hackers, and a bunch of other weirdy scenarios. So you basically fly around a first-person polygonal environment zapping at things with your whopping great laser.

▲ It's certainly packed with polygons, but what of the frame rate?

▲ Atari really need solid games for their Jag now.

Manager, *PushOver*, *Lotus 3*, *Zool*, *Sleepwalker* and *Central Intelligence* – all £4.99.....

Cyber-Girl Soldier Shocker!

Following its success in Japan and the US, Pioneer are set to launch the first part of the *Armitage 3* series in the UK very soon.

On 22nd January, you'll be able to buy *Electro Blood* (if you're over 15, that is), where '*Blade Runner* meets *Total Recall*' by all accounts. Imagine Mars, 2179, where people have now been joined by highly-developed humanoid robots.

When the murder of a country singing lovely, Kelly McCannon, reveals she's a Third Type robot, a more advanced version than the Second.

The Martian Police Department (MPD) calls out Ross Sylibus, a recently transferred cop from Chicago, and his partner Armitage, a 19-year-old with a wardrobe to shock and a death-defying secret. Sounds dead good, doesn't it?

Armitage 3 will cost you £6.99 for approximately 50 minutes' cyber-fun, but fret not – you can have one on us. We'll give a copy to the first ten people drawn from our big pocket who can complete the following: I think Armitage's death-defying secret is...

All entries, please sir, to Armitage 3, Ultimate Future Games, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2DL. They should arrive no later than 8th February.

Next Level of Theme Parks

Will this be the shoot-em-up to rescue the Jaguar from some fairly hefty criticism of late? Well, first reports indicate that the frame rate is none too sharpish, but we'll have to wait for the finished game before casting our judgement. See you next month then...

Machine.....Jaguar
Publisher....Atari
Developer...In-house
Style.....Shoot em-up
Release.....Early'96
Country.....US

Sega Enterprises US have just opened a high-tech entertainment centre in Irvine, California. Sega City will encourage visitors to become active participants rather than just normal white knuckle riders, which Sega claim will have people 'creating unique experiences with every visit'. Not, as they say, bad!

Groovy attractions at Sega City include an eight-player *Indy Formula* racer, eight-player *Daytona Special* and *R-360*, a flight simulator that rolls the full 360 degrees.

'We're taking our 40 years experience in interactive amusement hardware technologies, 3D computer graphics and amusement game design to a new level,' says Al Stone, president of Sega Enterprises. So come on Sega, bring your lovely City over here! Quick, quick, quicker!

most identical to the UK version except that there are no bloody noses. What softies.....

Ultimate Future Games

Section 2

Come & 'ave a go if ya fink yer patient enough!

The Ultra 64 (or Nintendo 64, as it's now beginning to be called) is finally unveiled, along with its first batch of stunning games. We go to Japan and the Shoshinkai Show to bring you the first pictures of the stunning array of titles it has lined up, including an in-depth look at what is being hailed as the greatest videogame of all time already! – *Super Mario 64*.

We give you all the launch details, explore all the amazing 64-bit games and show you the killer graphics. You need to know about this machine and Ultimate Future Games is first with all the information yet again 42

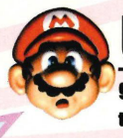
Silicon Graphics

The term SGI is bandied around like a particular bouncy bandage in Bangladesh, but what is it all about? Just what is a Silicon Graphics work-station? What can it do, why is it so expensive and is it any good?

We explore the implications of this technology for gamers as the prices start to tumble 52

Come & 'ave if ya fink yer patient en

No longer do we have to suffer false rumours and speculation. Nintendo's dream machine is real, the facts have been confirmed – the big boys are back and here to stay. They will be anyway...



Ultimate recently got back from the 7th annual Shoshinkai Software Exhibition at the Makuhari Convention Centre, just north of Tokyo, and as promised, Nintendo's addition to the Next Generation of gaming, the Ultra 64 (or Nintendo 64, as it's known over there), was officially unveiled to the world. 100 finished hardware units were indeed present and playable together with a 50% complete version of ***Super Mario 64*** and a 20% version of ***Kirby Bowl 64***. Not bad.

The main news (besides the top software on display – see page 46) was the announcement, predicted by Ultimate last month, that the Ultra 64 won't be released in Japan until Sunday April 21st. FOUR MONTHS AWAY! Good grief. There will be three games available at launch: ***Super Mario 64***, ***Kirby Bowl 64*** and another, as yet unconfirmed, title (our money's on ***Killer Instinct 2***). A US release has yet to be finalised, but strong implications were made as to the first week in May along with Canada. As for Europe, we're still playing the guessing game. September seems to be the earliest likely slot, but insiders are hinting at December '96. The price tag will be a very pleasing £250 in Europe with one pack-in game (although it's only £160 in Japan) and around £200 without.

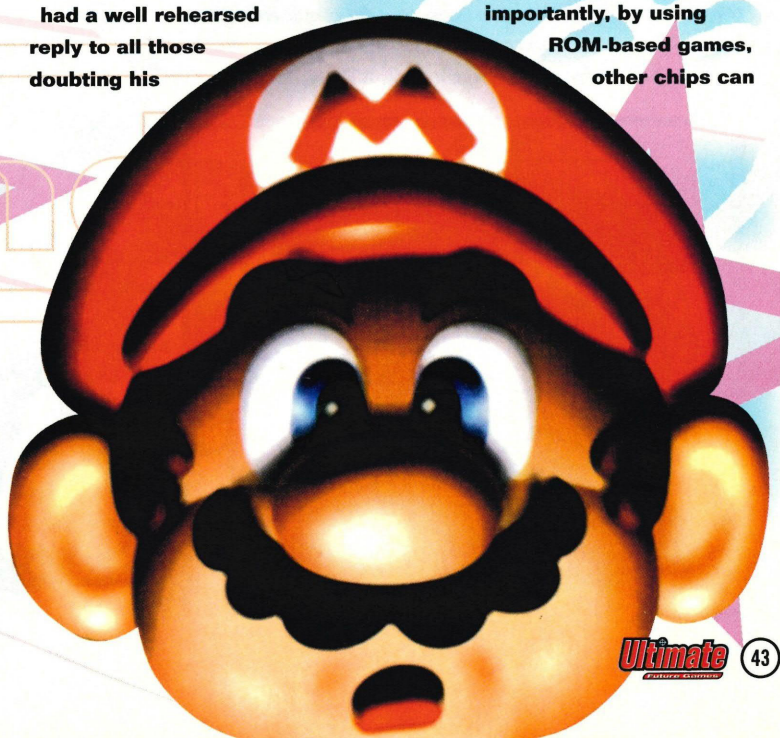
So, it's finally happened. No last minute hitches, no let downs, no more secrets (well, not many anyway), we've seen it in the flesh and know what it can do. What's the verdict then? Well, first things first, it's already being tagged as, 'the ultimate game machine' – our name just gets everywhere, don't you think? But what you want to know is whether or not it lives up to the

e a go

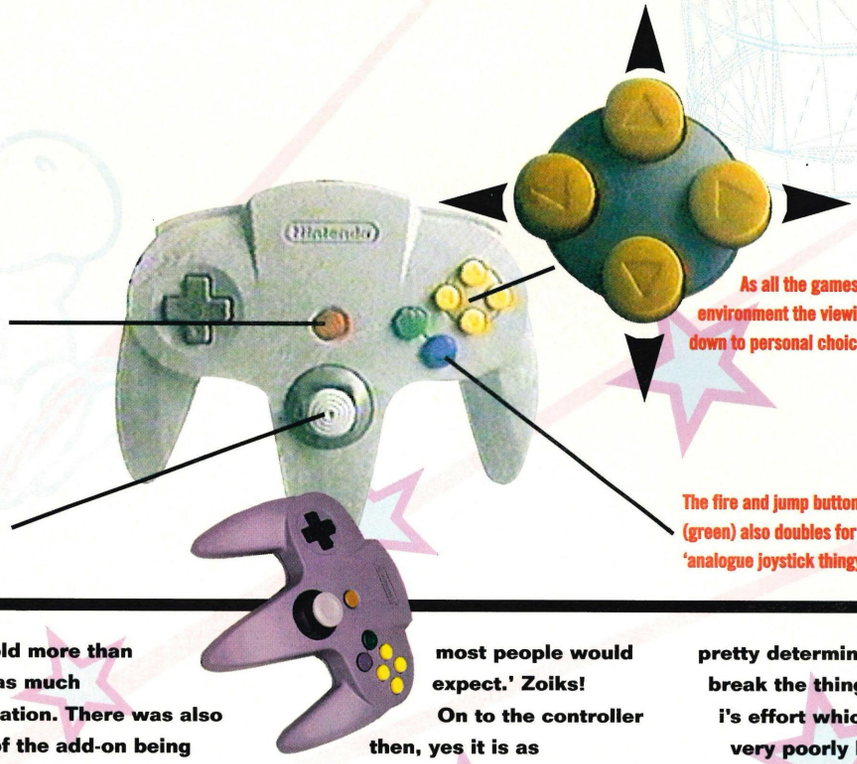
hype. The answer is yes. In some respects it even goes beyond our expectations. Nintendo themselves were clearly not shy about praising their new creation, 'Nintendo 64 represents a dramatic leap forward in the home videogame experience... by employing Silicon Graphics' powerful visual computing technology in the Nintendo 64 system, videogame players will view, interact and virtually 'fly' through worlds never before imagined in a dedicated home videogame system,' said Howard Lincoln, President of Nintendo Of America. Tom Jermoluk, president and chief operating offer of Silicon Graphics concurred: 'Silicon Graphics and Nintendo have created the Next Generation in home entertainment by providing a degree of realism and interactivity not found in any other competitive offering... Nintendo and Silicon Graphics' combined expertise in the home entertainment market and visual computing technology will allow game players to step inside virtual worlds.' We agree that it has certainly been worth the wait (see *Super Mario 64* preview on page 46) it's just such a shame that screen shots alone don't convey just *how* good this system is. Some of our colleagues who stayed in England were particularly nonplussed by the screen-shots that we E-mailed them. Upon our return they couldn't believe how excited we were, until, that is, we showed them the demo video. This is where magazines fail to capture the magic of videogames – we do try, though. Believe us when we say that it's better than any of the screen shots on the following eight pages imply. Much better.

As for the worries concerning a cartridge rather than CD-based system, Hiroshi Yamauchi had a well rehearsed reply to all those doubting his decision, he told Ultimate: 'Many of you feel that CD ROM is the call of the day, but look at the latest buzz-word in the computer world, plug-and-play, which is nothing but Famicom culture. In addition, customers thought that having no loading time is a great advantage, but more importantly, by using ROM-based games, other chips can

ough!



The fat and extremely clever controller



later be incorporated into the cartridge, which allows Nintendo to offer new game opportunities to game developers. The Nintendo 64 will carry on this tradition of using mask ROMs and computer chips to provide *the* most advanced games.'

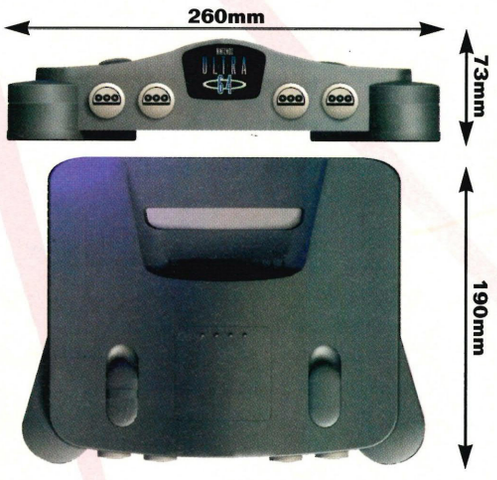
Nintendo also announced that their bulk storage add-on (the 'bulky drive') will not be ready until next year's Shoshinkai Show where, together with *Legend Of Zelda 64* and *Final Fantasy 7* it will make its debut. The add-on uses magnetic read/write discs and is rumoured to be four times quicker than current CD-drives and hold more than twice as much information. There was also talk of the add-on being backwards compatible. This would mean that data-discs rather than sequels could be released to beef-up old games. For example, after you're bored of *Ultra Doom* you could buy another 50 levels for around half the price or when you've finished *Cruis'n USA* there may be an opportunity to buy another couple of hundred kilometres of track. The possibilities are endless.

There's no news, as yet, on a price for either the 'bulky drive' or its software, but it has been said that it'll be, 'cheaper than most people would expect.' Zoiks!

On to the controller then, yes it is as revolutionary as we've been claiming all these months and as the official photo implies. We were initially worried about user-friendliness and the strength of the central 'analogue joystick thingy'. No need. It's the best joypad ever. Everything is just in the right place and after a quick go (on *Mario 64* in our case) it becomes second nature. And the 'analogue joystick thingy' is nothing like that found on the CD-i controller– rocking good news! We don't know how they've done it, but it would take a pretty determined idiot to break the thing, unlike the CD-i's effort which takes only a very poorly baby kitten to render it irreparable.

Nintendo have also gone button bonkers. As well as the seven visible buttons on the front there are two collar buttons, as popularised by the SNES controller. There's also a fire button on the underside, directly below the 'analogue joystick thingy'. Speaking of underside, we can now reveal what that mysterious cavity slot is all about: It's a memory card housing! The idea being that each player can store their own data, for example, controller configurations, game data, highest scores, favourite replays etc. So if you want to

Final Technical Specifications



Its appearance is exactly the same as the original photo and in the flesh it's only slightly larger than the PlayStation (mainly due to the raised hump). Anyway, here, for your pleasure, are the final technical specifications:

CPU: MIPS 64-bit RISC CPU (customised R4000 series)
Clock Speed: 93.75 MHz

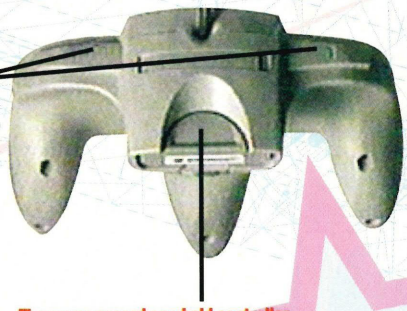
Memory:
Rambus D-Ram: 36M-bit
Transfer Speed: Maximum 4,500M-bit/sec

Co-Processor:
RPC: SP (advanced sound and graphics processor) and DP (super-quick pixel drawing processor) incorporated
Clock Speed: 62.5 MHz

Resolution: 256 x 224 – 640 x 480 dots. Flicker free interlace mode support

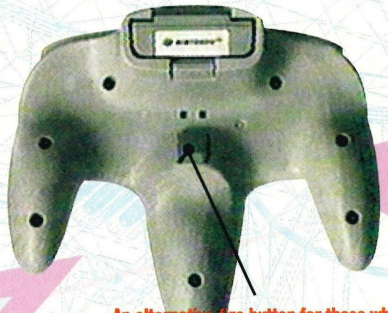
Colour: 32-bit RGBA pixel colour frame buffer support 21-bit colour video output

Graphics Processing:
Function: Z-buffer, anti aliasing
Realistic texture-mapping: Tri-linear filtered mipmap interpolation, perspective correction, environment-mapping



As popularised by the SNES controller and then ripped-off by everyone since, the collar buttons return, but are used more for calling up options than steering sharply.

The memory card can hold controller configurations, game data, highest scores and favourite replays. Clever little thing!



An alternative fire button for those who like that 'trigger' feeling. Only accessible when using the 'analogue joystick thingy' (obviously).

This was a very rare sight at Shoshinkai – one of the 100 machines on display without a coach-load of spectators crowded around. What a sexy machine, don't you agree?

play 'round at your mate's house you can simply take your own configurations with you which is perfectly tailored to all your gaming needs. Blimey, that sounded like an advert for the bloody thing – look it's great okay, that's all we're trying to say. And on top of that, it's available in six additional colours. Can they do no wrong?

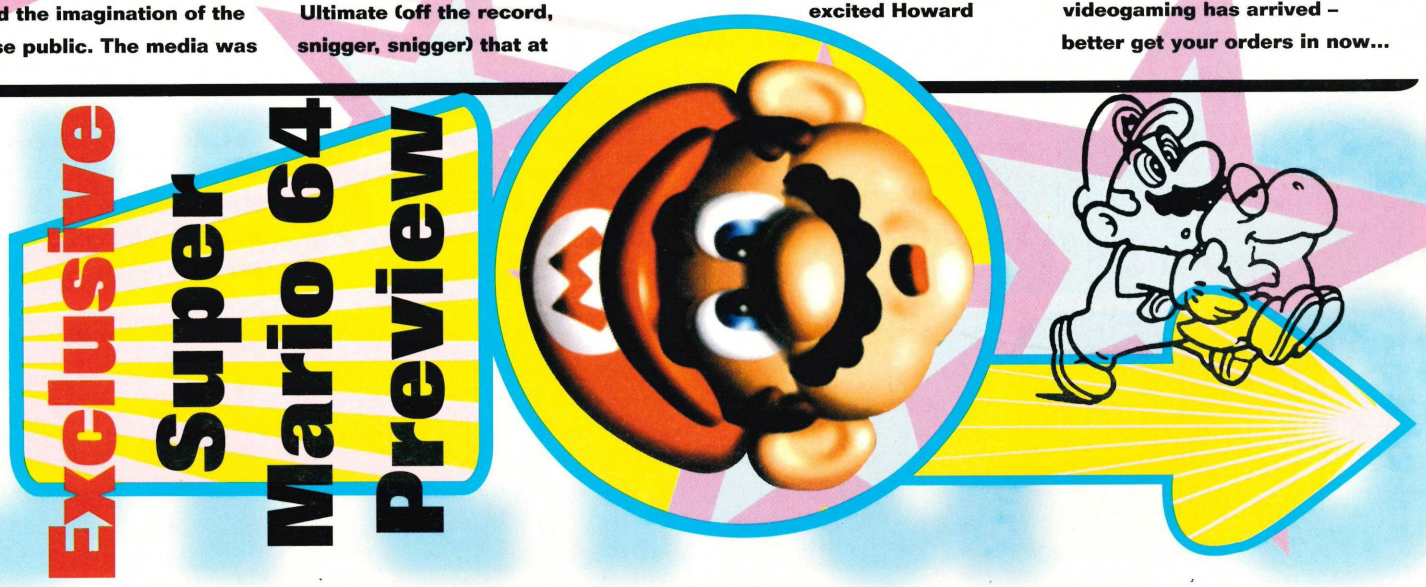
The software will be priced initially at ¥9,800 which, when literally converted, at the moment, is about £100. Fret not though, the actual price of games will be between £50 and £60, the same as current top of the range SNES carts which will force a drop in the price of these SNES carts.

The Ultra 64 has truly captured the imagination of the Japanese public. The media was seemingly concerned with nothing else during our brief stay and the gaming press is predicting the fastest selling console ever. It seems that, as usual, (discounting the disastrous Virtual Boy which will be re-launched next year) Nintendo have timed their new machine's release to perfection. No surprise there then.

When the show was over some were voicing their disappointment at what was on offer, stating that the Ultra 64 is only slightly superior to the PlayStation and Saturn. That was probably a reaction to expecting to play ten finished games and only actually getting to see two early versions. Why was this? One Nintendo employee told Ultimate (off the record, snigger, snigger) that at least five developers were ready to ship near finished software out to the show, but were informed that their software would no longer be required only days before. The reason? We don't know for sure, but we know that the decision came from the very top of Nintendo and probably concerns Nintendo not wanting any other products stealing Mario's thunder. And the thing is, it worked. We're all far too excited about *Super Mario 64* and will probably feel the same way in a couple of months when they unveil another couple of games. Nintendo aren't stupid.

This disappointment wasn't the common feeling though. Ultimate left the show feeling the same way as the visibly excited Howard Lincoln: 'By producing incredibly realistic graphics, providing exceptional gameplay performance and featuring a revolutionary, multi-directional controller, Nintendo 64 delivers beyond our expectations.' Naturally we wouldn't have said it in such a stiff manner, but the general message is the same.

There you go then, the Ultra 64 will be available from your local importer from April 23rd. It appears that, yet again, the future of videogaming has arrived – better get your orders in now...

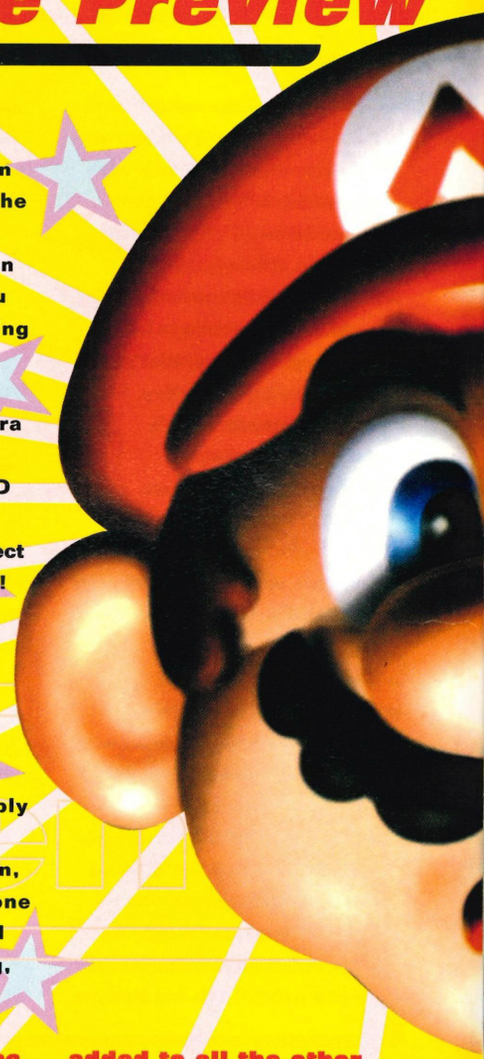


Super Mario 64 Exclusive Preview

Nintendo confirmed that 30 titles are currently in development for the Ultra 64. Of these, 13 were on display at Shoshinkai. They also stated that cartridges are no longer restricted to 64 Mbit. The current ceiling for the Japan/US launch is 96 Mbit (that's more like it). And, 'it would be possible for 256 Mbit carts to appear at some stage,' an insider told Ultimate.

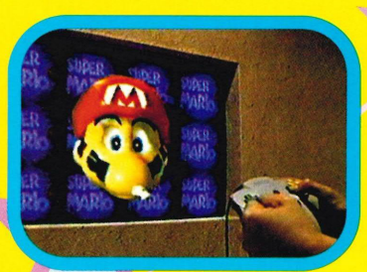
Hiroshi Yamauchi stressed that software is of great importance to Nintendo: 'The market should be led by software. But when you're talking about the Next Generation machine, you're talking about hardware. Users want software, creative innovative software that offers a fun experience they have never witnessed before. This is a market that is led by software, so it doesn't make sense to talk about the so-called Next Generation machine.' One of these quality games that we played to death was *Super Mario 64*... Every game system, in order to survive, needs a killer title that is, or appears to be, so good that it'll shift hardware units by itself. The NES had *Super Mario Bros*, The SNES had *Super Mario World*, the Mega Drive had *Sonic The Hedgehog*, the Saturn had *Virtua Fighter* and the PlayStation had *Ridge Racer*. Before you even read this preview you should know one thing – *Super Mario 64* (working title) is going to be the Ultra 64's killer game!

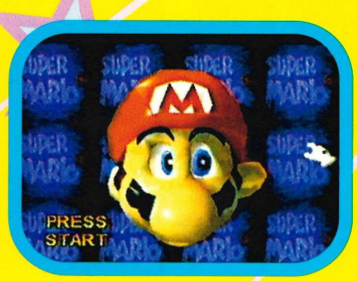
Mario's gone 3D and not just some throwaway 3D effect like in Sega's *Bug*! He's gone completely 3D! He's a rendered fella and so is his world. On top of that, the quality of this 3D effect is simply astonishing. There is absolutely no pixelation, even up close. In fact, one fellow showgoer summed up the effect by muttering, 'f*** the power of the

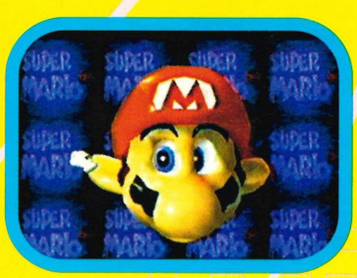


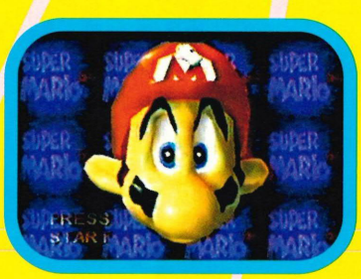
They're All Crazy Over There

The title screen of *Super Mario 64* is not only beautifully rendered, but is utterly mad in the face – quite literally! Before you press the Start button you can, if you choose, manipulate Mario's head in real-time to give him a look like one of the in-bred hillbillies in *Deliverance* or maybe even Ian Beale (not much difference if truth be known). Admittedly this is a gimmick, but, when added to all the other features in the game and machine, shows why Nintendo are still the company to beat. Hoorah for Nintendo!

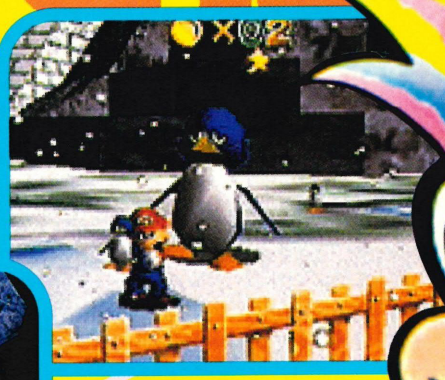


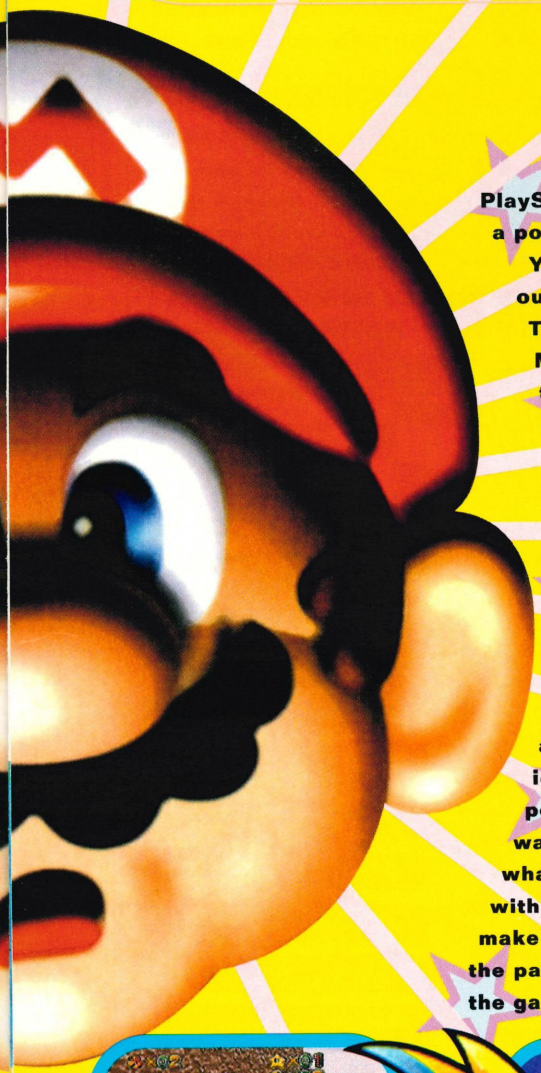






リアルに伝わ



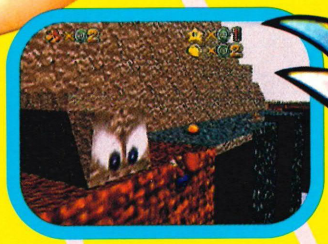


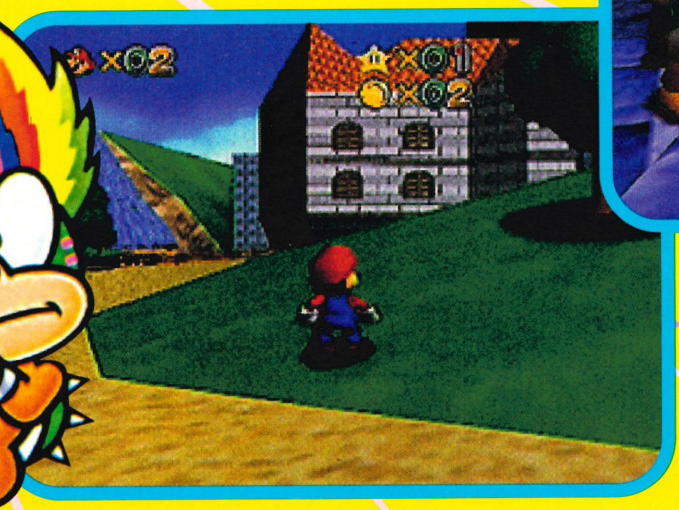
PlayStation.' He could have a point, actually.

You begin the game outside of a castle in The World Of Rocky Mountain, showing off the vast 3D environment immediately. Part of the charm of this game (and what makes us so confident that it will be Nintendo's flagship title) is that there really is no set route. You can go for a swim, climb over the ice, play with some penguins, scale the walls, climb a tree, whatever you fancy – within reason. You have to make choices which affect the path you take through the game, something which previous *Mario* games, including the recent and utterly splendid *Yoshi's Island*, just haven't done and probably couldn't achieve with their linear layout. Inside the castle you can send Mario through traditional doors, trap-doors and into warping mirrors (which nearly always lead to special stages). And it's these elements which make Mario seem more than merely a videogame character – he's REAL! Honestly!

There's absolute freedom of movement, you genuinely feel that you are in a world rather than just a level. Part of this stems from the four choices of perspective available. You can set the camera wherever you please, to the side, above, right in Mario's face or into the distance. This is utterly seductive. Oh yes.

What about those levels then? Well, the most gob-smacking of the ones we played were those based underwater. Never has an underwater scenario been so well produced in an interactive game. And the sounds! You can forget about the advantages of CD, no other system would have





The end of level Bowser is not only a tough bugger to crack, but shows off, in a few seconds, exactly what the Ultra 64 can do. This sequence really flaunts the rendered 3D character, illustrates the effectiveness of the tri-linear interpolation system which truly shows no pixels, even up close and moves at a blistering rate – something which the PlayStation and Saturn surely could not achieve. Grab Bowser by the tail, spin him around and as the camera pulls back, launch him at the screen. Brilliant.

bettered the atmosphere created by the Ultra 64's sound chip. Mario really does appear to swim, with you seemingly right behind him. Down through a tunnel you take him before bringing him up to surface beside a beautifully created submarine, where the in-game camera often jiggles halfway between the surface and a submerged state. Stunning. Then there's the warping effect when you jump through a picture, the ripples are straight out of *Stargate*, if not even better realised!

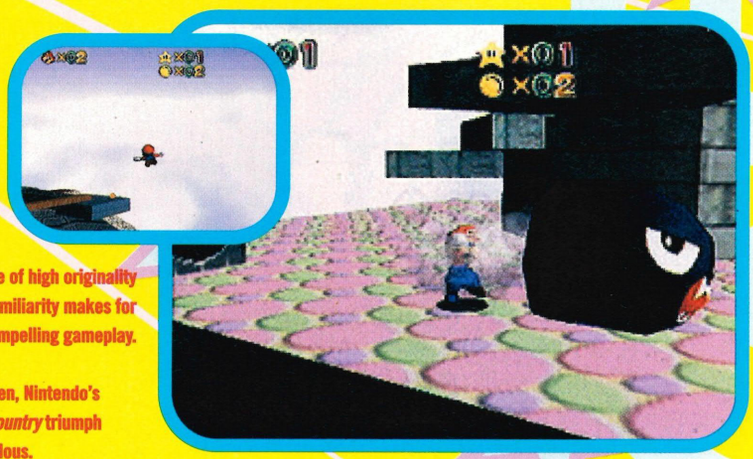
You may be wondering why Mario is visible when a *Doom*-like perspective would have been so much more immediate? Because it's Mario! The best loved character in videogame history – you fool! Nintendo have again created a style of play that makes you feel as if you're along for the ride rather than just watching and a first-person perspective would have robbed the game of its charm. Also, you wouldn't be able to witness Mario leaping and spinning while whooping in his excited state – it's tops.

Who else could be responsible for such a potential gem but the man who created so many of Nintendo's killer games, Shigeru Miyamoto. He has created a 3D world that is not only graphically superior to everything that has come before it, but is actually interesting, diverse and fun to explore. Again, Nintendo have concentrated on the idea and gameplay – the looks are seen as simply a bonus – just like they did with their first crop of SNES titles.

Yes, we might appear to be harping on about how great this games is a little too early (it is only 50% complete), but once you've played it, you'll understand. It somehow just feels correct. The analogue controller is largely responsible for this feeling because the harder you press it, the faster he moves. It's a simple thing, but so intuitive that you soon forget that the Mario genre has had a complete overhaul. It's *so* good!

Super Mario 64 is rumoured to have 150 stages, if that's the case then we'd better reinvent our scoring system for when the review comes in. This one's going to rocket off the scale. Hiroshi Yamauchi is certainly a confident geezer: 'I might be bragging, but when this game is complete, it may be the best videogame in history.' It seems that the wait has been worth it – you have been warned!

Machine.....Ultra 64
Publisher....Nintendo
Developer...In-house
Style.....3D Adventure
Release.....April
Country.....Japan



▶ The mixture of high originality and familiarity makes for compelling gameplay.

◀ All of a sudden, Nintendo's *Donkey Kong Country* triumph looks very frivolous.

And The Rest...

In all, 13 games were displayed at Shoshinkai. These are all preliminary names and the fact that Shoshinkai is a Japanese show means that there's no guarantee that they'll all be released over here.

Pilotwings 64

Pilotwings **was one of the first crop of SNES titles to show that it is indeed superior to the Mega Drive. Strangely, no one imitated the game so instead of becoming a cliche it has strengthened in our memories, leading to the inevitable *Pilotwings 64* for the Ultra. Hoorah!**

And what a game it's shaping up to be too! As in the original, this features several flight methods – by helicopter, hang-glider and jet pack. Phwoar! The main difference between this and the 16-bit version (and indeed anything that the 32-bit machines have been able to create so far) lies in the sexy, rendered USA environment. You can fly wherever you like without the landscape rendering before your eyes. And the scenery is brill, including famous American landmarks, although not to scale, obviously. Expect this to be massive and remember, you read it here first.

Kirby Bowl 64

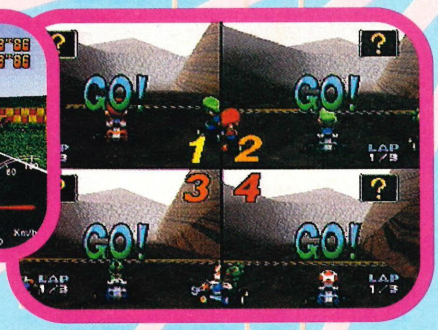
This takes the SNES classic, *Kirby's Dream Course* a couple of steps further into the realms of lasting playability, hopefully. Rather than basing the game on a golf course Nintendo have created a massive environment with Kirby as a ball that you guide all around the gaff. The point is to motor through the course as quick as you can while knocking all the other Kirby-alikes out of the arena and off the edge, while ensuring that you stay in. It was only a short playable demo, but the analogue stick made the speed and momentum feel particularly realistic. All a bit frantic, but very promising all the same.

It's a bit of a strange choice this one considering all the other rumoured games that actually had playable levels, but if anything hasn't got a hope of stealing Mario's thunder, it's Kirby. He's a cute character, but never posed any kind of threat to the loveable Mazza. Some neat touches here, though.

Mario Kart R

Rather than screw up a particularly good racer Nintendo have built on the original by sprucing up the graphics and offering loads more options. There is now a four-player mode on one screen. Not four letterboxes as in *Street Racer*, but four equal corners of the screen and it appears to work very well. The multi-player action now takes place in Ghost mode and Battle mode.

Mysteriously, Hiroshi Yamauchi told Ultimate that, 'Clearly, when users who have been playing with Super Famicom *Mario Kart* can tell exactly how different the 64 title is, then the players would know for themselves what the features and characteristics of the Nintendo 64 are. And they will know just how different the Nintendo 64 is from other videogame systems.' He obviously had a few too many wine gums that day.

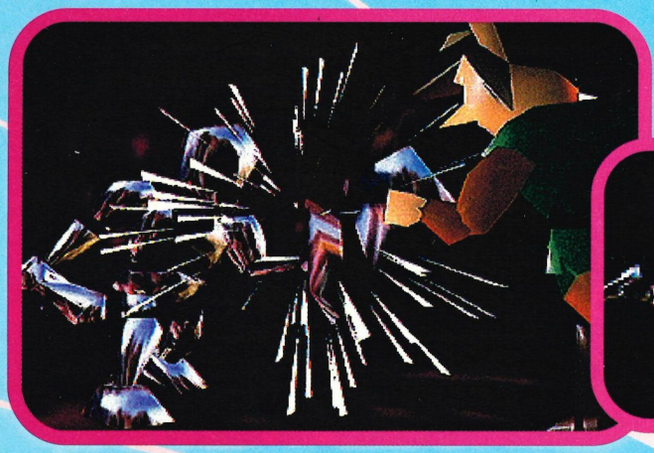


Wave Race 64

It's Nintendo's answer to *Wipeout*, out of the blue and at the show. Strange choice considering it's only been on the Game Boy previously, but stunning anyway. The jet skis have been replaced by gutsy looking speed boats and the only settings we know of (those on the demo video) are an urban canal system and some wide-open rivers. Graphically this is a corker – the best texture-mapping yet to be seen on the Ultra.

Expect furiously paced multi-player racing heaven. Is this the much talked about half-sequel to *F-Zero* that insiders at Nintendo HQ have been taking about for the last three months?

Legend Of Zelda

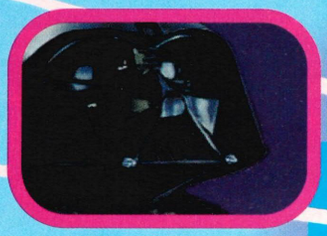


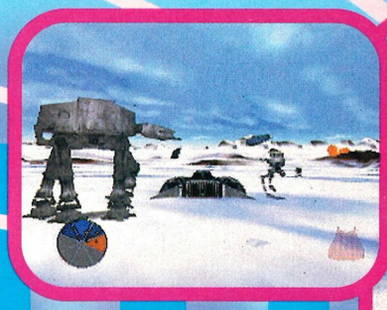
This was the least complete game on display, but at the same time the most graphically impressive. All that was shown was a 15 second demo featuring a fully rendered Link having a sword fight with a beautifully shiny knight. This is even more 3D than *Super Mario 64* and the reflections coming from the knight's armour are among the best effects ever seen in a videogame.

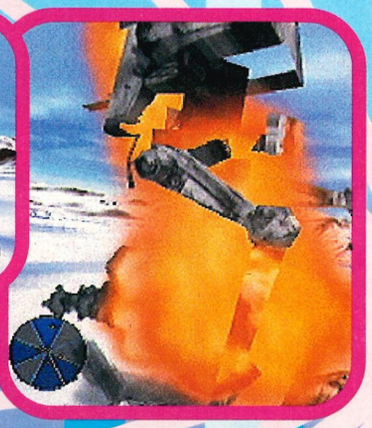
Legend Of Zelda 64 will be unveiled at next year's show and will be the first game to appear on the 'bulky drive'.

Shadows Of The Empire

Following on from last month's exclusive glimpse of LucasArts' *Shadows Of The Empire*, Nintendo had a 30 second demo video from the snow-speeder level on display. As predicted, it is a stunner and could quite easily be from the opening scene of *The Empire Strikes Back*. Some of the flying scenes slow-down when faced with awesome explosions, but this isn't anywhere near complete.







The game is going to have to be more varied than this to compete with *StarFox 64*, though. Let's face it, LucasArts know exactly what they're doing.

StarFox 64

The little hairy fox geezer gets the 3D, 64-bit treatment, but to be honest the little we saw of it didn't look too far removed from the SNES version. The main change is the newly added freedom of movement. You are no longer limited to a set route. You can go where you darned well please – although flying randomly in space is no fun.

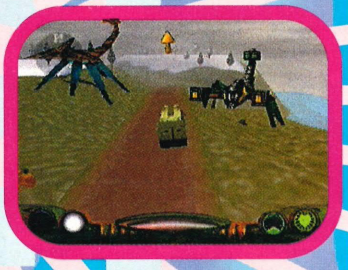
This is only 30% complete at the moment so expect some monstrous improvements by the summer. Nintendo aren't gonna bodge this one up, but even if they do it'll sell loads.

Buggy-Boogie 64

A bit of a mystery this one, we know that Angel Studios created it, we know that Shigeru Miyamoto was involved in its development and we know that it involves groovy buggies that battle it out it various futuristic arenas. Could this be Nintendo's answer to Sony's *Assault Rigs*? The video made it look a bit sluggish, but then we shouldn't really wibble on about that too much, 'cos this isn't a review! Expect it to be multi-player and bonkers barmy in the head. Also expect us to know more about this one in the coming months. We're baffled right now.

Body Harvest

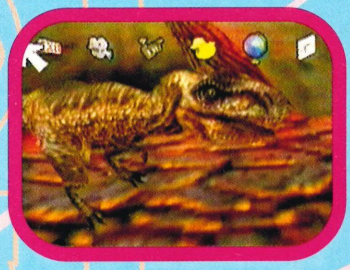
Those guys at DMA Design are clearly bonkers. Always have been, always will be. Their latest effort (after *Lemmings* and *Unirally*) sees you as a tiny little fella taking control of a series of monster vehicles in order to combat an alien invasion. It's rumoured that there are around 80 vehicles to choose from including planes and tanks, you receive a new vehicle after you reach each end of level target. That's around 80 levels then.



Goldeneye

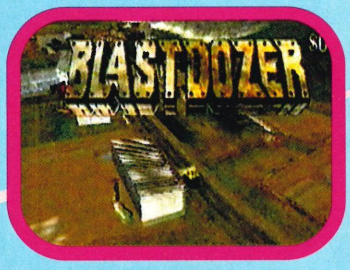
Rare don't mess about when it comes to good looking games and this 007 licence is no exception. This is a cross between *Doom* and *Virtua Cop*. All that was shown on the demo video was a polygon-baddie filled room with you wandering 'round in first-person perspective. A *Virtua Cop* clone would be disappointing, though knowing Rare, it's probably something altogether new.

Creator



Software Creations have gone for a dinosaur sim rather than the usual tatty licences, they're never predictable, we'll say that for 'em. You make your own dinosaur, control him to eat others and compose your own soundtrack to accompany the, erm, action. It's all a bit odd, but when you consider that SC created the innovative sound chip for the machine, it's not surprising that music creation would be involved.

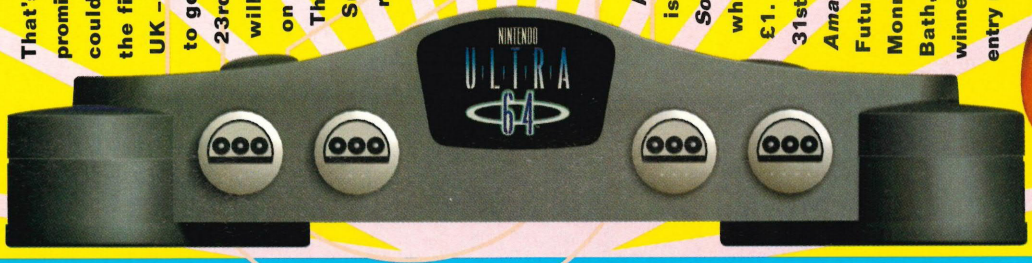
Blastdozer



As well as *Goldeneye* Rare presented this frenzied bulldozer-em-up in which you have to race through cities and towns destroying every building in your path. It's dead quick, there are a choice of vehicles and the most intense explosions ever are created using Alias' particle physics model. In our opinion this looks to be one of the most promising of the bunch.

Win!

That's right, as promised last month, you could be the owner of the first Ultra 64 in the UK – AND three games to go with it! On April 23rd one lucky winner will hear a loud thud on their porch. That'll be Nintendo's Super-Console ready for action. How do you win this top prize? Well, as in issue one we're running a *Something Amazing* compo. All you have to do is send us *Something Amazing* which costs less than £1. Send it by, March 31st to: *Something Amazing 2*, Ultimate Future Games, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. The winner will be the funniest entry received.



Certain words and phrases are used to impress. Words that mean something very important, but nobody is quite sure what. Words like 'triple AHA fruit acids' and 'dry-weave top-sheet' and Silicon Graphics. Those two words are bandied about like nobody's business in the entertainment industry these days. They've become synonymous with computer technology making possible the impossible, pushing 'the envelope' – all that sort of business. Everyone's lost touch with what Silicon Graphics is, er, was, er, does. See what we mean? Join us as we spill the beans on those Silicon Graphics machines...

Yes, Very impressive, Silicon Graphics

Alias Wavefront

Remember those flying bikes in *Judge Dredd*? Totally fabricated they were. The bikes, the city, the lot. And to make the on-bike characters movement more real Stallone's stunt double was motion captured and his movements mapped onto the bike rider. Cor!

Sub drama *Crimson Tide* relies heavily on *Alias Wavefront* software for its ultra-real under-sea action scenes. The torpedoes, bubbles and counter-measure explosive 'clouds' were all computer generated. Not bleedin' bad!

Softimage

Who could forget Jim Carrey's mighty morphin' head in *The Mask*? That's the power of Softimage 3D for you. Softimage software was then used to magically join the computer-generated special effects and pre-shot live action. All in all more than a bit spectacular.

Those Smirnoff ads, eh? How did they do that? Softimage software, that's how. Turning blokes into penguins and cats into panthers.

but what are...

con phics?

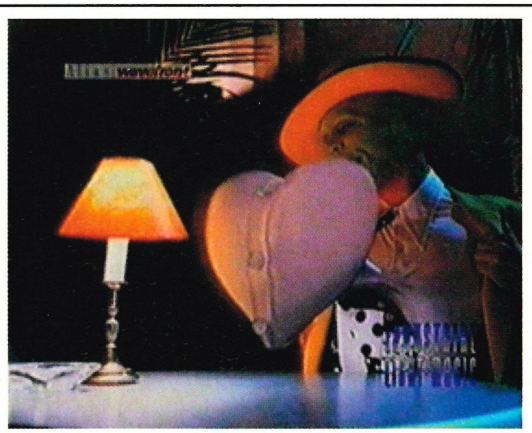
The Hardware

Silicon Graphics is the name of a company. Their headquarters is in Reading. They are a British company. Silicon Graphics make computers. It really is that simple. Or rather it would be if Silicon Graphics made computers like every other company made computers...

As new technology is developed it offers both increased performance and a lower price. That's the way it's always been. That's how you can get a Next Gen console, with previously undreamed of power, for your home for three hundred nicker. Digital watches used to cost you fifty quid, now you can get them free with a gallon of petrol. Cool.

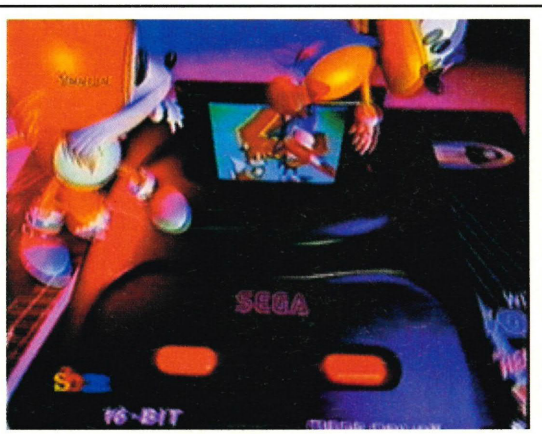
But this preoccupation with keeping costs down has influenced what new products are made. You must be able to make them for the 'right price'. The top-end machines displayed in the high street are in fact watered down, 'affordable' versions of far greater technology. They're not the best you can get. No company would make a computer using this super-technology because it would cost the price of a house, a car and posh schooling for a couple of kids and nobody would buy it. Or would they?

What if you wanted a computer to do things far beyond the capabilities of those high-street machines? What if you needed super-computer power? And what if you're prepared to pay for it? Then Silicon Graphics have just the machine for you.

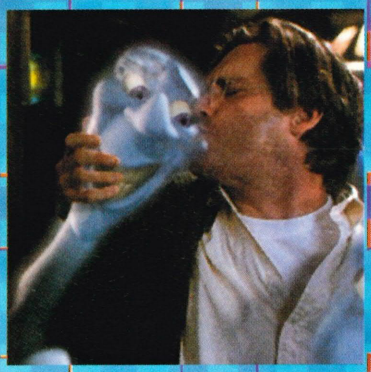
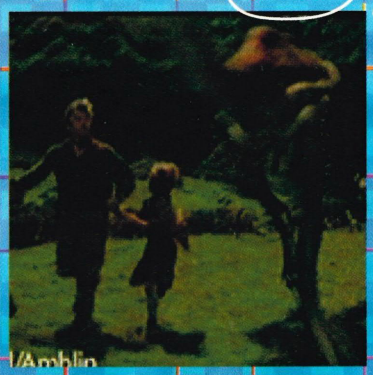


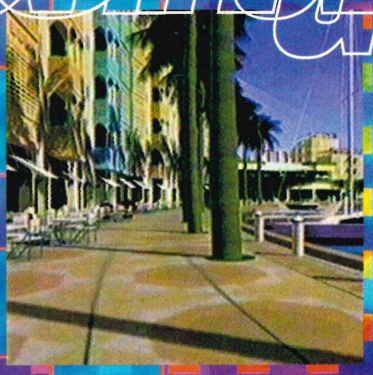
Autodesk 3D Studio

The cheaper alternative, but still capable of some eye-popping results. *Hellraiser*, Sega ads and the virtual reality effects for the forthcoming Keanu Reeves film *Johnny Mnemonic* are all the products of Autodesk's popular 3D Studio. Shame they couldn't render his appalling acting abilities really. Maybe the day will come when we never have to see the 'real' Keanu' again. Maybe...



Silicon

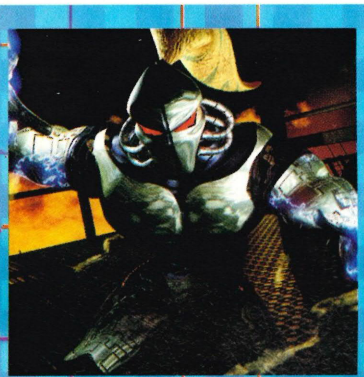
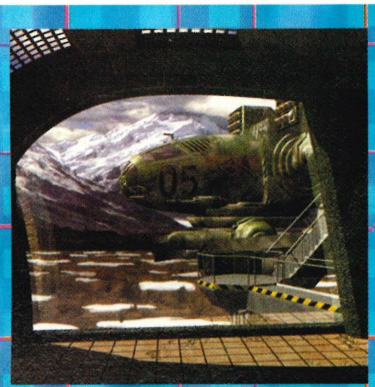





Silicon Graphics have ignored cost. Just completely forgotten that it is part of the equation for selling stuff. There are far more important things to worry about. Silicon Graphics use the very latest technology to make the very fastest, most powerful computers. No short-cuts are made, no holds barred – they're the best they possibly could be. Think of them as being like a Rolls Royce car. RR could use plastic wood effect panelling instead of real wood. Chances are you might not notice the difference, but if people are prepared to pay for such luxuries you might as well give them the real thing. The fact is that the power of the machines enable their purchasers to create things that do not exist, things that could not exist, things that, when placed in a movie or game, are so spectacular that it makes them millions of quid. Suddenly that £100,000-plus asking price seems rather reasonable.

So how does it do it? The Silicon Graphics machine's power relies on two things, first of all there's the raw speed and power of the processor. Their R8000 processor for example, used in some of SGI's machines is quoted as being 300 times more powerful than Intel's TV advertised Pentium. It brings super-computer power to your desktop and it comes in a nice shiny purple case too.

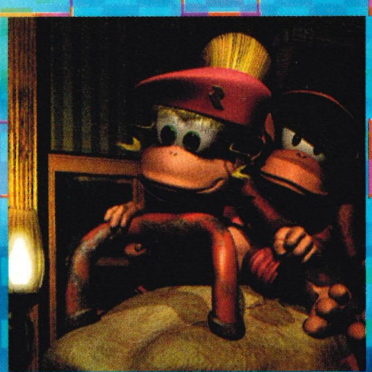
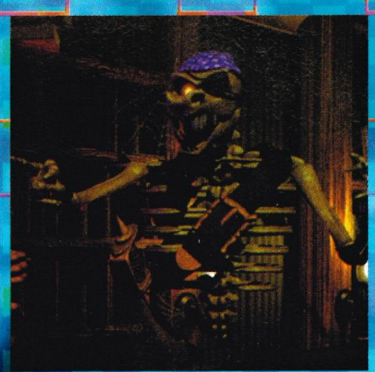
Secondly there's SGI's Reality Engine sub-system which adds specialist graphics processors and in-built software library routines to make the most of them and which can be used by software running on the machine. Think of these graphics chips as being like the dedicated polygon and texture-mapping chips inside a Next-Gen console.

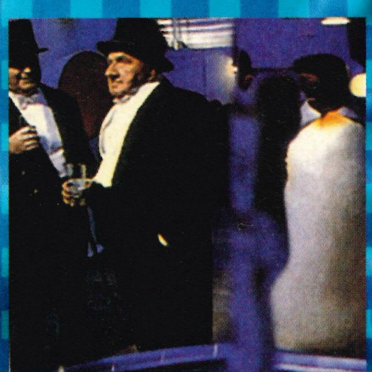
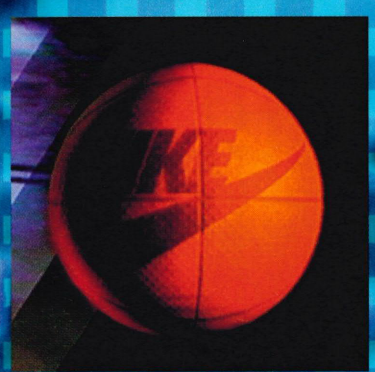



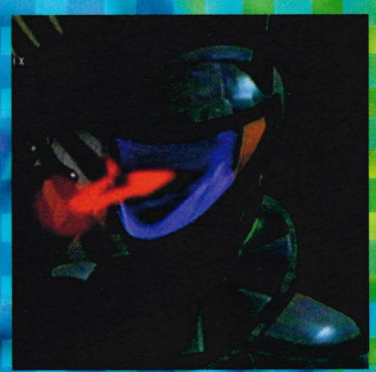
The Software

So you've got all this computing power at your disposal. What are you going to use it for? A computer's just a plastic box full of gubbins without software. It's the programs which run on SGI's machines that make all that magic even vaguely possible.

What the software does is create images. Images of



incredible detail. Pictures that are so detailed that they look like photographs – they look real. Hence the phrase 'photo-realistic'. A picture is made up of reams of data. The position of every line, the colour between the lines, forming a surface, the positioning of the surfaces to form objects. The shading of the surface to recreate the way light falls on to it. The texture of the surface – is it smooth? Rough? Furry? Shiny? If it's shiny are any other of the objects reflected in them? How do they appear reflected in it? A computer needs telling every single element of a picture. Quite some task, but one the software takes in its stride.

Once told the basics of how a surface 'is' it'll take care of the boring repetitive calculations and draw the whole surface for you, perfectly textured and perfectly lit. Multiple reflections? No problem. The software would draw the other reflected objects for you based on parameters such as how brightly lit they are and, of course, how reflective the surface is. Stick at it and viola, you'll have yourself a photo-realistic image. It could be of anything you imagine and no-one will ever know that it's not real. It appears that the camera really can lie.

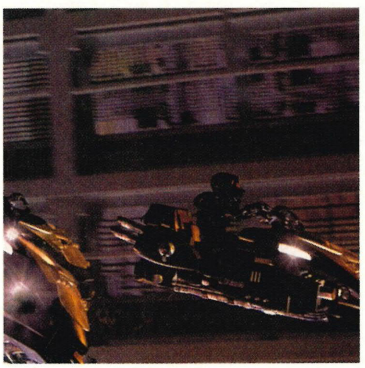
The creation of such an image is called rendering. All the details of the picture can be in place, but the machine needs time to draw it. The good news is that thanks to the lightning fast processor this usually isn't very long. In fact more often than not it's instantaneous. It's thanks to this power that objects can be manipulated on-screen in real-time.

At the recent Computer Graphics Expo a demonstrator played a *Doom*-style game where the player rides a gigantic fountain pen around a bizarre medieval virtual world dispatching knights in armour with inkblots. The whole game only used around 20 separate pictures, a picture of a knight, an inkblot, a piece of stone etc. The program bent and stretched these images to form all the buildings and scenery, rendering them 'on the fly' as they say. Very impressive, but you'll need an Onyx to play it.

Very complex photo-realistic images take slightly longer to render and the image becomes a bit jerky but an animator can get a good idea of the movement of a character in an animation he's working on before committing himself to a full render, saving time. The software can then produce each frame separately, ready to be used as frames of film or placed onto CD as an intro for example. Do this a few hundred thousand times and hey-presto, you've got yourself a completely real looking film that previously only existed in your warped imagination.

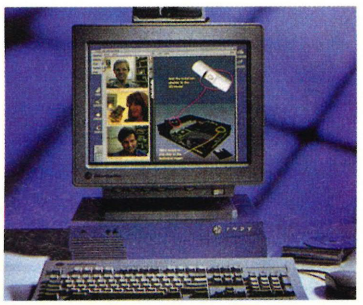
Such power software is very numerous, but packages from three distinct companies are responsible for most of the stunning SFXs and animations you've seen in films, games and on your TV.

First up there's Alias Wavefront, who used to exist as two different companies. One called Alias and the other called, yup, Wavefront. They both wrote top software for Silicon Graphics' machines and decided that rather than compete against each other they'd merge and pool their resources. No sooner had they done this than Silicon Graphics bought them. Denise Haskew of Alias Wavefront points out that 'this is a mutually beneficial thing. We now have creative input at the hardware stage and are able to say what features we would like future products to have.' Cool.



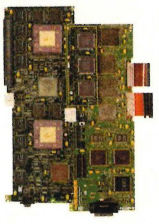
Indy

Just starting out in the graphics business? Well you need one of these little beauties. Although the baby of the SGI range the Indy certainly packs a punch. It's ideal for a spot of computer-aided design and has many of the 3D graphics features enjoyed by it's big brothers. And what's more it comes in a lovely spangly blue granite-look case – very desirable indeed.



Technical

Processor: R4400SC
Speed: 200Mhz
Sys Bus speed: 267MB/sec
Memory: 256MB
Max Internal Disk: 4GB



Onyx

We're into genuine super-computer territory now. It's these beasts that are responsible for all your favourite movie SFX. Symmetric multi-processing means that it can perform many calculations simultaneously, greatly speeding up the rate at which you can create your dinosaurs, or whatever. They're black with a little purple bit down one side. What a saucy thing. Lovely!

Technical

Processor: R4400SC
Speed: 200Mhz
Sys Bus speed: 267MB/sec
Memory: 256MB
Max Internal Disk: 4GB

Indigo 2 Maximum IMPACT

SGI's latest is truly an awesome beast. This top Maximum IMPACT machine borrows the processor more usually used in the Onyx range so those graphics move like a certain unpleasant substance does from a stick. Oh, and it's a rather snazzy purple – wild!

Technical

Processor: R8000
Speed: 75Mhz
Sys Bus speed: 267MB/sec
Memory: 640MB
Max Internal Disk: 12GB

Power Onyx

We're into genuine super computer territory now. It's these beasts that are responsible for all your favourite movie SFX. Symmetric multi-processing means that it can perform many calculations simultaneously, greatly speeding up the rate at which you can create your dinosaurs or whatever. They're black with a little purple bit down one side – saucy.

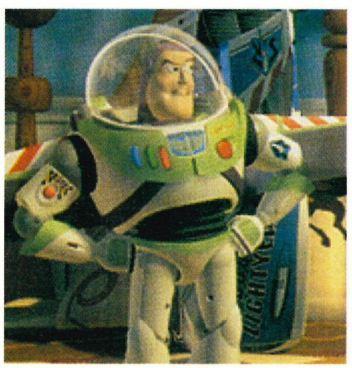
Technical

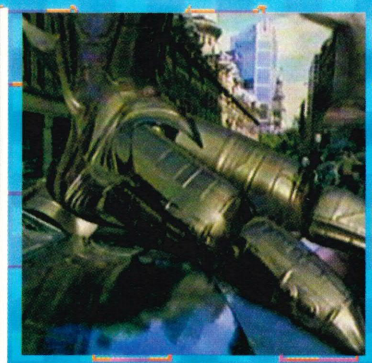
No. of processors: 1– 12
Processor: R8000
Speed: 90Mhz
Sys Bus speed: 1.2GB/sec
Memory: 16GB
Max Disk: 2TB (internal) 6.3TB (external)

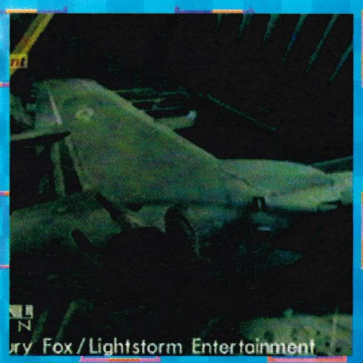
Toy Story

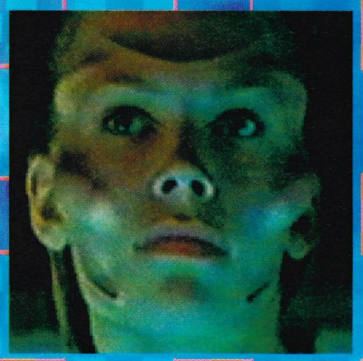
John Lasseter has created the worlds first 100 per-cent computer-generated movie. Every frame of every one of its 77 minutes was rendered on a vast bank of Silicon Graphics' and Sun SPARC machines. To gauge what an achievement this is *Jurassic Park* only featured a total of 6 minutes of computer-generated footage. Well done.

Our man in the States recently saw it and reckons it's the tops. 'You watch the first bit thinking, how did they do that? But after that you just forget it's computer graphics 'cos the story's so good,' he gushed upon his arrival back in Blighty.









She was at the Computer Graphics Expo to promote *Power Animator 7*, the latest version of their jack-of-all-trades software package, billed as the complete 3D solution.

Characters can be animated quickly and easily. Once a start and end position have been specified the software will calculate all the positions in between (in-betweening, then).

The company are presently working on an entirely new system, *Maya*, which we weren't allowed to see because of 'a press ban', it was only being shown to existing users, but it promises to be even more powerful, concentrating on the merging of computer graphics and live action.

Other software such as *MediaStudio* is used to mix real and computer generated graphics, known as compositing, for use as special effects. And *StudioPaint 3D*, an art package which can be used by an artist to create the aforementioned photo-realistic images. Phwoar!

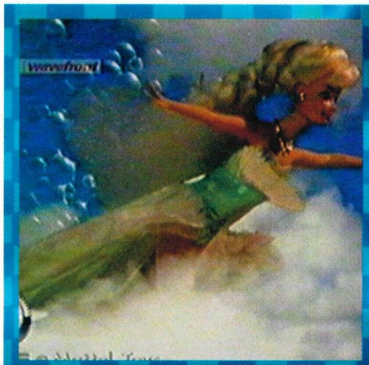
***Power Animator* can be expanded with modules, such as *Advanced Animation* and *Power Modelling*, which add new features. If you can imagine it – you can create it, and quickly.**

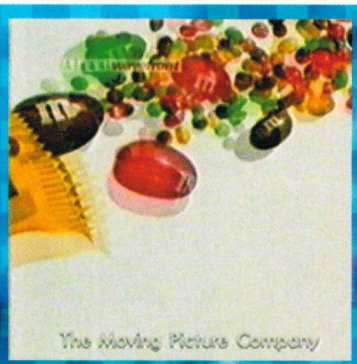
But there's a price to pay for all this wizardry. *Power Animator 7* weighs in at £7000 with each additional module costing £7900. If you wanted *Power Animator 7* and every module it'd cost you £24,000 although Denise was keen to point out, 'there are a lot of deals available and we are quite flexible.' Right, we'll have ten for the office then...

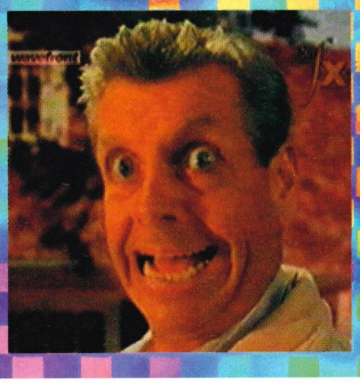
Secondly, there's Softimage, who are Alias Wavefront's arch enemies. They've a piece of software called *Softimage 3D* which performs similar tasks to Alias Wavefront's *Power Animator 7*, 'but is much better though,' we were told. This package has recently been converted to run on *Windows NT* compatible machines in an attempt to cut the costs, i.e. you don't need a Silicon Graphics machine to run it any more. An inevitable move really, considering the company was recently bought by *Windows* inventors Microsoft.

Softimage also offer *Softimage Eddie*, their compositing package and *Softimage Toonz* for 2D 'cell' animation as seen in cartoons. A full Softimage 3D package, incorporating the *Extreme* module add-on will cost you £11,500. *Eddie* is £6500 and *Toonz* is a totally bargainous £13,500. Gulp.

Finally worth mentioning even though it has absolutely







nothing to do with Silicon Graphics machines is Autodesk's *3D Studio*. This package is capable of producing SGI style graphics and animations on a lowly PC. There's an inevitable trade off in speed however. Material takes longer to produce, but the end results are, 'as good as anything a Silicon Graphics machine can do,' we were assured and to our eyes they're dead right. Best of all is the price – a comparatively paltry £2,250 and if you buy it now you get a free upgrade to the new *3D Studio MAX* for *Windows NT* which will be out in early '96.

Cor, technology, eh? Can you imagine where we'll be in ten years time? We'll all have SGI machines, probably.

The Result

Let's see what this costly hardware and software can achieve. Silicon Graphics Onyxs and Alias Wavefront software was used to produce the special effects in *Jurassic Park*, *Batman Forever*, *Disclosure*, *Casper*, *Judge Dredd*, *Lawnmower Man 2*, *Crimson Tide*, *Outbreak*, *Species*, *Apollo 13*, *Pocahontas*, *Johnny Mnemonic*, *Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers* and, as they say, many more.

Some of this work was just a tweak here and there, adding a flying taxi to the background of *Judge Dredd* for instance, whilst others involved the creation of huge monsters which then blend seamlessly with the action, as in the recent *Power Rangers* movie and, of course *Jurassic Park*.

One of SGI's prime exponents (no doubt they get all their stuff for free these days) is George Lucas' Industrial Light and Magic. It was they who put the SGI created dinosaurs into *Jurassic Park*, made the morphing metal T1000 in *Terminator 2* and made Jim Carey's face go all funny in *The Mask*. And they did it all on Silicon Graphics hardware. They're currently working on the effects for two major films.

In *Jumanji*, starring Robin Williams, where in one scene a vast herd of wild animals stampede down a street, elephants crunching cars underfoot. The street is real – the elephants and cars aren't. And *Dragonheart*, in which they create one of the film's main characters, Draco, a 40 foot long and 20 foot high dragon with the voice of Sean Connery. The rendered dragon is integrated seamlessly with pre-shot live action featuring Dennis Quaid talking to himself. Draco is then positioned and his features given a final tweak so that his expression and point of focus is just right.

A new concept is the existence of the digital-double, computer generated actors who don't mind leaping off tall buildings into a burning oil slick. In fact it has been said that actors may be out of the picture altogether in the coming years. Too tempremental, too untalented and paid too much money – scary thought!

One film that's done without actors and is currently making a mint over in the US is Disney's *Toy Story*, the story of a group of toys which come to life and get into all kinds of trouble. Amongst many well known voices there's Tom Hanks who provides the voice of Woody the cowboy doll. *Toy Story* used a mixture of Silicon Graphics hardware and Sun SPARC 20s (117 of the buggers in fact) to create the movie, of which every frame swallowed up 300 Mbytes of memory.

UK software giants Rare use SGI products all the time. They created *Donkey Kong Country*'s characters and backgrounds on an Onyx with *Power Animator*. The new *CompuHair* feature has been put to good use in the follow-up game, *Donkey Kong Country 2* where Diddy and Dixie Kong now have realistic looking hair too. *Killer Instinct* also wouldn't exist without SGI.

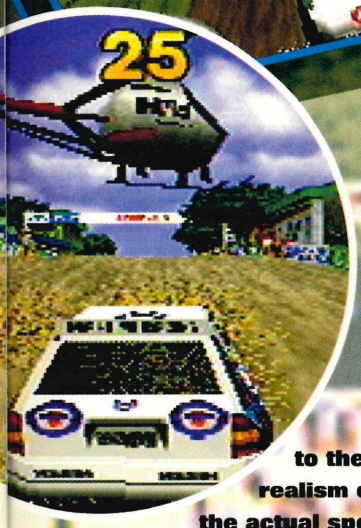
Sony are big SGI fans too. Just check out the graphics in *Krazy Ivan* and *Assault Rigs*, especially the way that young lady runs up the steps in the intro. Very nice. Forthcoming beat-em-up *Criticom* was rendered on *Power Animator*, the graphics then ported over to the PlayStation and awfully nice they look too.

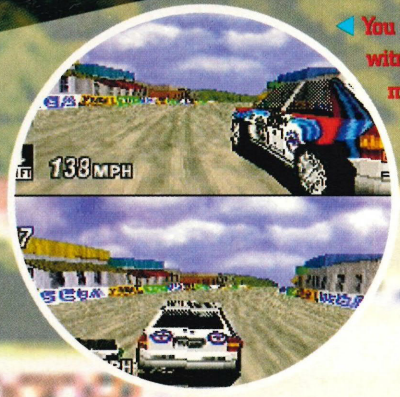
One thing's for certain, we can expect to see more and more SGI creations invading the entertainment industry. While the machines at one end of the scale get more affordable the ones at the other end get more powerful. Just be sure to watch this space...

The Dig
PC CD ROM 91
Duke Nukem 3D
PC CD ROM 62
11th Hour
PC CD ROM 83
Hexen
PC CD ROM 74
Hi-Octane
Saturn 84
Off-World Interceptor
Saturn 88
PO'ed
3DO 66
Maps O' Death
3DO 82
Revolution X
PlayStation 90
Ridge Racer Revolution
PlayStation 68
Sega Rally
Saturn 58
Super X
Jaguar 86
Virtua Racing
Saturn 81
X-Men
Saturn 72

Hot pedal/metal interfacing Sega Ri

in a lly





◀ You are witnessing the most effective split-screen mode ever!

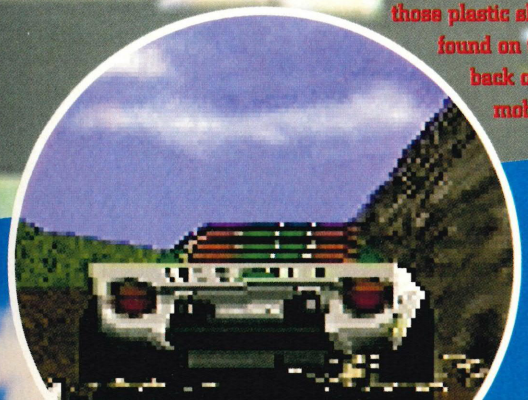
to the realism of the actual sport.

Right. Arcade chat over. What has the Saturn conversion of Sega's second-best racing game got to offer? What's immediately striking is the game's initial similarity to the coin-op itself, approximately to the same degree as the PlayStation conversion of *Ridge Racer* was to its parent. Cranking out at a rate of 30 frames per second, it's smoother than *Daytona*, while its textures and details retain a more natural appearance. In fact the fourth track, Lakeside, is tongue-lollingly attractive, with autumnal woods bordering the track most impressively.

Where *Sega Rally* really kicks into gear is in dragging over a fair approximation of the coin-op's classy gameplay.

◀ Keep out of the white and in the red, you get nothing in this game for two in a bed – or something...

▼ Don't you just hate those plastic slats found on the back of Trev-mobiles?



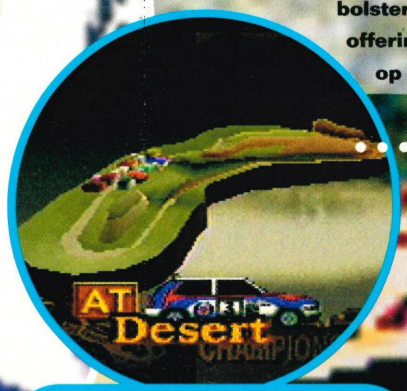
The dust kicked up really blocks your opponent's vision.

There's no speed loss in two-player mode. Amazing.

A gloopy mud-track and a dead fast car. Top fun for

Hammer your motah into a dirt-track corner at speed and your back-end slips out like a seal on a slick of swarfega; twitch your steering into opposite lock and you'll have it swinging back around to exit the bend gracefully – a gameplay trait that *Ridge Racer* touched upon, but this game really explores.

In creating a home version of *Rally*, Sega have attempted to bolster the value of the game by offering a number of non-coin-op options. The first is Time Attack mode, a section which merely allows you to tackle each track in a straight race against the clock, saving your best times to memory cart for the sake of impressing your peers later on. What's particularly great about this bit is that once you've set a best lap you can run again against a ghost image of your previous performance – playing on and on and getting a great visual indicator of where and when you're finding the most effective racing lines and



The Desert stage: Gorgeous, fast and wide. No wonder it's most suited to beginners. But it's all a bit, well, brown and dusty really.

And yep, there are plenty of cheats in the game. Top stuff.

The Forest stage: A mixture of surfaces to slide over and a deadly collection of bends make this an evil little swine to crack.

If it's skids you want forget not wiping your bottom and have a lash on *Sega Rally*...

so forth.

To be honest, a good week's play should allow even the most novice of drivers to unearth all that *Sega Rally* has to offer. You will, however, feel compelled to come back to it beyond that point, because it has that *Ridge Racer*-ish quality of luring you back to shave an extra half a second off your existing best when you come back late from the, er, lemonade parlour of an evening. What's unfortunate for Sega is that the game will have little chance to stand and shine on its own merits: *Ridge Racer Revolution* debuts in just seven time (sorry Sega), and it's already looking hotter than a freshly-baked potato. The next enthralling installment of the Saturn versus PlayStation saga is almost upon us. Here we go again – which is best, blah, blah, etc.

Ultimately

Slick

93%

- ⊕ Quick, dreamy, driving action
- ⊖ No machine link-up mode

Machine: Saturn
Publisher: Sega
Developer: In-house
Price: £45
Players: 1-2

UK

TUNE IT RIGHT UP!

We're still waiting for the driving game that lets you put together a vehicle from scratch, but until that dream comes true we'll quite happily take what *Rally* can offer, guv. Once your car's been 'created' you can even save it for later use. Mmm, very clevvah. The tuning section allows you to give any of six of your car's aspects a right old bit of tweakage. Hoorah!

Handling

Do you prefer your steering response sluggish, Austin Allegro-style, or tight-as-a-gnat's-chuff á la Peugot's little 205 GTI? Well here's where you alter it.

Tyres

Sega call 'em 'tires' but essentially we're talking about those round sections of vulcanised rubber which sit snugly around yer actual wheels. Hard or soft?

Suspension

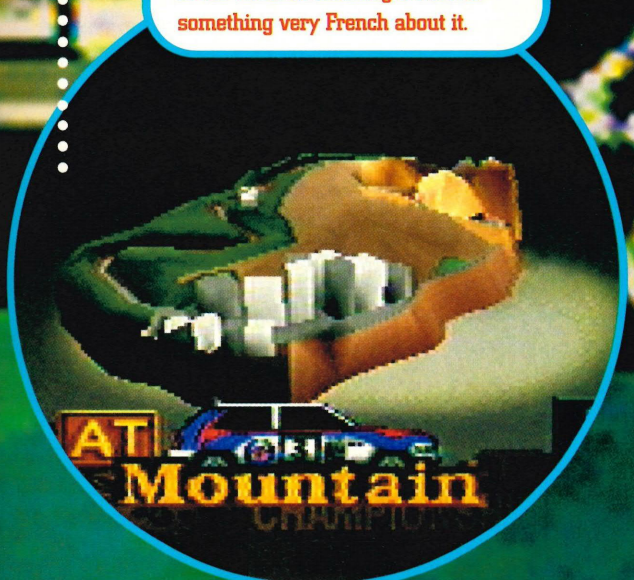
You've got control over both front and rear suspension tweakage and it ranges from loose to tight. Doesn't make too much difference if you ask us.

Blow-off valve

Restricting the obvious gag potential, we'll just say that this is the only directly engine-related part which you can mess around with (snigger!).

Tracks...

The Mountain stage: With more curves than old Claudia Schiffer, this is the ultimate challenge. There's something very French about it.



The city is packed with pigs who want you dead. No change there then.

Sorry mate, you'll have to whistle next time.

Oi! Porky! That's not fair! Your gun's twice the size of mine!

Doomed right

Duke Nu

That *Doom* has got a lot to answer for. It single handedly created the first-person perspective shooter and is responsible for the shifting of more PCs than any other game. A perceptive software industry noticed that id were flogging millions of copies and decided that they'd have a go. Which brings us to where we are now – drowning in a sea of *Doom* rip-offs. In fact, first-person perspective games are now known as '*Doom*-clones' and no review of one can take place without first mentioning their illustrious forebear. Come to think of it, that's what we're doing right now! For *Duke Nukem 3D* would not exist if someone else hadn't had the idea first. It's a blatant, outrageous rip-off.

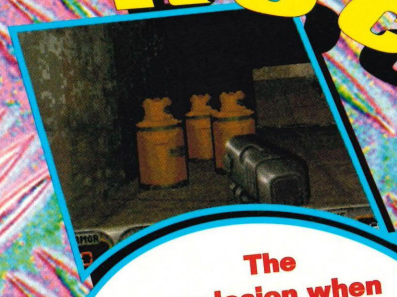
Look, it has big guns, ammo to pick up, medipacks, loads of different bad guys who die in horrible ways, levels which form episodes, of which there are three, the first of which is to be distributed free on the .net as shareware, need we go on? *Duke* knows its place. All respect is due to the master, the one, the only *DOOM*!

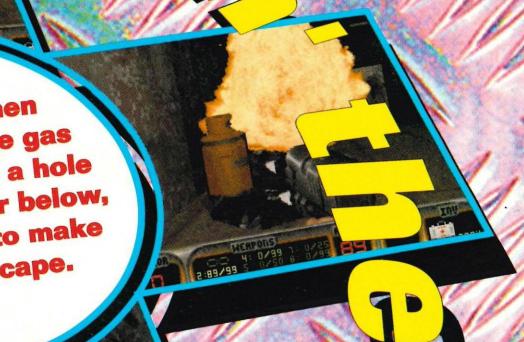
Ah, if only it was as cut and dried as that, but it's just not. It's a kind of mid-step between *Doom* (and its many clones) and *Quake* which is due next year and promises to rewrite the book on this type of game with its fully interactive world and polygonal characters. In the meantime *Duke* takes *Doom* and piles it sky high with as many new features as the programmers could think of. The chances are, if you're reading this, you own a PC, and if you own a PC you've played *Doom* to death, right? You want something new, yes? Let's face it, you want *Quake* don't you? Well, if you're sick of waiting then *Duke* will tide you over very nicely.

First and foremost Duke offers a completely 3D world

Look, it has big guns

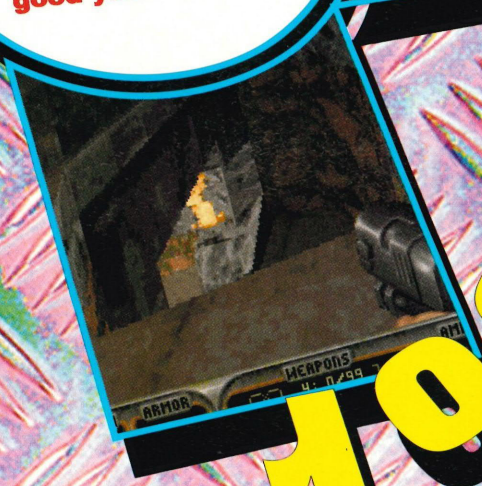
Rockin' the floor





The explosion when you shoot these gas canisters blows a hole down to the floor below, through which to make good your escape.

Kill a bad guy, step on him then leave bloody footprints all over the place. Cool.

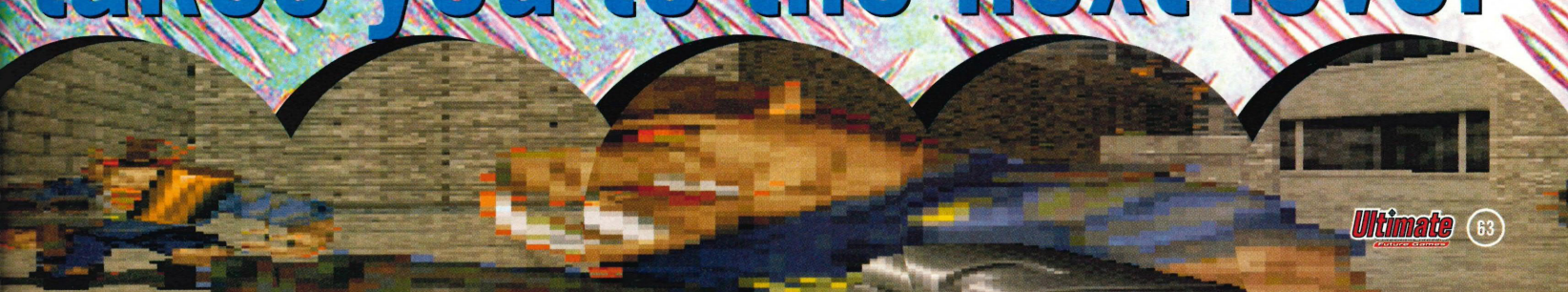


up? Kem 3D

Let's just take it as read you know *Doom*, right? What? You don't? Oh hell. Okay – kill the monsters, find the three coloured keys, open the doors, find the exit, go onto the next level until, err... there aren't any more. There, will that do? *Duke* has 'all this and more' as they say. So, let's concentrate on what new stuff *Duke* throws into the mix...

First and foremost *Duke* offers a completely 3D world. A feature you thought you had in *Doom* – but you didn't, ha! You couldn't look up and down could you? In *Duke* you can. Okay, this isn't such a new feature – *Doom*'s 'official' id follow-up *Heretic* had it and *Dark Forces* made good use of it too. Somehow this immerses you into the 3D environment.

takes you to the next level



a rather smart jetpack

That bloke is a Holoduke, a clone of yourself with which to baffle baddies.

This is only an early shotgun. The finished one will be far more impressive.

Death anyone? Anyone? Well form a queue scumbags.

Very clever

Very, very clever

Lay traps, swim under water, shrink people and, best of all, kill people on the toilet.

Being able to look at the floor or the ceiling may sound dull, but being able to look up and see a wild boar, dressed as a policeman, firing a shotgun at you from the top of a building is much more useful. *Duke*'s 3D engine also allows entire buildings to be made. Not just rooms up some stairs but rooms on top of rooms on top of rooms. Entire tower blocks. While exploring you may come across a hole in the floor. Look down through it and you can see the room directly below, a room in which you wasted ten bad guys some half an hour earlier. Which brings us to one of *Duke*'s most radical newies. If the aforementioned hole does not exist you can make one. It's possible to shoot out walls, ceilings and floors to make good your escape or gain access to seemingly unreachable areas. Once destroyed, the wall remains destroyed.

Return to it later and it's still a pile of rubble. 'I did that' you'll proudly say to yourself. It would be lovely if EVERYTHING enjoyed this destroyable quality, but unfortunately this isn't so. The obstacles which can be taken out are predefined, an animation of their destruction ready to be displayed and an alternative version of the map ready to be implemented should you decide to take it out. Ho-hum. Tell-tale cracks letting you know an obstructions disposable nature, rather like in the *Zelda* games, and new areas of the game can be opened with a boom should you be observant enough to spot them.

It's not just parts of buildings that can be messed with either. Every object in the game may be blown-up or shot. It becomes fun trying to find something that won't fracture under sustained gunfire, but it's a tough task. They appear to have thought of everything. Shoot the clock on the wall and its springy innards poing out, shoot the fire hydrant and it becomes a spout of water, shoot the walls and your bullet holes appear there. A chain gun battle with the piggy-fuzz outside the bank, upon closer examination, left the walls of the buildings

Later levels take you to an orbiting space-station where things must be killed. Again.

Every object in t

swim through flooded chambers

enables you to travel high above the city

▼ We say if it's brown and green it cannot live. Do not let it.

▲ This shot is from inside a mucky book shop. Don't know what one is? Ask your Dad.

▶ Our favourite, the remote control bomb. Bless it.

▲ Get over here and eat my big gun you fat hairy goons!

◀ Curry last night was it?

riddled with stray bullets. It's thoroughly amazing.

There are loads of previously unimagined ways to kill stuff too. Take the bizarre Shrink Ray for example. It reduces your foes to the size of plastic action figures from which position they may then be splatted under foot. Or the booby-trap bombs which you set up on opposite sides of corridors. A red laser-light links the two and should it be broken results in a whopping bang. Great for use in network deathmatch games. Our favourite has to be the remote control bombs. Lob one of these into a crowded room with a first press of the fire button and then detonate it with a second, resulting in untold death, maiming and other unpleasantries within.

On occasions you have to swim through flooded chambers to reach otherwise impenetrable areas and a rather smart jetpack enables you to travel high above the city, flying out of, or into trouble depending on your personal preference. The levels are suitably sprawling and very well designed meaning that this game will last you ages – at least as long as *Doom* or *Doom 2* did, anyway.

But is it better than *Doom*, which is quite clearly its aim? Of course it's not! What a ridiculous suggestion. Better than *Doom*? Are you mad? As you may have gathered we're rather keen on a spot of *Doom* and for all its new features and clever stuff *Duke* just isn't as good. It is, however, an outstanding game and if you loved *Doom* you'll wet your pants over this. It's as far as the genre can go without being 'new' which *Duke* simply isn't.

No doubt upon reading this *Duke*'s programmers will be distraught. 'We spent all that time on a game that's not as good as *Doom*,' they'll weep as they hand out the cyanide tablets. Sorry chaps. *Doom* somehow has a certain 'rightness' about it. Everything feels just right. *Duke* feels different. If you've played *Rise of the Triad* (also from US Gold) you'll know what we mean.

Time for a bizarre analogy. Think of *Duke* as being the new LP by your favourite band 'The First-Person Perspective Blasters'. You get it home, you play it, you love it. But after a couple of days you say to yourself 'Hmm, it's not as good as their first one is it?' Get it?

Ultimately

Explosive

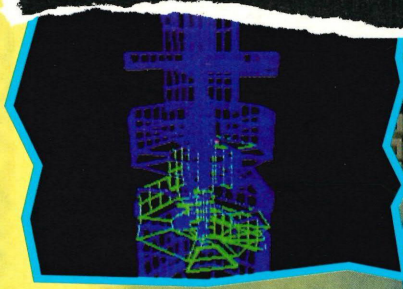
88%

⊕ Clever new features
⊖ Still not as good as *Doom*

Machine: PC
Publisher: US Gold
Developer: 3D Realms
Price: £45
Episodes: 3

UK

he game may be blown-up or shot.



▶ The shoes at the top mean Turbo-mode.

◀ Unlike *Super Mario 64* this looks great on the page and cack on-screen.

That's PO' that is

PO' stands for something

You're not a pretty fella are you? What started all this rage? Well, it's like this: You are a chef, one day the door to your kitchen flew open and a butthead of a monster charged in. Instinctively you picked up your frying pan and belted it to death. About to leave the incident at that, you notice that your souffle has been flattened. Now you're mad! You're gonna get tooled up and waste the invaders...

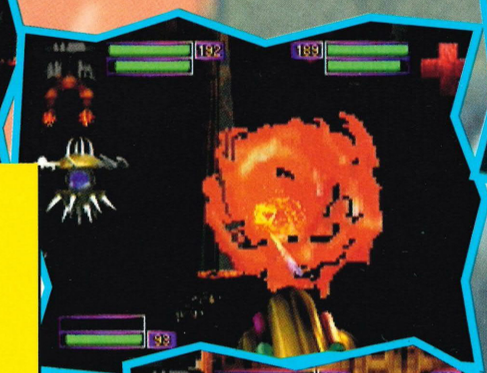
That name then, what does it mean and why? Well, it means Pi** O** (the term PO'ed is an American colloquialism) and it's the title of this game because, oh because of a flimsy plot-line at the beginning. You don't wanna know, it's very poor. The real story is that some childish developer thought that such a 'controversial' name would create a bit of free publicity in the press. Erm, nobody outside of the US either gets it or cares, you utterly ignorant developer man! Some people, eh?**

Okay then, let's get this out of the way early on: *PO'ed* is a *Doom*-clone desperately trying to be a game in its own right. Instead of relying on tension, gore, well designed levels and playability, Any Channel have plumped instead for bonkersness. Yes bonkersness! They thought that simply being a bit 'zany' would bail them out. Wrong! First-person shoot-em-ups have to be brilliant to survive in the marketplace, and this just isn't.

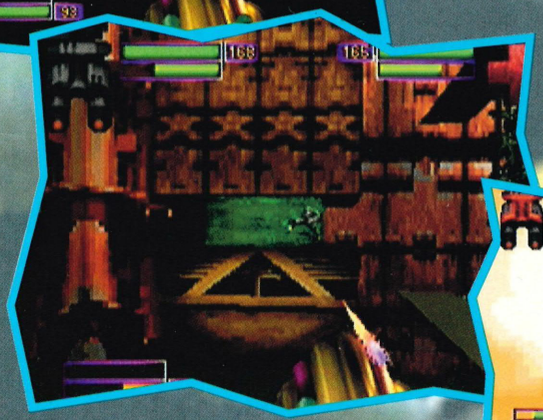
Maybe we're being a bit hard on *PO'ed*. It did actually make us laugh when we first switched it on. You're immediately faced by a creature called Butthead (a butt on legs) and all you're armed with is a frying pan. It *is* very funny lamping a fleshy bottom with a kitchen utensil, there's no disputing it. However, the chuckles soon die down when you actually play the game. Oh yes!

Here's the problem: Actually exploring the environments is far too sluggish. You seem to plod around even when in the laughable 'Turbo' mode. Then there's the control system. It actually offers a lot more than *Doom* (you can jump, look up, look down etc), but spoils these additions with unresponsive/counter-intuitive controls. Also the scenery is flawed (wafer-thin walls, walls that stop moving seconds *after* you've stopped walking). The whole experience is a shambles. And the most annoying bit? Well, it could have been such a good game. Some of the weapons are inspired, the frying pan, butchers knife, drill and meat seeker are particularly good value. And then there are the monsters, Butthead (the aforementioned butt-for-a-head creature), Arnie (a muscle-bound troll with one bloody great hand), Bow (part robot and part Volkswagon) and Cyclops (a floating eye with a jagged shell). Also the map screens are in glorious, rotatable 3D – great

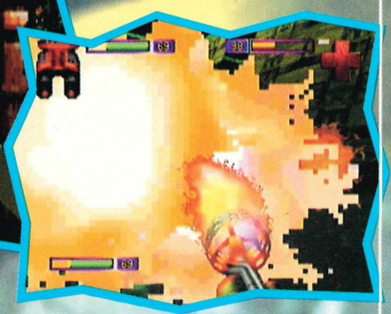
◀ Why isn't the gun in the middle of the screen? It's so annoying!



▲ There must be a gag here involving the term 'pan him in.' Oh, that was it.



▼ At least the flames haven't got jagged edges.



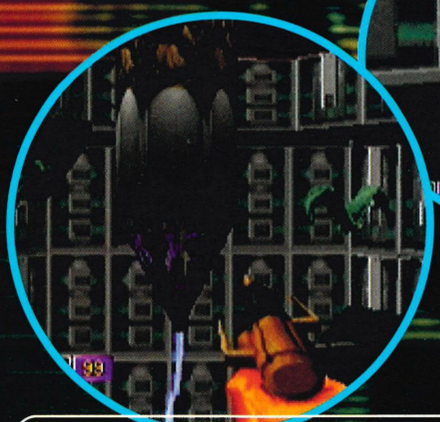
ed rude you know...

idea, wasted here. These are all very neat touches that deserve a better game to showcase 'em. As it is, they're completely wasted! Not so much a poor man's *Doom* as a completely-broke-man-with-loads-of-bills-coming-in's *Doom*.

Po'ed is a cross between *Doom* and *Assault Rigs* done not very well at all. This is the sort of sub-standard software that'll make the 3DO a dodo if Studio 3DO aren't careful. It's a real shame because somewhere inside this mammoth CD lies a brilliant *Doom*-beater struggling to break free from an amateurish farce.

When will developers ever learn? Either make your games brilliant or don't bother! *PO'ed* could have done with at least another six month tweakage to make it even passable. There's bound to be a sequel so take heed Studio 3DO, we're mad as hell and we're not going to stand for it any more!

▲ The flame-thrower would have been a good idea if you could aim okay.



▲ Send a laser bolt right up his jacksy. What could be more fun, eh?

Ultimately

Treacely

61%

- ⊕ Initially hilarious
- ⊖ Almost unplayable

Machine:.....3DO
Publisher:.....Studio 3DO
Developer:.....Any Channel
Price:.....£40
Levels:.....25

UK

▲ You haven't got a chance from long-range 'cos they run about the whole time.

BITS

This isn't very good, let's face it, but not to worry. *Doom* is finally going to be released on the 3DO next month and it contains some all-new, never before seen episodes! Word is that it's almost on a par with the PlayStation version which received a whopping 98% last month. Other than that, why not try *Killing Time* or *Escape From Monster Manor*? Both out soon.

BITS

Power-ups are scattered, throughout the game and are essential if you want to last more than 30 seconds. These are: health, energy, petroleum, missiles, tracer bullets, meat balls, infinite health, infinite energy, infinite petroleum, ammo extender and health extender. Not the most imaginitive power-ups in the world, but there you go.

◀ There's a big crowd willing you on in *Revolution*. This stretch gives you a real chance to pose to 'em.

▼ There are plenty of tunnels, too. This one's terribly tight and features some fast, nasty bends , though.

Ridge Racer Revo

A New Year

BITS

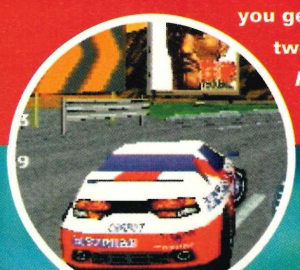
Although this features two original tracks from the original arcade conversion, it doesn't achieve as high a mark as it. Things have moved on considerably and we would have expected more of an improvement. Look at *Daytona* on the Saturn, then look at *Sega Rally*. Clearly an advancement.

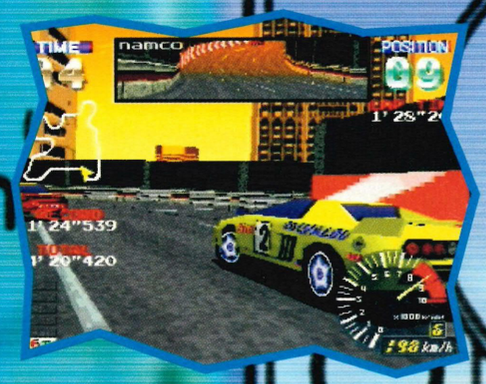
▲ The rear-view mirror is handy in the fast tunnel sections as these are where the fast cars catch up.

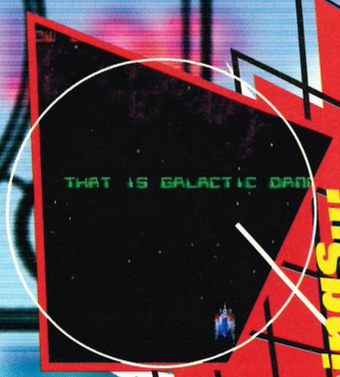
So here it is, the sequel to the launch, and some would argue yet to be bettered, game for the PlayStation. The emphasis is on two-players this time 'round though, but you're going to have to spend at least £700 to get the benefit (unless you know someone with another PlayStation, link-cable, copy of the game and television – obviously).

Revolution features three variations of a single track, plus you get to have a bash at two of the original *Ridge Racer* tracks in two-player link-up. The only improvements to the original tracks are a slight increase in speed, new advertising on the billboards and, of all things, new sky. But at least it gives you the chance to race against someone else on a track you all know (the criticism levelled at the first game). And perhaps that's one of the major contributing factors that leaves *Revolution* feeling more like an upgrade, a data disc for *Ridge Racer*, than a game in itself.

The first thing you notice when you begin haring it around the new courses is that, apart from being longer and taking in more varied, breathtaking scenery than the first (although the texture-mapping on the rocks is slightly dodgy at times), they certainly are a lot more challenging. Peppered with disgustingly tight



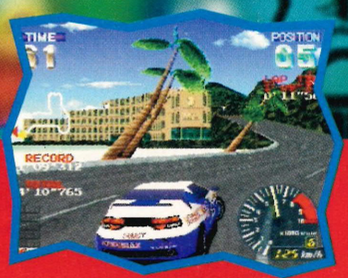




Secret special things...

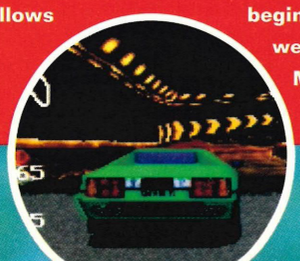
Once again, there's a classic Namco shoot-em-up to have a blast on while you're waiting for the 'main feature' to load. *Galaga* gives you four waves of enemies to destroy. Do that, and you'll be awarded more cars. Achieve 'Special Bonus' for two very special cars, though. Bonus!

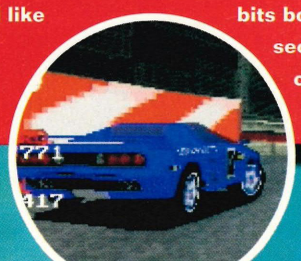
lution evolution?

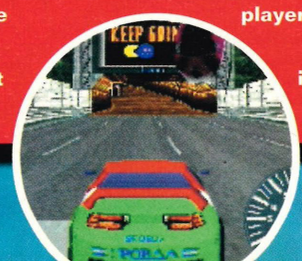


bends, you really are gonna have to prepare yourself for a healthy application of the brake button (or start practising those power-slides). There is an option that allows you to race around the courses by yourself (only having to meet the checkpoints), so you can certainly learn the best line to take faster than you did in regular *Ridge* (God, it's beginning to sound like we work in McDonald's). Each track, even though having a different part to race on, does tend to feel like an almost completely different one, and not merely the first with two new shorter bits bolted on (some sections get completely cut off on the later tracks). This is much better value than the original

It's curious that Namco have opted for a much tighter track this time 'round though. The whole point of *Revolution* was to provide the two-player option, and reducing the opportunities for overtaking seems to defeat the purpose. Admittedly, it does allow the second player to catch up a bit if he lags behind, but it generally ends up that you never really see the other player's car at all. The intelligence of the other cars







▲ In two-player, if you choose the same car, the colour of yours, his and the CPU's stay the same.

▲ Block the nippy green one! The enemies' intelligence has been vastly improved, mind.

◀ The constant banking into and bouncing off of the car in front' feeling can be bloody annoying.

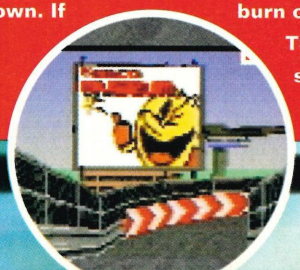
▶ At the start, the camera swoops around you in your car. How sexy.

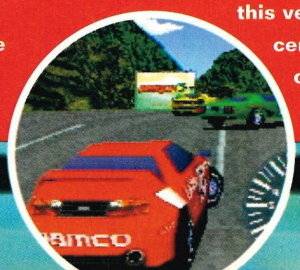
▲ This little pale beauty has similar characteristics to the Devil car found in the original game (which also makes an appearance here).

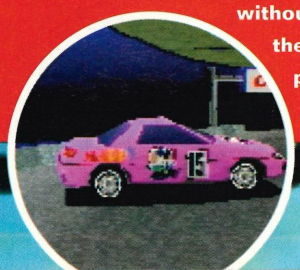
arcades, you'll soon begin to appreciate how important it is to block, particularly with the array of pretty nippy cars that you'll be racing against. Again, it's often better to start with a grippy car, block the others behind you on the straights and gain the advantage over them on the corners. You'll definitely have to run more of a tactical race than the straight all-out burn of before.

The atmosphere still seems to be retained, although the music isn't all new – remixed versions of the originals are in there. Dave, John, or whoever the bleeding commentator is, is even more aggravating, with his constant digs at how mup you really are and how far you're lagging behind. But one fault that has managed to creep through to this version, and is certainly more obvious due to the tight nature of the roads, is the suspect collision detection. Get past the rear of a car and it ceases to be a solid object, squeeze through a gap between two cars that seems to only be half a car in width – without touching them. In two-player mode this can get

has certainly been improved – the yellow car is even more annoying than usual, and the new cars tend to balance control with speed extremely well. And that's where the beauty of the rear-view mirror comes into its own. If you've never played *Ridge Racer 2* in the

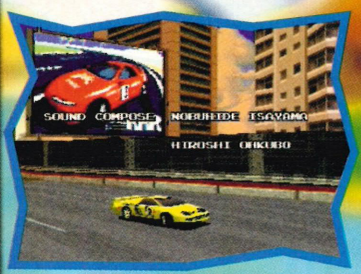






▲ Believe us, this is a mild jump. Wait for the huge one right before a corner on the beginner's track...

◀ Lovely lady! And look at her card – if you complete the three tracks, you get to go in reverse... again.



14◆ゲームの始め方／2P LINK GAME

▶ Trackside in-house advertising is a prominent feature.

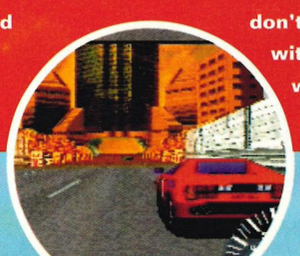
◀ There's no doubt the scenery is lovely. When you can see it.

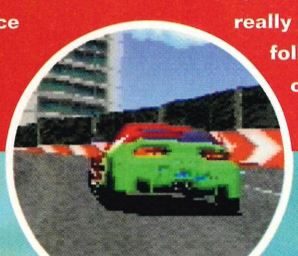
a bit frustrating when you see your mate streaking ahead without any real skill.

You'll no doubt have noticed that *Sega Rally* pips this to the highest scoring driving game this month. At the end of the day there's not much in it, but *Sega Rally* just feels more of an accomplished racer. *Rev* isn't really far removed from the original, and all eyes are on the certain conversion of the jaw-dropping *Rave Racer*. *Revolution* is a very, very good game, of that there is no doubt, but doesn't quite match *Rally* for the concentration or skill it demands of you.

That's it, we've done it now – don't flood the office with letters whinging on about *Ridge Racer Revolution* being better than *Rally*. It isn't. It's a very close call, but with both machines entering their second generation of driving games, *Ridge Racer Revolution* should have been so much better.

Look how much better *Sega Rally* is compared to *Daytona* – a point echoed in the BITS box on page 68. Namco couldn't really go wrong with the follow-up, but they could, quite easily have been lazy in the process – which they seem to be a bit guilty of here. Very good and recommended, but at the end of the day it should have been completely brilliant.





Ultimately

Predictable

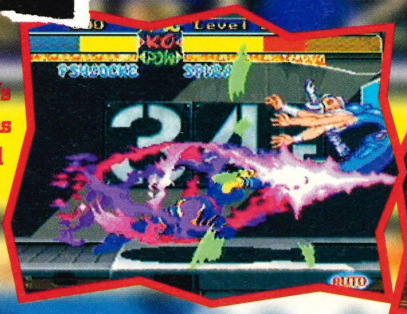
91%

- ⊕ Two-player link-up
- ⊖ Collision detection

Machine: ..... PlayStation
Publisher: ..... Namco
Developer: ..... In-house
Price: £50
Players: ..... 1-2 (hoo-ray!)

JAP

▶ Cyclops' eye can't defend from a belter on the chin.



▶ Spiral's multiple arms can't defend her from whatever that is.

Superhero fisticuffs in:

X-MEN Children

No. We know what you're thinking. You're thinking this might be a below-par *Street Fighter* clone, dolled up with colourful X-Men sprites that the Japanese will buy by the bucketload, but will, and should, never see the light of day in the UK. Well, you're right...

And wrong. Okay, it is a *Street Fighter* clone, and the Japanese will go mad for it, and yes, it is colourful. But it's by no means below par – in fact it's very very good, and us lucky Brits will get an official release, through Acclaim around March '96. Should we wait, though?

All the traditional one-on-one beat-em-up *Street Fighter*-esque options and features you'd expect are present and correct – Arcade, Survival and Versus modes and then there are ten of your favourite X-Men characters each with their own home turf. The settings vary from a wild prehistoric land to an ancient Eastern temple to the outside of the Blackbird spaceship to the interior of a nasty futuristic factory, complete with conveyor belts and falling girders.

But cast those flashy backgrounds and options-aplenty aside – it's the action, the stylised violence that counts. The gameplay is remarkably similar to *Street Fighter*, with rotations and fierce kicks accessing two or three eye-hurtingly splendid special moves for each character – and those special moves are all in-character for the X-Men and X-Women. Cyclops' incredible rays knock his hapless opponents' power bars into the shadows where they belong, Iceman's chilly blasts freeze opponents to the floor leaving them unable to defend themselves against your attacks, while Spiral's multi-dagger throws pierce flesh... though no blood flows. The moves are all ostentatious – they're big, brash, flash and extremely colourful. While we were all impressed with the impact that the moves from the *Street Fighter* series delivered, they're utterly out-done by the towering robotic antics of Sentinel, the rope-throwing of Omega Red and the mind-blowing hurricane blasts of Storm (sounds a bit like a Gladiators character). The moves are *ace*.

Stack up a few multi-hit combos and they're announced on-screen along with encouraging comments: 'Excellent hit... three hit combo!' Dunno what the commentary's on about though, 'cos it's all in Japanese – but it's suitably aggressive and enthusiastic, we can only hope that the English translation doesn't lose any of that, though it's usually the case that commentary on our versions are a pale imitation.

Another impressive feature is how the sprites move within the arenas. On certain levels you can knock your opponent off a platform and both fall down a storey to ground level. Then there're the unfeasibly

Punch-up!!

Play as Psyclops, get in close and deliver a dragon-punch upper-cut. As you victim flies into the air, jump up and smack him again – he'll fly further up into the skies as you lose sight of the ground, and float against the parallax scrolling background. Keep doing this – not only does it look great but you'll do plenty of damage.

▶ Bright cartoon colours show off the excellent moves.

▲ Backgrounds are pretty too.

▶ X-Men woman, Cyclops hacks-em-up.

◀ You can play as Akuma too (see our cheat in issue 6).

Of The Atom

▶ A curvy lady poses on a curvy spaceship. Smart!

high jumps, the levitations and the strings of dragon-punches outlined in the box (above). Oh, and there's an invisibility move and plenty of projectiles and some electricity/fire arrangements where you're not really sure what's going on, or how you managed it, or if you'll ever be able to do it again... but that's the beauty of it. There's plenty of variety because there are a lot of characters and they've each got these mad moves.

Also, some details grab the eye – often you'll see creatures appearing on-screen like a cat slinking across the background, pretending he's not noticed a mammoth clash-of-the-titans pagga kicking off in the foreground, or a squirrel will cheekily appear and a parrot will perch on a scrap-side tree. There's no real purpose to them, just an indication of the attention to detail that's gone into the game, and while, disappointingly, you can't hit them (animal lovers the world over will breathe a sigh of relief), we'll give a tenner to the first person who writes in with a cheat to that effect. No make that £20. Get scribbling.

Okay, so ultimately it's a formulaic, derivative one-on-one beat-em-up, but who cares? The action's fast, furious, bright and hugely addictive, and even if you don't know or care who the individual characters are, no beat-em-up fan could fail to want it. The only decision you ought to make is whether to buy it now on import or wait for Acclaim's official UK version.

▲ Something fairly mad, projectile-y and electric-ish we did accidentally.

Ultimately

Impressive

90%

- ⊕ Fast, bright, loads of moves
- ⊖ It's not 3D, is it?

Machine: Saturn
Publisher: Capcom
Developer: In-house
Price: £50
Special pants: Nylon

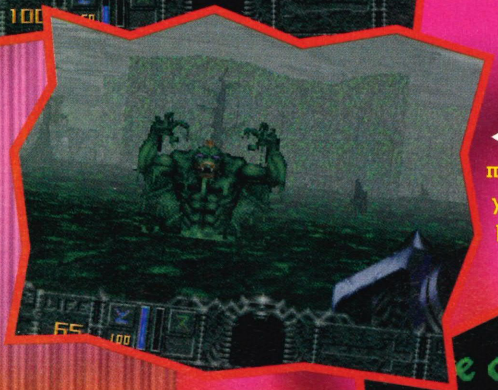
JAP

▼ Kill things with your flaming green sword.

▲ Erk! I've got my toe stuck in the electric socket!

Medieval Doomage

Hex casts



◀ My, what a muscular torso you have there big fella!

Does this need any introduction? It does? Okay then. Brief history lesson. Id created *Doom*, then created *Doom 2* then they gave the *Doom* engine to Raven software who made *Heretic* out of it, in which *Doom* got medieval on your ass. Id then milked dry the *Doom* cow with *Ultimate Doom*, which was *Doom* all over again with some new bits. And now here comes *Hexen*, another id/Raven collaboration.

It would be so easy to describe this as *Heretic 2*. Soooo easy. In fact we're sorely tempted to. It's... it's... oh damn, it's no good, the truth is this isn't *Heretic 2*. It was so obviously planned to be, but in the process of revamping *Heretic*, and it was in need of a good hard revamp in our book, they've turned it into something quite extraordinary. It's the same... but different!

When people gave up playing *Doom* and gave *Heretic* a go they were disappointed. Its action just wasn't as immediate. The weapons just weren't as meaty (a stick and sissy wand-things) and the baddies weren't as scary. And it was very brown. Very, very brown. Oh yes. There were spells and magic potions to collect, introducing an RPG element, but it all felt a bit half-hearted. Which basically left you with a game which was *Doom* with a medieval feel, but not as good. *Hexen* on the other hand is as good. *Hexen* is *Heretic* fixed.

It uses a souped-up, new improved version of the *Doom* engine which allows for the inclusion of lots of new graphical flourishes. Shoot a stained-glass window and it shatters into thousands of pieces, the whistling wind sends leaves fluttering from the trees and, get this, doors finally open like doors, none of that sliding shutter business. And the nasties which lurk in *Hexen*'s myriad of corridors and chambers have many more frames of animation than those of *Doom*. As a result, it will scare you totally witless.

The new features don't stop with improved graphics and sound either. You can now choose to play as one of three characters. There's the Warrior, who's the strongest, but whose weapons are primarily only effective close-up. Lots of axes and hammers, that sort of stuff. The Magician on the other hand is a bit of a weakling, but can waste baddies from miles away with a whole host of screen-blitzing spells. And finally, somewhere between the two there's the Jack of all trades, the Cleric (who isn't especially good at anything).

▶ Lawks-a-lordy my hands are just freeezing!

◀ Ah, that's much better

aplenty...

en its spell

Interestingly, *Heretic* scraps the traditional 'levels' game design. In *Hexen* you begin – you labour long and hard – you finish. Hexen's world is set up like a cart-wheel. Pardon? Look, just stick with us for a minute and all will become clear. You see, there's a central hub world from which paths stretch out to outer worlds. Often a task performed in one of these outer worlds will change something in another. Defeating a boss or throwing a switch may raise a bridge, or unlock a door elsewhere. Get it? There's a fair amount of retracing your steps to do 'cos everywhere's reached via this hub, but back-tracking is never boring (unlike back-packing, which is of course *very* boring) thanks to the numerous *things* you get the opportunity of killing along the way.

Hexen's plot is very well designed, you always know your goal and have a good idea of what to do to achieve it. Though actually achieving it can be *very* tricky. Still, you like a challenge don't you? *Heretic* is a complete monster of a game, which is a good thing – buy it.

Ultimately

Hellish

90%

- ✪ Huge and challenging
- ⊖ A bit dull early on

Machine:.....PC CD ROM
Publisher:.....GT Interactive
Developer:.....Raven/id
Price:.....£45
Nasties:.....Thousands

UK

Demo CD with every issue

bloody HELL

We're all Doomed...

Official UK PlayStation Magazine No.2

On sale January 9th

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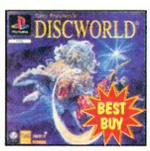

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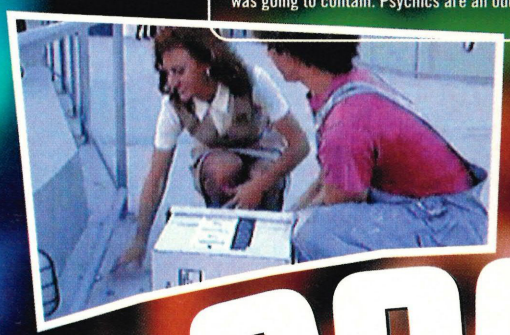
Why don't all psychics become detectives? They could earn an absolute fortune instead of swanning around at seaside resorts telling fortunes, but never actually disclosing any bad information. If any of you psychics are reading, why? Surely you could have predicted what this box was going to contain. Psychics are an odd bunch, that's for sure.

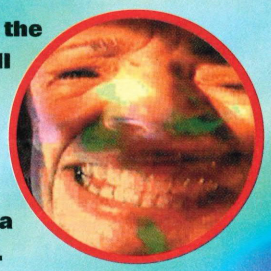


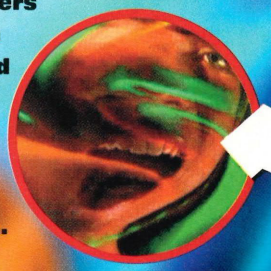
◀ Ahh, now, now. There's no use crying over spilt milk. That's right, bung a bit of super-absorbent kitchen towel on it. We'll have it cleared up in no time at all.

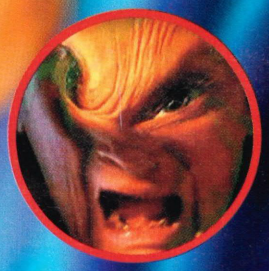
Yooooou could be a Psychic too

Mr Potato Head

Throughout the game you'll stumble across some of the ugliest characters ever to grace a home console. These characters exist in dream sequences and flashbacks. Ladies and gentlemen, introducing: Potato Heads...

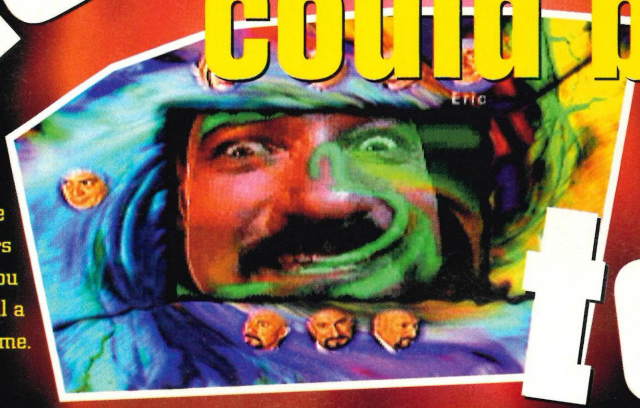




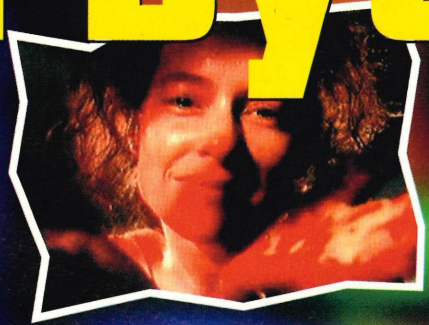


BITS

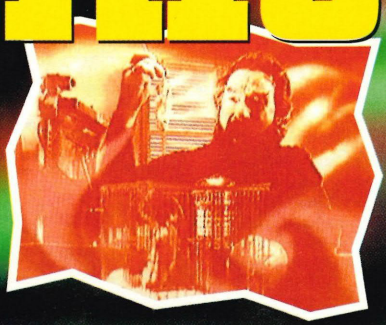
***Psychic Detective* contains** around 20 different endings, so even when you get to the end once, you still haven't seen half of the game. In fact you don't even have to do anything to see one of the endings, just press start and watch one view-point, all you'll have to do is change CDs once in a while and it'll finish after about an hour. Very strange.



▶ The heads around the edge of the screen are the characters whose minds you can dip into. All a bit spooksome.



▲ Has anyone seen the opening scene in *Carrie*? Does this bring it all back to you?



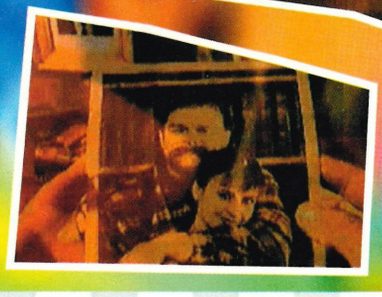
▲ One of the eerie and ambiguous flashback sequences. Not nice.

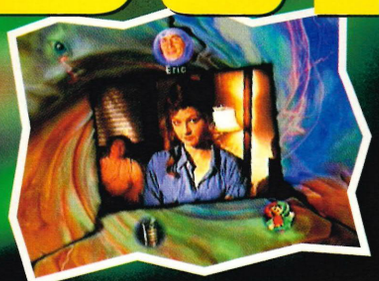
Interactive movies, eh? The genre we love to hate. And why might that be? Are we being needlessly picky for pickiness' sake? No, the reason that we hate them is because they're nearly always rubbish. In fact the tag 'interactive movie' is often completely inaccurate. Okay, they do feature movie footage and they're interactive in so far as the player has limited choices, but it's not really what we were expecting when the genre was in its infancy a few years back. What the average consumer expects when he/she sees the label, 'interactive movie' is a traditional game, with all the freedom of movement, but with the production values of a Hollywood blockbuster. That won't happen for a while and when it does they'll probably be called virtual movies, so for the moment then, does EA's latest effort bridge the gap between the usual expectation and disappointment?

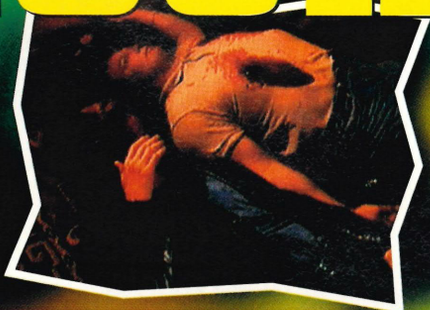
Okay, first of all, this is nothing radically new. As exclusively revealed way back in issue nine, *PD* consists of a bunch of FMV clips strung together with an average Sunday afternoon TV-movie plot. However, where this stands out from the likes of *The Daedalus Encounter* is that it isn't linear. Yes, the genre moves a step forward.

As you may have guessed, the story concerns a detective, Eric and that detective is psychic – which is clearly cheating if you ask us. Anyway, being psychic allows you to get inside of other characters' heads. Not literally of course because you wouldn't fit – it's a mind thing. Anyway what this does, is allow you to view goings on from the eyes of any given character involved at any time. And this is where *PD* differs form previous efforts. The action takes place in real-time. 'Big deal,' you may cry, but this really is a good thing.

winner ooo-oooooo in Detective







▲ This is a particularly tough riddle and involves the objects, not people.

▲ That's torn it. Not only was he butchered, but he died like a robot.

You're trying to solve a mystery and although you have these psychic abilities you've got to constantly switch characters so as not to miss any crucial action. It's all very clever, honestly. You've got to pity the poor makers who had to film every scene from about six different angles. Tedious work, but worth it when you consider the end result, which we haven't yet, so here we go...

Well, very slick, engrossing and atmospheric pretty much sums it up. The FMV is as smooth as in any other IM, although as usual all the action is contained within a tiny window in the middle of the screen, however in the case of *PD* this cropping is essential. The game wouldn't work with full-screen FMV, the area around is needed to display the psychic options available. It shows you which characters/objects are accessible by your powers. The production values are also very impressive, although some of the camera movements and angles borrow heavily from famous thrillers. These effects particularly come into there own when you encounter a spooky flashback or pick up vibes from a given object – top stuff.

So it looks great then, but how does it play? Like a dream actually, in fact exactly like a dream. You have no control over the actions or direction of the game, only what you see or don't see. So, it all comes down to plot and intrigue. And this is where *PD* scores high. You'll be compelled and that's all we're prepared to say – can't give away the plot, you see.

It basically comes down to whether or not you fancy half-controlling a very well produced cinematic mystery. If you do, they don't come much better.

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max carnage	17	8	12
mega bomberman	23	12	17
mega games 3	13	6	9
mega turrican	15	7	11
mickey mania	17	8	12
micro machines 2	25	15	20
micro machines '96	28	16	22
mortal kombat	15	7	11
mortal kombat 2	25	15	20
mortal kombat 3	30	20	23
mr nutz	20	10	15
nba tournament	25	15	20
nba showdown	15	7	11
nhl '95	20	10	15
nhl '96	27	15	20
pete sampras '96	27	15	20
pga european tour	18	9	13
pga 3	22	12	17
pga 96	30	18	23
phantasy star IV	32	20	25
pitfall	20	10	15
powerdrive	24	14	19
power rangers	28	15	22
primal rage	28	16	22
psycho pinball	22	12	17
ristar	22	12	17
road rash	12	6	8
road rash 2	17	8	12
road rash 3	22	12	17
rugby '95	18	8	13
sensible soccer	20	10	15
sensible soccer inter	22	12	17
shining force	25	15	20
shining force 2	27	15	21
shining in darkness	16	8	12
sonic & knuckles	20	10	15
sonic 3	25	15	20
sparkster	16	8	12
stargate	15	7	11
streets of rage 3	23	12	17
striker	26	15	20
subterrania	15	7	11
sunset riders	18	9	13
supermonaco 2	12	6	8
super SF2	27	15	22
syndicate	20	10	15
theme park	27	15	22
tiny toons	15	7	11
tiny toons - allstars	18	9	13
toys	15	7	11
turtles tourn fighter	20	10	15
urban strike	22	12	17
virtua racing	32	20	24
world of illusion	12	6	8
wwf royal rumble	20	10	15
wwf raw	22	12	17
zero tolerance	15	7	11
zombies	15	7	11

All new releases held in stock for **Megadrive**, **Snes**, **Saturn** + **Playstation** - phone for prices. You can trade your games for new or used games. Please ensure that all games have box + instructions and are PAL copies.

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PlayStation

	i	ii	iii
air combat	29	20	23
destruction derby	30	20	24
discworld	30	20	24
doom	32	20	25
jumping flash	28	17	21
kileak the blood	28	17	21
lemmings 3d	29	19	23
mortal kombat III	32	20	25
nba jam	26	15	20
novastorm	28	17	21
raiden	28	17	21
rapid reload	26	15	20
rayman	30	20	24
ridge racer	30	20	24
striker	30	20	24
tekken	32	22	25
theme park	30	20	24
toshinden	29	19	23
total eclipse	28	17	21
wipeout	28	17	21
xcom	28	17	21

3do

	i	ii	iii
blade force	29	18	23
demolition man	20	10	15
fifa	17	8	12
rebel assault	18	9	13
return fire	22	11	17
road rash	20	10	15
space hulk	29	18	23
street fighter II	23	12	17
syndicate	25	14	20
w. commander III	27	15	22

We also stock used games for Cdi, MegaCD, CD32 and Jaguar

Snes

	i	ii	iii
addams family values	22	12	17
aladdin	20	10	15
animaniacs	20	10	15
batman forever	25	15	20
biker mice from mars	20	10	15
blackhawk	20	10	15
bomberman 2	18	9	14
bomberman 3	32	20	25
cannon fodder	25	14	20
castlevania v... kiss	25	15	20
clayfighter 2	25	15	20
desert fighter	16	7	12
donkey kong	25	15	20
dragon	20	10	15
earthworm jim	25	15	20
empire strikes back	23	12	17
f1 champ edition	25	15	20
fifa 96	32	20	25
ghoul patrol	15	7	11
give 'n' go	32	20	25
int. superstar soccer	23	12	16
int. s. s. deluxe	30	20	23
judge dredd	25	15	20
jungle book	25	15	20
jungle strike	27	16	21
kawasaki challenge	25	15	20
killer instinct	32	20	25
lamborghini challenge	20	10	15
lemmings 2	20	10	15
lion king	25	15	20
lord of the rings	22	12	17
mario kart	22	12	17
mario paint	23	13	18
maximum carnage	20	10	15
mega man x	17	8	12
mickey mania	18	9	14
micro machines	20	10	15
mortal kombat 2	22	10	16
mortal kombat 3	32	22	25
nba jam tour	25	15	20
nba jam live 95	17	8	13
newman-hass indy/mansell	20	10	15
pga golf	20	10	15
pitfall	18	9	13
pocky & rocky 2	20	10	15
powerdrive	22	12	17
power rangers	22	12	17
primal rage	27	17	22
punch out	20	10	15
putty squad	22	12	17
return of the jedi	25	15	20
rise of the robots	14	7	10
rock & roll racing	24	14	19
samurai showdown	25	15	20
secret of mana	23	12	17
sen. soccer ltd	22	12	17
shadowrun	22	12	17
smash tennis	17	8	12
soccer (mufc)	22	12	17
star wars	17	8	12
street racer	22	12	17
sunset riders	18	9	14
syndicate	22	12	17
t2 arcade	18	9	14
theme park	28	16	22
turtles tour fighters	20	10	15
urban strike	32	20	25
wolfenstein	20	10	15
wwf raw	25	15	20
wwf royal rumble	20	10	15
zelda	17	8	13
zombies	18	9	13

Saturn

	i	ii	iii
bug	28	17	21
daytona	29	19	23
myst	30	20	23
panzer dragoon	25	13	20
rayman	30	20	24
real pinball	29	18	23
robotica	28	17	21
pebble beach golf	28	17	21
shinobi x	29	19	23
v.f. remix	24	12	18

Column i If you wish to buy a used game from us, this is the price you will pay

Column ii If you are selling a game for cash this is the amount you will receive from us.

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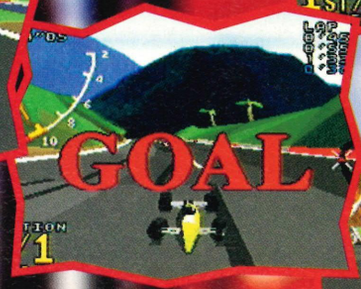
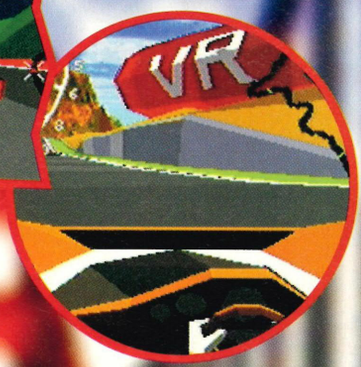
◀ Blocky like *IndyCar Racing*, but with pretty clouds in the sky. Hmm.

◀ Not only can you select cars, but also teams, which means colours.

▼ Left, left, right, up, down accesses the football cheat. No.

▲ The go-karts are perhaps the best fun of the game.





Time Warner's Virtua Racing

The title gives it away. Why would Sega license out the Saturn version of the game that's been a smash on arcade, Mega Drive and 32X? Because it's no good at all, that's why. So what's wrong?

Firstly and foremost is the gameplay. It's cack. At no point does it feel like you're driving a car, let alone a series of sports cars at speeds up to 180mph. No way. There are a range of vehicles including go-karts which, at least, begin to handle like real karts with their nippy acceleration, low top speeds and tight, pointy cornering. But it's nowhere near enough.

Secondly and, er, eighthmost, is the graphics. Dog's dinner. Look at the screenshots, then imagine the scenery 'hurtling' by at, er, walking pace. At a tired, small child's walking pace. The backgrounds are pretty on most of the ten tracks, none more so than the picturesque Alpine circuit, but the polygonal foregrounds are nasty – worse than the original arcade game, where they don't need to be, and if the developers complain to us, justifying their stupid polygons with that tired old 'we needed to sacrifice numbers of polygons and luxuries like texture-mapping for the sake of speed' argument, they can forget it. It's slow.

Thirdly, and, ahem, sixteenthmost, the sounds. Plinkety-plonkety ear-hurting minimalist Casio Vialtone elevator 'tooons' that don't fit the action apart from turning into some metal/oi!-esque 'hurry up' notice when you start the last lap. No commentary, but thankfully some nice effects, like the top tyre squeal as the back end complains 'round corners. That's good, but the music itself would keep Oasis up all night. If you know what we mean. We think you do.

Sure, there are ten tracks, five cars, and choice of arcade and 'Grand Prix' modes and a few nice details, but the whole deal is sub-standard. There are loads better racers out there and Sega themselves are underlining that fact with their own superb *Sega Rally*. Don't believe any other magazine that gives this game a higher score. We are telling you the truth!

Sega Rally is better

Just to underline the point that *VR* is v. poor, here's a picture of *Sega Rally* which is better. It's ace. Buy it. Don't buy *Virtua Racing*. It's no good.

Ultimately

Shoddy

42%

- ⊕ Tracks, options
- ⊖ Handling, looks, slow

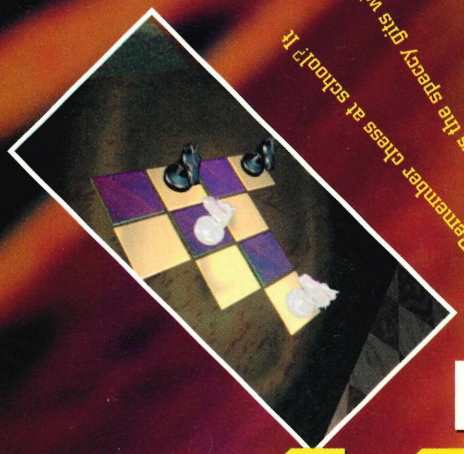
Machine: Saturn
Publisher: Time Warner
Developer: In-house
Price: £40
Tracks: 10

UK

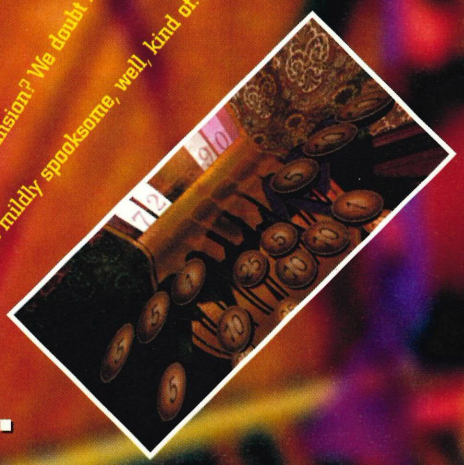
BITS

This may not be completely relevant, but *Space Hulk* on the 3DO is a very tough game. Battling Genestealers would be a lot easier if you had say, infinite health or something like that. We know how to crack it, but that would be too easy. There's a cheat that allows you smash it in minutes, clue: It's a magic word so get your Paul Daniels wig on and give it a try..

▲ Are we scared yet? Can you feel your pants slowly filling at the thought of wandering through a spooky mansion? We doubt it, but this is mildly spooksome, well, kind of.



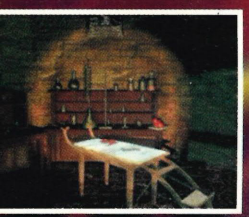
▲ Remember chess at school? It was always the spacey gits who used to win all the matches and be top of the chess ladder. They were all swots and teacher's pets. Well, some



What comes after 7th Guest?

Not 8th Guest, but...

11th Hour



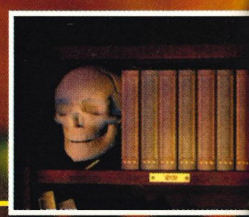
Remember *7th Guest*? You know, the one where you had to wander through a series of pre-rendered sequences solving some pretty obscure puzzles. Well it went on to be the biggest selling CD game of its time and now, almost a year after they promised, Virgin are bringing us the sequel.

It's based 70 years after the original and guess what, in all that time not much has changed. The graphics are still all lovely and rendered, except now you view it by torchlight in the early part of the game, and the puzzles are still as obscure as ever. But don't worry though, that really annoying voice that taunts you as you walk around is still there and still has you reaching for the volume. Doh!

Virgin are counting on this being the scariest thing you are likely to play. Well if you're the kind of person who gets scared when the puppy runs away with the toilet roll in the Andrex ads then yes, this will disturb you. Otherwise the 18 certificate is there purely for show.

Developers Trilobyte have spent a lot of time polishing up the graphics and video, but haven't done enough to the standard, wander-through-some-rendered-locations-and-solve-some-weird-puzzles-gameplay, which was always the biggest problem with the original.

The only way you can really get any fun out of this is to play it with a load of mates, then you can all try and suss out the puzzles. Do it on your own and you just get lost in the immenseness of it all. Experienced adventurers will probably enjoy getting their teeth into something as challenging as this and won't mind the faults, doubt it, though.



Ultimately

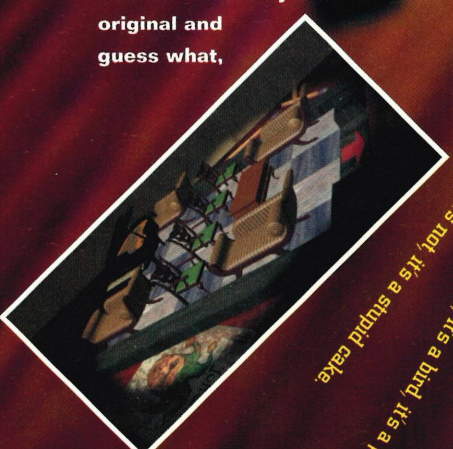
Flash

69%

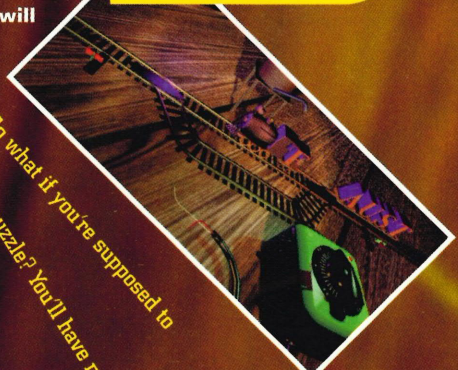
- ⊕ Visually stunning
- ⊖ They forgot the gameplay

Machine:	PC CD ROM
Publisher:	Virgin
Developer:	Trilobyte
Price:	£45
Levels:	One big one

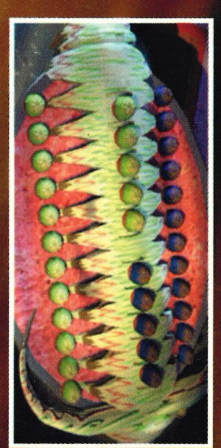
UK



▲ No it's not, it's a stupid cake.



▲ So what if you're supposed to solve the puzzle? You'll have more fun trying to rearrange the letters to make a rude word. Something like SUAFT. Um, we need more practice.

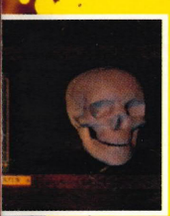


▲ Agh, it's a horrible monster. It's worse than a cleaning lady on a dark night. It's a bizarre alien invasion force, it's a bird, it's a plane.

Give Return Fire a massive...

Maps O' Death

map injection



We love *Return Fire*. Love it to bits. We take turns taking it home so we can sleep with it. Nothing pervy mind, we just cuddle up to it and give it a rub down with a fluffy shammy. Honest.

It's a top 3DO game. Lots of tanks, lots of war, what more could you ask for? Well, you could ask for the one-player game to be a bit more involving. Like a rubbish girlfriend, it only comes to life when there's company. When you and it are left alone for a while there're long pauses in the conversation and you can get a bit bored. Fortunately the two-player game's the tops and in the hands of experienced players a game can last ages with much to-ing and fro-ing of dominance. It's very, very, VERY addictive.

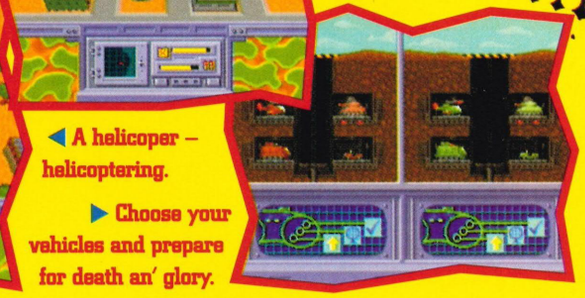
The aim of the game is to capture your opponent's flag which he has secreted in his heavily armoured fortress. You have a helicopter, an armoured support vehicle, a tank and a jeep with which to storm his inner sanctum, but, of course, so does your opponent and chances are he's going to be doing likewise to yours. Once the flag's in your jeep the race is on as to who can get back home with the booty first. So exciting!

But what are we telling you all this guff about *Return Fire* for? We came here to talk about *Maps O' Death*! Something entirely different! Except of course it's not entirely different. Mups, sorry, *Maps O' Death* is precisely what it's name implies. It is maps – o' death admittedly – for *Return Fire*. You load in original *RF* then bung in the new *Maps* disc, instantly injecting 100 new er, maps, into your fave game. It's like having your brain erased and discovering *Return Fire* for the first time all over again. Yipee!

Only that's all *Maps* does. It's just new maps. No new music, no new vehicles, nothing particularly new at all really. One difference is that you now only have limited vehicles. When enemy fire wastes a few there's less setting off from base with a nice shiny replacement. That's it – gone. Other than this it's business as usual. The maps are very intricately designed and will give even the most expert *RF* meister a run for his money, but *Maps* is a little bit of a missed opportunity.

Still, we love *RF* so much we welcomed *Maps* with open arms and *RF*'s been enjoying a bit of a second coming thanks to the new life breathed into it. At £25 *Maps* is quite reasonable too, we think you'll find, and while we're waiting for *RF2* proper this'll do nicely, thank you.

◀ A helicoper – helicoptering.



▶ Choose your vehicles and prepare for death an' glory.

Ultimately

Rejuvenating **84%**

⊕ Nice set of maps
⊖ Is that all?

Machine: 3DO
Publisher: Studio 3DO
Developer: Silent
Price: £25
Maps: 100

UK

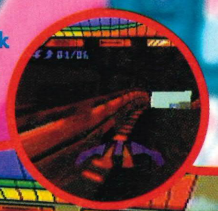
▼ The new maps are smashing but some new vehicles would have been nice too. Ah well, maybe next time.

▲ Two players in full swing. Two tiny tanks slug it out.

▲ Look, when we said we wanted a picture of a top bird this isn't what we had in mind.

▲ The split-screen mode ain't too bad actually.

▶ Wads of scrummy power-ups litter the track.



▶ Fave landmark has to be the scary blood-red tunnel.

▲ The backgrounds alternate from grey to brown then, in a shock move, back to grey again.

Hi Octane...

High expectations, high disappointment

Surprised us all a bit this'n. We remember *Hi Octane* from its appearance on the PC where its combination of hover-sled racing and very obvious re-use of Bullfrog's *Magic Carpet* engine failed entirely to set the PC world alight. Poor old *Hi Octane*. It just didn't feel *right*. Huff-puff.

Hi Octane features silly floaty hover-cars gliding about, ricocheting from wall to wall, long complicated courses which require the liberal use of direction arrows so that you knew what direction you're supposed to be going in and bizarre game mechanics which mean that if you're in the lead you get constantly shot up the bottom until you're not in the lead any more. Great, eh? Have they sorted out the gaffs for the Saturn version? No, besides the addition of a rather cramped two-player split-screen mode, nothing has changed.

When *High Octane* first appeared it was dismissed as 'not being like real car racing' and therefore a bit poor. Simple – then *Wipeout* appeared and spoilt everything by proving that so-called sled racing can be fun. Which leaves *Hi Octane* in a rather curious position. If *Wipeout* has vehicles which handle absolutely nothing like cars, yet is brilliant, what's up with *High Octane*?

Well, for a kick-off let's talk about that *Magic Carpet* engine. This fiendish method of cutting down on scenery keeps distant obstacles permanently obscured by a thick fog. Nice idea and one which worked a treat in *Magic Carpet*, but in a racing game it's rather daft. Just like in real life, when driving in thick fog you can't see the corners coming and as a result are always crashing. Yes, you can use the little map whotsit to see when the corners are due, but you don't want to be staring at a little scanner thing all the time do you? No!

And the guns bit. It's all wrong. As previously mentioned, when you're in front of anybody you're continually bombarded with enemy fire until you're destroyed. The way to play the game is to either hang about at the back, then race to the front during the last lap or to get so far in front that you can't be caught. Both of which mean that for most of the race you appear to be the only vehicle on the track.

This is a very ambitious game and a lot of fun for a while, but you can't help feeling that it's about three years too late for the gaming world to take much notice.

BITS

Hi Octane is by Bullfrog, the lovely and exceedingly talented programming crew that brought you *Theme Park*, *Syndicate* and, of course *Magic Carpet*, which invented the now over-used fog trick (hiding distant objects behind a bank of fog.) It seems that they're still rather keen on it as *Dungeonkeeper*, their forthcoming RPG appears to implement it too. Hmm...

Ultimately

Flawed

73%

⊕ Two-player game
⊖ Unsatisfying gameplay

Machine: Saturn
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Bullfrog
Price: £50
Tracks: Six

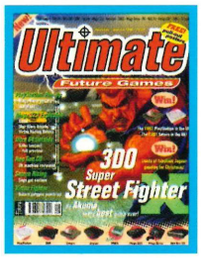
UK

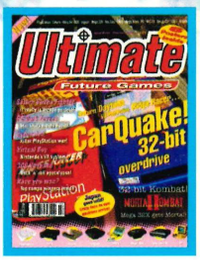
Back issues

issue ten

1 ▲ Ultimate's launch issue... A collector's item! The best introduction you can get to all Next Generation super consoles and games, and all for 95p! Bargain! Well, it was.

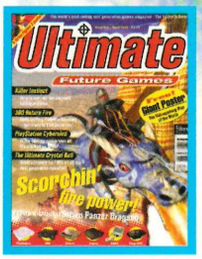
2 ▼ *Super Street Fighter X* on the 3DO – we had the very first review. Also includes everything you need to know about the Neo Geo CD, PlayStation and Saturn... Lovely!





3 ▲ The first review of *Ridge Racer* – and it's damned fast! – sandwiched between reviews of *Virtua Fighter* on the Saturn and *Mortal Kombat 2* on the 32X. Tip top!

4 ▼ Blow your mind with every single Next Gen console rated in all known game genres. We review *Motor Toon GP* and *Toshinden* on the PSX. Things are hotting up. Cookin'!



5 ▲ Sega throw a heavy punch in the face of the competition with their first shoot-em-up, *Panzer Dragoon*. We also review *Return Fire* for the 3DO. Scorchin'!

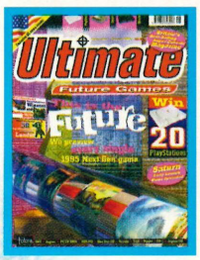
6 ▼ More punch-ups on the PSX with Namco's *Tekken*. The characters are incredible, will it beat *Virtua Fighter* to a pulp? Also *Street Fighter Zero* – first glimpse. Crunchin'!

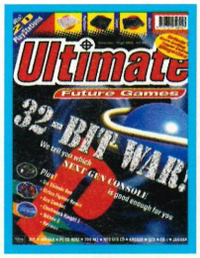
7 ▲ Delve into the Top 100 games that'll be hitting super consoles in the very near future. Plus! Don't miss the sharpest reviews of *Daytona USA* and *Tekken*.

issue eight

8 ▲ Includes 16-page pull-out guide devoted to Britain's contribution to the Next Gen. CD Sex – is it worth the hype? Plus! *Astal* on the Saturn and PSX *Jumping Flash.* Sexy!

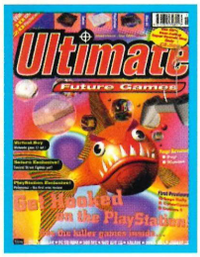
9 ▼ We preview every single 1995 Next Gen game. Exclusive previews of *Loaded, Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby* on the PSX. Plus! Free supplement. Only a fool would miss it!



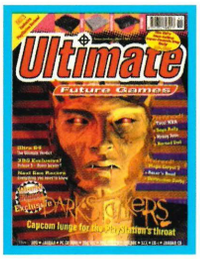


10 ▲ As the 32-bit war kicks off we predict who will be the winners and the losers. Plus! Free exclusive Psygnosis supplement to blow your socks clean off! It's a cracker!

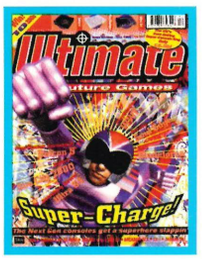
11 ▼ The PlayStation finally arrives just in time for our exclusive *Wipeout* and *Philosoma* reviews. Plus! First ever Virtual Boy reviews and a free exclusive Atari supplement. Value!



12 ▲ We bring you world exclusive reviews of *DarkStalkers* on the PlayStation as well as *Defcon 5* on the 3DO and *MK3* on the PlayStation. It's an exclusive frenzy!



13 ▼ *WWF* on the PlayStation, *Sim City 2000* on the Saturn and *Soul Edge* in the arcade. Add to that exclusive Ultra 64 news and superheroes in the Next Gen and you're onto a winner!



14 ▲ It's the preview to end all previews – 16 pages devoted 100% to 1996. On top of that we have *VF2* and *Virtua Cop* reviews AND an exclusive CD-sized PlayStation *Doom* solution! Smashin'!

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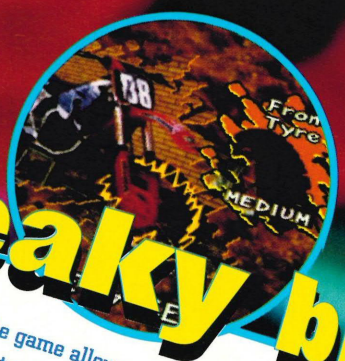
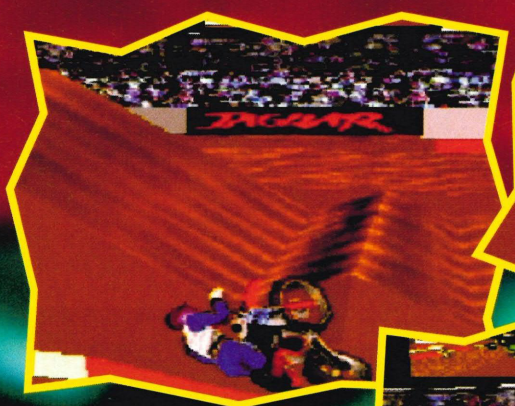
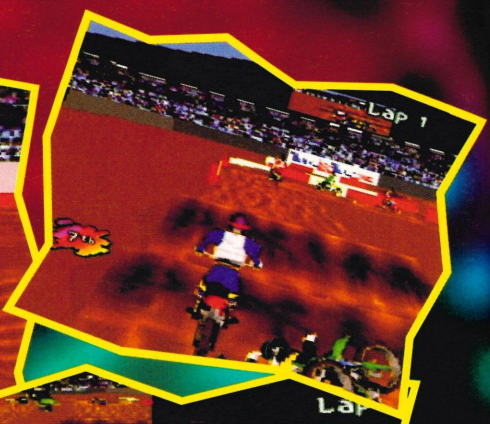
issue one

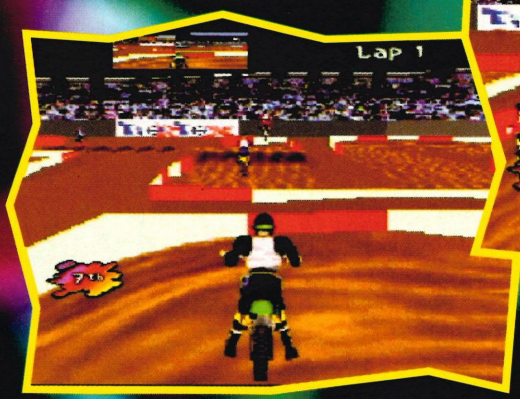


Tweaky bits

At least the game allows you to tailor your bike to the track. You can alter the front and rear tyres (either soft, medium or hard rubber), the suspension and the gears. So, get out and practise, learn the course and set the bike up how you prefer. It does help.



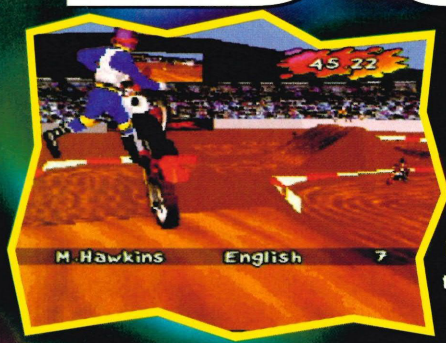




▲ Doh! Don't head for the plain brown bits or you'll be crashing...

Super

(and that's wh



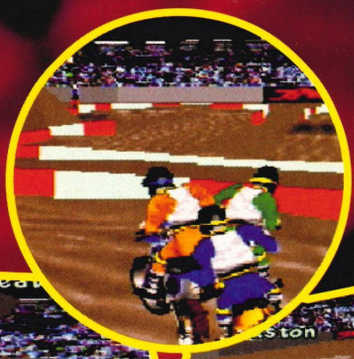
There are those people out there who undoubtedly feel we must have something against Atari's Jaguar. We don't. We give credit where credit's due, and it does have some top titles nestling in its software vault. *Iron Soldier* is certainly a quality shoot-and-stomp-em-up. We said at the time, that the Jaguar had the best version of *Doom*. And we all think *Tempest 2000* is bloody great. It's just that of late, there have been some God-awful releases from the house of Atari. It's not our fault that they have been getting some pretty dire marks. What do you expect? Aah, and here's *Super X* (or *Super 'Cross'*) offering itself up for review...

The game has you taking part in moto-cross races across North America. You get to select where you want to race during the single Practice and Race options, while Tournament has you moving to each venue in turn. You choose your racer (adding name, country and team details), then move to the tuning-up selection screen. Here you can tailor the bike to the venue (soft, medium or hard surface), by altering the tyres, suspension, gears etc. And it's straight off to the join the rest at the starting line.

Irritatingly, the other riders nearly always get off to a flying start, thanks to the way your starting barrier 'sticks' (unless you time it *just* right). But once your wheels begin to turn, you'll immediately notice the major failing in the game. The bloody frame-rate. Or lack of it. A racing game needs an engine that's fast, it needs an engine that's smooth – it does not need an engine that causes the action to jerk all over the gaff. It's just not a real pleasure to sit through. So there!

Then we come to the gameplay itself. You have control over the rider using the A, B and C buttons. They can be configured to your preferred settings of accelerate, brake and 'trick'. This last option doesn't really serve a purpose in the game, other than to relieve a bit of tension and boredom as you leap over the jumps on the

▲ Unfortunately, you can't cause any damage to this grim fella.



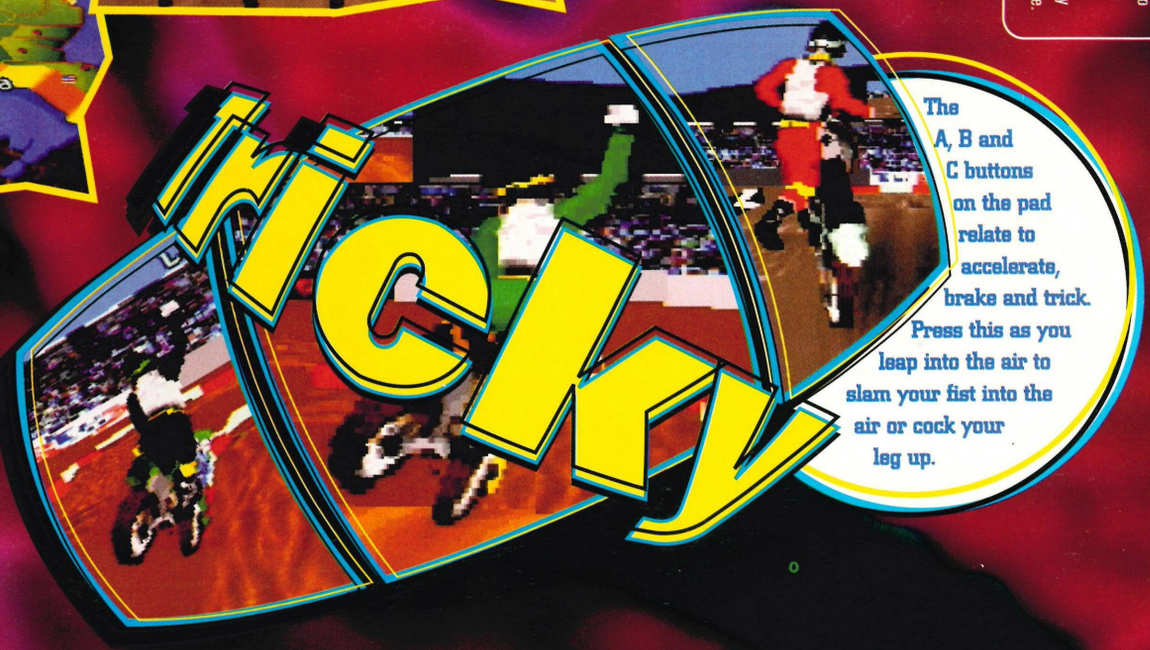
▼ Get a bird's-eye view of the circuits before you start.

▼ Yep, the countdown starts at five. A bit frustrating, that.

BITS

This is terrible. Whereas real moto-cross is top. Think back to the '70s when Honda's British World Champ Graham Noyce was a national hero, to the '80s when Yamaha introduced the monoshock rear suspension unit, and another Honda-mounted Brit, Dave Thorpe, kicked arse, 'til the early '90s and Belgian ace Georges Jobé. Get a video of this lot, but avoid this game.

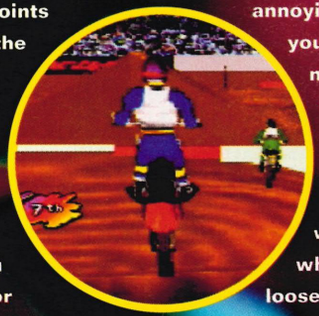
X



at you will be if you buy this)

course. Each rider has a different trick (although they invariably mean cocking a leg into the air and waving your arm around a bit like a girl). They don't get you any points and don't improve the game in any way.

Another major problem is with the courses themselves. There's no way of telling how fast you are actually going or how much brake you're applying, and if you're in the running for clocking up a record time (until you cross the finish line each lap). It would have given the game a bit more of an injection of pace, rather than merely relying on what position you're in. One hideously annoying point is that if you run off the narrow course itself, you crash. You don't slow down as you'd imagine you would in reality when you hit the loose sand and mud, you just end up in a crumpled heap, and the screen flicks to you back on your bike, replaced on the course. It does tend to spoil the flow of the race somewhat. And although a minor point, if you cheekily try and ride in the opposite direction or accidentally steer the wrong way at a corner, the game allows you to turn half way 'round, before making you crash on the spot. Gumph. How very unforgiving.



So, *Super X* is a serious disappointment at the end of the day, and Jag owners are left chewing their fingers for a decent driving game. This tries to go for realism by the throat with its authentic sounds, reasonably challenging circuits and the fact that you can tweak your bike to match the course (although, you don't actually earn any money to do this). But then all that goes out the window when you realise how unsatisfying the game beneath it really is. It's a bit poor is this.

Ultimately

Dirty

18%

- We split our sides
- Absolute RUBBISH!

Machine: Jaguar
Publisher: Atari
Developer: Tiertex
Price: £45
Modes: 3

UK

Saturn suffers Off-World Interceptor Extreme

The 3DO's *Off-World Interceptor* has just made the hyperspace jump to the Saturn in time for the new year – only this time it's *Extreme*. And it's still half a suspension unit short of a 4x4, we're sorry to say.

It's a bit confusing – there are objects, icons and bits of scenery that common sense or experimentation tell you to approach, avoid or destroy – you drive fast and shoot stuff, but it's *not* a racer. Check out the one-player story mode and its video intro and you'll discover that you're a space-age bounty hunter. Your raisons-d'etre are to 'Intercept' 'Extreme' individuals, 'Off-World' and make as much cash as possible in the meantime.

You've five worlds, each with various chases and a choice of vehicles, an upgrade shop, plus power-up weapons, armour-repairs, cash and continues. Each chase has individual graphic features, but the gameplay never wavers from its slightly-flawed basis. There's no discernable track or goal, and the other (enemy) vehicles match you for speed, staying just behind or ahead of you, reappearing each time you destroy them. There's a time limit, but, unless you park up without pausing and nip off for a couple of pints, this just means that the 'Time Critical' warning flashes when you get within 100 yards of the 'Finish', just to make it seem exciting which, often, it isn't. The gameplay boils down to driving fast, avoiding incoming fire, collecting weapons and shooting anything that moves.

Having said that, arcade mode is a laugh, and the decent looks and the reassuring way your 4x4s handle the mad Homing-Missile-strewn landscapes, is addictive in a fairly brainless way... which is quite a good thing. Chases get tough because of numbers and resilience of baddies, though it's more taxing on the fingers than the brain, but the big, big problem is the shambles that calls itself a two-player game. Strangely fun, yet cack.

Ultimately

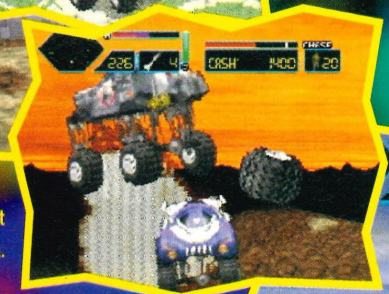
Brainless

60%

- ⊕ Addictive blasting, cool 4x4s
- ⊖ Awful two-player mode

Machine: Saturn
Publisher: BMG
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
Price: £45
Players: 1-2

UK

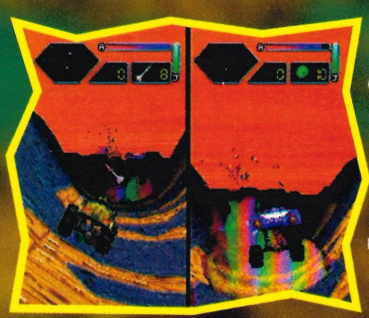


▶ Drive fast, avoid things that pop up in front of you and shoot anything that moves. Top fun.

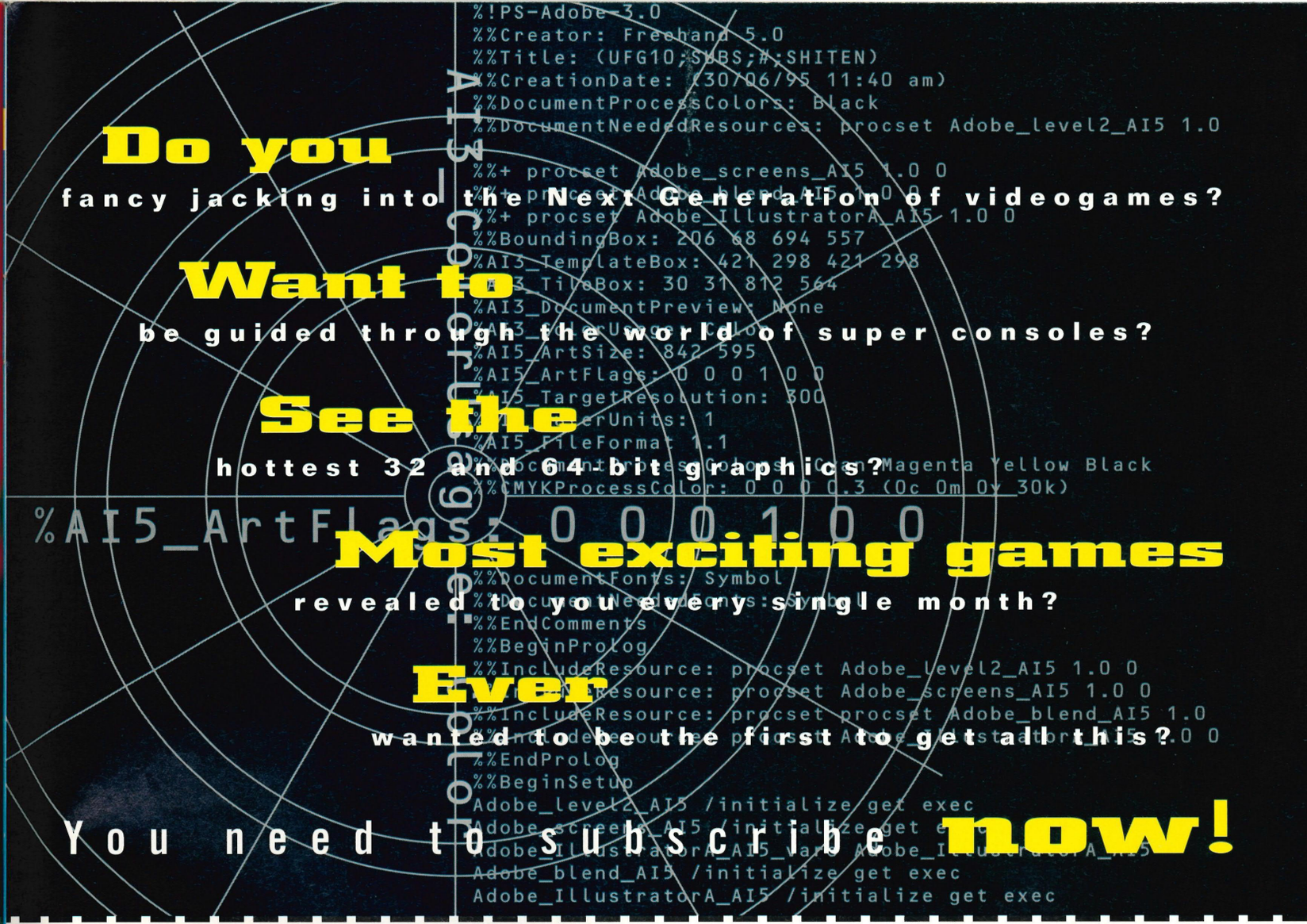
▶ You can just make out the silhouettes of two fat men who comment on the video sequences' dreadful acting.

▲ Collect the power-up weapons, and huge coins like the one we've just foolishly missed in the foreground. What idiots we are.

Two-player travesty



The split-screen two-player battle mode *should* be the best part of *OWIE*. But it's a travesty, a 'grotesque misrepresentation or imitation' of what multi-player drivin'-n-blastin' games should be. You can only fire forwards, you can't turn 'round or reverse and you can't destroy your opponent by merely ramming him. What were they thinking of?



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The Can

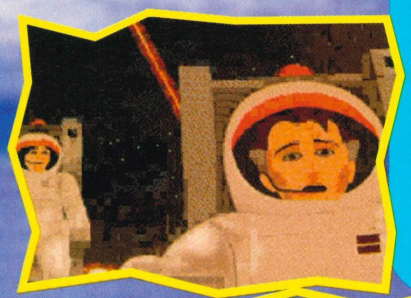
Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No it's an Agile

LucasArts are very famous in PC adventure land. *Monkey Island*? That's one of theirs. *Loom*? Same there too. And who could forget their last effort, the brilliant but non-too sizable *Full Throttle*.

Well, here's *The Dig*, their latest adventure which has had a little help in its production from a certain Mister Steven Speilberg. No, we've never heard of him either. Seems old Speilers was drafted in to wave his magic money-making pixie dust over the plot a bit to make it a dead spesh.

The Dig sees three astronauts being sent into space on a mission to destroy a giant asteroid on a collision course with Earth. No sooner do our three heroes reach said asteroid than it transforms into a kind of alien spaceship affair and whisks them away into an alternative universe. How tiresome. Thus begins your quest to find out what the Dickens happened and how you're going to get back home.

Now we at Ultimate like a bit of space-age fantasy as much as the next man, but *The Dig*'s creepy other-worldly atmosphere left us a bit cold. *Full Throttle*, its infinitely more entertaining predecessor,



▲ Our space-suited chums make a horrific discovery...

▼ Journalist Maggie Robbins provides *The Dig*'s girly action.

Flight sims are often dull, aren't they? People with beards play them. They sit all day in front of their computers wearing little leather flying hats and they *actually believe* that they're really flying (when they're quite clearly sat in the spare bedroom of a semi in Chipping Norton).

Agile Warrior, with its action set in famous political hot-spots from around the world, may make you think its one of the aforementioned games for beards, but it isn't. In fact the whole thing feels rather like last month's *Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2* (a top chopper game from Core Design in case you missed it) and in the realism/action debate this too errs on the side of the silly, letting you loose in a plane that's not only is impervious to direct collisions with the ground, but is capable of flight despite moving forwards at only two miles an hour. Oh, that's 'cos it's an '*Agile Warrior*' though, eh? Mmm, yes, doesn't make too much sense...

Prepare for lots of 3D jet fighter action featuring some excellent polygon explosions and err, that's about it actually. The rest of the graphics are a bit jerky and poor. Not bristly-chin rough but certainly not inner-thigh smooth. There's lots of nice shiny FMV though. At the start of every mission a rather stern Sergeant Major chap briefs you as to the task in hand,

involved the exploits of hardman biker Ben, righting wrongs by riding about on a massive motor bike and being dead cool. Its settings were gritty, real, and its characters were diverse and highly numerous. By comparison *The Dig* is a bit bland and po-faced. You spend your time wandering around, looking closely at rocks, trying to figure out what you're supposed to be doing and your companions are three rather dull astronaut types.

One thing *The Dig* does have to its advantage is size. There's nothing worse than shelling out forty odd quid on a game and finishing it over a weekend (as just about everybody did with *Full Throttle*). *The Dig* will keep you busy for infinitely longer, but whether you'll be riveted during this time is a different matter.

Don't get us wrong, *The Dig* is a quality game and plot-wise is up to LucasArts' usual standards. It's just that it's highly humourless and, dare we say it, a bit of a yawn? A top game for hard-core adventurers only, we're sorry to say.

Dig you dig it?

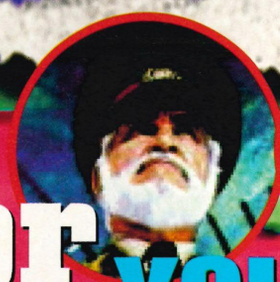
Ultimately

Plodding — 85%

- ⊕ Very big and long
- ⊖ Entirely fun-free

Machine:.....PC CD ROM
Publisher:.....LucasArts
Developer:.....In-house
Price:.....£45
Astronauts:.....Three

UK



Warrior you gimp

all the while seemingly on the verge of asking whether you are a 'steer' or a 'queer' but this is merely hundreds & thousands on a rather foul tasting bun.

Top of the in-game irritation list is the screen re-draw. It happens amazingly close by with scenery and enemies suddenly appearing from a clearly visible void up ahead. It's not too bad when you're flying close to the ground (mountains do tend to catch you unawares though), but fly as high as you can and the distance you can see ahead, or rather the lack of it, becomes startlingly apparent. You feel as though you're about to plummet to your doom over the edge of the world. Except, of course, you're in a plane so you'd be alright.

Our favourite graphical anomaly has to be the fact that when you fly over the sea it looks as if you're going up a hill. A spooky endless sea-hill, made of water. Ooo-wee-ooo. It's very disturbing. And rubbish.

Ultimately

Clumsy — 47%

- ⊕ Lovely explosions and FMV
- ⊖ Rubbish everything else

Machine: .....PlayStation
Publisher:.....Virgin Interactive
Developer:.....Black Ops
Price:.....£45
Missions:.....10

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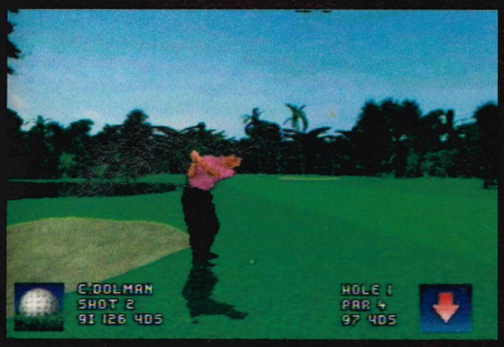

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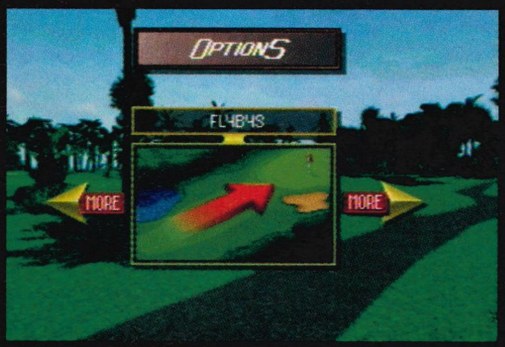
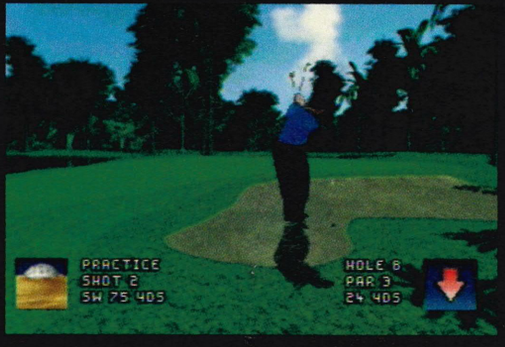


SEGA SATURN



PlayStation™

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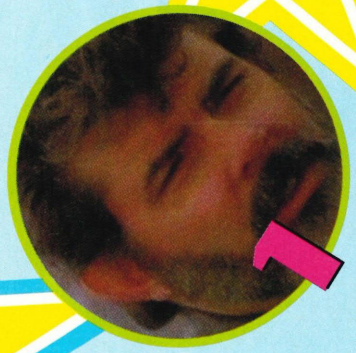

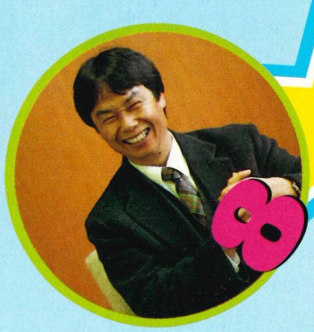

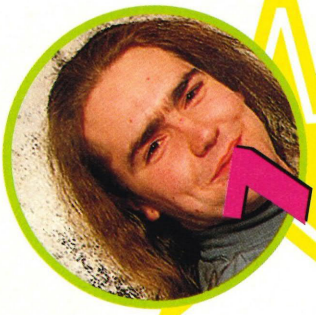

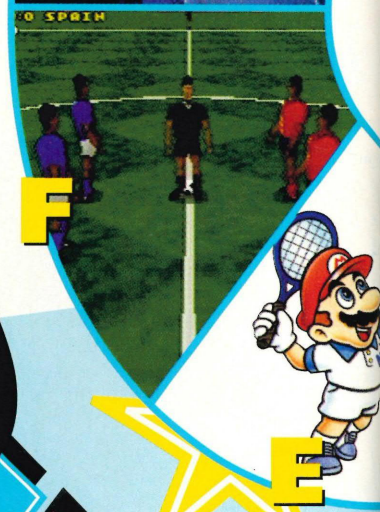

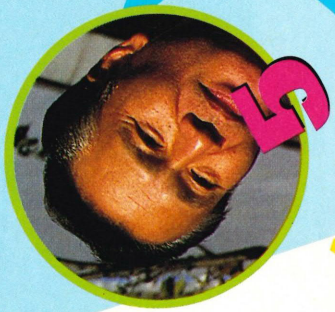

Look at me!

The Geezers...

1. Dave Perry
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3. George Lucas
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8. Death

Their Stuff...

- Actua Soccer
- The Dig
- Sensible Soccer
- Cool Spot
- Mario
- Jimmy White's Whirlwind
- Snooker
- Discworld
- The Virtual Boy

Yes, just look at them!

We like to feel that after reading Ultimate you yourselves feel part of the industry. But what if you attended a videogame party and were faced with talking to those with The Power? Would you know what to natter with them about?

Here's a quick test – look at the pics of the game-related stars over there (labelled 1-8). Then have a gander at the games and fancy stuff in the centre of this hypnotic spread. Scared, huh? Well, all you've got to do is match up the blokes to the game or thing you most associate with them. Then, quick as a flash, send us the answers on a back of a postcard (the numbers and letters matched up will do). There's a crisp £50 in it for you, but the deadline is February 10th.

All answers please, to: Look At Me!, Ultimate Future Games, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2DL.

3rd Degree

Enraged by the fact that games companies consistently refuse to recognise the stark staringly bleedin' obvious? If you invited a top games industry guru 'round your house for tea and muffins, what pertinent questions would you pose him? Better still, save your muffins and let us chat to 'em.

Post to: Ultimate Future Games, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath Avon BA1 2BW

E-Mail: mhawkins@futurenet.co.uk

Atari

How can the Jaguar call itself a 64-bit console when most of the games, if not all, are only just better than games for the SNES or Mega Drive? The Ultra 64 is 64-bit too, and it is cartridge based, but its games look much better. How? Is the Jaguar just a Mega Drive (or something less) in disguise?
J Rosseinski, Hull.

The Jaguar has been available for 18 months. The Ultra 64 is still six months away from launch in Japan and probably over a year way from launch in the UK. Any piece of hardware which is two and a half years further down the line should, by all accounts, use the advances in technology which will occur in that period to improve upon the existing products on the market.

I am sure that as soon as the Ultra 64 is (eventually) released the next, next big thing will already be being trumpeted as bigger and better. But be aware, Jaguar is still the only 64-bit system available now, is still half the price of existing 32-bit systems and still has the largest New Generation games library of any system. The first time buyers will move on to newer, sexier, more expensive consoles, but only Atari will get the mass market sub £150 casual gameplayer sales this Christmas, or the 10-15 year old market whose parents will not pay the upgrade price asked by Sega or Sony.

Darryl Still, Atari UK

Bullfrog

When will *Theme Hospital* be out for the PlayStation? Also *Syndicate Wars* looks cool too, is that finished yet? I want it now! Is *Dungeonkeeper* going to come out on the PlayStation too? Where did the idea come from for that?! It sounds absolutely brilliant.
Mathew Evans, Chesterfield

Looks like we've made three sales already Mathew, as all of the titles you mention are scheduled for conversion to the PlayStation.

Syndicate Wars will be published in May and *Dungeonkeeper* is due to appear in June. *Theme Hospital* will also be converted to the PlayStation, but is not due to be published until January 1997 I'm afraid.

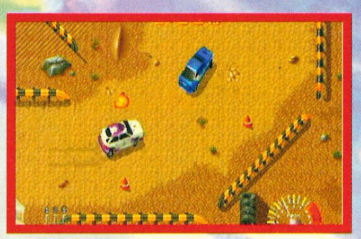
The idea for *Dungeonkeeper* began when Peter Molyneux, our head honcho, was taking part in a Role Playing Games session and he realised that the person who had the most fun was the person playing the dungeon keeper. We also felt that the computer RPG had become rather stale, ie. they always had the same scenario so this seemed like a good way to make RPGs more interesting and at the same time produce a cracking game in its own right. Simple as that really.

Our next releases for the PlayStation will be *Hi Octane* and *Magic Carpet* in January and March respectively. Perhaps one of these would help you pass the time until *Syndicate Wars* is released.

Cathy Campos, Bullfrog

Atari

Why is Atari wasting money publishing games like *Ruiner* (23%), *White Men Can't Jump* (35%) and *Super Burn Out* (31%)? There's no point in publishing loads upon loads of so-called Next Gen games when only one out of ten is any good?
D Bamford, Rotherham



▲ *Powerdrive Rally*. Not wonderful by any means, but jolly good fun for a limited period and a bit of an office favourite if truth be known.

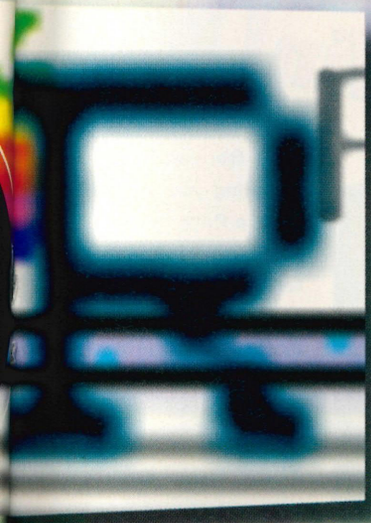
Both *Super Burnout* and *White Men Can't Jump* are, I believe, excellent games. I refute wholeheartedly the review ratings given by UFG (which I think is an otherwise great magazine) for these products and ask Mr Bamford if he has tried them before criticising. *WMCJ* as a 4-player link-up is great fun and I ask UFG to check their Jaguar because their description of *SBO* as 'slow' is ridiculous. The game runs at SIXTY FRAMES PER SECOND, which is as fast as any television system can handle!

I will admit however that, like all systems, the Jaguar has its share of less inspiring titles, but it also has titles which are unmatched on ANY other console system for quality, speed and graphics. Titles like *Doom*, *Alien Vs Predator*, *Tempest 2000*, *Rayman* and *Iron Soldier*. Remember all of these titles are on 4Mb cartridge and not on 700MB CD, as required by other systems at more than twice our price.

Darryl Still, Atari UK

Atari

I am a Jaguar owner with no good games, no CD drive and now no Virtual Reality headset. The way I see it I'm left with three options:
1) I wait until November 5th 1996 and cremate my already dead Jaguar in style on the local community bonfire.
2) Take Atari to court and sue them under the trade descriptions act of advertising something that doesn't match up to what everyone was lead to believe originally.
3) Atari come to my house, take my Jaguar back and reimburse



me with a cheque for all the money I've paid out. Which option do you suggest?
Paul J Derrick, Southdown

For every letter like Mr Derrick's we get, we get 100 from happy Jaguar owners, who are delighted with the range of over 50 software

▲ Are you *Fever Pitch* owners completely happy with your washes? Write and let us know...

titles now offered by Jaguar, including some unsurpassed games, as mentioned in the previous reply. The CD drive is AVAILABLE NOW! Readers should try their Future Zone or Virgin stores, or simply ask their local retailer to order it for them. Also, Atari has not cancelled its R&D on Virtual Reality. We have simply cancelled our contract with one particular company in this area. If Mr Derrick were a little more positive he may enjoy his Jaguar as much as the majority of our owners. If he cannot do this then his best bet is to trade it in at Future Zone, so that some other fortunate person can enjoy all the advantages offered by his Jaguar and some other company can try to satisfy Mr Derrick's demands of immediate delivery of perfection at a very low cost.
Darryl Still, Atari UK

Rebellion

What has happened to Rebellion? I have not heard anything from them for absolutely ages. I thought they were happily developing Jaguar games. What has happened to *Legions Of The Undead*, Skyhammer, *AVP 2 CD* and *Chequered Flag 2 CD*?

Do they have any other games planned or any other CD projects? And do they intend to convert their original PC adventure to Jag CD because I'd really like that.
Tony Hutchinson, Chester

Since *Alien Vs Predator* was released on the Jaguar we have been busy on a number of confidential projects on PC CD ROM and Super Consoles. We have grown to over 40 people and you should see some of our output early next year. Well, you probably will...

On Jaguar we have one game due in Jan/Feb – *Skyhammer*. It's a flight sim/strategy game with a few neat twists. The engine is optimally coded for the Jaguar GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) and it runs smooth and fast in 24-bit colour. The sound uses the new Atari audio system 'Jaz' with a full Meg of sound.

More importantly it's an original idea that keeps you on the edge of your seat in the flight sim but makes you think about strategy.
Paul Topping, Rebellion

Virgin

When can I get my hands on a copy of *Cool Spot Goes To Hollywood* for the PlayStation? It looks dead sexy.
Tarquin Wagstaff, Tavistock

Well, the game's scheduled for release towards the end of March, but you know what slippage is like. The main differences from its predecessor on the 16-bit consoles is that it's isometric as opposed to side-on. The play area will also be multi-level and include scroll push, similar to that you find in the *Mario* games.
Doug Johns, Virgin Interactive Entertainment.

Sega

I want a Saturn but I'm a huge fan of Sonic. I've got all the Mega Drive games and would buy a Saturn tomorrow if there was a *Sonic* game for it. How about *3D Sonic*, like the new Ultra 64 *Mario* game? I'm sure the Saturn could manage it and make a better job of it than they did with *Bug!*
Simon Cuthbert, Darlington

There will be a *Sonic* game on Saturn at some point in the future, but not for a while yet. Rest assured that it will be something special.
Mark Maslowicz, Sega Europe

Sega

Is there any chance of Sega doing another *Daytona USA*? I've bought the original, but have to say that I'm more than a bit disappointed with it. Why don't Sega do a remix version of it, like they did with *Virtua Fighter*? It's such a great game, I'm sure that everybody would buy a revamped version that actually made it enjoyable for any length of time, all my mates would.
Bryan Cutter, Billingham

▲ *Daytona*: Do you think that a *Remix* version would be a good idea? Let us know.

There are currently no plans for a *Daytona Remix* title.
Mark Maslowicz, Sega Europe

Sega

What is the Saturn's cartridge port for? There are no cartridges for it and it has an expansion port at the back so it can't be for that. Have Sega got some great master plan for this strange slot? They could do new cartridge games like the Ultra 64 cartridges and build extra hardware into them to make new features possible. Maybe I'm just dreaming, maybe I'm just mad. Whatever my problem, please put me out of my misery very, very soon.
Jason Corps, London

The cartridge slot is for Back-Up Memory cartridges only at the moment. As for other plans, I can't comment on that for the moment .
Mark Maslowicz, Sega Europe

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Exposed

Theme Park

This month we're going to be casting an appreciative eye over Bullfrog's classic, *Theme Park*. Originally a top selling PC game it has been converted for many different formats, most recent being the souped-up PlayStation and Saturn versions. Andy Nutall, *Theme Park*'s producer filled us in with all the juicy gossip, or erm, facts...

"This was a relatively easy title to port over, but as the console's processors are relatively slow by PC standards there was a danger that this could make the game too slow. But our programmer's a clever chap and it is, as you can see, a great game. The other thing is that you have in total slightly less than 4Mb RAM to squeeze the games into – not much smaller than the PC version uses, but as most Bullfrog PC games now require a minimum of 8MB RAM we'll have our work cut out in the future!

One of the first things we had to do was compress the sprites. Because there's so many of them, they don't fit into the allocated memory. The clever bit came with the routine which decompresses the sprite graphics from memory 'on the fly'. Without this routine we would have needed to reduce the quality of the graphics to fit them in RAM. Also the Japanese market required changes. The most interesting (and most frustrating) point is that on certain animations the characters had only three fingers and a thumb, a standard cartoon configuration, but this is a MAJOR taboo in Japan so we had to add an extra finger to each offending hand. Ow, my head hurts!

My favourite version of *Theme Park* is a toss-up between the PC CD ROM version and the Japanese Saturn. The PC-CD because you can play it in hi-res and the Japanese version because the speech is completely bonkers in the head. Get a copy in."

Win!

So, you fancy running your own Theme Park then do you? Good job we've got ten Saturn versions to give away then isn't it? Just tell us the name of Bullfrog's curiously monikered boss, okay? Send your answers to *Theme Park* – Exposed, Ultimate Future Games, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2DL post haste!

Technical

Game:
On-screen graphics: 700K compressed
Total game graphics: 121Mb
Sound effects: 467Kb
Audio tracks: 21
Total game music: 141Mb
Max on-screen sprites: 1500
Max saved-game size: 32K compressed
Intro:
24-bit graphics
320 x 240 pixels
1700 frames
15 frames/sec
Audio 44.1Khz 16-bit mono
Total playing time 113 seconds

▶ The option to experience the rides is superb.

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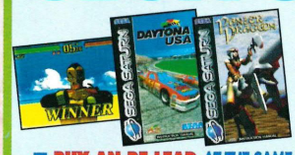

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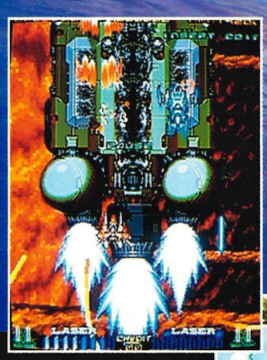

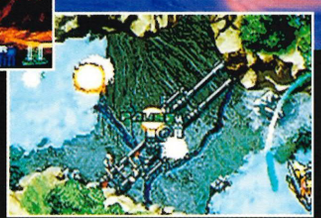

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