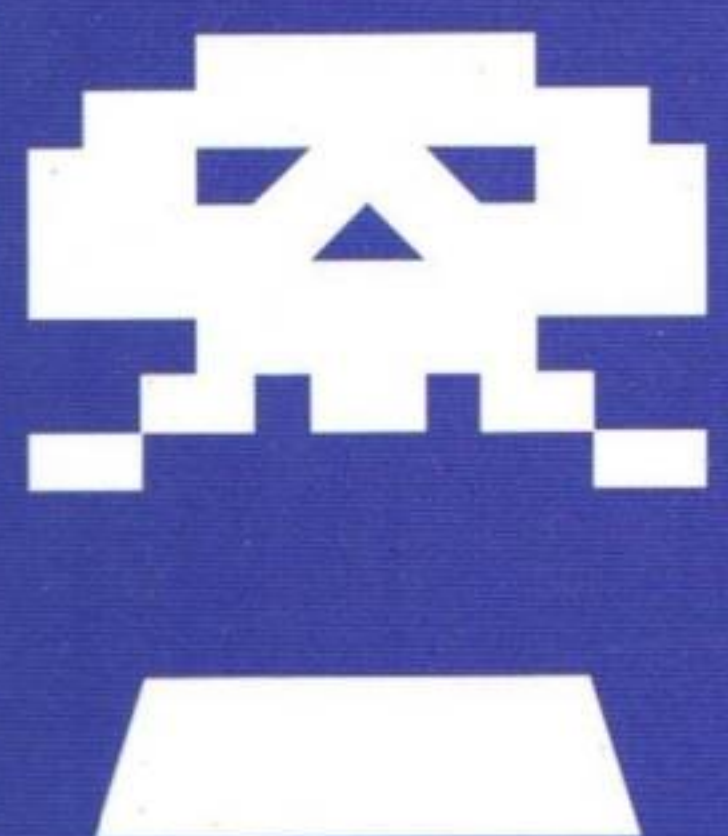


The videogame magazine

May 2000
Issue 19



PlaySta

N64

Game Boy

PC

Dreamcast

PS2

124
pages of

Star Wars
Dreamcast online
Street Fighter EX3
Soldier of Fortune
MDK 2
Resident Evil Survivor
Beatmania

RIDGE RACER 5

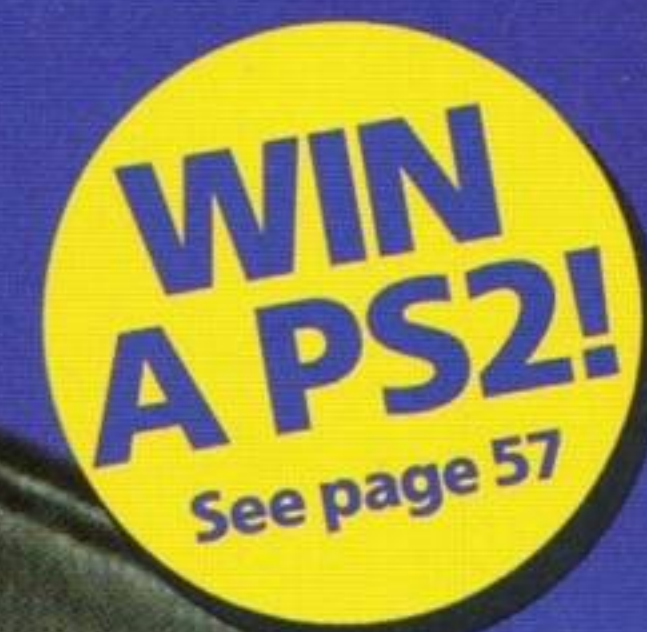
PlayStation2's stunning first racer reviewed inside!

THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

N64 GoldenEye sequel revealed – first pics and info!

POKÉMON STADIUM

Unmissable 3D monster battling on your N64!



PLUS!

X-BOX

First ever unveiling – all the details on page 16!

DOLPHIN

Top secret shots of breathtaking action game!

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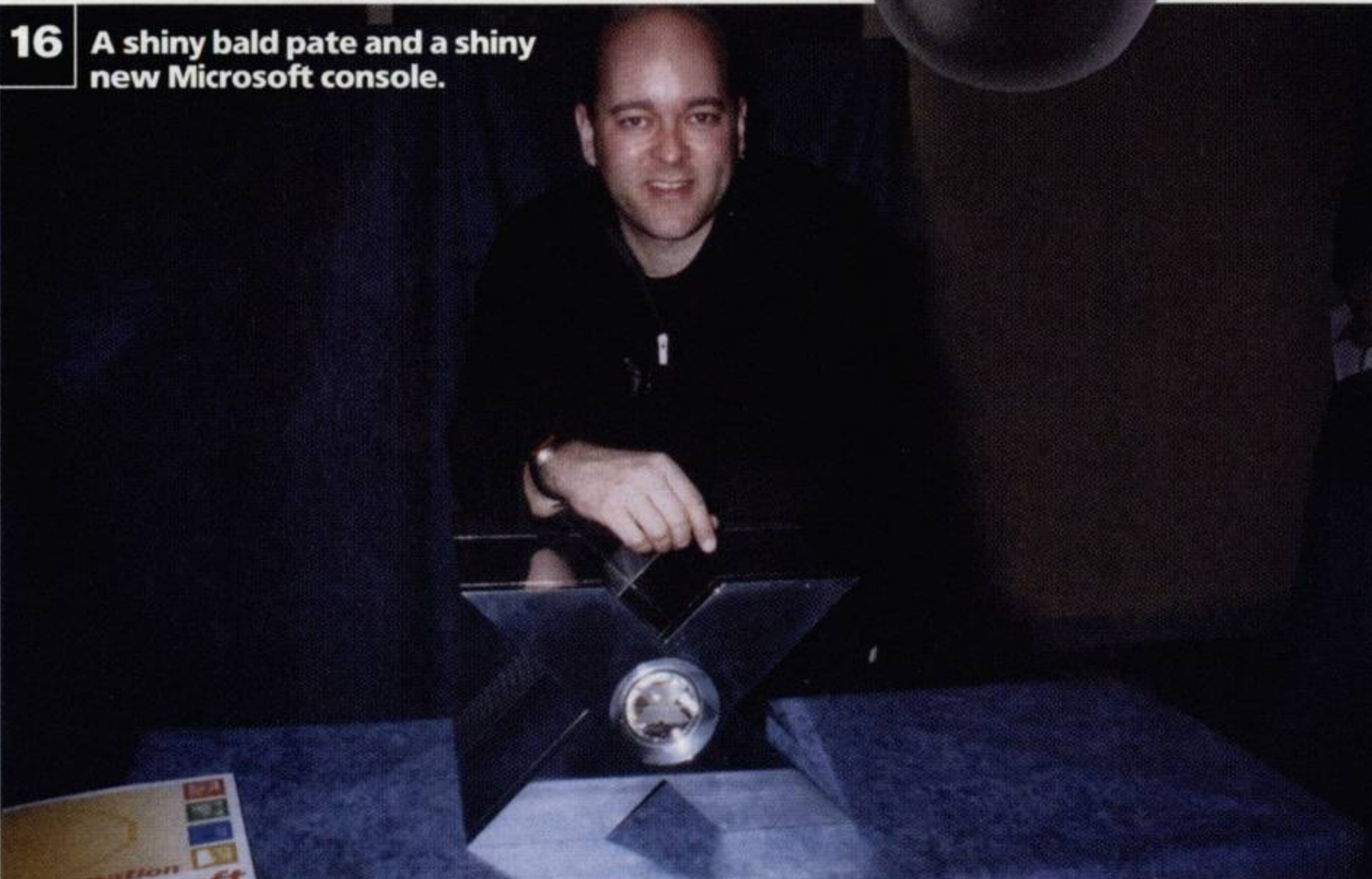
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A PS2!**
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60 New PlayStation2 Games



New releases: Ridge Racer 5, Stepping Selection, Street Fighter EX3

66 New PlayStation Games

New releases: Everybody's Golf 2, F1 2000, Road Rash Jailbreak, World Snooker Championship, Resident Evil Survivor, Bishi Bashi Special, Die Hard Trilogy 2, Muppet Race Mania, Player Manager 2000, Ghoul Panic, Star Ixiom, Psychic Force 2, Hydro Thunder, Circuit Pro Bowling, Armorines, Victory Boxing 3, JoJo's Bizarre Adventure, Urban Chaos, NBA Showtime, Jimmy White's 2: Cueball, Street Sk8er 2, 4x4 World Trophy



76 New PC Games



New releases: Soldier Of Fortune, Star Wars Force Commander, Ultima: Ascension, Star Trek: Armada, Euro League Football, Tzar, Need For Speed Porsche 2000, F1 2000, Croc 2, Alien Nations, Die Hard Trilogy 2

84 New Dreamcast Games



New releases: MDK2, Evolution, Street Fighter Alpha 3

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Cover PlayStation2 (Philip Sowles)

“My Beautiful Mountain”

Arcade continues its quest to prove that videogames are everywhere, even at -50°C.



Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA

Ah – winter holidays. You really can't understand the magic of skiing and snowboarding until you've been. The fresh mountain air cleansing your lungs, the alcohol going straight to your head and the pain rocketing through muscles in your body you didn't even know you had. But the thrill of whooshing down a mountain makes it all worthwhile. And whether you chose to ski or snowboard, whatever your ability, you really can't fail but get hooked.

And when the lifts close, or you fancy a break, there's only one thing that could possibly be any better. Armed with camera, dictaphone and a silly hat, *Arcade* decided to brave the cold and track down the hardy souls who opt to play videogames at 2,000ft.

Slot check

- Where: Bretton Woods, Mount Washington, New Hampshire, USA
- Entertainments: Snow (61 runs, 10 lifts); restaurants (one mid-mountain, one at bottom); bar, shops and ski/board hire
- Price: Flights: About £200 from Gatwick to Boston by Virgin, (see <http://www.virgin-atlantic.com>). Accommodation: The Mount

Washington Hotel (see <http://www.mtwashington.com>). Lift Passes cost about \$180 for five days (see <http://www.brettonwoods.com>). For other nearby resorts and a link to all the above info, see <http://www.ski93.com>.

- Seasons: Late November to Early April



Stevie, Natalie, Kate & Josh 12, 15, 9 & 8 London

Hello. What are you all playing?

[Kate] "Sonic." [Natalie] "Donkey Kong." [Josh] "Pokémon Yellow." I've only just started playing, but I've caught five Pokémon so far. I've caught Manky and Pikachu." [Stevie] "Manky? He sounds funny. What does he look like?" [Josh showing Game Boy] "He's a sort of pig/dog type thing. See?"

Have you seen the Pokémon Cartoon on SM-TV Live?

[Josh] "It's rubbish. The Pokémon

don't even seem to be in it very much – the main characters are all human. Pikachu's in it, but he's really annoying, 'cos all he can say is 'Pikachu'. The rap Ant and Dec do before it starts is quite funny. *SM-TV Live* is much better than *Live and Kicking*, don't you reckon?"

[Enjoying the conversation] Definitely. So, do you play games at home as well?

[Natalie] "I play *GoldenEye* and *Mario Party*. I can play that. Well,

the most I've got is about two stars. They need some more girl-friendly games." [Stevie] "Yeah, but I don't think they should just make Barbie games or anything like that, 'cos that would be stupid."

And how's America?

[Natalie] "I've been skiing in Italy and France before, but not America. It's much better here. Some things Americans do are a bit weird, though. Every time you say 'thank you' they say, [mimicking accent]

'you're welcome'. And they all think you know the Queen. The first day we got here, some people actually thought we were part of the Royal Family. One of them actually said," [mimicking voice again] 'so what are you, a princess or something?' Maybe I should have told them that I really was."

Maybe you should. Okay, thanks for the chat. See you later.



“My Beautiful Mountain”



Mick London

Hello. That your Game Boy?

“Nah. It’s the kids!” [Pointing to Game Boy] “What’s his name, the little yellow chap? Pikachu, isn’t it? He looks like he’s the main man.” [Screwing up face] Actually, don’t talk to me about *Pokémon* – that’s all I seem to have spent my money on since I’ve been here. You can get all these things in the States that you can’t get in England. Our hotel room’s full of A4 folders, trading cards, table cloths, you name it.”

[Pausing] Er, hang on. That voice... do we know you?

“Yeah – I’m Mick Brown, from Capital Radio.”


What, Mick out of Pat & Mick? Pat Sharpe’s mate? Um, blimey.

When’s your show on?

[Adopting DJ-voice] “1pm to 4pm every day. Capital Radio FM.”

And, er, how’s Pat?

“Fine. We did this thing for Children in Need the other week, and me and Pat got back and did ‘Haven’t Stopped Dancing Yet’. It got to number two, you know, but Madonna’s ‘Like a Prayer’ kept us off number one. We had six hits in all: ‘Haven’t Stopped Dancing Yet’, ‘Let’s All Chant’, ‘Use it Up Wear It Out’, and, er, three others. We did *Top of the Pops* twice – both times, I think, with Gary Davies. They made £450,000 quid those songs – all for charity. ‘Use It Up Wear It Out’ was Stock, Aiken and Waterman’s 100th hit, in fact. Ah, happy days.”

That’s nice. Well, er, good to have met you then. Bye. 



Bud 28, Boston



Hello. So, what are you doing here?

"Snowboarding. Doing some gnarly jumps."

What's the snow like?

"It's kind of powdery today."

Have you ever been to England?

[Thinking] "What's that? What, in London? Is that where The Beatles are from, Liverpool in London? I never went there. I don't have a passport. I heard about it once."

Right. Apparently, Prince Michael of Kent is visiting this resort today on a Royal visit.

Have you seen him?

"The what? Prince is here? The Artist formerly known as Prince?"

No, no. Prince Michael.

[Beginning to despair] You know the Royal Family? Yes?

Well, you know Prince Charles?

"The guy with the ears?"

Yeah. Well, no, not him. He's his second cousin, or something.

So, what do you think of the Royal Family?

"I think they're pretty cool."

And what are you playing on your Neo Geo?

"I've been playing *Puzzle Bobble*. It's like awesome, man. I was playing it on the chairlift. I get dark thoughts if I don't concentrate. I don't want to hurt people."

Right. You into videogames?

"I've got like a PC, a PlayStation and a Nintendo 64. All of them. I play the *Championship Manager*. It's a soccer game. I like soccer. Helps me concentrate my thoughts."

Righty ho. [Hiding behind photographer] We'd better be going. Cheers, Bud.



"My Beautiful
Mountain"

Jenny, Philippa, Izzie & Ben

20, 20, 22, 19 Boston

Hello. Is *Alpine Surfer* anything like the real thing?

[Jenny] "Not really. You don't lean the same to turn. When you're boarding you have to use your whole body, but with this game, you can just use your feet."

Why are you playing it, then?

"Dunno. The slopes are shut now, so I just fancied a go."

Fair enough. What other games are you into?

[Ben] "*Tony Hawk's* is good. *1080°* - now that's, like, awesome. That is almost as good as the real thing. I play it all the time, man."

Snowboarding, videogames - it's all you need, man."

Okey Dokey. See you later, then. Bye.



Your beautiful arcade

■ All you need is videogames, sweet videogames, there'll be videogames everywhere, you'll be laughing, singing, music swinging and dancing in the street. All you need to do is drop *Arcade* a line about where you like to play videogames, and let the Beautiful people do the rest.

A Write to us

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Ollie 25, Boston

All right, man? Busy day on the slopes?

"Yeah - the snow's great today, but I had a bit of a major wipeout."

Really? You okay, though?

"Nothing I couldn't handle."

So, you're playing *Beatmania* there. Any cop?

"You what? Nah, not really. I thought it was going to be a DJing game, but you just have to press the buttons in time with these coloured bars. And the music's shit. I mean, what is this song?"

Moloko, "Bring It Back"? No, it's not that. Don't know, sorry.

What sort of music are you into, then?

"Not this shit, I can tell you."

Britney Spears?

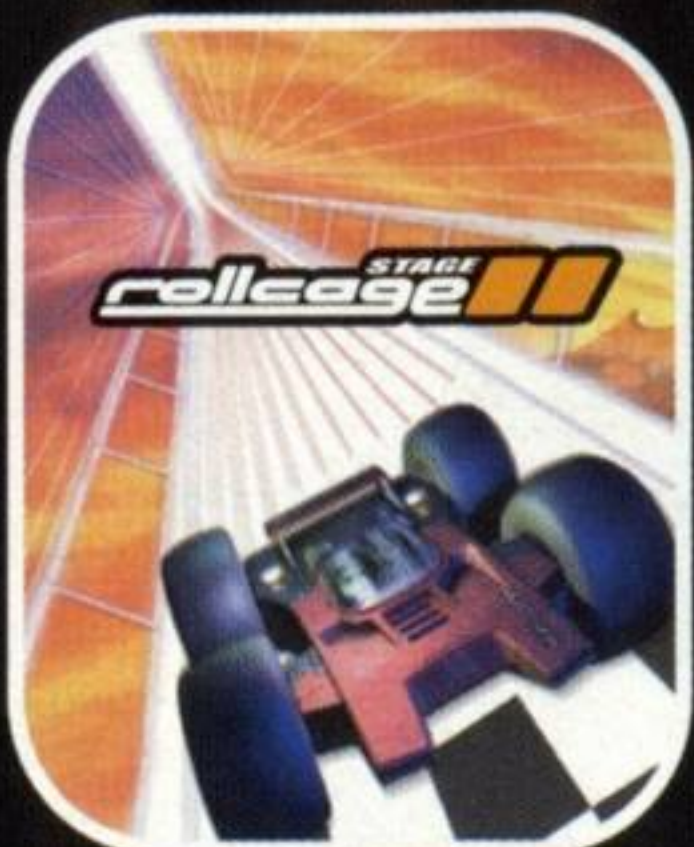
"Fuck off."

Righty ho. Er, bye then.



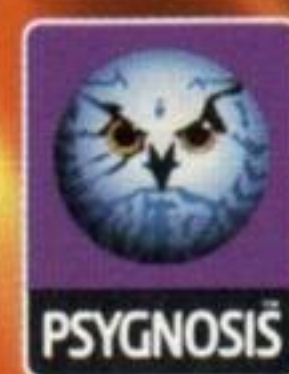
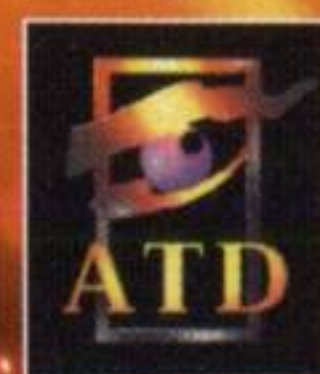
"Snowboarding,
videogames...
it's all you need, man!"

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FOR THE DIFFERENCE WILLIM GAINING



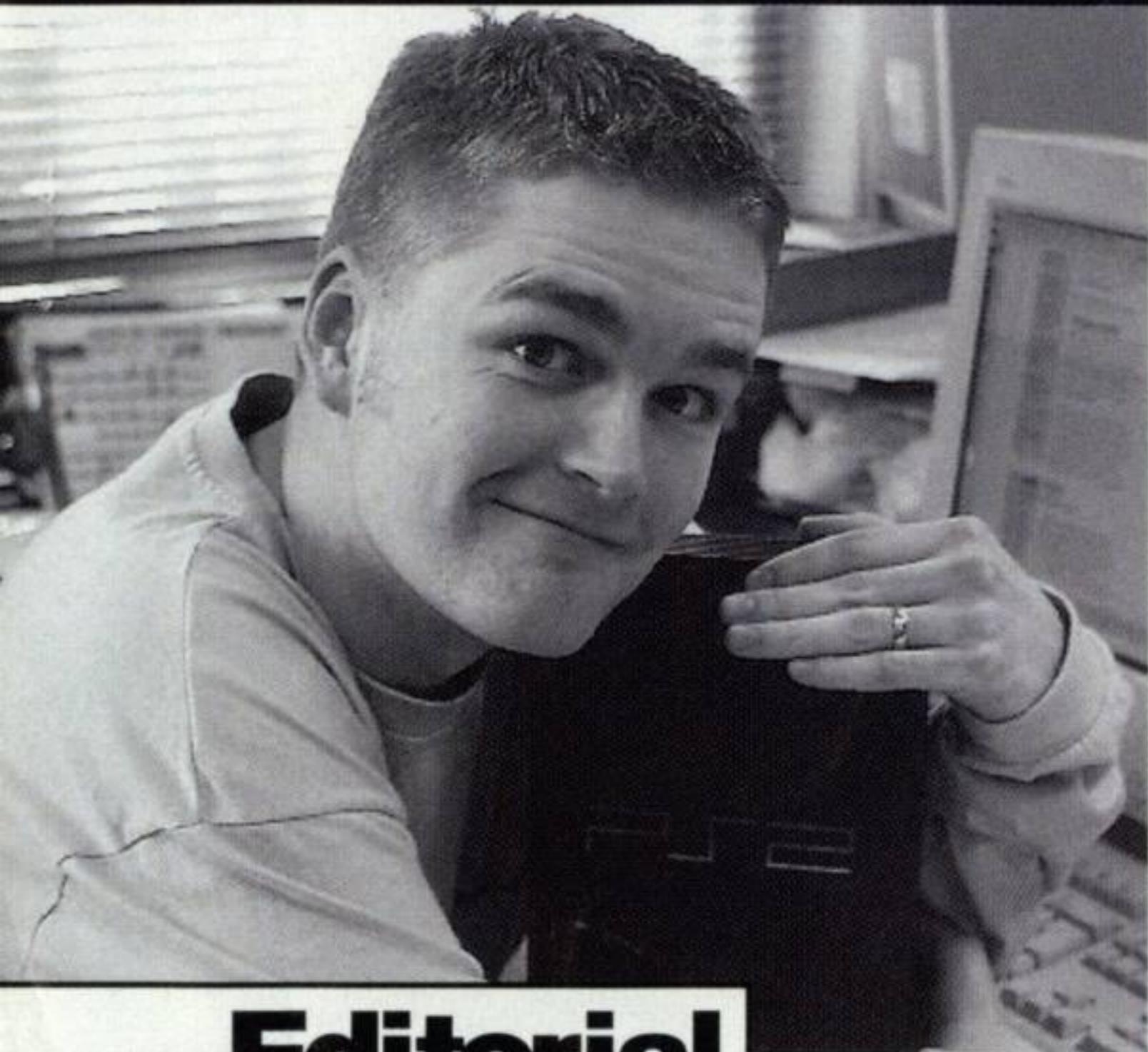
rollcage STAGE II

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Editorial

Making the moves

As experiences go, it's a truly terrifying one to come from *N64*, a Nintendo magazine, into the world of multi-format games. One moment you're making do with four reviews an issue, the next you're absolutely *swamped* by literally *hundreds* of games, screenfuls of eye-popping next generation graphics (doesn't *GT2000* look *incredible?*), and the sort of *ü*berviolence – as seen in this month's undoubtedly evil *Soldier of Fortune* (page 80) – that would give Nintendo's cute police nightmares.

But, anyway. As well as being a terrifying time, it's also massively exciting too, partly because of what's happening *now* – just flick to page 60 and the start of our reviews section for first verdicts on *Ridge Racer 5*, *Street Fighter EX3*, *Resident Evil Survivor* and *Star Wars: Force Commander* among others – but also because of what's set to happen in the future. Over the coming months, we're going to be looking at *Arcade* and changing it to meet your needs. If you've got any ideas or suggestions, please write in or e-mail us. We'd love to hear from you.

The main focus of this issue, though, is PlayStation2, and on page 44 you'll find the start of our gargantuan 14-page PS2 special. Just about everything you've ever wanted to know about Sony's dazzling piece of kit is revealed. And, if it isn't there, it's not worth bothering about.

Oh, and I almost forgot X-Box, Dolphin and Game Boy Advance, all of which are present and *incredible* in this month's Game On. All you have to do is turn to page 16.

Have a great month!

Tim Weaver
Editor

It's your letters

Got something you want to get off your chest? Stick pen to paper and get ranting and raving...



Letter of the month Living Zel

Aaargh – I've had it! It's about time someone stood up to the Nintendo mafia. *Zelda* is *not* the best game of all time. There. I said it.

The story behind the game is laughably poor, the character interaction is feeble, and – very, very quickly – it just becomes boring. Oooh, another temple to investigate. Once I'd rescued Epona, collected the Poes and done the mask swapping, the thought of entering *another* temple made me feel physically sick.

Some have argued that the *Final Fantasy* games aren't enjoyable because of the random battles; but surely these are no less annoying than *Zelda's* constantly respawning enemies. I love the level of control and involvement Square's game gives you. You may well follow a linear path, but all games are linear as they all have a beginning, middle and end.

Sorry about the rant, but this madness must stop *now*.

Sophie Cheshire, Manchester

Congratulations! We've decided to give you the Letter of the Month simply because you have the guts to say – out loud! – that Zelda isn't any good.

Naturally, none of us in the office can agree with you, but we take your point. And we wonder aloud if there are any other Arcade readers that feel the same as Sophie. Write in if you do!

Wallet-unfriendly PC problems

Is it me or has the cost of playing PC games spiralled out of control in recent months? The specs required to play the best new PC games are increasingly ludicrous, and developers only seem intent on creating more dazzling visuals, rather than concentrating on what makes a game good to *play*.

I love the PC, but constantly upgrading is out of the question, and some processors are already outdated by the time they arrive! A console might not be as powerful – at least until PS2 arrives – but at least you don't require an upgrade every time a

new title comes out. And just look at *Quake 2* on the PlayStation! Okay, so it doesn't *look* as good, but it works and it plays brilliantly when compared to the PC original. I just think it's time PC developers started creating games that everyone can play, regardless of how powerful their PC is.

K Tanghe, Belgium.

Absolutely right. Which is the reason that, often, the games that sell the most copies in the PC market are the games that don't require manual-filling technical specs. The Command & Conquer games and, to a lesser extent, Championship Manager both bypassed the need for the latest Pentium – and if you're looking for classic games that'll run on any old PC then there's the likes of the utterly fantastic Monkey Island and Sam and Max kicking around in the bargain basement bins. Of course, if you wait a year, you'll also have Half-Life and Black and White on the Dreamcast and, shortly after that, X-Box, which'll be a PC but at a third of the price. The dark days of emptying your bank account in order to upgrade are well and truly over.



Command & Conquer.

Out to launch

There's never been a more exciting time for gamers, with Dreamcast, the up-and-coming PS2, Dolphin and then X-Box. But, as a Nintendo fan, I'm concerned that Dolphin isn't going to be as dominant as it should, and as we'll undoubtedly find out when it's launched next year, *deserves* to be.

Their projected launch date of December 2000 worldwide has already been abandoned, and if we're not going to see it over here until *September 2001*, Sony will have, once again, stolen so much of a lead on Nintendo that they'll be simply uncatchable. And, the shame of it is, Nintendo will almost certainly have the best games on their console – but not as many people will get the chance to play them.

Simon Letchworth, via email

Nintendo's delay of Dolphin, at least in the West, surely wasn't entirely unexpected in the videogames industry. With the success of the N64 in the States, and 2000's release schedule – against all odds – looking both pretty



■ Arcade 18: Bond in all his *The World Is Not Enough* guises.

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■ Tell *Arcade* what's on your mind and, if your missive is made letter of the month, you'll get the top five games on your choice of system courtesy of Simply Games. Result.



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INTERACTIVE

On the side

I was pleased to see Shigeru Miyamoto saying that Mario will be becoming more adult on Dolphin. That means I'll no longer be forced to watch a cute monkey offering a lovable dinosaur a bouquet of flowers on a fluffy cloud of loveliness.
Alex Alexander, Leeds

Er, which game was that again?

How much will PS2 actually cost, then? On page 23 of your latest issue you say £199, then on page 52 you say £230. I'm all confused.
Nick B, Barnham

Educated guesses, those. Sony have remained schtum on how much PS2 will cost. But, we reckon somewhere between the £280 and £299 mark. Expect it to come down pretty quickly after that, mind.

Why didn't International Track and Field 2000 include the original coin-op somewhere too?
Miles Platt, Manchester

Like DK64 had the original Miyamoto classic included in the game? That would have been great.

I've sent in a picture of Jonathan, the day before he fell down a man hole.
Kelly Long and Laura McIntyre, N Ireland

Ouch.

What about this?

■ Let Arcade know what you think about: **PlayStation2** – what games should be made available at launch? **Nintendo 64** – could 2000 be the year? **Dreamcast** – where are the games? **X-Box** – Xcrable or Xcellent? **Game Boy Advance** – how can Nintendo make it great?

packed and pretty bloody brilliant (Perfect Dark, Turok 3, Zelda: Majora's Mask, Riqa, Eternal Darkness and The World is Not Enough to name but a few), it was never going to rush out the new console – not that Nintendo ever rushes anything. Of course, PS2's going to have a significant lead over Dolphin, but that won't worry Nintendo and it shouldn't worry gamers. Because whenever Dolphin decides to arrive over here, it'll almost certainly be the hardcore gamers' console of choice.

Black and, er, cream

Reading *Arcade* the other day, I noticed something of a recurring theme in the failure of certain platforms. Let me try to explain: the Lynx and Game Gear failed miserably against the pureness of the Game Boy, while, in the 16-Bit market, the SNES ruined the black Mega Drive. And, more recently, the PlayStation, in all its grey loveliness, thrashed the N64 into submission. Surely this doesn't mean that the slinky aesthetics and sheer blackness of PS2 will effect its success?

James Filus, Bangor

Interesting. But, this is surely just coincidence, isn't it? Or... is it?



■ **Black & White.**

The glee of DVD

I was a bit disappointed to see that the DVD playback on PS2 isn't as good as we'd all hoped. We were led to believe that it would be "second generation" and at least as good as current, middle-of-the-range DVD units. Instead, it chops and, when you rewind or fast-forward, it "stalls". I'm not happy.

S Garcia, Watford

Admittedly, the playback isn't quite as good as we were led to believe, but it's still pretty solid. We ran the bad haircuts of Swayze-fest Point Break on ours and it worked perfectly. And, remember, as well as that playback, you also get – more importantly – a top grade console for your money. We're not complaining.

Console yourself

Oh dear. There's nothing like a console war to cloud everyone's sense of, well, sense, is there? Isn't it good that we've now got two amazing machines – DC and PS2 – available? I'm ecstatic about the return of Sega, who I remember as being a classic gaming power, but after five years of domination, I'm also intrigued to see what Sony can come up with for PS2. The point is this: Sega have got *Soul Calibur* and *Sonic*, and PS2 will have *GT2000* and *The Bouncer*. And, as far as I'm concerned, that's a pretty good reason to be happy.

Gavin Stuart, Frockheim

Truly, your natural home is Arcade. Here, we've never been so excited about the future of games.

Say it loud

You won't believe this, but I am such a hardcore gamer, and have played *Final Fantasy 7* so much, that I know the entire script off by heart.

Aaron Colgate, Kent

That's impressive, that. But Arcade's very own Sam Richards knows all the steps when he's dancing to Britney Spears on the PS2's Stepping Selection.

Mistake heartache

I hate to sound like a sad, nagging old tosser, but while I was reading *Arcade* recently, I noticed two terrible mistakes: firstly, you seem convinced that *Sonic the Hedgehog* first appeared on the Mega Drive when, to my knowledge and everybody else's, he actually debuted on the Master System. The game was built into my machine for chuff's sake! Also, and slightly less significantly, you gave Ocean Colour Scene's latest album two stars instead of five.

Michael Atkinson, Kendal

No apologies from us because, actually you're wrong. Delving deep into our collective minds, we seem to remember Sonic being on the Mega Drive first. Though, admittedly, not everyone was quite sure. What we are sure about, though, is that Ocean Colour Scene were lucky to get two stars. Sweet.

The Videogame Magazine Arcade

Issue 19

Editorial

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Contributors

They know games. Which makes them ideal for the job of writing about them.



Andy Butcher
■ Freelance writer, layabout and part time b-boy, Andy harbours a secret ambition to play *Space Invaders* on top of Mount Everest. He says it's

because "he'll be closer when they come". Whatever that means. He's looking forward to the real-time world in *Final Fantasy 10* on PlayStation2 and spending the rest of his life there – that's until they find a way to graft the soul in for eternity.

■ **Fave game:** *Elite*



Jonathan Davies
■ Industry veteran and Arcade freelancer Jonathan has a secret passion for eating lamb. And dressing up as one – but only for

fancy dress, mind. Saucy. The PlayStation2 game Jonathan's looking forward to most is *Gran Turismo 2001*, though he suspects that they'll probably change the name to *Brum Brum Cars Excite!*

■ **Fave game:** *BMX Simulator*



Nick Jones
■ Arcade's workshy fop of a Games Editor is often found secretly drawing robots on his arm, mumbling "to the north"

and wrestling with the great Britney/Christina conundrum. When he's not thinking about shaved monkeys, he's looking forward to the quick return of big pixels to the PlayStation2, "they're our friends," he claims.

■ **Fave game:** *Super Mario World*



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■ The "Girl and Robot" animation was silky smooth.

BOX CLEVER

X-Box exists

Microsoft formally commits itself to entering the wildly competitive console fray.

At last it's official – the world's biggest and most powerful software company is launching a new games console. Microsoft unveiled its plans for a next-generation machine on 10 March and Arcade was at the UK presentation.

Still codenamed, the X-Box promises three times the graphics performance of PlayStation2 and packs an nVidia card, Intel 600Mhz processor, four game controller ports, a DVD drive, 3D sound, Internet access and a hard disk. Although Microsoft is using cutting-edge PC technology, the company stressed the machine is

aimed squarely at the console market. X-Box will have a shelf-life of five to six years, eschewing the upgrade fever of the PC industry.

At the presentation J Allard, general manager of the X-Box project, revealed a bulky X-shaped silver box – an early prototype of what will be a compact console. Allard said Microsoft's vision was "to provide the most intense, action-packed videogame experience". He then showed a series of real-time graphics demonstrations including a stunning particle-effect firework, shimmering water, a physics demo with hundreds of ping pong balls bouncing around a room and breathtaking animation of a karate kicking girl and robot

partnership, complete with dynamic lighting and shadows.

Although no games were on offer, the demo showed graphical potential capable of putting PlayStation2 to shame. Microsoft also revealed an impressive list of big name developers who had signed up for X-Box releases including Namco, Konami, Activision, EA and Acclaim. Allard was keen to stress that you can have the best technical specifications available, "but it all means nothing if you don't have amazing games".

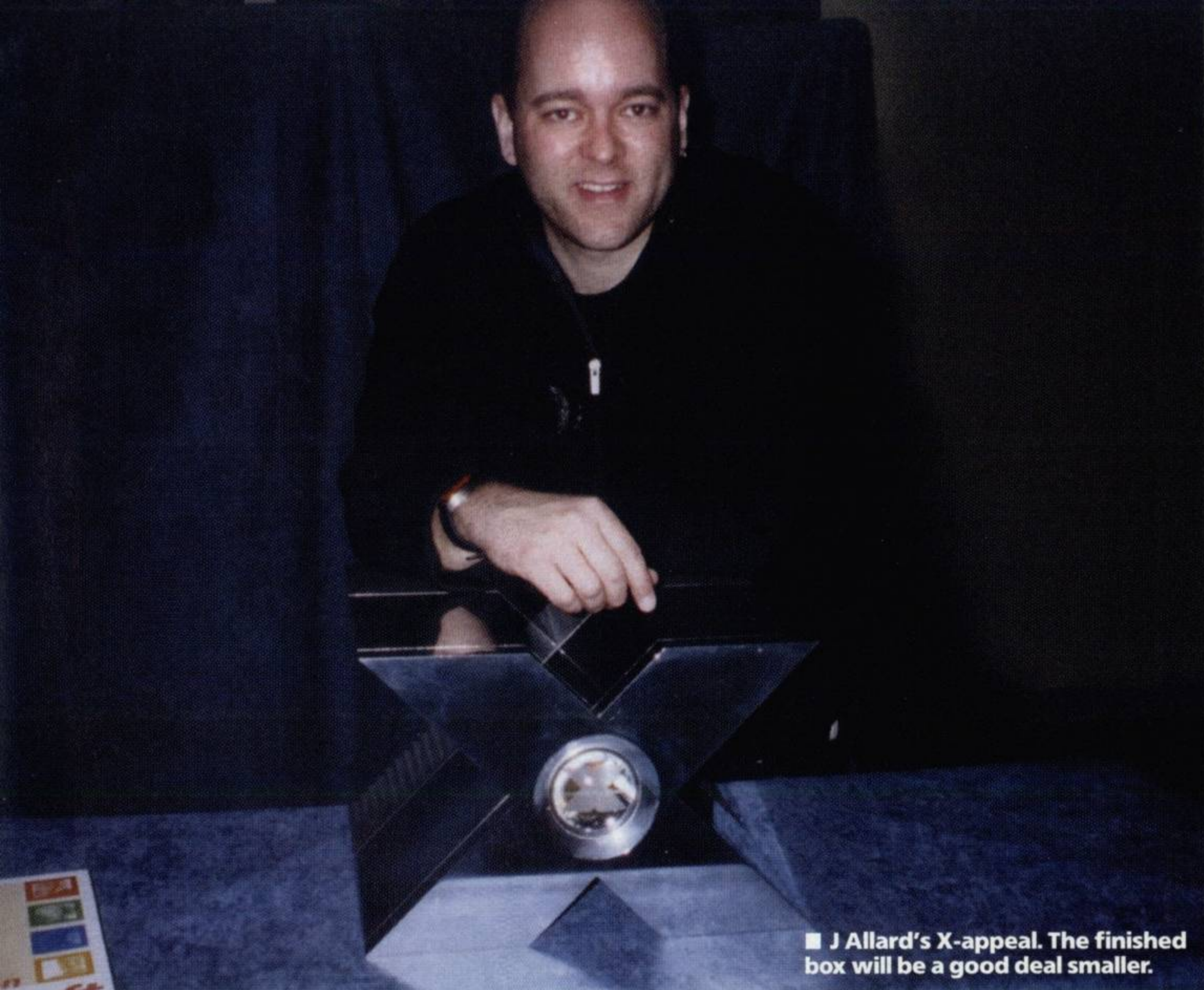
The inclusion of a hard disk could give the X-Box a definite advantage over its console rivals, but how it'll work without the inclusion of an operating system

is puzzling. Another revelation was the fact that although the graphics cards, sound chips and other components will be manufactured by third-party companies, Microsoft will build the X-Box itself. The company has made a whole range of very successful PC accessories – such as the SideWinder joystick – but has never made anything on this scale before. X-Box represents a significant shift from software to hardware and it'll be interesting

to see whether Microsoft has the discipline and organisation to successfully manufacture a console that could sell millions.

Microsoft is already planning a massive marketing campaign for the console's scheduled US release in Autumn 2001 that'll eclipse the impressive *Windows 95* launch. For further news and analysis on the state-of-play in the next-generation console wars turn to the Game On Special Report on page 16. 

"You need to have amazing games."



■ J Allard's X-appeal. The finished box will be a good deal smaller.



■ Two X-Box graphics demos: Ping Pong had impressive real-time physics; Desk Toys featured great lighting and reflections.



OUT THE BOX

X-Specs!

The technical trickery to be packed into X-Box.

Microsoft released a performance sheet at the presentation comparing the X-Box with PlayStation2. From the timing of the X-Box announcements, the choice of graphics demos (parodying the infamous PS2 "firework") and constant technical comparisons, it's pretty obvious that Microsoft is gunning for Sony.

X-Box PlayStation2

CPU	600 MHz Intel	300MHz MIPS
Graphics Processor	300MHz custom-designed X-Chip,	150MHz Sony GS developed by Microsoft and nVidia.
Total Memory	64Mb	38Mb
Polygon Performance	300 M/Sec	66 M/Sec
Full Scene Anti-alias	Yes	No
Micro Polygon Support	Yes	No
Storage Medium	4x DVD	2x DVD
	8Gb Hard disk	8Mb Memory card
	8Mb Memory card	I/O
	Game controller x4	Game controller x2
	USB	USB
Ethernet (10/100)	1394	PCMCIA
Audio Channels	64	48
3D Audio Support	Yes	No
Broadband Enabled	Yes	Future Upgrade
DVD Movie Playback	Yes	Yes
Maximum Resolution	1920x1080	1280x1024
HDTV	Yes	Limited
US Launch Date	Autumn 2001	Autumn 2000



■ PlayStation2? Pah, old news. Microsoft's X-Box is now the machine to discuss in the pub.

X-Box of games

Titles Microsoft hopes will do the business.

The best and most heartening part of the presentation was J Allard's constant exclamations that games are by far the most important aspect of the X-Box. Microsoft has a large and successful games division and although it could port games such as *Age of Empires 2*, the company stressed it is wholly committed to developing console-style titles specifically for the new machine. However, here are some games that already exist, or are in the pipeline, that Microsoft could easily port to X-Box.

Black and White



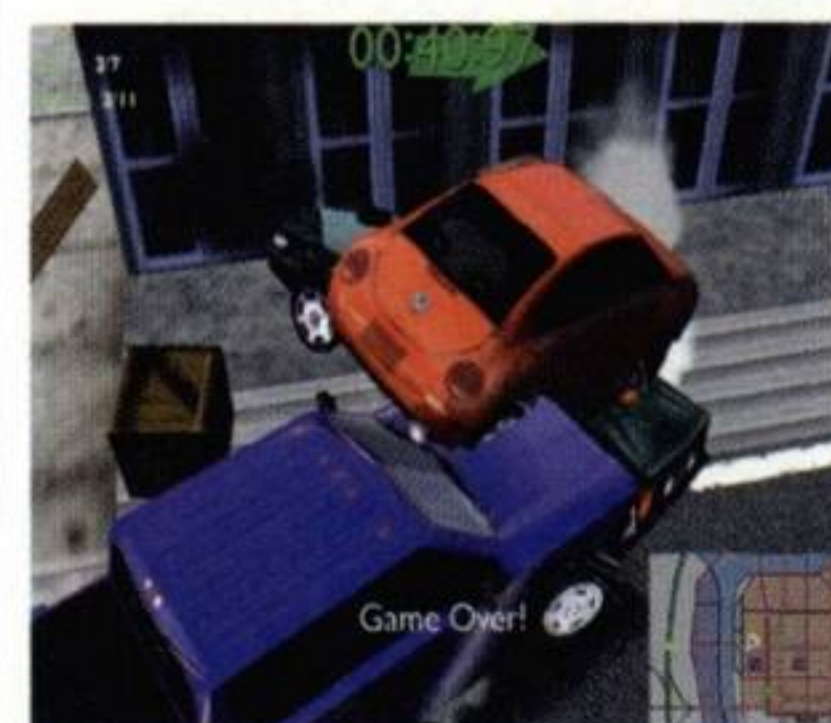
Peter Molyneux's gorgeous-looking God sim where you rule over a community of little people using scary, gigantic creatures such as lions and cows is expected to make the leap from PC to the X-Box.

Quake 3 Arena



iD's violent, bloody first-person shooter that, again, should port easily onto the next-gen console. As Microsoft has used the Direct-X system for X-Box, programmers will be able to use ready programmed third-party routines like the *Quake 3* engine to make games development easier.

Midtown Madness



Fantastic motor mayhem from Microsoft that could be quickly transferred to the X-Box. Microsoft will have to develop X-Box-only games to dispel accusations that it's just a PC in a console box.

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



■ This amazing fire sequence has some blistering effects...



■ ... as the special forces hero legs it clear of the explosion...



■ ... and then leaps out the way as it catches up with him.



■ After using infra-red sniper scopes, the soldiers get inside the carriage. Absolutely top.

NINTENDO'S MAGIC BOX

First Dolphin movie revealed

US developer Saffire shows what Dolphin will do.

After impressing everyone with a conversion of *Rainbow Six* on the N64, developer Saffire has released a jaw-dropping 60-second movie of what it thinks Nintendo's Dolphin will be capable of.

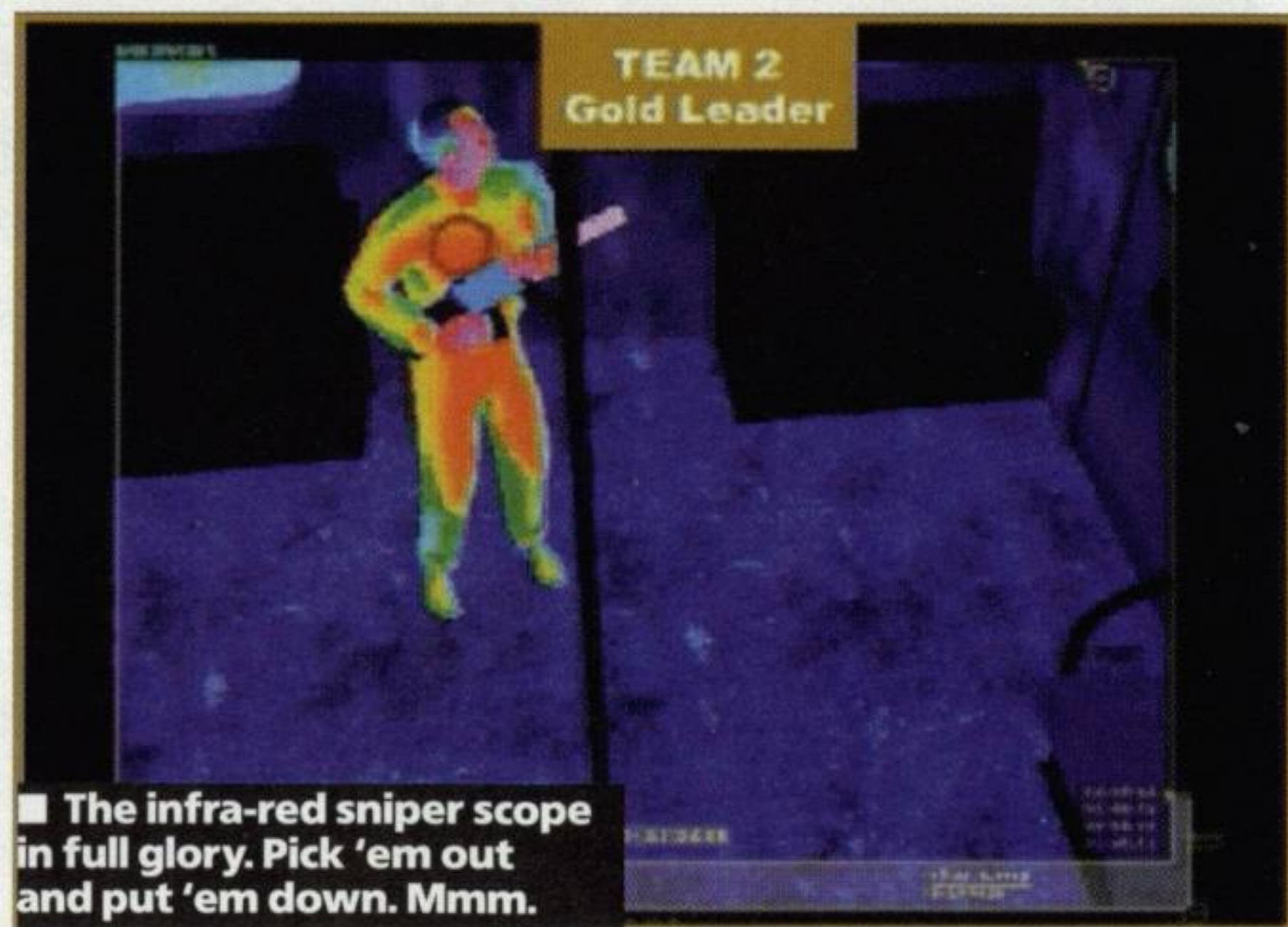
The game, running on a PC that matches the projected power of Dolphin, looked to play like a next generation *Rainbow Six*, and awesomely demonstrated the potential of Nintendo's follow-up

to the N64 with staggering real-time lighting, seamless polygons, and a wealth of graphical whizz-bangery, including reflections and fire effects. In fact, such was the quality of the in-game visuals that the switch between play and cut scenes wasn't even noticeable.

Nintendo's speak-and-die developer non-disclosure agreements obviously don't apply to Saffire (as they do to Rare, Factor 5, NSTC, Left Field and Retro Studios), which suggests that the company hasn't yet been privileged enough to see or

receive development kits from Japan. However, specifications for the machine have been made available to just about anybody who wants them, which is how Saffire managed to get together its mouth-watering demo.

Meanwhile, Dolphin will definitely not launch in the US until Easter next year, which means the UK public can expect to get their hands on Dolphin in September 2001 – interestingly, about the same time as Microsoft's X-Box is pencilled in for launch.



■ The infra-red sniper scope in full glory. Pick 'em out and put 'em down. Mmm.

INCOMING

Six games that you should already have on your shopping list.

3 months



Star Wars Episode 1: Racer

- Dreamcast
- LucasArts/Sega
- June

Hyper-fast Star Wars racer comes to Dreamcast complete with impressive graphical buff-up.



Super Magnetic Neo

- Dreamcast
- Crave
- June

Ingenious platformer with magnet-headed Neo solving puzzles via his own positive and negative charges.



Sydney 2000

- Dreamcast
 - Eidos
 - Summer
- Swish 'n' official Olympic Games tie-in with stacks of events and gorgeous visuals. Promises to give Track and Field a run.

6 months



Driver 2

- Playstation
- GT
- Autumn

Follow-up to tremendous cop-baiting 70's car chase. More cars and bigger cities, plus a whole lot of felony.



Conker's Bad Fur Day

- N64
- Rare
- October

All-new Conker adventure with – shock! – swearing, testicles and bodily fluids. And Rare used to be so nice.

1 year



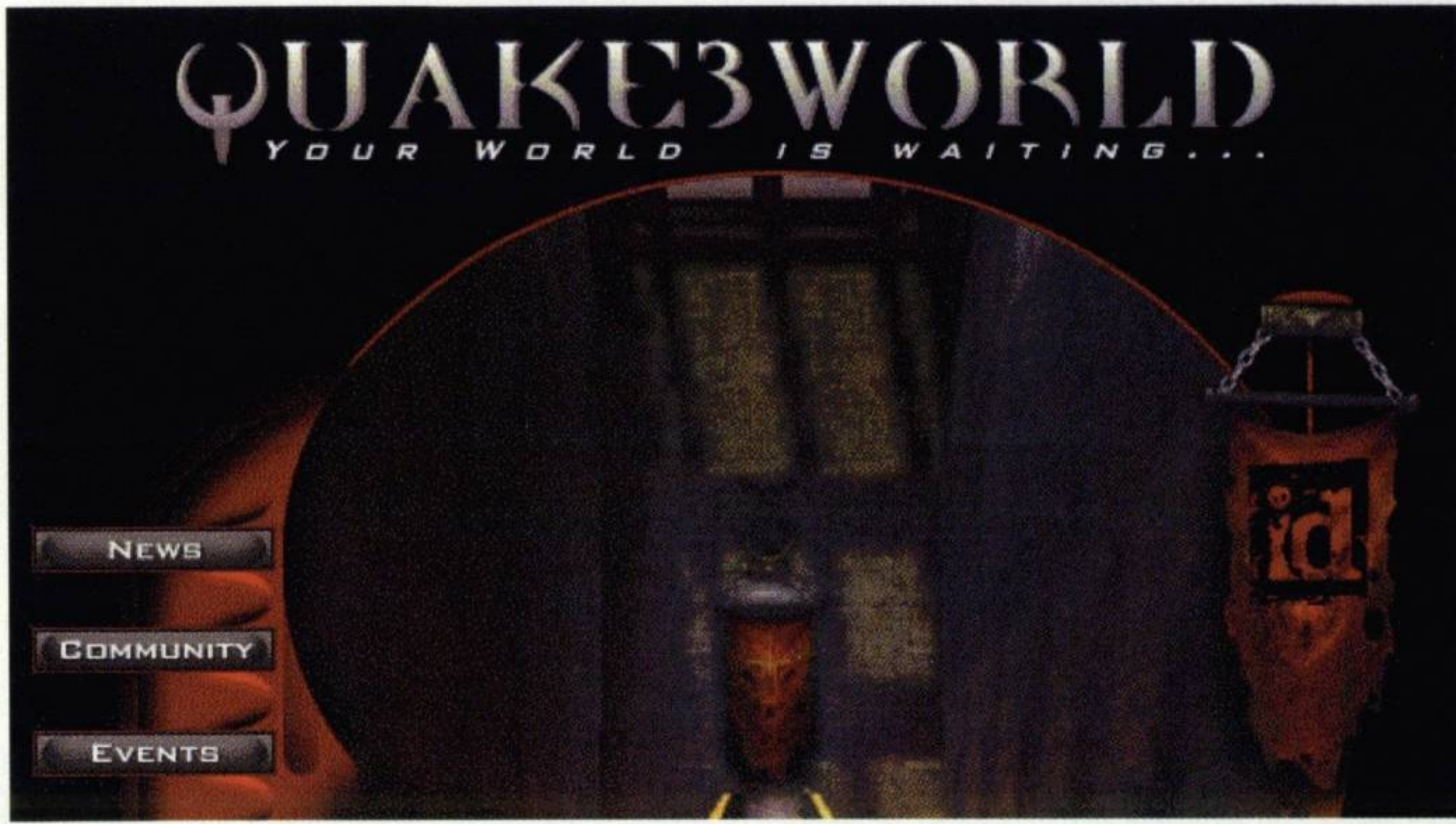
Ominusha: Warlords

- Playstation2
- Capcom
- Summer2001

Potentially staggering 3D horror, set in Japan in 1560, and scripted by Resident Evil author, Flagship.



■ **ChuChu Rocket** – the first Dreamcast game to go online.



Sam Richards' World of Games



Slay away

Television's favourite vampire slayer, Buffy, is to star in her very own adventure game on PlayStation, PC and Dreamcast. Although development has only just begun, publisher Fox is predicting a triumph of free-roaming and puzzle-solving.

The game, being put together by unknown quantity The Collective, will feature a host of locations from the show, including Sunnydale and The Bronze Nightclub, plus digitised versions of favourites, such as "good vampire" Angel. And, to add an air of authenticity, the show's creators and producers will be lending a hand throughout the project, ensuring that *Buffy*-the game looks like its TV relative.

It's good to Hawk

After successfully turning wet teenage weekends on the steps outside the local Co-op into a stunt-filled, adrenaline-packed, any-surface-will-do skateboarding extravaganza, Activision has decided to give *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* a second outing.

The sequel, pencilled in for the summer, will feature more of the same top notch olling, nollying, kickflipping and Madonna... er, ing, with an incredible 50 stunts now capable of being linked together in one long show-off fest, as well as new arenas like Love Park in Philadelphia, Marseilles, Manhattan and Skate Street, Ventura. Best of all, you'll be able to create your own skate parks, as well as your own skaters to fill them with.

Kommitment

Metal Gear Solid and *ISS* creator Konami has revealed its intention to become the biggest PlayStation2 developer on the planet, committing itself almost exclusively to Sony's new box of tricks.

Immediately on the horizon is the already announced *ISS 2000*, and that'll be followed by a new version of *Track and Field* and then a conversion of coin-ops *Gradius 4 and 5*. No mention was made of *Metal Gear Solid 2*, but that's almost certainly already in the pipeline.

SEGA GET ONLINE

Dreamnet

Dreamcast to get multi-player switch-on, at last.

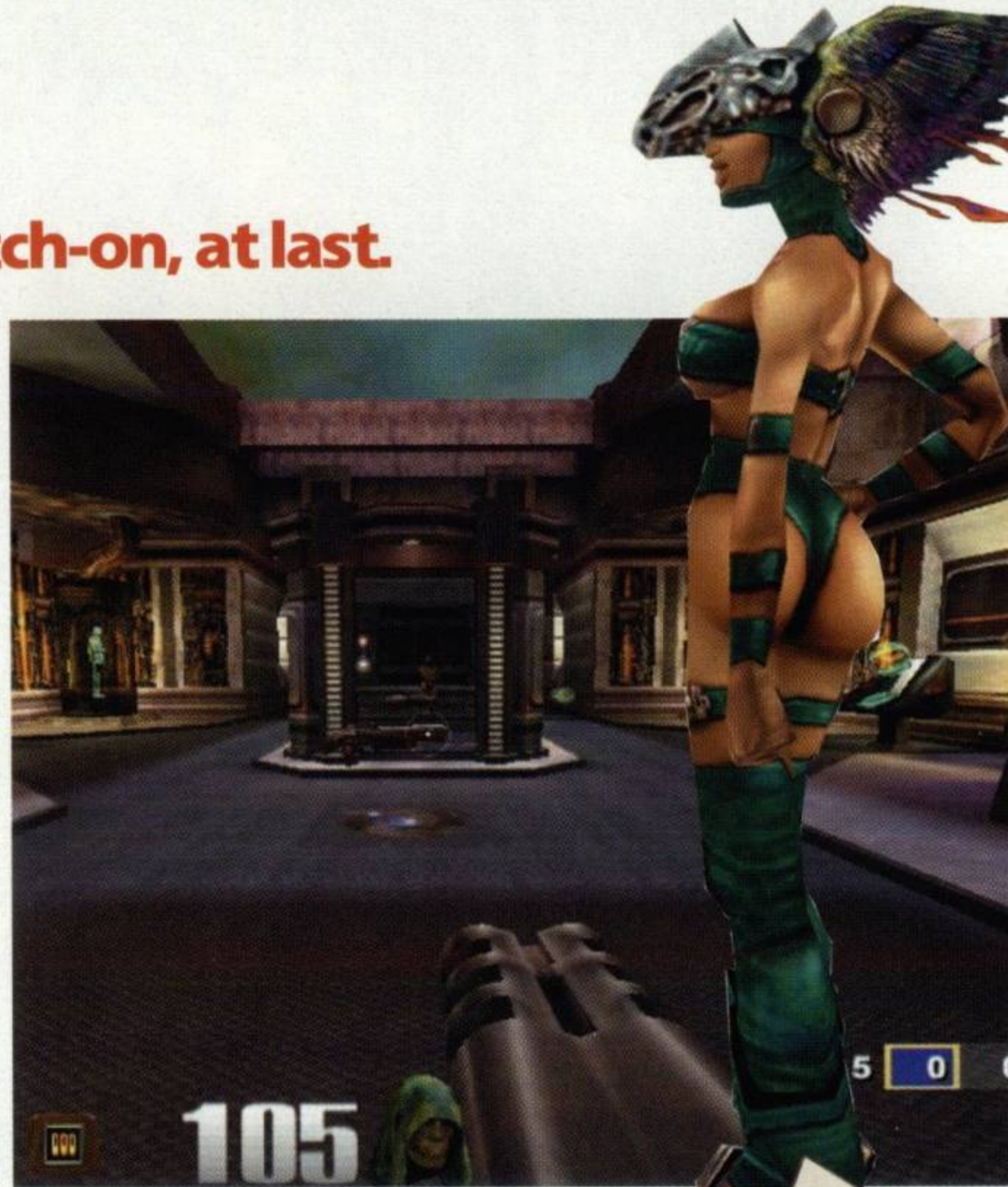
With the threat of PlayStation2 looming so large on the horizon, Sega is at long last looking to fulfil its promise of getting Dreamcast online – starting as soon as 12 May in Europe, with Sonic Team's *Chu Chu Rocket* playing guinea pig.

Details are still scarce, but a spokeswoman for Sega Europe told *Arcade*: "It's certainly the intention that you'll be able to buy *Chu Chu Rocket* on 12 May, take it home, and play with four other gamers over the Internet."

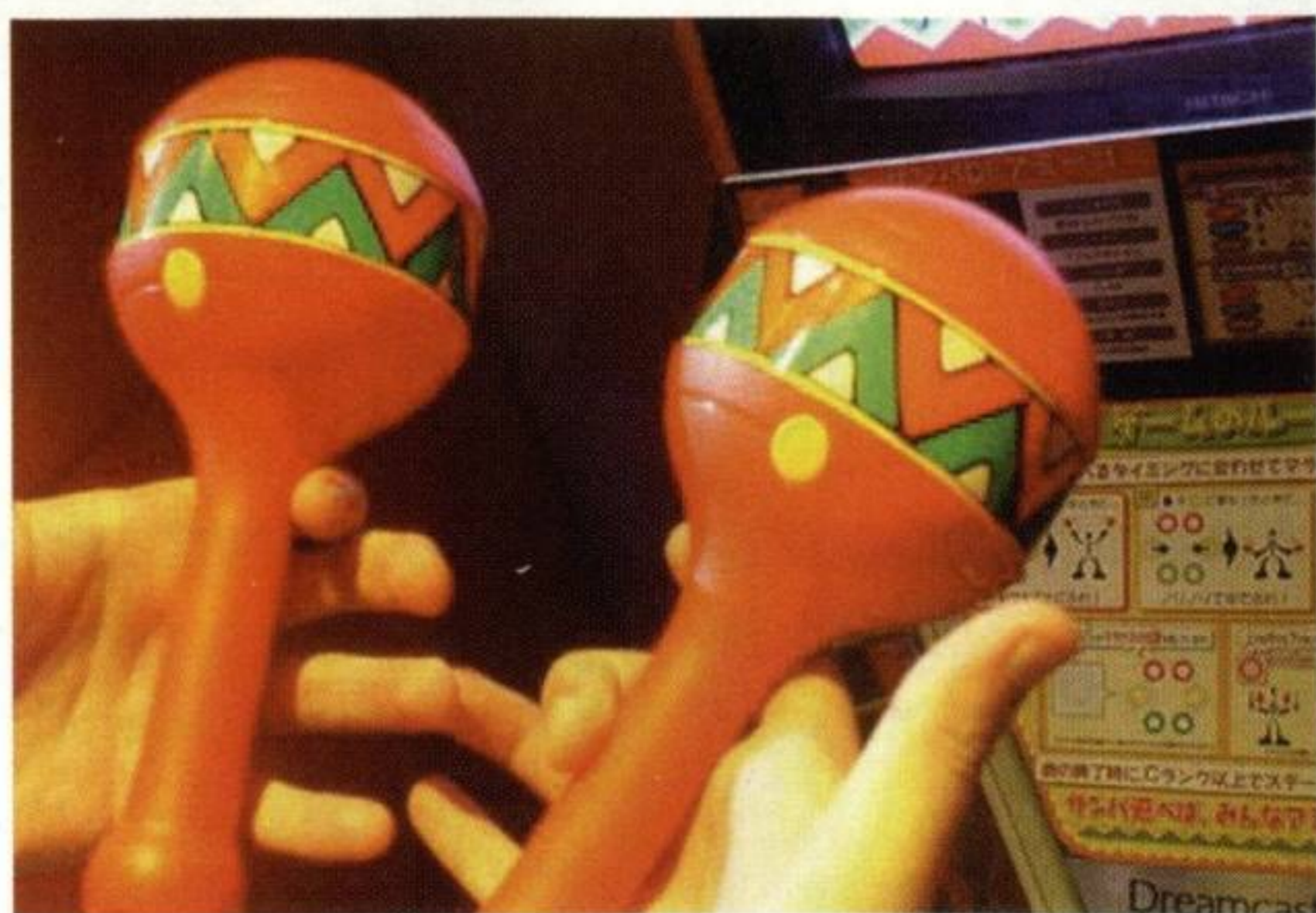
Naturally, this isn't a "confirmation" of Sega's intent to switch-on Europe, but at least goes to show the company is

now much closer to fulfilling its much-vaunted promise of taking multi-player to the masses (even if "up to six billion players" looks ambitious on a 33.3k modem).

Chu Chu Rocket won't, of course, be the only multi-player game Sega offers to networked videogame players. Also in the pipeline is a conversion of id's superb *Quake 3 Arena*, which will – brilliantly – support Internet play against both PC and Mac owners, and *Phantasy Star Online*, the latest in Sega's own long-running series of RPGs. Additionally, *Colin McRae*-creator, Codemasters, has expressed an interest in Dreamcast online, which might suggest it's considering an outing for one of its long-running series, such as *Micro Machines*.



SONIC TEAM RETURN



Samba rhythm

Conversion of bum-wiggling coin-op is "on".

■ After months of speculation, Sega has confirmed that Naomi's *Samba De Amigo* – a maraca-shaking, groove-making, arcade dancing-fest of a game – is making its way to Dreamcast.

The game, slated to appear in Japan this summer, is part Ricky Martin, part *PaRappa the Rapper*, part *Stepping Selection* – and all dancing, with maraca controllers and a base mat to pick up your moves, though these are sold separately.

A bit like the Britney-filled *Stepping Selection*, the idea of the game is to time your moves with instructions on screen, but – and here's the difference – it's your maracas that need to be cha-cha'd rhythmically rather than your feet. The result is a brilliant samba disco game, especially in two-player, where you and a friend have to co-ordinate your 'raca-shaking.

Expect a version to appear on these shores around Christmas.

GEEK FEST



Multi-player mayhem

Hundreds of gamers descend on Swindon for a weekend of uninterrupted deathmatch action.

■ Swindon Town FC conference centre was the unlikely venue for I-Series 3 – the biggest multi-player gaming event the UK has ever seen.

On 24 March 460 gamers came from every corner of the country – and even Europe – clutching their beloved PCs, ready to take part in a full-on weekend of deathmatch action organised by Multiplay UK and sponsored by online-gaming entrepreneurs Gameplay.com.

Gamers paid £40 to take part in a series of tournaments covering all the major titles including *Quake 2*, *Quake 3 Arena*, *Unreal Tournament*, *Half-Life*

and *Tribes* for prizes including PC speaker systems and graphics cards.

Games addicts played for the whole weekend, with some dedicated players rooted to their screens for more than 24 hours non-stop. Luckily for everyone involved, showers had been organised nearby at the reasonable fee of £1 per scrub.

Multiplay UK's next event is a 500-gamer competition on the weekend of 9 June at the same venue and the group is planning to smash all previous figures with an unprecedented 1,000 gamer deathmatch-fest in November.



"Gagging for it!"

A quick butcher's at some quality merchandise coming your way.

Zelda: Majora's Mask

Eagerly awaited Nintendo magic – now in hi-res.



Saliva-inducing follow-up to *The World's Greatest Game*.

Diamond geezer

■ As in *Zelda 64*, rupees are Hyrule's currency of choice. Collect enough and you can start shopping around for elusive weaponry like the Slingshot.

Majora's Mask

■ Format: **N64**
 ■ Developer: **Nintendo**
 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
 ■ Release date: **December**

Time constraints

■ This represents the amount of time you have to finish your quest. It fills up as you go and, if you're too slow, the moon'll crash into Hyrule. Ouch.

Mask of change

■ Majora's Mask, as its title suggests, concerns Link's ability to use masks to take on different personalities. Here, he transforms into a bearded Goron.

Visual treat

■ This second N64 *Zelda* will use the Expansion Pak for a touch of hi-res class. The results are stunning, particularly in some of the outdoor areas.

Navi-gation

■ Because Majora takes place before *Ocarina*, friendly fairy Navi can't possibly accompany Link on his quest. So, instead, he has twin fairies, Bell and Mondo.

Now you C me

■ Once again, the C-buttons will be used to switch between weaponry and, now, masks. You'll be able to play the ocarina to skip between places.

N64 BOND GAME

World beater

The World is Not Enough comes to N64.

Using an advanced version of the engine it created for head-removing shoot-'em-up, *Duke Nukem: Zero Hour*, developer Eurocom has finally confirmed that it is working on an N64-exclusive version of sought-after Bond licence, *The World is Not Enough*.

According to the UK coders, the game runs as smoothly and

quickly as *Perfect Dark*, and judging by some impressive movie footage its claims aren't unfounded. Rare probably won't be pleased at *TWINE*'s "borrowing" of much of *GoldenEye*'s basics, but, then, Eurocom hasn't exactly spent the last 18 months resting on its laurels. *TWINE* boasts a host of snazzy ideas, including completely interactive environments and some of the graphical swishes are incredible: floor reflections, water

effects and impressive enemy death scenes all abound as Bond makes his way through 18 levels, all based on the film's locations.

Certainly, *TWINE* N64 looks more impressive than its PlayStation counterpart, though it remains to be seen whether it can compete with the PS2 and PC versions which will use the *Quake 3* engine. However, one thing's for sure: come October, N64 owners will have a serious contender to *GoldenEye*'s crown.



■ The stunning new world of James Bond.



■ Two of the four designs drawn up by Nintendo UK. Will GBA look something like this?

HANDHELDS

Advance word

Game Boy sequel unveiling.

Although it won't be launched in the US and Europe until well into 2001, May represents a crucial stage in the development of Game Boy Advance. For the first time Nintendo is ready to talk about its handheld.

According to reports from its Redwood HQ, Nintendo of America is in the process of arranging a conference in Seattle to talk about the possibilities of its 32-bit monster. The machine, still on for an August release in Japan, has seen even less publicity than Nintendo normally reserves for a new piece of hardware, but the conference will offer the opportunity to see what GBA can do and whether, as

expected, it can handle perfect SNES conversions, such as *Yoshi's Island* and *Mario World*. Certainly, if reports are to be believed, Game Boy Advance will have the power of a SNES with two SuperFX chips – which might mean the return of the fabled *StarFox 2*, a game abandoned at the end of the SNES's life due to lack of processing punch.

Interestingly, to coincide with the conference, Nintendo's UK design agency has come up with four possibilities as to how GBA might look. *Arcade* liked two of them, especially the transparent alternative, though none seemed to adhere to Miyamoto's own confirmation that Game Boy Advance would be like a standard Game Boy flipped on its side.



Orient excess

A look at what's going on over in Japan.



A new type of game



■ *Typing Of The Dead*: the typing pool gets competitive.

■ *Arcade* has had its eye on Sega's *The Typing Of The Dead* for some time. The game has just been released in Japan on Dreamcast, after some considerable success in arcades. The concept takes an existing game idea and then makes a truly bizarre leap of the imagination. Basically, *The Typing Of The Dead*

is the same as *The House Of The Dead*, but your weapon is not a lightgun, it's a keyboard. Instead of shooting the filthy undead menace, zombies are wasted when you rapidly tap out the word which appears on the screen (the recent Dreamcast release came packaged with an official Sega keyboard). This

makes *The Typing Of The Dead* probably the only zombie game at which scatty secretaries will have an instant advantage. At least until they invent a version of *Resident Evil* where you can fatally wound Nemesis by putting phonecalls through to the wrong department. *Arcade* can't wait.

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Words by | **Jamie Sefton & Rich Pelley**

■ ILLUSTRATION: **MATT KENYON**

The Domination Game

As the state of play in the console wars becomes clearer, Arcade reviews the situation.

The next-generation console punch-up is in full swing, with Sega's impudent Dreamcast about to be joined in the ring by Sony's much-hyped PlayStation2.

Sony may actually become the first company to dominate the home videogames market for two generations of consoles – an extraordinary feat considering the company has only very recently entered this highly-competitive industry. “There is no doubt,” says Amy Curtin, PR Manager at Take 2 Europe, “that if Sony get the right software line-up and can fully exploit the Internet capabilities, it can more than match the success of the little grey box.”

Videogame history is littered with the winners and losers of

previous format battles. In the early '90s, Sega's Mega Drive was the console king in the UK, with the invincible *Sonic the Hedgehog* backed up with an indescribably cool (for the time) “to be this good takes ages” publicity campaign. Panasonic's 3DO and Atari's Jaguar were unleashed in 1994, but were short lived because of poor software support. The following year saw Sony shake up the market with the all-conquering 32-bit PlayStation – a project that had originally been a joint effort with Nintendo. The big N finally got around to delivering the N64 the following year, but despite the genius of *Super Mario 64*, it failed to surf the zeitgeist in the same way as the PlayStation.

Which brings things up to date, and to the PlayStation2 and

the current slug-fest between the four major players: Sony, Sega, Microsoft and Nintendo. Part of Sony's strategy is to use the PlayStation2 as a digital Trojan horse; a conduit for the Internet, DVD movies and videogames, making a complete home entertainment system. The fact the company has ensured the PlayStation2 is backwards compatible, allowing the use of PlayStation games and the majority of old accessories, demonstrates Sony's burgeoning

ambition to hold on to and further increase its market share. Nintendo has said it isn't interested in becoming an integrated home entertainment company, insisting that the Dolphin will be a dedicated videogames machine, with Internet access but possibly no DVD movie playback. Because of the success of the Game Boy and the guaranteed sales of the forthcoming 32-bit Advance, Nintendo can afford to continue to mine its niche market of

“Sony... can more than match the success of the little grey box.”

innovative, mould-breaking games from the fevered imaginations of Rare and Shigeru Miyamoto.

The main threat to Sony doing the double is a two-pronged attack from Sega and the mighty Bill Gates. At the recent launch of the X-Box, Microsoft made it clear it was going for Sony's jugular with a graphics demo parody of the PlayStation2 "firework" and promotional material comparing the technical specifications of both consoles. J Allard, the X-Box's "Minister of Fun", stressed that "in the living room, entertainment is king", and went on to say how Microsoft's vision was "to provide the most intense, action-packed gaming experience".

Sega meanwhile, in a remarkable all-or-nothing gamble announced on 3 April that in the USA the Dreamcast will be available for free. From 1 August 2000, if American users sign up for the company's own Internet Service Provider (at \$21.95 per month), they'll get a free Dreamcast or a rebate of \$200 if they already own a machine. Sega claims that its ISP will be the best service available for all forms of Internet gaming – including PCs – and a host of online games have been confirmed, including *Quake 3 Arena* and *HalfLife*. Sega is wholly aware that this battle for the living room could spell triumph or disaster for any company that gets muscled out. This deal throws down the gauntlet to the other companies, and may eventually lead to a change in the way you buy games consoles.

But is this constant console war good for gamers? Well, it'd be a tragedy if one company, such as Sony, dominated the market to such an extent that it stifled creativity and individuality. A glimpse at PlayStation2's high-profile releases backs that up: sequels like *Tekken Tag Tournament* and *Ridge Racer 5*. It seems that competition is a good thing for gamers, if maybe not for companies like Microsoft – who recently lost its *Windows* anti-trust monopoly case in the US.

Whatever the innovations and amazing future technology bring to the consoles, games should remain the focus of all the companies involved. "I think once PlayStation2, Dolphin and X-Box are out there, people will realise it's gameplay that counts," says Matthew Brooks, a programmer at Spiralhouse who worked on Infogrames' *Silver*. "Get a lot of good developers making really good games for your console and the specs start fading into the background."

KNOW YOUR HISTORY

Consoles through the ages

The games machines that you have loved and – in many cases – lost to market forces.

Since the birth of the videogame console, no company has managed to monopolise the market over two

generations of machine. All eyes may be on Sony with the release of the PlayStation2, but – following this

form – could the PlayStation2 actually fail? Arcade looks to the past to get more of a handle on the future.

■ The early years ■ Atari Vs The World ■ Winner: Atari

■ The first home console released – the Atari VCS in 1976 – which ruled supreme. Numerous competitors sprung up, including the Colecovision, Vectrex and MPV1000, but none managed to snatch the Atari's crown.



■ The rubber-key years ■ Sinclair Vs Commodore Vs Amstrad ■ Winner: Sinclair

■ The 8-bit home computer market was the level at which many current UK gamers entered videogames. In spite of looking like a beer mat, the ZX Spectrum 48 and 128K far outsold the Amstrad CPCs, and still managed to pip the Commodore 16 & 64 to the post.



■ The early consoles ■ Sega Vs Nintendo ■ Winner: no score draw

■ Although the Nintendo NES had done fabulously well in Japan and in the US, in the UK, where home computers were all the rage, interest in consoles was small. Both the Nintendo NES and Sega Master System sold, but in minimal quantities.



■ The proper-keyboard years ■ Commodore Vs Atari ■ Winner: Commodore

■ To begin with, the choice between Atari ST and Commodore Amiga was like the initial choice between Betamax and VHS – with critics favouring the underdog. But the Amiga soon ran the ST into the ground, and Atari never quite found its feet again.



■ The 16-bit consoles ■ Sega Vs Nintendo ■ Winner: Sega

■ The Sega Mega Drive was the first console to have a huge impact in the UK, with a mass following that was nurtured into a cult following by Sega's publicity. The Nintendo SNES had a longer lifespan but, in the UK, never managed to loosen Sega's stranglehold on the market.



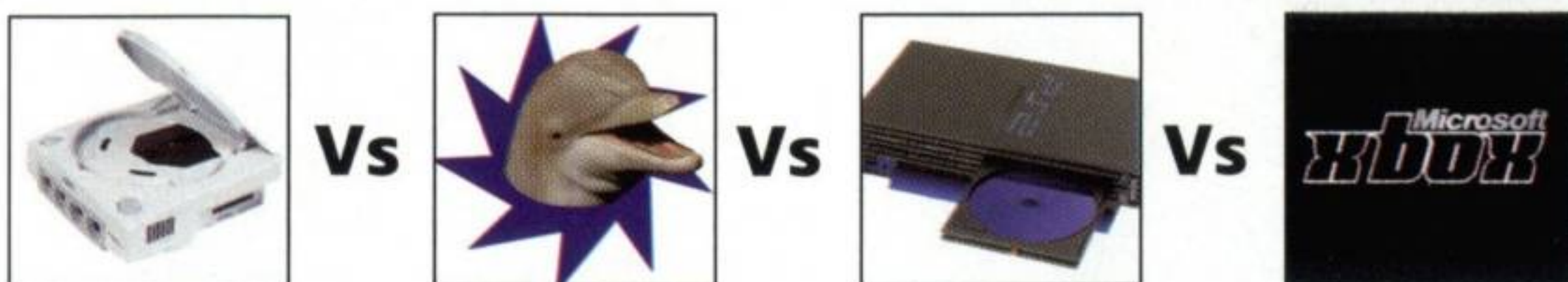
■ The current crop ■ Sega Vs Nintendo Vs Sony ■ Winner: Sony

■ Despite the success of the Mega Drive, the Saturn bombed in the UK, eclipsed by the new boy in town: the Sony PlayStation. The PlayStation has sold well ever since, redefining the place of videogames in youth culture. In spite of a brave effort, the N64 never caught up.



■ The future ■ Sega Vs Nintendo Vs Sony Vs Microsoft

■ Sega has already rediscovered itself with the hugely successful Dreamcast. The Sony PlayStation2 is out at the end of the year in the UK, but can Sony hold on to its crown? Will the Nintendo Dolphin or Microsoft X-Box be the one to watch? Only time will tell.



And elsewhere:

■ The pattern has been different in the US and Japan. With early home computers making less of an impact than in the UK, Nintendo held the early market share with the NES, originally released in Japan in 1983.

The SNES outsold the Mega Drive in Japan and the States, but then, oddly, the Saturn still outsells the N64 in Japan. Of course, Sony has had little to worry about, leading the world market since the 1995 release

of the PlayStation. Except for Nintendo and its Game Boy, which still outsells the PlayStation in the UK and around the world, making the Game Boy the most successful games machine of all time.

GAME ON

COMING SOON



When it comes to spotting which up-and-coming videogame contenders you should be keeping your eye on, it's important to know a bit about their early form, who's guiding them, how their training is shaping up, that sort of thing. As it happens, *Arcade*, is the best talent spotter in town and is more than happy to give you a sly nod in the right direction.

■ (Left) Tanks, not unnaturally, will be a bit troublesome.

■ All gun noises will be sampled from their real-life counterparts.



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JUNE

Format: **PC** | Developer: **Innerloop Studios** | Publisher: **Eidos** | Players: **1-12** | On sale in UK: **June**

PROJECT IGI

First-person shooter with a feeling of freedom and a sense of style.

The "bad in real life/good in game" dichotomy is one that never ceases to amaze. Clearly, while a nuclear exchange leading to a catastrophic global collapse of the industrial-economic base and a reduction of civilisation to a *Mad Max*-esque every-man-for-himself nightmare would generally be a bad thing, in a game – as example after example has shown – it's excellent.

And a similar real-bad/game-good scenario applies to Innerloop Studios' planned June release, *Project IGI*. In this case it's the idea that governments actually send single,

highly trained agents on deniable blacker-than-black operations of terrorism and assassination that will take centre stage; behaviour that all good citizens would no doubt condemn, but which makes for an ideal basis for a mighty first-person shooter.

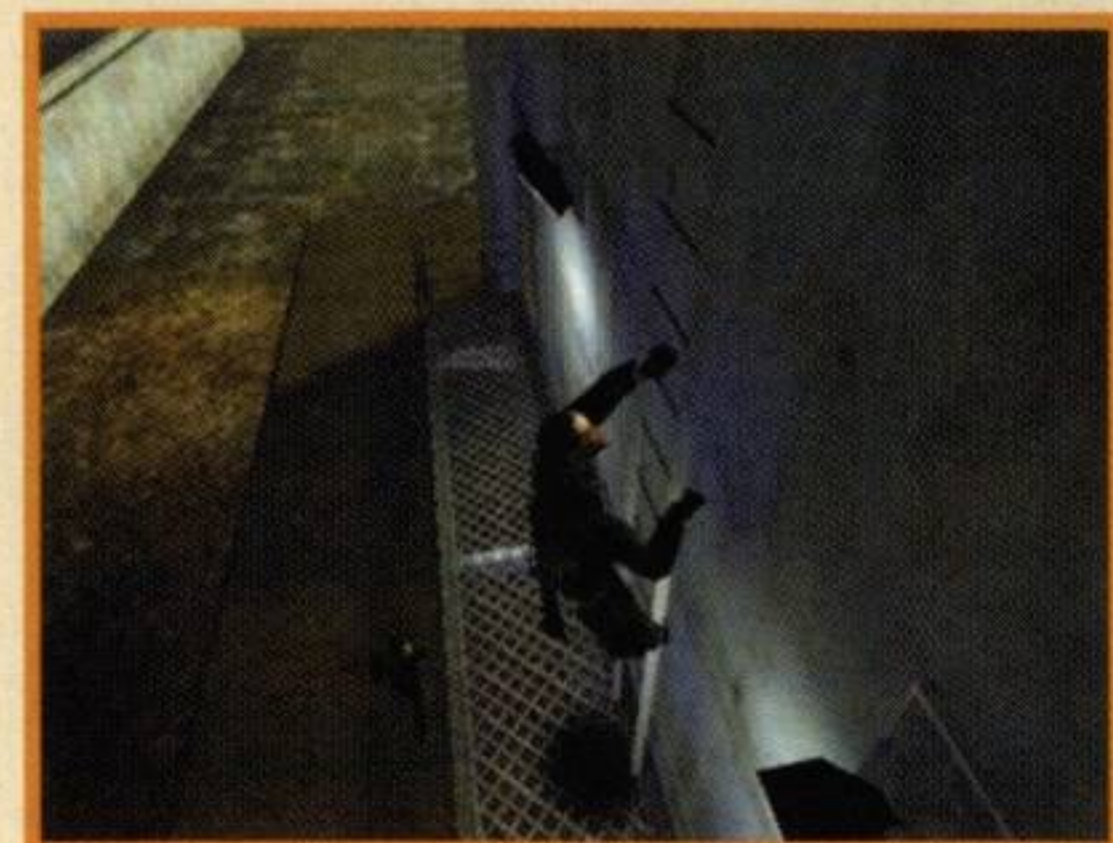
Following the *Metal Gear Solid* and *Hidden and Dangerous* trend for an increased amount of general sneakiness, in *Project IGI* avoiding conflict will play at least as significant a part as coming out on top in a desperate running battle with massed bodies of guards.

The expansive panoramas of the levels *Arcade* has seen focus on a single, highly developed location, such as a military base. Your mission, whether or not you choose to accept it, will be to work out a way you can

infiltrate the structure and still be able to get the hell out of there alive.

The most striking thing about each level is how much head scratching you will have to do before diving into the fray. Rather than presenting an oh-so-passé linear mission, you'll have the freedom to plan your route whichever way you choose. For example, you may opt to use your binoculars to survey the layout of the base, noting the position and route of guards and the location of defence systems. Alternatively, providing the enemy hasn't jammed it, you'll be able to use an orbital spy-in-the-sky satellite to get an overview of the situation. *Project IGI* will also come with a zooming scope function – standard issue for the first-person shooters of the





■ (Above) Sunbathing won't save him now.

■ (Right) Blondes have more guns.



■ (Right) Time-bars display how long tasks will take.



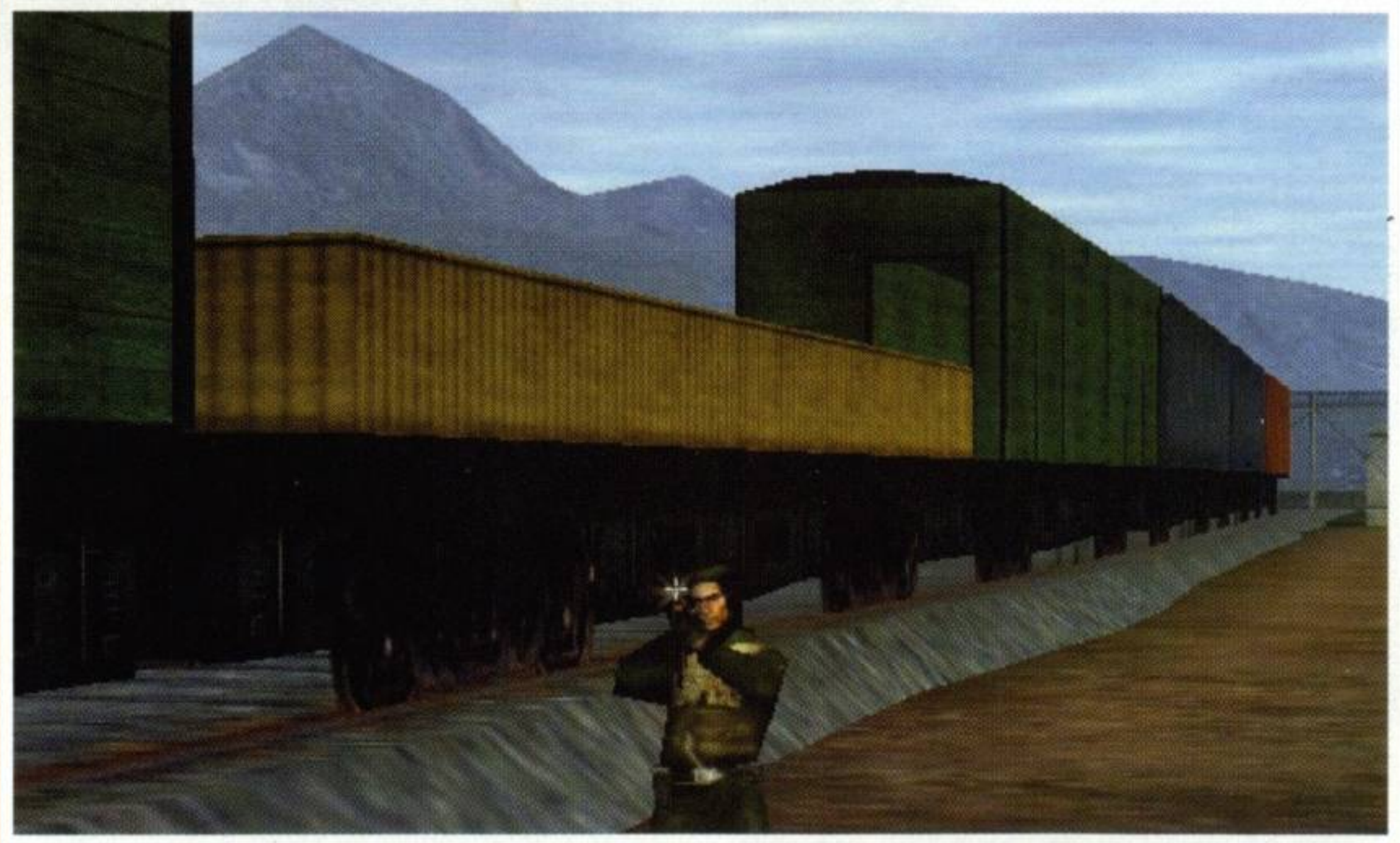
■ (Right) The not-so subtle approach.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Train in vain

The locomotive chase has been a long-lusted after moment in videogaming, with *Soldier of Fortune* and *Unreal Tournament* both giving it brave shots. But their efforts look like a ride aboard Thomas The Tank Engine compared to shenanigans you will get up to on the iron beast in *Project IGI*.

Since the terrain mapped in each level will be so large, the ride on the top of the train will be rendered disturbingly realistic – but you'll still be more than half tempted to stop and admire the correctly modelled bends, bridges and hills as you speed towards possible doom.



of a *Where Eagles Dare*-style cable-car battle, which will see you leap dangerously between ascending and descending carriages. Obviously, if *Project IGI* has anything, it's a real sense of flair.

So... what does that leave you with? *GoldenEye*-style realism. *Thief: The Metal Age* devotion to stealth. The sweeping set

of *Hidden and Dangerous*. And that's to overlook the *Metal Gear Solid* grandiose melodrama which *Project IGI* is happy to call a plot. Suffice to say, if *Project IGI* manages to be even a fraction as good as its inspirations, it'll infiltrate and hold the hearts of game fanatics everywhere this summer.



moment. But no matter how thorough your preparations, Mr Shit will become acquainted with Ms Fan sooner or later. The initial threats you'll encounter will be the guards, who – the developer promises – will have computer-powered minds to rival those of the genius-level *Half-Life* marines. Don't be surprised if you find your foes performing John Woo-style sideways rolls as they attempt to take cover.

Mind you, even taking cover won't be such a simple thing in *Project IGI*, as the penetrative power of the bullets will be accurately modelled. This is to say that if you see one of your foes hiding behind a thin wooden wall, a slug from your automatic rifle will slice through the improvised protection, killing your opponent and creating lots of handy matchwood. Equally, your hiding in a tiny shack won't be much help if three helicopters are spraying it with depleted uranium rounds.

Oh yes – helicopters. As well as personnel, your opponents will be fully

equipped with a number of vehicles, including tanks and the aforementioned choppers. Obviously if the heavy mob turns up, things will have gone badly wrong. On some missions, being spotted by the bases' cameras, in a manner similar to *System Shock 2*, will lead to these mechanical monsters being dispatched to assist the troops against your assault. The sight of a trio of gunships cresting over the horizon will be sure to fill even the heartiest soul full of creeping dread. And most impressively, things really will crest the horizon. Rather than, as is usual, having an artificially limited area, each level map will stretch 28 kilometres into the distance.

Sadly, while your super-spy won't be able to commandeer any vehicles, he will be able to acquire their weapons. This will be used in some of the many set pieces in the game, momentarily turning *Project IGI* into an upmarket *Operation Wolf* clone. Similarly memorable moments are promised, including the delicious prospect

GAME ON

COMING SOON



■ Armed with an irresponsible quantity of plastic explosive, your task is to burn those 'bots.



■ (Above) Stacking eight bombs together causes quite a chain reaction.



■ (Left) In the style of classic coin-op gaming you face a boss robot at the end of each mission.

■ You can lock on to targets from distance.



JUNE

Format: PlayStation | Developer: Studio 3 | Publisher: Bandai/Studio 3 | Players: 1-2 | On sale in UK: June

SILENT BOMBER

Light the fuse, stand well back and enjoy the fireworks.

Don't let the word "silent" confuse you. This game is far from quiet. In fact, it's going to be one of the loudest, most frantic videogame experiences in ages. Your speakers will rattle to the sound of explosions and the screen will be constantly ablaze.

Silent Bomber will be split into missions where the arenas are packed with a variety of enemy robot filth who must all be tackled differently, but your goal will almost always be the same: destroy everything.

While many recent videogame adventures have slavishly incorporated realistic elements, sometimes to the

detriment of player enjoyment, *Silent Bomber* will concentrate on simple, unrefined fun, rediscovering the feel of classic arcade gaming where the brief is: if it moves, blast it. This is achieved not by shooting, but by planting bombs on or around enemy machines, retreating a safe distance and letting them rip. You'll be Jutah, a man who can store whole arsenals of explosives up his voluminous sleeves. He's under attack from all sides, so you'll have to keep moving – bombing as you go.

Although the promotion of indiscriminate destruction may appear simplistic, progressive missions will require the development of tactical nous, particularly when facing powerful bosses. At first they'll seem indestructible, but they

all have a weak spot which requires strategic targeting. You'll be able to acquire different explosives, including the invaluable paralysis bomb, and discover weapon or shield upgrades by destroying the scenery.

The levels have been cleverly and stylishly designed. The retro-futuristic environment is familiar territory, populated by giant crab-like mechanoids wielding oversized lasers which fire deadly purple rays. You'll be treated to an amusing *Battle Of The Planets*-style storyline in the cut scenes between levels, but this won't distract from the main action.

The two-player mode looks only to be an aside from the main action. It will enable you to play as various enemy vehicles from missions you've completed. With two of

BEST BIT SO FAR

Destroy everything!

At the beginning of the game, a full motion video sequence shows your hero, Jutah, wandering around an enemy stronghold he's just razed. To his horror, there are civilians among the casualties. The shadowy voice of his superior is unrelenting: "Burn everything to the ground. That's an order." There's no pussyfooting around, no missions to rescue casualties or protect materials, just the constant exhortation to "destroy everything!" *Arcade* likes its action.



you slapping bombs at each other in a confined space it could be fun for a few minutes, but won't be able to compete with the variety of the single-player game.

Silent Bomber has somehow managed to reach the preview stage largely unheralded. It has been designed jointly by Bandai and Studio 3, the latter being a company which plans to bring many more of its own Japanese-developed games to the UK for both PlayStation and PlayStation2. If any of them display as much potential as *Silent Bomber*, you're in for an explosive time.





■ Licensed cars come as standard.

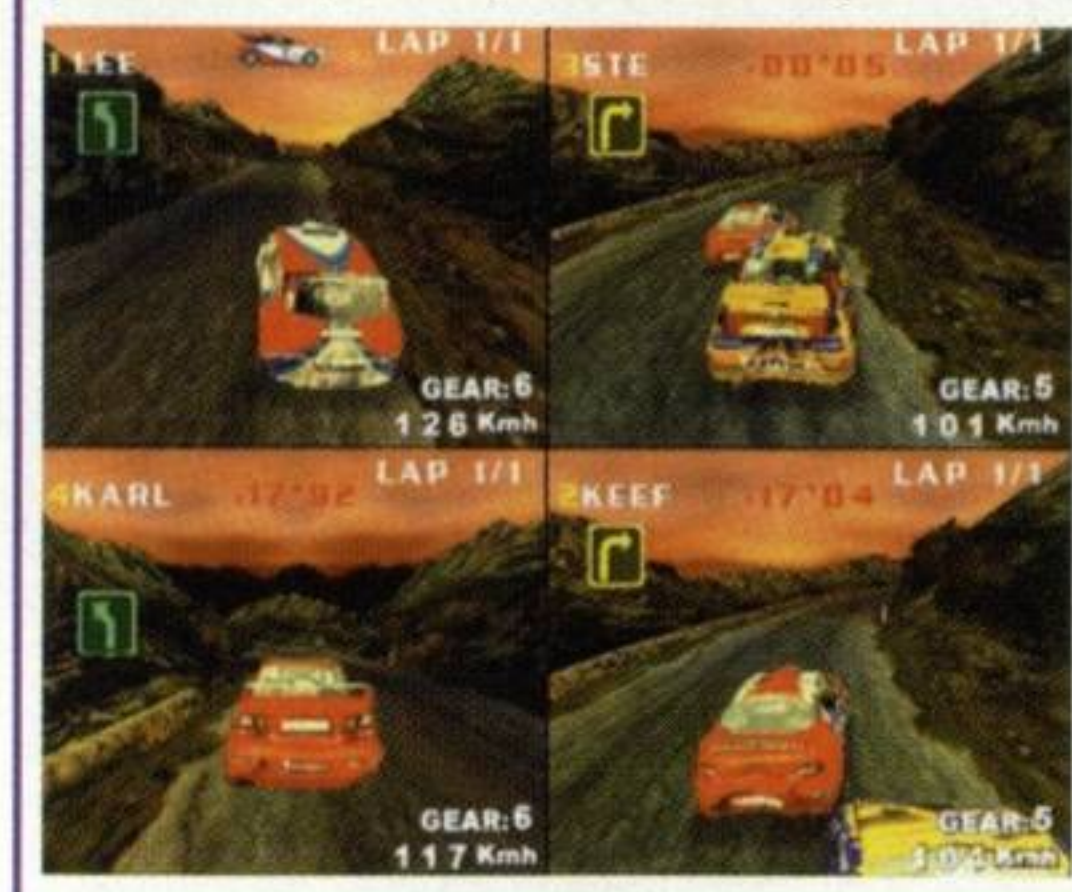


■ (Above) The in-car view gives a superbly frantic sensation of speed



BEST BIT SO FAR Four-player madness

V-Rally Expert Edition's Arcade and Trophy modes allow up to four of you to go head-to-head to become rally champion. When you consider the tracks are full of trees, rocks, hoardings and other such obstacles it becomes a recipe for a cheating, ramming and blocking disaster, which is always a bonus. Chances are you'll never speak to your "friends" again.



26 MAY

Format: **Dreamcast** | Developer: **Eden Studios** | Publisher: **Infogrames**
Players: **1-4** | On sale in UK: **26 May**

V-RALLY EXPERT

Don helmet, rev engine, it's rally time.

After the disappointing *Sega Rally 2* Dreamcast is still waiting for a top class rally racer. It's widely accepted that *Colin McRae Rally 2* will roar onto the console soon, despite Codemasters' silence, but the first true offroader will be *V-Rally 2*.

As well as the inexplicable title change to *V-Rally Expert Edition*, the game has undergone a few other changes from its PlayStation and PC days. The Dreamcast version will be the best-looking *V-Rally* game ever; even outdoing the PC with the loveliness of its high-res vehicles. The handling has been made slightly looser

and the arcade-style controls will allow for fast and frenetic rally action.

One thing that hasn't changed is the generous selection of game options. You'll get the basic Time Trial race against the clock; an Arcade mode with four cars racing on 18 tracks; and an in-depth *V-Rally* Trophy challenge where you and three others race over 36 courses to lift the coveted cup. The best option will match *McRae* by using the World Rally Championship format.

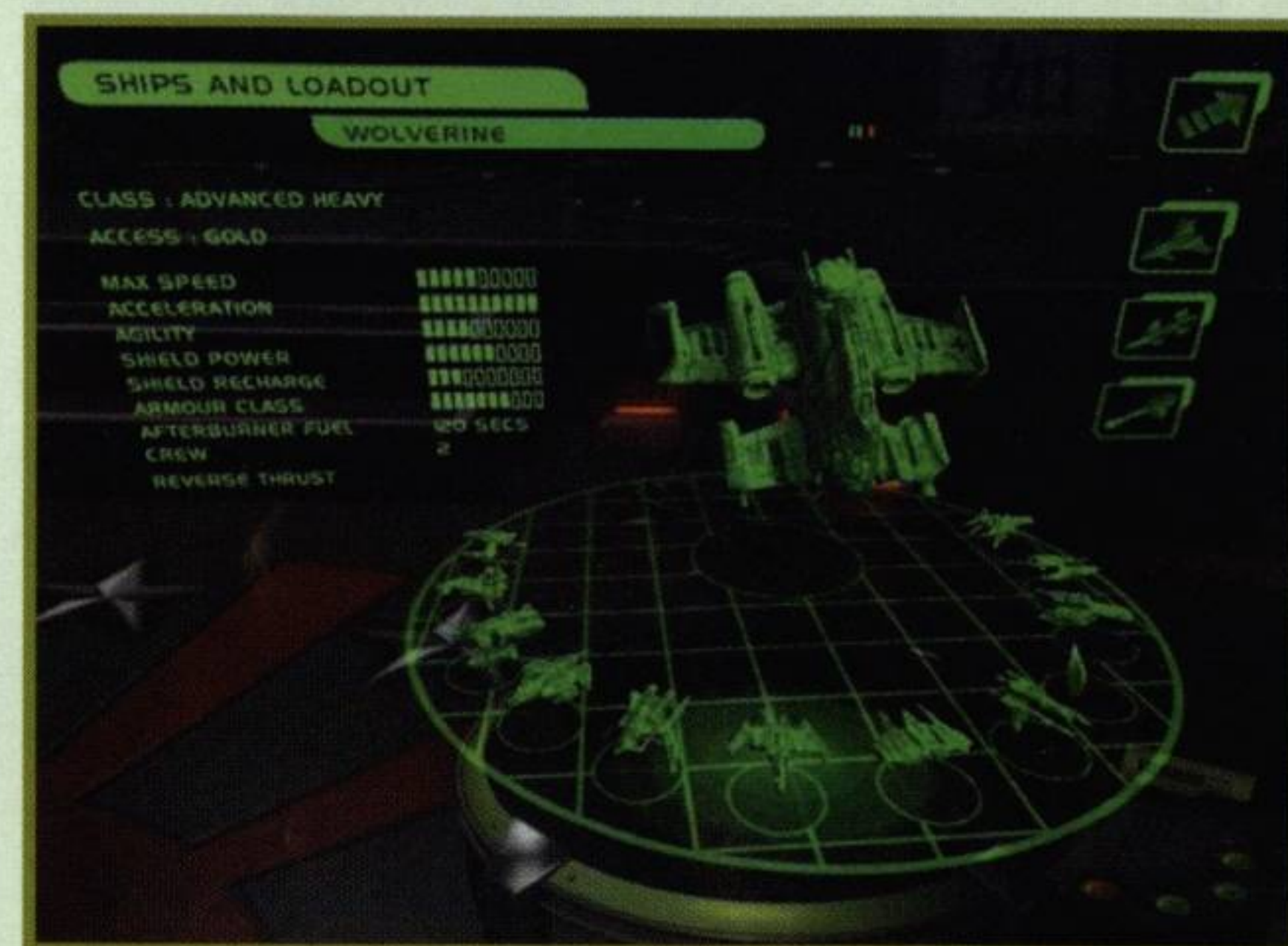
The preview copy *Arcade* took for a spin suffered from a touch of slowdown and the collision detection needed refining. But once these niggles are resolved Dreamcast will have a game worthy of the title *V-Rally Expert Edition*. **A**



■ More than 20 fast-paced, action-packed missions.

■ Play on the same side as your mates.

■ Thankfully, the "Cold War turns hot" plot doesn't overwhelm the action.



MAY

Format: **PC** | Developer: **Digital Anvil/Warthog** | Publisher: **Microsoft** | Players: **1-8**
On sale in UK: **May**

STARLANCER

The Roberts return to space.

Since they left *Origin* a couple of years ago, little has been heard from Chris and Erin Roberts, the brains behind the *Wing Commander* series. But that's set to change with the launch of *StarLancer*, the first title from their company, Digital Anvil.

Set 160 years from now, *StarLancer* will throw you into a war-torn future. The Coalition (the former Soviet Union, China and some Middle Eastern nations) has launched a surprise assault on the Alliance (read NATO), decimating its fleets and taking control of the Solar System. As a recruit in the 45th Volunteer Squadron,

BEST BIT SO FAR Digital cinema

One thing that really makes *StarLancer* stand out is the imaginative design and pacing of its missions, with new developments illustrated by superb cut-scenes. In one early mission, for example, you discover how the Coalition is moving its forces with such speed and precision when you're accidentally dragged through an experimental warp gate – which you must destroy and then dash back through before it explodes, all the while fighting off wave after wave of enemy fighters.



it'll be your job to jump into your starfighter and give the Commie basta... erm, Coalition forces a good slapping down.

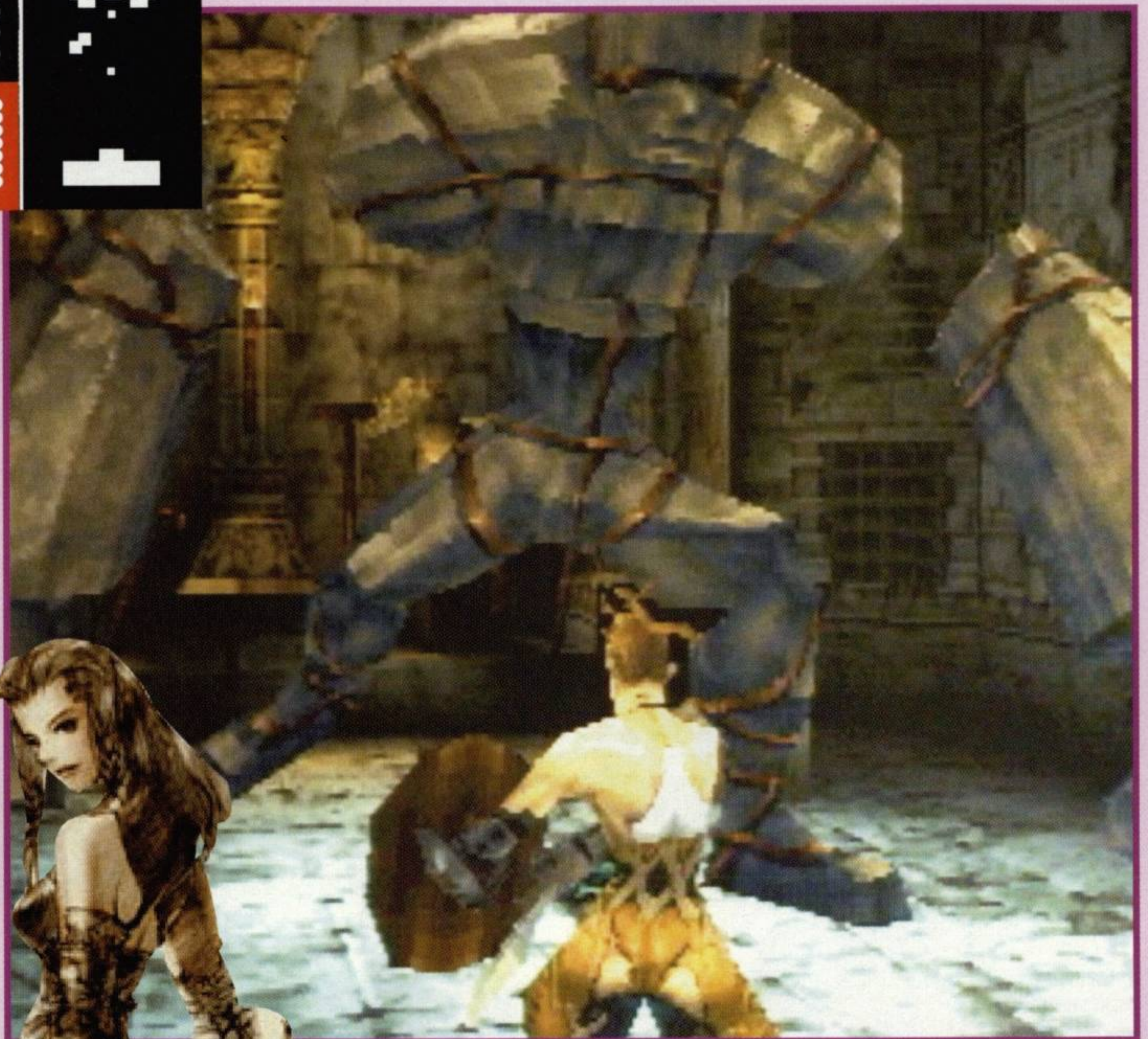
Concentrating on fast-paced, action-packed space combat, *StarLancer* will be instantly familiar to fans of the *Wing Commander* series. You'll also have plenty of chances to appreciate *StarLancer's* looks, as its semi-dynamic campaign will feature more than 20 missions, each one affected by your actions and performance in previous levels. They can even be played co-operatively, with other players taking on the parts of your squadron-mates.

The first in a planned series of *Lancer* titles, *StarLancer* seems set to bring space combat back to the PC in style. **A**



■ (Above) Switching into first-person "look" mode enables you to survey the area.

■ (Below) Learn how to chain attacks for maximum hits.



■ (Left) The unique battle system. Call up the green sphere and aim for your opponent's weaker spots.

■ (Above) Prepare for numerous boss encounters, including this granite demon.

BEST BIT SO FAR

A pair of Bristols

Translating Japanese RPGs into English is a mammoth task for the developer concerned, and perhaps why so few are ever released over here. *Vagrant Story* shows 'em how it should be done, with the text in neat cartoonish speech bubbles. The game even starts showing off by slipping into English regional accents: these two lowly knights appear to be deploying pure West Country yokel brogue. Cheers then, my babber.



JUNE

Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **Squaresoft** | Publisher: **Square** | Players: **1** | On sale in UK: **June**

VAGRANT STORY

A top new RPG from Square – no (dogs on) strings attached.

He woz a luvly dog, me only friend... saved me life once when I fell asleep under a lorry. Then 'ee bit me leg an' I got rabies and they 'ad to shoot 'im. Anyway, spare 50p for the night shelter, guv?"

But that's a different vagrant story. This *Vagrant Story* doesn't drink Special Brew on a park bench at 8am; it's the latest RPG from *Final Fantasy* fashioner Square, and will arrive on these shores after receiving a rare perfect 40 out of 40 score in Japanese gaming bible *Weekly Famitsu*.

Vagrant Story was created by Yasumi Matsuno, the man behind the acclaimed *Final Fantasy Tactics* game which never got

the UK release it deserved. *Vagrant Story* should go some way towards satiating the appetites of *Final Fantasy* fanatics starved of other Squaresoft RPGs such as *Chrono Cross* and *Xenogears* here in the UK.

Set in the Middle Ages, *Vagrant Story* will utilise a turn-based battle system combined with magic – comforting territory for any RPG fan. Players won't have to wade through reams of instructions and game menus, but there will be enough options to fully customise your character's skills and abilities.

Weapons will be created by collecting several separate pieces and crafting them together in a designated workshop. You'll then be equipped with a unique blade, more effective against a particular class

of opponent, and which "learns" from each enemy you slay.

The reason *Vagrant Story* should prove widely accessible is the combination of turn-based combat with action play. This will encourage you to physically dodge assailants or manoeuvre yourself into a better position to tackle them; it won't just be a battle of the stats. A kind of puzzle element will also be incorporated. To progress or to access hidden areas, cubes with different properties must be pushed, manipulated or destroyed, allowing you to climb ledges or bridge chasms. You'll also be able to re-enter rooms in a unique timed Puzzle mode.

You'll play Ashley Riot, he of the questionable hairdo, a "Riskbreaker" in

the service of the Knights Of The Peace. Trouble is, Ashley has been framed for the murder of the Duke Of Bardorba by Sydney Lossarot, leader of mysterious religious cult, the Müllenkamp. Ashley ventures into the ghost city of Leá Monde in a bid to clear his name and get to the bottom of the affair, encountering zombies, phantoms, ogres, minotaurs, dragons and the like.

Vagrant Story looks like it will play in a linear fashion, but looks excellent, with a great intro dumping you directly into the action. There won't be any grand *Final Fantasy 8*-esque FMV scenes, and *Vagrant Story* won't compete on the same epic scale (rumours suggest it'll only take six hours to complete). However, Square's newest RPG will boast its own, instant charms and if it turns out to be anywhere near as good as its illustrious forbears, *Vagrant Story* really will be a big issue. **A**



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GAME ON

COMING SOON



■ The rule book? In *Speedball 2100* it's thrown out of the window.

■ *Speedball 2100* holds nothing back on the violence side.



■ (Above) You can pummel the opposition to within an inch of their lives.

■ (Left) Power-ups appear randomly around the pitch.



■ (Below) The team set-up screen, which you'll soon learn to ignore.



BEST BIT SO FAR

Punch a pal, it's fun

Without question, the best bit of *Speedball* was the two-player mode. Following in that tradition, few multi-player games will have offered the same cuss-potential as *Speedball 2100*. The satisfaction you feel as your opponent grabs the ball, only to have his star player lose it as he's punched to the floor, is palpable.



obstacles, such as pinball-style bumpers that rebound the ball in the opposite direction, and teleporters that transport the ball to the other side of the playing area.

Defiantly retro-futuristic in both look and feel, *Speedball 2100* is undoubtedly going to appeal to fans of the original, but it remains to be seen whether the current generation of videogamers can see past the relatively old-skool production values, and suckle upon the golden gameplay within.



Format: **PlayStation** | Developer: **The Bitmap Brothers** | Publisher: **Empire** | Players: **1-2** | On sale in UK: **May**

SPEEDBALL 2100

An all-time gaming classic makes a welcome return.

Once upon a time the very mention of a new game by The Bitmap Brothers would've caused heart flutters in teenage gamers everywhere. Nowadays it's more likely to elicit cries of "Who?"

The Bitmap Brothers was one of the top development studios in the UK, but a reluctance to move its distinctive style of design, which it showed off in games such as *Chaos Engine*, into a new generation and a certain foul-up known as Z relegated the team to the Where Are They Now? file.

With fresh blood on board and a determination to re-establish the company in the minds of videogamers, it seems fair

enough that The Bitmap Brothers should be trying to muscle its way back into the gaming fold with a new version of its biggest ever hit: *Speedball*.

Think American football meets basketball meets a drunken street brawl on a Friday night outside a Chinese take-away, and you have the template for what *Speedball 2100* will be like. Aside from the fact that it's a made-up futuristic sport, *Speedball 2100* will be presented much like your average soccer sim. You can expect the usual management options, player transfers, league and cup options and a scorching multi-player mode.

The difference, however, between *Speedball 2100* and, say, *FIFA 2000* will be in the look of the game, and the fact that it'll

be perfectly within the rules to smash an opponent's nose in with the ball. Played from the series' classic top-down perspective, now given a subtle 3D twist, *Speedball 2100* will barely be distinguishable from its Amiga origins. And, all in all, that's probably a good thing.

Played at breakneck speed, with the emphasis on swift, brutal matches, *Speedball 2100* will feel like watching a video of a football match set permanently on fast-forward. Points are scored by whacking the ball into the back of the opposition's goal (flooring the goalkeeper if necessary), but randomly-appearing coins give your team a vital cash boost, allowing you to pay for better training and players. The walled pitch will be littered with

RELEASE SCHEDULE

Want to know when all the new games are coming out? Simple, have a quick look at this lot.

MAY

5th	Armorines	Acclaim	PSX
5th	World Championship Snooker	Codemasters	PSX
5th	MDK2	Interplay	DC
5th	Nomad Soul	Eidos	DC
5th	Hasbro Atari Collection	Hasbro	PC
5th	F1 World Grand Prix	Eidos	PC
5th	Music 2000	Codemasters	PC
5th	Cyber Tiger	EA	N64
5th	McGrath Supercross 2000	THQ	CGB

12th	Battle Tanx Global Assault	3DO	PSX
12th	Ballistic	THQ	PSX
12th	Hidden & Dangerous	Take 2	DC
12th	Dragon's Blood	Eidos	DC
12th	Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	Activision	DC
12th	Evolva	Virgin	PC
12th	Ballistic	THQ	CGB

19th	4 Wheel Thunder	Midway	DC
19th	Street Fighter Alpha 3	Virgin	DC
19th	Battle Tanx	3DO	CGB
19th	Dragon Dance	TBA	CGB

26th	Silent Bomber	Virgin	PSX
26th	Street Fighter EX2 Plus	Virgin	PSX
26th	Resident Evil Code: Veronica	Eidos	DC
26th	Giga Wing	Virgin	DC

26th	Dino Crisis	Virgin	PC
26th	MDK2	Interplay	PC
26th	Shogun: Total War	EA	PC
26th	Croc	TBA	CGB
26th	NBA Live 2000	EA	CGB
26th	Soccer Manager	TBA	CGB

TBA	Resident Evil: Survivor	Eidos	PSX
TBA	Star Wars: Jedi Power Battles	Activision	PC
TBA	Zelda Gaiden	Nintendo	N64
TBA	Banjo-Tooie	Nintendo	N64

JUNE

2nd	Ecco The Dolphin	Sega	DC
2nd	Furfighters	Acclaim	DC
2nd	Furfighters	Acclaim	PC
2nd	Mario Party 2	Nintendo	N64

9th	Colin McRae Rally 2	Codemasters	PSX
9th	Earthworm Jim 3D	Interplay	PSX
9th	Gauntlet Legends	Midway	PSX
9th	McGrath Supercross 2000	THQ	PSX
9th	Nascar 2000	EA	CGB
9th	Casper	THQ	CGB

16th	Baldur's Gate	3DO	PSX
16th	Daikatana	Eidos	PC
16th	Dark Reign 2	Activision	PC

16th	Deus Ex	Eidos	PC
16th	Diablo 2	Havas	PC
16th	Heist	TBA	PC
16th	World Championship Snooker	Codemasters	PC
16th	Excite Bike	Nintendo	N64

23rd	Plasma Sword	Virgin	DC
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30th	McGrath Supercross 2000	THQ	PC
30th	Perfect Dark	Nintendo	N64

TBA	Black & White	EA	PC
TBA	Space Channel 5	Sega	DC
TBA	Pokémon Yellow	Nintendo	CGB

JULY

7th	Colin McRae Rally 2	Codemasters	PC
7th	MSR	Sega	DC
7th	South Park Rally	Acclaim	DC
7th	Daikatana	Eidos	CGB

14th	Maken X	Sega	DC
14th	McGrath Supercross 2000	THQ	DC
14th	Tomb Raider	Eidos	CGB

TBA	Bust-A-Move 4	Acclaim	DC
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RELEASE SCHEDULE IN ASSOCIATION WITH HMV



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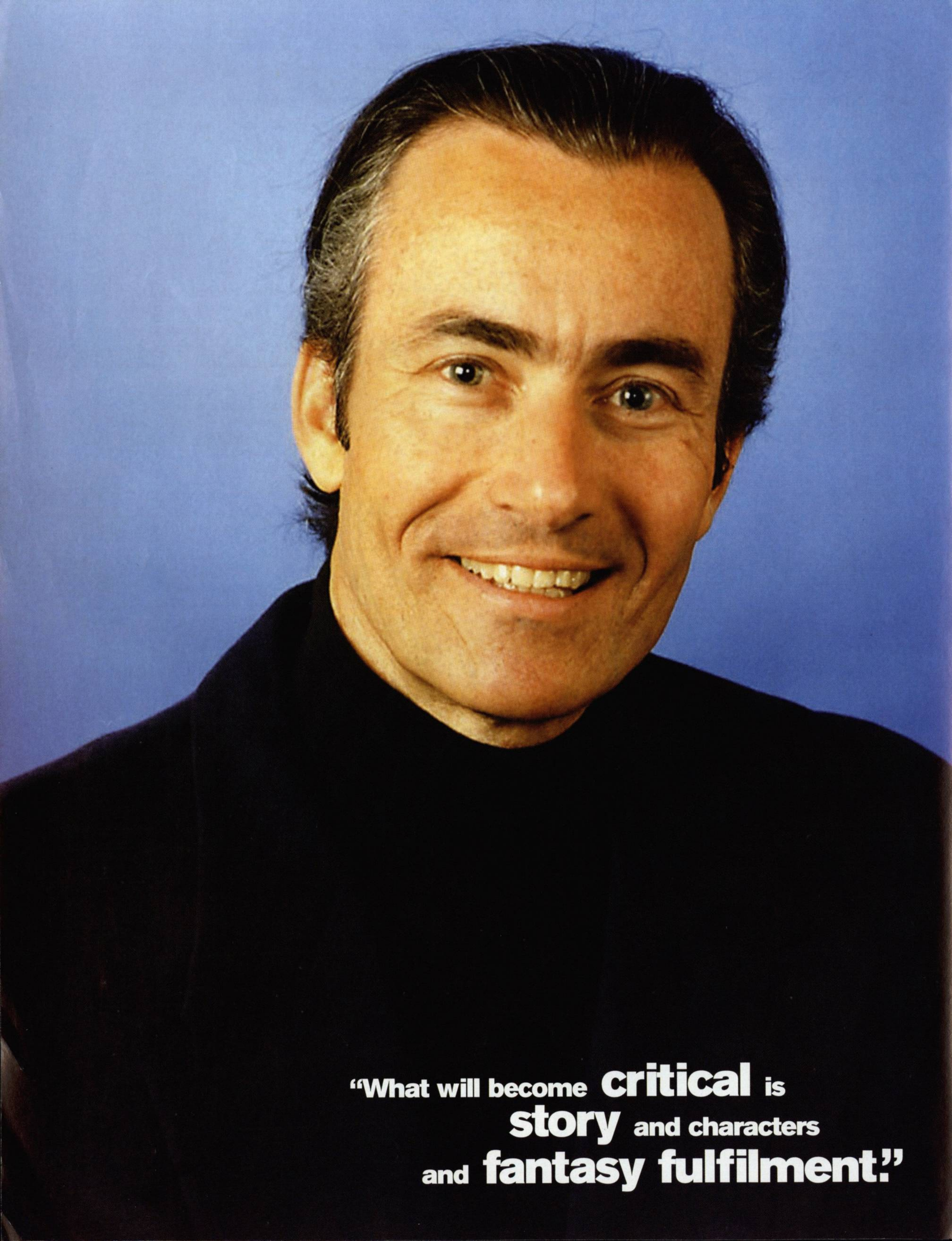
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“What will become **critical** is
story and characters
and **fantasy fulfilment.**”

Trip Hawkins

Interview by **Nick Jones**

He's had more to do with making the games industry what it is today than almost anyone. And he's got the coolest name imaginable. Arcade decided to have words.

If anyone deserves the title of "industry legend", it's Trip Hawkins. He started in the industry working in marketing for Apple. Then he saw the potential of videogames and in 1982 co-founded Electronic Arts – now the biggest software publisher in the world. He left the company in 1991 to start afresh with 3DO, with a vision to revolutionise games with a new console. That didn't pan out, but he is now head of 3DO games. Arcade couldn't think of a better person to quiz on his vision of the future of videogaming.

How do you think the industry has changed since the launch of the first PlayStation?

PlayStation changed gaming from being about the bits and the mechanics of gameplay to being about an immersive fantasy and what characters do in a good story. I was saying in 1986 that a CD-based machine would take over the world, and I am delighted at the success of PlayStation. PlayStation also led the shift from 2D to 3D graphics. The capacity of a CD enables a great PlayStation game to have those fabulous 3D graphics as well as great sound, music, voices, and video cinematics. Of course, these great things have not come without a cost; it is 100 times more expensive to make a game than it was before PlayStation came along.

How do you see the industry, and in particular games, changing over the next few years?

The technology is becoming so good that it will make itself irrelevant. What will become critical is story and characters and fantasy fulfilment, and how smartly we can design gameplay to deliver on those things. In the future we will look back on this moment as being the point where the industry and the market came of age, where it quit being an evolving technology and became a mainstream consumer experience. The PC was a revolution because it democratised computing. With PlayStation2 we have another revolution in which gaming and Internet access shatter the elitist boundaries of the PC. If we do this right, everyone in the world will eventually be playing Internet games.

Up to six billion players, right? So is the future open, free game worlds that take place entirely over the Internet?

I think online gaming isn't just the next big thing. It's *the* big thing. I don't care how smart we make these machines, it's not as much fun as fragging my best friends. And that's especially true if the friends you grew up with now live in different parts of the world. If it was a small world before, online gaming will make it even smaller. And, yes, I expect we will see massive, open, free game worlds. I am now in my sixth year working on such a project, which I think is the most ambitious and interesting thing I have ever undertaken. I'll be able to say more about it in the future.

What kind of new games do you have in your head?

Every kind imaginable. But I prefer to start with the human being and what makes him tick. The purpose of entertainment media should be to take us into new worlds and fantasies and transform us with new insight about ourselves and our feelings. What gaming has going for it as a software medium is that it's interactive, and that is what people are all about. So I have always had a strong preference for multi-player gaming and a strong interest in stories that create emotional attachments to characters that resonate with our real lives. The most popular games in the world, the ones that have acquired tremendous cultural status, are all pretty simple in terms of the gameplay mechanics. Look at how your countrymen feel about kicking a round ball through some goalposts.

How about X-Box? Are you impressed by what you've seen?

It has the potential to strip away the things that prevent the PC from becoming truly mass market. It opens up the Internet to a wider audience. The real question is, what is Microsoft really going to do with it? You see, I have been around from the beginning so I remember the failure of PC Jr, MSX, MSX-2, the HPC, and the Talisman project. Every "consumer" initiative driven by Microsoft has been a disaster.

So, will X-Box be the exception?

They certainly have the money, but do

Why you should listen to this man

Trip has long been known for his predictions about the direction the game industry will take. He was one of the first to champion the CD-ROM as the future medium for videogames and as the console as a set top box – which seems to be happening with PlayStation2. His prediction that the videogame industry would be the new Hollywood came true two years ago when, for the first time in its history, turnover from worldwide sales of videogames was more than for the US film industry. Three years ago he predicted that the next PlayStation console would arrive in 2000 and that it would have a DVD drive. Is this guy psychic?

they know what to do with it? Bill Gates used to brag about not even having a TV in his house. I have known Bill for 20 years and he has never shown any evidence of having any understanding of consumers, entertainment or games. The guy is a business genius, but it's not even clear in this case what he wants.

How do you see Nintendo's position and what are you hoping for from the Dolphin?

Nintendo is very capable. I consider *Pokémon* to be the most impressive phenomenon in the history of videogames. Here you have 8-bit, black-and-white games blowing away every other game in the market. So, that should prove that you can never count Nintendo out. On the other hand, if you had the ability to invent *Mario*, *Zelda*, and *Pokémon*, would you really want to limit your software business to whatever hardware market share you could take away from Sony? One particular positive with Dolphin is that Nintendo is saying it is shooting for a very low price, which would enable more people to afford to buy it. Again, my goal is to make everyone in the world a gamer.

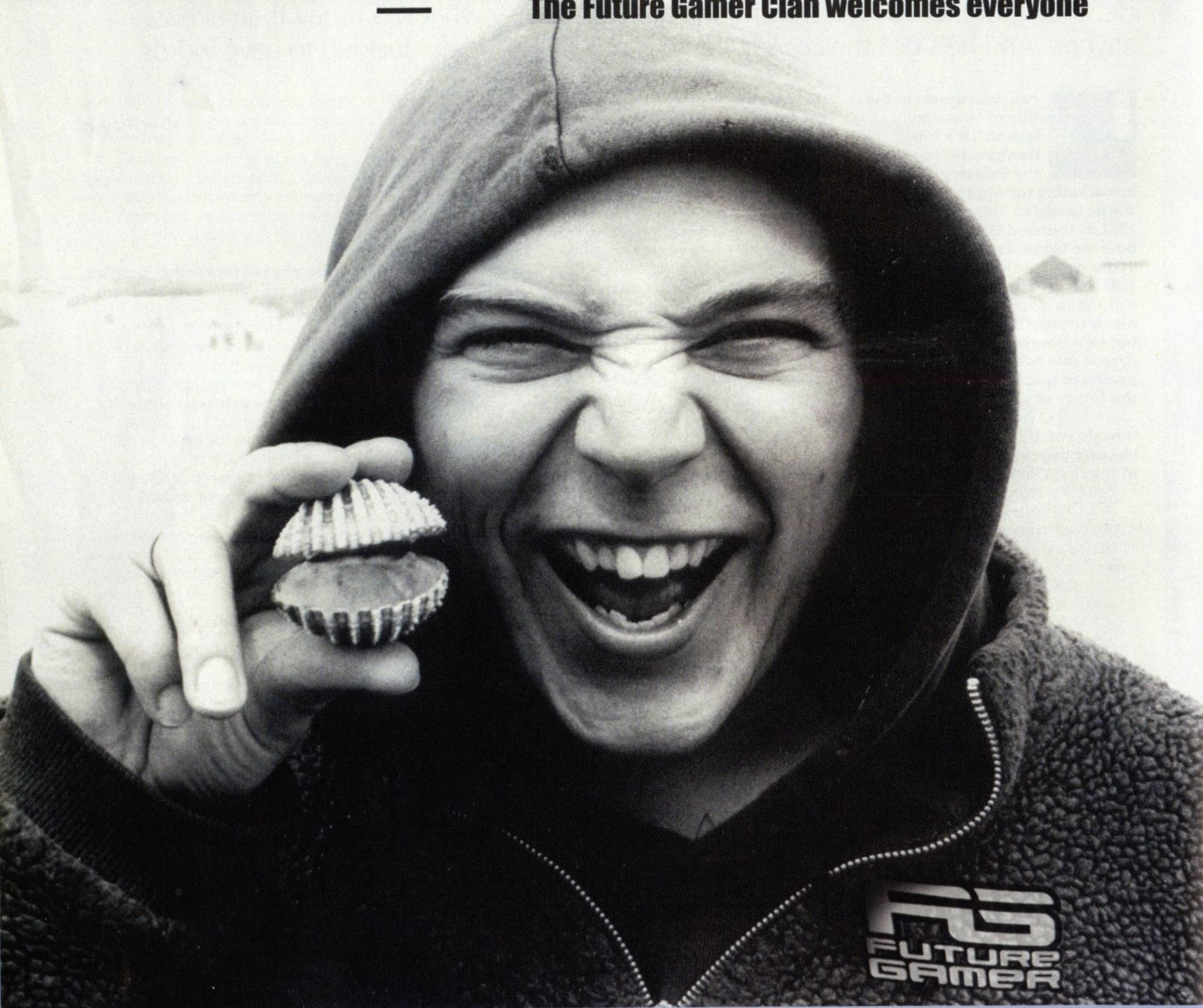
3DO has had a lot of success with the Army Men franchise. What have you got in the works at the moment?

Of course, our first goal is to support more platforms and to continue our storyworlds with new episodes. We think gamers like to win and build on their skills, so they like to go back again and again to familiar genres. But rather than do traditional industry sequels, we view it like a new episode in a movie series. People care about characters and want to find out what happens next.

Every year we add three or more new gameplay genres to our mix and in addition we are working on some major new brands. *BattleTanx* was new last year. Helicopter action is a recent new addition, but it made the most sense to us to place it in the *Army Men* world. It's kind of like when Nintendo is bringing out a new game system and it has a great new game genre and they say, gee, maybe the character should be Mario? It's a no-brainer. We're going to take Sarge's girlfriend, Vikki, and give her a show. We're also working on a new sci-fi storyworld. And more, but if I told you I'd have to kill you. **A**

[FGC] _ Shell

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NOW PLAYING IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH

Mixing it up on the wheels of steel, abducting and training sweet little monsters to fight to the death, and blowing people's limbs clean off as they lie prostrate – what in the wide world of videogames is going on? Arcade gets down and dirty with the titles of the moment to give you some idea.

P36 BEATMANIA



■ Ruff Driverz have taken their tunes from an old meat factory in Essex to the sun-drenched shores of Ibiza, but what will they make of Beatmania – the DJ game from Konami?



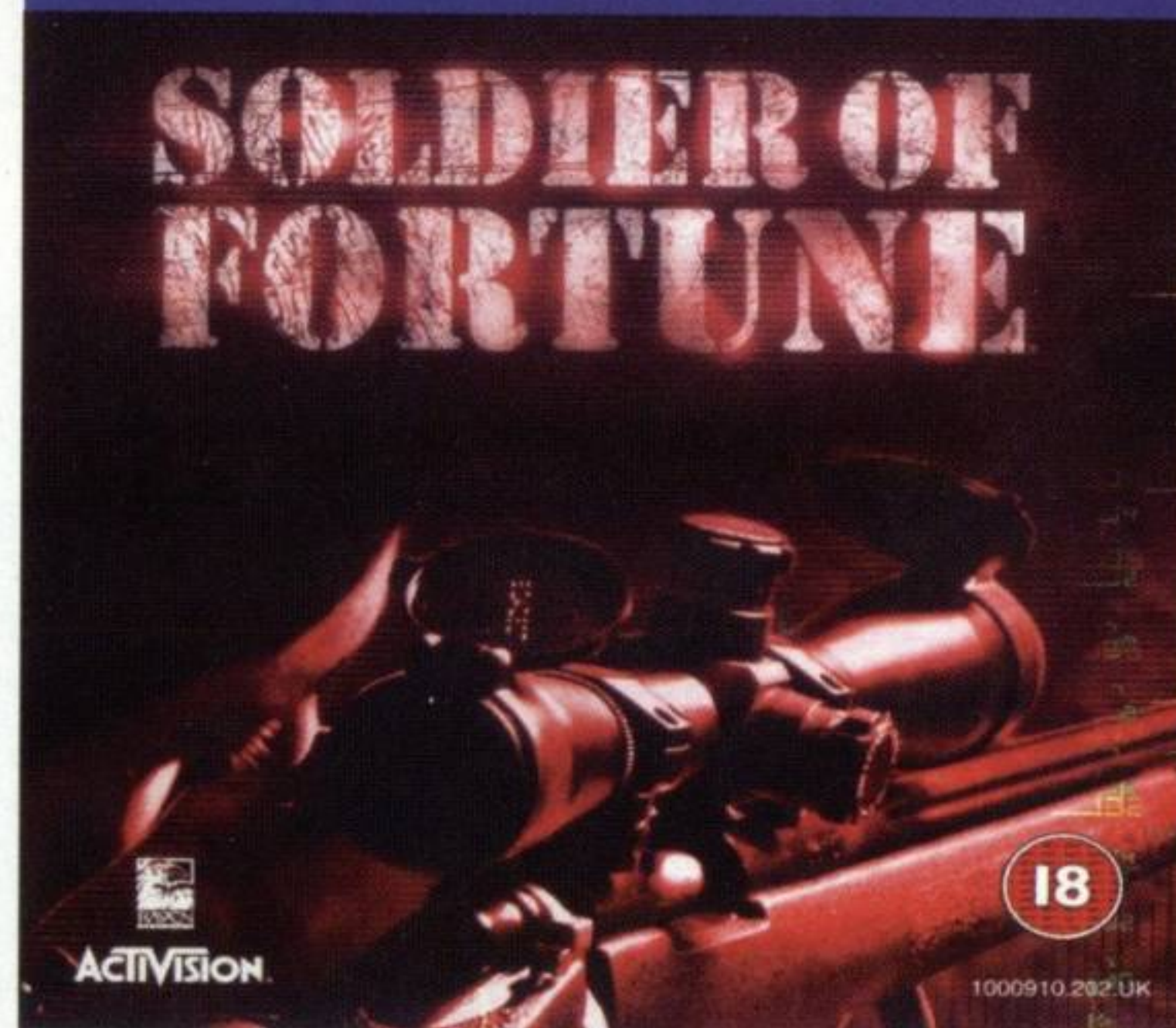
P38 POKÉMON STADIUM



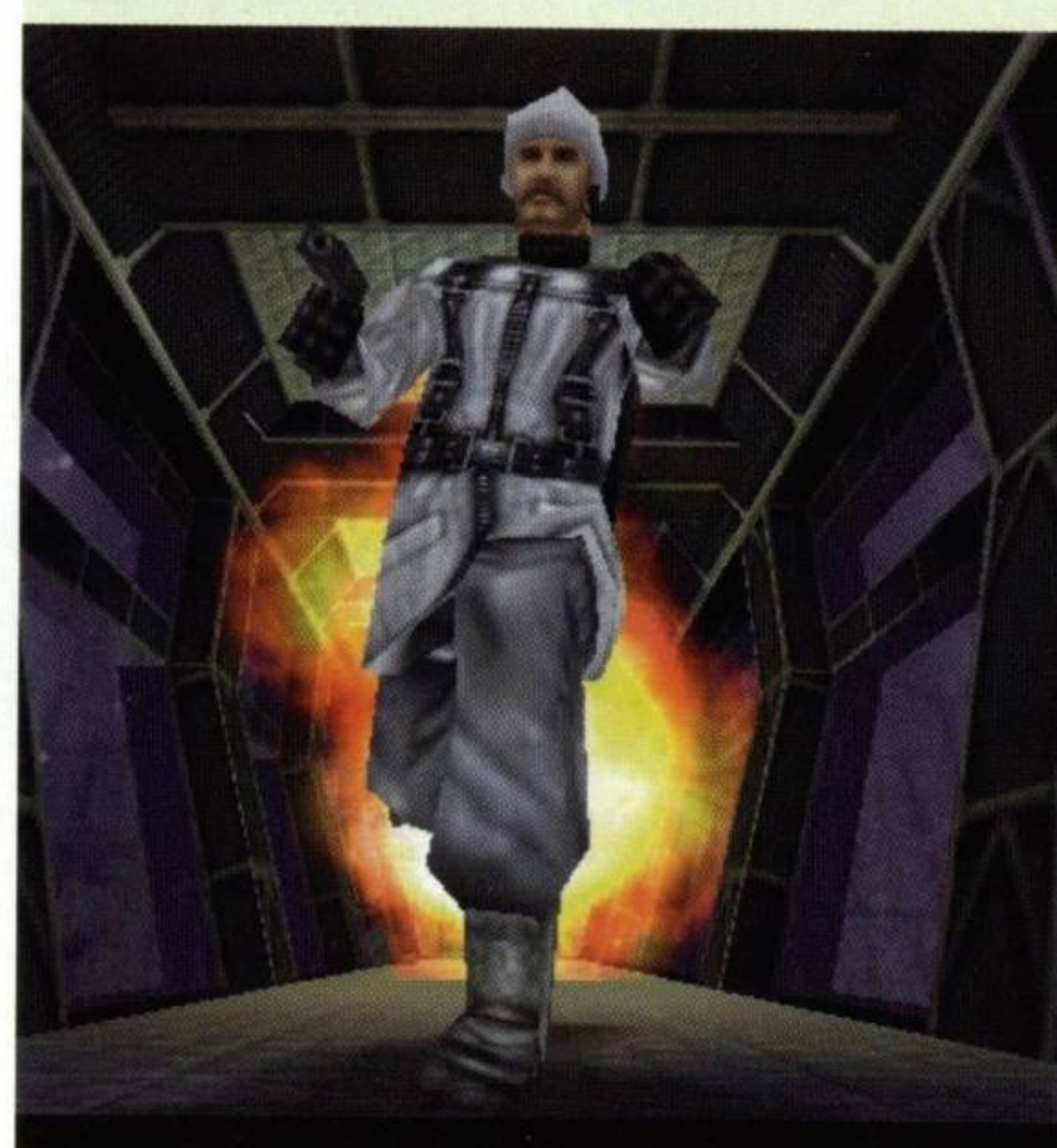
■ *Pokémon Stadium* has enabled the little monsters to make the jump from your pocket to the wide open spaces of the N64. But how best to handle the critters in this new environment?



P40 SOLDIER OF FORTUNE



■ John F Mullins provided the real life inspiration for bloody first-person shooter *Soldier Of Fortune*. So, is being a mercenary all it's cracked up to be and is John really that scary?



NOW PLAYING IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH BEATMANIA

Format: **Playstation** | Developer: **Konami** | Publisher: **Konami** | Price: **£50** | Release date: **27 April** | Players: **1-2** | ★★☆☆



WHAT'S BEATMANIA ALL ABOUT?

■ It's a real-time dance music game hard and fat – it's too cool! At least, that's what it says on *Arcade*'s specialist game controller, a keyboard/turntable hybrid that's necessary to play *Beatmania* properly, and set to become one of the PlayStation's coolest pieces of kit. The game contains 18 tracks ranging across the gamut of dance music genres from trance to electro to garage, with some bizarre Japanese pop tunes thrown in for good measure. Your job is to tap the buttons and scratch the turntable in time with the scrolling coloured bars and thus correctly replay the tune, rather than create your own arrhythmic noise collage. It's an unusual game, but more than a little addictive.

RUFF AND TUMBLE

Ibiza favourites Ruff Driverz ride the rhythm.

The first of the popular Japanese rhythm action or "Bemani" games to grace a UK console, *Beatmania* is unlike any other videogame. It comes packaged with its own special controller, which is a mini mutant hybrid of a keyboard and a turntable, and probably bears more relation to those flashing sequence Simon toys of your childhood than it does to *Tomb Raider 4*. Then again, Simon didn't boast a raft of tunes from top dance acts for you to reconstruct. One such thrusting number from



Beatmania is "Dreaming" by house hitmakers Ruff Driverz. *Arcade* visited their studio in deepest Essex to see what the band thought of their PlayStation debut.

How did you get involved with the *Beatmania* project?

[Chris] At the time "Dreaming" was doing well in the charts, we got the call asking us if we'd mind the track being stripped down into parts and being used in a videogame. Mostly we just get requests for our tracks to be used on adverts or compilations, so this was something different. We're big game players, so of course we said yes. We'd like to be on a game soundtrack again if asked. A PlayStation2 game soundtrack would be pretty nice.

Have you been playing videogames for years?

[Chris] Yeah, I had a Mega Drive, then a SNES, and a PlayStation when it came out. I always get the new systems, although I didn't bother with Dreamcast 'cos it didn't blow me away. I'm waiting for PlayStation2 now, especially as my PlayStation is knackered from too much playing. I like racing games, so *Gran Turismo 2000* should be good.

[Bradley] I've got a PlayStation. I've got hundreds of games but I'm crap at all of them. That *Metal Gear Solid*, I always die before they've finished running the credits. I haven't got beyond the first level of *Tenchu* either.

What's your view of *Beatmania* then?

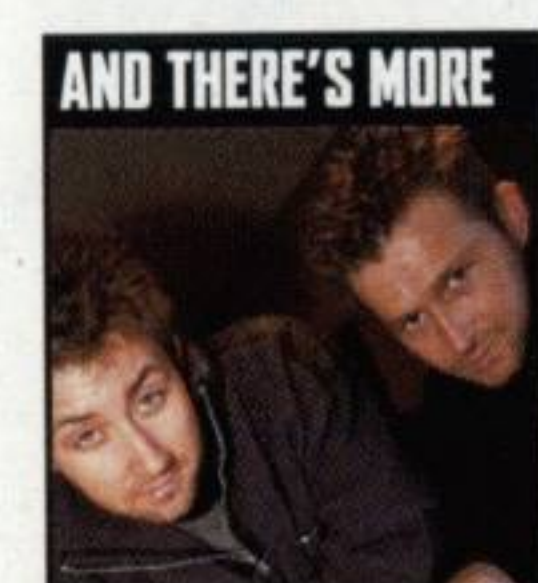
[Bradley] It's mad, innit? You take a while to get used to the controls – I keep thinking the piano keys relate to actual notes – but once you lock into the groove, there's a real feeling of satisfaction when you get it right. [Chris] I think kids will love it, but I'd rather be playing a racing game myself.

How do you feel the game has dealt with your track?

[Bradley] I can see what they've done with that guitar riff, but it goes a bit mental in places. Like you said, it's one of the hardest tracks in the game. [Chris] They've put a photo of us in there, and when you press all the wrong keys like we've just been doing, a speech bubble comes out



■ (Above) Not to be outdone, DJ Konami is making the trip to Ibiza this year, spinning the tunes at Es Juancos Tossos.



■ Chris and Bradley have been together as the Ruff Driverz for almost three years. They built their own studio in an old meat factory in the Essex countryside and from there crafted eclectic pumping dance hits such as "Don't Stop". A hefty stint in Ibiza influenced the Spanish vibe of "Dreaming" (a massive chart hit towards the end of 1998) and its follow up "La Musica". They've just signed a new deal with Recognition and are halfway through recording a second album. Chris and Bradley have already pinpointed a potential single release in "Chosen Ones", featuring Katherine Ellis, the vocalist who appeared on "Dreaming". Its feel is more Brazilian than Spanish, and it should receive a severe caning throughout the Ibiza season before a proper release in late summer.



of our mouths, saying "poor". That's a bit surreal. We're slugging ourselves off now. I give up! [Bradley] I can do the Moloko and Les Rhythmes Digitales tracks, but ours is too hard for me.

What are your plans for the Ruff Driverz?

[Chris] We've just signed to a new label and we're halfway through recording an album for them. We've already finished a track called "Chosen Ones" which should be the first single. [Bradley] We've done six mixes, including one for the radio, a harder mix for the clubs and a chill-out mix for all the Ibiza cafe DJs, which is a new thing for us.

Are you heading out to Ibiza this year?

[Chris] We've got a night called Tonic starting at Eden every Thursday and we're still going to be DJing UFO at Es Paradis on Mondays. We've got some really nutty ideas for that this year.

GAMEPLAY CHALLENGE

Sing It Back To Me

■ Most of the harder tracks, Ruff Driverz's "Dreaming" included, are a challenge enough in themselves. If you can attain level C on "Dreaming", *Arcade* would like to hear from you, likewise if you can even clear Gangster Breaks or the frankly impenetrable Jazz stage. However, a feat which should be possible with a little practice is a perfect A score on Moloko's "Sing It Back". No Poor, no Bad, and no simply Good notes. Everything must be Great.



■ Timing is everything – then you can get the game to play to your tune.



■ **NOW PLAYING:** *Beatmania* – reconstruct tunes by Moloko, Les Rhythmes Digitales, a load of strange Japanese musicians... oh, and the Ruff Driverz, of course.



NOW PLAYING
IN THE SHOPS THIS MONTH

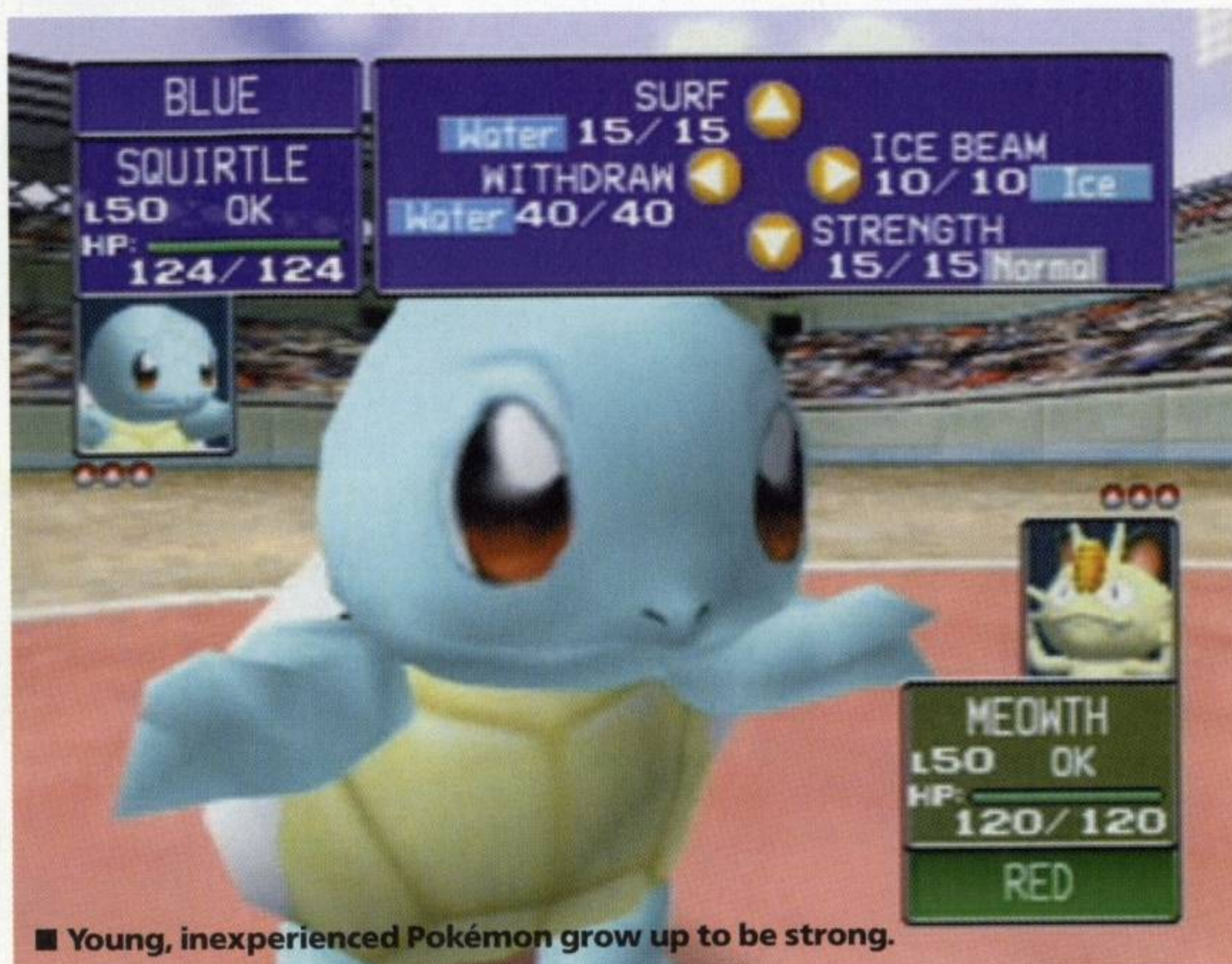
POKÉMON STADIUM

Format: **N64** | Publisher: **Nintendo** | Developer: **Nintendo/Creatures** | Price: **£50 (with Transfer Pak)** | Release date: **on sale now** | Players: **1-2** | Score: **★★★**



WHAT'S POKÉMON STADIUM ALL ABOUT?

■ *Pokémon Stadium* is the ultimate Pokémon accessory – it enables you to do battle with your favourite pocket monsters in full 3D animated graphics. First off you have to use the Game Boy Pak (see Transfer Pak box) to load your Pokémon from your Game Boy cartridge. You can battle against your friends or against the computer and compete for various Poké-cups and against the greatest Pokémon trainers in the world to become the top trainer yourself. If you're a Poké-freak – and judging by sales of the games there's a hell of a lot of you out there – then this is an essential purchase.



DESTROY ALL MONSTERS!

Become the best Pokémon trainer of all time.

Have you got monsters in your pockets? Do you run around talking in Pika-speak to total strangers? Have you named your cat Mewtwo? If the answer to any of the above is yes then you're going to need a copy of *Pokémon Stadium*. You'll also need to peruse *Arcade's* guide to becoming the bestest Pokémon trainer.

Psycho killers?

How to get Pokémon with great potential. This only applies to the Game Boy games *Red* and *Blue* –

you'll have to play them to get the most out of *Pokémon Stadium*. With wild Pokémon it is possible to get two of the same level, but with vastly different statistics. To get the strongest and best Pokémon you have to build them up the hard way. Capture several of the same kind and see which has the lowest level and the lowest stats. This should be the one you train up – the lower the starting point the better it will get.

Pokémon types

Each Pokémon has a type – some are a combination of two types. For example, Pikachu is an electric type: he's strong against electrical attacks but weak against water attacks. Dual types, such as water/poison, have the advantage of being strong in two types of attack but also weak against two types of attack. Check the Pokédex for more details.

Basic strategy

When selecting a Pokémon team, try to choose a good mix – you don't want to choose all electric monsters and then come up against a water monster. Using attacks that are the same type as your Pokémon will make them roughly one-and-a-half times more powerful. But their defence against opposite type attacks drops – damage will be increased by one-and-a-half times.

Taking turns

It's important you have a strong lead

AND THERE'S MORE

Don't think that the *Pokémon* craze is anywhere near over. The first *Pokémon* film, cleverly titled *Pokémon: The First Movie*, was released in April. Like the popular cartoon series it follows the exploits of Ash Ketchum and his adventure to become the ultimate Pokémon trainer. It's basically a battle against the evil Mewtwo, a genetically engineered Pokémon who wants to rule the galaxy with his own unique Pokémon. As the name suggests this will be the first in a series of films – next is *Mewtwo Strikes Back* and then *Pokémon 2: Revelation Lugia* – whatever that means.

Pokémon – changing character effectively loses you a turn – so fight on until your lead faints. If you do switch, your next Pokémon will have the first attack. Try to use attacks that have a high chance of scoring a critical hit. Slash, crabhammer, karate chop, stomp, headbutt, horn attack, and all the most powerful moves (thunder, hydro pump, fire blast, psychic, etc) all have a good chance. Critical hits cut through any defence that your opponent might have and score more damage.

Tag teams

These are *Arcade's* best *Pokémon* teams – you'll be able to become the best trainer of all time with this lot...

Power tactic team

This team can beat every type of opponent: Mewtwo, Golem, Articuno, Dragonite, Jolteon, Gengar.

Power team

Pokémon with extremely powerful moves: Vaporeon, Zapdos, Golem, Alakazam, Venusaur, Moltres.

Super offence

Great on offence but not so good on defence, so watch out: Clefable, Mewtwo, Golem, Jolteon, Ninetales, Vaporeon.

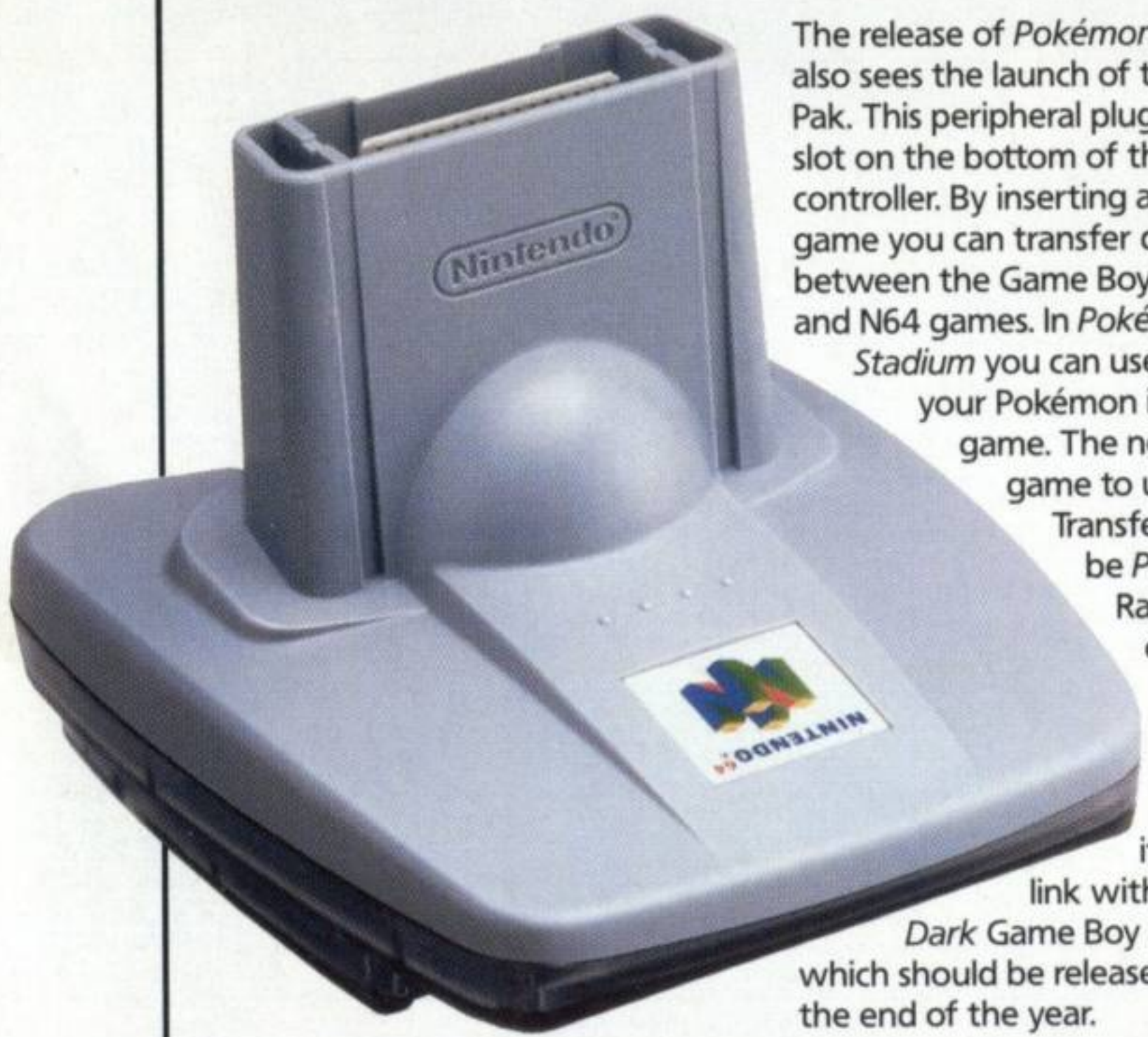
Super tactics

This team is based around status change attacks. Treat them well: Mewtwo, Moltres, Articuno, Gengar, Dragonite, Chansey.



THE TRANSFER PAK

A synergy of Game Boy and Nintendo 64

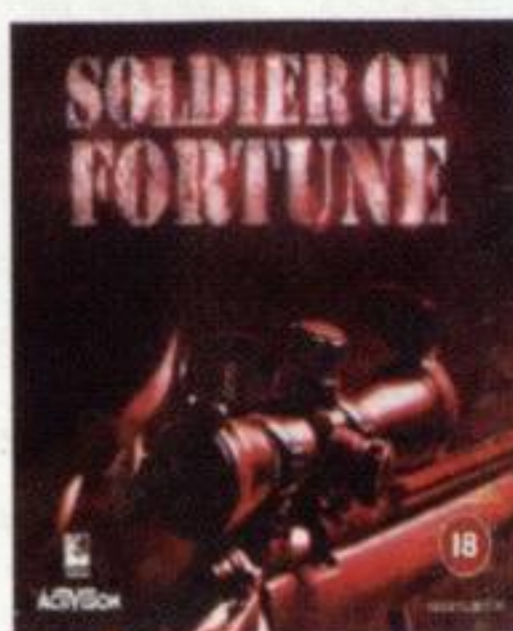


The release of *Pokémon Stadium* also sees the launch of the Transfer Pak. This peripheral plugs into the slot on the bottom of the N64 controller. By inserting a Game Boy game you can transfer data between the Game Boy cartridge and N64 games. In *Pokémon Stadium* you can use it to load your Pokémon into the game. The next big game to use the Transfer Pak will be *Perfect Dark*. Rare is being cagey about how the Transfer Pak will work, but it'll obviously link with the *Perfect Dark* Game Boy game, which should be released towards the end of the year.

■ Link your N64 and Game Boy with this natty device.

■ **NOW PLAYING:** Pokémon Stadium – Just starting out on a career as a Pokémon Trainer? Find out all the basics and more with Arcade's pocket monsters guide.





WHAT'S SOLDIER OF FORTUNE ALL ABOUT?

■ It's the most visually detailed first-person shooter to date. Character modelling is superb and you can see the whites of your enemy's eyes – before you blow their head clean off. The horrific and gory results of your firepower on hapless legions of terrorist gang opponents may not be realistic, but they certainly make for an enjoyable game. There will be many parties who disapprove of this level of graphic body mangling, but you'll find it's a guilty pleasure hard to resist.

VERY MERCENARY

Arcade talks guns, guts and games with real life soldier of fortune John F Mullins.

Your character in *Soldier Of Fortune* is a fictionalised version of John F Mullins, a man who has been a real life mercenary.

Throughout the '80s any agency which needed a job doing could hire his skills and experience in the fields of weaponry, combat, tactics and military intelligence. Largely, these were operations of the US Government which couldn't be undertaken by the military, or in the public eye. Arcade asked John about his involvement in *Soldier Of Fortune*.

How would you describe the vocation of John F Mullins as he appears in *Soldier Of Fortune*?

A craftsman sure of his tools. A specialist in his kind of problem solution. When you have a brain tumour, you get a neurosurgeon. When you have a nasty divorce case, you get an attack dog for a lawyer. When you get a situation that calls for the surgical application of firepower, you call him.

How closely does the game reflect the experiences of your career?

Few situations can be solved by singleton agents. That being said, sometimes it is far better to go in with one man than with a crew. You



always attempt to get in, do the job, and get out without attracting any attention at all. That is easier solo.

How do you think Raven has balanced realism with the demands of producing an enjoyable game?

Extremely well indeed. Obviously, I wouldn't want to go in on a real mission with this number of adversaries. On the other hand, if you only had one or two to defeat in a game, it wouldn't be very much fun, would it?

How does this game reflect the serious nature of your undertakings?

If anything, it understates the seriousness of the threats that face us in today's world. There are far worse things out there than the occasional errant nuke.

How does *Soldier Of Fortune* compare to other military-themed games you've played?

It's head and shoulders above the rest. Some of them get so complicated, West Point graduates couldn't figure them out. Some are bone-stupid in concept and execution.

What is your favourite feature of the game?

The absolute accuracy which the strike zones allow. Far better than hitting somewhere within a box and getting a kill.



■ John F Mullins as he appears in the game. Whatever the gravity of the situation, note that his tache remains neat.

AND THERE'S MORE

■ John F Mullins was born in Oklahoma in 1942. He joined the army straight out of school, becoming a paratrooper before joining the "Green Berets" Special Forces. He served on four separate missions during the Vietnam war, rising to the position of captain. During the '70s he ran training and operational missions in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and South America. After retiring from the military, he offered his services for hire. Working for a number of government and civilian organisations, his missions again took him all around the globe and involved VIP protection, asset recovery, hostage negotiation and other high-risk operations. He is now the founder of an ammunition manufacturing company, the president of an advanced tactical military training centre, a published novelist and a high-level consultant.



Activision is releasing the game in two versions in the US, one with all the "mature" content locked out and the other uncensored. What's your view on the videogame violence debate?

It's out of control. People who talk about the violent tendencies of today's youth obviously haven't studied history.

Youth today is less violent than in practically any period in the past. The difference is that we have the international media slaving to present the latest victim, complete with blood, for the edification and entertainment of the viewing public. And, of course, a lot of people are making a living from it. Completely undistinguished writers now find themselves television darlings because they rail about how "we are conditioning a generation of killers." Bushwah. And I use that word only to be polite.

GAMEPLAY CHALLENGE

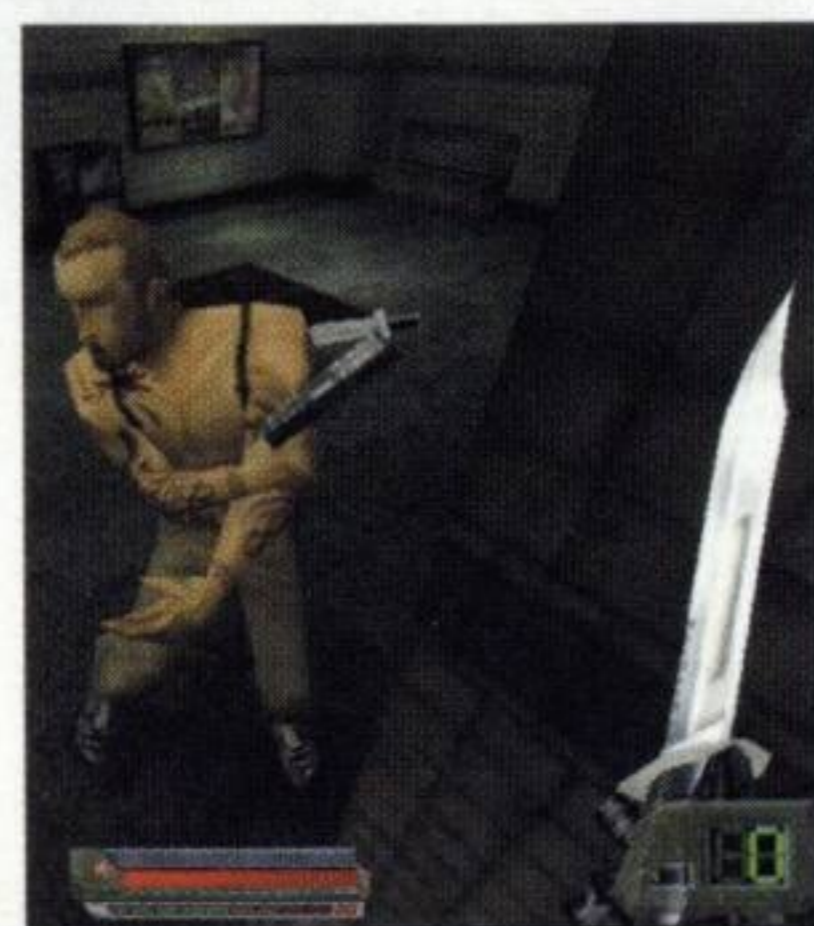
The knives are out

■ The throwing knife is described as a vital component of your *Soldier Of Fortune* armoury. Which is patently nonsense because, given the choice, you will always desire the comfort of a warm gun, even for stealth missions. However, knife kills can be a great deal of fun, and they're often even more gruesome up close than blasting people's limbs off with a shotgun.

Here's the challenge, then. Complete the first mission on any difficulty mode you feel comfortable with, using only your knives. You'll have to get reasonably close to spear your victim, but a knife successfully thrown at the head is usually guaranteed a kill. A knife in the chest causes your enemy to flounder, at which point you can rush in and rip him up nice.

Remember to always retrieve your knives from dead bodies as you only have six, and the last knife can't be thrown. You're bound to lose a

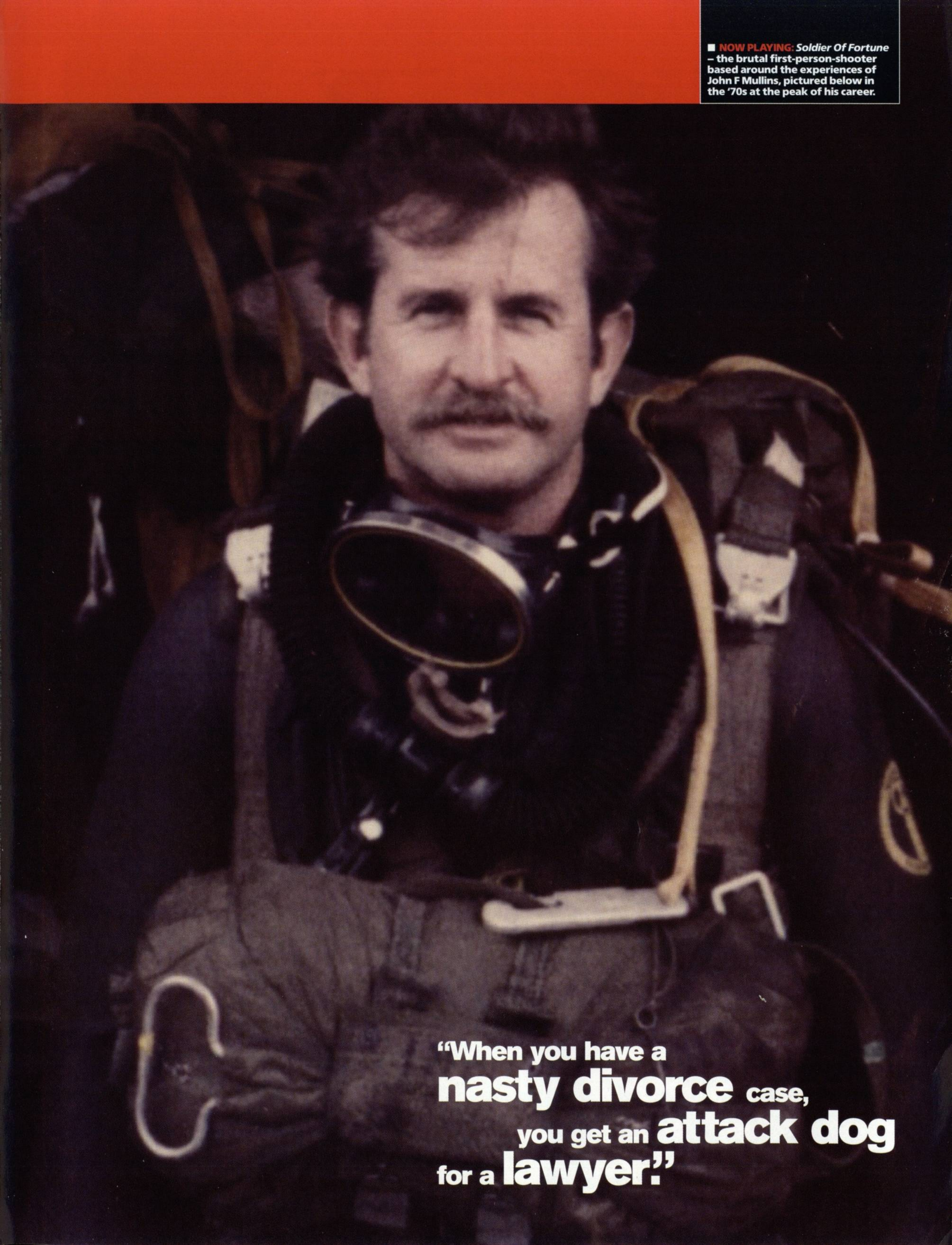
couple along the way, so the challenge gets more difficult as you proceed. Try not to take on multiple enemies at once and if under heavy fire, you'll have to leg it. Watch out for the guys on the train. Good luck, soldier.



■ This chap's just felt a stabbing pain in his arm.



■ **NOW PLAYING:** *Soldier Of Fortune*
– the brutal first-person-shooter
based around the experiences of
John F Mullins, pictured below in
the '70s at the peak of his career.



“When you have a
nasty divorce case,
you get an **attack dog**
for a **lawyer.**”



Misshapes

People come in all shapes and sizes. So do videogame characters.

Videogame characters can take the form of all manner of shapes, be they male or female, human or animal, gelatinous blob or alien life-form.

Sometimes, though, the artistic licence is taken just a bit too far. How the hell, *Arcade* wonders, did this little lot ever get famous?

1 Pac-Man

He may have started his life looking like a pie-chart, but the addition of arms and legs (in the *Pac-Man* cartoon series and then the *Pac Land* arcade game) allows him to be a secret addition to PlayStation2's fabulous *Ridge Racer 5*. How else could he drive a car?

2 Berk

From the Spectrum's colour-clash-tastic *Trap Door*, based on the Saturday-morning, Willie Rushton-voiced plasticine series. Essentially a big blob with eyes, arms,

Top ten

Top Ten Possible X-Box Shapes

- 1 Rectangular
- 2 Spherical
- 3 Square
- 4 Long and thin
- 5 Flat
- 6 Y-Shaped
- 7 Upright
- 8 Rhombus
- 9 Dodecahedron
- 10 X-Shaped

feet and a West Country accent. Capable of changing shape if something heavy falls on him. The berk.

3 Thing On A Spring

A Zebedee-style character, from the Spectrum game of the same name, with a big spring for legs, and accompanying "Boing" noise.

4 Lara Croft

Breasts this big usually only come attached to ladies with the same frame as Bella Emberg from *Russ Abbott's Mad House*. Yet the only person who's ever got to touch them is the lucky bloke out of the Nike advert.

5 Toad

He's got no nose, no eyeballs, and looks about 12. Still, he drives a mean-handling go-kart. For a man with a mushroom for a haircut, that is.

6 Every single Pokémon

A mutated selection of birds, snakes, dragons, crustaceans, plates of jelly – heck, here anything goes. Provided, of course, that the results are undeniably cute. Why else would you want to catch 'em all?

7 Earthworm Jim

Just a big worm in an oversized spacesuit. How his arms and legs attach to his body is never explained, but presumably in the flesh he looks like the character from the Peperami advert, and not a worm at all.

8 Sunny Funny

Parappa the Rapper's love interest, with a human body and a flower for a head. Still, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Even if the beholder is a dog.

9 Abe

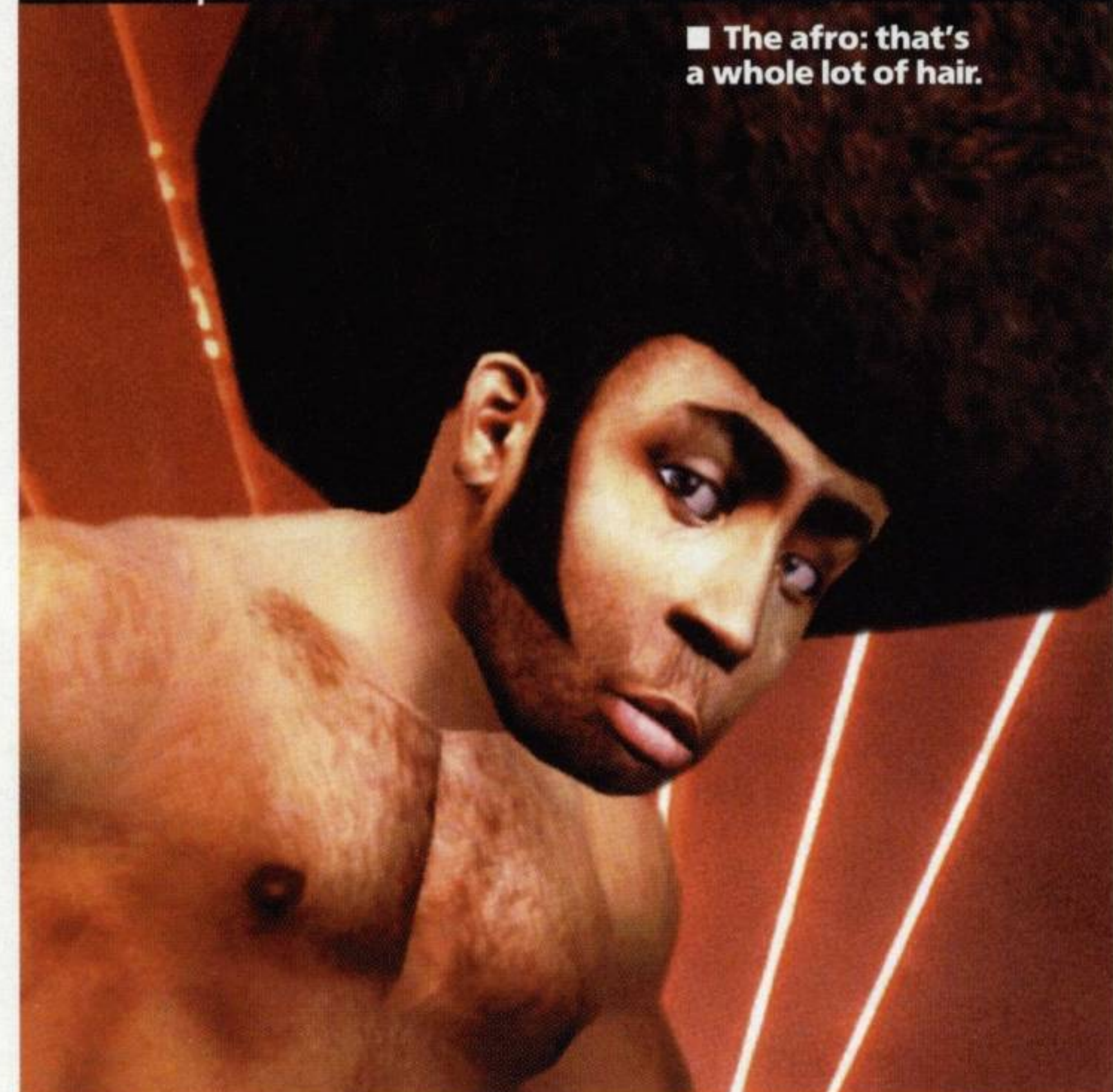
Funny little alien out of *Abe's Oddysee* and *Abe's Exoddus*. Looks like a cross between Sporty Spice and a frog. No nipples, but then again he is an alien.

10 Spyro the Dragon

Dragons are usually large, graceful, majestic beasts. Spyro, on the other hand, is about the size of a dog and looks more like a My Little Pony than a dragon.

Guest chart

Top ten hairstyles



■ The afro: that's a whole lot of hair.

Bad hair day? Arcade admires some choice cuts.

1 Short back and sides

Traditional, convenient, and timeless. Looks good on everyone. Usually what you get in the barbers if you ask for nothing more specific than "a bit of a tidy up".

2 The Quiff

As favoured by Elvis and The Fonz, later reinvented by Morrissey and the hordes of Smiths fans eager to copy the miserable-one. Requires a controlled quantity of hair gel to keep it up. Conversely, is easily reduced to a "flop" if you go out in the rain or go swimming.

3 The Mohican

Dictionary definition: a punk hairstyle in which

the head is shaved at the sides and the remaining strip of hair is worn stiffly erect. Oddly, no one in *Last of the Mohicans* actually had one. In fact, the only person the *Arcade* chart compilers can think who did is Mr T, and his had a habit of changing drastically in length during each episode of *The A-Team*.

4 The Ponytail/Pigtails

"Never trust a man with a pony tail," is a maxim by which *Arcade* lives, which is perhaps a little unfair when all the wearer is actually trying to do is to keep it out of his eyes. Look nice on girls, in a horse-riding kind of way. Pigtails are rarer, generally sported by young girls,

Angelica from *Rugrats*, and, of course, Britney Spears in the video of "Baby, One More Time".

5 Long hair

Perfectly acceptable for women. For men, however, all too often equals Heavy Metal.

6 Bleached

If you're going to dye your hair and you're a bloke, you may as well go the whole hog. Incorrect use of the necessary bleaching materials is likely to make your head look radioactive.

7 The Skinhead

Hygienic, easy to maintain and, you'd have thought, socially acceptable if it weren't for the three messages it sends out:

"I'm nearly bald", "I'm in the Army," or "I'm going to kick your head in."

8 The Mullet

Long at the back, short at the front, like, classically, Billy The Fish.

9 The Flat-Top

Redundant hair cut from the '80s – a short back and sides with a flat top – which barbers used a special comb with a built-in spirit level to cut. Due for a come-back soon.

10 The Afro

Fantastic tight-curl haircut that Michael Jackson had when he was in The Jacksons, Afro Thunder's got in *Ready 2 Rumble* and, miraculously for a white man, Leo Sayer has maintained all his life.



CHART ANALYSIS
With the Arcade lovesick fool.

"I'm in love, I'm in love, I'm in love. Oh, hi there. Have you ever been in love? It's like a warm milky drink swimming around your stomach. You can't beat it. Trouble is, I'm not just in love with one woman. I'm in love with three. There's Jessie, for starters, from *Toy Story 2* at number four. I like a gal with big boots, and let me tell you, Jessie doesn't disappoint. Then there's Jill Valentine, from *Resident Evil 3* at number ten. Those long, long legs, and blue crop top. She's a sexy gal, and no mistake. You know, I just can't decide, and that's not mentioning Lara Croft at seven. Perhaps some form of menage-à-quatre could be in order. Sounds good to me.

■ And then flowers miraculously appeared.

Vox pops *This month: down the park.*

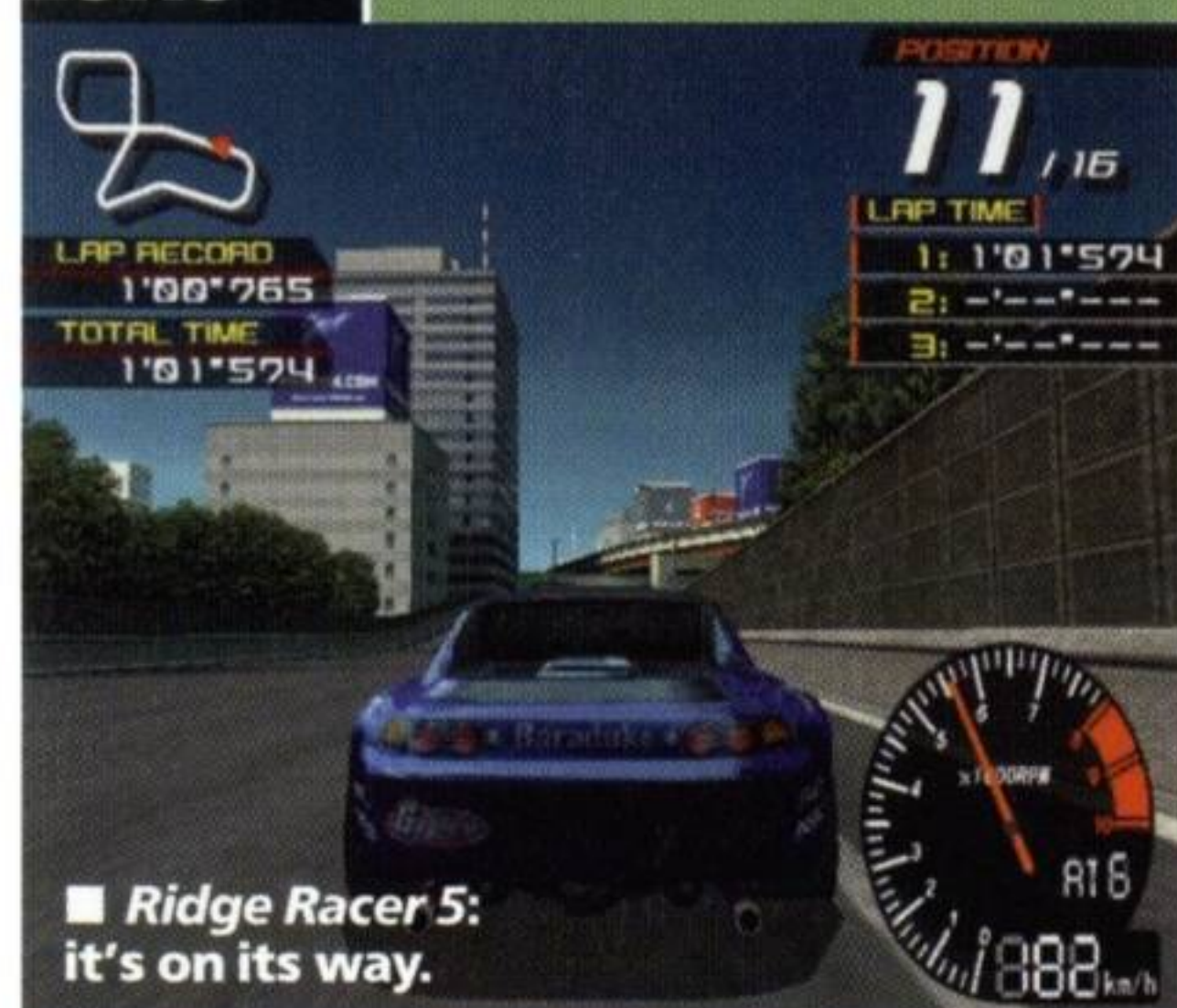


■ Hello. "Hello." How are you? "Okay, thanks. Er, can I help?" Oh, we're from *Arcade* magazine. You know – the videogame one. Do you play games? "Yep." We've got a PlayStation2. "Really? What's it like?" Pretty good, when all's said and done. You gonna get one? "Expect so. Bit pricey though, aren't they?" Yeah.



■ Hello. We're from *Arcade*. Do you want to be in our magazine? "Ok. How big?" Oh, don't worry. Only about the size of a postage stamp. "So, what do I have to do?" Do you play games? "We've got Frisbee, and a football." No, videogames. "Oh yeah. *GoldenEye's* my favourite. I'm a mean shot." Okay. Fantastic.

Import zone *With Department 1 (0171 916 8440)*

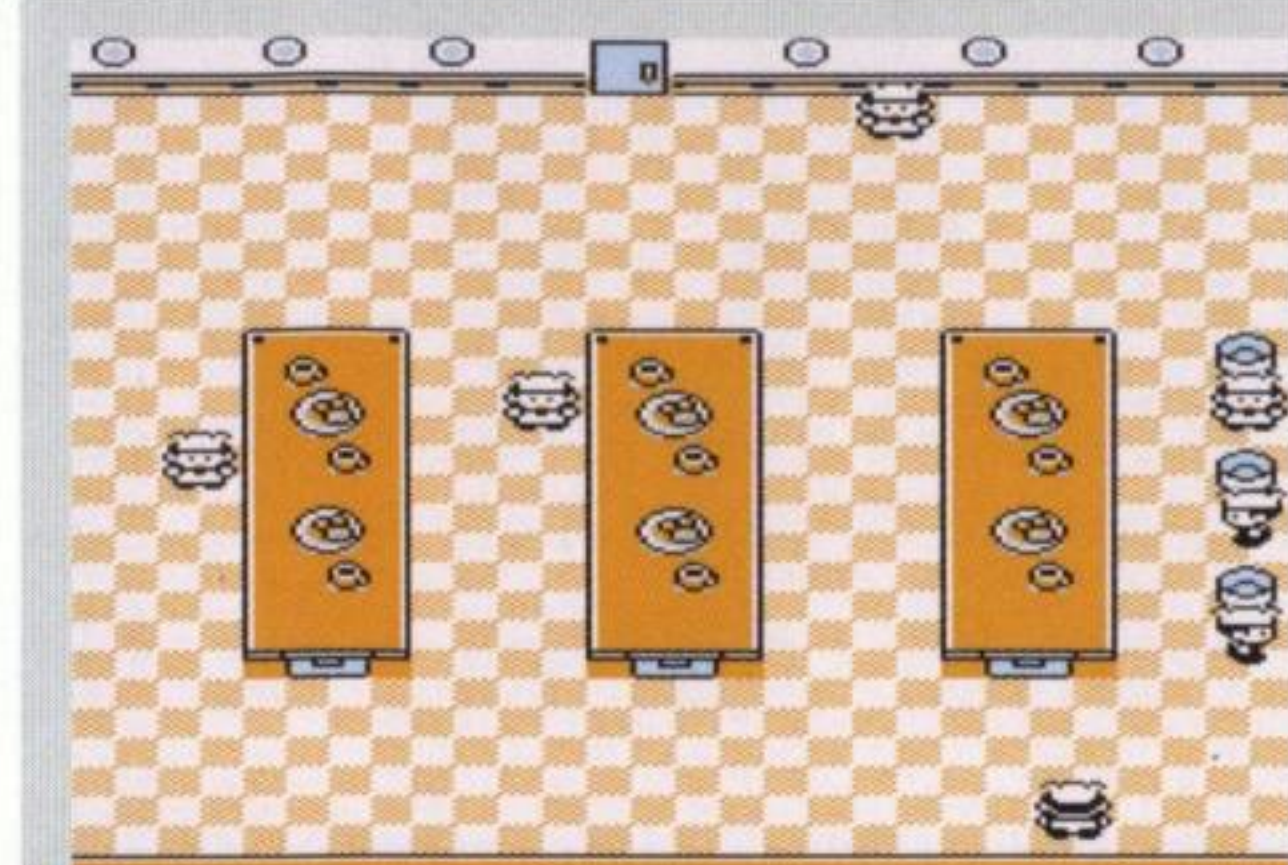


■ *Ridge Racer 5*: it's on its way.

■ Time once again to send Percy the *Arcade* carrier pigeon on another mission to Department 1 to see what's the prize goose and what's the turkey in the world of import games. [Opening window] Ah, here he comes. [Unravelling strip of paper] "Hello, Dave here. What can I say about the PlayStation2? It's selling like hot cakes. People can't wait to play *Ridge Racer 5*. *King of Fighters 99* and *Marvel Superheroes Vs Capcom* are doing it for the Dreamcast. But that's it, really. Message ends." Cheers, Dave. And cheers, Percy.

Official Top 40

There's no escape from the Pokémon.



1 (6) Pokémon Red

■ **CGB** ■ **Nintendo**
The Pokémon phenomenon goes on and on. Catch the little monsters and set them off against each other.

2 (7) Pokémon Blue

■ **CGB** ■ **Nintendo**
Not the little critters getting sad, just more catching antics.



3 (-) Formula One 2000

■ **PSX PC** ■ **EA**
Cracking F1 racer with an official licence and up-to-date stats.



4 (-) Toy Story 2

■ **PSX PC N64 CGB** ■ **Activision/Disney**
Buzz about and solve puzzles in average film-tie in fodder.



5 (2) Gran Turismo 2

■ **PSX** ■ **Sony**
The greatest racer in the world just keeps on selling.



6 (-) C&C Tiberian Sun

■ **PC** ■ **EA**
Latest RTS in the excellent Command & Conquer series.



7 (-) Tomb Raider 4

■ **PSX PC DC** ■ **Eidos**
Dreamcast release pushes Lara back into the top ten.



8 (8) The Sims

■ **PC** ■ **EA**
Incredibly addictive sim where you can run – or ruin – lives.



9 (-) Fear Effect

■ **PSX** ■ **Eidos**
The best-looking game ever to appear on the PlayStation.



10 (1) Resident Evil 3: Nemesis

■ **PSX** ■ **Eidos**
Jill Valentine's return to Raccoon City shot down from the top spot.



11 (13) Crash Bandicoot 3

■ **PSX** ■ **Sony**

12 (-) Tomb Raider 3

■ **PSX PC** ■ **Eidos**

13 (-) Theme Park World

■ **PSX PC** ■ **EA**

14 (-) UEFA Champion's League 2

■ **PSX** ■ **Eidos**

15 (-) Spyro The Dragon

■ **PSX** ■ **Sony**

16 (-) Urban Chaos

■ **PSX PC** ■ **Eidos**

17 (11) Championship Manager 99/00

■ **PC** ■ **Eidos**

18 (-) Metal Gear Solid

■ **PSX** ■ **Konami**

19 (5) ISS Pro Evolution

■ **PSX** ■ **Konami**

20 (34) Rayman

■ **PSX PC CGB** ■ **Ubi Soft**

21 (31) A Bug's Life

■ **PSX PC N64 CGB** ■ **Sony**

22 (12) FIFA 2000

■ **PSX PC CGB** ■ **EA**

23 (4) Crazy Taxi

■ **DC** ■ **Sega**

24 (9) Medal Of Honour

■ **PSX** ■ **Ea**

25 (17) Superbikes 2000

■ **PSX PC** ■ **EA**

26 (17) Age Of Empires 2

■ **PC** ■ **Microsoft**

27 (-) Delta Force 2

■ **PC** ■ **Novalogic**

28 (-) Colin McRae Rally

■ **PSX PC** ■ **Codemasters**

29 (14) Tekken 3

■ **PSX** ■ **Sony**

30 (35) Tony Hawk's Skateboarding

■ **PSX N64 CGB** ■ **Activision**

31 (-) Die Hard Trilogy 2

■ **PSX** ■ **EA**

32 (-) Rayman 2: The Great Escape

■ **PC DC N64** ■ **Ubi Soft**

33 (-) International Track & Field

■ **PSX** ■ **Konami**

34 (-) Colony Wars: Red Sun

■ **PSX** ■ **Psygnosis**

35 (-) Half-Life: Generation

■ **PC** ■ **Havas**

36 (-) Cricket 2000

■ **PSX** ■ **EA**

37 (18) Grand Theft Auto

■ **PSX PC CGB** ■ **Take 2**

38 (13) Crash Bandicoot 2

■ **PSX** ■ **Sony**

39 (21) Gran Turismo

■ **PSX** ■ **Sony**

40 (-) Ultima: Ascension

■ **PC** ■ **EA**

JAPANESE TOP 10



- 1 (-) *Ridge Racer 5*
Namco, PS2
- 2 (-) *Kessen*
Koei, PS2
- 3 (3) *Pokémon Silver*
Nintendo, GB
- 4 (-) *Fantavision*
SCE, PS2
- 5 (4) *Pokémon Gold*
Nintendo, GB
- 6 (-) *Muscular Ranking*
Konami, GB
- 7 (-) *RPG Tsukuru*
ASCII, GB
- 8 (-) *Mobile Suit Gundam Giren's Ambition - Genealogy of Zion*
Bandai, PSX
- 9 (-) *Street Fighter EX3*
Capcom, PS2
- 10 (1) *Trade & Battle Card Hero*
Nintendo, GB

US CONSOLE TOP 10



- 1 (1) *Gran Turismo 2*
Sony, PSX
- 2 (2) *Pokémon Yellow*
Nintendo, GB
- 3 (6) *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*
Activision, PSX
- 4 (7) *Donkey Kong 64*
Nintendo, N64
- 5 (4) *Pokémon Red*
Nintendo, GB
- 6 (5) *Pokémon Blue*
Nintendo, GB
- 7 (9) *Gran Turismo*
Platinum, PSX
- 8 (8) *Spyro the Dragon*
Platinum, PSX
- 9 (-) *Crash Bandicoot: Warped*
Platinum, PSX
- 10 (-) *Medal of Honor*
Electronic Arts, PSX



PLAYSTATION 2



PS2 IT'S HERE

IT'S HERE!



ARCADE PRESENTS EVERYTHING YOU'LL EVER NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SONY'S REVOLUTIONARY NEW GAMES CONSOLE.

As you may have noticed by now, PlayStation2 has finally been released. Despite only being on sale in Japan, the reverberations from the biggest console release of all time have been felt across the globe. After all, the release of the PlayStation2 is as important to videogames as Neil Armstrong's first step on the moon was to space travel, the assassination of John F Kennedy was to conspiracy theorists and the birth of Rolf Harris was to the welfare of pets and small animals.

With more than 70 million original PlayStations already sold – five-and-a-half million in the UK alone – Sony has managed to win videogames a place in the mainstream, and now hopes to build on that success.

But PlayStation2, with its 128 bits, Emotion Engines, floating-point performance chips and processing speed of 6.2 gigaflops per second, isn't just another small advancement in technology. Handled properly, the new console has the potential to take videogaming to unbelievable new levels.

Design-wise, Sony has confidently positioned PlayStation alongside other, more established forms of mass entertainment – relegating the child-friendly rounded edges of the Nintendo and, to some extent, PlayStation to history. PlayStation2 is to be flaunted along with your widescreen TV, its Dolby stereo sound amplified through your state-of-the-art hi-fi and its DVD draw ready and waiting to accept the latest movies.

Over the next 14 pages *Arcade* rigorously tests every aspect of the PlayStation2, works out what all the bits in the box are for, looks at the first batch of game demos, rates the console's DVD capability, links it up to a stereo, tests its backward compatibility, hits the street to get the public's verdict, reviews the first batch of import games and gives you – yes, you – the chance to win your very own PlayStation2. *Arcade* does all this so that when PlayStation2 arrives in the UK at the end of this year you'll be as clued up as you'll ever need to be, and also because *Arcade* understands you really need to know all this. After all... this is PlayStation2.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

JUST ABOUT TO CRACK OPEN YOUR NEW PLAYSTATION2? HEY! SLOW DOWN. YOU DON'T WANT TO GO BREAKING SOMETHING, NOW DO YOU?

■ At the risk of sounding like your Dad, you really don't want to rip open your freshly imported PlayStation2, plug it all straight in to the mains and go. Goodness, no. Otherwise you're likely to be staring at a smouldering

lump of black plastic and, quite possibly, a small fire. Different voltage, you see. Instead, you want get everything carefully out of the box and then take a moment to consult the instructions to see what fits in where and

which bits do what. At least, you would if the enclosed instructions weren't all in Japanese. Instead, what you want to do is consult the *Arcade* guide to what you get with your PlayStation2, and exactly how to use it.

The box

■ **Technicalities:** The PlayStation2 box measures in at 350x130x300mm, and is bright blue with the PS2 logo on the front and Japanese characters aplenty on the back. Open the flaps, remove the two pieces of polystyrene, and get going.

In other words: The box is blue and is useful for carrying your lovely new PlayStation2 around in.



Memory card

■ **Technicalities:** High capacity 8Mb, with a data transfer 250 times faster than the original using a "MagicGate authentication and encryption security system" to ensure it only works on official PlayStation2 games.

In other words: Eight times bigger than your old memory cards. Old PlayStation memory cards are still compatible, but be warned that most saves are big and so won't fit on a 1Mb card.



The PlayStation2

■ **Technicalities:** The PlayStation2 measures in at 301x178x78mm. Weight-equals-quality fans will be pleased to hear it tips the scales at a hefty 2.1Kg.

In other words: PlayStation2 is bigger and heavier than its predecessor, but looks a lot snazzier.

Top

■ **Technicalities:** Branded onto the top of the PlayStation2 is the PS2 logo in various shades of blue, with PlayStation2 indented into the plastic. Copyright checks also go out to Compact Disc, Dolby Digital, DTS digital out, DVD video and DVD ROM. In other words: It's a PlayStation2, that's for sure.

Front

■ **Technicalities:** Two joypad ports, two memory card ports, a metallic Sony logo, a plastic swivelly-PlayStation logo, DVD drive door, and Reset (with green LED) and Eject (with blue LED) buttons. On the base are two USPs (universal serial ports), which are industry-standard ports found on PCs where future PlayStation2 peripherals such as steering wheels or joysticks could be plugged, and an IEEE1394/FireWire i-Link S400 port, where things like a future PlayStation2 digital camera could be plugged. In other words: Here's where you plug in your joypads and memory cards, and stick in the DVDs.

Side

■ **Technicalities:** Ribbed plastic. Bottom side: flat plastic. In other words: You can almost feel the quality.

Back

■ **Technicalities:** Slot for a Type III PCMCIA card with eject button. Unconfirmed reports from Sony say that a PlayStation2 hard drive – possibly as big as 50 Gigabytes – may well be launched early in 2001. If so, here's where you'd insert it, or any other future PlayStation2 expansion. Main Power on/off switch, AC-In port, AV Multi Out port, Digital Out port, and a big fan, which is quite noisy. In other words: Here's where you turn the PlayStation2 on and plug in the power and TV lead.

DVD/CD Player

■ **Technicalities:** The DVD drive is capable of reading both CD-formatted (650 Mb) and DVD-formatted discs (4.7 Gb) via specially designed spindle that can read both DVDs and CDs from the same laser. The PlayStation2 launch games are actually just on CD, but as time progresses games will appear on DVD. PlayStation games came on black discs, but the PlayStation2 games discs are blue. In other words: You can play DVDs and CDs as well.

Inside

■ **Technicalities:** CPU: 128-bit Emotion Engine; System clock frequency – 294.912MHz; Main Memory – Direct RDRAM; Memory size – 32Mb; Graphics: Clock frequency – 147.456MHz; Embedded Cache VRAM – 4Mb; Sound: Number of voices – 48 channels plus software; Sound memory – 2Mb; I/O Processor: CPU Core – PlayStation CPU+; Clock frequency – 33.8688MHz; Disc Drive: CD-ROM and DVD-ROM; 24X CD-ROM, 4X DVD-ROM. In other words: It's pretty powerful in there.

Dual Shock 2

■ **Technicalities:** As well as the two joysticks, all the buttons on the control pad, apart from Start and Select, are analogue and sensitive to 256 degrees of pressure. So, in, say, a racing game, the harder you press a button, the faster you would accelerate, or the harder you press Left on the D-pad, the sharper you would turn. In other words: Well, it doesn't look much different to the old Dual Shock apart from coming in a glittery black colour. The two joysticks feel a bit stiffer, though. And it still vibrates.



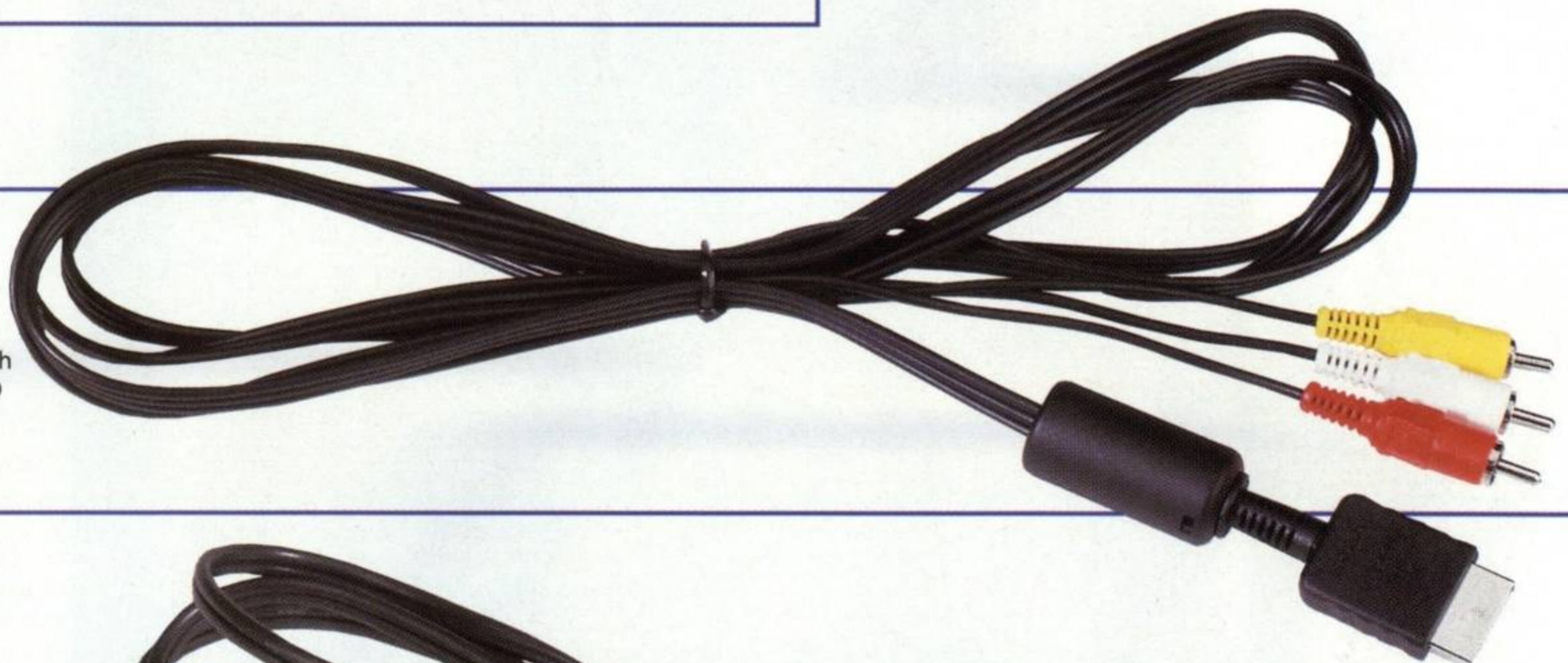
System Disc

■ **Technicalities:** An interactive instruction book for the PlayStation2. Page upon page of Japanese telling you how to change the clock and things. What you'll need it for, however, is to download the DVD drivers onto a memory card, so you can play DVDs. If you aren't fluent in Japanese, you'll find it a bit tricky to work out how to do this, but it is possible. In other words: Useful for downloading DVD drivers, but little else.



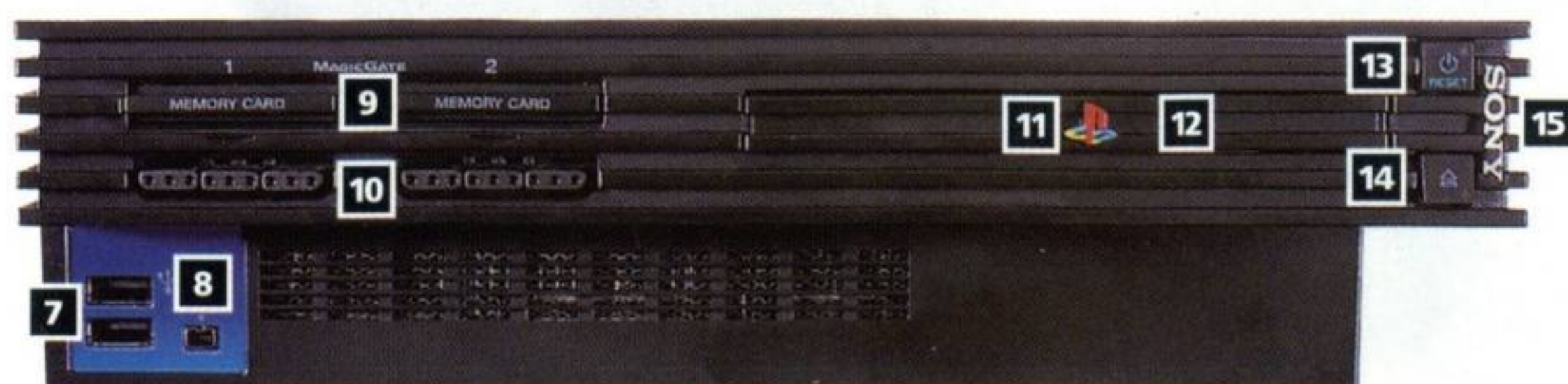
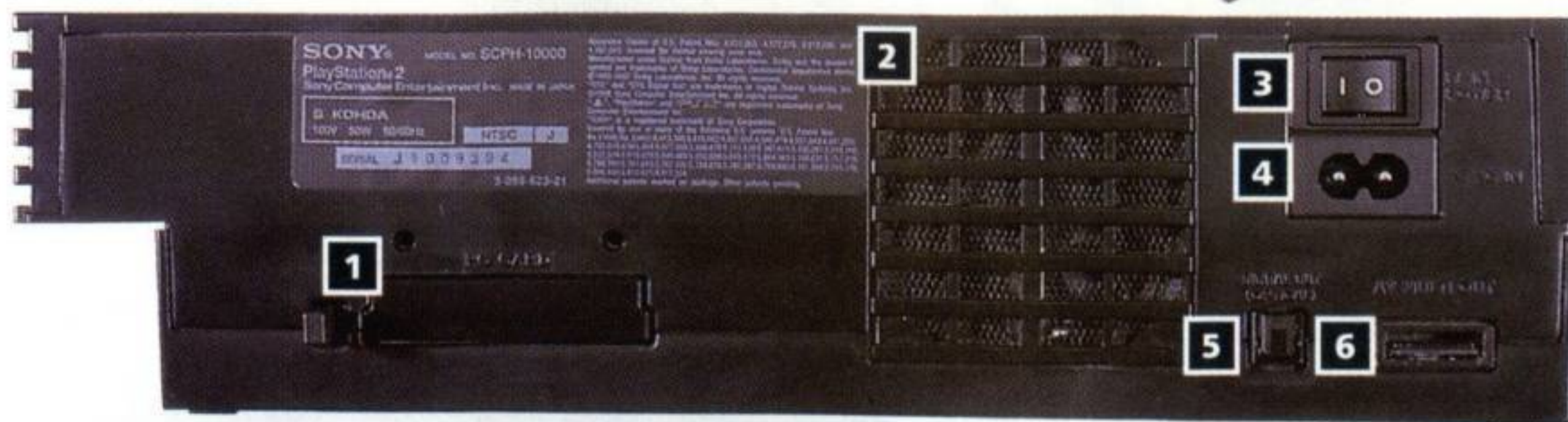
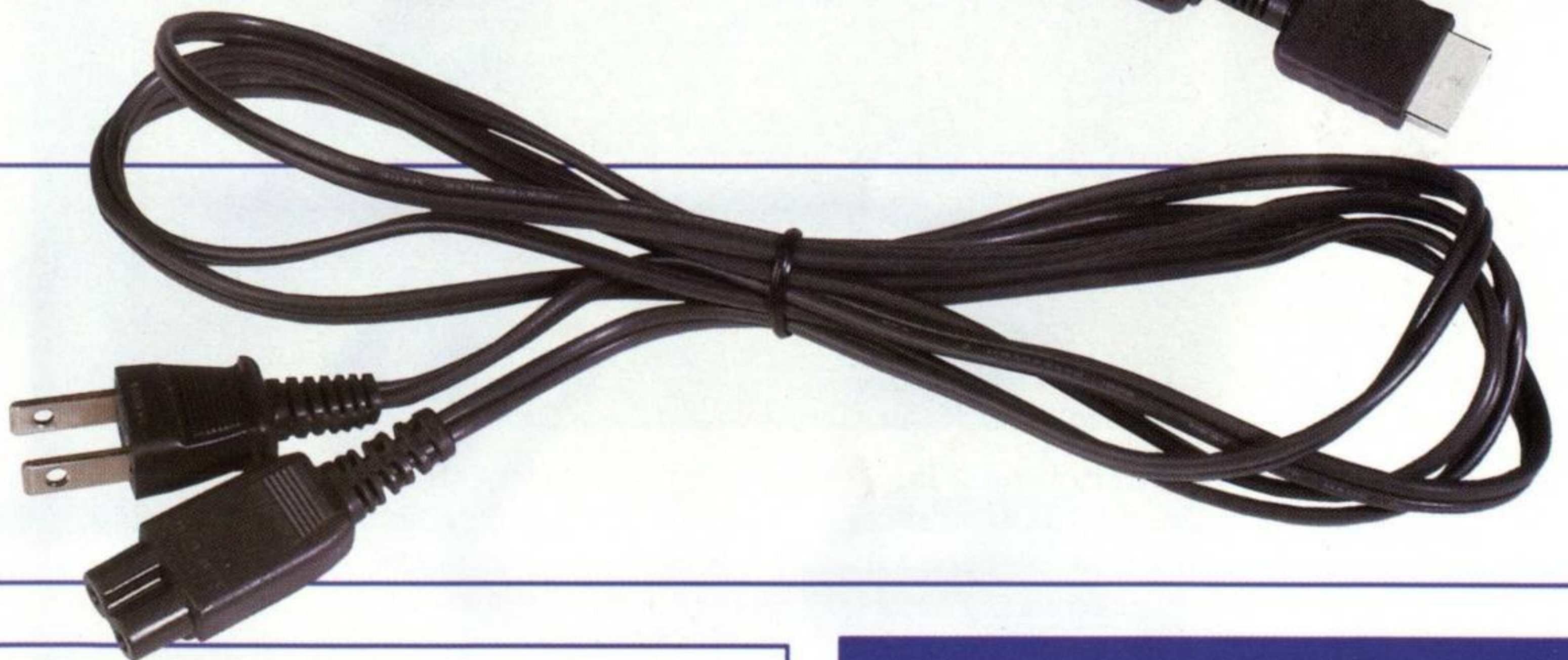
TV lead

■ **Technicalities:** PlayStation Multi Out to three-way phono. Standard PlayStation lead that plugs into the two audio in and one video in phono plugs on your telly. If your telly can't cope with phono leads, you can use a standard PlayStation SCART or SVIDEO lead instead. Your telly will have to be able to cope with NTSC (60MHz) display, of course, to run a Japanese PlayStation2. In other words: Check your TV first.



Power lead

■ **Technicalities:** 110V AC power lead, which doesn't fit into a UK socket. Don't just use an old PlayStation lead instead. To transform the UK's 240V output to the required 110V, you'll need a 50 Watt step-down transformer. Even more importantly, most step-downs (the sort Arcade has previously used for Japanese Dreamcasts, N64s and PlayStations) are less than 50 Watts, so you need to make sure you get one specifically to use with your imported PlayStation 2. In other words: Get a PlayStation2-specific step-down or you'll blow your new toy sky-high.



What's what

1. PC Card slot
2. Cooling fan
3. On/off switch
4. 110V AC power in
5. Digital out
6. AV Multi Out
7. 2 x USB ports
8. S400 i-Link
9. 2x memory card ports
10. 2x joypad ports
11. PlayStation logo
12. DVD draw
13. Reset button
14. DVD eject button
15. SONY logo

Other extras



■ Plenty of extras and add-ons will undoubtedly be released for the PlayStation2. At present you can get extra Dual Shock 2 joy pads, various TV leads (the same as for the PlayStation), a little stand to add a bit of stability if you wish to store your PlayStation2 vertically, and a brand new multi-tap (pictured here) that looks like a mini PlayStation2, which you'll need to replace your old multi-tap, which won't work (see page 52 for details on what PlayStation stuff will work with the new console).

THE GAMES

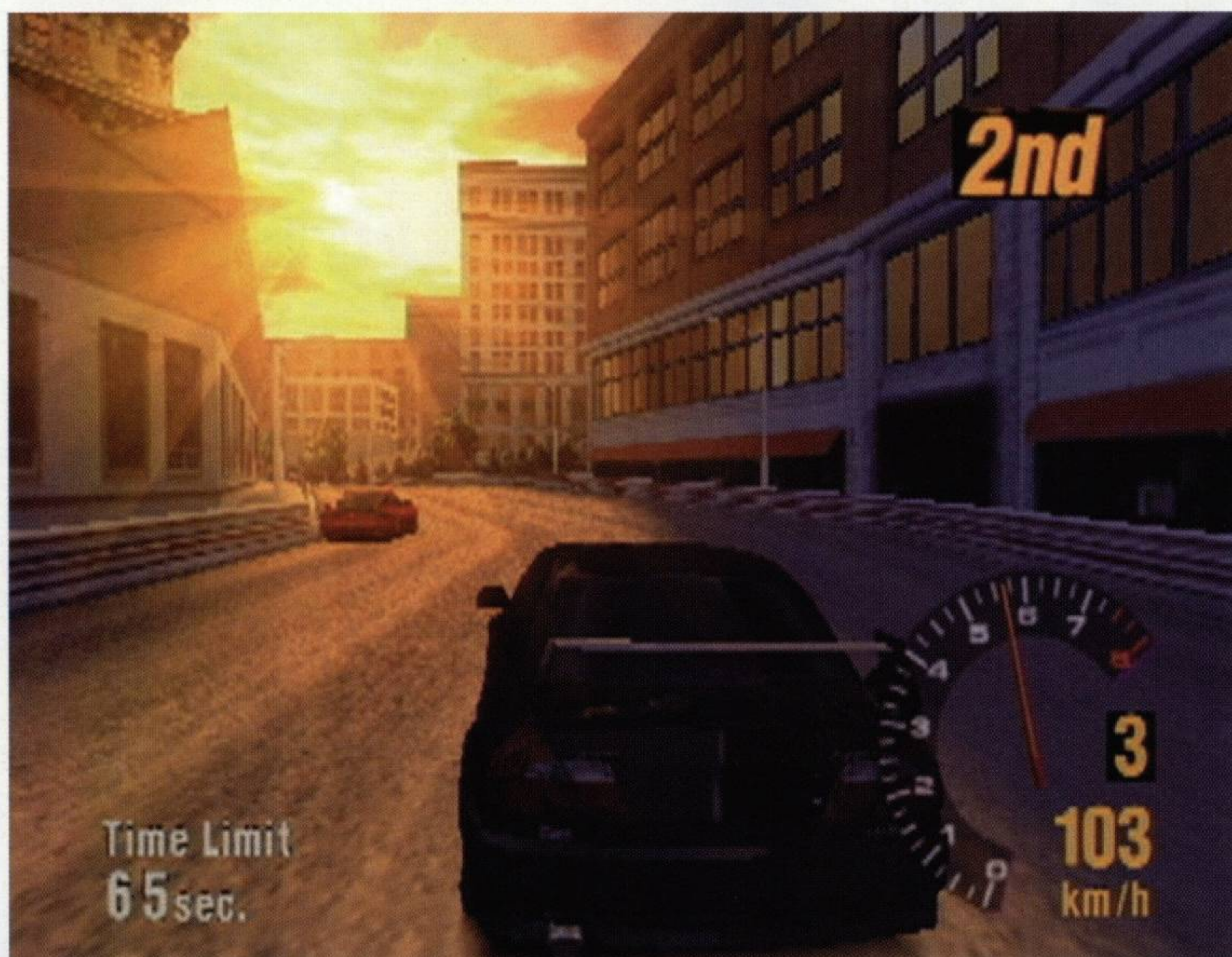
WHAT'S GOING TO BE STOKING THE PS2 FIRE IN THE COMING MONTHS.

Gran Turismo 2000

The greatest racer of all time roars onto PlayStation2.

Game info

- Publisher: Sony
- Developer: Polyphony Digital
- Players: 1-2



or, at least, too shiny. However, this is likely to be toned down for the final version – which, if you believe Sony, will look even more out of this world. The images shown here feature two million polygons. Quite impressive, you might think. But wait – Polyphony Digital reckons it will use ten million in the complete version, along with all manner of graphical touches to smooth off the edges of cars. What exactly those extra eight million polys will do remains something of a mystery. The insides of lighting fixtures, the tread on tyres, cup holders? Whatever, there's no doubt *GT 2000* is going to look a bit more than special. This, combined with the way the cars handle, means it will look and feel like there's a lot more going on under the shiny exterior. Even the demo makes you believe there's an engine and real weight to the car you're driving.

Details on the structure of the game remain unclear, although it's a good bet that there will be less cars. Rather than stretch itself a little thin on this *GT*, Polyphony Digital is going for quality over quantity and talks are taking place to secure Ferrari and Porsche licences. There's little doubt that the game will use a number of courses from *GT2*, but there'll also be host of new courses.

Gran Turismo 2000 looks like it will be first game to really put the PlayStation2 through its paces. Marrying the fantastic car handling of the PlayStation games and next gen photo realistic visuals would have been enough, but Polyphony Digital has taken it a bit further. Chances are *GT 2000* will be a launch title in the UK. So, if you haven't already, start saving those pennies now. **A**

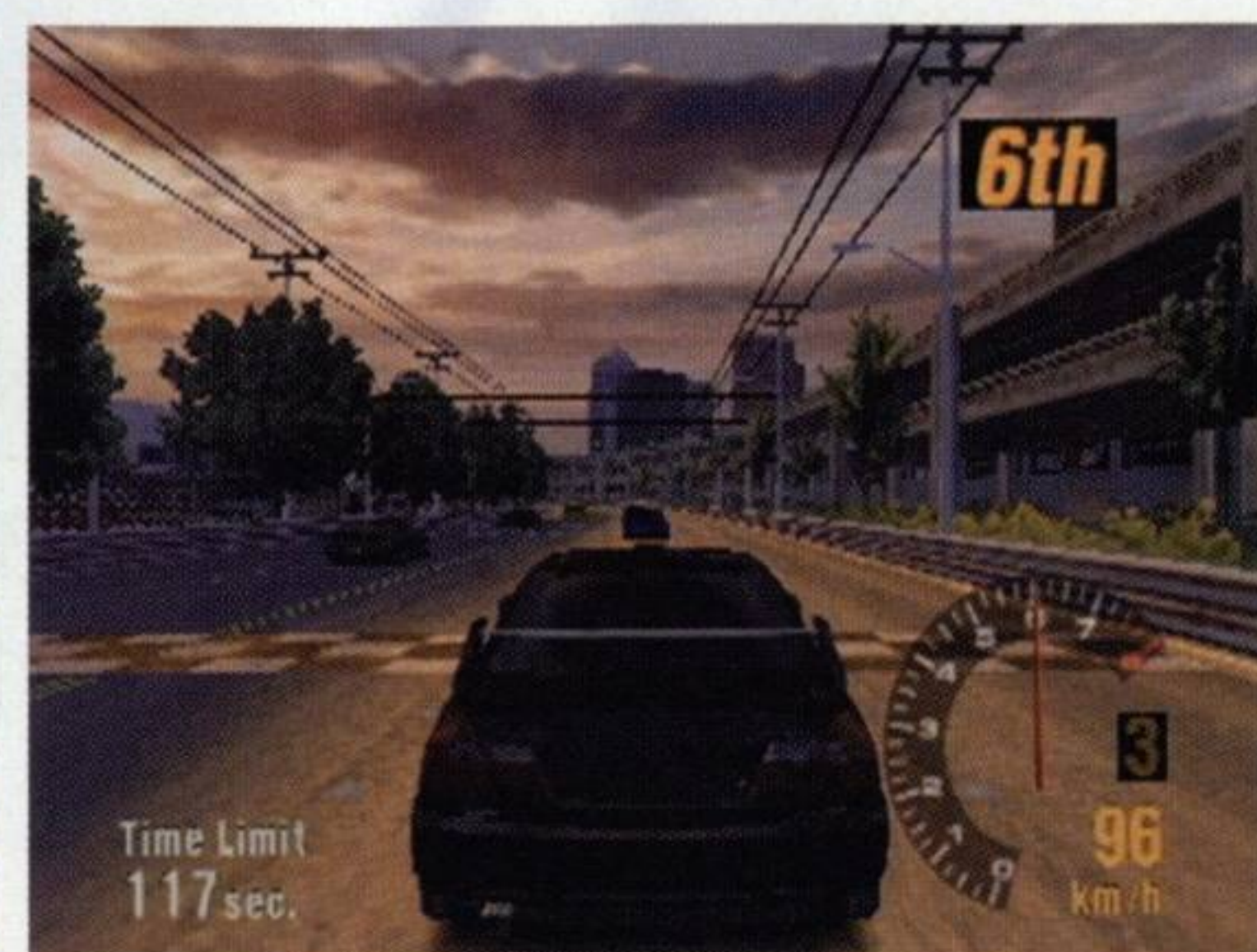
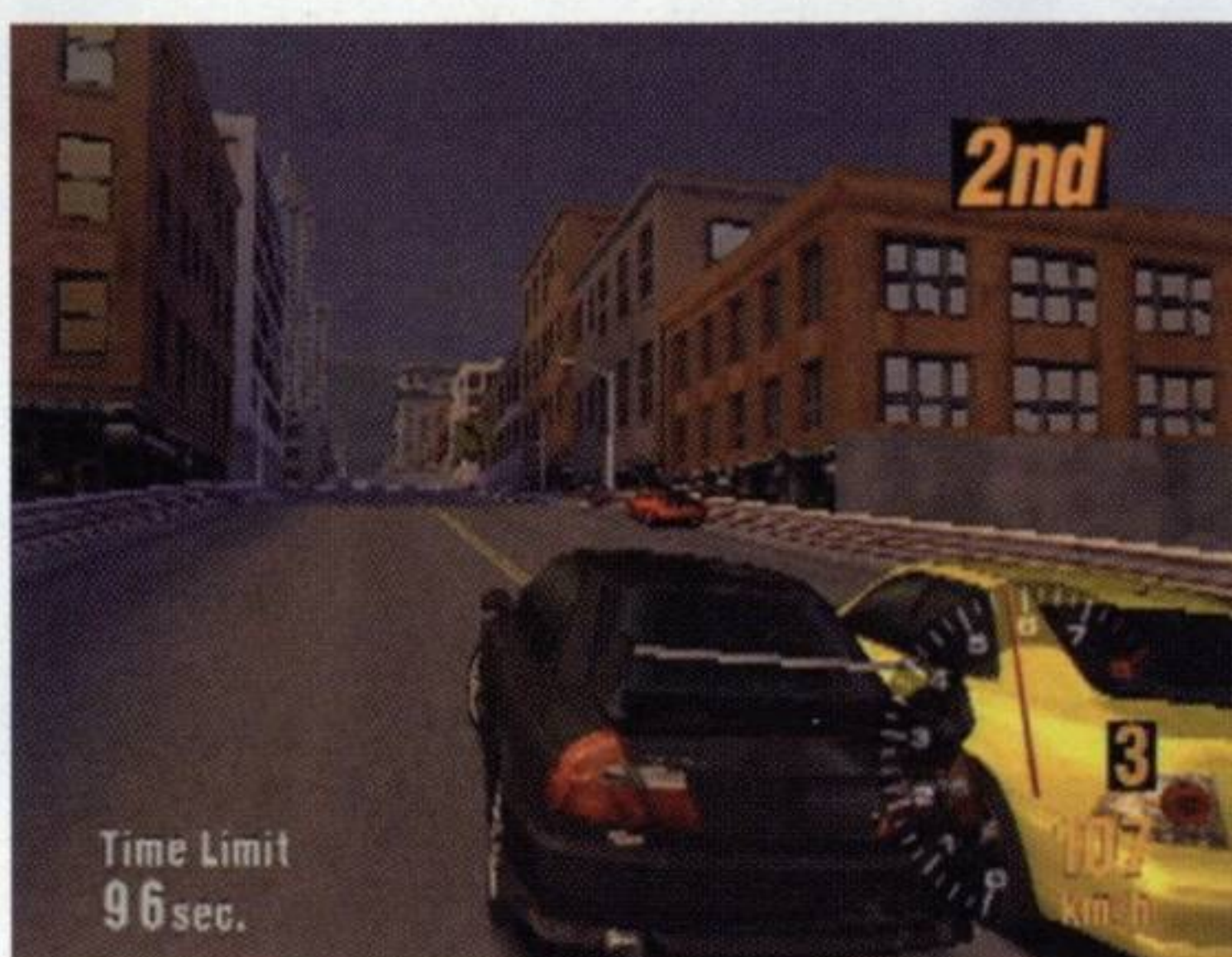
While *Gran Turismo 2* is undoubtedly the best racer the world has ever seen it does suffer from perhaps being a little rushed. *Gran Turismo 2000* will give the developers Polyphony Digital the perfect chance to set the record straight. PS2's

first guaranteed huge seller will include everything it wanted to do with *GT2*, but with some added next generation magic.

Just a quick play on a 20% complete demo was enough to allay any fears *Arcade* had that *GT 2000* will be nothing more than *GT2* with pretty graphics. The main improvement is with the car dynamics. Although the dynamics in the two PlayStation games looked for all the world to be spot on, Sony has decided to go that bit further. The company is boasting that it's got car handling down to 99% accuracy – this is, that playing *GT 2000* will be just like racing a real car. And playing the demo shows that there has been a

marked improvement. There's real drama when you're trying to slam your motor into a hairpin bend, with tyres screeching and the weight of the vehicle being transferred to the front. There really is nothing else quite like it.

Graphically *GT 2000* will be the pick of the first few titles on PS2 and, unsurprisingly, it's the cars that take the limelight. If there is a criticism then it's that the cars look too good,



Golf Paradise

Everybody's favourite golf game.

From the makers of Sony's popular cartoon golf game *Everybody's Golf* comes this PlayStation2 adaptation.

It will feature the same winning formula of loveable characters mixed with a surprisingly realistic simulation that made *Everybody's Golf* the

best golf game on PlayStation. Like its forebears, its success will rely on making playing a round of golf fun and being extremely easy to pick up and play while still boasting the sort of subtlety that even the most accurate golf sims would be jealous of.



Game info

- Publisher: Sony
- Developer: TE Soft
- Players: 1-4



World Soccer 2000

ISS gets the arcade treatment.



Better known as *ISS* in the UK, *World Soccer 2000* is the arcade version of Konami's premier footie game. The PS2 version will be closer to the arcade look of the N64 version than *ISS Pro Evolution*, but it will be the first *ISS* game to feature real player

and team names. From what *Arcade* has seen work still needs to be done on the graphics – while player animations are excellent, they look a bit basic. Hopefully this will be sorted out by the time *World Soccer 2000* makes its debut on these shores.



Game info

- Publisher: Konami
- Developer: KCET
- Players: 1-4

Armoured Core 2

Get on a mission to Mars.

Somewhat typically for a game featuring giant robots, *Armoured Core 2* is set in the distant future where humans now live on Mars. You'll play one of three sides, battling for the right to the red planet – a place where 40% of the earth's population

now resides. It'll all be mission-based stuff with robots fighting it out on desolate landscapes. You'll earn money to spend on upgrades by winning fights. It'll all be beautifully rendered with fantastic metallic Mechs, while still retaining a Japanese anime-look.



Game info

- Publisher: From Software
- Developer: From Software
- Players: 1-2



Kessen

Epic strategy battle-sim.



War game enthusiasts will be rattling their sabres in anticipation of this stunning strategy battle-sim.

Kessen boasts amazing graphics, with hundreds of beautifully rendered Japanese warriors in dazzling costumes fighting each

other with guns, lances, cannons and swords. It'll have the epic feel of an expensive movie, with an orchestral soundtrack and story-telling full motion video sequences. Unlike *Braveheart*, however, the battle scenes will have no blood and gore – or Scotsmen.



Game info

- Publisher: Koei
- Developer: Koei
- Players: 1

Fantavision

Where every night is Bonfire Night.

Now you can sit in your front room and go "Ooooh" and "Aaaah" to your heart's content with this kitsch fireworks game. Basically, it's *Missile Command* meets *Tetris*.

You'll link up different coloured fireworks and detonate them to

produce mesmerizing displays in environments, such as glitzy cities and outer space. It'll be fun and frantic, with a replay mode that'll enable you to watch your most spectacular displays with various effects, including a mind-expanding psychedelic mode.



Game info

- Publisher: Sony
- Developer: Sony
- Players: 1



Evergrace

The first RPG to hit PlayStation2.



One of the first role-playing games for PlayStation2, *Evergrace* promises to be a graphically impressive third-person 3D adventure. The backgrounds look amazing, with flowing fountains, branches waving in the breeze and incredibly

detailed buildings. There'll be the usual swordfighting and spell-casting, with real-time battles against a bizarre collection of fantasy creatures. Despite the impressive looks it doesn't appear to have the storyline or depth of *Final Fantasy 8* or *Zelda*.



Game info

- Publisher: From Software
- Developer: From Software
- Players: 1-2

DVD playback

If the DVD playback facility on PlayStation2 is any good, it could spell the end for VHS. Arcade rigged it up to the best kit available to see how it fared.



■ **The Kit:** Feast your eyes on the £17,000 of home cinema gear above. The main components of the system Arcade tested the PlayStation2 out on were a £5,000 Fujitsu plasma screen TV, five Clan speakers worth £4,925, a £3,800 Lexicon digital decoder for the surround sound and a Parasound power amp worth £2,500 beefed up the sound to an almost deafening level. While it's unlikely you'll plug your PlayStation2 into such a monster of a system, given the chance it would be rude not to, wouldn't it?

Whatever the final price of the UK PlayStation2 turns out to be, you'd be a hard-nosed sour graper to deny it won't be value for money. Not content with the sexiest bit of polygon-pushing kit this side of NASA, Sony has blessed the PlayStation2 with the ability to play DVD movies.

In the light of this, a trip down to the local Radfords was in order to sample the delights of demo rooms equipped with the latest digital decoders, widescreen TVs and more speakers than an Iron Maiden concert. Arcade tested PlayStation2 on two different set ups – the first was mid-range, comprising of a 29" widescreen TV, a digital decoder, five speakers and a sub woofer. The second was the kind of thing only reserved for the most fanatical of home cinema buffs – it was worth

Surround sound in games

The advantages of surround sound for videogames are the same as for movies. Imagine a first person shooter where you can't see your enemy but you can hear him running up behind you, or a football game where you hear the chants coming from different sections of the crowd. The whole point of surround sound is that it helps immerse you still further in the videogame experience.

around £17,000 (see above for full specifications).

It should be pointed out that playing DVDs on PlayStation2 is a bonus. Playing games is what it's all about. With this in mind, Arcade was pleasantly surprised by the quality of the picture. In a direct comparison with a £350 Pioneer DVD player showing *The Matrix* there

was little difference. The picture on the Pioneer DVD looked slightly more solid and was better defined, but the PlayStation2 kept pace with only a hint of wooliness on the edges of faces and foreground objects. Not bad for a so-called bonus feature.

Best of all was the sound PlayStation2 was capable of. Surround sound is always impressive, but the music, dialogue and sound effects from PlayStation2 were as good as any of the dedicated, pricier DVD players. Of course the sound quality depends heavily on the amplifier and speakers it's played through, but head-to-head with a £1,600 DVD player there was no discernible difference.

The best possible sound and picture quality is currently via S-Video (for the picture) and using the Digital Out for sound. However, PlayStation2 has two other modes of picture quality – RGB, which allows for better definition, and a Y Cb/Pb Cr/Pr mode, which splits the signal into more basic components for the best picture quality – although you won't be able to enjoy this until HDTV becomes widely available (which may not be for five or six years).

The bottom line is that if you're serious about DVD, you're going to buy a dedicated player anyway. But if you're after movie playback that's streets ahead of VHS, the PlayStation2 is just the ticket – and that's without mentioning the games.

■ A big shout to John and Richard at Radfords for all their help. All the kit shown is available from Radfords on 01225 446245.

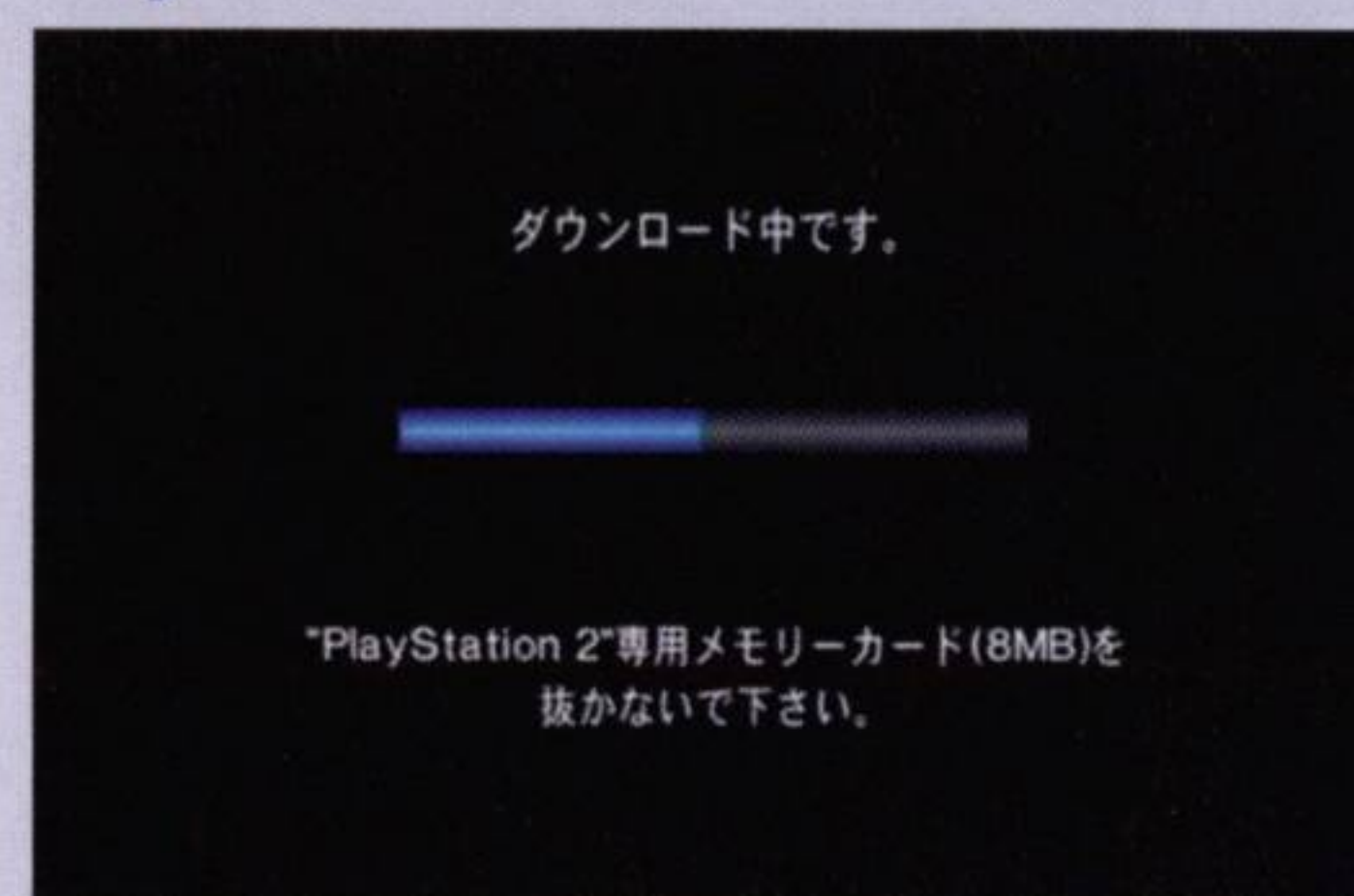
DVD specifications

Sound options on PlayStation2.

- **Dolby Pro Logic**
An early form of surround sound – this provides stereo in the front two speakers and mono sound in the rear speakers. Not true surround sound, but still very good.
- **Dolby Digital 5.1**
Full on surround sound – digitally recorded and reproduced, this is the best quality sound available on DVD at the moment.
- **DTS**
Closely linked with LucasFilm's THX technology, designed to standardise digital sound quality, DTS Digital is a different system to Dolby Digital but offers a similar quality of sound.

How it works

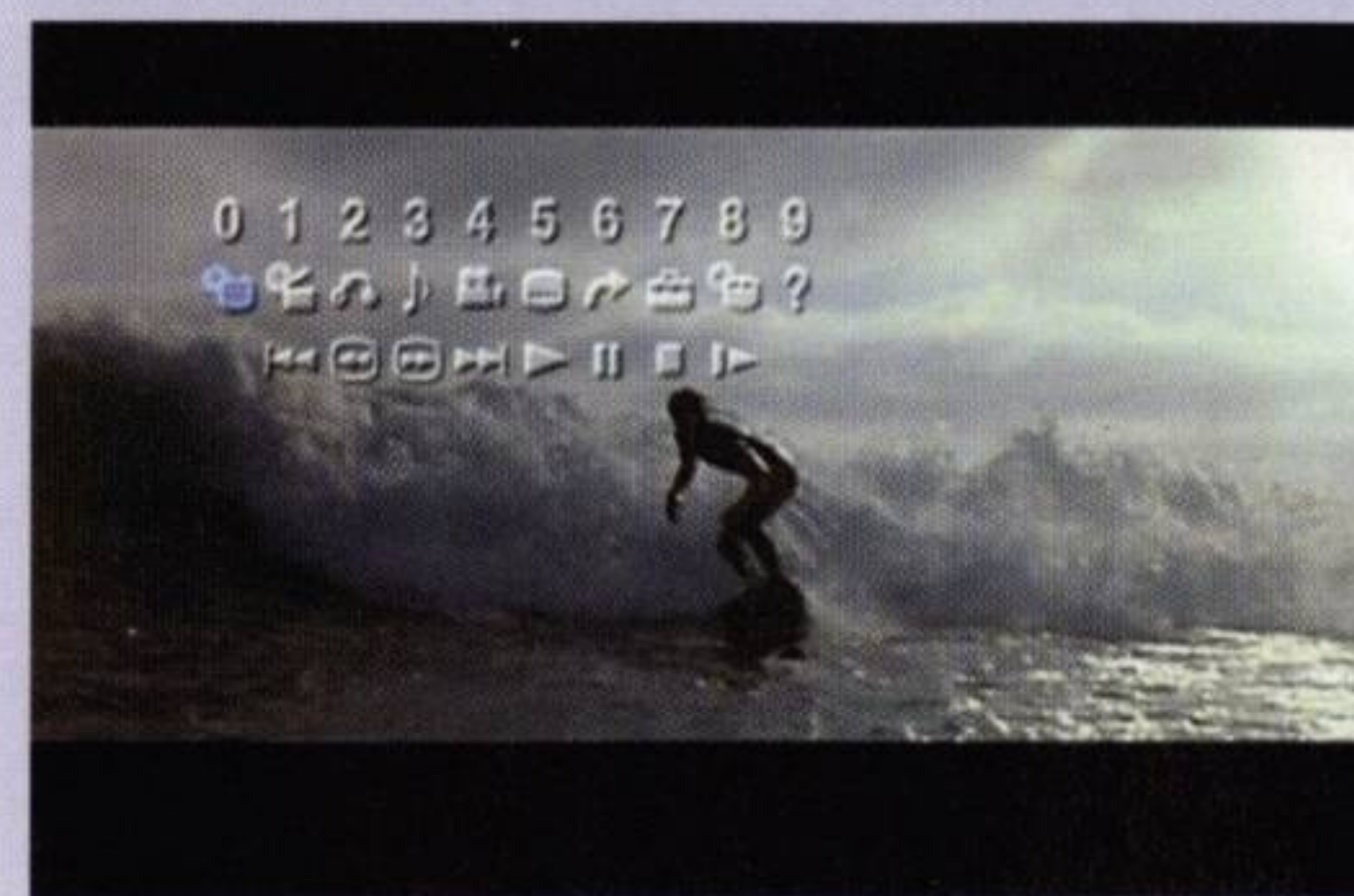
PlayStation2 DVD nuts and bolts.



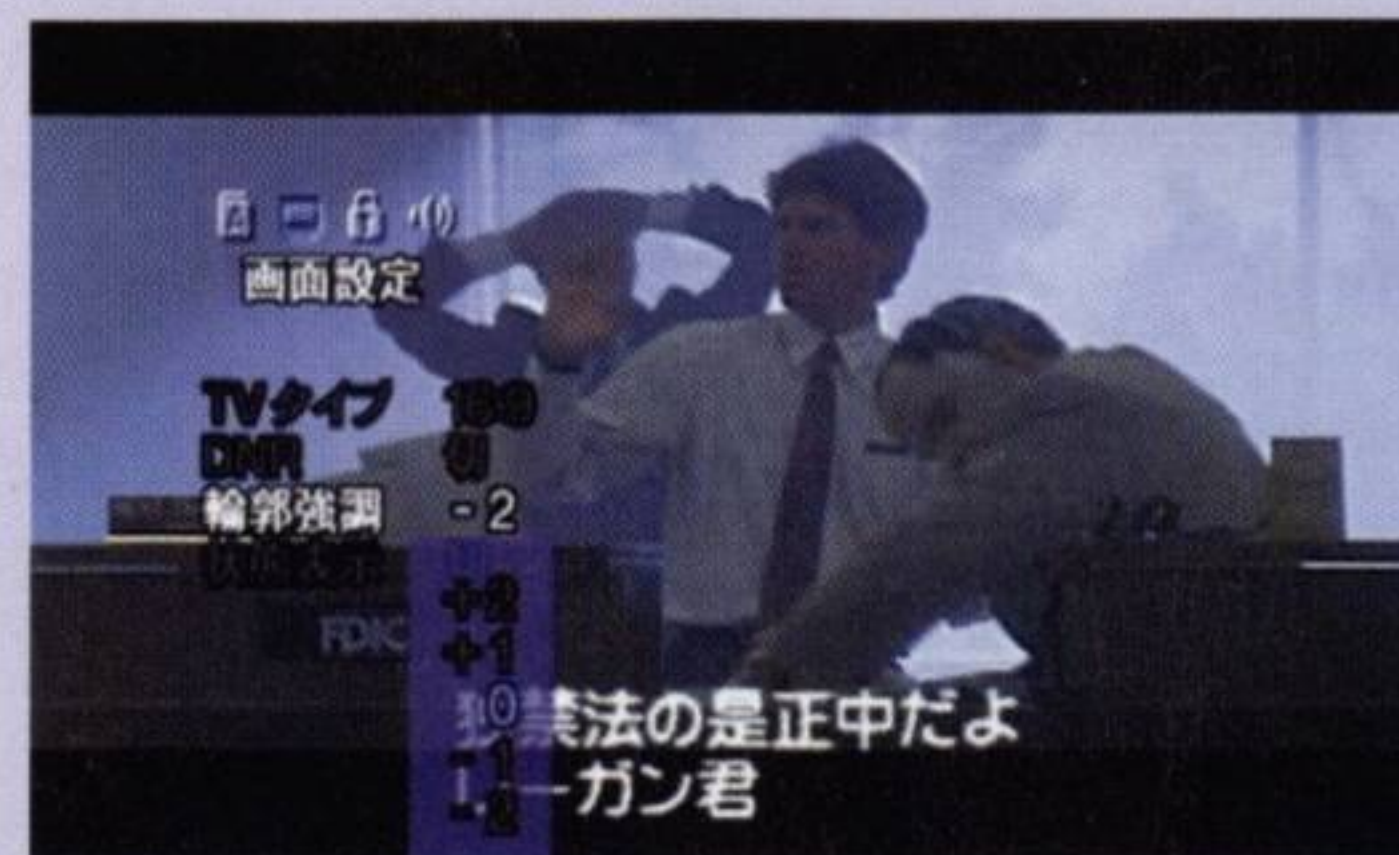
■ Using the Utilities Disc that is supplied with PlayStation2 you must first download drivers onto a memory card.



■ Insert a DVD and the PlayStation2 recognises it immediately and begins playback.



■ Remote control is handled on the joypad – shoulder buttons rewind and fast forward and the other buttons work the menu.



■ Pressing Select brings up the DVD menu – from here all the usual DVD functions can be accessed. Changing soundtracks, subtitles, multiple camera angles and any special extra features.

Start up and option screens

Fed up of the dull intro screen you get every time you fire up your PlayStation? Get ready for something new.

Fears that videogamers would be subjected to another five years of the PlayStation intro screen have been laid firmly to rest with the arrival of PlayStation2. Instead, Sony has gone for a decidedly

futuristic look, all shimmering crystals, purple and blue lighting, ambient, watery sound effects and more than just a touch of magic. Unexpectedly eschewing the company's previous functional

approach to design, this is something for the new millennium: a truly modern computer interface which also manages to give PlayStation2 a bit of a mystical feel that is, erm, out of this world.

Start up

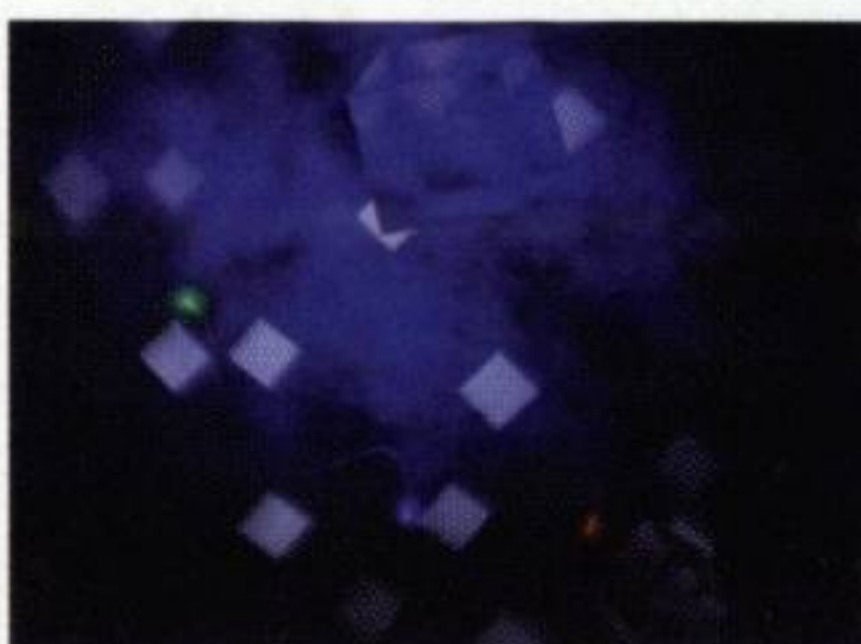
What does PlayStation2 look like when you switch it on?



■ From out of the darkness swirl some strange cube-like objects, accompanied by a resonating, eerie chime.



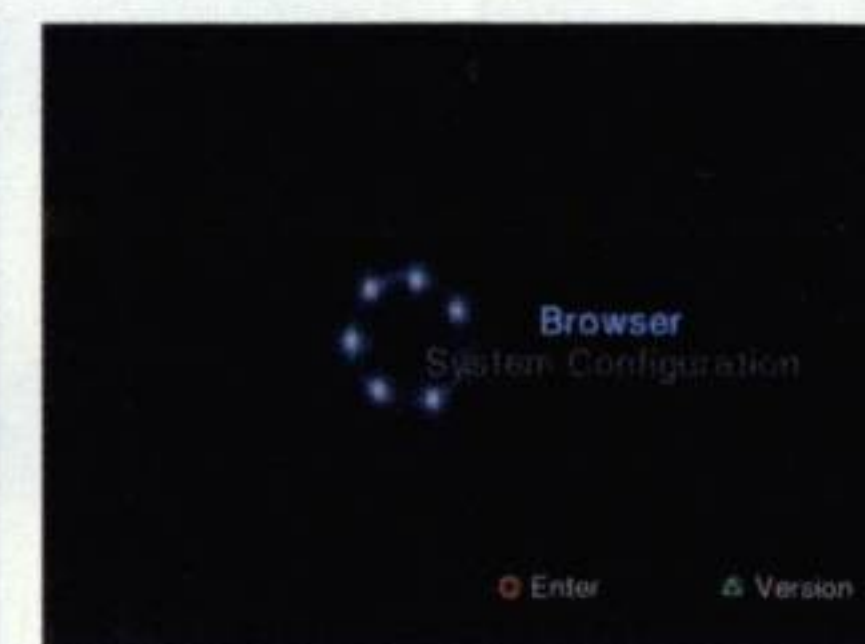
■ The legendary words "Sony Computer Entertainment" hove into view and the background becomes solid. You watch in awe as specks of coloured light dart around in the fog below.



■ Then as suddenly as it appeared, this strange, landscape is gone; the logo fades and you seem to accelerate through the ether. From out of the blackness you see strange lights dancing.



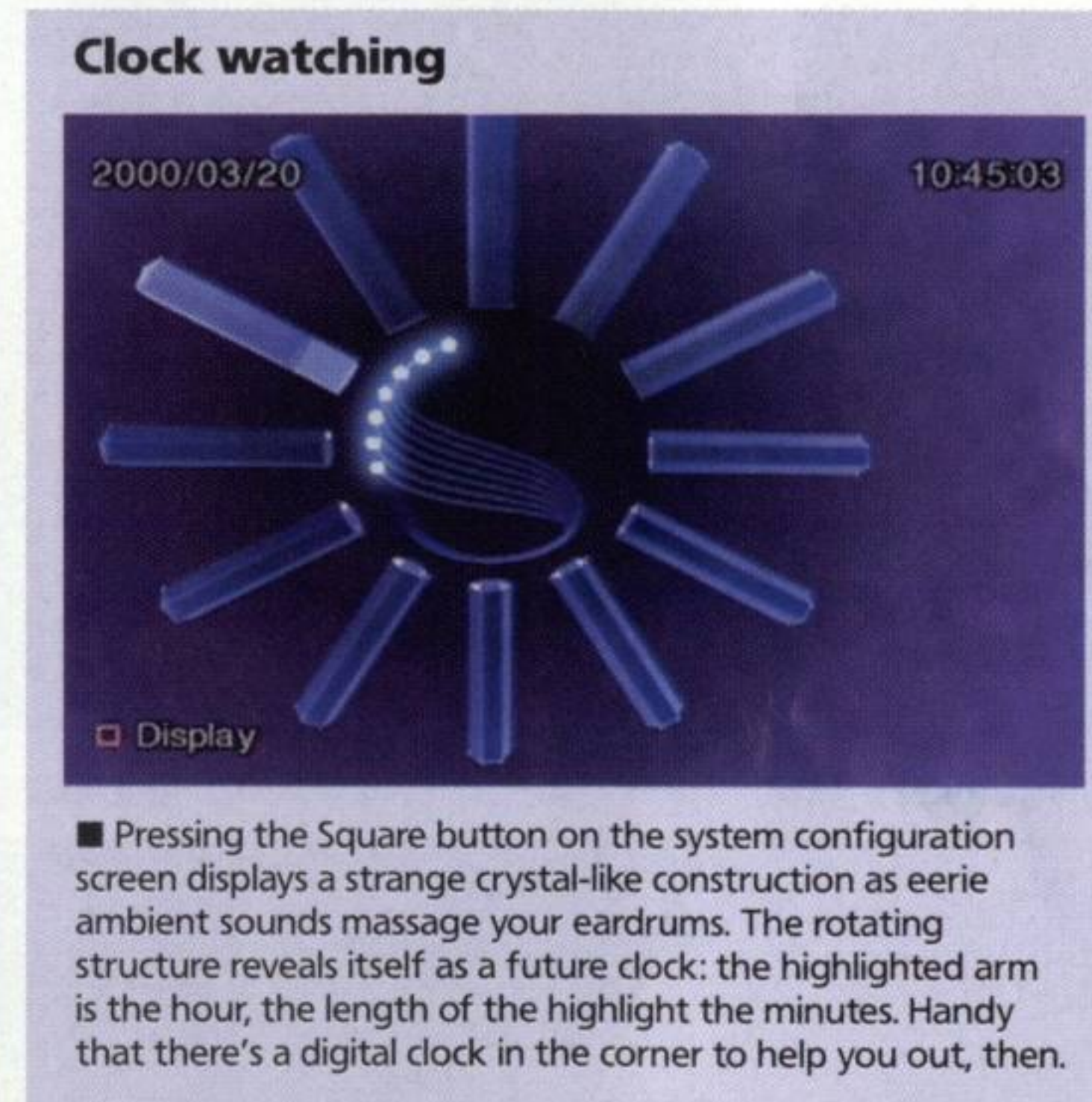
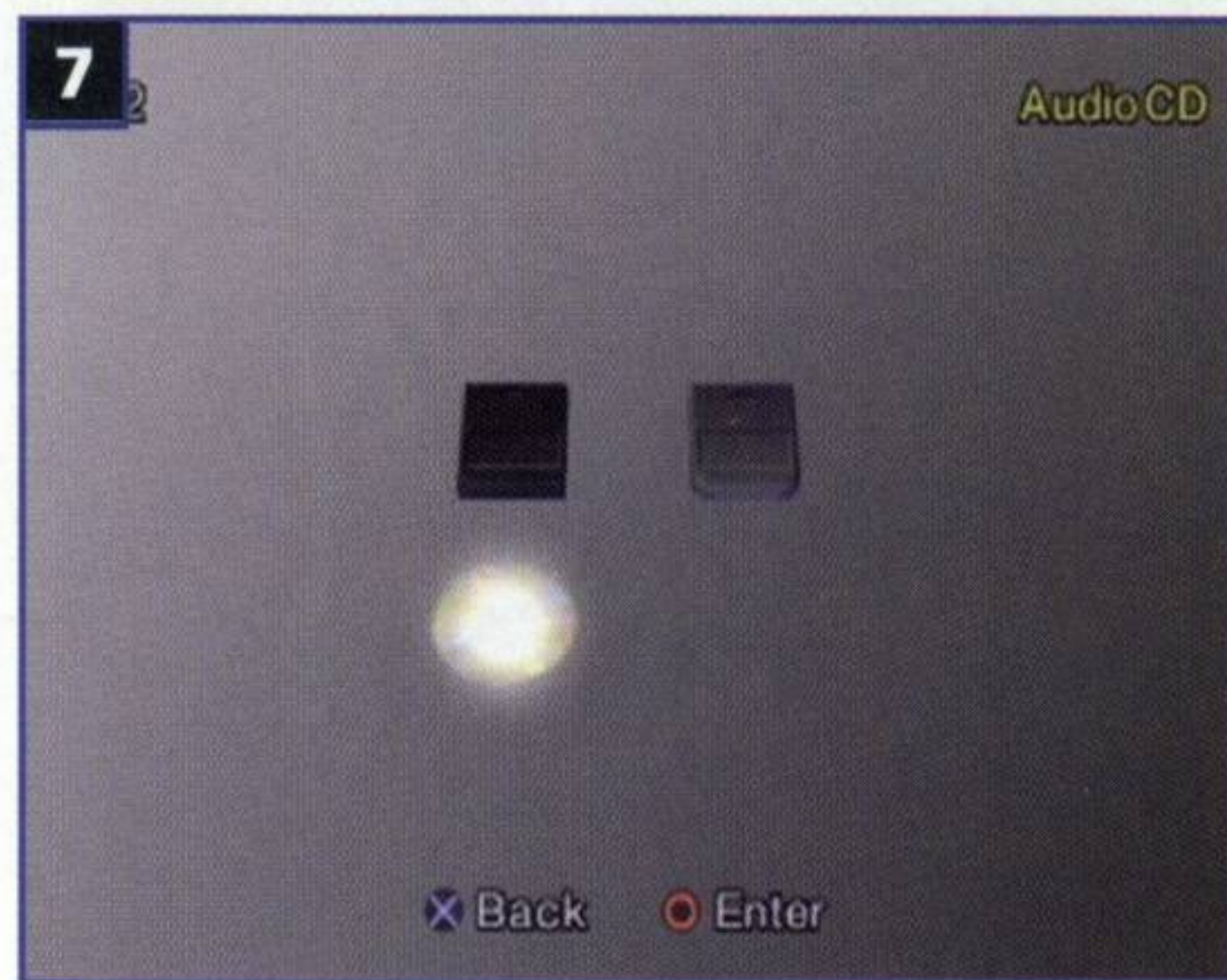
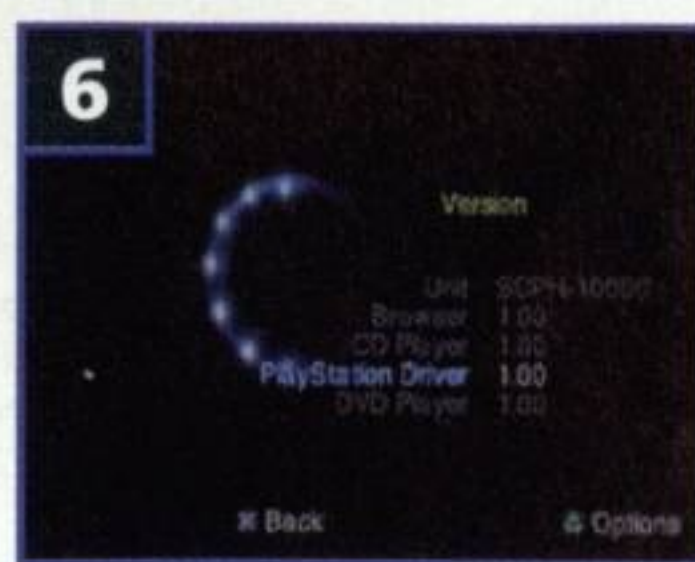
■ The lights circle and the picture begins to focus...



■ ...revealing the PlayStation2's main menu.

Option screens

A close look at the internal workings of the PlayStation2 interface.



1. Entering the system configuration reveals a blue/purple background. Lights move around the centre of a strange out-of-focus 3D construction. Five translucent cubes float on the left of the screen, representing the five options. Woo. First off you can change the time and date.

2. Next up is the screen size. The options are: 4:3 ratio, full screen and widescreen.

3. Sound set up is next – choose whether to have digital out on or off. Digital out gives you surround sound, so long as your PlayStation2 is connected to an appropriate amplifier and the DVD/game has surround sound as an option.

4. Choose between RGB or Y Cb/Pb Cr/Pr for the picture output. The former is for normal televisions, the latter for high resolution monitors and HDTV – which won't be

available for another five or six years.

5. Finally, Sony has included a handy option to change the interface to English. This doesn't affect the text or language in games.

6. This lets you check which version of the PlayStation2 operating system you have and which DVD and PlayStation enhancement drivers are installed (see page 52 for

more on this). The Japanese PlayStation2 will play both Japanese and American DVDs at present, but this is in the process of changing as Sony introduces new drivers.

7. The browser enables you to see what you've got plugged into your PlayStation2. As you can see here you have a PlayStation2 memory card, a PlayStation memory card and an audio CD.

8. The memory card screen. Typically PlayStation2 memory saves are illustrated with an animated 3D icon (*Ridge Racer 5*, top middle), saves from PlayStation games (*Final Fantasy 8*, bottom left) stay the same but move from side to side. A little bit.

9. Getting info on a game save gives you the last time it was updated and the option to delete or copy it to another memory card.

10. The tracks on an audio CD are represented, as are most things on PlayStation2, by solid blocks.

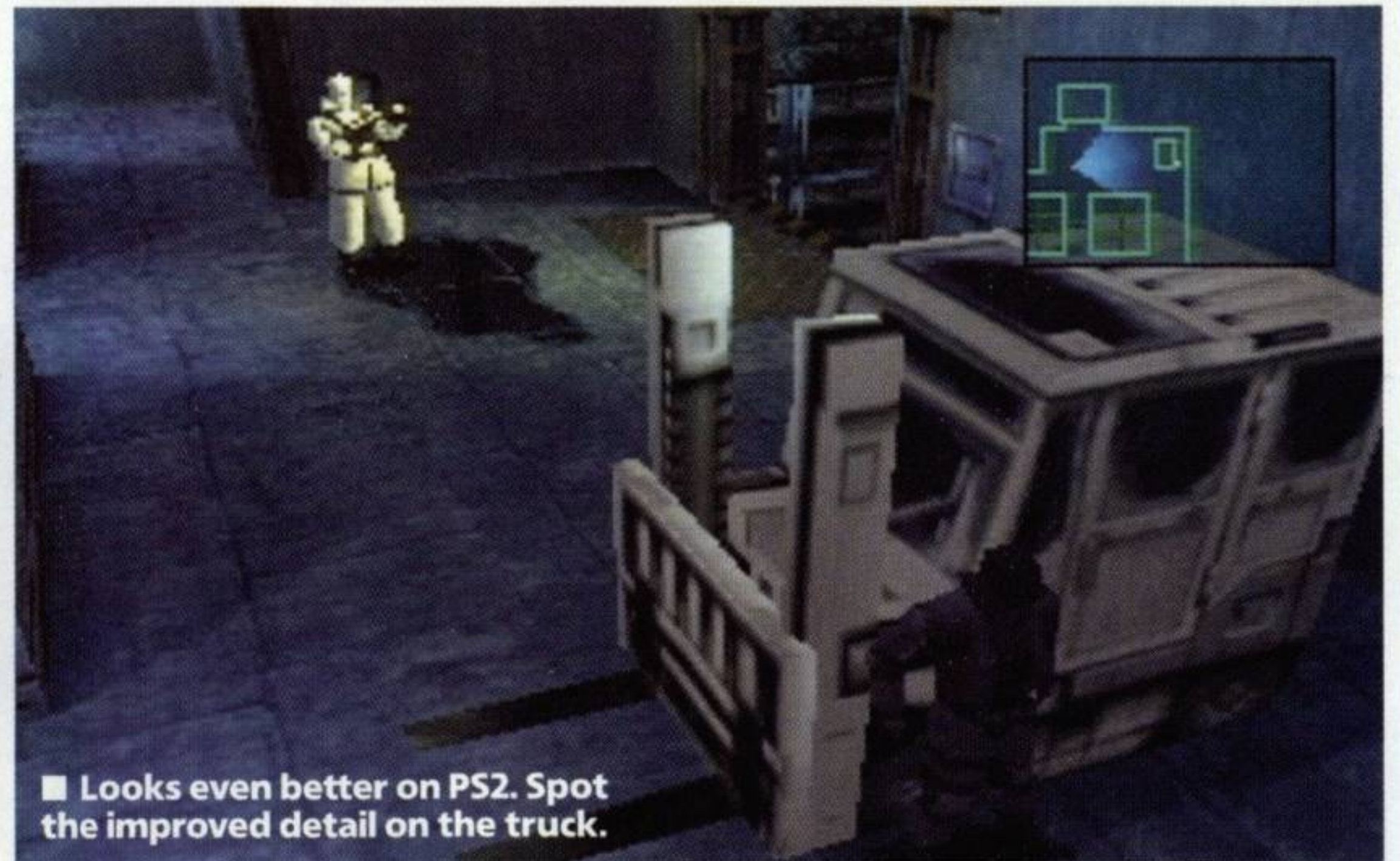
11. Playing a track brings up a rotating cube; fast forwarding makes it spin faster. There's no sign of a musical shape generator like the one that came with the original PlayStation. Probably because no one ever used it after the first week.

Old games

While you may be on the verge of binning your PlayStation, there's no need to consign your favourite black discs to the dumpster. All your old games will be compatible with PlayStation2, and – yes – some will look even better.



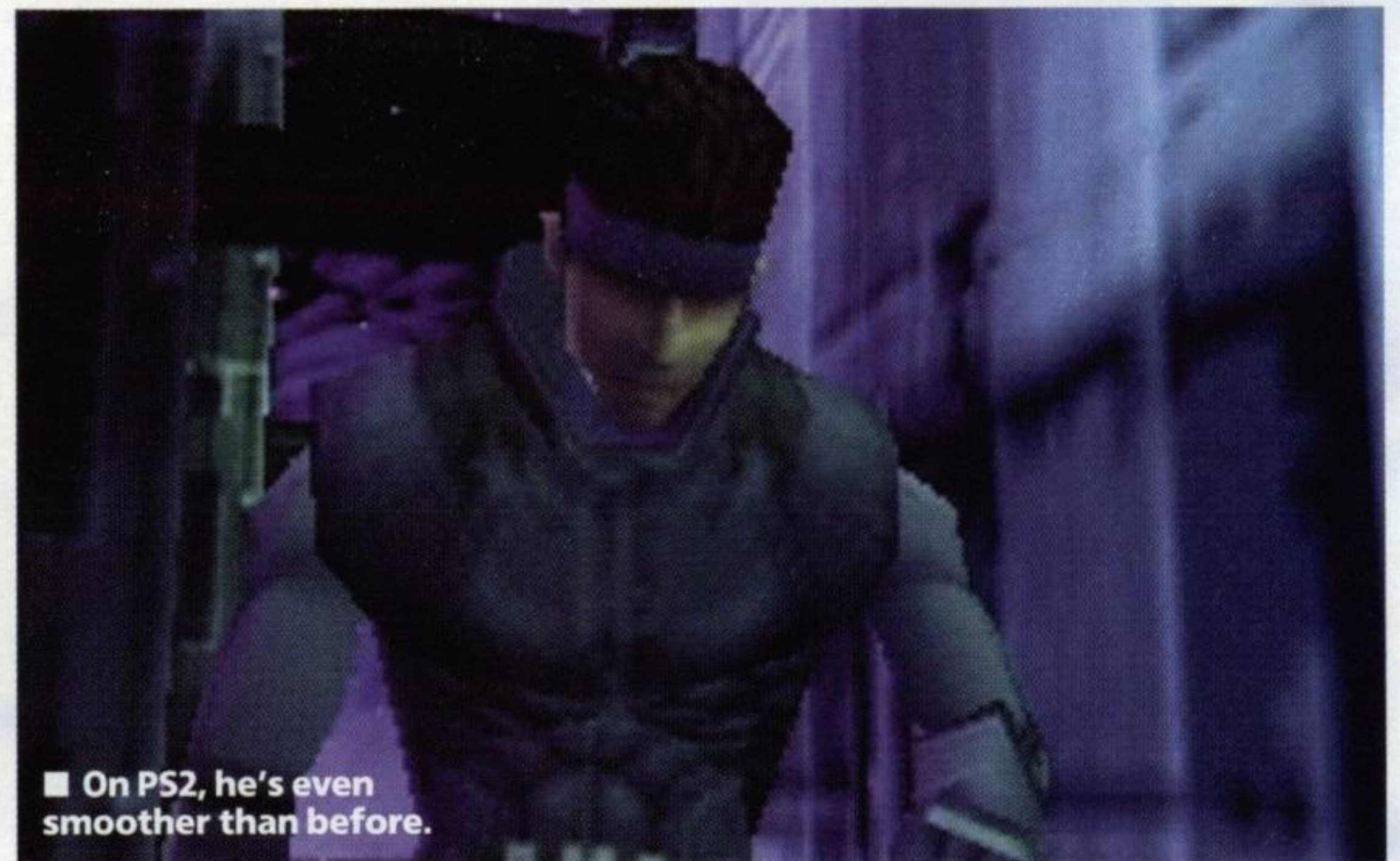
■ *Metal Gear Solid* on the PlayStation. Looks good.



■ Looks even better on PS2. Spot the improved detail on the truck.

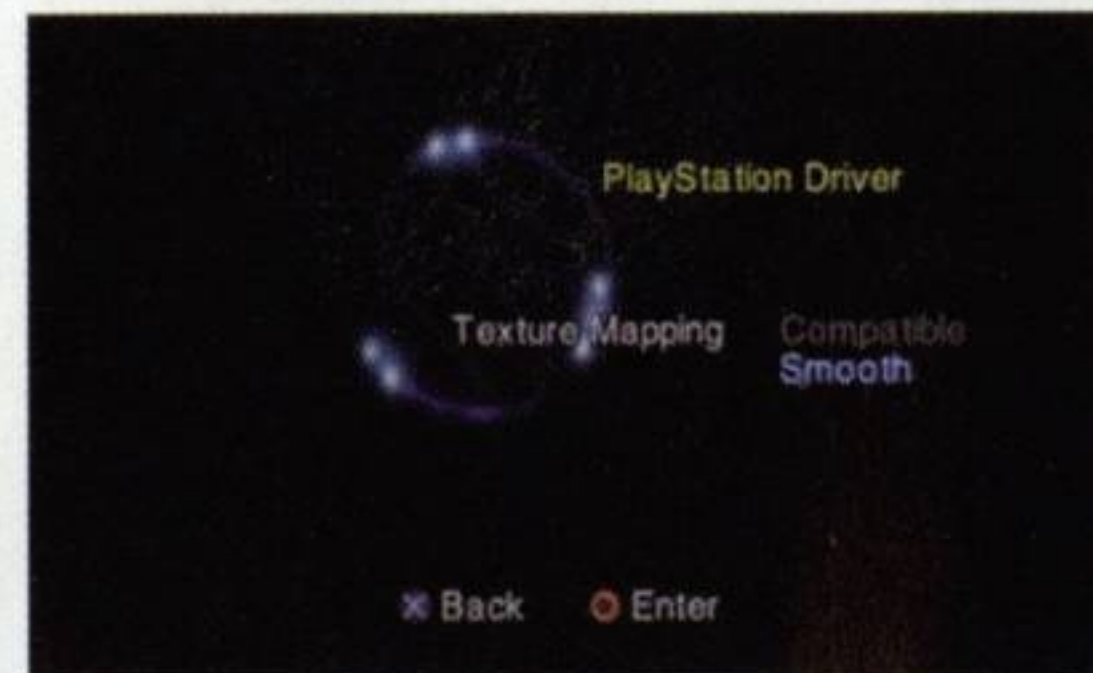


■ Solid Snake on the original PlayStation.



■ On PS2, he's even smoother than before.

■ (Below) Browse through the PlayStation Driver screen on the Option menu to enable the faster loading time and improved graphics.



Ever since the PlayStation2 specs were announced, talk of backwards compatibility with old PlayStation games has been on the lips of the videogaming public. It was a sigh of relief, therefore, that greeted news that all your old games would still work on the PlayStation2.

But – fantastically – that's not all, because many PlayStation games actually look and play better. Selecting the PlayStation Driver option from the main option screen on PS2 gives you two variables to tweak – disc speed and texture mapping. These are only relevant to original PlayStation games.

By turning the disc speed from compatible to fast, the loading times of many PlayStation games are slashed. The CD drive in a

PlayStation runs at double speed, that is it spins the disc twice as fast as an audio CD. The DVD drive in the PS2, however, is 24 speed. So although there are still loading pauses when loading PS2 games (because more information is being passed from CD to CPU), loading times are greatly reduced, theoretically loading 12 times faster.

But that's not all, because the PlayStation Driver also offers you the opportunity to turn the texture mapping from Compatible to Smooth. PlayStation graphics have always been a little rough around the edges, but the PS2, like the N64, has special graphics chips to smooth out edges and many games look better as a result.

The most notable improvement *Arcade* could detect was when running the fabulous *Metal Gear Solid* on PlayStation2.

The background scenery appears to have considerably more depth as PlayStation2 blurs less relevant objects, causing the more important stuff to look sharper. For example, the crates on the first level, which usually look jagged and clumsy, look a whole lot smoother. As you duck round the corner from a guard, you can also see more detail on his uniform. The guards even walk more convincingly... well, maybe.

The replays in *Ridge Racer Type 4* and *Gran Turismo 2* are also a lot cleaner, with no polygon break-up and far fewer jagged lines. It's a bit like taking your glasses off and giving them a good clean. So, all in all, not only can you play lovely new games on your new PlayStation2, but it will also spruce up your old titles to boot. Now that really has to be a result.



Old accessories

In with the new and out with the old? Not necessarily.

Luckily, all the PlayStation add-ons *Arcade* could lay its hands on (other than the multi-tap) still work on the PlayStation. There's a new multi-tap that looks like a mini PlayStation2, but there's only one game – *Street Fighter EX3* – that has a multi-player game for three or more. Although the Dual Shock works fine, the refinements in the Dual Shock 2 (namely the analogue buttons) are likely to be utilised more and more in games, forcing the original Dual Shock into redundancy. PlayStation 1Mb memory cards still work, but only for games where the saves will fit. *Ridge Racer 5*, for example, requires an 8Mb card to fit any game saves on.



■ Original multi-taps don't work on PS2

Will it work?

PlayStation Add-on	PlayStation2 compatible?
Multi-tap	No
Dual Shock 1	Yes
1Mb Memory Card	Yes
Unofficial 8Mb Memory Card	Yes
Light gun eg G-Con	Yes
Steering Wheel eg Logic3	Yes

Where's it gonna fit?

Your PlayStation2 will need a home, after all.

PlayStation2 is shaped like two thin boxes stuck on top of each other, a 301x178x40mm box stuck on top of a 270x157x38mm one. It's longer and thinner than the old PlayStation, but considerably deeper and a lot heavier. It's a lot bigger than the Dreamcast, but at least it

doesn't look like a Breville Pie Magic. But – the big question remains – where are you going to put it? On the floor next to your telly is the traditional spot, but with its sleek hi-fi friendly looks, you could try on top of your hi-fi, although this does make your PlayStation2 look

a bit small. Better, perhaps, to stand the thing on its side (with the plastic PlayStation logo swivelled accordingly) on a shelf somewhere, or go the whole home entertainment system hog and proudly flaunt it under your 29 inch television with your digital box and hi-fi.



Buying a PlayStation2

If the thought of waiting another five or six months to actually own a PlayStation2 is too much to bear, worry not because Arcade is here to show you exactly where you can get your hands on one right now.

The only way to make the leap into the next generation of console gaming right now is to import a PlayStation2 from Japan. If you don't fancy a trip out East yourself, there are plenty of dedicated videogame importers in the UK willing to sell you a PlayStation2 with all the accessories and deliver it to your home at a substantial mark-up from the Japanese retail price.

Bear in mind that the act of importing a PlayStation2 to sell in another country isn't always legally endorsed by the Japanese government. The back of the PlayStation2 box clearly states: "As a purchaser of PlayStation2 console... you are prohibited to export these products without authorization by the Minister of International Trade and Industry except under special circumstances which meet the requirements of the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law."

Importers take the law into their own hands, and by extension, so do you when buying a console from them. It follows that while most game importers are reliable companies who simply want to fill your house with the latest videogame thrills direct from Japan, a few of them are

cowboys. Arcade, therefore, can't vouch for the reputation of any firm listed below, all right?

It's also worth remembering that your PlayStation2's warranty is invalid outside Japan, so if you blow the insides by using the wrong step down (see right), or if it somehow malfunctions through no fault of your own, you've got no comeback and will be seriously out of pocket.

As far as prices go, it's best to shop around. The price of an imported PlayStation2 is dropping week by week, depending on availability, and each importer has their own pricing structure. Most prices include a game of your choice, a step down and delivery to your home, but it's worth seeing what kind of deal you can cut.

At the time of writing, PlayStation2 consoles were selling at anything between £550 and £700. The cheapest quote Arcade got was for £480 from Run Pacific (details below), which imports its gaming wares via Hong Kong. By the time you read this, prices should have dropped significantly and anyone selling a PlayStation2 for more than £500 at that point will probably be stitching you up like a kipper.



Step down

■ A step down is a device which transforms the 240-volt power supply which comes out of your British plug socket, down to 110 volts, a more suitable level for Japanese electronic equipment. If you plug an ordinary power lead directly into a Japanese PlayStation2, you're likely to melt the connection, thus leaving you with a £600 doorstop.

Most importers are throwing in a free step down transformer with the PlayStation2 package, but unlike other imported consoles, there is an extra complication. The power output of a PlayStation2 is 50 watts, more than twice that of a PlayStation or Dreamcast. Step downs used to power other consoles are generally not capable of running a PlayStation2, and by using them you run the risk of the step down burning out, creating a nasty stench of molten plastic.

It's best to ensure before you buy that your importer can provide a step down rated at 50 watts or higher. Arcade obtained its step down from CPC (01772 654455).



PlayStation2 importers:

Project K
0208 508 1328
www.projectk.com

Run Pacific
0870 852 2676 2382
www.runpacific.com

EuroAsia/Smart Products
0208 890 3900
www.smartproducts.co.uk

Games Terminal
0870 606 0054
www.gameterminal.com

Axen
0208 909 3344
www.axen.com

Department 1/Computer Exchange
020 7916 8440
www.cex.co.uk





WHAT DO THE PEOPLE THINK?

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT, REALLY. GO OUT ONTO THE STREET AND LET THE GREAT BRITISH PUBLIC PUT PLAYSTATION2 THROUGH ITS PACES.



When the PlayStation2 arrived in the Arcade office at the end of last month you could cut the atmosphere with a spoon, so heavy was the fug of expectation. Since then, the team has been rigorously testing every aspect of Sony's new baby; fondling its over-sized fan port, wondering what the socket marked "S400" does and perpetually worrying that it's broken, only

to realise that the power switch at the back hasn't been turned on.

Games-wise, views around the office (see page 56) have been pretty mixed. But why not give the people who are thinking about forking out hard-earned cash for the pleasure of owning the latest console a look at what it can do, and hear their views? All Arcade need do is stick a desk outside the office, dangle an extension lead out the window and wait for some people to walk past. It might just work...





Verdict

Generally, perceptions of PlayStation2 fell into two camps. Half the people who played seemed unable to tell much difference between the new and old PlayStations, while the rest thought it was 100 times better than anything they'd ever seen.

The games on offer on the Arcade desk were *Ridge Racer 5*, *Street Fighter EX3* and a demo of *Gran Turismo 2000*. Although technically impressive, none of these push PlayStation2 to its limits by any means. Perhaps as a result of this, videogames rookies were left a little underwhelmed. However, those with a keen eye for their interactive entertainment were able to pick out the clues as to the underlying power of PlayStation2, noting the lack of pop-up, smooth light-sourcing and incredible, cheek-flapping, processing speed.

The PlayStation2 is a phenomenal beast, and the Japanese launch titles only scratch the surface of its mammoth potential. It is – as they say in hi-fi shops – a serious bit of kit, and will only go from strength to strength. Keep on reading for the Arcade team's views on PlayStation2 (page 57), and the chance to win one of the first UK launch models on page 58.

Hit, miss or maybe?

What future for PlayStation2? The public speaks.

So, what was the overall consensus? PlayStation2 – the best thing since sliced *Space Invaders*, or simply a nudge on from the Dreamcast? First impressions are lasting impressions, after all.



Yolanda
■ 21, student
■ Maybe

"It doesn't look much different to the PlayStation, really. I've played *Ridge Racer Type 4*, and *Ridge Racer 5* looks the same to me, except the tracks appear a bit sunnier now. It seems like it's just a plain PlayStation with a DVD to me, really. What does everybody else reckon?"



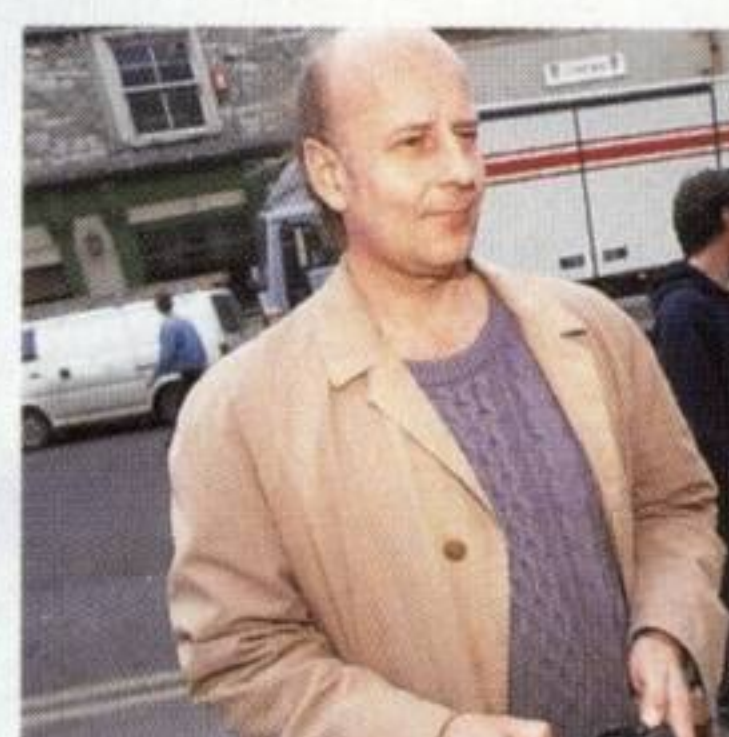
Alex
■ 28, window cleaner
■ Hit

"I've been waiting a long time for the PlayStation2. You really need a game like *Resident Evil* to see what the machine is capable of, but it doesn't seem to lock up and freeze like the Dreamcast does sometimes on things like *Crazy Taxi*. Which is a good start, obviously."



Rachel & Daniel
■ 17 & 17, students
■ Hit

[Daniel] "I loved it. *Street Fighter EX3* looks a lot better than *Tekken* – it just seems instantly to be a whole lot more playable. The graphics are much better, much faster. I'm definitely going to get one." [Rachel] "My younger brother's going to get one, so I'll be able to play on his."



Michael
■ 41
■ Hit

"I'd like to have one, but it's like fillet steak – it looks like I'd like to have one, but I think I'll go to the chip shop instead. It's all a question of price, really. I've got bills to pay, but if I had enough money, then yes." [Starting up a game of *Ridge Racer 5*] Which buttons are the handlebars?"



Norman & June
■ 68 & 67
■ Maybe

[Norman] "It made me feel young. I can't even put the video on, you know. My wife does that." [June] "He's hopeless." [Norman] "I had a go on a Karaoke machine once, but this is much better. In my day you didn't have computers, it was all in your head. But I'm up for it."



Rowen, David & Chris
■ 13, 13 & 14, skiving school
■ Hit

[Rowen] "I've been reading all about it, and it's brilliant. I think everyone's going to like it." [David] "It's a lot better than the Dreamcast." [Chris] "The Dreamcast slows down and cuts out bits. The games are much better on the PlayStation, so PlayStation2 is gonna rock."



Carlo & Mark
■ 33 & 12, dustman & schoolboy on lunchbreak
■ Hit

[Carlo] "This is tonnes better than the PlayStation. Yeah – I'll get one." [Mark] "It's pretty exciting to have a go on it, although it's kind of what I expected it to be – just more up to date with much better graphics. It's cool, though."



Guy
■ 27
■ Hit

"This is fantastic, absolutely fantastic. I've had all the consoles from the Mega Drive to the Dreamcast, but I'm definitely going to dump my Dreamcast now. The graphics handling is amazing. Dreamcast was a huge disappointment, mainly because it hasn't had enough backing."



Jason
■ 33
■ Hit

"I've read the Japanese have been disgusted with it. But it doesn't look half as bad as I imagined, though it's more of a graphical tweak than anything." [Studying *Ridge Racer 5*] "Having said that, there's no pop-up, and only a tiny bit of shimming in the distance. I'm going to buy one."



Paul
■ 32, Market analyst
■ Hit

"There are still some hefty loading pauses, but the picture quality is much better. It's definitely worth getting for the DVD player alone, and on top of that you get a top games machine. You can put me down for one of these, that's for sure."



Maria
■ 26, Graphic designer
■ Miss

[Playing *Gran Turismo 2000*] "Er, I've played *Gran Turismo*." [Studying screen] "What's the difference? Can't see any myself. You can plug the PlayStation2 into your stereo and play DVDs though, can't you? Apart from that, I can't work out what all the fuss is about."



Daniel
■ 19, Traffic warden
■ Hit

"This is great." [Lapping up his third go on *Gran Turismo 2000*] "The graphics are great, like the sun glare, and the reflections on the rear windscreen of the car." [Glancing over shoulder as *Arcade* points out a double-parked car] "Oh, forget him. Just have one more go, yeah?"

The future of videogames – PlayStation2 style

Three men, one console and some questions from your favourite videogame magazine. It's five years since the PlayStation was released and changed the videogame landscape forever, so what will PlayStation2 do?

Trip Hawkins



As the man who co-founded Electronic Arts and launched the 3DO console in the '90s, Trip Hawkins could be described as something of an expert in the field.

The look of PS2 – love it or hate it?

I like it, but what I really care about is what is inside.

What excites you about the insides of PlayStation2?

The real-time immersion. The Emotion chip that will take AI, behaviour, and depth of characters to a new level. And the DVD movies. Later on, PlayStation2 will change the nature of the Net, democratising it into a real mass market.

What's your opinion on the first batch of games?

Some things are stunning, like *The Bouncer*. And the motion capture work in the Square baseball game is awesome. But overall I was disappointed in the Japan launch mix. But it's early.

I hope customers are patient because it will take a few years to really deliver on the dream.

What games are you looking forward to playing?

Pretty much all of them because I like to go to school on what other developers are doing.

How will PS2 change games?

I think all genres will take a leap in immersion and AI. New genres will put more focus on driving emotional response with stronger stories and characters and better camera work.

What will 3DO bring to PS2 development?

Customers like the stories, characters, and gameplay in *Army Men*, *Might And Magic*, and *Battle Tanx*. So we will take those fantasy worlds into new levels of immersion and new genres and episodes.

What ideas have you had?

One exciting new development is that we are building a "vehicle" for Vikki, our babe from *Army Men: Sarge's Heroes*. She's quite a capable woman but has the appeal of the "girl next door".

Sam Houser



Self-styled bad boy of the gaming community, Sam Houser is president of New York-based Rockstar Games and expert on all things *Grand Theft Auto*.

The look of PS2 – love it or hate it?

I like it. It shows how Sony want to turn it into more than a games machine, and are aiming for an older audience – the people who spent the past five years playing with PlayStation.

What excites you about the insides of PlayStation2?

Integrating it into a TV/hi-fi, games and Internet domestic media system is great, but the machine will live or die on it's processing power and on people's ability to exploit that.

What's your opinion on the first batch of games?

That has been the only disappointment. They're far better than anything else you've ever seen, but nothing that

really makes me think that this is going to transform games.

What are you looking forward to playing?

Our games – it's why we make them. It's when the second-generation stuff turns up that it will begin to show its power.

How will PS2 change games?

It gives designers a lot more freedom. You have the ability to use lifelike characters on screen in huge numbers, and the ability to have a lot more "intelligent" sentient characters.

What will Rockstar Games bring to PS2 development?

Even on PS2 I don't think it is going to be possible to create a game with the diversity of a film – they'll still be either adventures or action – but we're trying to combine the two.

What ideas have you had?

Our first generation stuff – *Oni*, *Midnight Club* and *Getaway* – is as inventive as anyone's. Our second generation software, out in autumn 2001 through 2002, is possibly even better, but I can't talk about that yet.

Dave Perry



The videogames industry's very own messiah, Dave Perry is probably best known for creating *Earthworm Jim*, *MDK* and his latest – and best – *Messiah*.

The look of PS2 – love it or hate it?

It looks like an amplifier that goes under a car seat.

What excites you about the insides of PlayStation2?

Its design will yield amazing graphics down the road when people really get to grips with the microcode Vs multiple processors. So don't just load up *Gran Turismo 2000* and think that's all it will ever do.

What's your opinion on the first batch of games?

They are exactly what we all expected. It's next to impossible to deliver games that meet the hype that Sony had going. That said, I am happy that the hardware is out in Japan and they are shipping here this Christmas. Lots of teams are

working hard on the machine and I am sure we will see some really drop-dead titles by the time the X-Box is shipping.

What are you looking forward to playing?

The machine's ability to do effects is pretty amazing. I am looking forward to a real-time *Final Fantasy* with spell effects that show us what the hardware can do when pushed.

How will PS2 change games?

The better games look and sound, the more Joe Public takes an interest. Suddenly games are not so nerdy when there are beautiful women in them. I think 2001-2004 will really be a new chapter in getting the characters in the games to be a lot more real, instead of just someone you want to shoot because they are dumb and annoying.

What will Shiny bring to PlayStation2 development?

Our first game will be high-action/fighting in a sci-fi world.

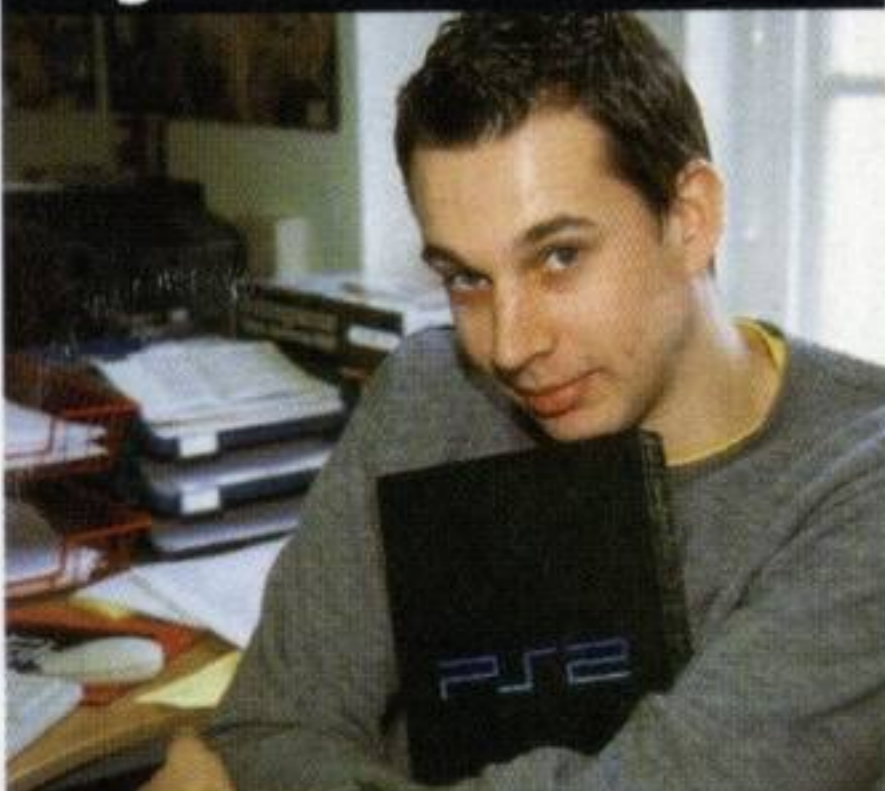
What ideas have you had?

Not yet... *Messiah* taught me a lesson.

Arcade team views

The most influential people in videogame magazines beginning with "A" put their money where their mouths are.

"Big" Sam Richards



Deputy Editor

"The initial games don't seem to utilise the PlayStation2's power, but the phenomenal software support suggests plenty of exciting developments. *Gran Turismo 2000*'s advance in feel as well as just cosmetics impressed me. Combining a top quality games machine with decent DVD player, the PlayStation2 will undoubtedly crush all opposition."

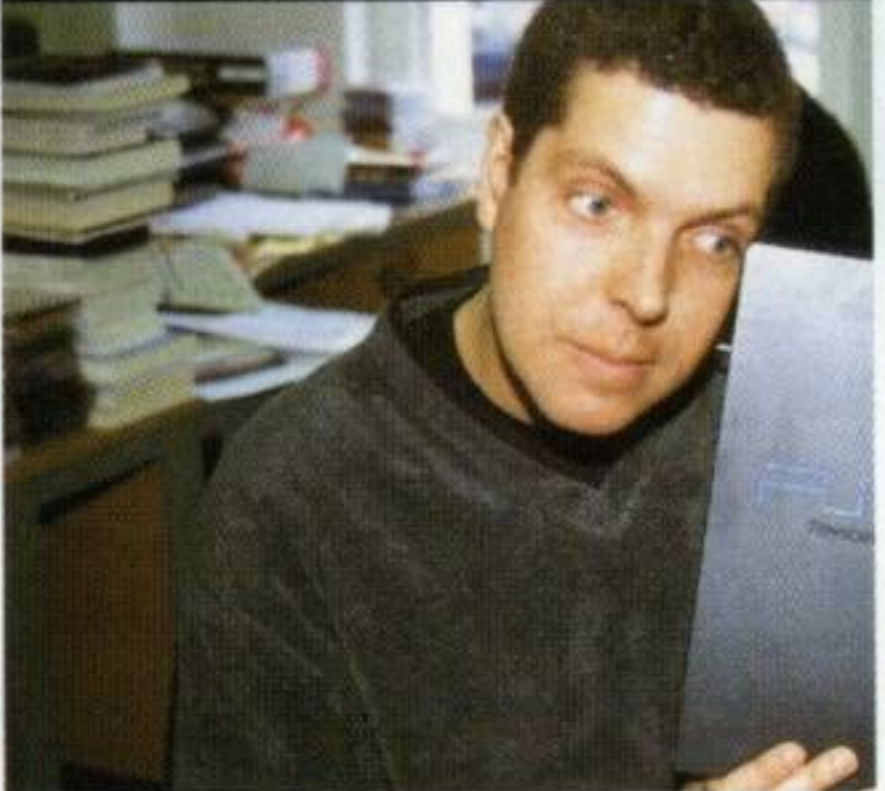
"Two bottles" Nick Jones



Games Editor

"PlayStation2 is a videogame fertility symbol for the future, the past and the future in one tidy package, with a huge potential that ought to inspire a new breed of game. I read somewhere that if you play the PlayStation2 non-stop for 20 hours, tentacles attach to your eyes and transport you to a pink planet and you never come back. Sounds good."

"New" Jamie Sefton



Staff Writer

"It does look a bit like a '70s Bang & Olufsen stereo. The graphics don't seem as big a leap as expected, after, say, *Soul Calibur* and *Crazy Taxi*, but the programmers are still trying to get their heads round what the machine can do. The PlayStation2 will take over the world. It just has to, with those sexy blue and green lights."

Sean "Connery" Atkins



Ex-Editor

"The PlayStation2 is oddly militaristic and brave, looking like a cross between a Manhattan skyscraper and a toaster. The demos display dramatic leap potential – *Dark Cloud*, *DOA2*, *The Bouncer* and *GT2000* all look staggering. And best of all, the joystick leads are significantly longer than on the PlayStation – which is good news for all lead fans."

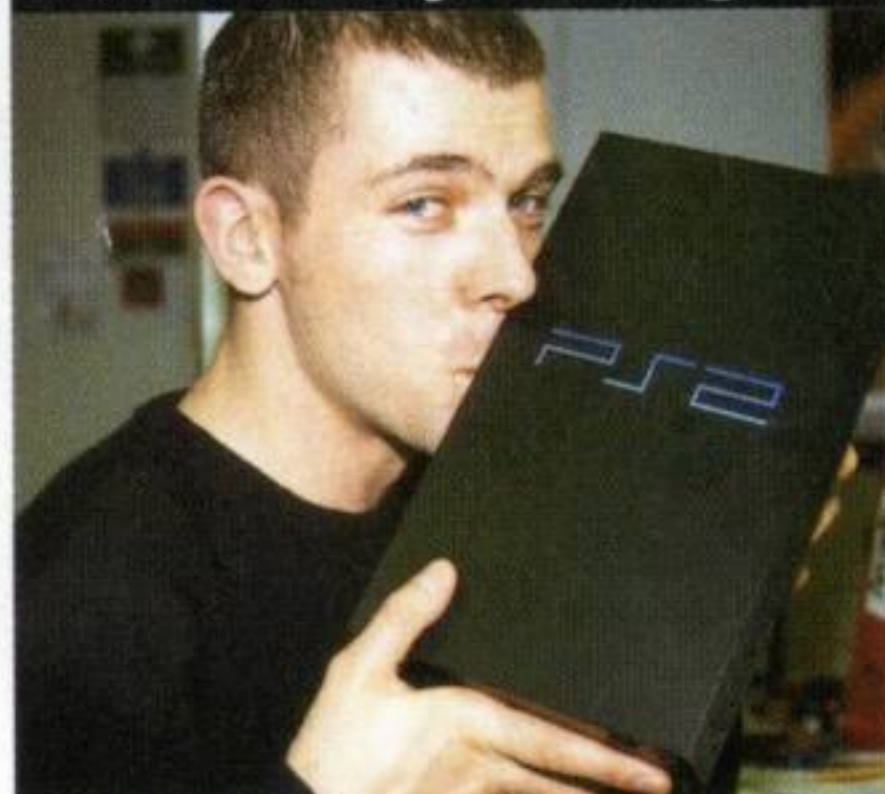
"Nice But" Tim Weaver



Editor

"How do I eat mine? I prefer it on its side. I like the bulky underside. In terms of graphical oomph, *Ridge Racer 5* isn't doing a lot that the Dreamcast couldn't. But when heavyweights like Namco and Square find their stride, the PS2 will wipe the floor with the opposition. Don't tell anybody, but *Stepping Selection* is actually the game I've enjoyed most."

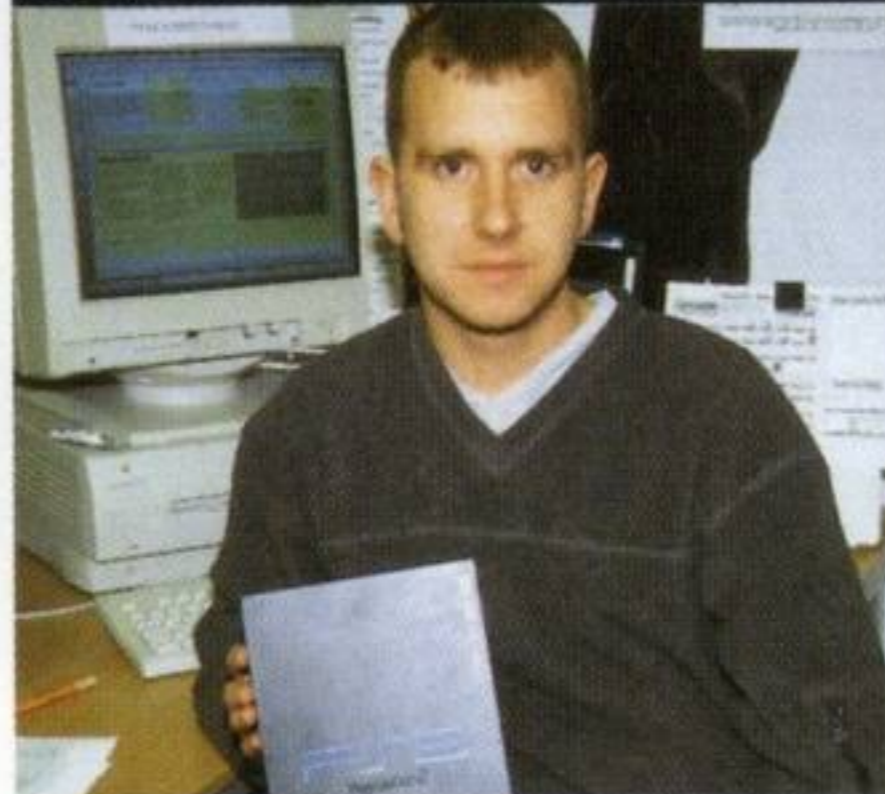
Jamie "Pokéy" Dolling



Production Editor

"*Ridge Racer 5* is an interesting introduction to the capabilities of PS2 – but the lack of a four-player option is a real disappointment. While it looks like fun, it's still just another games machine. It may change the world of gaming, but the likelihood of it changing the world – in the way the PC has done – is slim."

Richard "KO King" Keith



Production Assistant

"The PlayStation2 looks like a real piece of equipment, not just a toy, which is a good thing for the IKEA age. *Ridge Racer 5* is undeniably fast, but we'll just have to wait to see what developers can do with the machine. It's just a pity the PlayStation2 will arrive in the UK too late to be eligible to play on the left side of England's midfield in Euro 2000."

Rich "Peller" Pelley



Features Editor

"Half of me thinks PlayStation2 is the most brilliant thing I've even seen, while the other half is mildly disappointed. Then again, the Dreamcast was a shambles when it was initially released in Japan, and so the other half of me knows that things'll just get better. But, then again, I can barely even add up, so what do I know?"

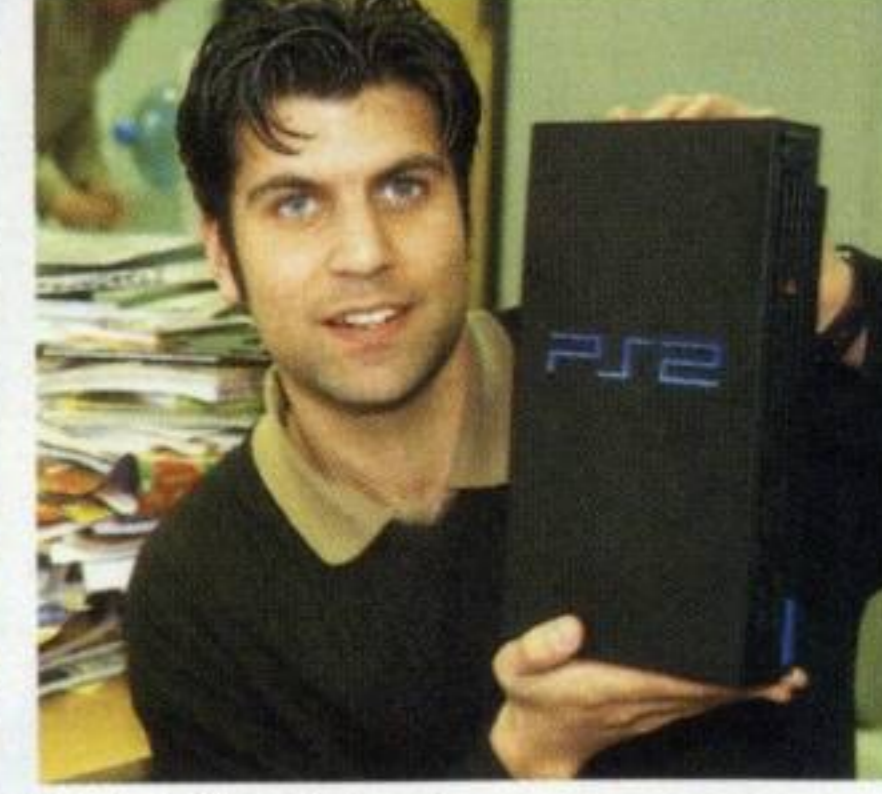
Alvin "Pasty" Weetman



Art Editor

"Well, it looks nice, doesn't it? The little glowing blue light is nice. They worship things like that where I come from. Game-wise, so far nothing looks that ground-breaking, there's no dramatic leap. *Ridge Racer 5* is fun, but apart from the time trials it does get boring. But it'll get better when they work out how to programme it."

"Smooth" Hanif Saddiq



Art freelancer

"The design is excellent, much better than the grey box-look of the old PlayStation. The games don't seem that great, although racing as Pac-Man and being chased by ghosts on scooters in *Ridge Racer 5* is pretty funny. It's hard to tell what to make of it really until there are more games to play, a console is nothing without good games."

WIN! A PLAYSTATION2 PLUS TWO GAMES!

BE THE ENVY OF YOUR FRIENDS AND GRAB YOURSELF A PS2!



■ It's the greatest console the world has ever seen, and to celebrate its arrival and *Arcade's* staggeringly huge 14-page PlayStation2 special one lucky reader is getting the chance to win their very own.

And not only that. As well as the prestige of being one of the first Western gamers to get your hands on the sleek, black loveliness of PlayStation2, you'll also have two top notch games to play on it: the lavish 2D scrapping of *Street Fighter EX3* (reviewed on page 64), and – and most excitingly of all – the utterly fantastic *Ridge Racer 5* (see page 60 for the definitive verdict). You'll even get a special step-down required to convert 240 British volts to a more economical, and way safer 110 Japanese ones to keep your machine happy.

All you have to do in return is answer the following question:

■ Which retro Namco character is hidden in *Ridge Racer 5*?

■ Send your answer together with your name and address on a postcard to:

Win a PlayStation2
Arcade
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2BW

Buy a PlayStation2!

For a full list of PlayStation2 importers, nip along to page 53. *Arcade* got hold of one from the lovely CA Games. You can reach CA Games on (0141) 3343901, or via the wonder of electronic mail on cagames@intonet.co.uk. Remember, you'll need a 100 watt electricity convertor to fiddle with the voltage and, although CA Games is well aware of this, some importers may not remind you. If you don't have one, you'll run the risk of exploding your PS2. Boo.



■ Essential step-down.

THE RULES

1. No purchase is necessary.
2. No Future Publishing employees or their "associates" may enter. Nope.
3. The closing date is Thursday 8 June, 2000.
4. The editor's decision – although often misguided – is final.
5. There is no cash alternative to the competition prize.
6. Absolutely no correspondence will be entered into regarding any aspect of this compo.
7. Individuals may only enter this competition once. And no multiple entries, right?

IN THE NEW ISSUE OF...



Scream 3 THE FULL STORY

- Interviewed! The Phone Voice Man
- Scream's Family Tree ■ The bodycount so far

CHRISTIAN BALE IS AN AMERICAN PSYCHO

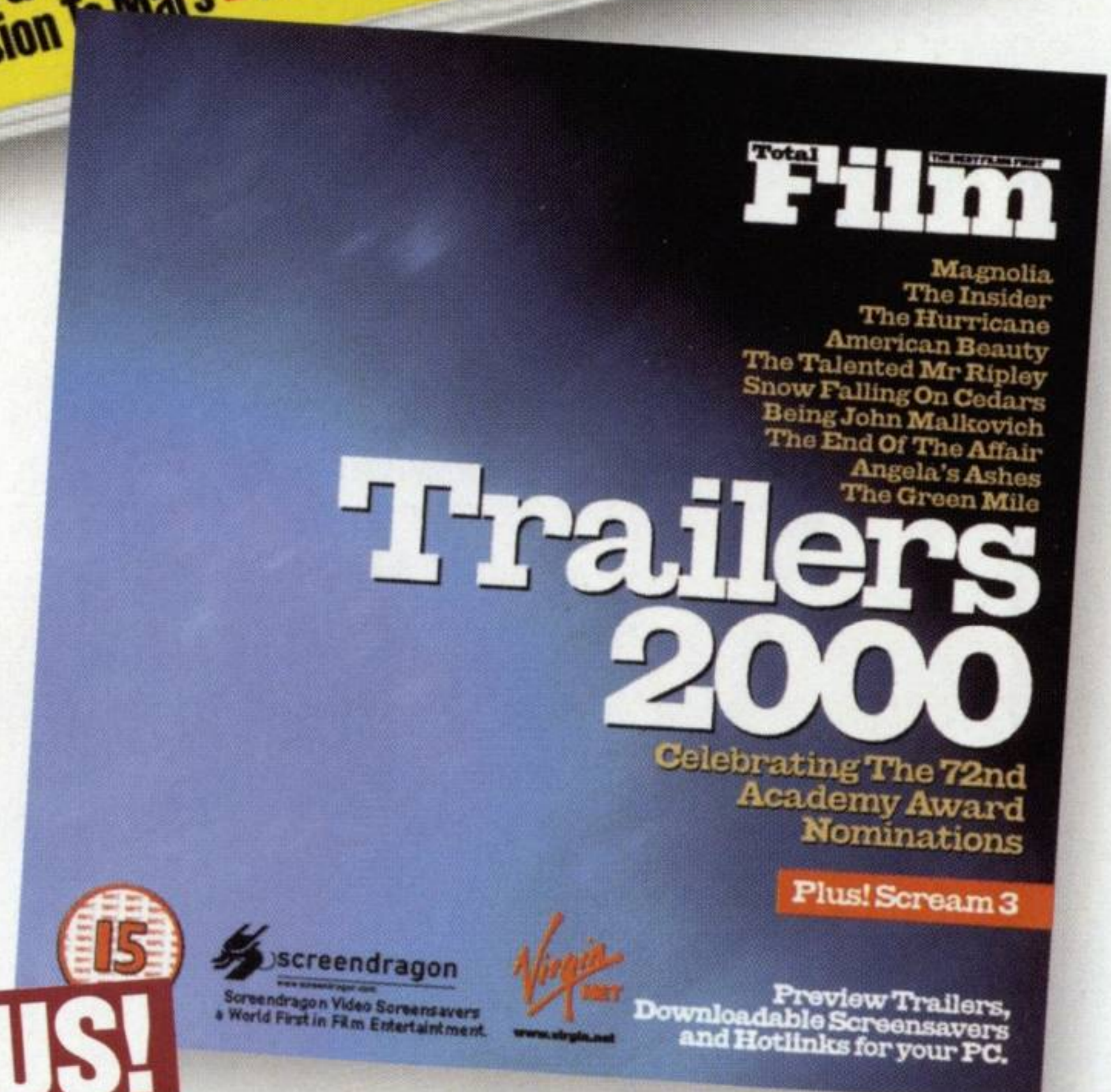
"I did go a bit berserk!"

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May 2000



A Review

The Ultimate Game Buyer's Guide

PAGE 60

RIDGE RACER



INSIDE...

- Everybody's Golf 2
- Street Fighter EX3
- Star Wars: Force Commander
- MDK 2
- Pokémon Stadium
- Stepping Selection
- F1 2000
- Soldier Of Fortune
- Resident Evil: Survivor
- Tony Hawk's Skateboarding
- Bishi Bashi

49
GAMES
REVIEWED!

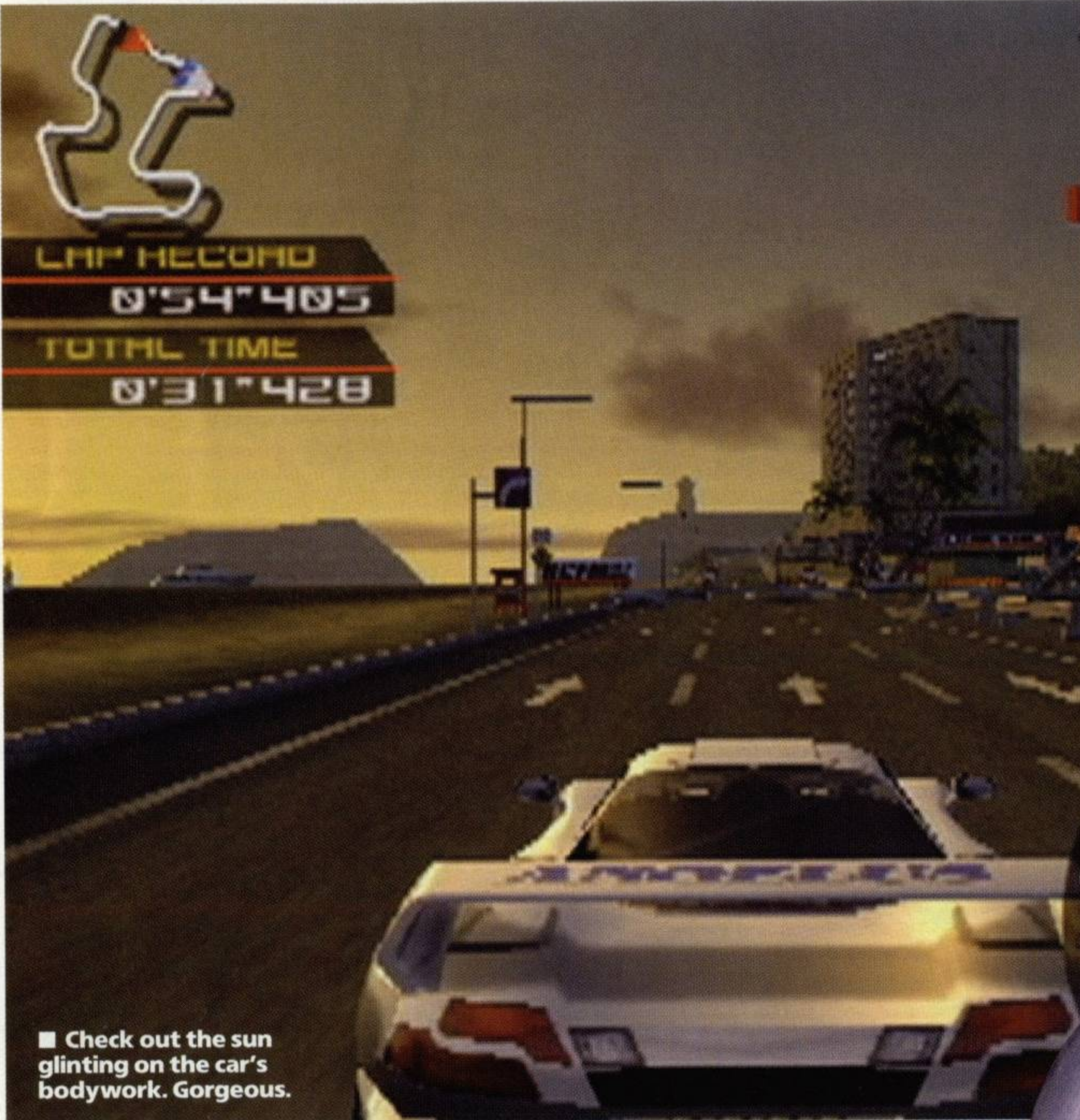
PLAYSTATION2 WARMS UP WITH THE FASTEST DRIVING GAME YOU'VE EVER SEEN.

PLUS! VIDEOS/BOOKS/MUSIC/COMICS/INTERNET/TOYS/GAMES
ACCESSORIES/CD-ROMS/FILMS/DVD/GADGETS

Star ratings

- ★★★★★ Simply the best. A game you really must play.
- ★★★★ Excellent. Definitely worth your money.
- ★★★ Good stuff. Not a world-beater, but fine within its genre.
- ★★ Strictly average. *Arcade* says: don't buy it.
- ★ Awful. Avoid at all costs.

New PlayStation 2 Games



■ Check out the sun glinting on the car's bodywork. Gorgeous.



IMPORT

RIDGE RACER 5

Game info

- Publisher: **Namco**
- Developer: **Namco**
- Price: **£60**
- Release date: **on sale now (Japan)**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **Dual Shock2-compatible, memory card**

PLAYSTATION2'S FIRST RACER IS A WHEEL-SPINNING WINNER.



■ Mist rolling in from the sea. Is this the Mull of Kintyre?

A new era has begun. PlayStation2 is finally a reality and although the rumoured 150 launch games failed to materialise, lucky owners of the 128-bit marvel have the supersonic thrills and spills of *Ridge Racer 5*, an arcade-perfect racing title, to enjoy.

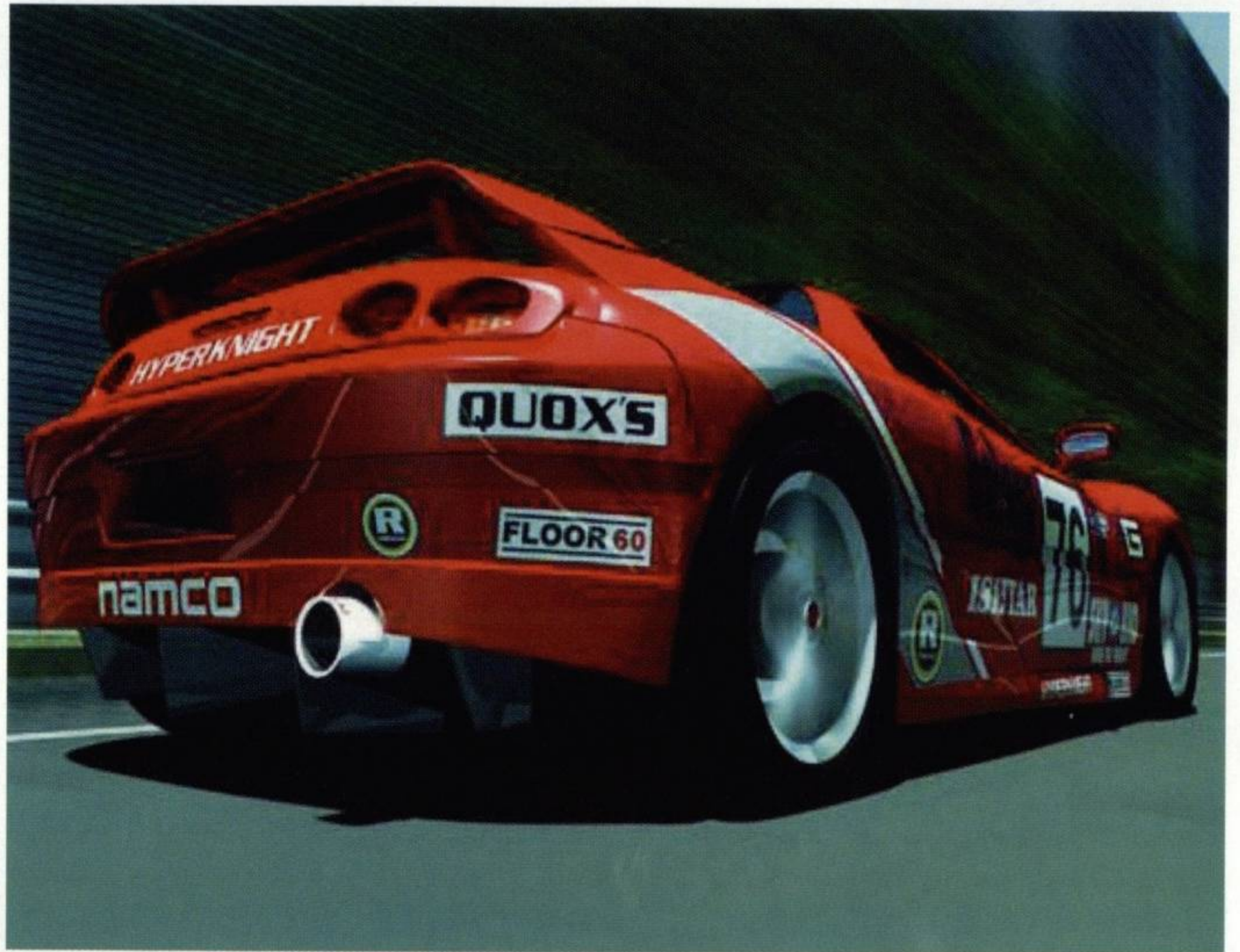
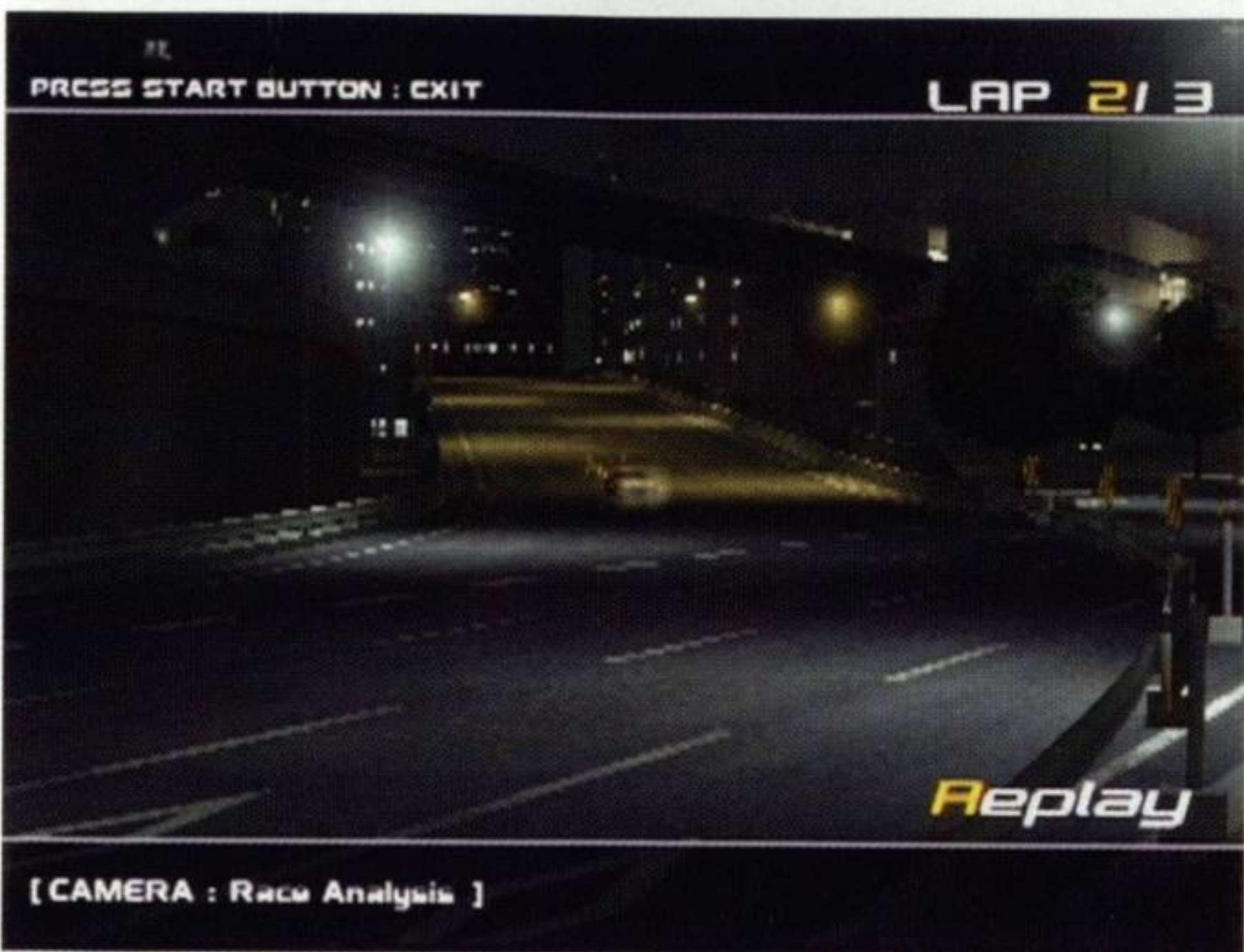
Ridge Racer 5 is an adrenaline-soaked sequel that not only shows off the glorious graphics of the new Sony machine but delivers a fantastic driving game with heaps of cars, tracks and challenges. It's a wonderful moment when you delicately place the blue CD in the PlayStation2's sliding tray for the first time and witness Ai Fukami coquettishly playing with her hair while gleaming cars skid round corners to the rousing rock-dance vibes of Boom Boom Satellites.

If you've ever played one of the earlier *Ridge Racer* games, you'll know that it's no *Gran Turismo*-style driving simulation with real manufacturers and a mechanic's wet dream of endlessly tuning of engines and changing spark plugs. The game is a shameless arcade chase through

various Ridge City circuits with the emphasis on speed and fun, rather than realism. *Ridge Racer 5* continues that legacy, managing to retain the playability and "feel" of the game, while vastly improving the eye candy.

When you begin the game, you're presented with numerous race options including a Free Run to try out different cars and courses and the hyper addictive Time Trial where you can challenge soon-to-be-ex friends to beat the fastest lap of a circuit. However, Grand Prix is the place to start, as you're going to have to complete a collection of tracks to unlock the Duel option, which features a garageful of new challenges, locations and seriously fast vehicles.

Grand Prix starts you off in 14th place, giving you just three laps to manoeuvre yourself into fourth or higher, depending on the competition and particular round you are racing. When available, Duel mode pitches you against four fiendish opponents who you must thrash in a one-to-one race to win their vehicle. All the cars are exclusively from Namco, but they're clearly inspired by the



■ You won't find any official car manufacturers in *Ridge Racer 5*, but Namco's designs are as sleek and sporty as any Porsche or Ferrari. Where else can you drive the devil's car?

whatsoever, while sparks fly, flames burst from the exhaust and real-time reflections from trees and street lights shimmer across the bodywork. The backgrounds are amazing, featuring impressive solid glass and concrete buildings, suspension bridges and lush, realistic trees. Road signs, advertising hoardings and other incidental environment effects such as clouds, flying birds and aeroplanes add to the believable 3D world the game creates. Then there's the superior quality of the lighting, including an incredible sunset in the evening, which bathes the whole of Ridge City in a warm orange glow. On the downside, there's a slight hint of pop-up in the distance and the collisions look a bit unrealistic, but this is more to do with *Ridge Racer 5* being an arcade game as opposed to a simulation than anything else.

If you're a fan of *Pac-Man*, then you'll love the

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Ai Fukami
 ■ Amazing graphics
 ■ Fast and furious gameplay
 ■ Superb bonus cars

Danni Minogue
 ■ Poor two-player with fogging
 ■ Not a huge variety of circuits
 ■ Annoying Ridge City FM DJ

IT TRULY IS EDGE-OF-THE-SEAT STUFF AS YOU RACE ROUND THE TRACK AT RIDICULOUS SPEEDS.

best designs from Europe and America. There's a 1950s pink Cadillac, a car that looks like the new VW Beetle, a jet black car-of-the-Devil and an angelic sports car that goes like a rocket and corners like it's on rails.

Each car has its own "feel" when you're driving, a custom speedometer and distinctive engine sound, which ranges from a wasp in a jam jar to Concorde on steroids. When you've unlocked all the cars, you get to participate in the mighty Battle Royal – the ultimate race for first place against the cream of the game. Great stuff.

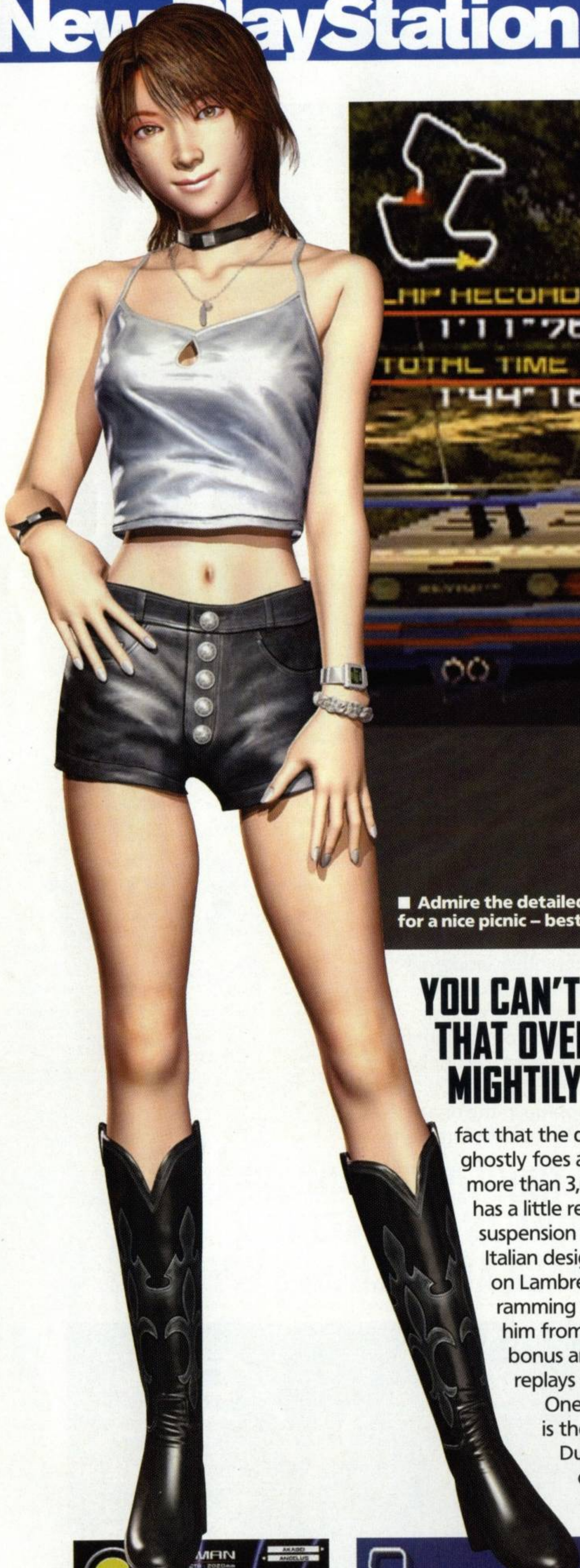
It truly is edge-of-the-seat stuff as you race round the track at ridiculous speeds, especially when you get your driving gloves on the souped-up cars. Power sliding is a well-known *Ridge Racer* move where you take your finger off the accelerator for a split second, then quickly reapply it to perform a controlled skid round a corner. This is a tricky skill to master, but essential if you want to shave vital seconds off your lap time and catch the cars in front.

The next-gen graphics in *Ridge Racer 5* are astounding, especially the TV-style replays from every angle. All the gleaming cars move as smooth as silk with no slowdown



■ The lighthouse in the background beams away at night.





■ Admire the detailed trees and hills by parking in a layby for a nice picnic – best avoided if you're Gillian Taylor.

YOU CAN'T SHAKE THE FACT THAT OVERALL THIS IS A MIGHTILY IMPRESSIVE GAME.

fact that the dot-munching pizza pie and his ghostly foes are unlocked when you rack up more than 3,000 kilometres in races. Pac-Man has a little red comedy car with crazy suspension while the four ghosts wear Italian designer sunglasses and zip about on Lambretta-like scooters, intent on ramming their yellow chum and preventing him from winning the race. It's a wonderful bonus and hilarious when you watch the replays of the cartoon mayhem.

One element that must be mentioned is the inclusion in *Ridge Racer 5* of the Dual Shock2's advanced analogue controls. If you go to the Options screen, you can set the sensitivity

of the buttons to digital (which is just on or off), light, medium or heavy – a mind-blowing experience as you witness the acceleration of your vehicle changing as you apply different pressure to *one button*. Revolutionary stuff.

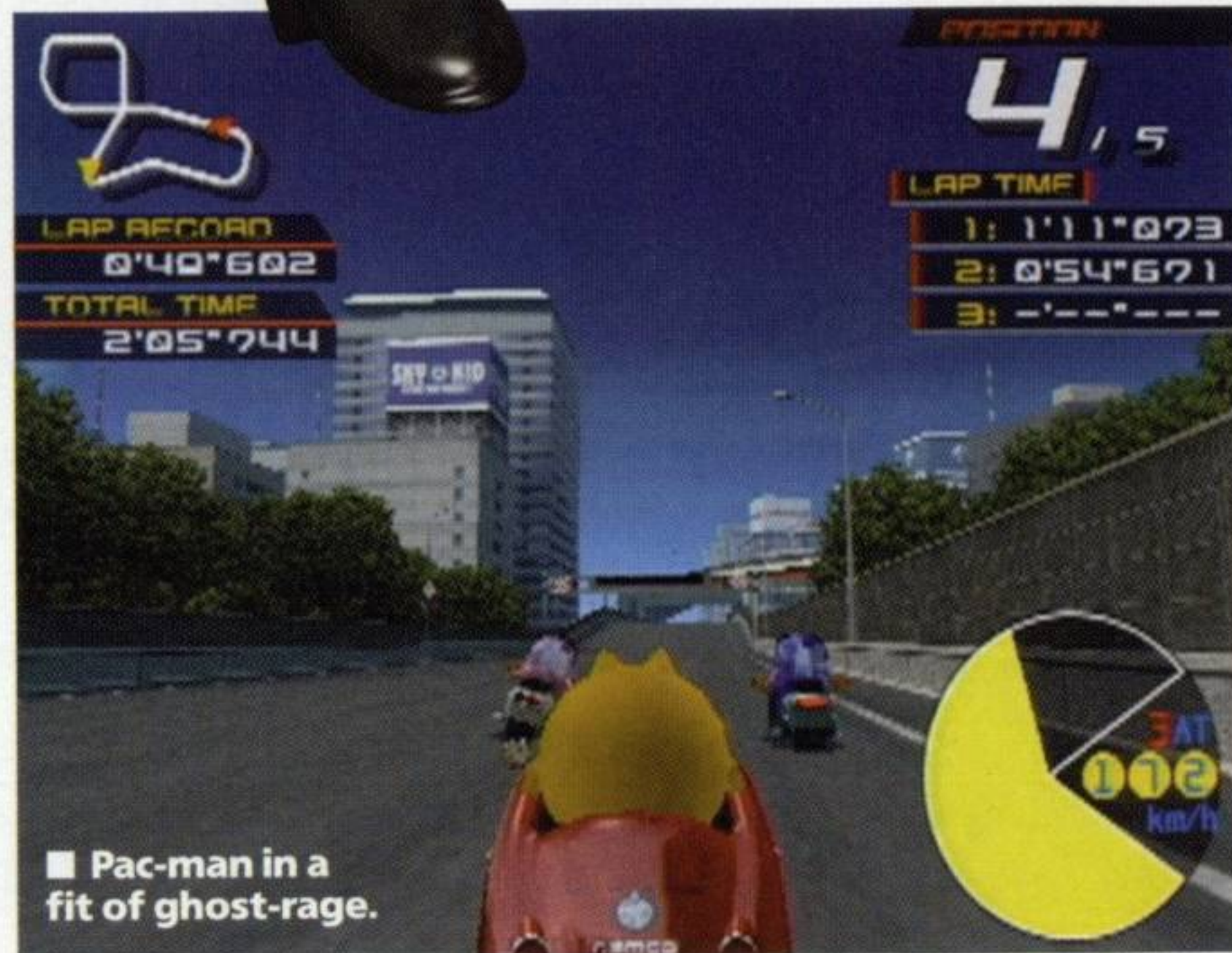
So how does the PlayStation2's first major release perform? Well, *Ridge Racer 5* isn't perfect, having annoying pseudo-American DJ commentary, similar gameplay to earlier incarnations and a disappointing two-player mode with an alarming amount of graphics "fogging". But you can't shake the fact that overall this is a mightily impressive, gorgeous-looking and downright enjoyable driving game with a great level structure that keeps you strapped in until you've unlocked all the bonus cars and circuits. *Crazy Taxi* and *Soul Calibur* on the Dreamcast might spoil the "best-looking game ever" tag, but Namco took only ten months to complete *Ridge Racer 5*, demonstrating the PS2's true potential is still waiting around the next hairpin bend. A stylish, confident and fun start to the PlayStation2's videogame journey. ★★★★★

Jamie Sefton

Or you could try...

Gran Turismo 2
Sony ★★★★★
in-depth racing sim with more cars than the Manchester United first 11.

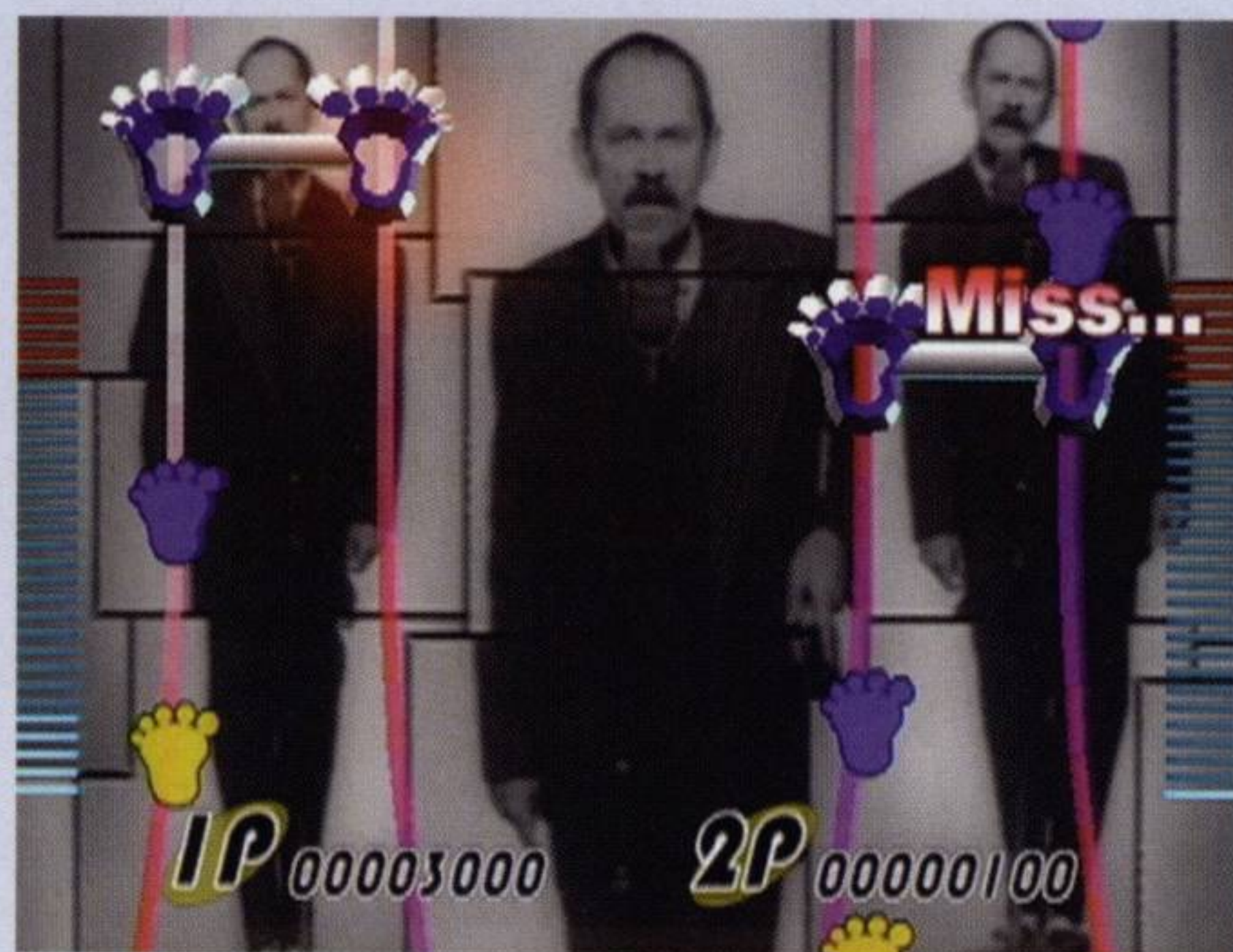
Ridge Racer 4
Namco ★★★★★
A possible 320 cars in the PlayStation's former fastest racing moment.



■ Pac-man in a fit of ghost-rage.



[CAMERA : Normal]



■ (Above) Two-player action with the Scatman. What could be better?

■ (Left) Britney's finest hour. Even the PlayStation2 loves it.



IMPORT

STEPPING SELECTION

PLUG YOURSELF INTO THE POP DREAM.

Believe it or not, *Stepping Selection* could prove the most revolutionary of the titles yet to appear on PlayStation2. While the others all have something special, only *Stepping Selection* looks like opening the Sony machine up to an audience that has so far resisted its wildly successful charms: girls.

Yes, girls. Girls that festoon their bedrooms with pictures of appealing boys from prefabricated bands. Your little sister. Your older sister. Maybe even your mum. If they like to dance – and is there a woman alive who doesn't? – they are going to love this game. And you know what that means, don't you? No longer will the sound of the console firing up send the lion's share of ladyfolk packing.

Why? Well, *Stepping Selection* gives you the opportunity to live the pop dream and dance alongside your chart-topping favourites. Just plug in the dance mat, pick a tune and step on as your PlayStation2 pumps out Britney, The BackStreet Boys or Steps, complete with the videos that sold you their songs in the first place.

What you see on the screen, as well as the muggings of your millionaire heart-throb, are two lines leading to the outlines of two feet: one representing your left foot, the other your right. As the tune gets going, little coloured feet work their way up the screen towards the outlines. When they hit, you have to press the requisite pad on your mat. Keep time and the feet stay high on the screen, foul up and they drop down, eventually depriving you of dancing through to the end of the video.

And that's about it. There are three levels of difficulty, you can dance off in a two-player mode and there are a number of other options, such as being able to watch the video without having to play the game (almost too tempting, what with "Baby, One More Time" on offer). But to write the title off on that basis is to miss the point.

What *Stepping Selection* does is to offer you the excuse to dance in the same way that so many other games serve

as reasons to avoid the duller things in life. Get into the groove and, as tens of thousands of Japanese Bemani nuts have proved, you'll soon be deeply involved, any semblance of reservation lost in a popstastic whirl of hip-thrusting abandon. True, the majority of the tunes on offer in this instalment are shocking and their accompanying videos risible, but once the genre takes off the selection will skyrocket. Then you'll be left with a stark choice: get jiggy with it or sacrifice valuable hours with your PlayStation2 to the teenybop pop star in your life. ★★★ **Jamie Dolling**

Or you could try...

Beatmania
Konami ★★★★★
Mix up some DJ action with special "turntable controller".

PaRappa The Rapper
Sony ★★★★★
Rhyming dog who makes a cake out of a fish and falls in love with flower.

Game info

- Publisher: **Jaleco**
- Developer: **Jaleco**
- Price: **£60**
- Release date: **on sale now (Japan)**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **Dance mat**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

High stepper
■ A purer excuse to boogie you will not find
■ Two-player dance off
■ The lovely Miss Spears. Woof

Wallflower
■ Pretty bloody hard, tell truth
■ Some cack tunes in there
■ We're British, for God's sake



■ Even the BackStreet Boys make you want to get up and frug like a good 'un. No, really...



IMPORT

Game info

- Publisher: **Capcom**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Price: **£60**
- Players: **1-4**
- Release date: **on sale now (Japan)**
- Extras: **memory card, Dual Shock2-compatible**

STREET FIGHTER EX3

THE SAME OLD 2D FIGHTER FOR A BRAND SPANKING NEW CONSOLE.

When all's said and done, it doesn't matter how many polygons PlayStation2 can throw around, it's the quality of the games that counts. With Sony's next generation console you'd be well within your rights to expect next generation games. It doesn't always work like that, though. *Street Fighter Ex3* may be appearing on the sexiest bit of kit ever to grace the Arcade office, but the game is so old it doesn't even qualify as last generation.

Street Fighter on the SNES and Mega Drive was great. In the days before *Tekken* there was no better fighting game. Sadly for the series it has failed to move with the times and this latest instalment only goes to

show that it's about time that Capcom called it a day with the *Street Fighter* games.

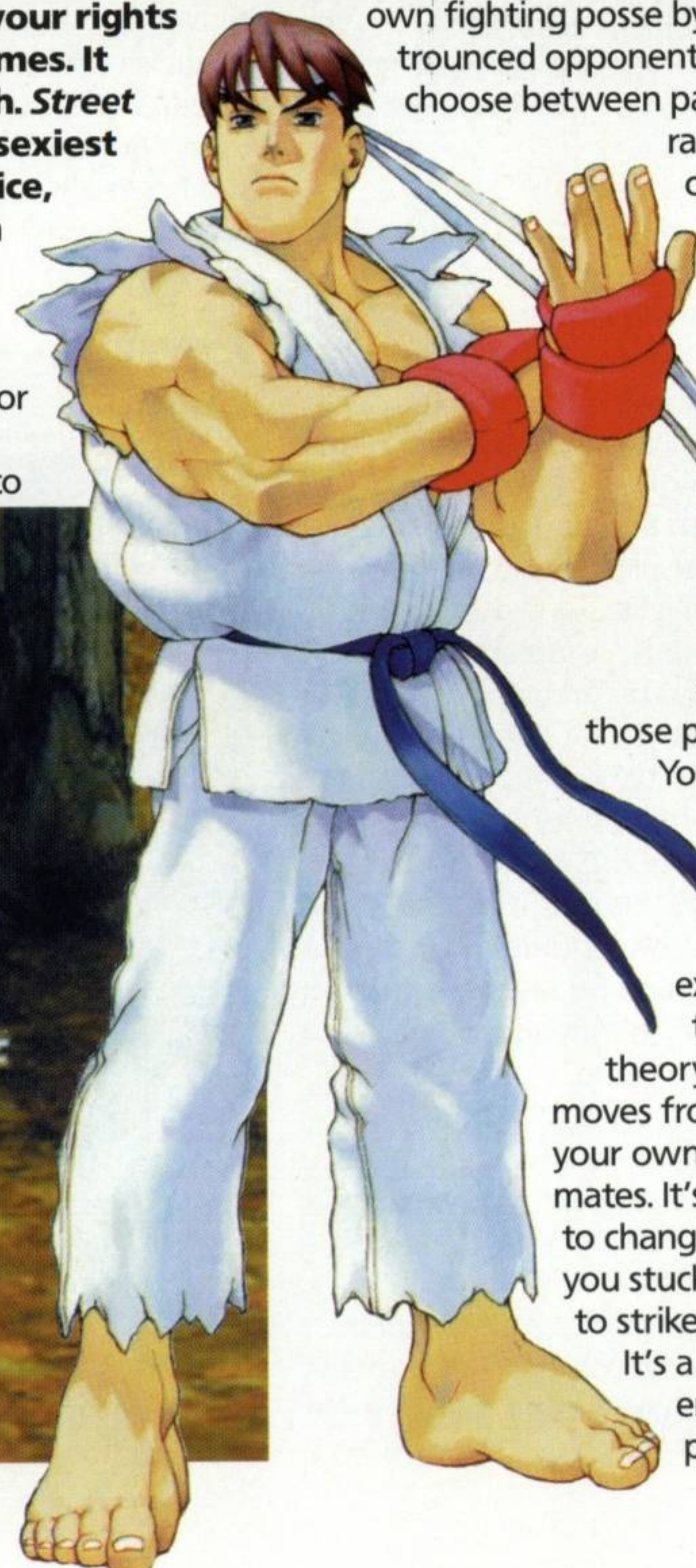
There are a few nods towards innovation, however. For instance, the single-player mode lets you build up your very own fighting posse by giving you the option of taking trounced opponents into your team. You can then choose between partners for your tag team. It's also

rare that you fight one-on-one; one-on-three, two-on-two or two-on-one are the sort of odds that you'll have to overcome. While this is all good, opponents' energy levels are scaled down so it's not much more difficult than fighting one-on-one.

And, for some bizarre reason, when you get three or four fighters on screen at once the game stutters and threatens to judder to a stop under the weight of all those polygons on screen.

You can create your own fighter by completing a number of fighting-related tasks, such as pulling off three Alpha moves in succession, giving you experience points which you can then spend on new moves. So, in theory, you can take all your favourite moves from the other fighters and develop your own killing machine to take on your mates. It's just a shame that you are unable to change your boy's appearance, leaving you stuck with Mr Average – not someone to strike fear into the hearts of enemies.

It's a bad sign that probably the most enjoyable part of the entire game is played during the end credits. As a



■ When you beat an opponent you can take them into your tag team.





■ All the old *Street Fighter* moves make a return. Yawn.



■ Backgrounds look good when still, but make your head spin when moving.



■ Michael Jackson and Cindy Lauper put in an appearance.



■ Three on one isn't great odds, but power bars are scaled down to make it easier. Too easy.

charming little bonus your victorious fighter is rushed by hundreds of thugs – it's your task to take out as many as you can while the credits roll by. If you get a certain number, then a special bonus is yours.

Even sexy visuals can't save *Street Fighter Ex3* from mediocrity – it isn't a patch on the Dreamcast's *Soul Calibur*, or even *Virtua Fighter* for that matter. The cartoon fighters haven't translated very well into three dimensions and there is something strange going on with the backgrounds. These are partly in three dimensions, but seem to move in the wrong direction. Not that this really matters, because *Street Fighter Ex3* only works on one plane – there isn't even a hint of 3D fighting here.

However, there is plenty of playability. *Street Fighter Ex3* has that instant appeal that has served the series so well in the past, but delve a little deeper and there is little to keep you coming back for more. The fighting suffers from all the old *Street Fighter* problems – you'll probably be just as successful by bashing buttons as by considering your moves.

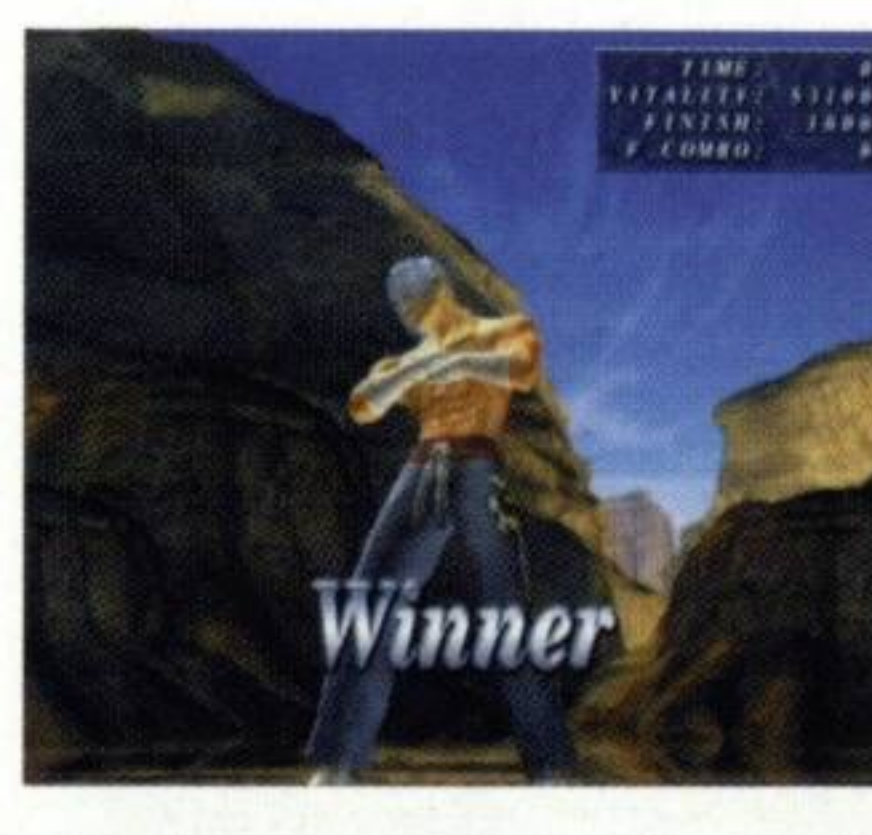
One of the reasons for *Street Fighter Ex3* remaining in the Dark Ages of fighting games may well be

the game's die hard following, which is unwilling to give any quarter to any departure from the original *Street Fighter* format. It is to this minority that this PlayStation2 version will appeal. But with limited moves and fast and frantic fighting that's easy to pick up and play, the package feels a bit 1990s. Like all *Street Fighter* games this doesn't offer the depth of *Tekken* or *Soul Calibur*, leaving you feeling no more than disappointment at the first fighting game on PlayStation2. Roll on *Tekken Tag Tournament*. ★★

Nick Jones



Or you could try...
Tekken 3 (PSX)
Namco ★★★★★
Quite simply the king of fighters.



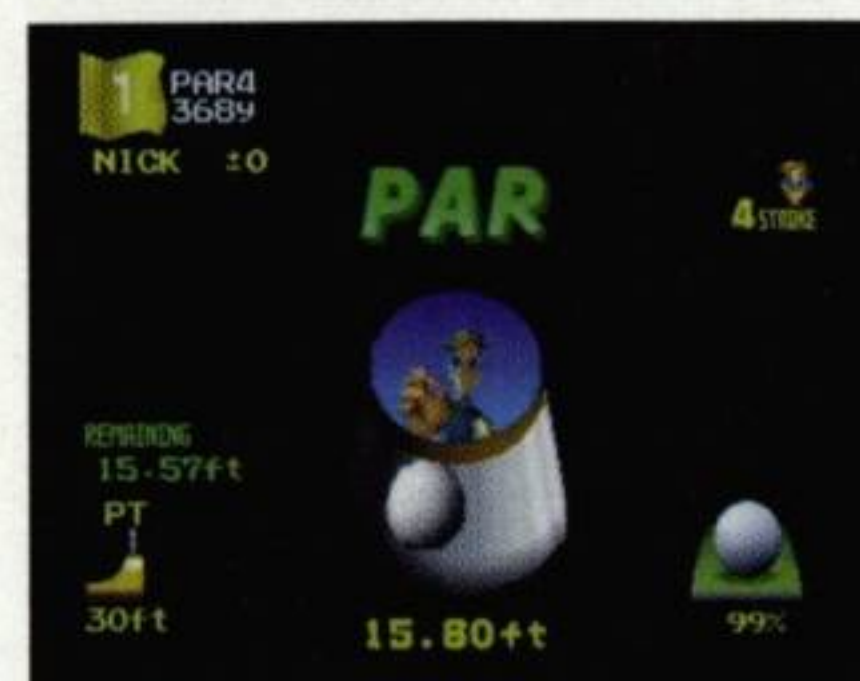
Street Fighter Alpha 3 (PSX)
Virgin ★★★★★
Loads more depth in this 2D classic.

↑ **Uppers & Downers** ↓

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Knockout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fight against multiple opponents ■ Build your own fighter | <p>Throw in the towel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are these really next gen graphics? ■ Not many moves ■ Tired fighting system |
|---|---|



■ Chun Li is "tagged" by Dhalsim and gets to fighting.



Game info

- Publisher: Sony
- Developer: ClapHanz
- Price: £25
- Players: 1-4
- Release date: May
- Extras: memory card, multi-tap

EVERYBODY'S GOLF 2

EVERYBODY'S FAVOURITE GOLF GAME MAKES A WELCOME RETURN.

When *Everybody's Golf* was released a couple of years ago it was a breath of fresh air. It managed to do two things where previous golf sims had struggled to do one: present a realistic sim and build a healthy dose of gaming action into proceedings.

Rather than be a straightforward sim like other games, mirroring the real thing with four-round tournaments and money lists, *Everybody's Golf* took a different tack. For a start, the players were cartoon-style characters, each with their own personality. Also you could open up new players and courses by winning matches and tournaments. And yet the game felt more like the real thing than any other title.

Everybody's Golf 2 gives the formula just a tweak here and an improvement there and once again comes up with

the goods. There's a whole new line-up of crazy characters to play with. You start with three basic players: hunchbacked bloater Mel, dizzy blonde Sam and rasta-boy Cedric, and can immediately take on the portly, jumpsuited Dottie. Other characters include skateboarding Spike, who has a tantrum when he misses a putt and surfer dude Chip, who slams his head on the green if he loses a hole. You get new characters – up to ten to start with (there are hidden characters to open later) – by beating them on the Vs mode, going head-to-head with the computer over 18 holes. You can then use them on any of the other modes. The new players inevitably hit the ball further but have their own way of playing which may, or may not, suit you.

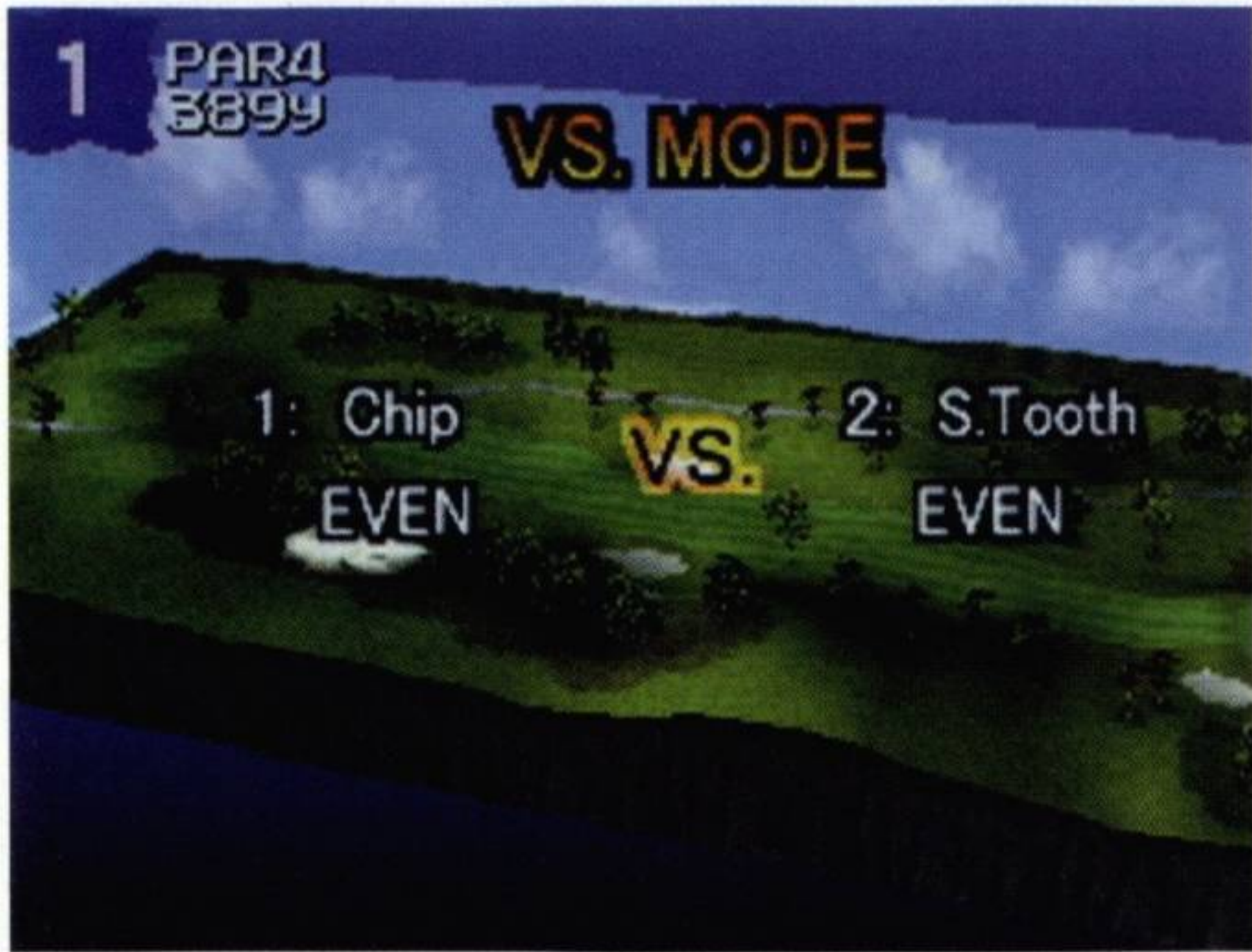
The other main single-player game is the Tournament mode. Start as an amateur and move through the ranks by competing in four 18-hole tournaments a year. You get points for your place, and if you accrue enough you move up to the next level and open up new courses. This is a different game to the Vs or the multi-player modes. Here it's you against the course and there's never anyone else to help you out by going out of bounds. It is also incredibly absorbing. The desire to pick up points and progress is addictive. Although each round takes about 40 minutes you never want to leave it at that. If you mess up you have to put it right, if you're on a roll you want to keep on rolling.

The multi-player games are winners as well. Play against one, two or three mates and the competitive spirit soon kicks in. As in the first game, you can flagrantly taunt your opponents as they address the ball. This isn't very sportsmanlike and would certainly be frowned upon on the tees of St Andrews or Augusta, but this is *Everybody's Golf* and those sort of things don't matter. What matters is having fun, and putting off a friend so he hooks a ball into the woods on the final hole is lots of fun.

Everybody's Golf 2 also looks good. The cartoon nature of the game means it doesn't have to lovingly re-create famous golf holes or realistically show how pros hit golf balls and can get away with the odd blocky-looking character or hole. But from the lush backgrounds to the

■ (Below) Pah! Although endearing, the celebrations can be annoying if you've actually just lost the hole.





■ (Above) Before each hole you get to see where not to hit.



■ (Above) You can replay shots from different angles.



butterflies floating across the course to the way each player has his or her own individual style, it's all easy on the eye.

Playing the game is very similar to the first one, and to most other golf sims out there. You have a power and accuracy bar which controls how you hit a shot. You set it off by pressing the X button, hit X again to set the power and once again to gauge your accuracy. Although stopping the bar as it reaches the accuracy mark is relatively simple and quickly mastered, you have to do it every single time – which isn't as easy as it sounds. You also have to bear in mind wind speed, the lie of the ball, the shape of the course and the skill of your character. So while you can fade and push the ball by hitting the direction button as you strike the ball you have to be sure that your character can make that shot. It's no good trying to get a player who naturally



National Invitational

RANK	NAME	SCORE	PTS.	HOLE
1T	Viki	-3△	2400	5H
1T	Becky	-3○	2400	6H
3T	Laura	-2-	768	8H
3T	V-Dor	-2-	768	9H
3T	Joey	-2-	768	3H
3T	Dave	-2○	768	3H
3T	Ami	-2○	768	4H
8T	Tanya	-1-	180	7H
8T	Derek	-1-	180	4H
8T	Kevin	-1○	180	5H

X BUTTON SCROLL X BUTTON SCORE CHARTS SELECT BUTTON SAVE



■ Hitting drives is quickly learned but takes a bit longer to master. It's not enough just to hit it as far as you can, you have to read the hole and play with the weather, not against it.

fades the ball to draw it round a corner. Anyway, hitting long drives isn't the key to the game. The quickest route to Tiger-like domination is to get your short game and putting going, for which you need to learn how to read the wind and the greens. Only repeated playing gives you these skills.

Everybody's Golf 2, while no great leap forward from the original is quite easily the best golf game you'll find on PlayStation. ★★★★★

Richard Keith

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓	
Tiger ■ Looks great ■ Good range of modes ■ Addictive	Pussy cat ■ Repetitive ■ Limited courses



Or you could try...

Cyber Tiger
 Electronic Arts
 Like *Everybody's Golf* it tries to make golf fun, but unlike *EG* it fails badly.

Pro 18 World Golf Tour
 Pygnosis
 Accurate and well-designed with complex controls.

■ (Far left) Putting is quite simple, just press X twice. But watch for that borrow.



- Publisher: EA Sports
- Developer: Visual Sciences
- Price: £30
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-2
- Extras: Dual Shock-compatible, memory card

F1 2000



A CHEQUERED FLAG WELCOMES THE DEFINITIVE FORMULA ONE TITLE.



■ Minardi unveils its new car.



You have to envy Formula One drivers. A life of racing the fastest cars, dating the most beautiful women and eating nothing but caviar while knocking back a cellar's worth of diamond-encrusted bottles of Beaujolais is not to be sniffed at.

F1 2000 could be the game to give all frustrated racers the chance to experience life in the fast lane – albeit without the wine, women and fish eggs. This is EA's first *F1* game, and the maker of the all-conquering *FIFA 2000* has again provided a smart-looking, playable game.

An official licence means all the up-to-date teams, drivers and cars can strut their stuff and, for the first time, Formula One fans get to play the game as the 2000 season unfolds. There's the usual glut of race and car options, so before you put your keys in the ignition, you can alter your fuel strategy and tyre compound, as well as making the game harder by factoring in things like damage, tyre wear and fuel usage. A Test Day option gives pernickety drivers the chance to pore over graphs and information on gear shifts, speed and braking, while the trusty Pit Stop is there for further tinkering.

Once the mechanic in you has been satiated, you're ready to get into the race action. Prospective Schumachers

can enjoy a Quick Race, a Time Trial or a Championship, which enables PlayStation owners to race all 17 Formula One circuits in the order that they're happening this year.

A great achievement of *F1 2000* is that you really feel like you're taking part in a Formula One Grand Prix, with a believable feeling of speed, all the actual livery of the cars themselves and TV-style coverage. Although there's no commentary from Formula One legend Murray Walker, the atmospheric voice of a pit crew member providing vital race information such as "you're five seconds behind Frentzen", proves surprisingly effective.

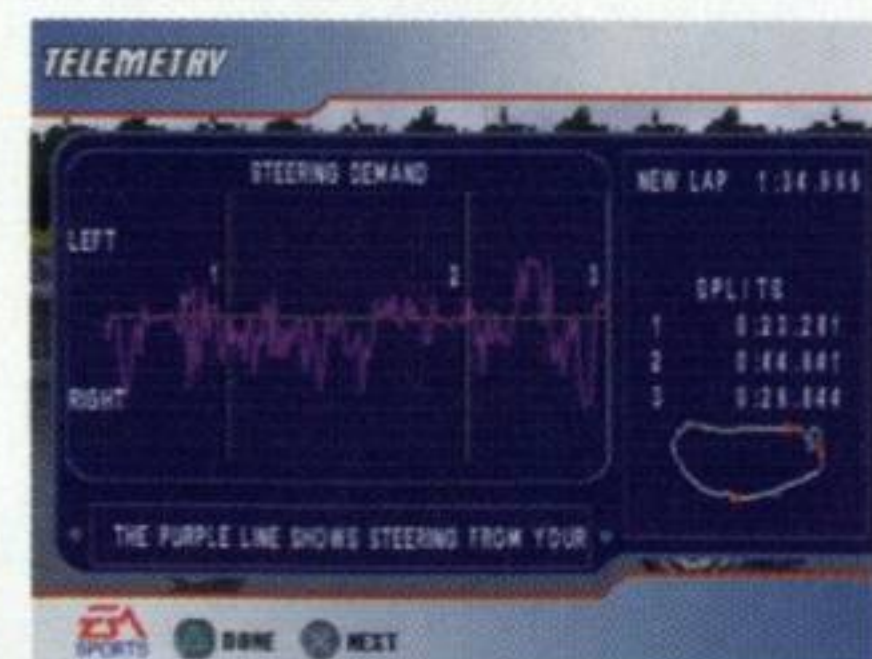
The graphics are excellent, if a little jerky in places – especially when the cars bunch together. All the circuits are nicely reproduced, including the new Indianapolis track in the USA and the famous Monte Carlo rat-run through twisting paparazzi-adorned streets. During a race, bits can fly off your car, tyres burst, dust and smoke fly up and skid marks scar hot tarmac. There are also environmental effects, such as water spraying up from vehicles during rainy days and grass collecting on tyres when a car wanders from the track – all of which are excellent.

F1 2000 is a good game, but you really should be aware that this isn't a *Ridge Racer*-type arcade thrash round a course. If you keep your foot down and try to power-slide round corners, you'll spend more time skidding off the road





■ Biking, fighting... *Road Rash* hasn't changed a bit.



↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Bernie Ecclestone

- All the new drivers, teams and circuits
- Authentic atmosphere
- Immensely playable

Bernie Clifton

- Some graphics slowdown
- Poor two-player mode
- No replays of entire race

ROAD RASH JAILBREAK

■ Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
 ■ Developer: **Electronic Arts**
 ■ Price: **£30**
 ■ Release date: **May**
 ■ Players: **1-4**
 ■ Extras: **memory card**

■ The *Road Rash* dynasty rumbles on, belching increasing amounts of smoke but kept on the road by regular annual servicing. If you like biking, and you like hitting people, this is still the game to own.

This new version – the third on the PlayStation and probably the great-great-great nephew twice removed of the Mega Drive original – is the best-looking yet. While the scenery's a bit old-skool and the frame rate's hardly custard-smooth, the bikes themselves look great. They're incredibly detailed, even when there's a whole pack of them on the screen.

There's a generous selection of ways to play, too. If you're on your own you've got a choice between Jailbreak mode, which sees you working your way up through a biker gang, Five-O mode, where you're a police biker "apprehending" (i.e. hitting) gang leaders, and Time Trial mode. And then there's an excellent selection of multi-player modes, ranging from four-player split-screen to you and a pal in a sidecar combination.

Success demands you strike a delicate balance between staying on the road, avoiding oncoming traffic and flailing wildly at enemy bikers as you pull alongside them. Even after all this time it's surprisingly exciting.

For a while, that is. Whichever mode you play *Road Rash Jailbreak* in, the ride-avoid-attack formula remains the same, and starts to get a bit tedious once you've got the hang of it. Your resolve is eroded still further by the excruciating music score the game has been lumbered with, which sounds like it was recorded by a team of panel beaters having their toenails pulled out.

So, *Road Rash* is still worth wheeling out, but you can't escape the feeling that it's trading on its past reputation somewhat. Mind you, they've been saying that for years now.

★★★ **Jonathan Davies**



■ Button storms into last place.

THE MAKER OF THE ALL CONQUERING FIFA 2000 HAS AGAIN PROVIDED A SMART-LOOKING, PLAYABLE GAME.

depending on which you choose. The in-car views, including one where you can see the driver's arms steering the wheel, look attractive but are incredibly difficult and frustrating to play. An outside camera is probably the least atmospheric, but you can actually see what's going on in a race and can avoid getting completely lost.

Instant replays are also available at the touch of a button, and – obviously – mean you have the chance to watch, and rewatch, all those exciting tyre-squealing moments during a race. Other in-game features that add to the authenticity of the game are the TV-style Formula One placings that flash up intermittently and the real-time retirement of various drivers – including regularly booting Jensen Button out of races.

F1 '99 used to be the ultimate Formula One racing game on the PlayStation, but that's no longer the case. EA has made an immersing, fast-paced driving simulation that perfectly captures the excitement, thrills and atmosphere of a season. The two-player game is disappointingly drab and the graphics often chug along at a low frame-rate, but there's enough here to get Formula One enthusiasts revved up in a petrol-sniffing frenzy. ★★★ **Jamie Sefton**

Or you could try...

F1 '99
 Sony ★★★
 Fast, smooth Formula One game, now with out-of-date statistics.

Gran Turismo 2
 Sony ★★★★★
 The best racer ever with tons of tracks and more than 600 cars.



than winning championships. You have to learn to take corners carefully, slowing right down, then accelerating smoothly away to avoid 360° spins.

The controls are a little sluggish, with the D-pad surprisingly beating the analogue sticks in the ease-of-use department. However, in practice the game plays well and there's nothing more satisfying than closing in behind an opponent, overtaking craftily on a corner, then letting them choke on exhaust fumes as you pull away. The AI of the computer-controlled cars is excellent, but you sometimes feel there's a force field around your car, with other drivers choosing to let you through, rather than hold their position.

EA has excelled itself in the choice of different camera views available and the superb engine sound effects change



■ (Above) Dimmed lighting, oohs and ahhs from the crowd, it's all so very atmospheric.

■ (Right) Ronnie O'Sullivan breaks off. All the game's top professionals are in here.



Game info

- Publisher: **Codemasters**
- Developer: **Blade Interactive Studios**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **April**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **memory card, Dual Shock-compatible**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Screw</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Intuitive, simple controls ■ The excellent Aiming Aid ■ Superb physics model | <p>Kick</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Very hard at higher difficulties ■ Not exactly action-packed |
|--|--|

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER

GO SNOOKER LOOPY WITH THE CODEMASTERS.

■ (Below) Television-style camera angles give the illusion you are a top class professional snooker player.



Snooker, eh? Whoever would have believed that such a quintessentially English pastime, once the sole domain of upper class toffs with extremely large country houses, would become a worldwide television phenomenon?

Well, whatever your take on the game it has taken off big time and, although no longer the draw it was in the 80s, the annual World Championship is viewed by millions around the globe, all glued to the screen watching two blokes in waistcoats hit balls around a table with sticks.

Now Codemasters has brought all the thrills and spills of the game (such as they are) to the PlayStation, allowing you to pit your skills against the likes of Stephen Hendry, Ronnie O'Sullivan and more than a dozen of the world's best players at a digital version of the Crucible. And, while the very concept of snooker sims is perhaps even stranger than the popularity of the sport itself, it has to be said that the result is arguably the finest snooker game ever.

The key to *World Championship Snooker's* success is threefold. First is the time and effort that has been put into bringing the World Championship to life. Rather than just slapping the names of the top players onto a standard snooker sim, Codemasters and developer Blade have gone to great lengths to recreate the look, feel and atmosphere of the real thing, using the same camera angles as the televised coverage, and even including cut-shots to where the other player sits watching his opponent. Throw in some nice commentary and excellent motion-captured players

and referees, and you have a game that really makes you feel like you're playing in the competition proper.

Of course, all this cleverness would be wasted if the game itself wasn't accurate, but that's the second area in which *World Championship Snooker* excels. The physics modelling is absolutely top notch, right down to the tiniest detail, and no matter what you try to do, the on-screen result is exactly as it should be. Similarly, the intelligence of the computer opponents is impressive, with different players reacting to situations in their own way and displaying an admirable grasp of strategy and tactics.

The masterstroke, though, is the superb control interface. At one and the same time, it manages to be almost laughably simple, and yet not only enables you to play any shot you can imagine but also accurately represents the realities of the game. Shots that would be tough in real life are tough in the game, and easy shots are easy. Largely this is due to the superb Aiming Aid, which manages to tread the line between realism and fun, allowing you to make shots without making the game too easy to play.

In short, then, *World Championship Snooker* is a masterpiece, and an absolute must for any PlayStation-owning snooker fan – and the Masterclass mode, which teaches you how to play the game, will even improve your understanding of the real thing. ★★★ **Andy Butcher**

Or you could try...

Jimmy White's 2: Cueball
Virgin ***
Offers snooker, pool, and several bar games, but is more complicated to play.

Pool Shark
Gremlin ***
A chance to make like Fast Eddie in the comfort of your own home.



■ **Zombies don't present a challenge for the sureshot, stumbling slowly towards the centre of the screen.**



■ **Your first-person character has amnesia and discovers photos of himself as clues to his identity.**

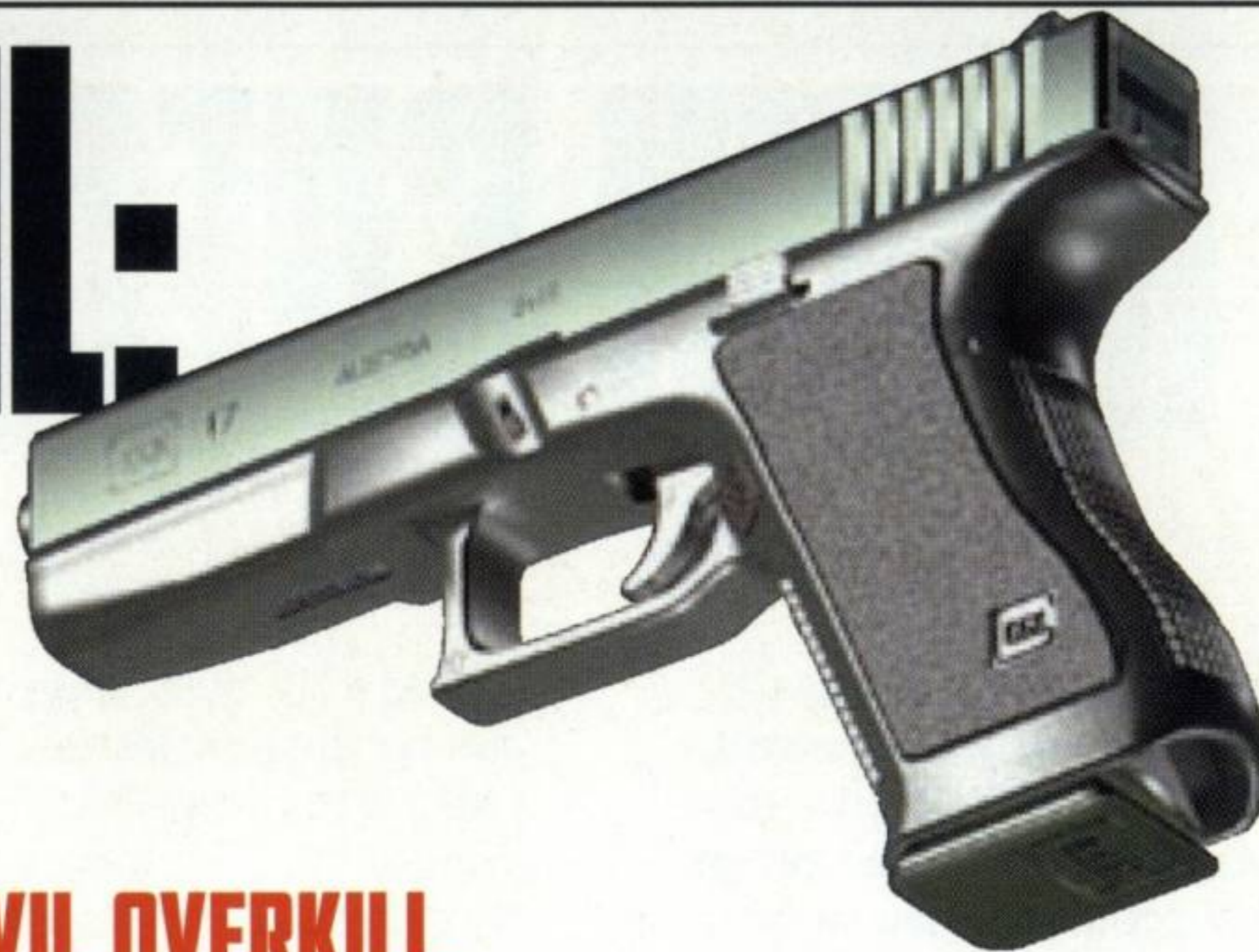


■ **Tyrants are resilient, but dim enough to outwit easily.**



■ **At last, a challenge! The final boss is a mutant bitch zombie fiend from hell.**

RESIDENT EVIL: SURVIVOR



Game info

- Publisher: **Eidos**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**
- Extras: **Dual Shock-compatible or G-Con 45 Lightgun**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Living dead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It's a Res Evil lightgun game. Hurrah! ■ Shoot zombies with your own pistol | <p>Seeing red</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hybrid of genres doesn't work ■ Poor sound and graphics ■ Limited, easy and dull |
|--|---|

LIGHTGUN GAME SIGNALS RESIDENT EVIL OVERKILL.

Forget that the title of this game involves the words **Resident and Evil**. Affiliated to the classic survival horror series by name, but not by merit, *Resident Evil Survivor* is poorly executed and eschews the high standards of Shinji Mikami's adventure games.

In theory, the idea of a lightgun shooting game set within the *Resident Evil* world is a good 'un. If it could have combined the zombie carnage of *House Of The Dead* with a few more cerebral challenges – improving on the Sega game's superficial gameplay – *Survivor* could have been a mouthwatering prospect. The decision to take the lightgun game off its rails and allow freedom of movement is admirable, but the game doesn't deliver.

The storyline distances itself from others in the *Resident Evil* pantheon. It takes place on an island owned by the shadowy Umbrella organisation behind the zombie plague. Teenage slaves are being turned into zombie tyrants. None of the characters from the other games appear. Chris Redfield is briefly mentioned, but the lack of linking plot is duly explained by the fact that your character has amnesia. The reality is gradually revealed in a series of artless cut scenes, during which the character voicing and animation is so poor that any tension is lost. *Survivor* pays little heed to the audio touches which create such an eerie atmosphere in *Nemesis* or *Code Veronica*.

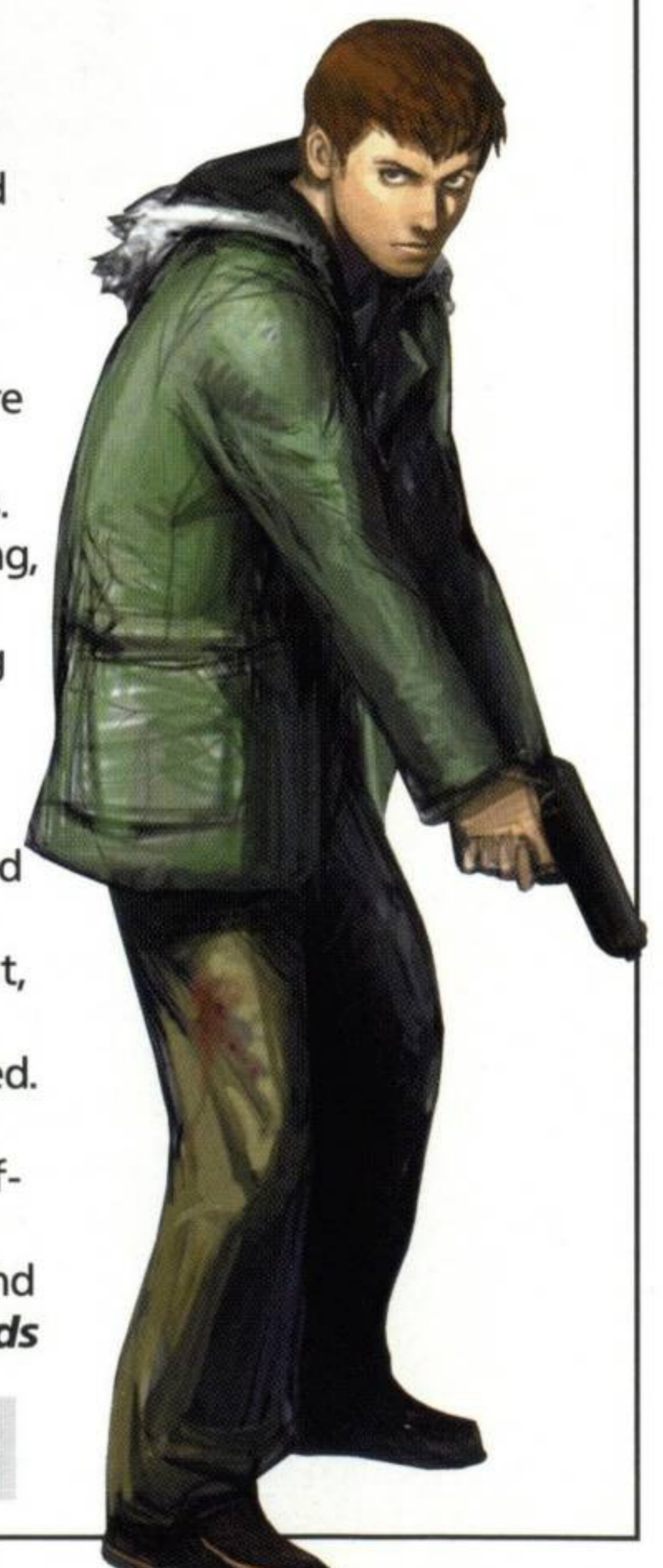
The game graphics are also primitive in comparison. The style of the typical *Resident Evil* environments has been copied, but *Survivor's* backdrops are drab and simplistic. There are only about four different zombie animations and further into the game you meet a lot

of tyrant creatures, who are all exactly the same. Their AI is woeful and blasting them soon becomes tedious.

More crucially, *Survivor's* hybrid of gameplay styles doesn't succeed. You can control the game with a joypad or a G-Con 45 lightgun (no other lightguns appear to be compatible) but neither method is satisfactory. The joypad controller makes it easier to negotiate the environments, but shooting is more difficult as you have to stop dead before lining up a crosshair. G-Con control is predictably hampered by the lack of directional buttons. To manoeuvre yourself, you press the trigger while aiming the gun off screen; to look left and right, you use the A and B buttons. There's no strafing move and you can't shoot while moving, so Capcom has simplified the game accordingly, making it rather dull in the process. There's little reward for shooting accuracy – the game will happily register a direct hit even if you only scrape a loose piece of clothing – and there's no advantage to be gained from headshots.

Surely the only point in compromising a straightforward lightgun game for freedom of movement is to give you something worthwhile to find? *Survivor* fails on that count, typically handing you a key to open a door two rooms away. There are no puzzles, and your brain remains untaxed.

Resident Evil Survivor may keep you stimulated to the end, but that's only because it lasts less than two-and-a-half-hours. Soon the world will wake from this ill-conceived nightmare and find itself in *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* and everything will be all right again. ★★ **Sam Richards**

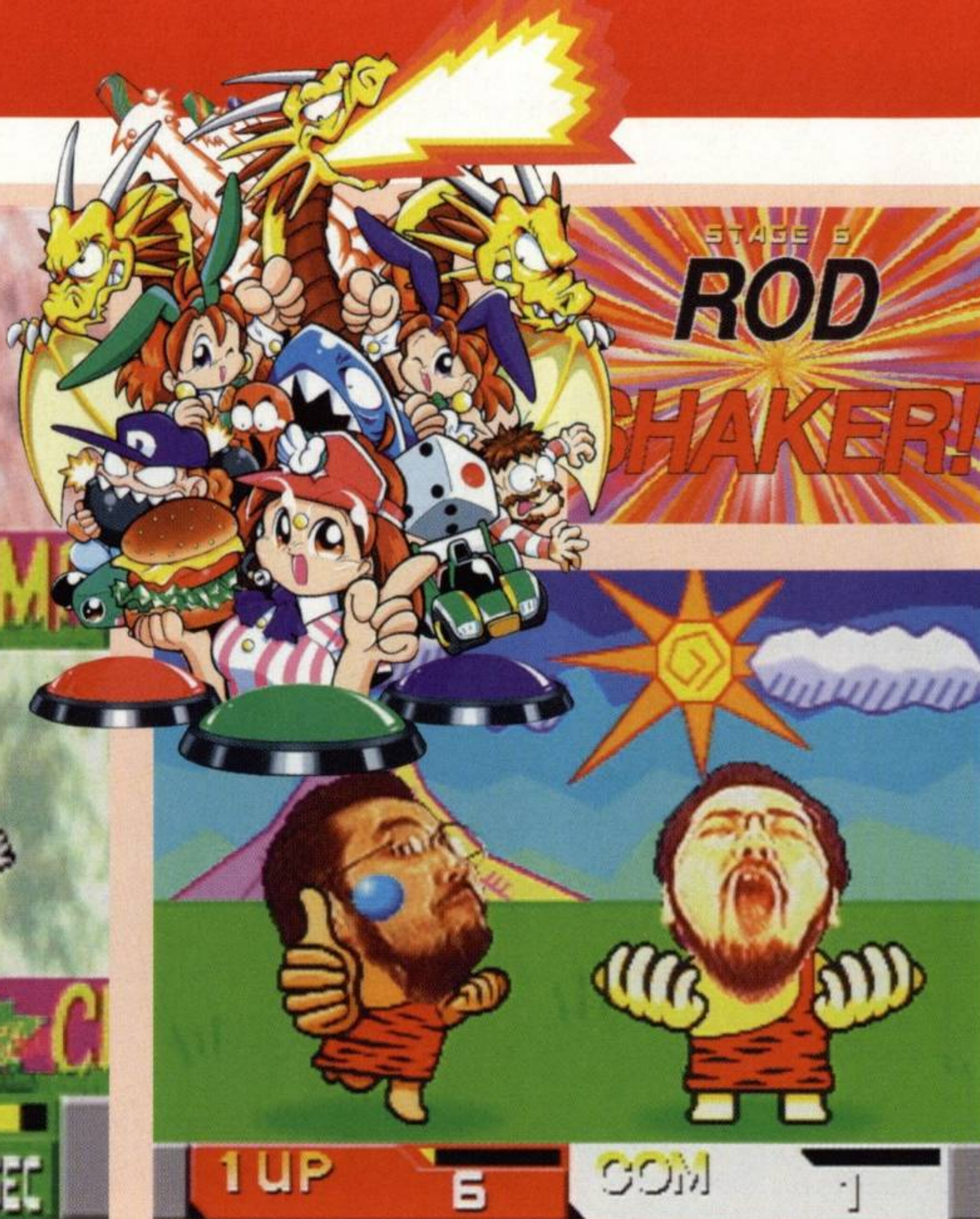


Or you could try...

Time Crisis
Namco ★★★★★
The original lightgun shooter. It may be short, but at least it tests your skills.

Resident Evil: Nemesis
Capcom ★★★★★
If you want the true *Resident Evil* experience, immerse yourself in this.

■ Button bashing footie to horrify the purists.



BISHI BASHI SPECIAL

FUN SIZED CHUNKS OF JAPANESE VIDEOGAMING INSANITY.

You're bored. Your girlfriend/cousin/Dad/Gran/unwanted guest is hanging around, happily chomping their way through your reserve of chocolate digestives, seemingly oblivious to your twitching desire to boot up the PlayStation. You need a game which you can play with your game-virgin guest which won't require hours of explanation and will give them an opportunity to put up a half-decent fight.

Enter *Bishi Bashi Special* which, much like Nintendo's *Mario Party* – from which it takes its inspiration – is fun for all the family. In every mode of the game you're assaulted with a variety of instantly enjoyable mini-games with the instructions for each spelled out before you play. "Just bash all the buttons!" it may suggest, advice which anyone can understand. This isn't the most sophisticated gameplay technique ever invented, but it does make for a level playing field and means that no matter who you play against competition is a fierce and fun affair. And before you have time to celebrate or lick your wounds, it's on to the next challenge.

Bashi Bashi's mini-games require you to do everything from climb a skyscraper to select the correct ingredients for a chef's stew to expand a dancer's afro by imitating a disco rhythm. The methods involved include such traditional stand-bys as spot the difference, but also incorporate neat reductions of almost every videogaming staple you will have come across. Along the way you will play *Pong* with a giant crab, *Spyhunter* on a horse, *Galaxians* without the spaceship and – in a moment of unfettered genius – the javelin throw from *International Track & Field* will be recreated with a newlywed bride lobbing a custard pie at her wedding guests.

Yes, *Bishi Bashi* is particularly odd in places. Without wanting to invoke the knee-jerk suspicion that Japanese games are always weird, it's impossible not to chuckle at the glorious non-sequitur of destroying a wooden shack

to find a 2D rabbit supping from a bottle of Bollinger among the remains. *Bishi Bashi* is happily insane, a humour intensified by the literal English translation of the game titles. *Arcade's* favourite is *Jump For The Meat* in which a bare chested man leaps higher and higher until he can grab a pork chop suspended in mid-air. This kind of thing should be celebrated, and Western game developers would do well to imbue some games with similarly manic humour.

Not all the mini-games are great. A few are baffling, some are impossible, others too easy and one or two recycle the same ideas. The quality of graphics and sound is defiantly lo-fi and often charming, but when it makes *Point Blank* look like *Black & White* the shoddy presentation can occasionally hamper your enjoyment.

Whatever its faults, however, there are few games which can claim to be this accessible while still maintaining a level of gameplay which will satiate and amuse the hardcore. *Bishi Bashi Special* constitutes fantastic value, combining two Japanese releases (*Bishi Bashi Super* and *Bishi Bashi Hyper*) on one disc with about 100 mini-games. Konami has also announced plans to sell the whole package for £20 under the new PlayStation software pricing agreement. That rescues *Bishi Bashi Special* from the realm of Japanese obscurity and makes it a game every home should own. ★★★★★ **Sam Richards**

Game info

- Publisher: Konami
- Developer: Konami
- Price: £20 (TBC)
- Release date: May
- Players: 1-8 (only two play simultaneously)
- Extras: Analogue

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Bash the buttons

- Huge gameplay variety
- Even your Mum can play
- Mucho chortlesome weirdness

Bash the bishop

- Limited single-player fun
- Some mini-games look and feel a tad shoddy

Or you could try...

Point Blank 2
Namco ★★★★★
Great lightgun mini-games with a similarly ludicrous bent.

International Track & Field 2
Konami ★★★
Button bashing disguised as a series of arduous Olympic events.



■ "Here comes the bride/ lobbing a pie" – if only all weddings were like this.





■ (Left) Manager's Office screen, allowing you to keep an eye on how you're doing.

Game info

- Publisher: 3DO
- Developer: Anco
- Price: £30
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-2
- Extras: memory card

Rank	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Diff	Pts
1	Southampton	17	11	3	3	34	17	17	44
2	Tottenham	17	10	4	3	32	18	14	44
3	Manchester U.	17	9	4	4	27	18	9	39
4	Aston Villa	17	9	3	5	29	21	8	36
5	Chelsea	17	8	4	5	21	24	-3	35
6	Leeds	17	8	3	6	26	18	8	35
7	Arsenal	17	7	4	6	23	24	-1	31
8	West Ham	17	7	3	7	23	24	-1	31
9	Leeds	17	7	2	8	24	23	1	31
10	Newcastle	17	6	5	6	19	27	-8	31
11	Bradford	17	5	4	8	18	17	1	30
12	Wimbledon	17	5	3	9	19	19	0	30
13	Sheffield W.	17	5	1	11	17	22	-5	28
14	Leicester	17	4	3	10	14	20	-6	28
15	Derby	17	4	3	10	15	20	-5	28

PLAYER MANAGER 2000

COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT SIM LET DOWN BY SLOW LOADING.

The enduring popularity of football management sims isn't hard to fathom. All fans think... no, scrap that... all fans know they could do a better job of managing their favourite team than the idiot/fallen idol presently employed by the club.

The current hunger for footie management means that even though the PlayStation clearly isn't designed for such information-heavy games the genre has continued to show up on Sony's little grey box.

Until the emergence of Codemasters' *LMA Manager*, *Player Manager '98/'99* was top of the table. Unlike *LMA*, which was designed with the PlayStation in mind, *Player Manager '98/'99* seemed to be an effort to cram a PC game onto the PlayStation whatever the consequences. The consequences were, as even its most ardent admirers would admit, loading times that made playing the game just a little too much like watching paint dry.

And there's no let up with *Player Manager 2000*, as playing it is like wading through treacle. Every time you start up it takes an age to load the game data. A quick save is time for a cup of tea. In fact, your tea consumption will rise exponentially if you become addicted to *Player Manager 2000*. And addicted you can be, because despite all that it's a good game.

There's more depth and tactical mumbo-jumbo here than in any manager sim this side of the PC. You can design tactics for whatever team you're playing against and change them mid-game; you can develop youth players and watch them improve; buy and sell players throughout Europe and play friendlies against your mates' saved teams. The players even have predetermined "invisible characteristics", such as how well they get on with other players. In fact, as far as actually controlling a team goes *Player Manager 2000* has got the lot. You can tailor your tactics to the team you're playing, and if you insist on

sticking with one particular style of play you soon start to lose games. Too predictable, you see.

The transfer market is a little eccentric, to say the least. Reality is left behind as you pick up David Beckham for less than £2.5 million and find Sol Campbell transfer listed for £3 million. There are also plenty of other weird bargains which, though clearly nonsense, mean it's always worth having a look at who's available.

While undoubtedly more comprehensive tactically than *LMA Manager*, *Player Manager 2000* fails to live up to that game's high standards. First, there are the aforementioned slow loading times. This really is frustrating, meaning it can take 20-odd hours to complete a season and as a result you become progressively less keen to carry on with a poor team, turn them around and come out with a stronger squad ready for the next season. And the very comprehensiveness of the game means that if you do check out all the stats, keep a close eye on the training and keep a beady eye on the transfer market things take even longer. And, unlike *LMA*, you really do need to keep an eye on these things, rather than leave them to "coaches".

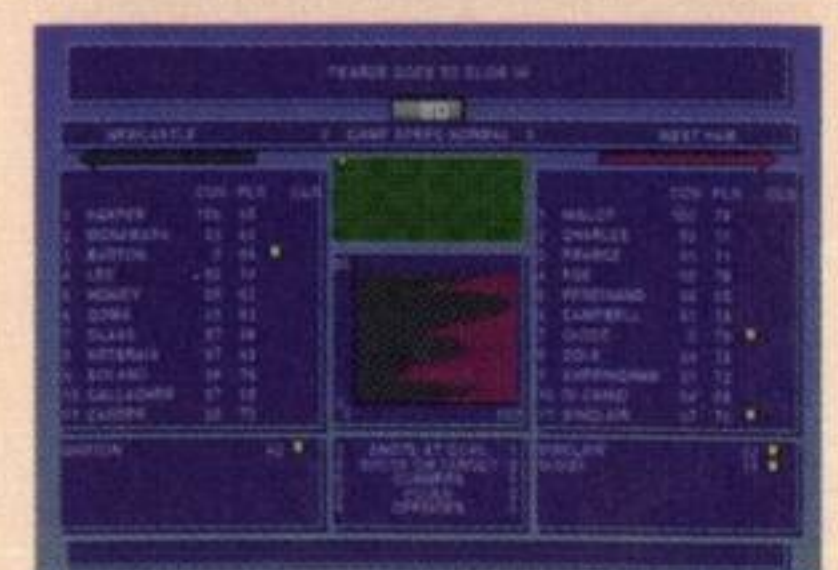
Also, there's little scope for building small teams into world beaters as you can't influence the financial side of the club. So you can't, for example, improve your stadium to boost gate receipts (not in the job description of most managers, granted). This makes it hard to ever challenge the big guns if you want to start at, say, Doncaster, or even a middling Premiership team like West Ham.

But if you want to control every aspect of the playing side, pitting your wits against the best in the land then *Player Manager 2000* is the game for you. Just make sure the kettle works, you've got plenty of tea bags in the cupboard and milk in the fridge. ★★★ **Richard Keith**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Bill Shankly | Hand Shandy |
| ■ Comprehensive | ■ Slow |
| ■ All the right names | ■ Dodgy transfers |
| ■ You're in control | ■ Really slow |

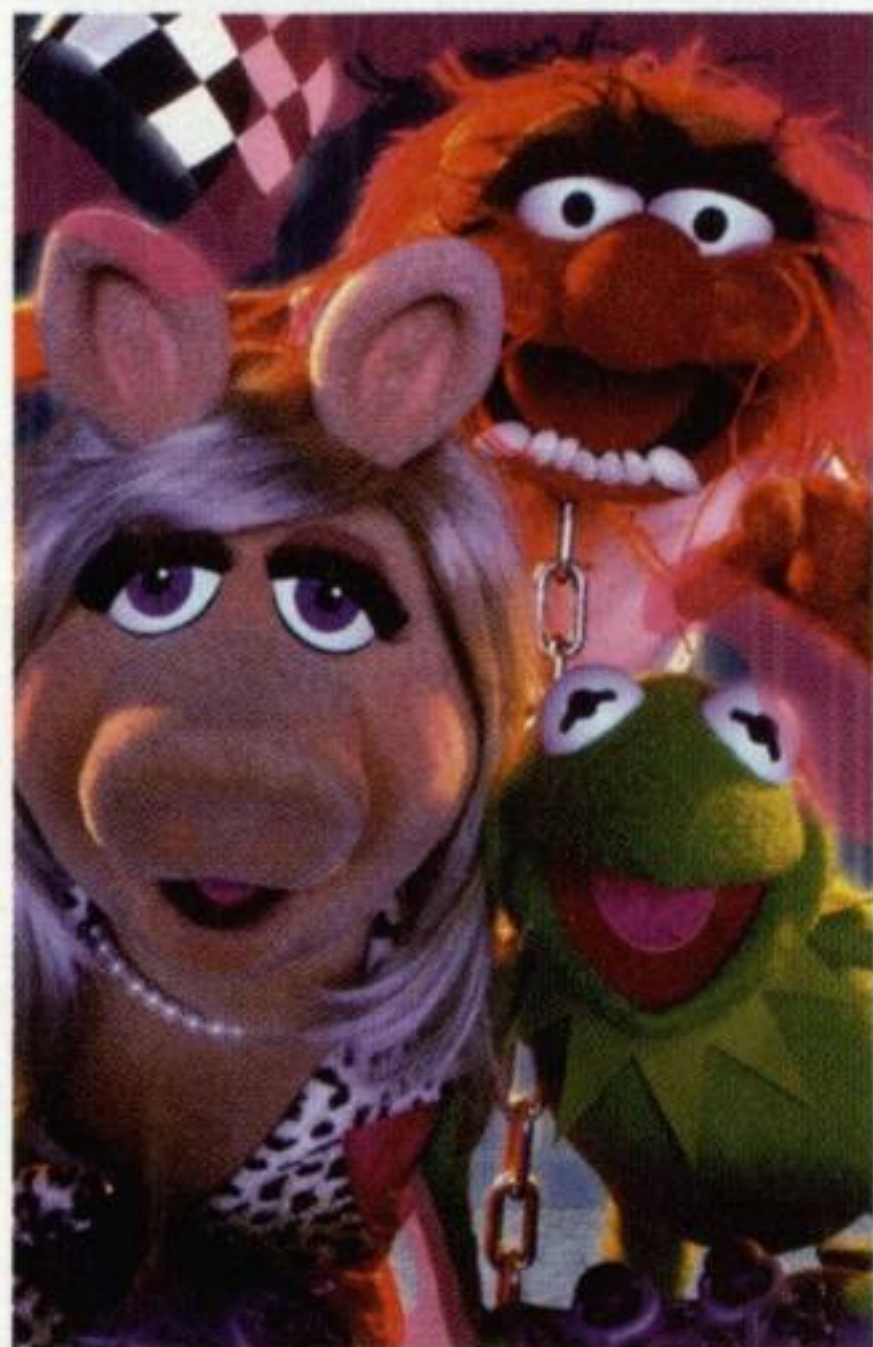
■ (Below) You can watch the games in one of four ways: scanner, quick watch, watch highlights or commentary. You'll learn which one suits you best.



Or you could try...

LMA Manager
Codemasters ★★★★★
A cracking footie game, complete with mini-games.

Premier Manager 2000
Infogrames ★★
Limited transfers, little depth and too simplistic.



MUPPET MANIA RACING

- Publisher: **Sony**
- Developer: **Traveller's Fare**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **memory card, Dual Shock-compatible**

■ Videogame journalists are, as a rule, a suspicious bunch, all too eager to raise a cursory eyebrow against claims that a game they have no intention playing can be any good. By the same token, the videogame magazine-buying public (that's you) are equally fickle, likely to pass over a game review just because it's been sandwiched next to a bigger review of *Die Hard Trilogy 2* with more pictures and a bigger title.

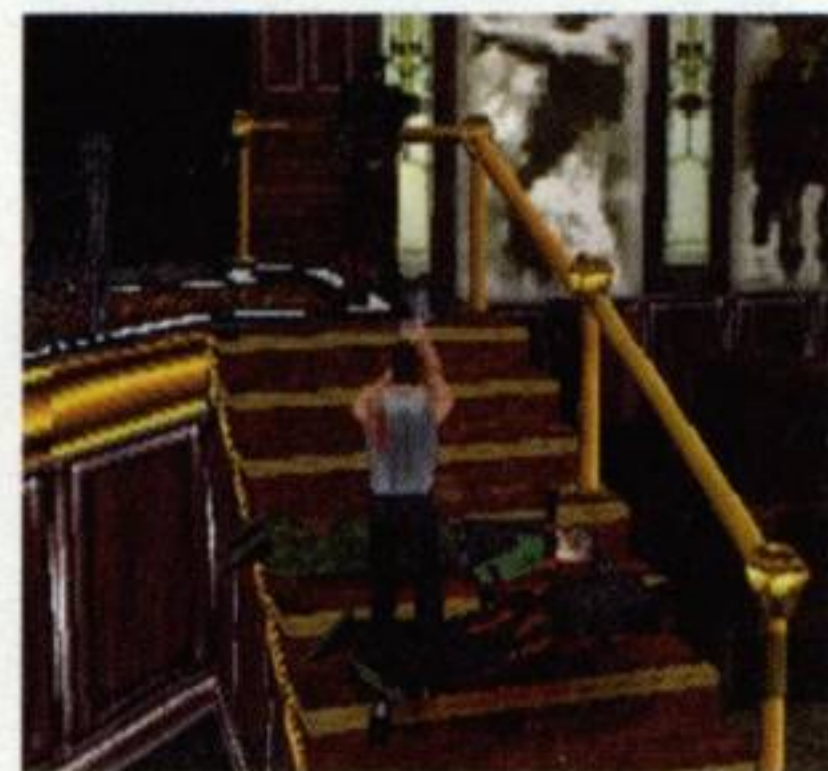
But in this case everyone is wrong, 'cos *Muppet Mania Racing* is really, really good. It's in the *Mario Kart* mould, with your favourite Muppet characters in an assortment of vehicles: Kermit in a kart, Gonzo aboard a flying saucer, Fozzie on a steamroller - you get the drift. For power-ups, swap the banana skin for a penguin, the green shell for an exploding fish, and the red shell for, er, a chicken. Stick in a turbo-boost, charged by collecting the fruit that litters the tracks, and you're away.

Whereas *Mario Kart* is all about nudging the controls, keeping to the racing lines, and firing the power-ups at just the right moment, *Muppet Mania* is the opposite, an all-out fest of over-steering round corners, boosting through the pack and letting off as many chickens as you can get your hands on.

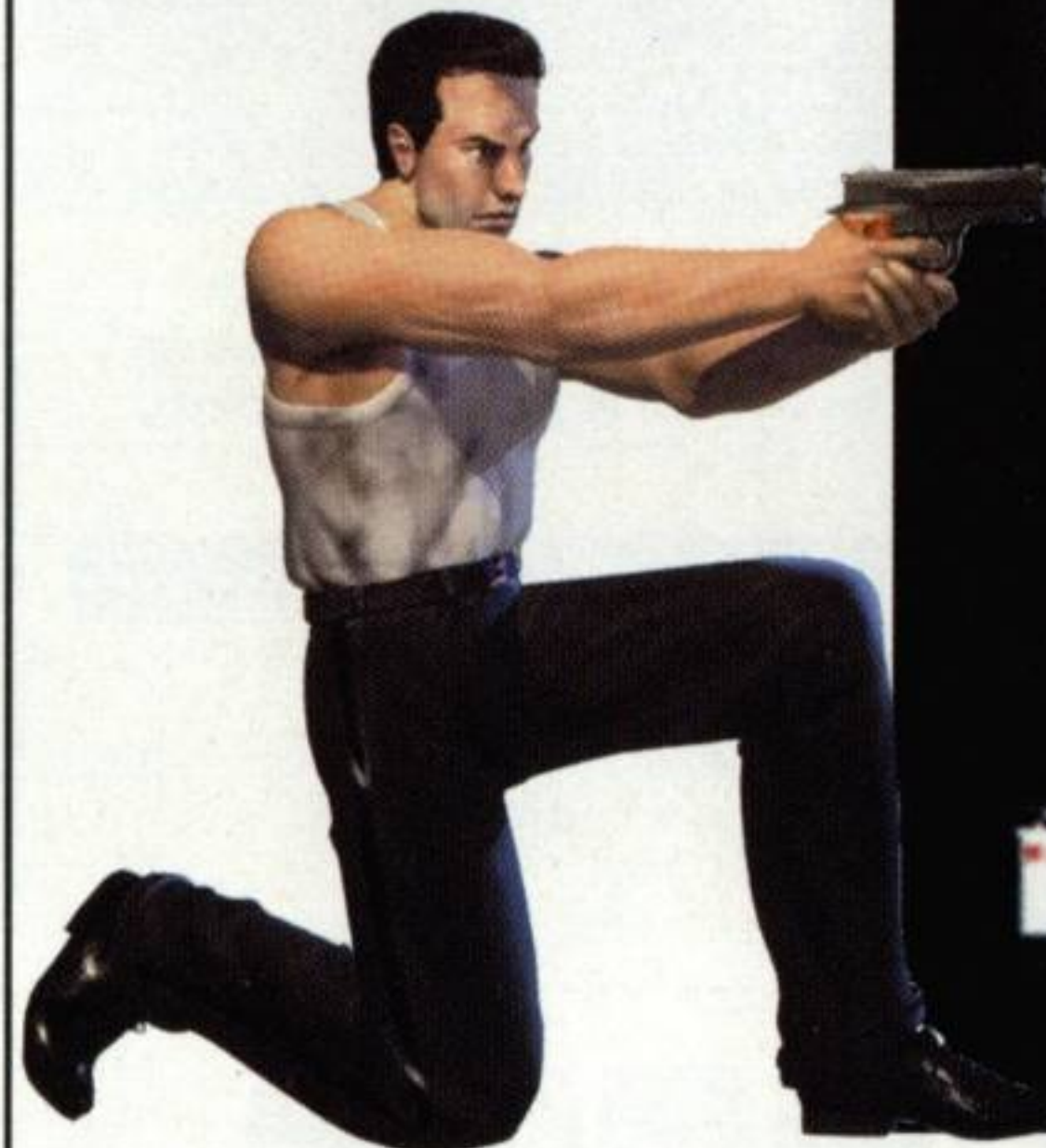
The design of the levels (based a quarter each on the four Muppet movies) accommodates this, with big arrows pointing you in the right direction, short-cuts sneaking your through and a kart handling unseen on a PlayStation racer before. Heck, there's even a Deathmatch level.

Speed Freaks was desperate to be *Mario Kart* but failed. *Muppet Mania Racing* almost manages to get it right. ★★★★★

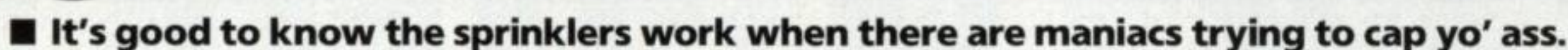
Rich Pelley



■ "I have a bad feeling about this". Yes, so do we.



■ It's good to know the sprinklers work when there are maniacs trying to cap yo' ass.



DIE HARD TRILOGY 2

THREE GAMES, AND NOT A SINGLE ONE OF THEM WORTH PLAYING.

Game info

- Publisher: **Fox**
- Developer: **N Space**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **out now**
- Players: **1**
- Extras: **memory card, light gun**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>McClane</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adventure bits ■ Passable shooting levels ■ Sort of fun | <p>Macleans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dire driving levels ■ Black fog everywhere ■ Nothing remarkable |
|---|--|

■ Red or dead - the game's femme fatale.



With *Die Hard Trilogy 2* you get three games for the price of one, in the same sense that you can spend three weeks in Benidorm for the price of seven days in Tuscany. Like its predecessor, this title includes an action adventure game, a shoot-'em-up and a driving game. The catch is that none of them is especially good.

First, in (rapidly) decreasing order of merit, come the action adventure levels. These are the best bits by far, and have you stalking through buildings shooting baddies, unlocking doors and taking out security cameras. The graphics are decent enough - if rather foggy - and there are some neat set-pieces, like a bloke running out of a door in front of you on fire and setting off the sprinklers.

The viewpoint has been moved a little lower than in the first game, but the daft being-able-to-see-through-walls feature has been retained and the levels seem rather shorter. The result is diverting, but doesn't stand up to close scrutiny in this post-*Metal Gear Solid* age.

Then there are the shoot-'em-up bits, for which you'll ideally want to have a light gun

plugged into the second controller socket. The camera ducks and weaves automatically from room to room while baddies pop up from behind oil drums and bystanders run across the screen waving their arms in a manner akin to the FBI training sequences Hollywood has taught you to know and

love. Again, these bits are efficiently executed, but their *Virtua Cop*-style bullet-spraying looks rather old-fashioned next to the cold precision of *Time Crisis*.

Finally come the driving levels.

These, quite frankly, stink. The car handles like a bedstead and boasts the world's largest turning circle. As for the scenery, it's about as picturesque as an abattoir. If the driving

levels were removed and released on their own, they'd be the worst driving game since *Cruis'n USA*.

So there you have it. If you're the kind of person who'd rather buy three packets of plain digestives than one packet of chocolate ones, *Die Hard Trilogy 2* may just be the game for you. ★★

Jonathan Davies

Or you could try...

Metal Gear Solid
Konami ★★★★★
Makes a better breast of the walking-around side of things.

Time Crisis
Namco ★★★★★
The light gun game to which all others doff their caps.

GHOUL PANIC

TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND AIM STRAIGHT FOR THE GHOULIES.



■ "We must save the kittens..."

Namco's latest helping of G-Con fodder is *Point Blank* with a supernatural twist. In the firing line are ghosts, skeletons and cats. You've got to shoot the ghosts and skeletons but spare the cats, who'll run up to the camera and express their gratitude in disturbing, squeaky little voices.

Like *Point Blank*, *Ghoul Panic* throws a dazzling variety of mini-games at you in no particular order. Each gives you just a few seconds of frenzied lightgun action before it's whisked off the screen and replaced with another. The games are splendidly imaginative. One minute you're plugging away at *Galaxian*-like formations of ghosts swooping over the roof of a haunted house; the next you're given just one bullet and three seconds to pick off a single runaway roast chicken. There's one where you navigate a maze of rooms in search of captive cats,

one where you've got to take out dancing skeletons on a confusingly lit dance floor, and one where you must pick off ghosts chasing their feline prey up and down a staircase.

The valiant storytelling efforts of the adventure mode can do little to stop *Ghoul Panic* paling fast when you're playing on your own, especially as Namco still insists on providing infinite continues. But it's brilliant in the viciously competitive Party mode, where you and your guests take it in turns to pair up on the settee and blaze away. Remember to ask someone to bring round a second gun, though because *Ghoul Panic* only works with a lightgun.

Ghoul Panic has better graphics and more diversity than the *Point Blank* games, and is the one to go for if you haven't got either of the others. ★★ ★★ **Jonathan Davies**

Game info

- Publisher: **Namco**
- Developer: **Namco**
- Price: **£25**
- Release date: **May**
- Players: **1-8**
- Extras: **lightgun (required)**



↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|--|--|
| Spirits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Varied ■ Marksmanship-testing ■ Funny | Shandy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Limited single-player fun ■ Unlimited continues |
|--|--|

Or you could try...

Point Blank 2
Namco ★★ ★★ ★★
Endlessly weird variation on the same theme, with tiny bald men.

Time Crisis
Namco ★★ ★★ ★★
The shooting game of champions, and a better one-player bet.

Also released

And bringing up the rear...

Words by **Andy Butcher**



URBAN CHAOS

- Publisher: **Eidos**
- Developer: **Mucky Foot**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ The turn of the millennium isn't much cause for celebration in Union City, what with the streets overrun by criminals and mad cultists causing as much trouble as possible. Fortunately, it is quite a lot of fun for you, as you guide rookie police officer D'arci Stern through the many levels of this *Tomb Raider*-esque 3D action adventure that's let down by rather rough and unfinished-looking graphics. ★★ ★



4X4 WORLD TROPHY

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Developer: **Infogrames**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

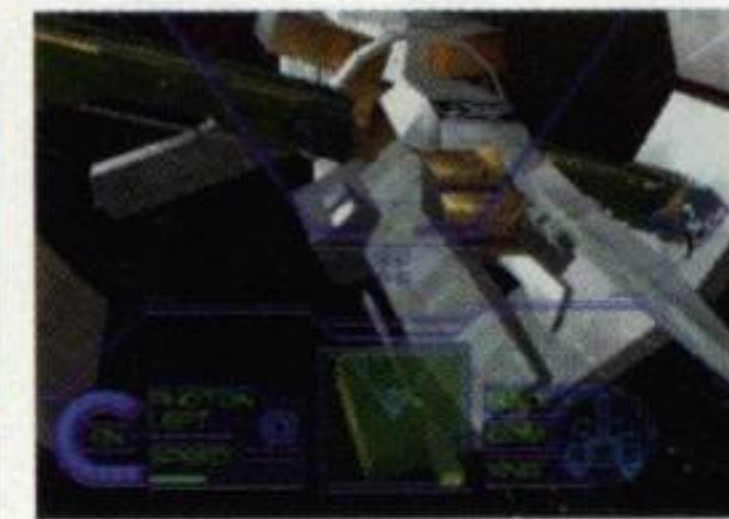
■ Choose a massive pickup truck. Drive it through woods, deserts, mountains and other gnarly courses. Grate your teeth at the unresponsive controls. Yes, it's yet another uninspiring off-road racing game for the PlayStation. Sadly, not even some rather nicely designed courses, a grunge rock soundtrack and a wide range of vehicles can save *4x4 World Trophy* from its sluggish handling. ★★



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

- Publisher: **Virgin**
- Developer: **Awesome Developments**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ Nothing if not comprehensive, this "pub game simulation" offers not only snooker and several variants of pool, but also a one-armed bandit, darts, draughts, and even an arcade cabinet with a pixel-perfect conversion of the classic Commodore 64 blaster, *DropZone*. Lots of fun for all the family, then, but why not just head off down to the juicer instead? ★★ ★



STAR IXIOM

- Publisher: **Sony**
- Developer: **Namco**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ Sad proof that even a developer with the history and reputation of Namco can turn up the odd disappointment, this lacklustre 3D space blaster sees you flying a variety of starfighters against hordes of stupid, unconvincing alien craft, interspersed by pointless "wander around the space station" scenes to choose new weapons and the like. Not exactly Namco's finest hour. ★★



ARMORIES: PROJECT S.W.A.R.M.

- Publisher: **Acclaim**
- Developer: **Distinctive Developments**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **May**
- Players: **1**

■ A moderately entertaining first-person blaster, *Armories* gives you a suit of power armour with a big gun built into one arm and an invading horde of alien nasties to blow to icky little splatters of gore. Good use is made of the Dual Shock controller's twin analogue sticks, but other than that this is exceedingly average. ★★



VICTORY BOXING CHALLENGER

- Publisher: **JVC**
- Developer: **Victor Interactive**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **May**
- Players: **1-2**

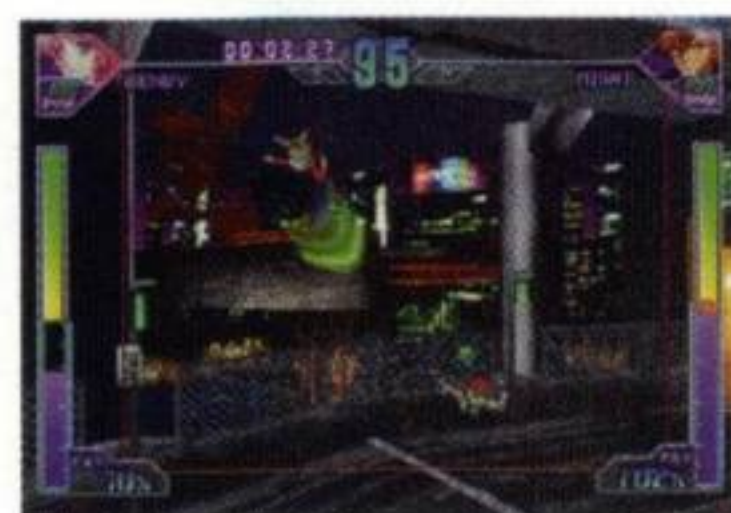
■ The original *Victory Boxing* was an excellent game. The second was less impressive, opting for a more arcade and ultimately less satisfying experience. Sadly, this third outing continues the downward trend, being the worst of the lot. Unconvincing animation, poor camera angles and sluggish controls all conspire to create an experience that's best avoided. ★



NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC

- Publisher: **Midway**
- Developer: **Midway**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**

■ Fast, action-packed and ridiculously easy to get into and play, this great two-on-two basketball game uses the same winning formula that made the original *NBA Jam* such a massive hit – there are only three buttons (pass, shoot, and turbo) and hardly any rules to worry about. Realistic? Not really. Fun? Yes indeed. ★★ ★★



PSYCHIC FORCE 2

- Publisher: **JVC**
- Developer: **Taito**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**

■ More 3D fighting strangeness from Taito. Like the original, *Psychic Force 2* adds a twist to the traditional beat-'em-up formula by setting the action in a free-floating cube, around which your character can fly at will. It takes some getting used to, but does have a rather unique manga feel, and looks pretty enough. Not exactly *Tekken 4*, but fun in its own way. ★★ ★



HYDRO THUNDER

- Publisher: **Midway**
- Developer: **Blue Shift**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **May**
- Players: **1-2**

■ Midway's speedboat racing game proved to be quite a lot of fun on the Dreamcast, but the unconvincing graphics engine in this PlayStation conversion only goes to highlight the lack of depth and long term appeal of the rather simplistic gameplay. Not even the trademark over-the-top Midway announcer's enthusiasm can save things from merely being acceptable. ★★ ★



JOJO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE

- Publisher: **Virgin**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **May**
- Players: **1-2**

■ Capcom just won't let 2D *Street Fighter*-style beat-'em-ups die a peaceful death. In this particularly bizarre example, based on a massively successful Japanese comic book, you get exactly what you'd expect – lots of lovingly detailed 2D characters with a huge range of special attacks. Capcom's mastery of this style of game shows but it's all getting a bit tired. ★★ ★



STREET SK8ER 2

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **Electronic Arts**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**

■ A pretty impressive improvement over the original, *Street Sk8er 2* takes more than a few leaves from the superb *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* to provide a much more enjoyable and slickly produced package. Everything you'd expect from a good skateboarding game is in here, and it's just the thing for *Tony Hawk's* fans waiting for the sequel to arrive. ★★ ★★

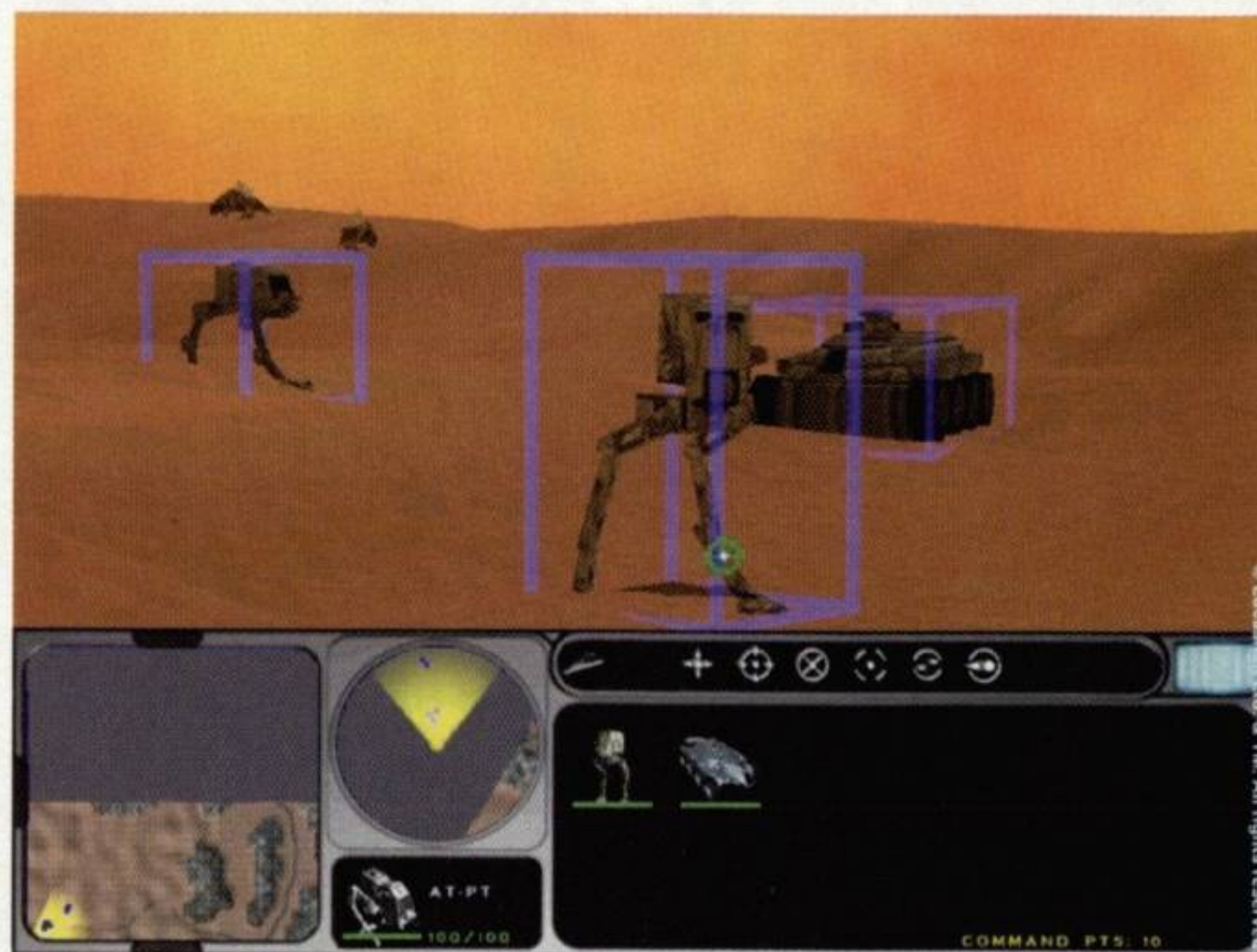


BRUNSWICK CIRCUIT PRO BOWLING 2

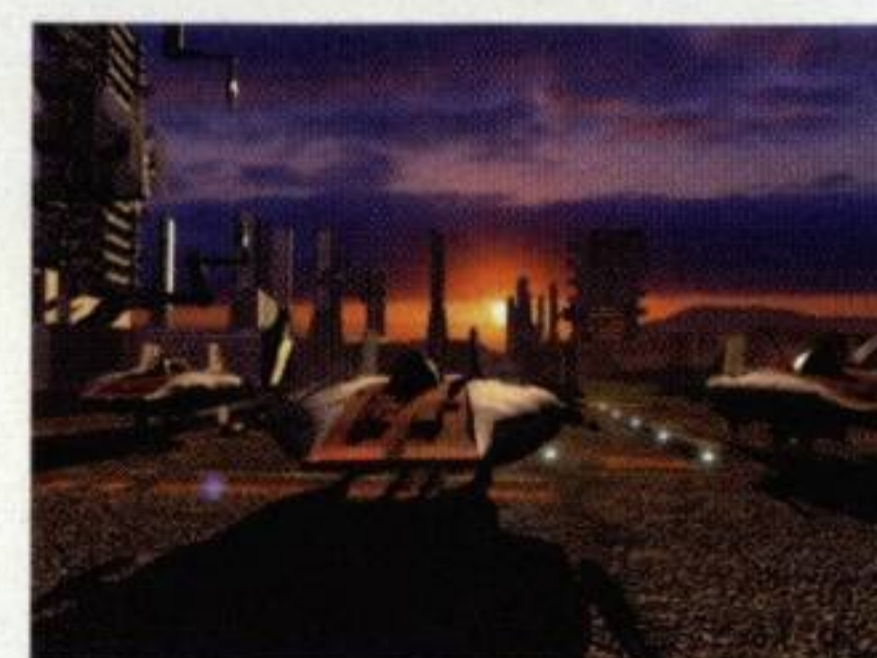
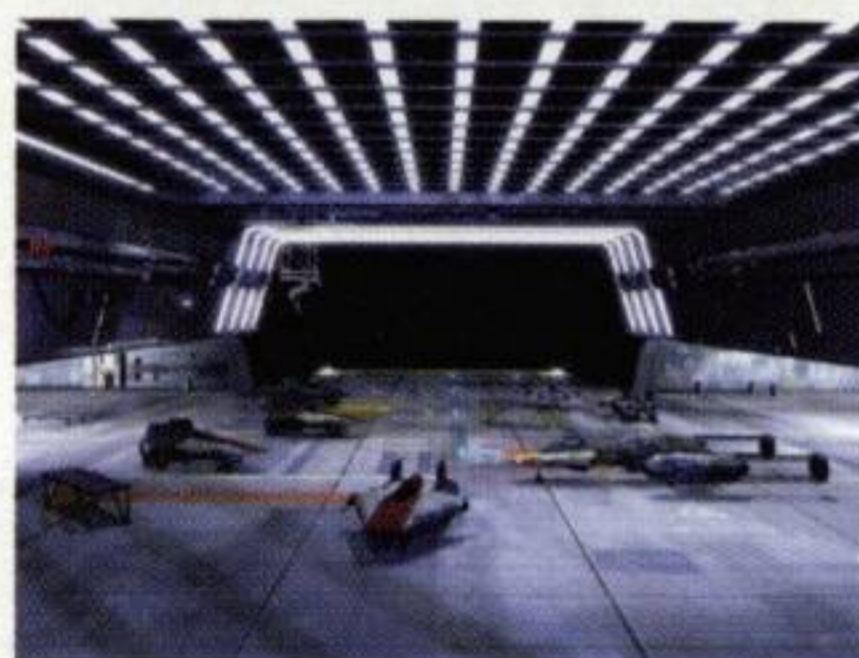
- Publisher: **THQ**
- Developer: **Adrenalin Entertainment**
- Price: **£20**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-4**

■ Ten pin bowling sims. What's the point? Sadly, this is not a question answered by *Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling 2*. In fact, apart from the amusement value to be had from the frighteningly accurate look of the players (wildly fat Americans with dodgy dress sense), this ranks as possibly one of the most pointless games of all time. ★

New PC Games



Zoom right in on the action and you can hear every clank and whirr of the All-Terrain Scout Transport's lanky chicken strut. Great for taking out infantry, but pants against vehicles.



Game info

- Publisher: **Activision**
- Developer: **LucasArts**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-32, LAN, Internet**
- Requires: **P11 266, 64 Mb RAM, 3D accelerator card**
- Recommended: **P111 450, 128 Mb RAM, 32Mb 3D accelerator card**

FORCE COMMANDER

QUALITY STAR WARS STRATEGY GAME MARRED BY LAGGING CONTROLS.



LucasArts has produced a number of classic games under its *Star Wars* banner. The *X-Wing* series was, and remains for many, the seminal space combat sim as it put you at the helm of the ships that childhood dreams were made of. And *Jedi Knight* may not have had the finesse of id's offerings, but it had gameplay and a plot structure to rival *Half-Life*.

The more recent *Episode One* titles were pretty good too – not as hot as LucasArts' previous offerings, but that probably has more to do with the fact that they were based on a weaker film than the first three.

So, it comes as a bit of a blow to discover that *Force Commander* doesn't live up to the legend. The



Just like the movies, the Rebels rely on Shield Generators to keep their base structures safe from enemy ordnance.



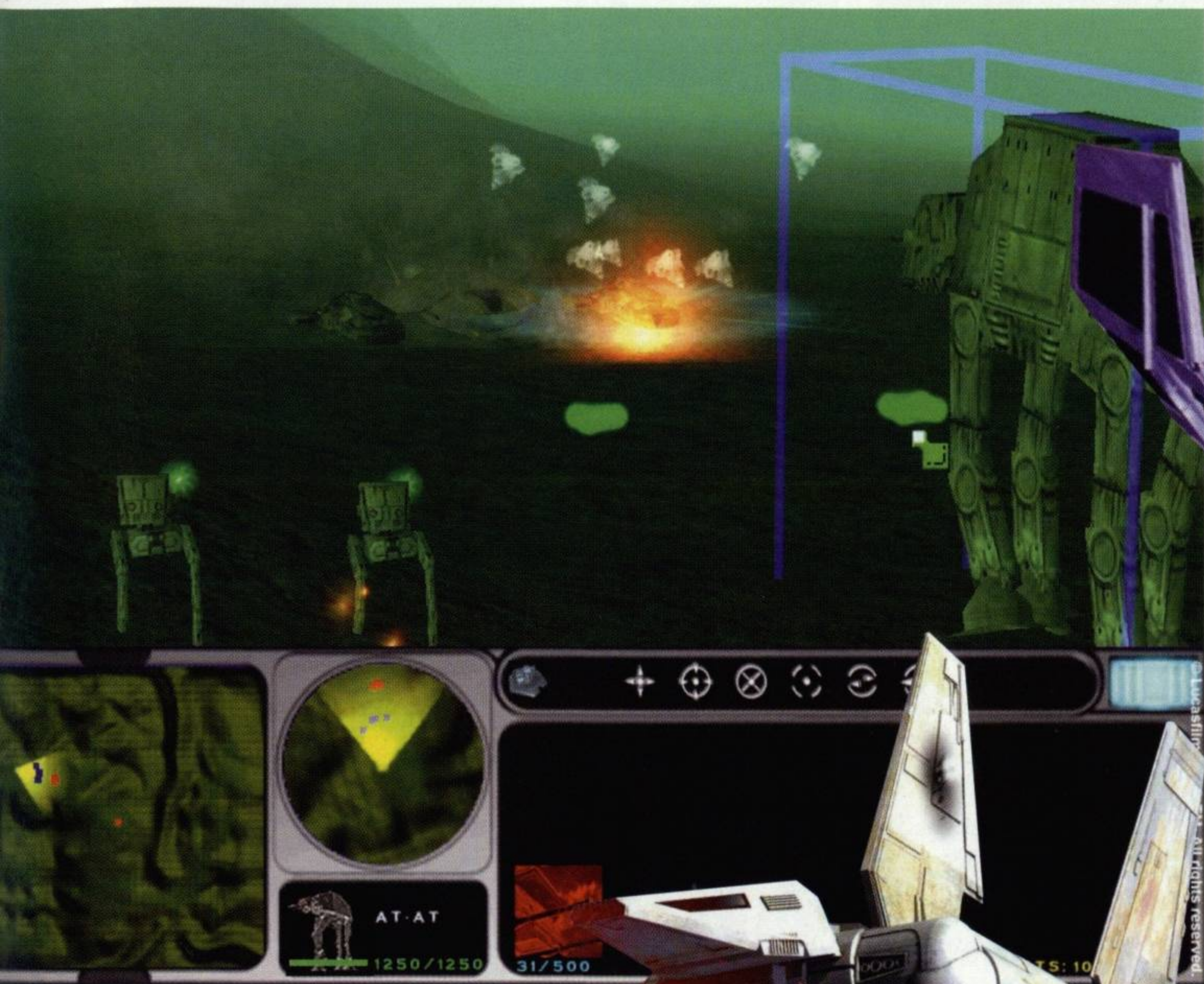
Numerous plush cut scenes get the storyline rolling.

disappointment isn't immediately apparent though. From the moment you install the game it effortlessly builds up your expectations – the opening movie does that whole chills-up-the-spine *Star Wars* thing. Top stuff.

However, you expect a worthy game on top of the admittedly wonderful paraphernalia, and that's where *Force Commander* doesn't deliver the goods. It's a real-time strategy game at heart, cast in the same mould as *Tiberian Sun* or *Warzone 2100*. Look beyond the physical similarities and you'll find some tasty innovations; instead of harvesting resources, a task that most of today's strategy games charge you with, you're provided with Command Points, which are used to buy reinforcement units and new base components. Command Points (essentially a mark of your superiors' contentment with your decisions in combat) are awarded through tactical success. Kill an enemy unit or steal one of his buildings and you'll be given a certain amount of points, which can in turn be spent on bolstering your forces or expanding your base.

Requisitioning units is simple and satisfying. Star Destroyers packed with troops circle high above, so if you've got the Command Points to fund it you can order a complement of Stormtroopers, a stand of AT-ST walkers, or an AT-AT or two. One of the game's major strengths is its





■ Tie Bombers make a welcome appearance, raining high-explosive plasma on the Rebels.



units – controlling AT-ATs is, after all, precisely what you want. In fact, it's one of the main motivations for buying *Force Commander* – live out those fantasies.

Of course, the Rebels have their own counter-measures, such as the Snow Speeder and its AT-AT disabling tow-cable. Another trick up the Rebels' sleeve is their units' shielding, which replenishes over time. This means that even heavily damaged units can hold back, power up, and still play a part in battles. Each side shares certain unit types, such as foot-soldiers, turrets, artillery and fast scout units. The sides are well matched, even if the Rebel tanks look shabby faced with 500 tons of lumbering Imperial hardware.

Base construction is a similar process to ordering units – base components are delivered from space via heavy transport units, and placed where you choose. Buildings play a curious part in *Force Commander*, as they need to be constantly defended. Any building, be it a turret, bunker or whatever, can be stormed and claimed by enemy troops. Letting your base defences fall into enemy hands can be your undoing, as it will be turned straight onto you.

And finally, you have the control interface. One of the game's finest features, it's also *Force Commander's* fatal flaw. With simple mouse controls and hotkeys, you can

zoom in and out, rotate, tilt and flip the camera to any angle, and generally be in total control of the action. But alongside this sublime level of control, you've got an incessant feeling of lag – whenever you tell a unit to do something, or move the camera, or change screens, there's a tiny pause which mars the whole experience, making it feel sluggish and clumsy. While this may sound like a piffling thing, it really does have serious joy-thwarting properties.

Your units also exhibit poor pathfinding abilities – units frequently stop at untraversable terrain, or mill around clumsily rather than take a simple route round the obstacle. Such problems are simple enough, it's true, but even the downloadable patch (www.forcecommander.com) doesn't help. *Force Commander*, despite its epic pretensions, remains a prime example of flawed genius. ★★★ **Alex Bickham**

FROM THE MOMENT YOU INSTALL THE GAME IT EFFORTLESSLY BUILDS UP YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Chewbacca

- Star Wars strategy
- Great visuals
- AT-ATs

Jar Jar Binks

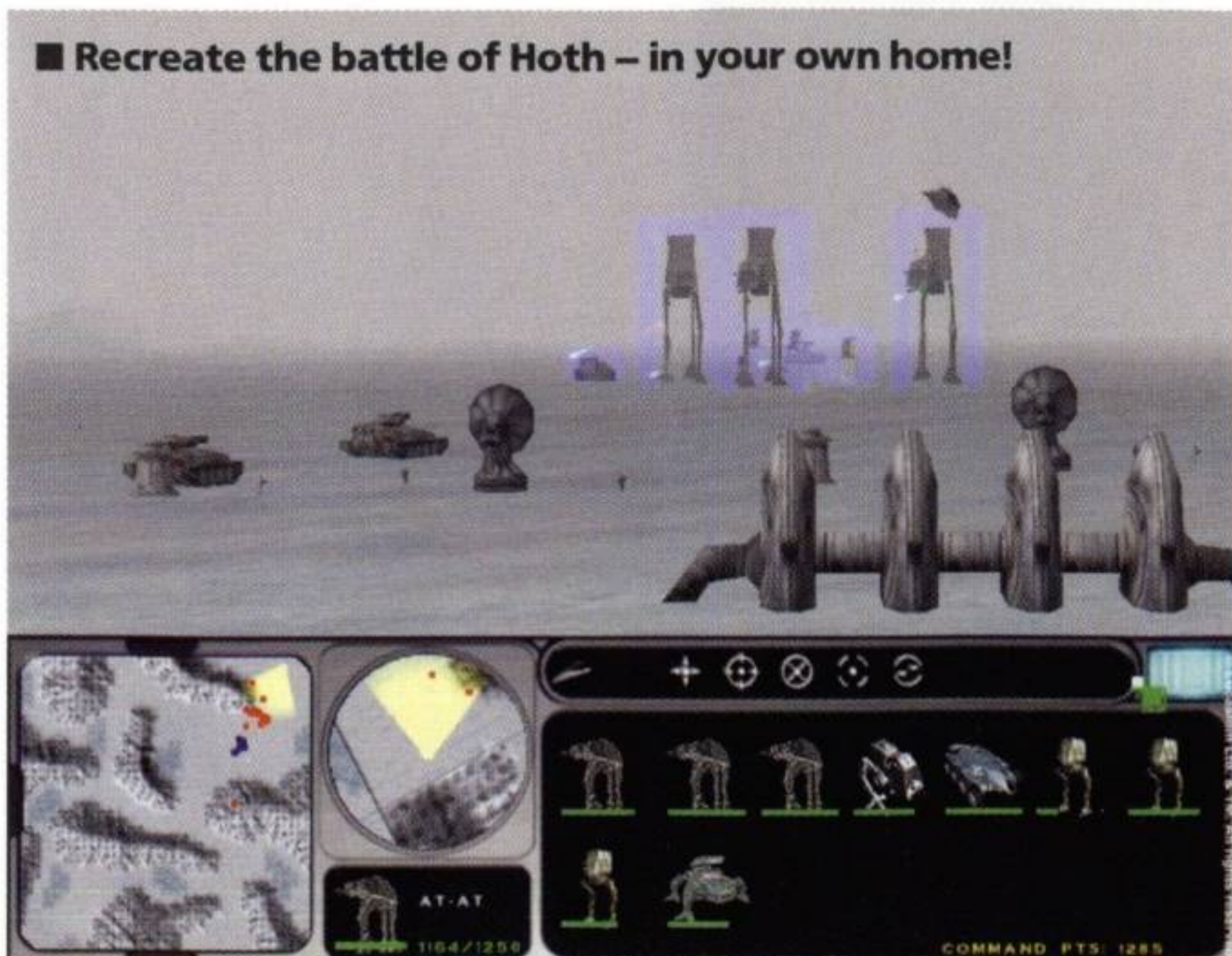
- Clumsy controls
- Divvy units
- Overly powerful weapons

Or you could try...

C&C Tiberian Sun
Electronic Arts ★★★★★
Latest in the RTS Command & Conquer series goes for total warfare

Star Wars X-wing Alliance
Lucas Arts ★★★★★
No strategy, but it's Star Wars and there's plenty of shooting involved.

■ Recreate the battle of Hoth – in your own home!





■ *Star Trek: Armada's* graphics engine is a stunning piece of work, and makes it easy to get carried away and start shouting things like "Arm photon torpedos!" or "Phasers on full!" Just be sure no one can hear you...

Game info

- Publisher: **Activision**
- Developer: **Activision**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **May**
- Players: **1, LAN, Internet**
- Requires: **P200, 32Mb RAM**

STAR TREK: ARMADA

A STAR TREK GAME WITH SOME REAL ACTION? ACTIVISION MAKES IT SO.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

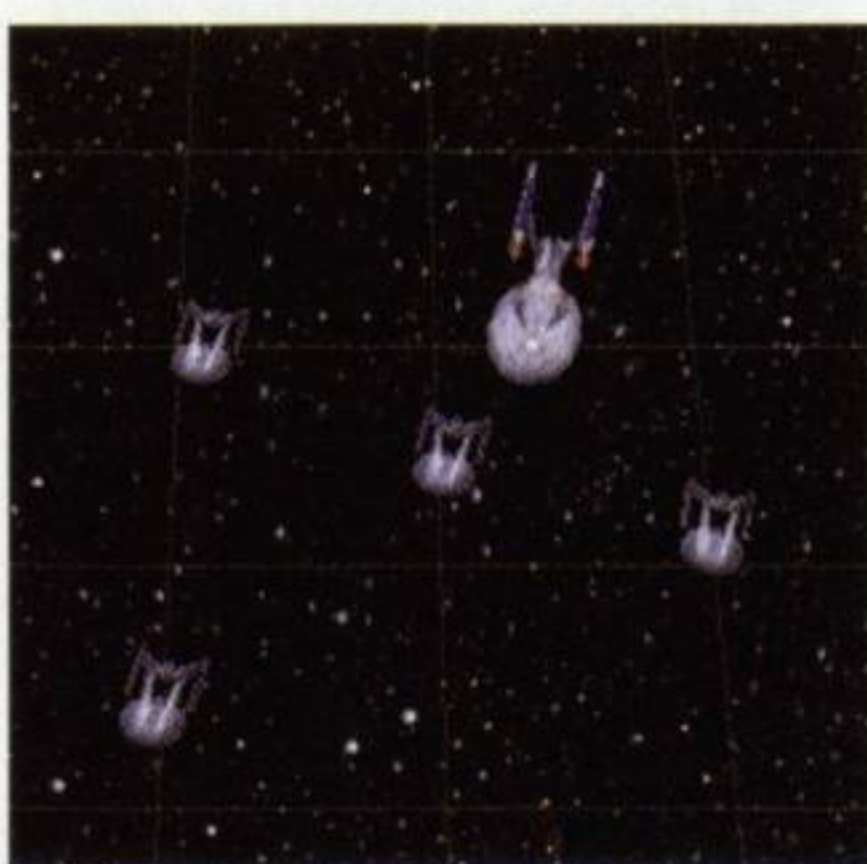
- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Bold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stunning graphics engine ■ Action-packed gameplay | <p>Bad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lacks depth and challenge ■ Little tactical scope |
|---|--|



■ Special weapons like this jammer abound in *Armada*.



■ A Borg base crumbles before the Enterprise's might.



■ Organising ships into fleets is simple and effective.

Given the continued popularity of the various *Star Trek* series, it's hardly surprising that there have been so many games based on them over the years. Unfortunately, even the best of them have suffered from two key problems. The first is that you often need to be a serious Trekkie to understand what's going on, and the second is that they try to stick closely to the principles of the *Star Trek* universe, especially the dictum that force is a last resort.

While this humanist philosophy is an admirable thing, it can make for rather dull gaming. What's the point in commanding all those powerful starships if you don't get to blow things up, anyway?

Star Trek: Armada, Activision's first real-time strategy game based in the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* universe, is different. Although real Trekkies will undoubtedly get more of a kick out of watching the plot unfold in a series of cut scenes that could have come straight out of an episode of the show, it's simple and straightforward enough that even someone who's never seen *Star Trek* in their life can at least follow what's going on. Best of all, though, there's not a whiff of diplomacy involved in the gameplay. Even the cuddly Federation gets to act like a pack of psychotic Klingons, blasting anything that moves into as many pieces as possible.

It's also a very nice game indeed. Drawing on the time-honoured principles of real-time strategy games, each of *Star Trek: Armada's* four basic campaigns puts you in charge of one of the major *The Next Generation* empires – the goody-goody Federation, the warlike Klingons, the sneaky Romulans and the nasty Borg – and faces you with a series of missions played out from an isometric third-person view. You get to build structures such as starbases and shipyards, mine Dilithium moons for resources, and construct fleets of ships, then send them against the enemy and start flinging phasers and photon torpedoes around willy-nilly.

All of which is great fun, mainly due to the superb 3D graphics engine. Every single ship is a mini-masterpiece in its own right, beautifully rendered down to the last detail, and

the effects are just as good, with brilliant beams of weapons fire scintillating against enemy shields and (with the "Director's Cut" option enabled) ships curving around each other in massive dogfights. Switching to the zoomed-in "cinematic" view allows you to see the action up close, and it really is like watching one of the better space combats from the *Next Generation* shows or movies.

So lovely are the visuals, in fact, that it takes some time for *Star Trek: Armada's* one serious flaw to become apparent. Despite some well-designed missions and many nice touches and ideas, such as being able to transport crew members onto derelict ships to salvage them – or enemy ships to capture them from the inside – *Armada* ultimately suffers from its own simplicity. There's just not enough to it to make the gameplay match the quality of the visuals. It's not that it's a bad game, but graphics engine aside, neither is it anything very special. *Star Trek* fans will love it, of course, but while strategy fans will find it an enjoyable diversion while waiting for the next big thing, in the final analysis that's all it really is. ★★★ **Andy Butcher**

Or you could try...

Homeworld
Sierra ★★★★★
Command your own space army in RTS/shoot-'em-up hybrid.

StarCraft
Blizzard ★★★★★
A life-consuming strategy-in-space affair, but in 2D.




■ A Klingon fleet gets jiggy with the dreaded Borg Cube.

c: Netscape Online

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■ (Right) A pair of shades provide scant protection from the repeating slugthrower.



■ The microwave pulse gun cooks enemies like a Sainsbury's ready meal.

Game info

- Publisher: **Activision**
- Developer: **Raven**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-32 (LAN, Internet)**
- Requires: **P200, 64Mb RAM, 700Mb HD-space, 3D accelerator card**
- Recommended: **P266, 64Mb RAM, GeForce 256.**

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

EXCESSIVE VIOLENCE? THIS GAME GOES OUT ON A (SEVERED) LIMB.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Shot in the head

- Beautifully simple
- Fabulously gory
- Horrifically addictive

Shot in the dark

- Morally questionable
- Stylistically limited
- Dodgy enemy AI in places.

The *Daily Mail* won't like it. Poorly researched Channel 4 documentary programmes won't like it. Your Mum probably won't like it. But there really is something hugely enjoyable about blowing the head off an enemy from close range and then systematically separating his limbs from his body with shotgun blasts as his corpse lies prone on the floor.

Soldier Of Fortune's much-lauded 26 body gore zones allow you to commit the wanton acts of mutilation which games have always previously denied you. The character detail is as impressive as any game that has gone before, and the interaction between their bodies and your weapons is greater than ever. You can shoot them in the leg, at which point they begin hopping around in pain, unable to then protect themselves from further assaults like, say, a throwing knife right in the eye, a bullet in the lunchbox or a highly satisfying throat shot. Following a brief and painful death sequence, you're free to further amuse yourself by whipping out your Raptor SMG sub-machine gun and forcing their spent torso to "dance".

The whole idea of revelling in computerised ultraviolence like this is actually a little distasteful, even to the hardened fragger, but its appeal is similar to that of

pornography. You may feel a little dirty at first, but if it's enjoyable, hell, why not just admit you have a strange weakness for it? You won't be alone. The advantage of *Soldier Of Fortune* being that nobody is exploited and nobody gets hurt. You can debate the videogame violence thing forever, but despite the fact that the word "realistic" will crop up in association with this game all over the place, it's still essentially a cartoon.

Soldier Of Fortune is a mission-based game. You play John F Mullins, a mercenary soldier hired to assassinate various unpleasant terrorist masterminds, rescue hostages and take possession of dangerous cargoes. Each of these quests (there are 30 in the game) require you to eliminate large numbers of evil henchmen before reaching your quarry. On the first mission, you tackle a punk-styled gang in the subways of New York, but you're soon on a moving train in Uganda apprehending terrorists in possession of nuclear capabilities, infiltrating a Siberian base or trawling through Kosovan sewers. You gradually uncover a grand conspiracy, but the bigger picture matters little. You go in, you kill people, you complete the set objectives, you get the cash. A mercenary never asks too many questions.

The real John F Mullins (interviewed on page 40) seal of endorsement may be a little disingenuous; it's difficult



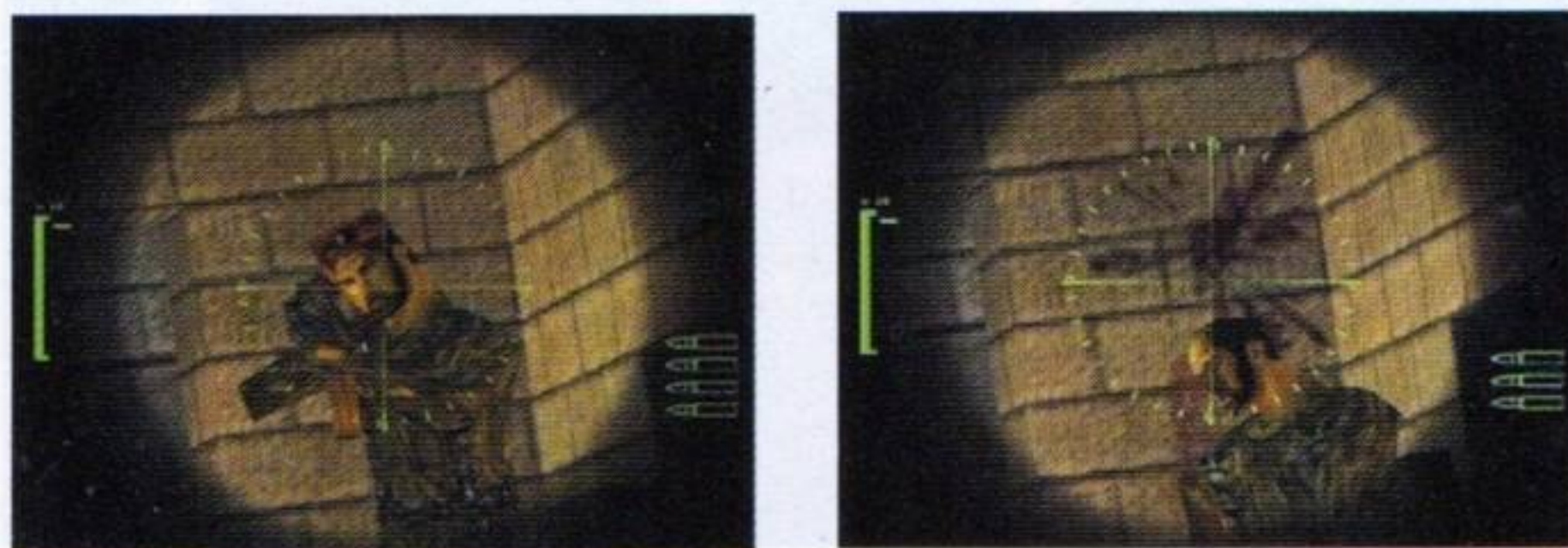
to believe that any of his real-life missions involved taking on 60-odd armed assailants by himself before reversing the take-off procedure of a nuclear missile, all for a measly \$50,000. Raven has, however, been astute in setting the scene. Locations are real, some of the situations are just about plausible, and real-life people even make an appearance (hello Saddam). These elements lend the game excitement and immediacy, but it's clear it's tailored to the enjoyment of the trigger happy (which is a good thing). The weapons are closely based on real hardware, but their effects are greatly exaggerated. And why not?

You begin with a 9mm handgun which can take enemies out from considerable distance at the expense of four bullets. The crosshair is just a dot in the centre of the screen (which turns red when you target an enemy) but it's unfailingly accurate and enables you to play the stealth game when necessary. Most levels are labyrinthine, with enemies round every corner, and the best approach is to shoot them before they see you. The unique "lean" control is crucial – you can peer (and shoot) around corners while your opponent is still polishing his barrel.

The more foolhardy approach is to equip the shotgun and close down on enemies, letting rip from within sniffing distance. This is when the limbs start flying and brains splatter against walls, evoking guilty pleasure. Progressing through the game, you'll be able to pay a trip to the armoury (hidden in the vaults of a used book store)



■ (Below) Probably the most effective and satisfying sniper rifle action to appear in any game. Ouch, that's got to hurt.



■ (Left) The Siberian levels, which involve infiltrating a nuclear bunker, are reminiscent of *GoldenEye*. (Above) The Yakuza get amongst it and receive a bullet in the head for their troubles. Serves 'em right.

and stock up on outrageous firearms, including a flamethrower, an amazing M-75 Guardian sub-machine gun and a lightning gun. Go on, indulge yourself.

THIS IS WHEN THE LIMBS START TO FLY AND BRAINS SPLATTER AGAINST WALLS, EVOKING GUILTY PLEASURE.

At root, *Soldier Of Fortune* is a straightforward first-person shooter. Tactical decisions are limited and missions linear, although cleverly designed to appear more involved. You need to detonate crates and grilles to access hidden areas, climb through air vents and leap across rooftops – not too complex, but enough to keep you guessing. With its mission-based structure, lone hero, contemporary setting and constant streams of enemies, *Soldier Of Fortune* is closer to the N64's *GoldenEye* than anything else.

Soldier Of Fortune is a game which doesn't aspire to the greatness of *Half-Life*, but unlike the majority of PC games it knows its limitations. The multi-player mode is fairly superfluous; the emphasis is on a single-player game which is basic in concept and deadly in execution. There's you, a stockpile of heavy weaponry, a cartel of terrorists and a truckload of gore. You may feel compelled to scrub your body clean after playing, but this is the pinnacle of gruesome, visceral entertainment. ★★★★★ **Sam Richards**

Or you could try...

Half-Life Sierra ★★★★★
First-person-shooter with a military bent, but loads of mental alien stuff going on too.

Kingpin Virgin ★★★★★
Enjoyable gang-themed shooter which used to hold the record for graphic brutality.



■ This skinhead is already dead, but somehow you just can't leave him alone. Make his body dance, shoot his limbs off and cut him up with a knife. What would your Mum say?



■ "Ere, take a picture of this."



■ *Ultima Ascension* is the first in the series to go 3D, making for one of the best-looking games you'll have ever seen.

Game info

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **Origin Systems**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**
- Requires: **P300, 64Mb RAM, 300Mb HD-space**

ULTIMA ASCENSION

SKETCHY INTERFACE SINKS SPRAWLING ACTION RPG.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

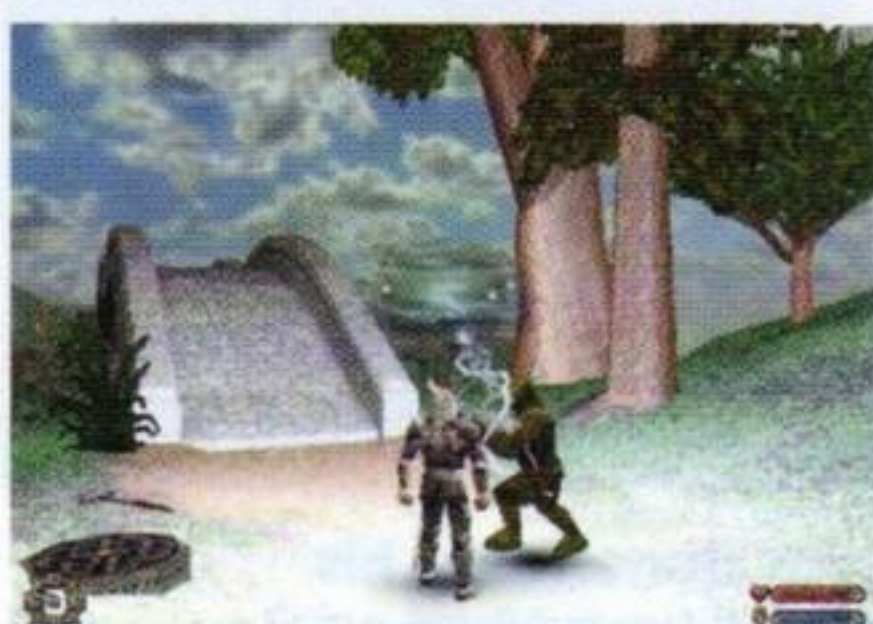
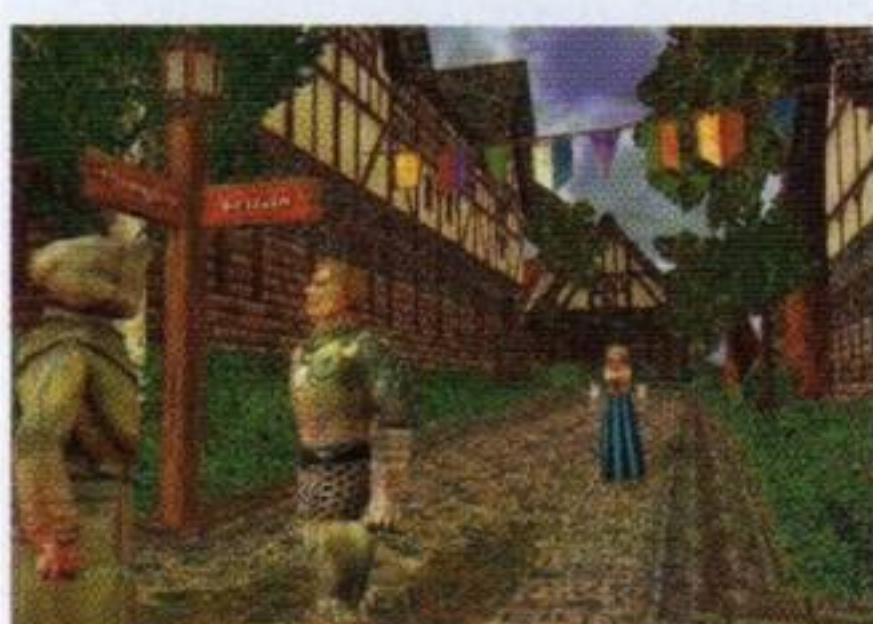
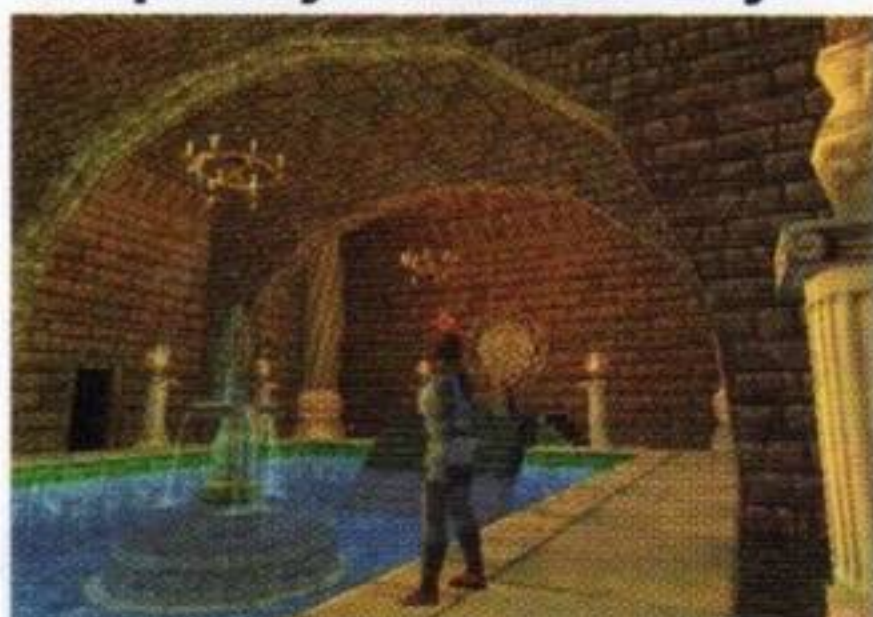
Fantasy kingdoms

- Gorgeous graphics
- Non-linear quests
- A whopper of a game

King Dong fantasies

- Dodgy controls
- Smelly inventory
- Stupid in-game manual

■ The game world is huge and can be explored in a completely non-linear way.



Role playing games don't always enjoy the best of reputations in the eyes of the uninitiated. And surely, of all the role-playing games that ever were, the *Ultima* series must rate as the most "misunderstood".

The brainchild of one Richard Garriot, aka "Lord British", ten-odd years ago, *Ultima* has spanned countless epic quests (or, more accurately, nine, including this one), and its infamous online permutation. *Ultima Ascension* is designed to be the final game in the series, and sees you, as the Avatar, bowing out in atypically verbose style.

The world of Britannia is once again besieged by a Mr Badman, who has caused mysterious pillars to burst through the ground around the land. What is he up to? What is the purpose of the mysterious pillars? Did he have planning permission for them? These are the questions that you, as the Avatar, are recruited to answer. En route to defeating the evil that grips the kingdom you'll engage in a heady assortment of side-quests, beef yourself up with some meaty spells, play with excitingly bladed weapons and have the bad fortune to encounter some of the dullest people you're ever likely to meet.

It's about time, but *Ultima* has finally gone 3D. Think *Tomb Raider* meets *Zelda 64*, and you'll be close to picturing the look of *Ultima Ascension*. However, the gameworld is far more detailed, intricate and believable (to a point, depending whether you believe in orcs and dragons) than either of those titles.

Though the land of Britannia isn't as big as, say, the real world, the fact that you can explore it in completely non-linear fashion – from the dungeons, to towns, to eerie forests – is commendable. More astonishing still is the complexity of the environment. With its day-to-night cycles, weather patterns, cliffs and swamps, this is surely one of the most convincing game worlds ever created. And now, as the sailor said to the bishop, here comes the "but".

There's evil at the heart of *Ultima Ascension*, but it's not the sort that has horns and wings. For all its visual splendour and surprisingly engaging plots, the gameplay is sunk by some extremely dodgy control. For a game that

purports to be an action RPG, the action is woefully stilted. Combat is stripped down to the basics, and the mouse control of the Avatar makes for what can only be politely described as "creative" wanderings. Worse still is an inventory interface that makes it impossible to swap the order of weapons and equipment without having to drop some of it on the floor. Likewise, the in-game manual and spellbooks are woefully laborious to negotiate.

It's a real shame that *Ultima Ascension* falls down on these counts, because in many respects it is a remarkably beautiful game. That said, for all its flaws the final game in the *Ultima* series is still surprisingly enjoyable, and if you've got a monster of a PC it should help to smooth some of the problems associated with the controls. So, consider *Ultima Ascension* cautiously recommended, but make sure you bear the above warnings in mind before you shell out your gold pieces. ★★★

Paul Rose

Or you could try...

Final Fantasy 8
Eidos ★★★
Manga-tinged science-fantasy.

Nox Interplay ★★★
Less pretty, but more playable.

■ (Below) Beef up your character with some mighty spells.





■ While it looks nice, the game is unnecessarily complicated.



■ Not even dramatic replays can hide how bland this game is.

EURO LEAGUE FOOTBALL

CHAMPIONSHIP CONTENDER OR SET FOR A RELEGATION DOGFIGHT?

Championship Manager works because all the statistics serve to inspire your football mad brain. Break it down and all you've got is a load of numbers, but if you apply a little imagination you're a world away from your PC, submerged in the business of brokering transfers, engineering your FA Cup run or staving off relegation... it's as real as *Match of the Day*.

But then that's not *Euro League Football*, that's the genius of what it's up against. Sadly, it hasn't learnt a thing from its competitors. *Euro League Football* fails because you aren't drawn into its universe. All the stats are here, all the options, all the players – in fact everything you would expect is here along with massive barriers that prevent you from engaging in the life of a football manager.

It's the control interface that's mostly to blame. In *Championship Manager 3* it's easy to jump around looking

at players, teams, transfer lists and so on. Not so in *Euro League Football*. You often have to delve through a number of different menus to get to the screen you want, and half the time you get lost and give up.

You get three different ways to "view" the matches: the results Final Score-style, as text commentary and in a match where you control the action. The match option is little more than a basic *FIFA*, and while it enables you have more say in your team's results it doesn't hang together.

Euro League Football has all the makings of a decent management game, but the interface prevents you from getting into the thick of the action. Whereas *Championship Manager 3* is the Alex Ferguson of the management world, this is more your Danny Wilson. ★★

Nick Jones

Or you could try...

Championship Manager Season 99/00
Eidos ★★★★★
The best football management game you'll have ever seen.

FIFA 2000
EA ★★★★★
A masterclass in PC football simulation.

Game info

- Publisher: **Sold Out**
- Developer: **Dinamic Multimedia**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-8**
- Requires: **P200, 32Mb RAM, 250Mb HD-space.**
- Recommended: **P233, 32Mb RAM, 500Mb HD-space**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Nessus Dorma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Up to date with recent transfers ■ Good for beginners | <p>Diamond Lights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Confusing interface ■ Dodgy "playable" footie game ■ Not very believable |
|---|---|

Also released

Haven't you had enough already?

Words by **Nick Jones**



ALIEN NATIONS

- Publisher: **Infogrames**
- Developer: **JoWood**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Minimum: **P200, 16Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**
- Recommended: **P233, 32Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**

■ *Alien Nations* is trying hard to emulate *Age of Empires*, but the trouble is that the world in which it all takes place is totally unbelievable. It takes an age to get your civilisation up and running and there's little tactical skill involved when it comes to battles. This is a poor facsimile of a great game. ★★



NEED FOR SPEED: PORSCHE 2000

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **Electronic Arts**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Minimum: **P200, 32Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**
- Recommended: **P300, 64Mb RAM, 300Mb HD-space**

■ This is a quality racing title featuring every Porsche model since 1948. Opposition cars are only there for the passing, but that said, the other drivers are "intelligent" enough to make mistakes. There's a lot here for your money, and this is one for Porsche nuts. ★★



CROC 2

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **Argonaut Software**
- Price: **£30**
- Release Date: **on sale now**
- Minimum: **P200, 32Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**
- Recommended: **P266, 32Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**

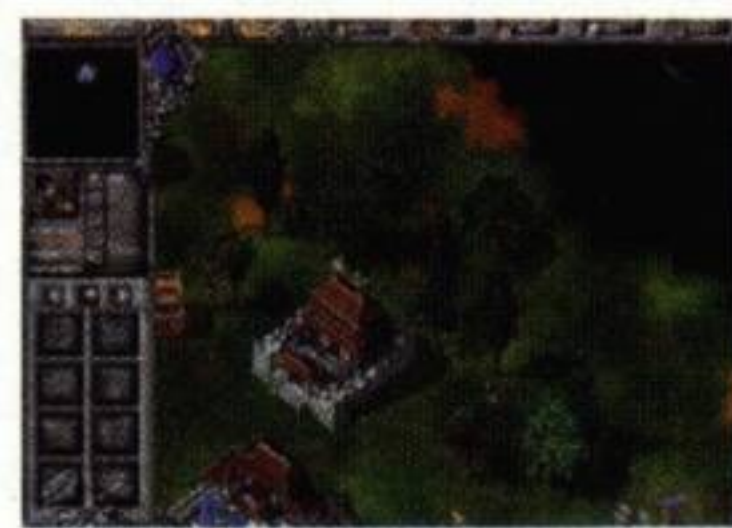
■ The PC isn't exactly known for its quality 3D platformers, and *Croc 2* isn't about to change any of that. You guide Croc around collecting gems, beating bad guys and jumping on platforms. It's *Mario* without any of the inventiveness, the charm or the fun. ★★



F1 2000

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **Electronic Arts**
- Price: **£35**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Minimum: **P233, 64Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**
- Recommended: **PII 450, 128Mb RAM, 500Mb HD-space, 3D accelerator card**

■ The PC version of EA's first Formula One game has great speed and graphics. It leans towards simulating the sport, and is terrific. It has all this season's drivers and courses, drivers that race like their real life counterparts and great TV-style presentation. ★★



TZAR: THE BURDEN OF THE CROWN

- Publisher: **Zabrac**
- Developer: **Infinite Loop**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Minimum: **P200, 32Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**
- Recommended: **P233, 32Mb RAM, 300Mb HD-space**

■ *Tzar* is *Age of Empires* with magic and fantasy creatures. It's real-time strategy and is all about collecting resources, researching technology and fighting battles. However, this is a poor clone, is tedious and there really is no point in your buying it. ★★



DIE HARD TRILOGY 2

- Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
- Developer: **Fox Interactive**
- Price: **£30**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Minimum: **P233, 32Mb RAM, 150Mb HD-space**
- Recommended: **P300, 64Mb RAM, 300Mb HD-space**

■ John McClane is back on the screens in the second game based on the films. *Die Hard Trilogy 2* is three games in one: a third-person shooter, a first-person shooter on-rails and a driving game. Of the three, the third-person game is the best – Fox shouldn't have even bothered with the other two. ★★

New Dreamcast Games



Game info

- Publisher: **Interplay**
- Developer: **BioWare**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1**
- Extras: **VM unit**

MDK 2



TAKE A SIDEWAYS LOOK AT THE SHOOT-'EM-UP GENRE.

The original *Murder Death Kill* wasn't a game that was afraid to be a bit daring. It was fast, frantic and, most of all, it had a cheeky sense of humour. In fact it spent most of the time poking fun at the generally po-faced shoot-'em-up genre. Thankfully, *MDK 2* keeps the irony and the gags coming thick and fast.

The story picks up where the last game left off. It's all very clichéd, but then that's the point. Big bad aliens want to make earth their playground, and humans aren't invited. Luckily for the man in the street there's an angel watching

A GAME THAT'S DIFFICULT BUT REWARDING... AND SERVED UP WITH A GIGANTIC SLICE OF IRONY.

over him, in the shape of Doctor Hawkins: nutty professor and technological genius. When the aliens invade, the good doctor sets about saving the planet –

with the aid of his janitor and latest invention: a six-legged robotic canine freak.

You play different levels with the different characters. Each has his own style of gameplay, providing plenty of variety. Kurt, the janitor, is a mix of stealth and blasting; Max, the robot dog, is a straight-up shooting machine and the Doc, a pacifist, has puzzles aplenty to solve.

Kurt has access to the latest hi-tech gadgetry, such as stealth camouflage for temporary invisibility and a futuristic parachute for gliding around. Best of all, though, is his sniper rifle. This zooms up to targets and lets you get up close and



■ *MDK 2* always keeps you guessing what's going to happen next, with massive rooms, jetpacks and aliens who like to tease. There's always something new to do.



■ (Above left) Shooting isn't always the answer. In this case you have to use the leaf blower to push the aliens in range of the alien-eating plant. (Above right) Bosses are always inventive. This is the disco ball of death.



■ A plumber's nightmare.



personal with the aliens. It also takes all manner of different ammunition – homing bullets, mortar bullets and so forth. This makes for some great gameplay in Kurt's levels; sneaky-shooty stuff mixed up with the odd puzzle here and there to engage the mind.

Max, on the other hand, is just out for green blood. You can equip each of his four free limbs with a weapon. Four Uzis are a great combination, making alien killing a quick and fun pastime. But with so much blasting, Max's levels can become repetitive – you soon get tired of shooting waves and waves of bad guys. Things are livened up a little with the inclusion of a jetpack, but there's not much else to keep your brain in gear.

The Doc's levels are probably the most deranged. Being a pacifist he doesn't have a normal weapon and has none of the top spec gadgetry at Kurt's disposal. Instead you need to think of more imaginative ways to dispose of aliens. At one point you need to combine a hand drier with some pipes to create a leaf blower. You then have to use this to blow aliens into the feeding trough of a giant man-eating plant. Very droll, very imaginative and, for the most part, the same could be said for *MDK 2* as a whole.

There are aliens that wave at you and squeal "oww!" when you shoot them and others that just want a game of hide and seek. In fact, there are plenty of moments that will put a grin on your face, especially the little aliens cleaning the windows of a spaceship using their farts as a cleaning fluid. It's not exactly Oscar Wilde, but you'll laugh.

There are, however, some sections that rely too heavily on old-skool gameplay – the long platform sections, for

example, soon become a real chore to traverse. But, such things aside, *MDK 2* is a terrific little game and the graphics are a marvel. Bosses are inventive and spectacularly realised – fancy taking on a giant spaceship single-handedly? Or a giant rotating disco ball? If you want a game that's difficult but rewarding, and is served up with a gigantic slice of videogame irony, then *MDK 2* will make your eyeballs explode with pleasure. ★★★★★

Nick Jones

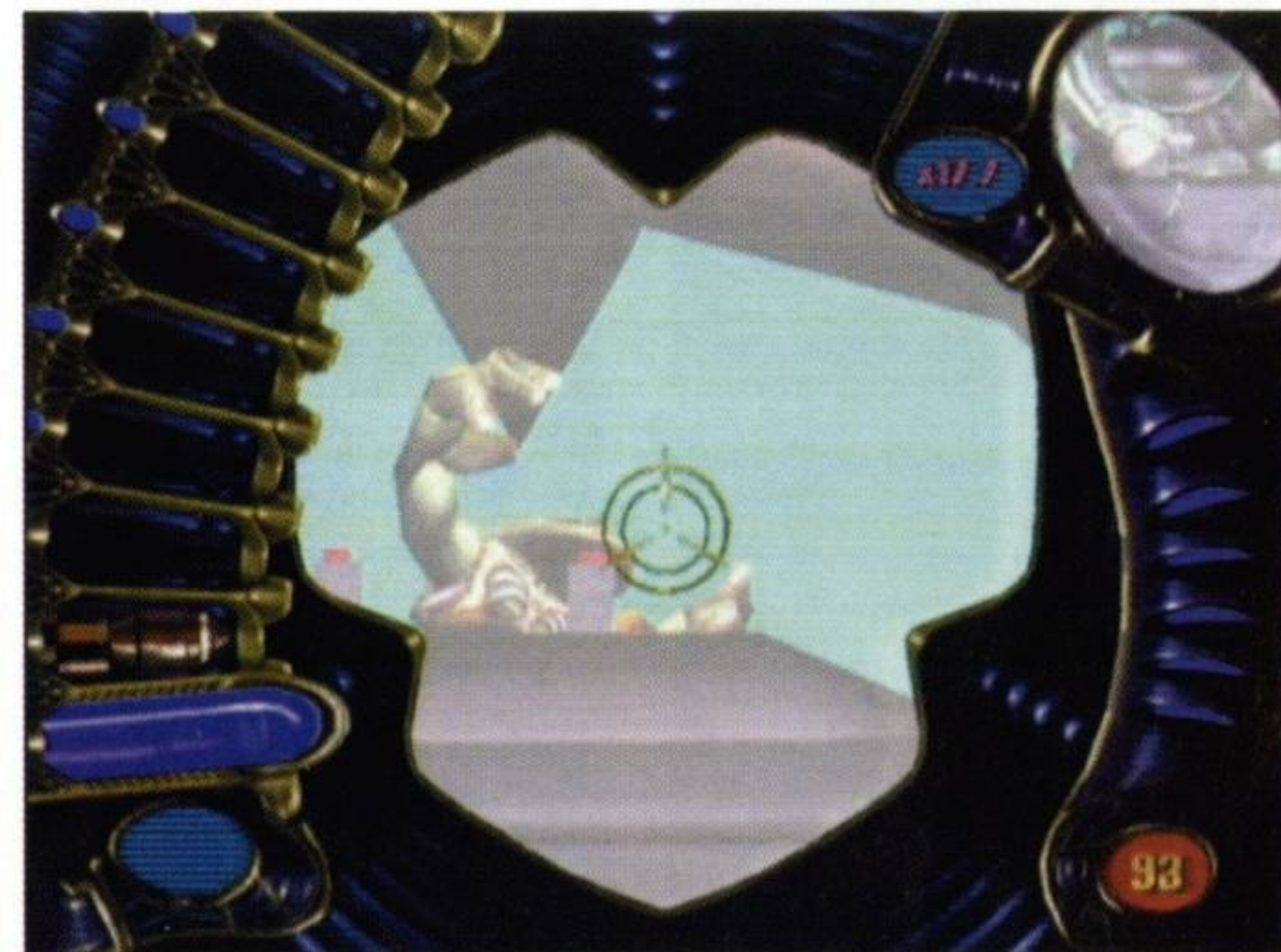
↑ **Uppers & Downers** ↓

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Bang</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Great outlandish visuals ■ Three characters to play ■ Challenging and difficult | <p>Whimper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bad platforming ■ Repetitive shooting ■ No multi-player |
|--|---|

Or you could try...

Slave Zero
Infogrames ★★
Average shoot-'em-up.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver
Eidos ★★★★★
Brilliant vampire action adventure.



■ (main) Kurt's excellent sniper rifle can zoom right into the bad guy's nostrils, if you like.

■ *Evolution's* baddies aren't very fearsome. A big rat? Brrr!



■ Battles are the usual mixture of smacks and spells

EVOLUTION

RPG ACTION ARRIVES ON DREAMCAST, BUT IT'S NO SHENMUE.

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Thumbs

- Appealing cartoony aesthetics
- Non-linear level system

Appendix

- Uninvolving narrative
- Repetitive gameplay



■ Linear's weapon is a frying pan. Back to the kitchen, love.

Today you get to find out how to make a Japanese role-playing game. First, take a load of super-deformed little humans whose big heads and bigger eyes are totally out of proportion with the rest of their bodies. Next, give the lead character a spiky hairstyle and a burning desire to prove himself to his elders. Then add an endless supply of dungeons, sprinkle too generously with turn-based battles – in which you take it in turns with strange-looking baddies to cast spells and smack each other over the head – and, finally, ensure the English translation is full of irritating Americanisms.

Thankfully, *Evolution* dispenses with the clichéd RPG formula and... what's that you say? *Evolution* is an entirely derivative role playing game that does absolutely nothing new and is a distinctly average title that is typical of the genre? Oh dear, you're right.

Evolution's generic storyline puts you in the tiny shoes of a youngster named Mag, part of the renowned Launcher family of adventurers. His father disappeared while in search of legendary artefact the Evolutia, and left behind a large debt for his son to bear.

As Mag you must prove yourself worthy of the Launcher name by going on quests to find lost treasure and using your finds to pay off the family debt. Naturally, the ultimate objective is to complete your father's final adventure and track down the mysterious Evolutia. What this boils down to is a wholly

linear progression of events. You wander around your home town of Panama speaking to people, strolling into strangers' houses and buying supplies from the local shop. When this becomes tiresome you head for the society of adventurers called, erm, Society, and receive an assignment. You then travel by plane to one of five ruins in which you traverse anything up to 20 floors of randomly-generated dungeons, collecting artefacts in between turn-based fights with wolves, insects and big rats. Then, at the exit to each ruin, you encounter a hideous monster for the compulsory boss battle, after which you go back to town, receive another assignment from Society, repeating the cycle until you've completed all five ruins.

Evolution has about 15-20 hours of play, but when you add an uninspired narrative to the lack of gameplay variety there's very little incentive to battle through the tedium just to see the story unfold. There are a couple of positives. Firstly, you can approach the five ruins in any order you like, which adds a welcome touch of variety to proceedings. Secondly, the enemies are visible, so if you're quick enough you can rush past them and avoid yet another turn-based battle. But, in truth, you struggle to find anything praiseworthy in the game and in the vast majority of areas all you get is a tired collection of old role-playing archetypes that have long since lost their lustre.

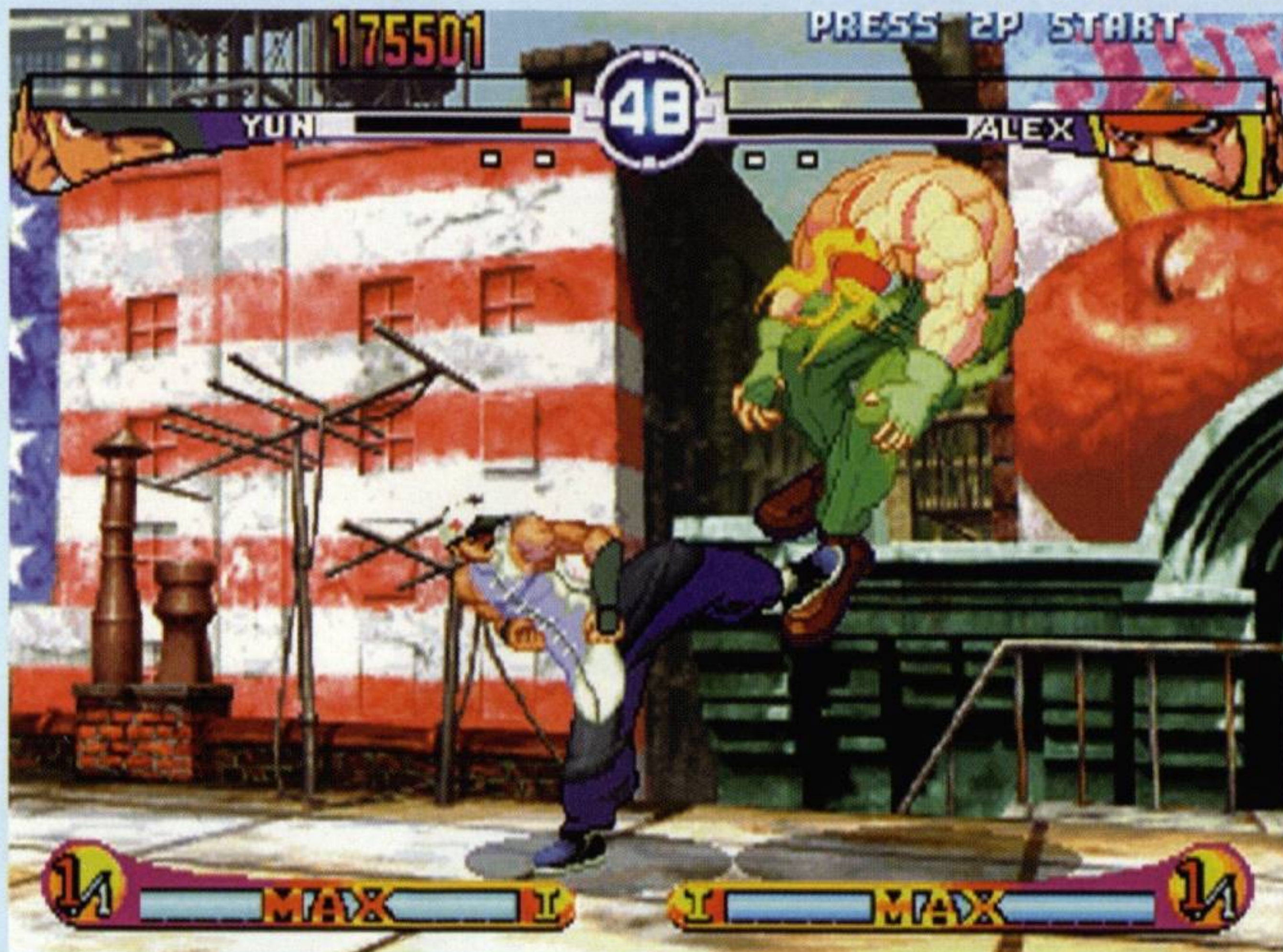
If you're an RPG obsessive who can't wait for *Shenmue* and *Phantasy Star* to hit these shores, you may find a crumb of enjoyment in *Evolution*. If not you'd be wise to hold out for some genuine 21st Century role-playing action. ★★

Lee Hart



Game info

- Publisher: Ubi Soft
- Developer: Sting
- Price: £40
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1
- Extras: VM unit



■ With a dojo full of new characters and moves plus a tighter-than-a-duck's-arse control system, *SF3: Double Impact* is back to separate the men from the 3D-obsessed nippers.



Game info

- Publisher: **Virgin Interplay**
- Developer: **Capcom**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **vibration pack**



STREET FIGHTER 3: DOUBLE IMPACT

PROSTRATE YOURSELF BEFORE THE BEAT-'EM-UP DADDY.

Back in the day *Street Fighter 2* was as groundbreaking a beat-'em-up as *Tekken* and *Soul Calibur* have proved to be in the years since – and just as massive. *Street Fighter 3: Double Impact* has been a long time coming, and while it certainly hasn't been the only *Street Fighter* game released since 1991 it's the first genuine sequel to Capcom's 2D classic.

True, Dreamcast's own *Street Fighter Alpha 3* didn't let the series down, but its custom combos, air blocking and readily-accessible super moves took the focus off traditional, skilful *Street Fighter* moves, leaving hardcore fans with a bitter taste in their mouths. *Double Impact* is a back-to-basics affair and to play it is to be magically transported back to the halcyon days of its predecessor – without the acne and dread of being asked to write on the blackboard during sex education class.

The coolest innovation is the Super Arts, based on characters' special moves. Tap out a double Ryu fireball and the screen turns a stormy blue before your man unleashes a super-charged version of his classic move. Super



Or you could try...

Power Stone
Capcom ★★★★★
Fighting madness featuring multi-level arenas and makeshift weapons.

Soul Calibur
Sega ★★★★★
Sword-wielding perfection.

Arts are tricky to pull off, which is good because it means versus battles are based more on skilful use of standard kick, punch and grab moves, and one-move wonders struggle against opponents who are willing to put in the time and effort to master the game. Another innovation is the parry system. This involves you pressing forward, or down if you're in the air, to parry your opponent's moves. Unlike traditional blocking, parrying effectively throws off the attack without affecting your health bar. It's tricky, but satisfying to perfect. There's also a dash move (another first for *Street Fighter*) that's pulled off by tapping forward or back twice in quick succession – handy for getting out of a tight spot.

To all this you can add the tightest control system since *Street Fighter 2*, some fantastic animation and characters (Ibuki, will make you feel all giddy like the first time you saw Chun Li – no, really), and super-fast loading times. There's also a brilliant bonus game where you have to parry as many of Sean's basketballs as you can. There's really not much to dislike about *Street Fighter 3*.

The only criticism you can level at the game is that there aren't as many play modes as *Alpha 3*. If you can get over that (and you should try), *Double Impact* won't let you down. ★★★

Stephen Lawson

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Attack

- Cool new characters
- Impressive animation
- Tight gameplay.
- Short loading times

Retreat

- Shortage of play modes
- Possible lack of longevity

■ While a lot of classic *SF* moves have been retained, the all-new Super Arts are a more than welcome addition to the series.



New Nintendo 64 Games



■ You can play your Game Boy Pokémon through Stadium, on a television.



Game info

- Publisher: Nintendo
- Developer: Nintendo
- Price: £50 (with Transfer Pak)
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1-2
- Extras: Memory Pak, GB Pak

POKÉMON STADIUM

GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL – POKÉMON EVOLVES ON N64.

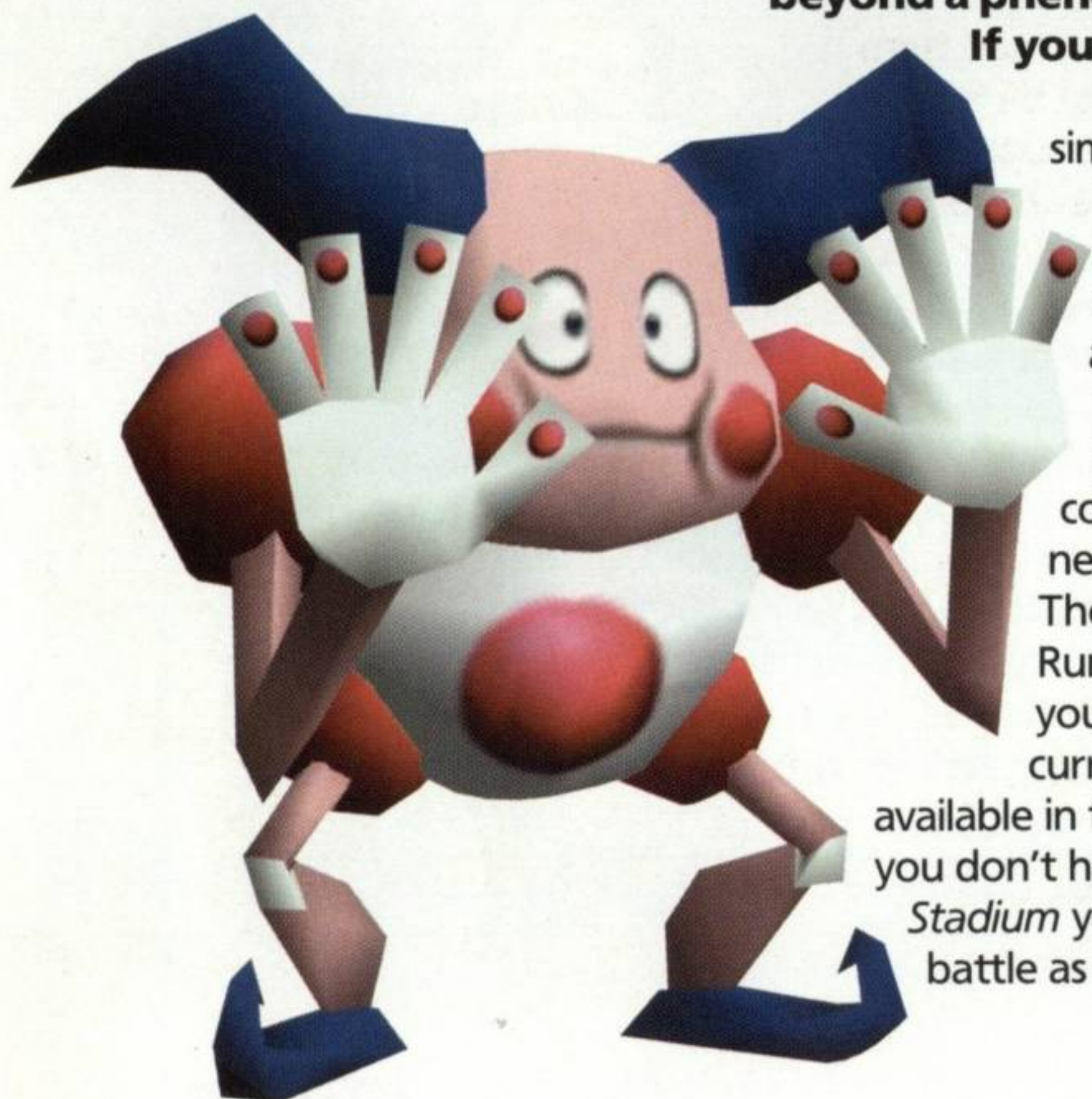
Arcade
Nintendo 64
Game of
the Month

Get down to the Poké-Rap. You know when a phenomenon has entered the collective consciousness of the country's youth when it becomes a major part of Saturday morning TV. Ant and Dec's hilarious/desperate (delete where necessary) homage to the pocket monsters is a sign that Pokémon has gone beyond a phenomenon and into the mainstream. If you're still at school, that is.

The idea behind *Pokémon Stadium* is simple: it's basically a 3D showcase for your collection of Game Boy Pokémon. It enables you to battle against friends, to battle for various Pokémon trophies and against the best Pokémon trainers in the world. The prize? Well, to become the greatest Pokémon trainer of them all, of course. This is all possible because of the new peripheral for N64 – the Transfer Pak. The device attaches to your controller in the Rumble Pak slot. You then have to slide in your favourite flavour of Pokémon cartridge, currently just the Red and Blue flavours are available in the UK, and you're away. Don't worry if you don't have a Game Boy version – in *Pokémon Stadium* you can "rent" the Pocket Monsters to battle as well. Various cups are up for grabs – they

relate to the different levels of Pokémon and the stage of evolution that they are at. Cups for cute Pokémon, cups for all-comers at any level and a league tournament and loads of sub-trophies to win. Working your way up the ladder you can fight the top Pokémon trainer and steal his crown. Undoubtedly there are a lot of things to win, but most of the prizes are similar and things can get lonely. The game works better when you're playing a friend – arguments and much bragging of Pokémon powers are on the cards.

There are a couple of other distractions from the relentless battling. You can take photos of your Pokémon, save the pictures and peruse them at your leisure at a later date. This is only for the most dedicated Poké-master, but if you've come this far, then that's you. There are also a number of mini games – kind of like *Mario Party* – where you can fight it out in various games such as Sushi-go-round (eat as much sushi as you can) and Magikarp Splash (make



■ The weird and wonderful brought to life in three dimensions.



■ At higher levels Pokémon battles get more tactical. Here the crab makes use of the "itchy-scratchy" attack.



■ The infamous Exeggcute. Insert your own egg-related pun.



SEEING YOUR TWO DIMENSIONAL MONSTERS COME TO LIFE IN THE WORLD OF NINTENDO 64 IS SOMETHING AKIN TO WATCHING YOUR FIRST CHILD BEING BORN.

the fish jump high). Disappointingly – and this is an opportunity missed – playing these games won't affect your Pokémon in any way. No extra experience, no evolution, no incentive to get down and play.

Even fighting in tournaments won't better your monsters – the only way you can improve your Pokémon is to play the Game Boy game and you can do this via *Pokémon Stadium*. On a big screen TV in four glorious colours, it truly is something spectacular.

Seeing your 2D monsters come to life in the world of N64 is something akin to watching your first child being born. Freed from the manacles of monochrome 2D Game

Boy life, the Pokémon come jumping into your TV screen in spectacular colours and fantastical animations – it just makes you wonder how good a N64 *Pokémon* game could be. No longer is Pikachu just an 8x8 sprite – he jumps, smiles, charges and even just stands around looking excellent. Likewise, all the 149 other Pokémon have been given the super animation treatment. Attacks are spectacular as well and, along with some excellent TV-style commentary, lend the battles an epic FA Cup Final feel.

Deciding on a score for this "game" is not easy. If you're well into your Pokémon, then this will be ideal. If you haven't got a beloved collection of the little critters then there is little point to it. It offers very little that's different to the link up battle game on Game Boy and aside from bringing your Pokémon to life there seems to be little reason to own a copy. Essentially this is just a supplement to the main game. In this way it works as well as you would want, just don't expect a whole new *Pokémon* adventure. ★★★ **Nick Jones**

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

Poké-ball
 ■ Great animation
 ■ Lots of cups to win
 ■ Use your own Pokémon

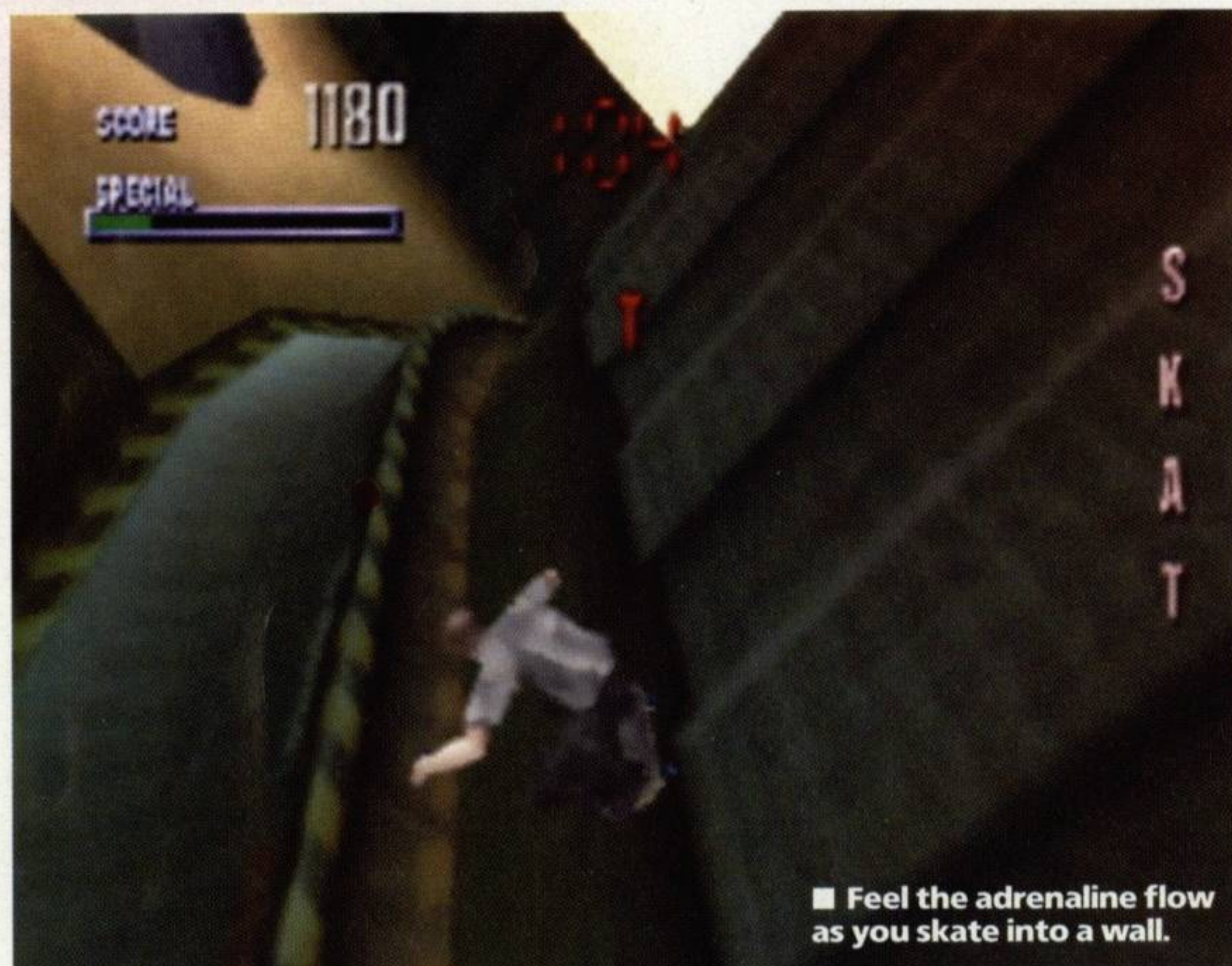
Poké in the balls
 ■ Not a game in its own right
 ■ Not enough mini-games



■ Apart from the battling there are these cute, but ultimately pointless, mini games. Play them once, and you're unlikely to return.

Or you could try...
 Super Smash Bros Nintendo ★★★
 Pikachu stars in this cute beat-'em-up.
 Mario Party Nintendo ★★★★★
 Four way party fun with Mario and chums.





■ Feel the adrenaline flow as you skate into a wall.



■ It's a grind, but someone's gotta do it.

■ PHOTOGRAPHY: ACTION IMAGES/JONO KNIGHT

Game info

- Publisher: **Activision**
- Developer: **Neversoft**
- Price: **£40**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Players: **1-2**
- Extras: **Rumble Pak, Memory Pak**

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING



■ "Hey, look. I can see my house from up here."

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|--|
| Air
■ Lots of tricks
■ Great two-player mode | Square
■ Annoying single-player
■ Blurry graphics
■ Poor divide between speed and tricks |
|---|--|

TRUCKS, BEARINGS AND GRAZED KNEES ON YOUR N64.

As *Arcade* discovered in issue 14, Tony Hawk is now married, in his 30s and had a son. And for the *Back To The Future*-generation of skaters, finding this out is like pulling out your first grey hair, feeling self-aware in McDonald's or finding yourself watching Saturday morning kids' TV out of sexual frustration rather than interest – it just makes you feel old.

It took more than a decade and a half for a Tony Hawk skateboarding game to make it onto a console, with the three-star PlayStation version of *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* arriving in 1999. The N64 version is near-identical and so suffers from the same merits and pitfalls.

On the plus side of the seesaw is the fantastic true-to-life feeling of freestyle skateboarding. Jump, Grab, Flip and Grind tricks are each assigned to the C buttons. Each pulls off the most basic form of the trick, with the opportunity

to gamble your finger dexterity up for bigger and better crowd-pleasers, but with the added worry that if you don't re-align the board, you're going to go – well – Tony over tit.

The two-player mode is where *Tony Hawk's* excels, especially in the head-to-head Graffiti mode. Here, you attempt to out-trick your opponent on the other side of the split-screen by painting the track various shades of your colour every time you pull a stunt. To steal points and win back sections, your opponent has to go one better.

Where *Tony Hawk's* falls down is the single-player Challenge mode. Here you have to collect "videotapes", by completing certain criteria set out on each course, such as collecting all the letters to spell the word "skate" or grinding on a certain number of picnic tables. These challenges are

strictly – and often – absurdly against the clock, and don't really require any skill other than skating like a madman and memorising how far you got last time. Without the clever division of tricks and speed as seen in *1080° Snowboarding*, the fun in this part of *Tony Hawk's* is replaced more by panic and fluke. So, instead, you find yourself gritting your teeth through the single-player Challenge mode just so that you can unlock the tracks to have some fun in the Freestyle and two-player modes.

Graphically, *Tony Hawk's* is viewed through the traditional N64 tinted lenses, with far more blurring and a duller appearance than the PlayStation version. The controls seem a little better suited to the N64's joypad, but even so – this ain't a great N64 game. On a system where great games are everything, *Tony Hawk's* is unlikely to make much of a lasting impression. ★★★

Rich Pelley



■ Pulling tricks is a matter of locating the C buttons.

THE FANTASTIC, TRUE TO LIFE FEELING OF SKATEBOARDING... JUST DON'T GO TONY OVER TIT.



■ Either that's a long rail, or we haven't gone that far.

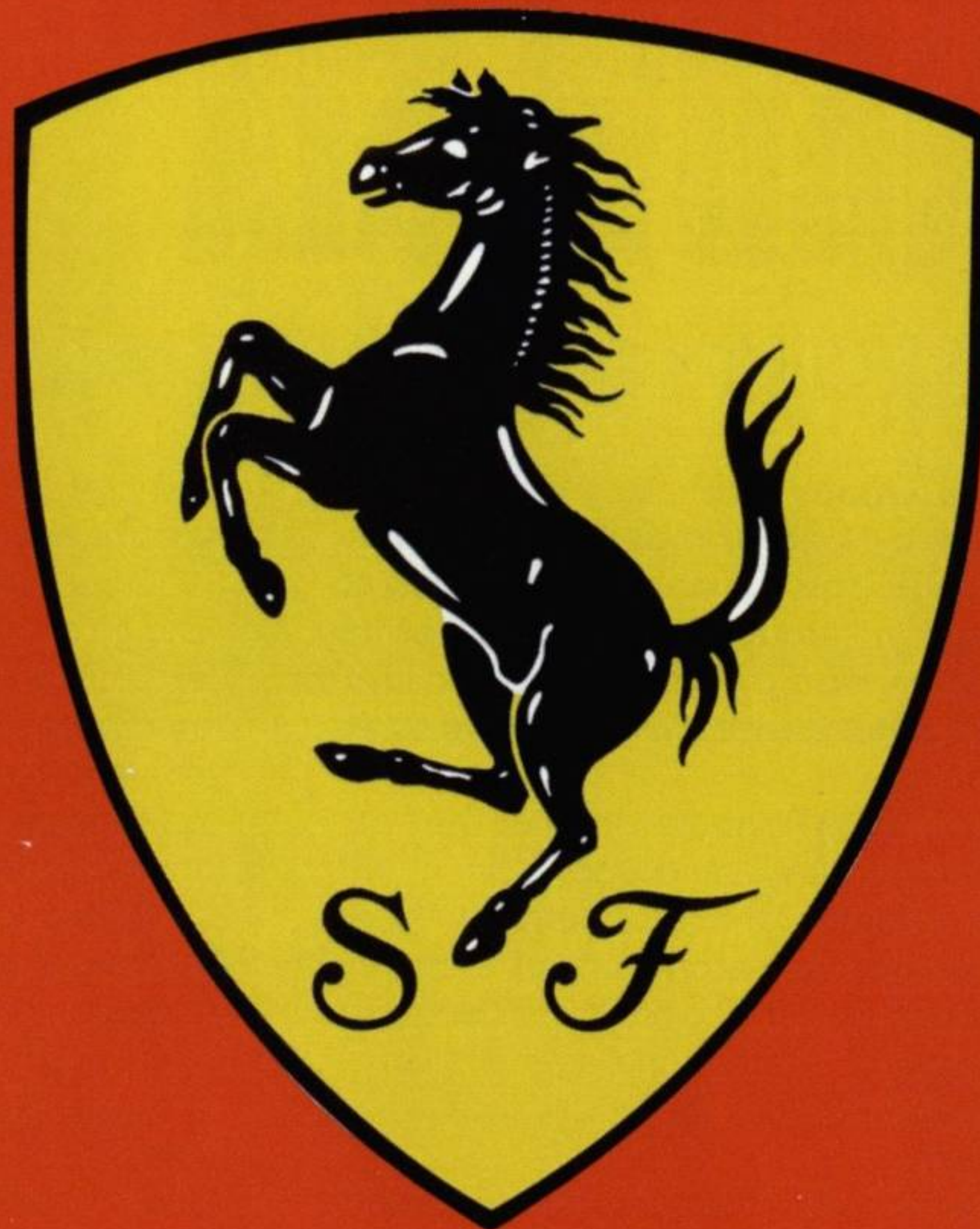
Or you could try...

1080° Snowboarding
 Nintendo ★★★
 Forget concrete, snow is oh-so-much better

Mario Kart 64
 Nintendo ★★★★★
 In fact, forget snowboarding. Go karts are the best.



■ Things look rather "underpant" brown.



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Other Systems

Game Boy

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Game info

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Publisher: **Take 2 Interactive**
- Developer: **Crawfish Interactive**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1**

RAINBOW SIX

TAKE ON THE WORLD'S NASTIEST FOES IN THIS ADULT-THEMED SAS SIM.

↑ Uppers & ↓ Downers ↓

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| SAS | SOS |
| ■ Hours of gameplay | ■ Complicated |
| ■ Fantastic missions | ■ Planning takes ages |
| ■ Involving | ■ AI of agents sometimes poor |

■ Gently sneak round the corner and shoot everything.



There aren't too many Game Boy games where you take on neo-Nazis or murderous Hutu rebels, although Bowser has been known to get pretty nasty. *Rainbow Six* is an extremely thorough conversion of the stealth and shoot espionage PC title, impressively retaining all the original missions.

The story has you joining Rainbow – no not the programme with George, Bungle and Zippy – an organisation set up to combat the rise in terrorist "free agents". From the moment you accept one of the brilliantly-scripted missions, you must get to work assembling a rock solid team from a roster of international agents, all of whom have certain skills in which they excel, such as demolition and stealth.

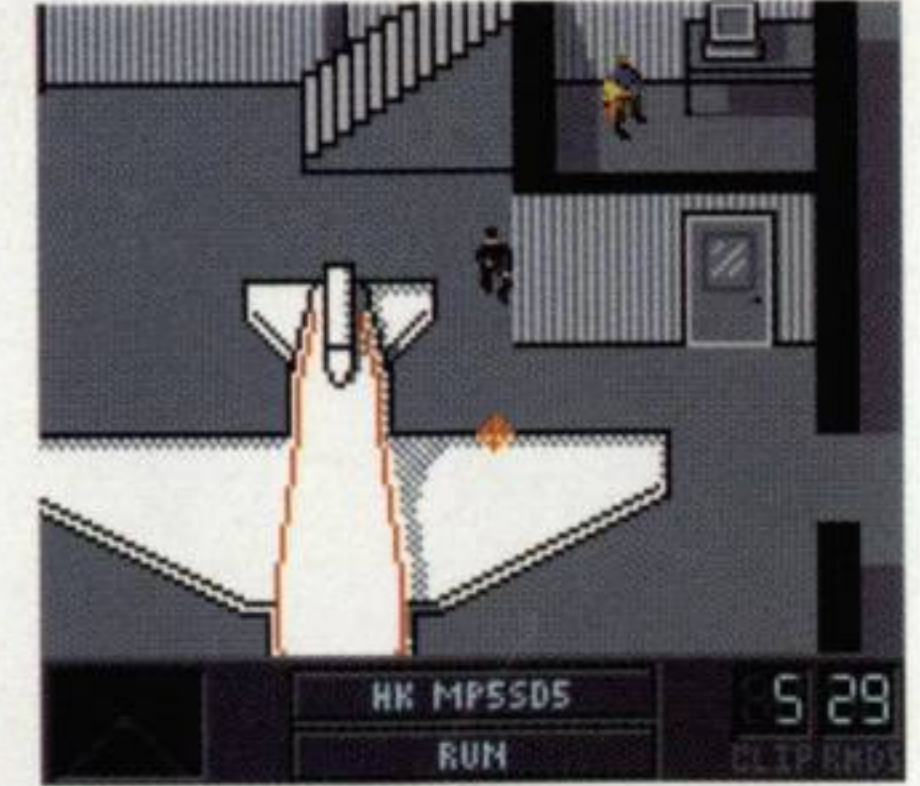
The secret of the game is in the planning – you won't get far if you rashly decide to send your team guns blazing into a heavily armed, booby-trapped oil rig. You must first choose the appropriate uniform for the terrain, then supply your agents with heavy weapons and extra gizmos such as electronics kits or frag grenades. You then have to plan your mission using a detailed map screen to co-ordinate where your team will hold position, where they will attack first and what to do with any hostages they may come across. Planning can take half an hour at least, which tests the patience of any gamer used to the instant thrills of *Super Mario Bros DX*, but it's this depth of gameplay that makes

Rainbow Six such a different proposition – and as fresh a game as you'll find in the handheld arena.

Once you start your mission, you control your teams and go about the business of sneaking around, using the excellent Sniper mode to pick off enemies at will and rescue innocents. Throwing a Flashbang into a room to stun a group of terrorists, before storming in and machine-gunning every last mudder-funsting one of them is a tremendously satisfying and unique Game Boy experience.

Rainbow Six is an ambitious title, but it succeeds in creating a complex and intriguing game with an excellent collection of varied missions. This isn't the sort of cartridge you'll pop in your Game Boy for ten minutes on a train, as it's quite heavy going in places. But, if you give it a decent investment of time, you'll be rewarded with an intelligent and enjoyable action adventure. ★★★★★ **Jamie Sefton**

■ Pick your uniform carefully. You want to look smart in a crisis.



Handheld round-up

A world of videogaming in itty-bitty cartridges.

Words by | **Jamie Sefton**



CHERRY MASTER

- Format: **Neo Geo**
- Publisher: **SNK**
- Developer: **Dyna**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1**

■ Why bother with a fruit machine sim? The whole point of playing on the gaudy mechanical thieves is to win money. Without gambling, the whole exercise is reduced to watching your imaginary pot going up and down. *Cherry Master* isn't even a good fruit machine, with no nudges or holds and a higher/lower game that even Bruce wouldn't go for. Don't insert coin. ★



BUBBLE BOBBLE

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Publisher: **Gaga**
- Developer: **Taito**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1**

■ Faithful conversion of the addictive platforming puzzle game featuring a cute dinosaur that blows bubbles. The gameplay involves trapping enemies in bubbles and rising up on top of them to complete 129 different levels. In-game music is annoying, but the graphics are clear and colourful. A warning: *Bubble Bobble* will get under your skin. ★★★★★



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2000

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Publisher: **THQ**
- Developer: **EA Sports**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1-4**

■ Fore! Put on your pink Pringle and hit the greens with another golf title for the Game Boy. *PGA Tour 2000* is a decent game, with great motion-captured golfers, three authentic courses and a four-player option. There are no 3D views of the courses and it doesn't have the playability, depth or character of *Mario Golf*. ★★



GAME & WATCH GALLERY 3

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Publisher: **Nintendo**
- Developer: **Nintendo**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1-2 (with link-up cable)**

■ A pot-pourri of five sweet-smelling *Game & Watch* classics from Nintendo's vaults. Here you get the original LCD classic and a modern version with tip-top remixed graphics. Gameplay is simple but addictive, such as *Egg*, where Yoshi has to gobble up cookies before they burn in the oven. Excellent. ★★★★★



THE MUPPETS

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Publisher: **Take 2/Rockstar**
- Developer: **Tarantula**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1-2**

■ Jim Henson's creations have made the jump onto Game Boy in a platformer featuring sampled Muppet voices. As Kermit or Animal, you go back in time to six different zones, such as Ancient Egypt, to rescue members of the cast. Sadly, the controls are sluggish and the jumping/puzzle solving is as clumsy and awkward as Gonzo. Hire the shows on video instead. ★★

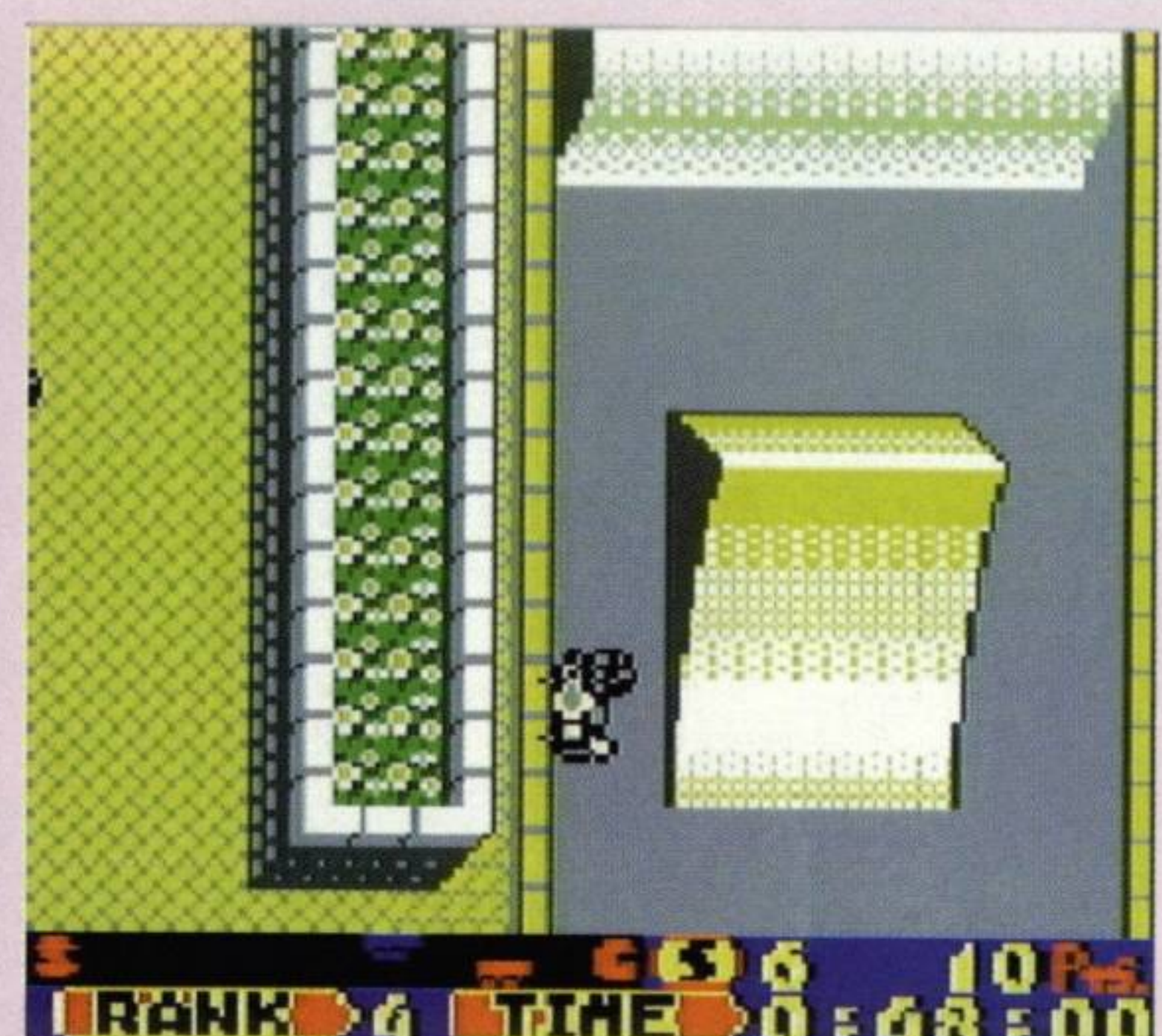
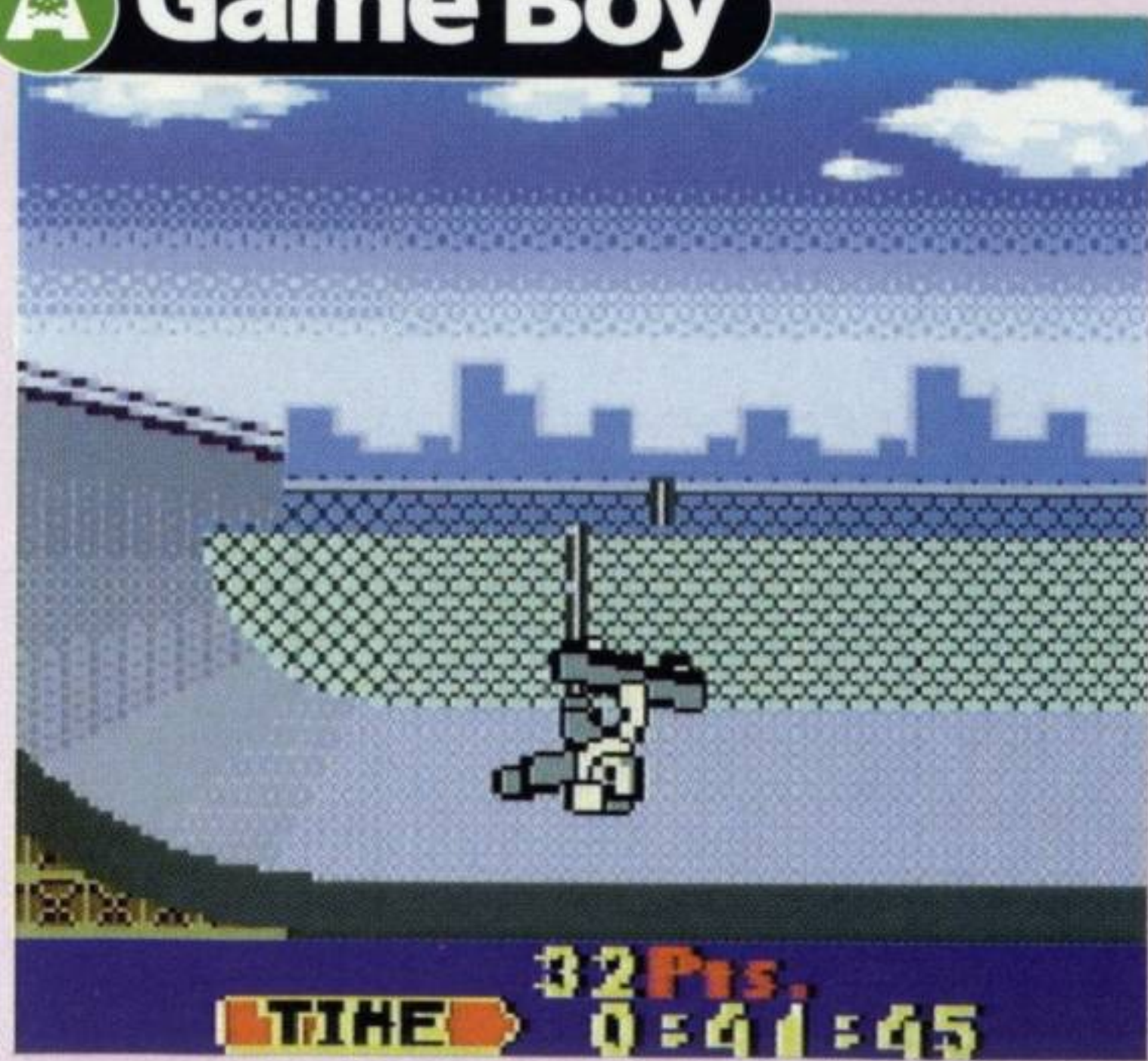


YODA STORIES

- Format: **Game Boy Color**
- Publisher: **THQ**
- Developer: **Torus/LucasArts**
- Release date: **on sale now**
- Price: **£25**
- Players: **1**

■ *Yoda Stories* is a PC conversion that works a lot better on Game Boy. As Luke, you have to solve puzzles and defeat Darth Vader. The sound effects are cool, and the cute graphics make even the Stormtroopers look adorable. The animation is poor, but the game soon becomes surprisingly playable. As Yoda would say: "Mmmm, buy this game if a fan, you will." ★★★★★

A Game Boy



TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING



RIDE THE STREETS ON A WOODEN PLANK WITH WHEELS.

Skateboarding has finally been permanently rescued from the kind of '70s obscurity that still dogs the full-scale comeback of the Space Hopper. Pumped-up, baseball cap-wearing teenagers can now be seen kick flipping and tail grabbing in shopping centres and outside public libraries every Saturday morning. For those of you who think that a half-pipe is something featured on *Ground Force*, there's always the world of videogames to look to for salvation

Tony Hawk's Skateboarding is a high profile release of the popular PlayStation title, featuring ten real-life pros (Bucky Lasek anyone?), heaps of special moves and two distinctly different games in one cartridge. Half-pipe is a fun sub-game where you have a minute to do all kinds of showing off in different skateparks, with points given for combinations of moves like the indy nosebone and the dangerous-sounding backflip.

The other element to the skateboarding action is top-down racing over a series of urban circuits. You can take

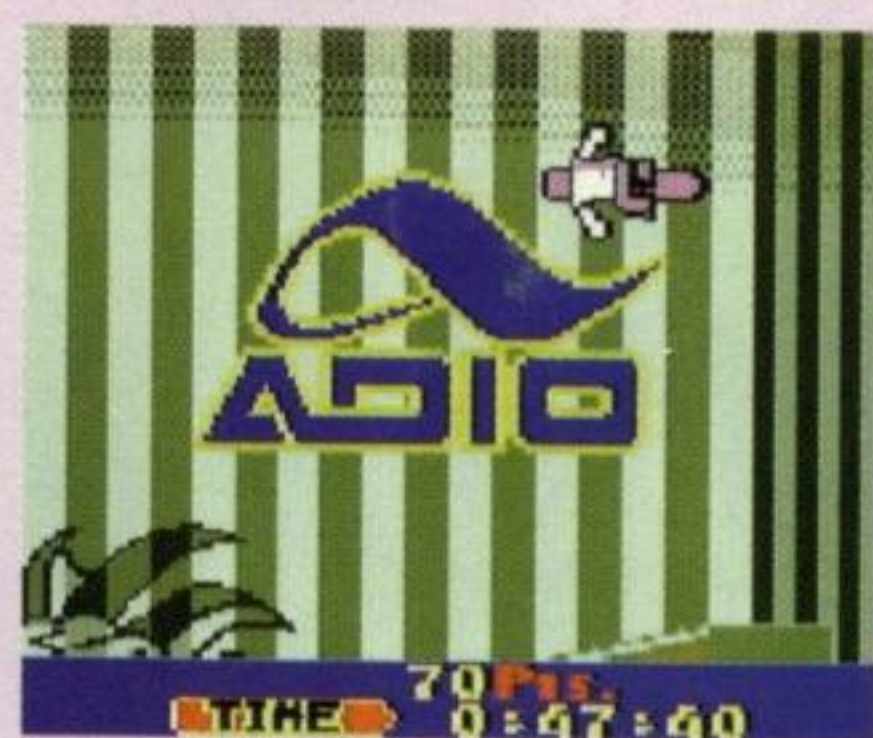
part in a championship against four opponents, enjoy a one-on-one against the computer or, best of all, challenge a mate in a link-up game. Once you've chosen your skater, you grab your board and thrash it around courses such as the Park, Street or Downtown Harbour, each with a unique set of obstacles and challenges to trip you up. To win races, you have to master "grinding", where the skateboarder slides along railings, benches, cars and girders, while also performing stunts and picking up speed boosts to zip past opponents. You can even send other boarders flying by smacking into them – a sneaky move that's bone-crunchingly effective.

Skateboarding isn't the easiest hobby to transfer to an 8-bit console, but *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* manages to get some of the appeal onto the tiny screen. If you're not a boarder, you may find it somewhat shallow and at times the control system can veer towards the frustrating. Nevertheless, this is an enjoyable game that's best played with a friend to the sounds of a pumping, aggressive hip-hop soundtrack. Bitchin' dude. ★★★ **Jamie Sefton**

Game info

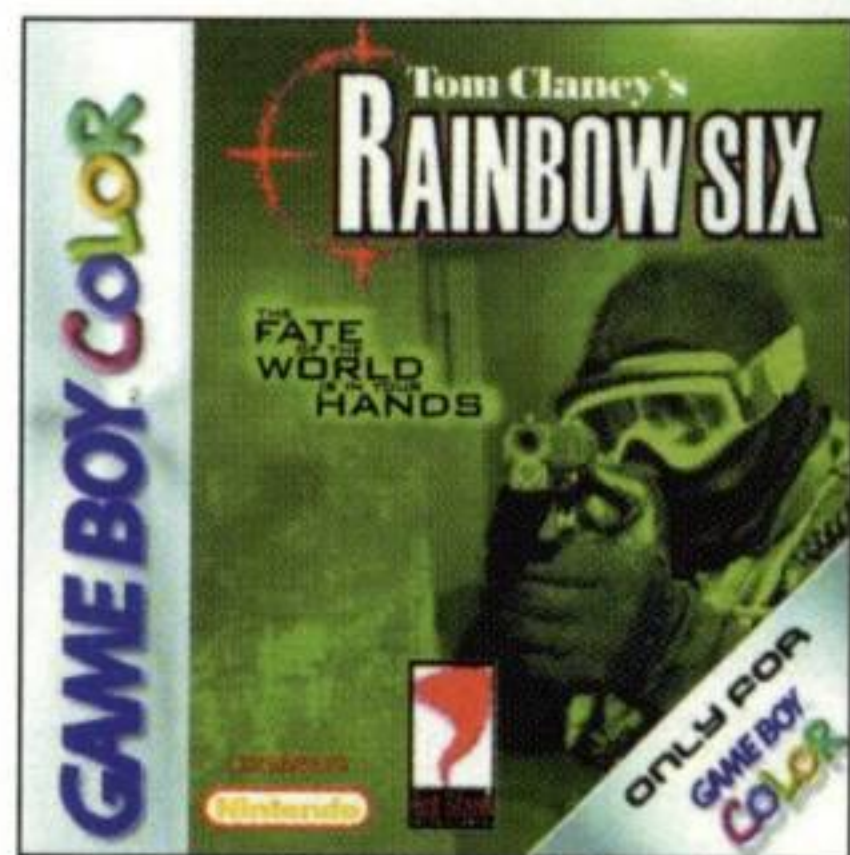
- Format: Game Boy Color
- Publisher: Activision
- Developer: Natsume
- Release date: on sale now
- Price: £25
- Players: 1-2 (with link-up cable)

■ (Below) There's nothing like a good grind on a Sunday morning.



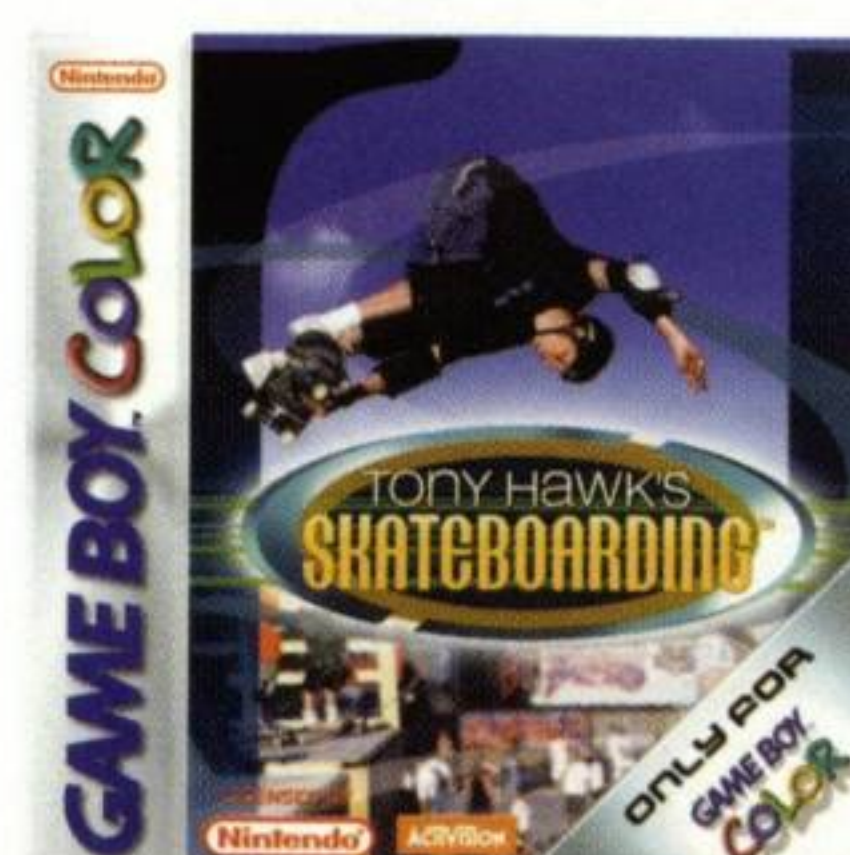
↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Great tricks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nice animation ■ Great cut-scenes ■ Extremely playable | <p>Bored stupid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not much depth ■ It's about skateboarding |
|---|---|



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A Coin-op



■ The control system is simple, but effective. You'll play like a pro in no time.

SKINS GAME

CARTOON SWINGERS STAR IN TOP HOLE ARCADE GOLFING GAME.

Sports games have become popular in arcades over the last 12 months, but mostly in the team format. Coin-op and consumer developer Midway has unveiled a number of titles, predominately for a US audience, notably through its NBA and NFL franchises. In the case of the former, the manufacturer licensed the computer-generated use of actual players from the league. Despite lacking any real golfers, *Skins Game's* impressively realistic representation of the gentlemen's game is as close as you're going to get to playing like the Tiger.

Whereas "draw" and "fade" will doubtless have tended to equate to "pull" and "slice" for most of you, in this virtual environment you can drive the ball 300 yards and bend it round trees before stopping it dead on the green – all with little more than some nimble handling of the joystick and the odd, well-timed tap of the backspin button.

To get round the lack of real golfers Midway gives you the next best thing with an assortment of wacky characters to choose from. Although it's difficult to imagine any of these donning the legendary Green Jacket (in truth it's impossible to imagine at least one swinger wearing much more than the skimpy, absurdly impractical red mini-skirt she sports), it is easy to strike up a real bond with your chosen player. In particular, their individual mannerisms, notably the celebratory routines, are strangely appealing.

But there's more satisfaction to be gleaned from this game than just admiring the sultry poses of high-heeled female golfers. The assorted camera angles give an authentic view of the action, meaning all that's lacking are the witty asides of Peter Alliss. Despite his presence, you can't help feeling that Midway has again tailored this offering purely for a US audience. For a start, if anyone can explain the nuances of how and why "skins" are won,

answers on a postcard please. Golf is a global game, however, and the scoring system will most likely be readily adapted in other markets.

Also, there's a neat little custom facility where the game takes your photo and gives you a pin number. If you key in the number every time you play, it will display your picture and, eventually, give you access to new courses.

Playing the game is simple: pull back the joystick a given amount and you propel the ball down the fairway the said distance. You also have the option of taking a "power shot" once every three holes, which gives you the strength of John Daly. A word of warning: you'll find using the feature will also drive you to drink like Daly, so hard is it to master. It's not inconceivable that the game could be suitable for a pub environment, such is its competitive nature. It's certainly ideal for tournament applications. No doubt Midway will have such a trick up its sleeve when it comes to a console version. ★★★★★ **Guy Woodward**



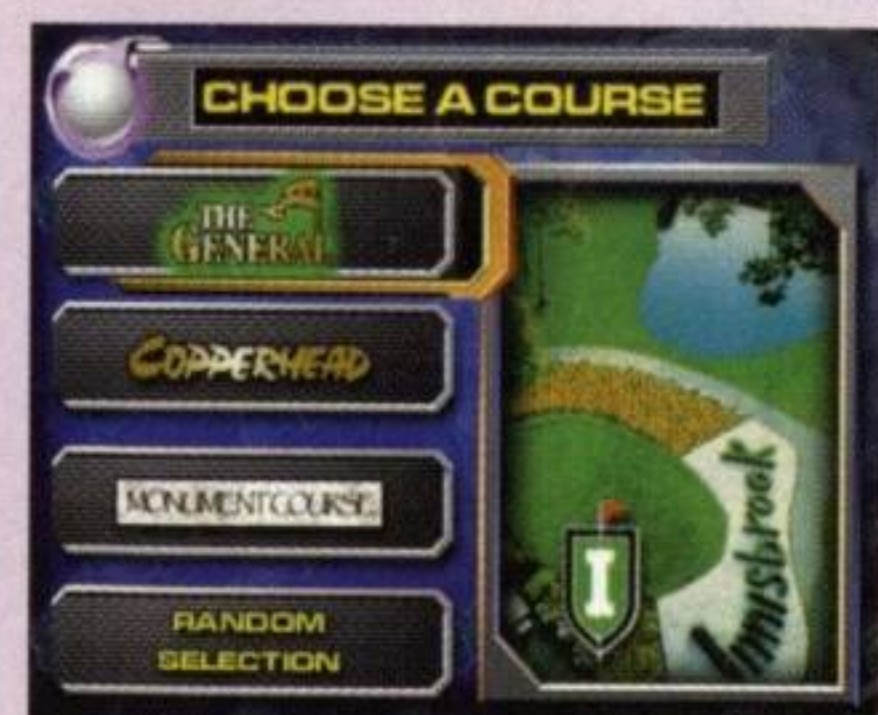
Game info

- Publisher: Midway
- Developer: Midway
- Players: 1-4
- Release date: on sale now

↑ Uppers & Downers ↓

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Hit the fairway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ "Fade" and "draw" facility ■ Joystick mechanism for easy control ■ Endearing mannerism of players | <p>In the lake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ US scoring system ■ No authentic players ■ No championship courses |
|---|--|

■ If you enter your PIN every time you play you can access new courses.



**PC
STUFF**



PC Primal Stick

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£15 (Serial) £18 (USB)**
- Available from: **Wild Things on 02920 755 774**

■ Transparent turquoise probably isn't the best colour for a third-party peripheral, but Wild Things must believe it's a winner. The Primal Stick is an ugly cartoon-style add-on that looks like a strange alien electronics project. Installing is easy enough – a simple task of messing about with the generic drivers in the "Game Controllers" bit of

Windows. Buttons are scattered across the gizmo, with a Hat switch on the top. In practice, the Primal isn't very accurate and has a tendency to make whatever you're controlling veer sharply left or right with only a slight movement of the stick. Also, the Hat switch interferes with other buttons, meaning you sometimes can't fire when using it.

The Primal Stick is definitely aimed at the lower end of the market, with a cheap "feel" and a small base that moves about too much. It's not bad, but if you dig a little deeper into your pocket, you could buy a joystick that's much more fun. ★★



GM2

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£40**
- Available from: **Saitek on 01454 451 900**

■ "Gold 'n' brown, texture like sun" sang The Stranglers – allegedly about Saitek's bizarre colour scheme. GM2 is a Windows '98 USB pad and mouse collection specifically for fans of first-person shooters and strategy titles. The product is meant to be a replacement for the keyboard commands of such games, with clever software that enables you to assign, for

example, a *Quake 3 Arena* rocket jump to one button. It's a cracking idea, but is let down by the weight of options available. The programming software is incredibly complex – PC virgins will need to enrol on an Open University course before attempting it. You can download profiles from the Saitek Web site, which makes the set-up less painful.

Using the GM2 takes a bit of practice to get right, and the mouse is poor, feeling "plasticky" and cheap. It could be useful, but you need to ask yourself whether you have enough free time to bother learning how to use a new gaming device.★★★



P120

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£10**
- Available from: **Saitek on 01454 451 900**

■ Yep, it's that horrible Saitek colour scheme again. However, if you are prepared to live with the brown and gold, this PC games pad is excellent value.

Installing it is simple, again using good old Bill Gates' software drivers. The P120 is comfortable to hold and has a good quality D-pad disc and array of buttons. It's accurate

and top fun with footie games and old skool blasters alike. One clever addition is a detachable joystick handle that can be added to the D-pad. This enables the playing of other genres, such as space combat games, although this obviously isn't as sweet as having a dedicated joystick.

This is a solid piece of kit and at under £10 won't have you smashing your piggy-bank in a *Beano* comic-type fashion. Also, if you have a '70s-style nouveau-riche house, the pad will match your decor perfectly, which is always worth bearing in mind. ★★★★★



A Our Choice
SideWinder Force Feedback Pro

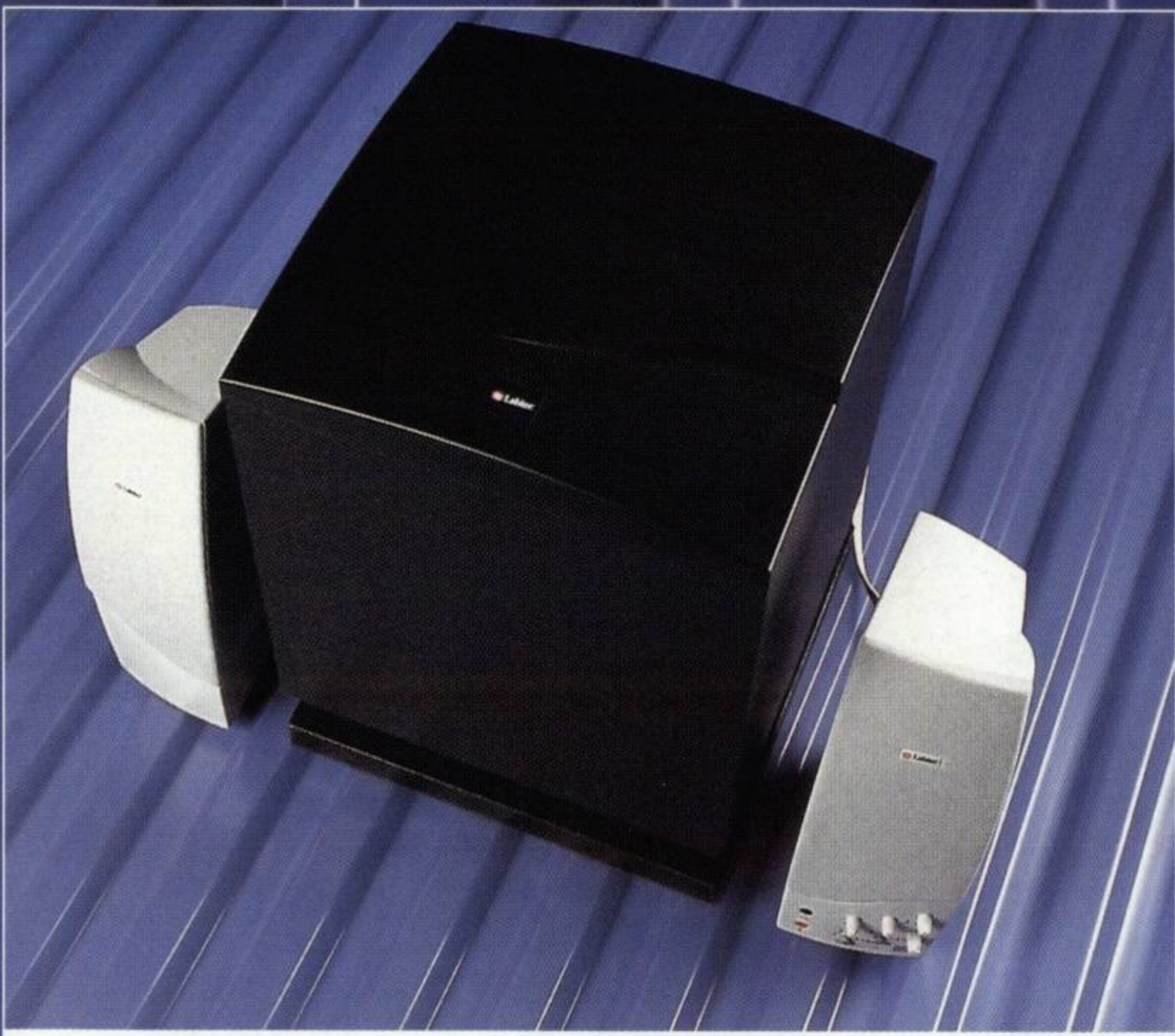
- For: **PC**
- Price: **£99**
- Available from: **Microsoft on 0870 6010 100**

■ If the X-Box console is manufactured and designed as well as the majority of Microsoft peripherals, it's going to be a winner. The Force Feedback Pro is expensive, but by golly, it's worth the money.

Installation was a breeze. Just load in the software from the CD and away you go – you

don't even have to calibrate it. The set-up software enables you to test the different effects, such as a jolting Plasma Cannon, a low rumbling Car Engine and a hand-juddering Machine Gun, as well as programming or loading in button profiles for specific titles.

For actually playing games, the SideWinder is fantastic – it's really accurate, solidly made and all the buttons work like a dream. This product oozes quality and is a delight to set up and use. If you love flight sims and epic space battles, the Microsoft Force Feedback Pro should be top of your list. Start saving now. ★★★★★



ATX 5820R

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£150**
- Available from: **Labtec on 01256 386000**

■ Computer speakers are notoriously awful, with poor sound and horrible white cases that gradually turn yellow. Labtec makes a range of top quality gear, and the 5820 is the PC equivalent of a Marshall stack.

The sub woofer box is massive, belting out low frequencies at high volume. The two satellite speakers are well made, have

an open, clear sound and attach to your monitor with the brackets provided.

Labtec has also included Virtual Dolby Surround and a "spatializer", which basically widens the stereo field, giving a much more exciting and three-dimensional experience. It works great with a variety of games, and when you play DVD movies it's like being at your local multiplex. There is a slight muddiness in the mid-range frequencies if you over use the effects, meaning speech can get lost. But, if you decide to invest in some serious PC speakers, the 5820s take some beating.★★★★



SideWinder Precision Racing Wheel

- For: **PC**
- Price: **£50**
- Available from: **Microsoft on 0870 6010 100**

■ The second Microsoft peripheral reviewed this month is another excellent piece of gaming hardware. It's a non-feedback racing wheel that is, again, easy to install due to the packaged software.

At the base of the wheel is a built-in bolt system that attaches it firmly to any

surface – this baby is not going to move during mid-race. The wheel itself has a very solid action, is highly accurate and always returns to the centre when you let go. The pedals are just as good, with a tough build that'll withstand some serious slamming.

The wheel is missing rubber bits for extra grip and there's no separate gear stick, but these are minor omissions most gamers can live with. Driving nuts should consider shelling out for a force-feedback wheel but if you're not bothered about good vibrations then the SideWinder Precision is worth a test drive.★★★★

**DREAMCAST
PLASTIC**



Stereo Scart Connector

- For: **Dreamcast**
- Price: **£8**
- Available from: **Wild Things on 02920 755774**

■ Once you've forked out £200 on a Dreamcast, there's nothing better than kicking back with a copy of *Crazy Taxi* or *Soul Calibur*. Lovely. But hang on –

the picture isn't that sharp. Damn those pesky RF leads. You might as well throw your new console into a large smelly skip.

Before you take such drastic action, maybe you ought to think about buying a SCART lead. Wild Things' sleek black connector is only £8 and improves the picture quality instantly. For a small amount of dosh, you'll get years of fuzz-free games-playing pleasure.★★★★



Dream Force Joypad

- For: **Dreamcast**
- Price: **£18**
- Available from: **Venom on 01920 484444**

■ Third-party stuff for the Dreamcast is coming into the Arcade peripherals warehouse at an alarming speed.

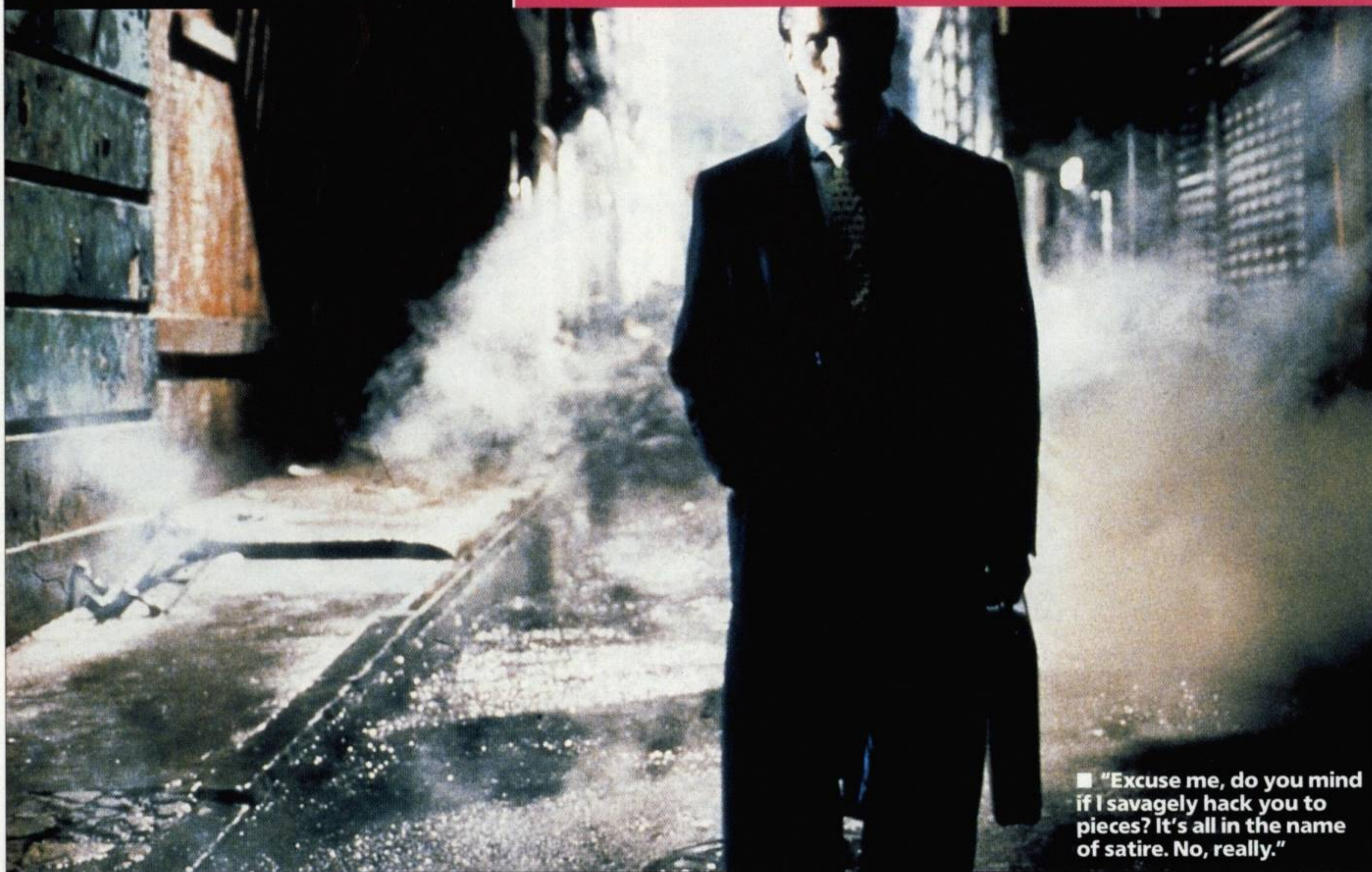
The Dream Force looks a bit clunky, but it's well put together and the shoulder

buttons are better than Sega's. But the analogue stick is awkward to use and feels a little odd under your thumb. The rumble feature, which means you don't have to bother with any add-on packs, is a bonus but it doesn't seem to work that well.

The fact that it's £2 cheaper than an official pad should make the Dream Force good value. But the crappy stick and dodgy rumble effect tarnish a product that could have been a real contender.★★★★

PHOTOGRAPHY: KATHERINE LANE-SIMS

Film of the month



■ "Excuse me, do you mind if I savagely hack you to pieces? It's all in the name of satire. No, really."

Film info

■ Director: **Mary Harron**
 ■ Starring: **Christian Bale, Willem Dafoe, Jared Leto, Reese Witherspoon, Samantha Mathis, Chloë Sevigny, Justin Theroux**
 ■ UK release: **out now**

AMERICAN PSYCHO

Violence and greed as fantasy and reality blur.

Wry, brutal, intelligent, exhilarating and very funny, there's little chance that *American Psycho* will be to everyone's taste. Few films that mix social commentary, sarky humour and digs at Phil Collins with wincingly nasty chainsaw killings ever are. But – make no mistake about it – *American Psycho* is not one to miss.

Suit-wearing city trader Patrick Bateman (Bale) has a secret: he kills people. Bloodily, viciously and for the least substantial of reasons. Beg money from him? You're in trouble. Hurry him at a cash machine? The only withdrawal you'll need is from a blood bank. Upstage him at the office by having a snazzier

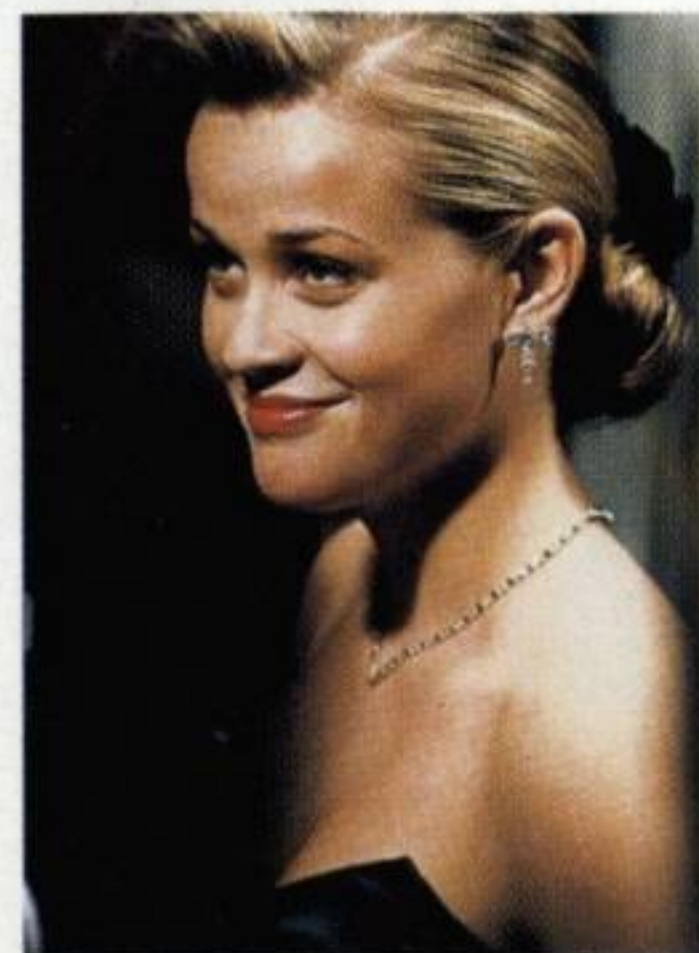
business card than him? Run for cover. But in the bland, label-obsessed (your make of suit, tie, glasses and face care product makes you who you are) world of the late '80s, he's getting away with it. Or is he?

As the layers of Bateman's twisted psyche start to peel back, can you really trust that anything you see is actually happening? Is Patrick really a stone cold sociopath or is he just a deluded nobody, fantasising about leaving a trail of bodies a small war would envy? There are arguments for both viewpoints, but – and prepare for lengthy pub arguments about this – Harron's film is careful to leave it open-ended.

Mixing and matching genre looks and feels (from *Wall Street* chic to *When Harry Met Sally* glossiness to grainy *Texas ChainSaw Massacre* hack'n'slashing), Harron delivers a scintillating distillation of Bret Easton Ellis's decade-defining novel. In a blazing hour and a half of cinema, she paints Bateman as a vain, pretentious child of his time. A receptacle for every fad that comes along, his attempts to fit in lead to him being so anonymous that he's constantly being mistaken for someone else.

And in Bale she's got a leading man worthy of it all. His physique pumped up to Greek god buffness, Bale cruises through the first half of the film oozing the kind of depth and power previous favourite for the role DiCaprio could only dream of. Thank God the vagaries of the star system didn't deny Bale the part that should make his career. ★★★★★

■ (Below) "Well, he looks like a nice man."



■ "No, I said rats."

THE VIRGIN SUICIDES

■ Director: **Sofia Coppola**
 ■ Starring: **Kirsten Dunst, Josh Hartnett, James Woods, Kathleen Turner**
 ■ UK Release: **5 May**

■ Sofia Coppola, daughter of Francis, was roundly panned for her colourless performance in *The Godfather Part 3*. But her directing career displays considerably more promise, judging from this quirky, eye-catching feature debut.

Based on the best selling novel by Jeffrey Eugenides, *The Virgin Suicides* looks at the captivating impact five beautiful sisters have on the suburban town of Grosse Point, Michigan. This, you may recall, was the setting for John Cusack's brilliant hit man comedy *Grosse Pointe Blank*. While considerably less bloody, the action is just as fatal this time around.

When one of the sisters commits suicide, her grief-stricken parents (Kathleen Turner and James Woods) respond by keeping the remaining four locked up at home. Fascinated, the local boys hatch a plan to rescue the girls from their bizarre imprisonment.

With Kirsten Dunst excellent as the most sexually adventurous of the quintet, Danny DeVito and Scott Glenn in cameo roles and Air supplying a hypnotic soundtrack, this '70s-set oddity casts a bewitching spell that bodes well for Coppola's future behind the camera. ★★



■ Sigourney showing that the mighty don't always fall.

GALAXY QUEST

■ Director: **Dean Parisot**
 ■ Starring: **Tim Allen, Sigourney Weaver, Alan Rickman, Tony Shalhoub, Sam Rockwell, Daryl Mitchell**
 ■ UK Release: **28 April**

■ Back in the early '80s, *Galaxy Quest* was a TV sensation. The crew of the Starship Protector roamed the spaceways, the actors playing them raked in the cash and everyone was happy. But if you warp forward nearly 20 years you'll see that the show was cancelled after three seasons, the actors playing the crew are now reduced to scratching a living by dressing up in their old costumes



■ **Virgin Suicides:** Eye-catching oddity from Francis Coppola's daughter.

at anorak-packed sci-fi conventions and things look like they just can't get any worse.

But then they do, as a naive alien race mistakes them for the do-gooding heroes they once played and drag the aging thespians off to fight for them in a very real intergalactic battle.

As William "Kirk" Shatner take-off Jason Nesmith, Allen pitches his performance perfectly between comedy buffoon and genuine action hero. Stir in support from the likes of Weaver (playing a blonde bimbo officer whose only job is to repeat what the computer's just said) and Rickman (as the bitter, classically trained actor reduced to playing a latex-headed Spock-clone) and you've got a smart, tongue-in-cheek comedy actioner that will have hardcore Trekkies

fuming into their plastic replica communicators. Everyone else will love it. ★★ ★★

SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS

■ Director: **Scott Hicks**
 ■ Starring: **Ethan Hawke, James Cromwell, Richard Jenkins, James Rebhorn, Sam Shepard, Eric Thal, Max von Sydow, Youki Kudoh, Rick Yune**
 ■ UK Release: **12 May**

■ On a cold, snowy island off America's Pacific coast in the 50s, the scars of the Second World War still divide a mixed Japanese and Scandinavian community.

For the most part they co-exist peacefully, if not always happily, but all that is threatened when fisherman Carl Heine is

found dead and Kazuo Miyamoto (Yune) is put on trial for murder.

Shine director Hicks has kept the odd narrative structure of David Guterson's best selling novel, spiralling round the lives of the islanders while unfolding both the courtroom drama and a never forgotten teenage romance.

The result is a bleakly beautiful film packed with some gorgeous images. ★★ ★

HOUSE!

■ Director: **Julian Kemp**
 ■ Starring: **Kelly MacDonald, Jason Hughes, Freddie Jones, Miriam Margolyes, Mossie Smith**
 ■ UK Release: **5 May**

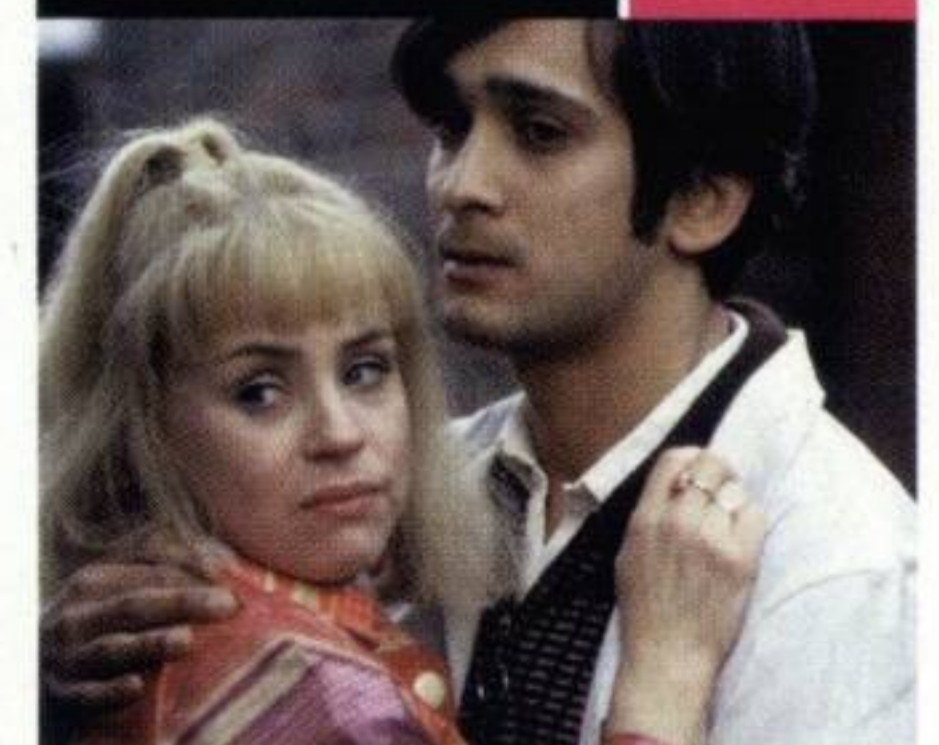
■ Bingo isn't the most exciting subject for a film (nor, come to that, are the South Wales valleys the most enticing setting), but

anyone who lets little things like that put them off seeing Julian Kemp's directorial debut is missing a gem of a movie.

The owner and staff of dilapidated bingo hall the Scala think that their number's up when the Mega Bingo complex opens up on the edge of town. It poaches their best bingo caller, lures away most of their custom and leaves them staring financial disaster in the face. Then one of the waitresses (MacDonald) discovers she has a strange and mystical gift...

Sweet, silly and fun, *House!* is a real film, not just a TV fodder lash-up. Kemp has pulled together an able cast and then rounded out the likeable nonsense with clever camera work and an imaginative eye for what looks lovely on the big screen. ★★ ★

Videos to rent



■ **East Is East:** "All I said was that it's colourful."

EAST IS EAST

■ **Film Four**
 ■ The most acclaimed British film of last year is a brilliant portrait of a Pakistani family growing up in '70s Salford. Although advertised as a rip-roaring comedy, *East Is East* is actually a compelling drama bursting with humanity, which also provides many moments of genius observational comedy.

The Khan kids are negotiating the territory of tentative snogs, first dalliances with alcohol and pretentious art-school sculptures of female genitalia. To their horror, Mr Khan, despite his own mixed marriage, is determined to press ahead with arranged weddings to two of Bradford's ugliest daughters. Meanwhile, the threat of circumcision forces Salid to take refuge under the hood of his parka. One of those must-see movies. ★★ ★★

EYES WIDE SHUT

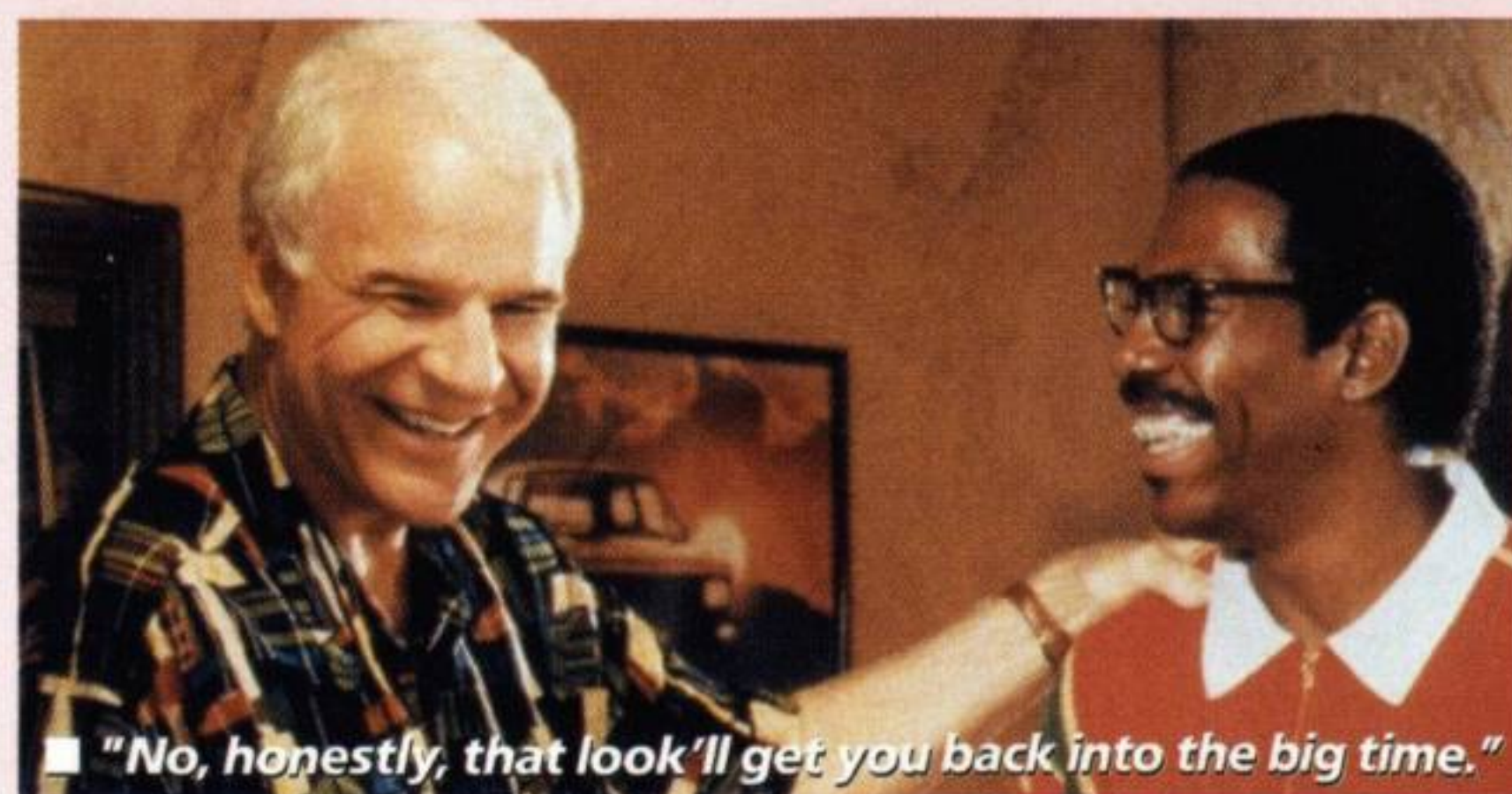
■ **Warners**
 ■ Stanley Kubrick's last film is unquestionably not his best, but it's still worth watching for brief flashes of directorial flair and a healthy quotient of weirdness.

Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman play a well-heeled New York couple left with nothing to fight except each other. As a result, they joylessly destroy each other's egos and pursue jealous sexual fantasies with others. This makes for stultifying viewing, until Cruise's quest for a quick shag leads him to a bizarre ritualistic orgy for the city's wealthy elite. His subsequent one-man detective mission breathes life into a previously languid film. ★★ ★

DETROIT ROCK CITY

■ **Entertainment In Video**
 ■ Goofy American teen metal film very much in the vein of *Airheads* and *Bill & Ted* – awed ogling of cleavage and devil salutes a speciality. Edward Furlong and chums play in Kiss tribute band Mystery and are preparing to see their hard-rockin' heroes in concert when the drummer's God-fearing mother burns the tickets, believing Gene Simmons to be Satan. The fearless foursome make tracks for Detroit anyhow and not only all eventually gain admittance to the arena, but get to take part in a series of improbable adventures and meet chicks. Like, uh, cool, but *Detroit Rock City* isn't original enough to spawn a rash of bodacious playground catchphrases. ★★ ★

DVD The biggest new releases.



■ "No, honestly, that look'll get you back into the big time."

BOWFINGER

■ **Columbia Tristar**
 ■ A heralded return to form for Eddie Murphy and Steve Martin – assuming that *Beverly Hills Cop 2* meets *The Man With Two Brains* is your idea of a riotous festival of laughs. *Bowfinger* (scripted by Martin) is typically zany

and inconsequential, featuring a struggling director's last ditch bid to hit Hollywood paydirt. Without a leading man as a big draw, he pursues action hero Kit Ramsey (Murphy) with a hidden camera to film the actor covertly, shoving his own cast into the frame where

necessary. *Bowfinger* is frequently funny, even if making a movie about making a movie is the last refuge of the star so immersed in Hollywood he forgets reality. ★★ ★
Extras Deleted scenes, out-takes, location features, commentary by director Frank Oz, star biographies.

Videos to buy

STAR WARS: EPISODE ONE THE PHANTOM MENACE

■ **20th Century Fox**
 ■ Away from the tidal wave of hype engulfing this film, it's time to admit *The Phantom Menace* isn't really very good. Even if you're the kind of obsessive who dresses like Boba Fett to go down the shops, the lack of panache with which Neeson and McGregor tackle their central role as Jedi Knights is deflating. Then there's the walking insult that is Jar Jar Binks and episodes of pure schmaltz (look at little Anakin, isn't he cute) which fail to evoke the strange magic of the original trilogy. The pod racing sequence is



■ **Phantom Menace:** Not very good.

superb, but doesn't mask the fact this is a film to rank alongside *My Favourite Martian* rather than cinema greats. ★★

THE IRON GIANT

■ **Warners**
 ■ Better known as Ted Hughes' *Iron Man*, this animated Disney version strays from the original storyline, but retains the sense of mystery about the Iron Giant's origins and purpose. Naturally the US government thinks he's something to do with the Russians and dispatches a missile to destroy him, but a young boy named Hogarth discovers the Giant has a capacity for learning and emotion and attempts to halt the military onslaught. Heavy on the sentiment, but still charming. ★★ ★

Book of the month



■ (Above) *Robotron* – shown here in its Spectrum incarnation – a game which inspires you to quote Greek philosophy, surely.



Book Info
 ■ Author: **Steven Poole**
 ■ Publisher: **Fourth Estate**
 ■ Price: **£12**
 ■ ISBN: **1-84115-120-3**

TRIGGER HAPPY

Finally, there's a book that really gets to the heart of the videogame experience.

The problem with serious cultural analyses of the videogame world is that they tend to be written by curious academics who don't know one end of a PlayStation from the other, struggling to document the strange appeal these hypnotic, flashing images have on the masses.

Joystick Nation a recent effort by American JC Herz, is riddled with errors, and back in the early '80s, even Martin Amis poked his oar in. But Steven Poole, sometime game reviewer with *The Guardian*, knows his stuff. He's succeeded in writing an excellent "aesthetic history" of videogames which is academically worthy, thoroughly contemporary and eminently readable. Most importantly of all, though, it immediately makes you want to go and play some games.

Poole doesn't attack his subject chronologically, nor does he tackle it genre by genre. Instead, each chapter explores one basic element of videogames which makes people associate with them so strongly. Whether it be the artificial worlds, the graphics, the stories, the idols

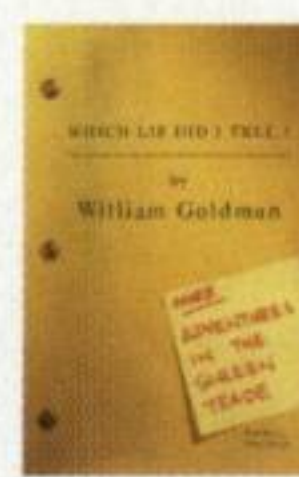
or the basic urge to play and compete, this approach allows the author to cite examples from gaming history (personal favourites appear to be *Robotron* and *Zelda 64*, which are referenced in almost every chapter) and align them with philosophical truths. From Plato to PlayStation2 in one paragraph – now that's impressive.

Trigger Happy serves as both a fascinating history and a platform for future debate. If he's not overturning the accepted tale of the birth of videogames by pledging allegiance to the 1958 Brookhaven National Laboratory story, Poole is intelligently rubbishing the sacred cow of interactive storytelling. His choice of contemporary commentators is also spot on, from Richard Darling to Jeremy Smith of Core to film director David Cronenberg (sneakily pilfered from an interview written by this very reviewer in this very magazine – mine's a pint, Steve).

Whether as an introduction to videogaming, an informative bog read, a forum for pub discussion or another justification for "one last go at beating the high score", *Trigger Happy* is essential reading. ★★★★★ **Sam Richards**

WHICH LIE DID I TELL? MORE ADVENTURES IN THE SCREEN TRADE

■ Author: **William Goldman**
 ■ Publisher: **Bloomsbury**
 ■ Price: **£17**
 ■ ISBN: **0-7475-4977-x**



■ "Sequels are where's movies," asserts William Goldman in this fascinating insight into

the life of a Hollywood screenwriter. He wrote *Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid*, *Marathon Man* and *Misery*, among others. The guy knows what he's talking about.

Which Lie Did I Tell? is essentially a selection of essays on aspects of screenwriting written with such a deft touch it's as if Goldman's actually sat there with you reading out loud. Whether he's talking about the zipper scene in *There's Something About Mary* or Gene Hackman's performance in *Absolute Power* it's all treated with humour and wit, but above all with a huge passion for telling stories. ★★★★★

THE CASE OF THE MISSING NEUTRINOS

■ Edited: **John Gribbin**
 ■ Price: **£6**
 ■ Publisher: **Penguin**
 ■ ISBN: **0-140-28734-5**

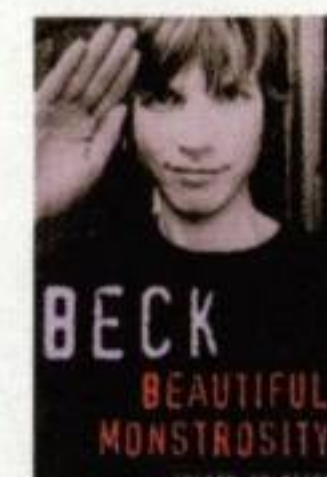


■ This collection of essays by journalist John Gribbin is subtitled "curious phenomena of the universe", and attempts to make astrology and cosmology accessible to the layperson. Gribbin says he was looking for "off-the-wall" aspects of astronomy. Off-the-wall for scientists being essays on when the next ice age will be and how supernovae come about.

The essays are all well written and explain the often difficult concepts well. But Gribbin is unable to pull off Stephen Jay Gould's trick of writing a popular science book that stands up as a compulsive read. ★★★

BECK: BEAUTIFUL MONSTROSITY

■ Edited: **Julian Palacios**
 ■ Publisher: **Boxtree**
 ■ Price: **£10**
 ■ ISBN: **0-7522-7143-1**



■ Beck is the quintessential contemporary pop star, consistently eluding

pigeonholing. Taking early blues as his starting point, Beck has gradually incorporated most styles of music into his repertoire.

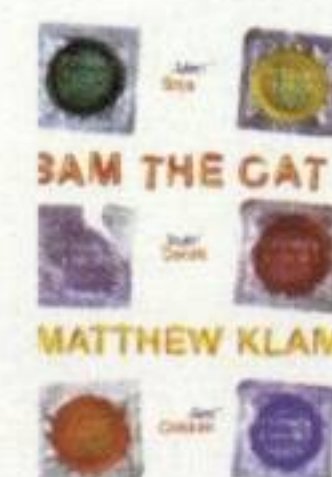
Palacios' intellectual case for the complex soul of the "chameleon" is suitably fascinating and thorough.

The great thing about Beck is that he seems to surround himself with equally vibrant people. Palacios probably could have written a whole book about Beck's grandfather (a performance artist in the '60s) and he fills a chapter with the history of Odeley's enigmatic production team The Dust Brothers.

If only the author could have interviewed Beck direct rather than relying on previously published snippets. ★★★★★

SAM THE CAT

■ Author: **Matthew Klam**
 ■ Publisher: **Viking**
 ■ Price: **£11**
 ■ ISBN: **0-6708-9235-1**



■ The first few pages of this short story collection are deceiving. The boastful narrator, Sam,

contemplates a string of ex and future conquests – surely nobody wants to read about that? But Klam has an ideal plan for deflating the hero.

Dissatisfied with his lovers' lack of spark, Sam finds himself drawn to a male friend. But the man isn't gay and Sam gets to feel the sting of rejection.

The other stories portray those ground down by employers, ridiculed by partners and betrayed by their own bodies, this is white, affluent man at his lowest ebb. Even so, Klam finds hope and humour among the ashes. ★★★

Music



■ **Cypress Hill: hip-hop survivors still smoking fat ones.**

THE BLUETONES

Science & Nature

■ Label: **Superior Quality**



■ The third album from the lightweights of indie pop doesn't contain any surprises.

Notorious for their long sleeping hours, The Bluetones' music has always been afflicted by a similar case of narcolepsy. Opening track "Zorro" (note extra "R" for added grrr factor) briefly hints at something more concerted this time round, but the band soon fall back on the same jangle guitar shapes. Meanwhile, the lifeless vocals of Mark Morriss makes Embrace's Danny McNamara sound like Otis Redding.

The Bluetones are capable of penning a pleasant tune, and their Smiths-ian meanderings work to satisfying effect on "Autophilia" and "Mudslide". Their sound is also doggishly retrogressive and the rhythms are twee, particularly on single "Keep The Home Fires Burning". Ultimately, though, there's nothing to really dislike about The Bluetones, and nothing much to like about them either. Back to sleep, lads. ★★

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

Mwng

■ Label: **Placid Casual**



■ The prolific Super Furry Animals have long talked about their Welsh language album in the wake of their all-English effort *Guerilla*. Much like kindred spirit Beck's *Mutations*, they've chosen to issue *Mwng* on their own small label, and it's an altogether more introspective record than their other three LPs.

However, the fact that this is a low key release and not an official fourth album doesn't make *Mwng* any less valid. Some of their best moments have come when they've ditched the electronics and got back to basics. *Mwng* boasts a charming lack of affectation and the use of brass gives the record a soulful feel.

The language barrier isn't really an issue – Gruff's lyrics are barely audible and often turn out to be about magic scissors cutting hair by themselves. If you don't own any Welsh language records, start a collection here. ★★★★★

CYPRESS HILL

Skull & Bones

■ Label: **Ruffhouse/Columbia**



■ Cypress Hill deserve your respect if only for achieving veteran status in the notoriously short-term hip-hop game. It would be easy to dismiss their schtick in favour of newer talent with a fresh angle, but Cypress Hill are nothing if not consistent.

Skull & Bones is their fifth album and it's as crisp and vibrant as anything they've ever done. DJ Muggs' production sounds effortlessly contemporary, but there's no great departure from the winning formula. If anything, they sound suitably wise compared with their *Black Sunday* selves, but marijuana is still the major motivator (witness the excellent "Can I Get A Hit") and Sen Dog still sounds like he's rapping on a cartoon. Familiar stuff, but visceral and exciting for the most part.

Cypress Hill have the dubious honour of inventing rap metal back in the day, and for the most part, *Skull & Bones* steps just the right side of the line, sounding threatening without erupting into moronic riffage. But then they go and spoil it all with the second part of the album which topples hopelessly into the moshpit, with guest appearances from members of Fear Factory and Rage Against The Machine. An album of two halves, and the second is not pretty. ★★★

ELLIOTT SMITH

Figure 8

■ Label: **Dreamworks**



■ He rose to prominence after his soundtrack to the film *Good Will Hunting* was nominated for an Oscar but Elliott Smith has actually been around for years, first as a member of underground rockers Heatmiser and for the last five years as a solo artist. However, *Figure 8*, while probably his most complete album to date, isn't likely to change the world.

Elliott's alternative credentials are first class, but he often seems a bit out of place among his peers. His music is anachronistic: sometimes this is a good thing, creating a warm nostalgic feel on songs like "Everything Reminds Me Of Her"; sometimes his devotion to outmoded notions of classicism and the waltz time signature merely grates.

Figure 8 is an enjoyable album and its best moments compare to The Beatles circa *Abbey Road*, but Elliott Smith needs to contemporise, man. ★★★

Album of the month



■ **Black Box Recorder: please, no "box" jokes.**

BLACK BOX RECORDER

Perfect pop perversion.



Album info

■ The Facts Of Life
■ Label: **Nude**

Luke Haines is an unlikely pop star. A few years back he enjoyed a fleeting liaison with the charts in *The Auteurs*. Since then his music has become ever more bleak. He formed *Baader Meinhof*, inspired by German terrorism, and then *Black Box Recorder*, whose first album mixed nursery rhymes to lyrics about natural disasters.

The Facts Of Life welcomes Haines, plus equally twisted compadres John Moore and Sarah Nixey, back into the pop fold. The glorious single (also called "The Facts Of Life"), which recently charted, revels in its glossy production and a chorus which resembles All Saints' "Never Ever". The lyrics celebrating the coming of adolescence ("you're getting ideas when you sleep at night, they develop into sweet dreams") stay just the right side of salaciousness on the surface, but listen closely – deep in the mix, beneath Nixey's breathy vocal, Luke Haines is whispering the words in unison. Many of the songs use this technique to mesmerising effect, lending an unsettling edge to deliberately mundane lyrics about motorways and home improvement.

Think Serge Gainsbourg duetting on love songs with his 14-year-old daughter or Nick Cave crooning murder ballads with Kylie. The music is as polished as Air or Saint Etienne but with an undercurrent of menace which gives it a sense of true excitement. Haines is still a contrary fellow who looks too much like an evil version of Richie from *Bottom* for comfort, but he has brilliantly refined his characteristic savage bitterness, realising perfect pop perversion is the way forward. ★★★ **Sam Richards**

Millennium jukebox

What's been tickling the ears of the Arcade team this fine spring month.

DOVES

Lost Souls

An gorgeously epic rock record from the guys who used to be Sub Sub.

VARIOUS

Skye Presents The Breaks (Volume 3)

Yet more discofunk titillation from compilation label Harmless

ENCORE

Self Preservation

Startling hip-hop debut from energised West Coast MC.

DJ FOOD

Kaleidoscope

Twisted chill out music which sounds like Coldcut doing jazz and sampling Debussy.

SOFA SURFERS

Cargo

Dub noise freakout fun from Austria.

THE SMITHS

Greatest Hits

We were happy in the haze of a drunken hour, until we discovered some girls are bigger than others.

THE BEATNUTS

A Musical Massacre

In yer face hip-hop for when you don't feel like taking no weak assed shit.

MOBY

Play

As if we didn't hear all these songs enough every time we switch on the television and see a car advert.

CHRIS COCO

Solar Spectrums

Uplifting downtempo mix album.



■ It can stand upright, but can it play *Ridge Racer 5*?

SONY DVP-F11 DVD PLAYER

DVD info

- Price: £450
- Available from: Sony on 0990 111999
- Web: www.sony.co.uk
- Release date: on sale now

Stand and deliver, it's your money or your clutter.

Fed up with bits of hi-fi taking over your valuable living space? Does your flat now have more in common with a NASA control room than the spacious, well-appointed apartment you once knew? Fear not, as Sony has come up with this neat little idea to keep your living space clutter free.

As DVD players go, this is something of a departure; not for this machine the dour black box of its contemporaries. In fact, the DVP-F11 is quite a little looker, with its titanium finish and minimalist fascia. The coolest thing about this player, though, is that it can play DVDs while sitting either horizontally or vertically – in the same

way as the PlayStation2. The advantage of this idea is, of course, that if the machine is on its side, it doesn't have to take up as much space on the floor, the upshot of all this being that you've got more room for the rest of your gear.

Despite being a fair bit smaller than your average DVD deck, the DVP-F11 manages to cram in the majority of the features and connections you'd expect from a larger player and has no loading tray – you simply slot the discs into it in-car-CD-style. So, if you're looking for the latest in home cinema, but aren't prepared to sacrifice too much of your precious space, or if you don't have any space to sacrifice, this is the player for you. ★★★★★



CD Walkman info

- Price: £300
- Available from: Sony on 0990 111999
- Web: www.sony.co.uk
- Release date: on sale now

SONY D-EJ01 CD WALKMAN

Taking the skip out of your step.

The trouble with personal CD players is that they don't like being knocked around and have a habit of skipping like 6-year-old girls every time you break into something more strenuous than a saunter.

Sony's new D-EJ01 promises to change all that with its G protection, jog-proof technology. Only slightly wider than a CD and a tad over 20mm thick, the D-EJ01 is about as small as personal CD players are going to get.

It sports all the current must-haves, what with its cool brushed-metal finish and side-loading slot. The controls are hidden away around the perimeter of the casing, which keep the smooth lines of the case intact, and all the functions can be accessed via the blue-backlit, in-line remote control.

Sound-wise, it's superb, with bags of bass and plenty of top-end. The anti-shock system does the business as well, and unless you're prepared to throw the player across the room you won't harm it at all. Buy this, or be doomed to CD-skipping hell. ★★★★★



SAMSUNG ANYCALL WATCH PHONE

The speaking clock you can talk back to.

Just think of the weird looks you'd get sporting this little number. It's bad enough seeing people with those hands-free phones ambling down the street towards you, making small talk with themselves in a distinctly care in the community fashion, but just imagine how much damage

mumbling into one of these watch phones could do to your social standing.

People will cross the road just to avoid your talking-to-wrist antics and your friends will completely blank you in the street. But don't worry just yet as this space-age timepiece isn't available on these shores yet, although it will be released later this year. The relentless advances

in mobile technology mean that the latest phones are smaller and more feature packed than ever before and the watch-phone is no exception.

When you finally get your hands on one, you'll be able to call upon a 250-contact phone book, calendar and a calculator, all in one lightweight, 50g package. There'll also be a voice dialling function for 20 names

and numbers, basic PDA functions, PC synchronisation, and the built-in speaker phone means that you won't actually have to talk to your wrist to be heard which, let's face it, is a blessing. For the moment though, you'll either have to book your flight to the Far East to pick one up, or wait patiently for Samsung to release it over here. ★★★

Watch info

- Price: £tbc
- Available from: Samsung on 0208 391 0168
- Web: www.samsung.co.uk
- Release date: Winter

GET ORGANISED

It's great to be busy, but keeping track of a hectic life can be a chore, hence the success of personal digital assistants. They look good and can sort your schedule at the same time. Michael Brook of *T3* magazine explains.

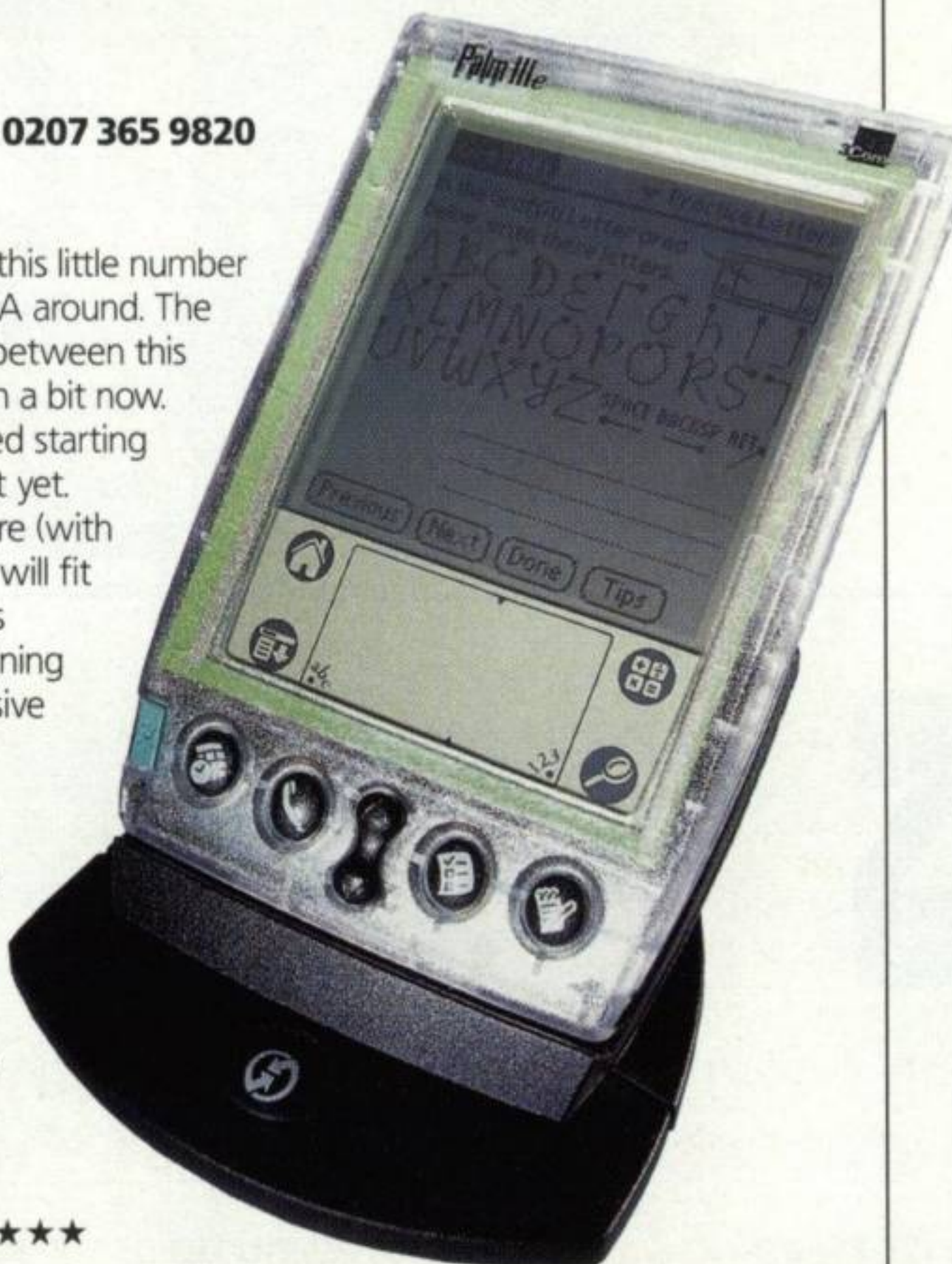
PALM IIIE

- Price: **£149**
- Available from: **Palm Computing on 0207 365 9820**
- Web: **www.palm.com**
- Release date: **on sale now**

The iMac-inspired translucent casing of this little number makes the Palm IIIe the coolest looking PDA around. The new packaging is the only real difference between this and the original Palm III, which is getting on a bit now. As PDAs go, though, it's a reasonably priced starting point and not ready for the scrap heap just yet.

Unlike the other products featured here (with the exception of the Palm V), the Palm IIIe will fit unobtrusively into your pocket, and it's this portability which goes some way to explaining the brand's popularity. You also get a massive two-month battery life into the bargain.

That said, the display is monochrome and the Palm IIIe doesn't boast the multimedia features of the Cassiopeia and Aero, although it's considerably cheaper. For your £149 you get an address book, to-do list, e-mail connectivity, games and a calculator all in one 168g package. If you don't need the bells and whistles of the more expensive products, then you could do a lot worse. An excellent budget PDA that has all the basic features you'll need. ★★★



PALM V

- Price: **£250**
- Available from: **Palm Computing on 0207 365 9820**
- Web: **www.palm.com**
- Release date: **on sale now**

The Palm V is a bit of a legend. Its svelte, easy-on-the-pocket design make it a popular choice, but it has been around for a while and isn't as cutting edge as some of the other PDAs here. It's still the smallest and lightest of the bunch, though, and has a battery life of around a month, which should be enough for most people. As with the Palm IIIe, it has a monochrome display, 2Mb of RAM and all the same basic features, but it's lighter and slimmer than its sibling.

Being an older model, the Palm V has a massive amount of free/shareware floating around on the Net, so for your £250, you get a well-supported piece of kit that's easily upgradeable. An infra-red port with a modem-equipped mobile phone means that just because you're away from a land line you don't have to lose touch with your e-mail – a separate modem is available for those who haven't got the latest mobile phones. If you're looking for something to get you organised, that fits easily in a jacket or jeans pocket, and has the added benefit of a massive user base, then the Palm V should be your first point of call. ★★★



Our choice

CASIO CASSIOPEIA E-105

- Price: **£500**
- Available from: **Casio on 0208 450 9131**
- Web: **www.casio.com**
- Release date: **on sale now**

The daddy of the PDA world, the 65,536-colours Cassiopeia boasts a host of features you'd expect to find on a laptop or desktop PC. The 252g Casio may not be cheap, but comes with a standard 32Mb of RAM – more than enough to store all the information you'll ever need – and, as it uses the popular WinCE operating system, you can download files straight to your PC without any need for conversion.

Where the Cassiopeia really shines, though, is in the multimedia stakes. It can run picture viewers, play videos, and encode MP3 files, as well as the address book and e-mail facilities you'd expect from a PDA – all of which is presented on a superb, almost reflection-free colour screen. The drawback of this is that the batteries drain fast, only managing eight hours between charges. But if it's the last word in pocket-sized multimedia you're after, this is the PDA for you.

★★★★



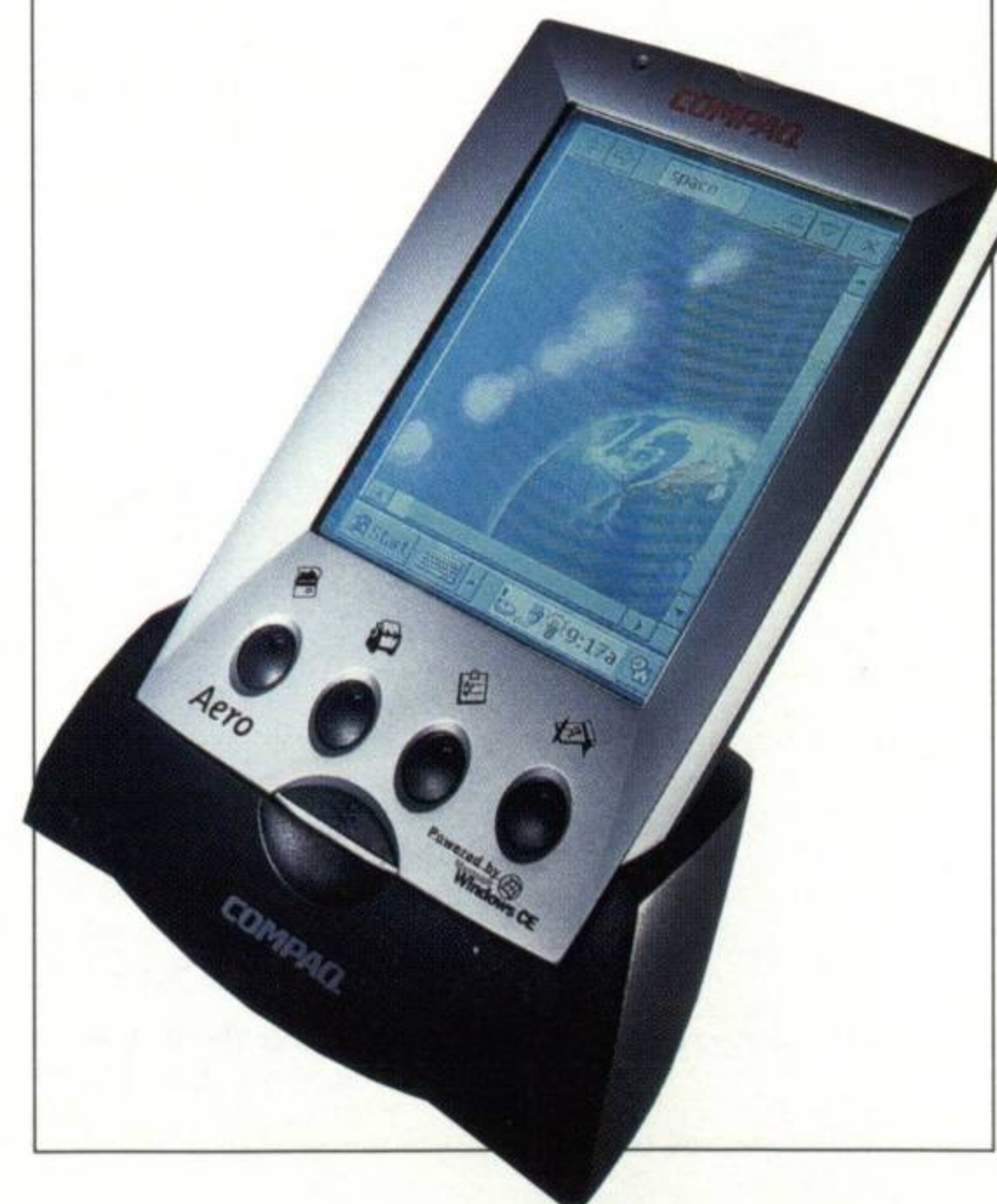
COMPAQ AERO

- Price: **£340**
- Available from: **Compaq on 0845 270 4000**
- Web: **www.compaq.com**
- Release date: **on sale now**

The Aero's a 256-colours number and, like the Casio, it's a tad battery-thirsty, with only eight hours between charges. It has most of the features of the Casio, including the multimedia gubbins (except MP3 coding), albeit in a slightly larger box.

Again, this PDA runs the WinCE operating system, so you can transfer files to your PC in headache-free style, and with a modem-equipped mobile, you can surf the Net as well. Once you're on the Internet, you can download games and applications and make full use of the 16Mb available.

The Aero is one of the best looking PDAs you can get, with its sleek silver case and pin-sharp display. However, it's also one of the heaviest, weighing in at a hefty 305g. This combined with the fact that it is one of the larger models here means it's not quite as portable as the Palm series or the Vtech. If you've got the cash to spare – and want all the multimedia features the Aero offers – this is the place to look. ★★★



VTECH HELIO

- Price: **£110**
- Available from: **Vtech on 00 1503 646 2880**
- Web: **www.myhelio.com**
- Release date: **on sale now**

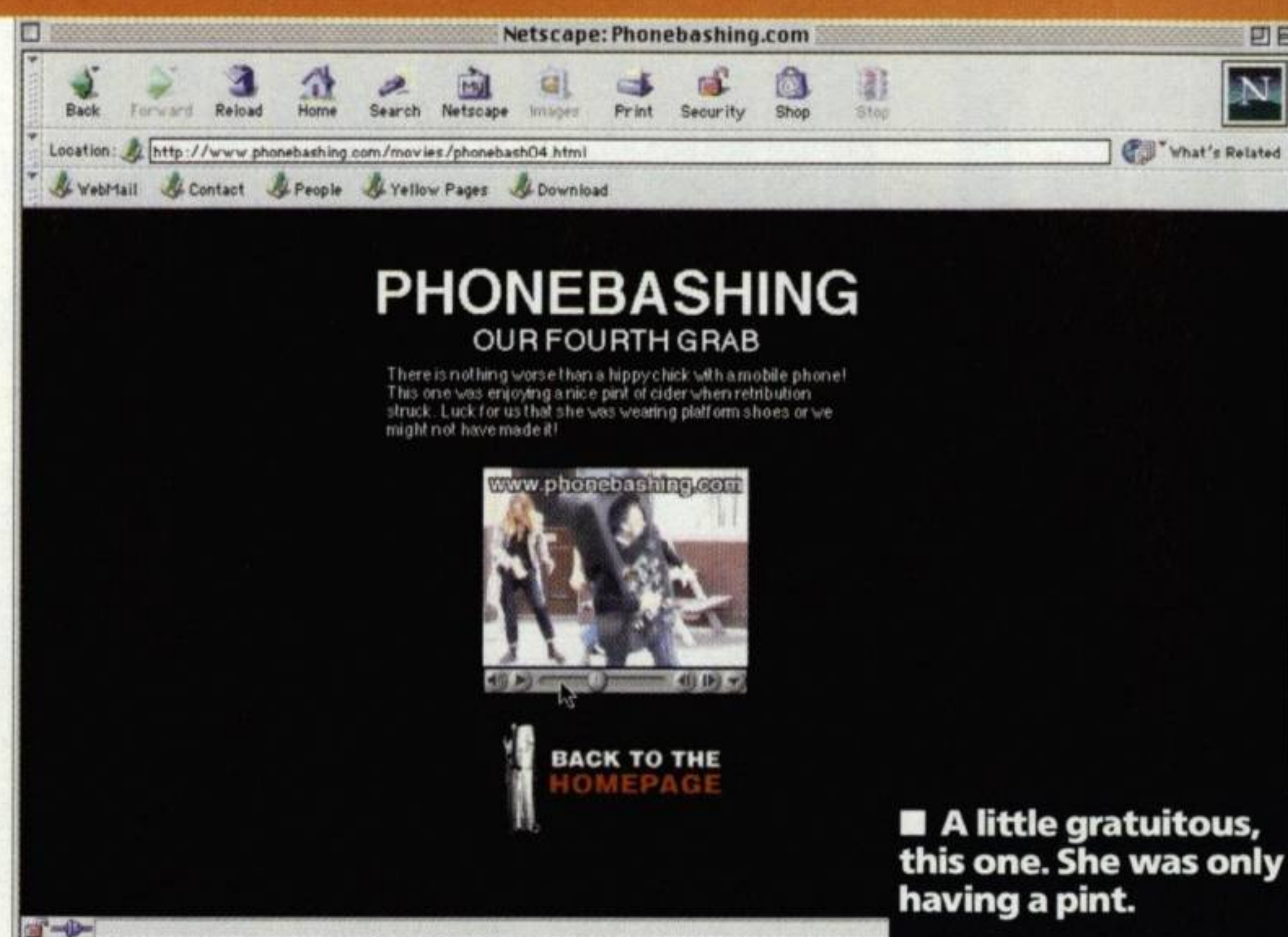
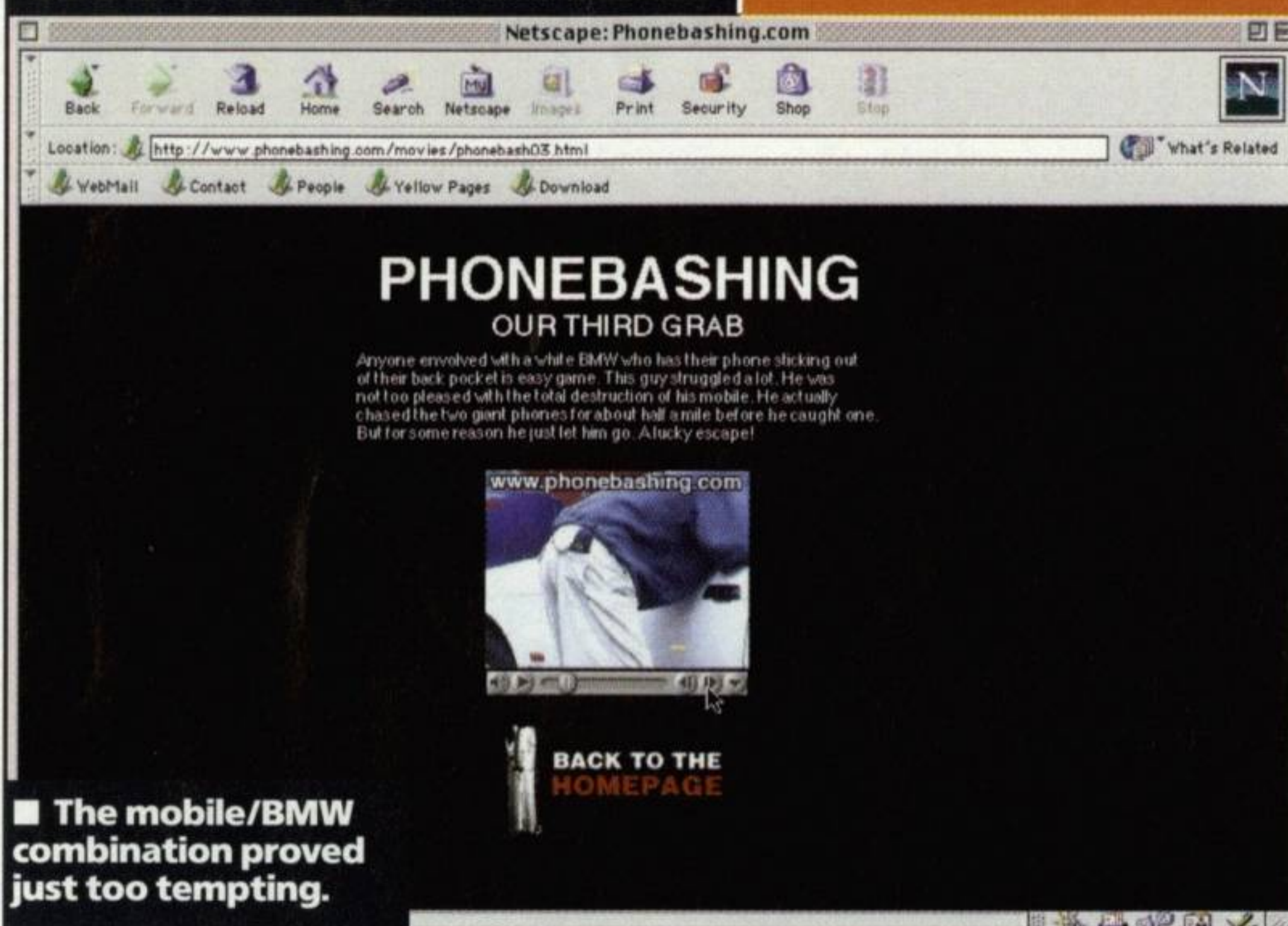
If you're on a tight budget, the Vtech Helio offers most of the features of the Palm series in a cut-down format, albeit with a larger, 4Mb, memory. It's available in a host of metallic, translucent and solid colours, so you should be able to find a finish to suit your tastes, however discerning.

It looks a little cheap in comparison to some of the other models, and although it comes in some £40 cheaper there's little excuse for this. The only real difference between this assistant and the Palm IIIe is the addition of a voice note recorder so you can record up to 55 minutes of dictation.

The 168g Helio uses the VT-OS operating system, which makes transferring its stored information onto a PC more difficult than with the other models, and as it has no infra-red port the only way to get e-mail connectivity is via the serial port. If you want a cheap and cheerful organiser with a few extras, the Helio is ideal. Ask it to do much more than that and it starts to look out of its depth. ★★★



Mobile madness



CROSS LINES

Fed up with that bloke on the train shouting into his phone? In that case, get dressed up like a mobile and take some action of the direct variety.

This, it sometimes seems, is the Age of the Mobile. Everyone has, or is getting, a mobile phone. From eight-year-old kids to 80-year-old grannies they're all out there: on the streets, in cars, trains, restaurants and parks. And they're oblivious to the fact that other people don't always want to hear their conversations.

But while more and more people are getting connected there are those who refuse to. For some this has become a mission and the spread of mobile the sign that the world is coming apart at the seams (or maybe they just think people with mobiles tend to be rude, arrogant and loud). Take, for example, Channel Four's *Trigger Happy TV*. The funniest part of that show was Dom Jolly wandering around with a one-foot mobile stuck to his ear shouting into it, paying no heed to those around him: "Yes, yes, I'm in the park now, just walking through it."

Satire, though, is not always enough. At least for some. No, the battle to rid the world of mobile has begun. A small band of neo-Luddites has begun to bite back with direct action. And, somewhat ironically, they've set up a Web site to tell the world about it.

Phonebashing.com isn't just a manifesto against the mobile. It's a graphic illustration of direct action at work, and you can watch. The group's guerrilla-style tactics

involve dressing up as six-foot mobile phones (in, apparently, stolen costumes), looking for annoying people using their mobiles, taking them from them, smashing their phones before their unbelieving eyes and taking to their heels before being beaten up.

The phonebashing.com Web site has six incidents for you to watch. In one a woman can be seen chatting on her mobile as she is having a hair cut. Taking exception to this the pair rush into the shop, grab the mobile from her and run out. The woman is too shocked to react but a male stylist gives chase, nearly grabbing one of the attackers as he squashes the mobile under his foot. This type of situation is repeated time and time again, mainly in opportune attacks on the street. In the best a man leans into the window of a BMW, mobile in his back pocket. The pair rush up to him, one pinning him in the car while the other takes the phone, runs into the street, takes an almighty jump and smashes it on the road. The man has now escaped the clutches of the first giant phone and chases after them as they make their escape.

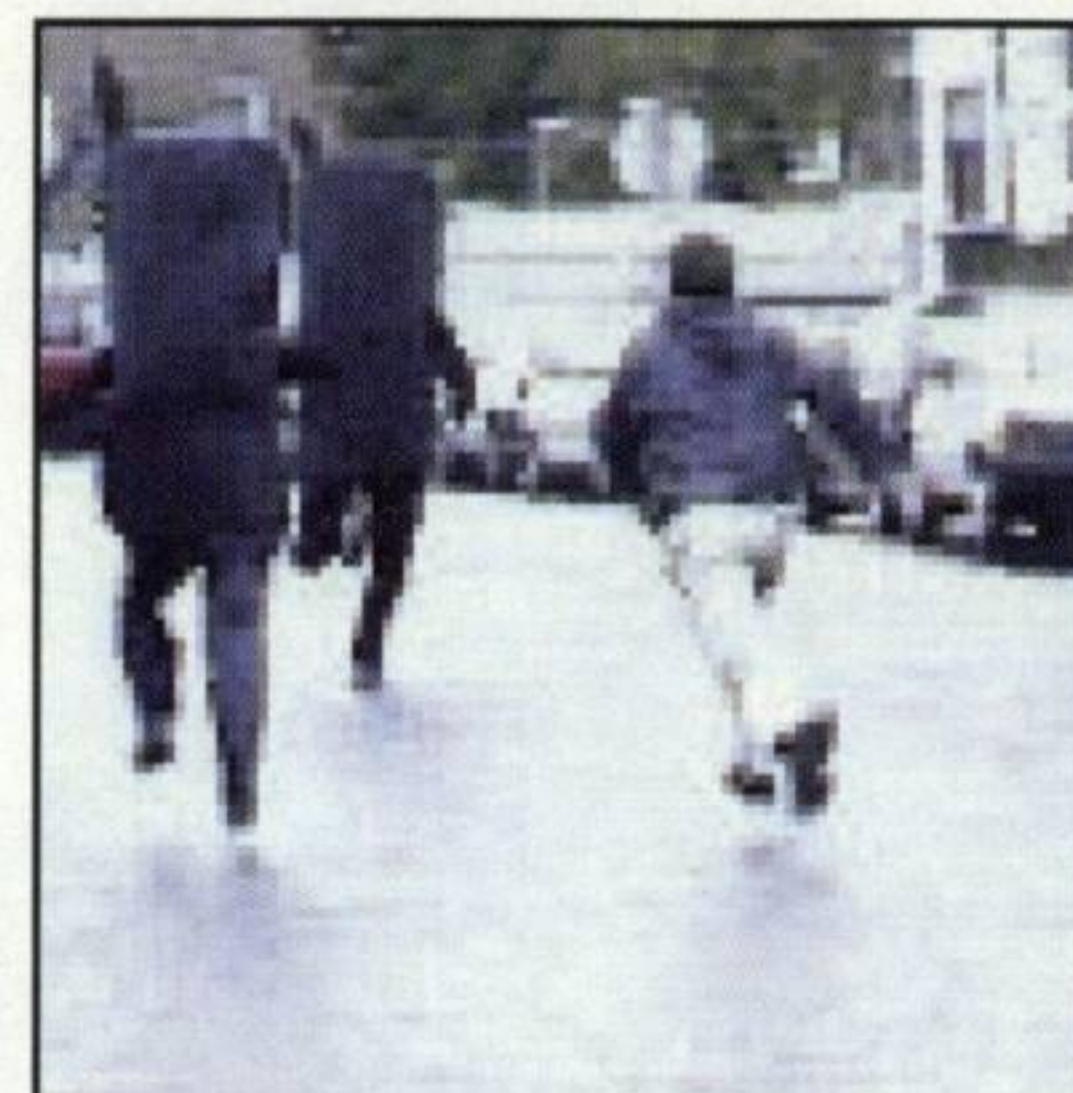
Now, it has occurred to *Arcade* that these attacks may be staged. The footage does conveniently fade out during the chase. But they're so funny, and, if faked, so well done, that it doesn't matter. Now, call all your friends and tell them about it.



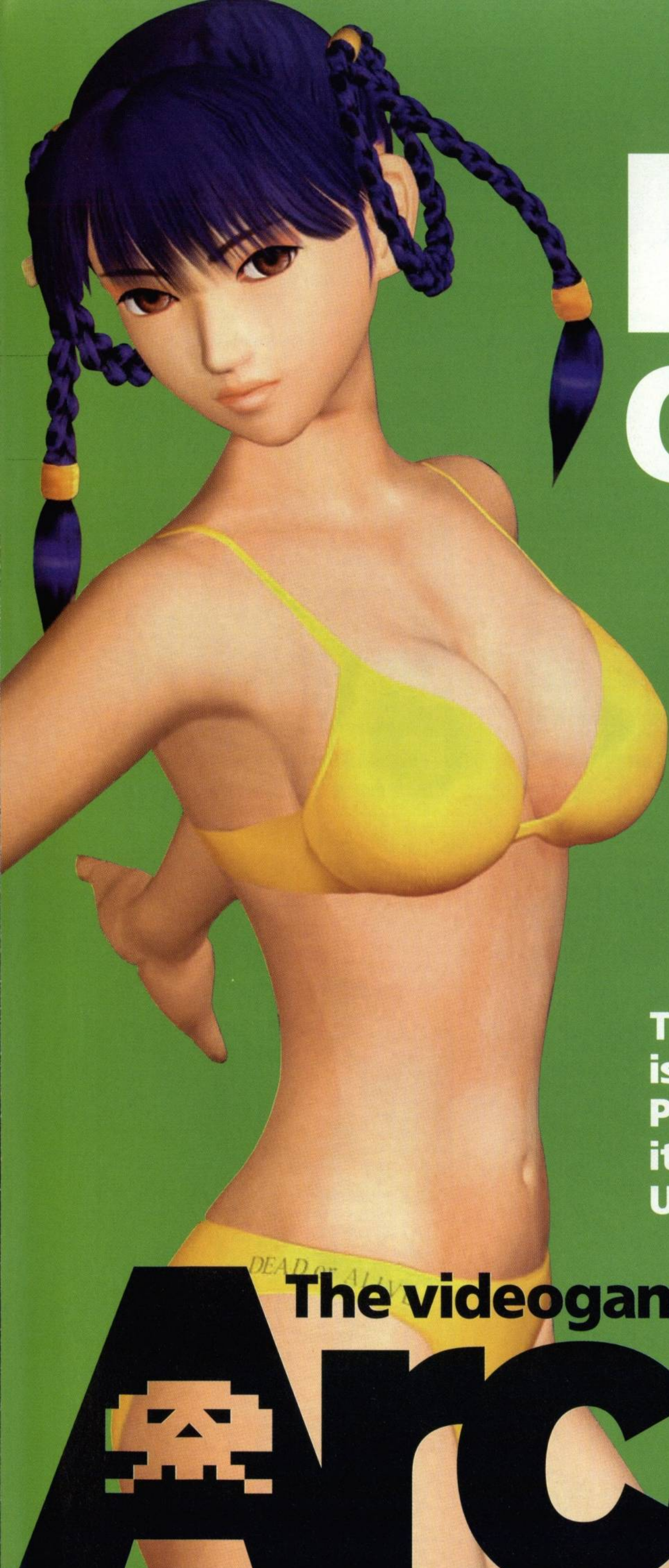
■ You'd think you were seeing things, wouldn't you. That's cider for you.



■ Now, that's what you call mobile. The sense of excitement is palpable.



■ Even if you caught them, what would you do with a 6' phone?



Next month

DEAD OR ALIVE

2

The world's bounciest beat-'em-up is set to spring onto Dreamcast and PlayStation2. Next issue Arcade gets its hands on the first copies in the UK and delivers the definitive verdict.

The videogame magazine



Arcade

Plus! Perfect Dark and Tekken Tag reviewed!

ALSO: COLIN MCRAE 2, ECCO THE DOLPHIN, KESSEN, DAIKATANA, MARIO PARTY 2, CHU CHU ROCKET AND EURO 2000!

Arcade 20 on sale Tuesday 23 May

Contents subject to change

May | 2000 | **Arcade** | 105

Arcade

Back issues

Doctors, dentists and barbers the country over understand the value of a good back issue. Given all they do for you it would be churlish to think you know better, wouldn't it?

Issue 13 December



■ *Tomb Raider 4* reviewed, war sims get real and PlayStation2 is revealed in all its glory.

Issue 14 Xmas



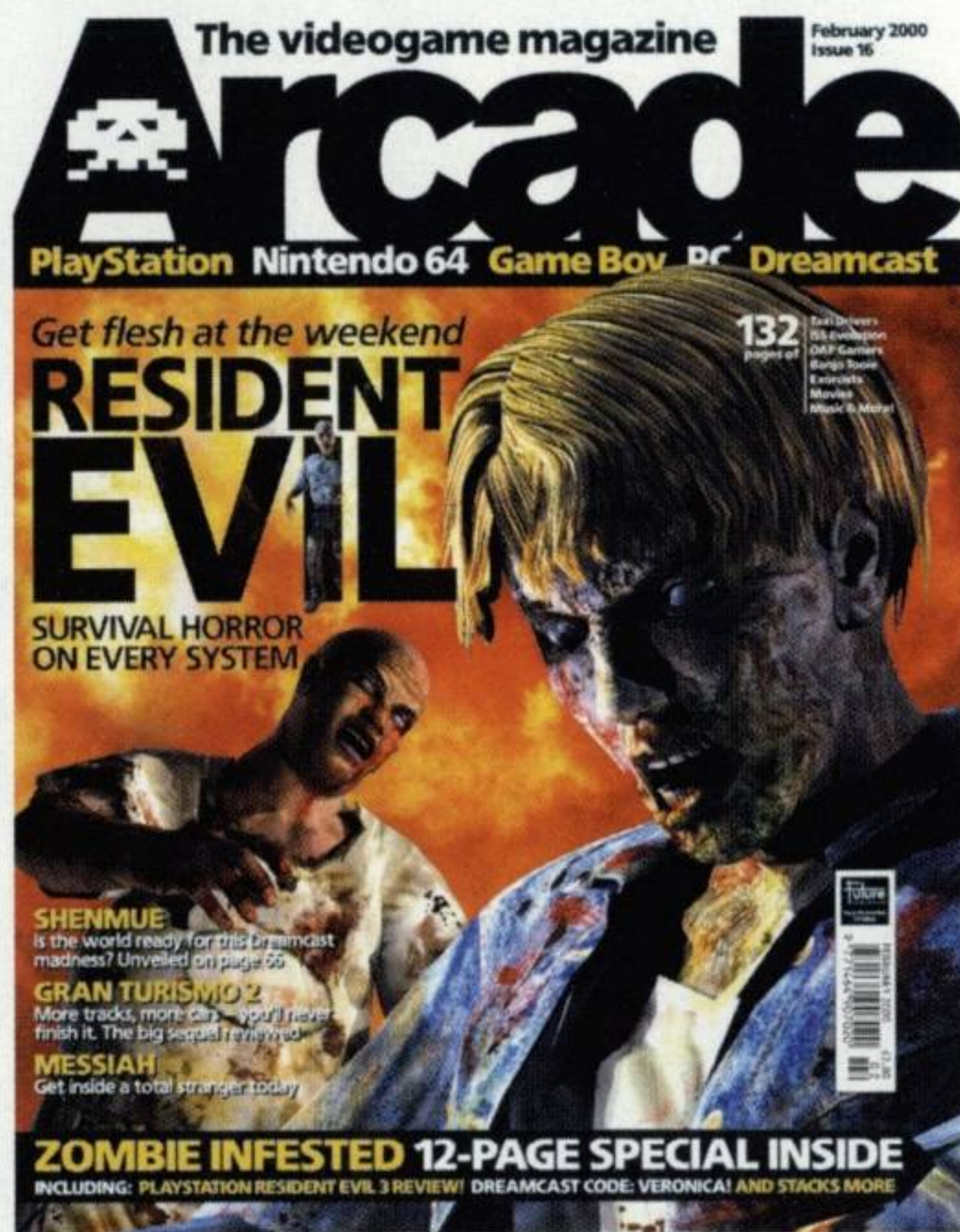
■ *Soul Calibur* sorted, Swiss Toni talks totty, Santa spills his sack and the gorilla returns.

Issue 15 January



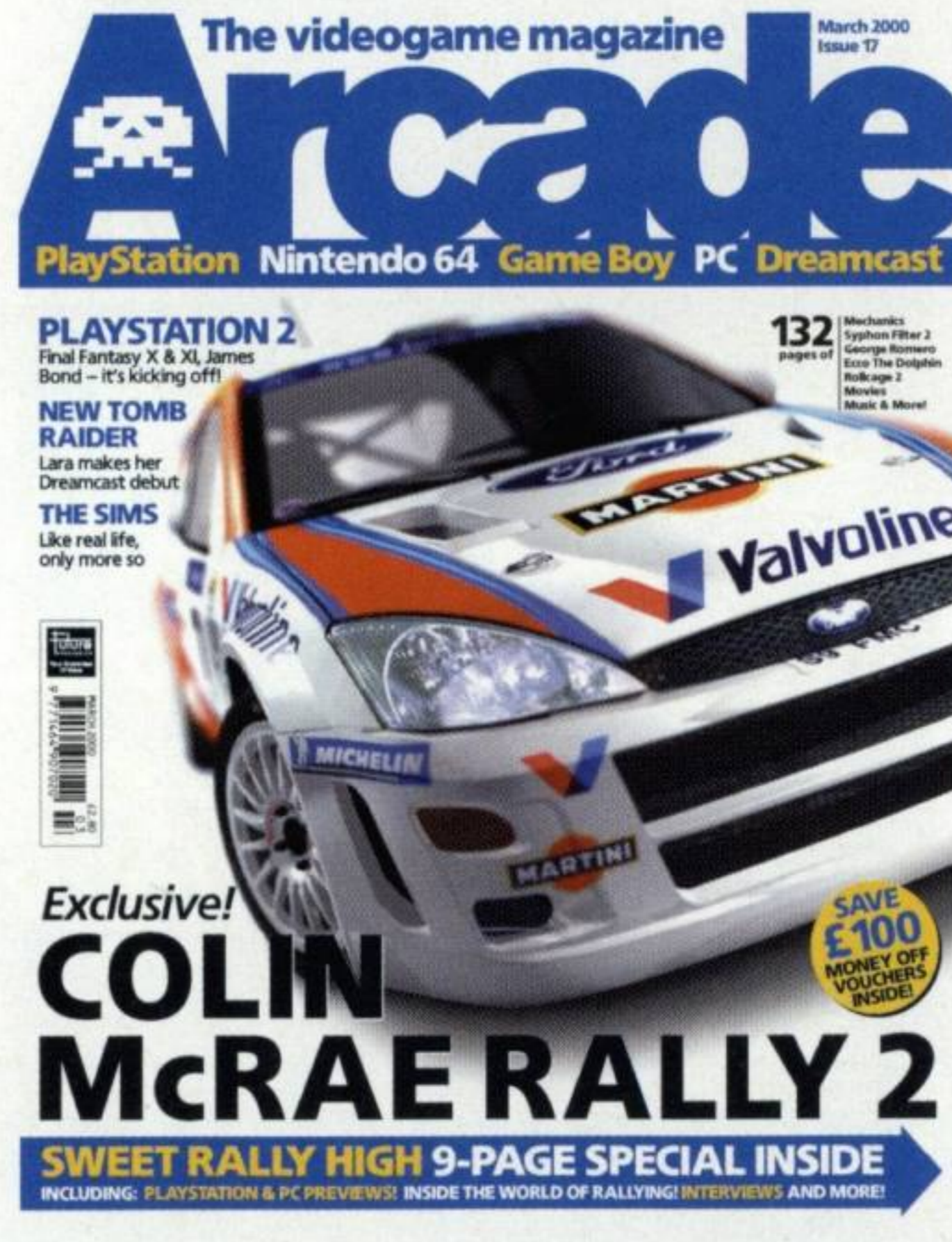
■ The biggest games of 2000, England in Euro 2000 and a videogaming trip to The Big Apple.

Issue 16 February



■ *Arcade* looks at survival horror games, talks to an exorcist and has a shuffy at *Shenmue*.

Issue 17 March



■ Exclusive *Colin McRae Rally 2* preview, racing with the car mechanics and Dreamcast Lara.

Issue 18 April



■ Exclusive details of *The World Is Not Enough*, PlayStation2 festival and the future of handhelds.

A Back issues

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THE PLAYSTATION MAG



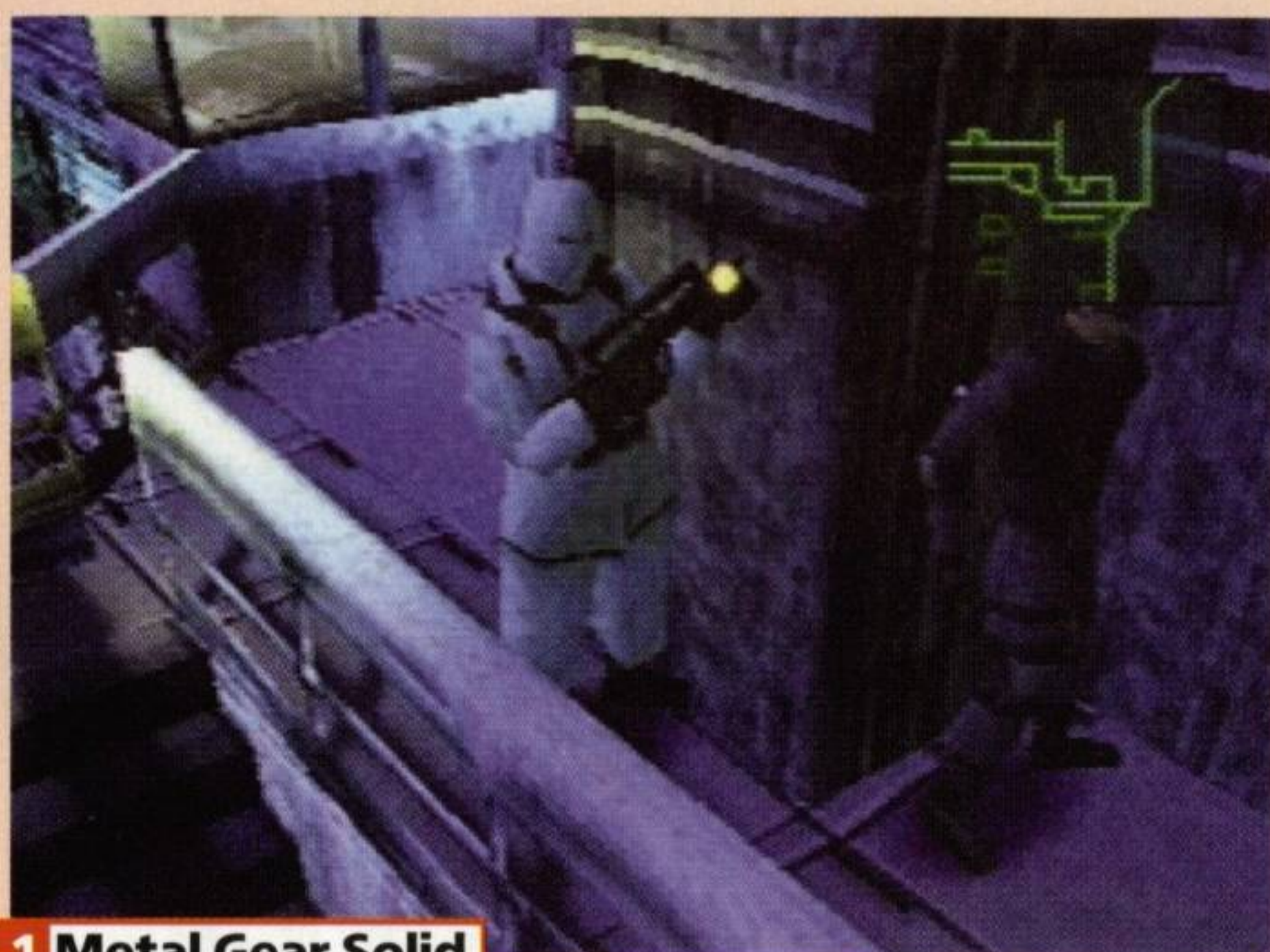
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The A-List

Arcade's Top 20 PlayStation games

■ A prime selection of PlayStation cuts ripe for the games butcher.

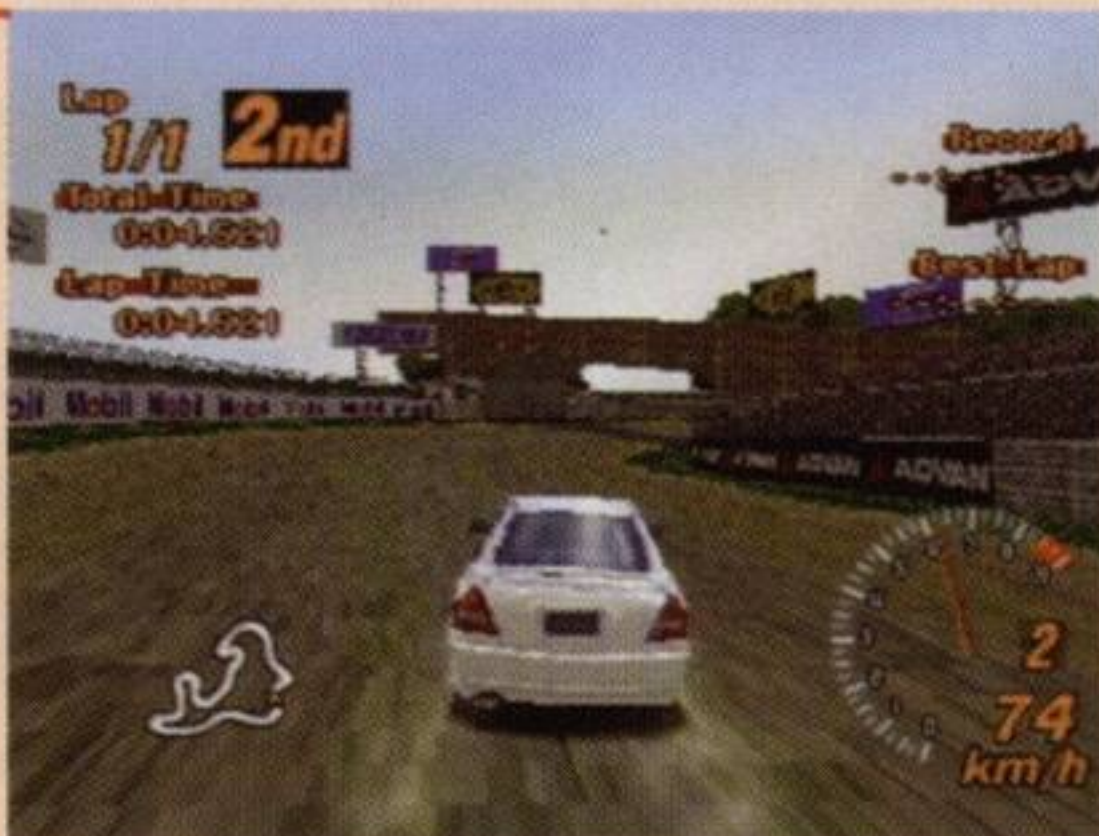


1 Metal Gear Solid

■ Sneaker ■ Konami ■ £40
Infiltrate a shadowy enemy installation *Metal Gear Solid* is brilliant – sneak around and avoid detection rather than blasting everything in sight. Despite the end-screen coming around after only a few hours, you'll adore every single minute of play. ★★★★★

2 Gran Turismo 2

■ Racer ■ Sony ■ £35
Get your motor running With nearly a thousand different cars, tons of tracks plus the chance to retune and upgrade your vehicle, this is the most comprehensive driving sim since the last *Gran Turismo*. It's starting to look a little rusty in places, but if you love to race, you have to own this game. ★★★★★



3 ISS Pro Evolution

■ Sports ■ Konami ■ £35
The best football game in the world *Evolution* lacks the trendy music and official licence of other titles, but it's still the most breathtakingly realistic footie game ever made. Wondrous graphics, amazing depth and compelling gameplay – football has come home to the PlayStation. ★★★★★



4 Tekken 3

■ Fighter ■ Namco ■ £20
Adept slapping Major improvement to the earlier versions in almost every way: graphically flawless and the new moves add something for both newcomers and veterans alike. A wide variety of sub-games, bonuses and hidden characters, as well as a frightening difficulty level, means there's so much to do that it's almost the *Mario* of fighting games. But without the cute stuff, obviously. ★★★★★



5 Quake 2

■ Shooter ■ Activision ■ £40
Magnificently violent first-person shooter A PlayStation conversion of id's classic shouldn't have been possible, but Hammerhead has pulled it off – big style. The one player game is immersing and scary while the multi-player options are unsurpassed. Gaming heaven in hell. ★★★★★



6 Tomb Raider

■ Action Adventure ■ Eidos ■ £20
Baps entertainment The original and, now that it's a Platinum-tastic £20, still the best of Lara's tomb ransacking antics. The second outing didn't add enough to the franchise, the third game smelt slightly of a rush job and the fourth, while ace, is just too damn pricey compared to this. Lovely. ★★★★★



7 Resident Evil 3

■ Horror Adventure ■ Eidos ■ £35
Splatter undead assailants This part-prequel, part-sequel to *Resident Evil 2* sees feisty survivor Jill Valentine taking on the zombie hordes and avoiding the frightening Nemesis. More brilliant level design, challenging bosses, fantastic scenery and buckets of blood 'n' gore. ★★★★★



8 Driver

■ Racer ■ GT Interactive ■ £40
Stunning-looking '70s car-chase sim Rocket through real American cities, evading the Filth and causing upset for pedestrians. The missions don't vary much, but as a driving "toy", *Driver's* unbeaten. Smashing through piles of boxes is thrilling, and the replay editor makes for added fun. ★★★★★



9 Wipeout 3

■ Racer ■ Psygnosis ■ £35
The future of racing As if the year 2097 wasn't far enough in the future, the Psygnosis boys have set this one in 2116. Every element has been improved and rather than attempt to reinvent the wheel/hover device, the inspiration here is a refreshingly playable back-to-basics approach. ★★★★★



10 Final Fantasy 8

■ RPG ■ SONY ■ £35
Latest and best instalment of Square's epic RPG series A finely crafted sci-fi story with brilliantly detailed characters, involved gameplay and utterly astounding cut scenes that make *Toy Story* look like *South Park*. Bid fond farewell to your free time. ★★★★★



11 Silent Hill

■ Horror Adventure ■ Konami ■ £40
Chillingly atmospheric scare-'em-up A seamless *Resident Evil* clone. Grimy, decrepit, littered with hanging corpses and depressing enough to make you string up a noose – all in splendiferous 3D. Only flawed by a few too many illogical puzzles. ★★★★★



12 Ridge Racer 4

■ Racer ■ Namco ■ £35
Super-fast racing Thrills come from the breathtaking speed at which the eight gorgeous tracks rush past and the brilliance of the two-player mode. Master the powerslide and you'll unlock 320 unique cars. If you're after realism, though, *Gran Turismo* is for you. ★★★★★



13 MicroMachines V3

■ Racer ■ Codemasters ■ £20
Tiny cars race around your living room The old top-down 2D game souped-up into pseudo-3D, and it's a beauty. There are 30 innovative courses, based on kitchen tables and school desks, coupled with a perfect overhead camera, plenty of amusingly behaved vehicles and a multi-player game that's ace. ★★★★★



14 Ape Escape

■ Platformer ■ SONY ■ £35
Satisfying simian search Catching panicky monkeys with nets refreshes the platforming genre, while the coin collecting sub-quest and bonus games ramp up replayability. The true 3D world looks lovely, the controls are perfect and it's fun and challenging too. ★★★★★



15 LMA Manager

■ Sport ■ Codemasters ■ £40
Finely-tuned footballing excellence Finally, a football manager game on a console that's worth its weight in balls. A great interface, nifty transfer system and the real names of the players create a cracking management sim that even Ruud Gullit could master. Premier League stuff. ★★★★★



16 Colin McRae Rally

■ Racer ■ Codemasters ■ £20
Life-like rural driving sim A departure from the usual racing game, as your rally car rattles around countryside tracks with time and damage your only opponents. The variety of terrain and responsive controls give real driving feedback. And it's a bloody bargain at £20. ★★★★★



17 Fear Effect

■ Action Adventure ■ Eidos ■ £30
Stylish, mould-breaking adventure. There are episodes in *Fear Effect* where you really feel like you're playing the most important videogame of recent times. Wonderful graphics and ingenious puzzles, slightly spoilt by quirky controls and long loading times. ★★★★★



18 Syphon Filter 2

■ Action Adventure ■ Sony ■ £30
A deadly virus has never been so enjoyable. Gabe is back in a sequel with more sneaking, shooting, bombing and silly running-about-behaviour. Packed with exciting challenges and unreconstructed gunplay, *Syphon Filter* is a good game but just falls short of being an all-time classic. ★★★★★



19 Anna Kournikova Tennis

■ Sports ■ SONY ■ £35
Quirky racket-play Cute polygonal pros battle it out in a game that's a little more serious than previous *Smash Court Tennis* titles. Sublime controls and an addictive multi-player feature. In fact, this is by far the best tennis game you can buy – so there. ★★★★★



20 Crash Team Racing

■ Racer ■ SONY ■ £35
Marvellous Mario Kart clone Four-player racing insanity with the appropriately-named Crash and friends. Crazy cars, power ups and heaps of courses make this a fun, if derivative, racer. ★★★★★



TOP 5 PLAYSTATION GAMES TO IMPROVE YOUR FITNESS



- Int'l Track & Field 2**
 Konami
 Exercise those fat fingers with some vicious pummelling.
- Parappa the Rapper**
 Sony
 Kick, kick, punch and see those pounds fall off.
- ISS Pro Evolution**
 Konami
 Top-drawer footie training.
- Alien Trilogy**
 Acclaim
 Run away very quickly.
- Resident Evil 3**
 Capcom
 Lose weight through severe sweating and frequent visits to the toilet.

Once upon a time there was a videogames player who took his mother's cow to market. Unfortunately he swapped the animal for *Superman* on the N64. Now he's dead. Don't make the same mistake – check *Arcade's A-list*.



Arcade's Top 20 PC games



1 Half-Life

■ Shooter ■ Sierra ■ £35

Stunningly atmospheric first-person shooter Built with a truly terrifyingly believable environment and logic puzzles, and incorporating mind-bogglingly intelligent bad guys and a decent amount of gorgeous all-out alien-blasting. ★★★★★

2 Quake 3 Arena

■ Shooter ■ Activision ■ £45

Id perfects the first-person blaster. The eagerly awaited third instalment of the now legendary franchise has loaded up with missiles, gritted its teeth and blasted onto the PC in a shower of bloody entrails and splintered bone. *Quake 3* plunges you into an atmospheric, brutal world that creates moments of genuine fear and excitement. Astounding. ★★★★★



3 Unreal Tournament

■ Shooter ■ GT Interactive ■ £40

A pre-Quake deathmatch revolution Gorgeous, quick, frantic, brilliant. Tremendous AI bots, plenty of big guns, loads of options – everything. But be warned, a hefty PC is required to do this masterpiece any kind of justice at all. ★★★★★



4 Grim Fandango

■ Adventure ■ LucasArts ■ £35

You look like Death warmed up The style, presentation and content of this odd, amusing adventure leave it towering above everything else. The puzzles are obscure, but you'll forgive it, thanks to neat touches, absorbing plot and downright loveliness. ★★★★★



5 Tiberian Sun

■ Strategy ■ EA ■ £40

Engrossing and imaginative strategy game Just like its predecessors, *Command & Conquer* and *Red Alert*, the emphasis in *Tiberian Sun* is on total warfare. You're constantly teetering on the brink of disaster – make the wrong strategic choices and your army will get its arse kicked, but plan well and victory will be yours... eventually. ★★★★★



6 TOCA 2

■ Racer ■ Codemasters ■ £35

Heavily realistic revs Even with 15 cars jostling for position in front of you, *TOCA 2 Touring Cars* always looks stunning. The realistic handling makes free-wheeling over the varied courses a pleasure, and the added support races supply extra value-for-money. ★★★★★



7 Championship Manager 99/00

■ Sports ■ Eidos ■ £25

Out-coach Keegan Guide lowly teams to the top of the football tree in one of the most absorbing games ever made for the PC. A wealth of footballing stats put *Championship Manager* in a league of its own. Gooaaa! ★★★★★



8 System Shock 2

■ Action/RPG ■ EA ■ £35

Stomach-somersaulting horror. Your character awakes stranded on a deep space starship, with no memory, your entire crew butchered and weird cybernetics grafted onto your body. Difficult, but atmospheric, scary and original. ★★★★★



9 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation

■ Action Adventure ■ Eidos ■ £40

Four-play with Lara Latest in the incredibly successful franchise sees our heroine take on all manner of nasties in ancient Egypt. Won't stretch your hardware but has oodles of gameplay and puzzles galore. ★★★★★



10 Dungeon Keeper 2

■ Strategy ■ EA ■ £35

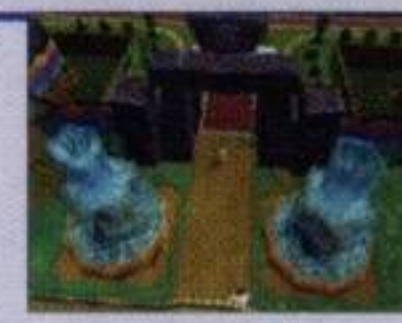
Prepare to unleash the beast within This strategy masterpiece bubbles and seethes with a pitch-black humorous atmosphere. And it's non-repetitive! If you're going to open one intellectual bottle this year, *Dungeon Keeper 2* is the one to savour. ★★★★★



11 Theme Park World

■ Strategy ■ EA ■ £30

All the fun of the fair A fantastic sequel to the popular *Theme Park*, with an easy-to-use interface and superb 3D views of all the rollercoasters and attractions. Worth the price of admission. ★★★★★



12 Thief 2

■ Action Adventure ■ Eidos ■ £35

Atmospheric, first-person adventure with a gripping plot. In *Thief 2*, Looking Glass has produced a stealthy sequel that exceeds its predecessor in every way. Beautifully designed missions mix with authentic interiors to create a game that's immensely rewarding and great fun. ★★★★★



13 Midtown Madness

■ Racer ■ Microsoft ■ £35

Fender-bending racer with terrific traffic You can't run people over but this incredibly realistic driving game has great challenges, amazing graphical detail and cars, cars, cars. Crash some vehicles and enjoy a little bit of a road-rage frenzy. ★★★★★



14 Final Fantasy 8

■ RPG ■ Eidos ■ £30

Lip-smacking conversion of the PlayStation title. No less than five CDs contain this sprawling and ambitious RPG. It's a game you'll need to work at, but it'll reward your efforts many times over with a twist-riddled storyline and glorious cinematic sequences. ★★★★★



15 Messiah

■ Shooter/Puzzler ■ Interplay ■ £40

An adventure of Biblical proportions Hugely enjoyable and funny game where you take on the role of a cherub called Bob, whose mission is to save mankind from evil. The chubby avenger solves puzzles and defeats sinners by possessing characters he encounters. Twisted. ★★★★★



16 GTA2

■ Action ■ Rockstar games ■ £40

Carjacking, gun-toting sequel of the controversial action game Be a mean mutha in this inner-city joyriding extravaganza where crime does pay. Wonderful dark humour, great car handling, funky music and plenty of invention. A worthy update of a classic title. ★★★★★



17 Homeworld

■ Strategy/Shoot-'em-up ■ Sierra ■ £35

Compelling space combat and management game Takes the best elements of real-time strategy games and shoot-'em-ups, with jaw-dropping space battles, spooky music and scary baddies. One of the defining PC games of '99. ★★★★★



18 Curse of Monkey Island

■ Adventure ■ LucasArts ■ £40

Fantastic point-and-click adventure Genuinely amusing and with clever puzzles, *The Curse of Monkey Island* scores well for its controls, which make exploring and examining as easy as possible. Great to look at and listen to, if a tad frustrating and illogical. ★★★★★



19 Alien Vs Predator

■ Shoot-'em-up ■ EA ■ £40

She's a bitch, he's invisible and they're expendable So much more than a *Quake* clone. Atmospheric, gorgeous, truly frightening, bloody hard. Play as a marine and your motion tracker will beep in constant panic – worth the asking price alone. ★★★★★



20 Kingpin

■ Shoot-'em-up ■ Interplay ■ £30

Pop a cap in your momma's ass, bitch An ultra-violent, ultra-sweary, retro-futuristic gangster romp. In fact it's funting great, you cusk! Single-player is totally immersive and you feel proud to finally be playing a proper "grown-up" game which, in fact, is utterly childish. ★★★★★



■ **Arcade's X-Box charts will make an appearance in late 2001. Grroovy.**

TOP 5 PC GAMES WITH CELEBRITY TIE-INS



- Colin McRae Rally 2**
Codemasters
Enjoy a drive through the country with someone shouting in your ear.
- Brian Lara Cricket**
Codemasters
Cricket's just the perfect action-packed sport, huh?
- Tiger Woods 2000**
EA Sports
Look smart in your tartan shorts and Pringle jumper.
- Jimmy White's Cueball 2**
Virgin Interactive
Join the Whirlwind in a drinking/snooker session.
- Jeff Wayne's WOTW**
GT Interactive
The chances of enjoying this game are a million to one.

The A-list

Arcade's Top 20 Nintendo 64 games

■ **Lucky Japanese gamers may get their Dolphin later this year. The rest of you can check out this top Nintendo 64 selection.**



1 The Legend of Zelda

Best game in the world and that's a fact Traditional *Zelda* hallmarks wrapped up in a beautifully realised 3D world. The wandering about, talking, fighting and cut-scenes have been fine-tuned until they're perfect. Worthy of all the hype thanks entirely to the sheer genius of Shigeru Miyamoto. Maybe Sony should poach him. ★★★★★

2 Super Mario 64

■ **Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £30**
The king of 3D platformers
A masterpiece, with huge levels, sublime controls and immersive gameplay. The game that invented a genre. As with all Miyamoto games, it slowly sucks you in and refuses to let go, and its full-on 3D graphics still impress. ★★★★★



3 GoldenEye

■ **Shooter ■ Nintendo ■ £30**
Stealthy first-person shooter
A believable and immersive 3D world, with 20 challenging missions taking you from gorgeous snow-covered wasteland to grubby men's toilets. One of the best multi-players that money can buy, too. Which is nice. ★★★★★



4 Mario Kart 64

■ **Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £30**
Cute characters go to the races
The original comedy racer returns. The single-player game is a lonely experience, but the time trial adds longevity and the multi-player game is arguably the greatest on any platform. So addictive it could be classed as a legal drug. ★★★★★



5 Donkey Kong 64

■ **Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £60**
Monkey magic DK and a family of wacky simians return in a huge cartoon adventure. The price of the game is hiked due to the inclusion of an Expansion Pak, but the exquisite platforming, enjoyable multi-player and wealth of hidden secrets make it an essential purchase. ★★★★★



6 Jet Force Gemini

■ **Shoot-'em up ■ Rare ■ £40**
Twin trouble Rare finally returns with a fantastic 3D shoot-'em up that's big, bally and heart-thumpingly exciting. A great soundtrack and some of the best visuals on the N64 make it an instant classic. ★★★★★



7 Shadowman

■ **Shooter ■ Acclaim ■ £40**
Chock full of serial killers and all manner of dark grisliness A tidy, atmospheric next generation *Quake* with a decent plot and lashings of voodoo spookiness. Incredibly big, intelligent, rewarding, challenging and thoroughly deserving of your time. Classic stuff indeed. ★★★★★



8 Turok 2

■ **Shooter ■ Acclaim ■ £40**
Dino hunting This looks stunning, and the game itself is helped by impossibly large guns and an end to the precision jumping nonsense that marred the original. The tasks may appear familiar if you're a *Doom* fan, though, and it's occasionally too difficult. ★★★★★



9 F1 World Grand Prix 2

■ **Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40**
Eddie Irvine simulator Looking as good as real-life, with all the real cars, drivers, stats and other nonsense. Whether you're an arcade racer or a true F1 fan, there's something here for you, with a two-player option to round it all off nicely. ★★★★★



10 ISS '98

■ **Sports ■ Konami ■ £40**
Tremendous goal-fest The N64's best football sim and arguably the best on any system. Oh-so-intuitive controls, silky smooth animation and very nearly as addictive in multi-player as the mighty *Mario Kart*. You will lose months of your life. ★★★★★



11 1080° Snowboarding

■ **Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40**
Snow-based racing A brilliant range of modes, plenty of tricks, and loads of boards and courses for you to have a crack at. You get beautiful controls, brilliant replays and challenging racing. A gorgeous, technically superb, super quick experience. ★★★★★



12 Banjo Kazooie

■ **Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £40**
Bizarre bear-bird crossover Beautiful levels that beg you to explore, a genuine challenge with plenty of variety, and the first Rare game not to feature an eye-wincing amount of cute. Almost knocks Mario from his perch. Praise indeed. ★★★★★



13 Lylat Wars

■ **Shooter ■ Nintendo ■ £30**
On-rails 3D space blast Loosely based on *Starwing* on the SNES, and intended to be an immersive, movie-like experience, with cut-scenes that ape films like *Independence Day*. It's too easy, but it's still addictive, well-crafted and frantic. Pure blasting action. ★★★★★



14 Pilotwings 64

■ **Flyer ■ Nintendo ■ £30**
Fly about a bit and cry at the difficulty of it all Along with *Mario 64*, this is the game that launched the N64. It boasts beautiful, realistic scenery and some of the hardest tasks this side of Mensa. Basically, it's a truly unique flying experience. ★★★★★



15 Quake 2

■ **Shooter ■ Activision ■ £50**
Travel to Stroggos, massacre its people Non-stop action, plenty of secrets and a more than worthy sequel. Unfortunately the single-player lifespan is poor. But, in deathmatch terms, *GoldenEye* may have the brains, but *Quake 2* has the brawn. ★★★★★



16 Ridge Racer 64

■ **Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40**
Faithful conversion of the racing classic. It's taken four years, but the N64 is finally catching up with driving games on PlayStation. Lovely looking, silky controls and a stonking four-player option. It's not *Gran Turismo* but it's still a damned fine game. ★★★★★



17 Wave Race 64

■ **Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £30**
How jet-ski games should be done Water-based frolics that are second to none, even compared to coin-op titles at a thousand times the price. The tracks are beautiful, and the controls are as responsive and intuitive as you'd expect from Nintendo. ★★★★★



18 Resident Evil 2

■ **Horror Adventure ■ Virgin Interactive ■ £50**
Fresh flesh-filching Although a little late, has lost nothing of its gruesome appeal in the transition to N64 and is one of the scariest games ever committed to a console. Classic zombie-shooting action. ★★★★★



19 Rocket: Robot On Wheels

■ **Platformer ■ UbiSoft ■ £40**
Robot wars Developer Sucker Punch proves that not only Rare and Nintendo can create top-drawer platformers. Fabulous graphics and levels crammed full of sub-games and quests, *Rocket* is a breath of fresh air. ★★★★★



20 Star Wars Episode 1: Racer

■ **Racer ■ Nintendo ■ £40**
Force-based pod racing Great scenery, cool racing craft and, most importantly, speed. And a *Star Wars* licence, of course. The option to upgrade the pod is cool, and the similarity to *Wipeout* isn't a bad thing. No weapons, though, and too short. ★★★★★



TOP 5 NINTENDO 64 GAMES TO PLAY IF YOU WANT TO BE A VAMPIRE



- 1 Castlevania**
Konami
Vampires don't live in a semi in Leeds. Go Medieval.
- 2 Killer Instinct**
Nintendo
Essential for a bloody feast.
- 3 Shadowman**
Acclaim
The undead don't cast shadows. No amusing hand puppet impressions then.
- 4 Pilotwings 64**
Nintendo
Practice your flying bat skills.
- 5 40 Winks**
GT Interactive
Catch some Zs in your coffin.

Arcade's Top 10 Dreamcast games



1 Soul Calibur

■ Beat-'em-up ■ Sega ■ £40

The best fighting game ever Magnificent beat-'em up game, where the participants wield huge metal weapons. Incredibly detailed characters, realistic backgrounds and beautiful lighting effects make this a must-buy for Dreamcast owners. A cut above the rest. ★★★★★

2 Crazy Taxi

■ Racer ■ Sega ■ £40

Visually impressive cabbie-sim An adrenaline-pumping driving game that straps you in the seat of a maniacal American taxi driver. Deliver passengers to their destinations by weaving in and out of traffic, careering through parks and taking hair-raising short-cuts. Fantastic fun. ★★★★★

3 Power Stone

■ Beat-'em-up ■ Capcom ■ £40

The beat-'em-up bar brawl! Welcome to the game where you can throw chairs, vases and tables at your opponent. The aim – quite simply – being to knock the gemstones out of them. Spring around the spaces like a new-born lamb. You looking at me? ★★★★★

4 Ready 2 Rumble

■ Beat-'em-up ■ Sega ■ £40

Funky fighting Gobsmacking arcade-style boxing game with a ringful of hilarious characters and fabulous graphics. Massive fun in two-player mode, this is the true heavyweight champ of console pugilism. A knockout. ★★★★★

5 TrickStyle

■ Racer ■ Acclaim ■ £40

Speedy tricks outside the red light district Welcome to the place where your *Back To The Future 2* dreams become reality, and play as a racer, a stunter or a bully on the mean streets of the 23rd century. A *Wipeout* wannabe that hits the spot. ★★★★★

6 Sonic Adventure

■ 3D platformer ■ Sega ■ £40

Hedgehog heaven on Sega's new platform Steer spanky new Sonic around a wonderful new world, meeting up with his old friends Tails the Fox, Knuckles the, um, echidna, and a rather sexy squirrel named Amy. It all makes perfect sense once you get going. ★★★★★

7 Hydro Thunder

■ Racer ■ Midway ■ £40

Splash-happy speedboat stunner Nothing new in the gameplay stakes, but a large collection of speedboats and geographical locations make this an enjoyable ride. Sets a benchmark in terms of presentation and flashy visuals. Lovely. ★★★★★

8 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation

■ Adventure ■ Eidos ■ £40

Lara bounces onto Sega's finest. Plenty of exploration, puzzles galore, mummies, traps and Ms Croft's delectable 128-bit curves. Be warned though: you'll need a lot of patience to endure the awkward control system and lack of polish. ★★★★★

9 Resident Evil 2

■ Horror Adventure ■ Virgin Interactive ■ £40

Survival horror. Spooky, tense atmospheric shooter with a cinematic story. This conversion has better graphics, extra features and bonus games. It's little more than a warm-up for *Code: Veronica*, but a worthwhile purchase for zombie-wasting newcomers. ★★★★★

10 NBA 2K

■ Sports ■ Sega ■ £40

Slam dunkin' action. As a basketball sim, *NBA 2K* has it all with great presentation, amazingly fluid animation, a wealth of options and infallible gameplay. As the best sports game on the Dreamcast, this is one for fans of basketball and novices alike. ★★★★★

■ Sega's Dreamcast now has a top selection of gorgeous games – Go get 'em.

Arcade's Top 10 Game Boy games



1 Zelda DX

■ RPG ■ Nintendo ■ £25

Puzzle-solving with your fave elf An involving plot, beautiful graphics, and a story where the emphasis is on engaging the player in the same way as *Final Fantasy 7*. It's incredibly difficult, with a vast range of interesting challenges. A good one for the beach. ★★★★★

2 Tetris DX

■ Puzzler ■ Nintendo ■ £20

Brick drop return shock! The graphics, sounds and modes might have changed, but this is still the same old *Tetris*, known world-wide as the most addictive version of the Russian puzzler. It's *Tetris!* Quite simply, get it in. ★★★★★

3 Super Mario Bros DX

■ Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £25

Seminal Mario platformer Uncomplicated, hugely enjoyable platform brilliance, transferred to your portable friend after 14 years. Running, jumping and gobbling mushrooms has never been so much fun, and there's a shedfull of extras. ★★★★★

4 David O'Leary's Total Soccer 2000

■ Sports ■ UbiSoft ■ £25

The beautiful game Do the Wembley bounce in celebration – the Game Boy finally has a decent footie game. Intuitive gameplay, great instant replays, a two-player link-up and all the European teams make this a cup winner. Yeeesss! ★★★★★

5 R-Type Delta

■ Shooter ■ Nintendo ■ £25

The daddy of side-scrolling shooters Arcade perfect, if inevitably small, conversions of *R-Type*, *R-Type 2* and a groovy remix of the two all on one irresistible cart. Bloody hard too. ★★★★★

6 Mario Golf

■ Sports ■ Nintendo ■ £25

Pocket putting A compelling cocktail of golf and RPG elements with a bunkerful of game options including a cup-winning Tournament and a Match game where you can take on Mario himself. Great graphics and a superb control system add polish to this mini masterpiece. Grab your wood and tee off. ★★★★★

7 Harvest Moon

■ Strategy ■ GT Interactive ■ £20

Down on the farm Clear your land, till the soil, plant some seeds – there aren't many farming sims out there, but *Harvest Moon* proves that they should be more popular than Lara. The detail is astonishing. There's so much stuff to do. ★★★★★

8 Warioland 2 DX

■ Platformer ■ Nintendo ■ £25

Mazza's arch enemy returns Features a novel "can't die" aspect and insists on you collecting all the coins from each level, creating fist-clenching difficulty in the process. Top quality and fiendishly challenging. ★★★★★

9 Defender/Joust

■ Retro ■ Midway ■ £25

Old coin-ops for your pleasure A double helping of retro arcade fare: a splendid side-scrolling shooter and a rather good fire-button-free flap-'em-up played on ostrich mounts. Oh the joy of holding old coin-ops in your palm. ★★★★★

10 Tomb Raider

■ Platformer ■ Eidos ■ £25

Lara in your hand. A solid 2D platformer with smooth animation, authentic *Tomb Raider* gameplay and impressive hi-res cutscenes. Could've had more variety, but it's an enjoyable game that should see Lara bulging the pockets of excited Game Boy owners. ★★★★★

■ Handheld in black and white – and "color" too.

TOP 5 DREAMCAST GAMES TO AVOID IF HYDROPHOBIC



- 1 Hydro Thunder**
Midway
Enough to frighten anyone with a fear of water.
- 2 Sega Bass Fishing**
Sega
Look away and catch a fish in this boredom-sim.
- 3 Soul Calibur**
Namco
Best to avoid the "hurting along on a raft" level.
- 4 House of the Dead 2**
Sega
Canal-infested zombies pose a damp and nasty threat.
- 5 Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense**
Activision
Conquer your fears and give this a burial at sea.

TOP 5 GAME BOY SPORTS GAMES



- 1 David O'Leary's Total Soccer 2000**
UbiSoft
Premier league football action. Magnificent.
- 2 Mario Golf**
Nintendo
Hack divots around a colourful series of courses.
- 3 Tennis**
Nintendo
An ace title that's almost as old as Bjorn Borg.
- 4 Knockout Kings**
EA
Play as Ali or Lewis in a boxing classic.
- 5 Star Wars: Ep 1 Racer**
LucasArts
Incredibly fast futuristic fun.

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KICK ASS

BECOME A DEMON GAME PLAYER OVERNIGHT

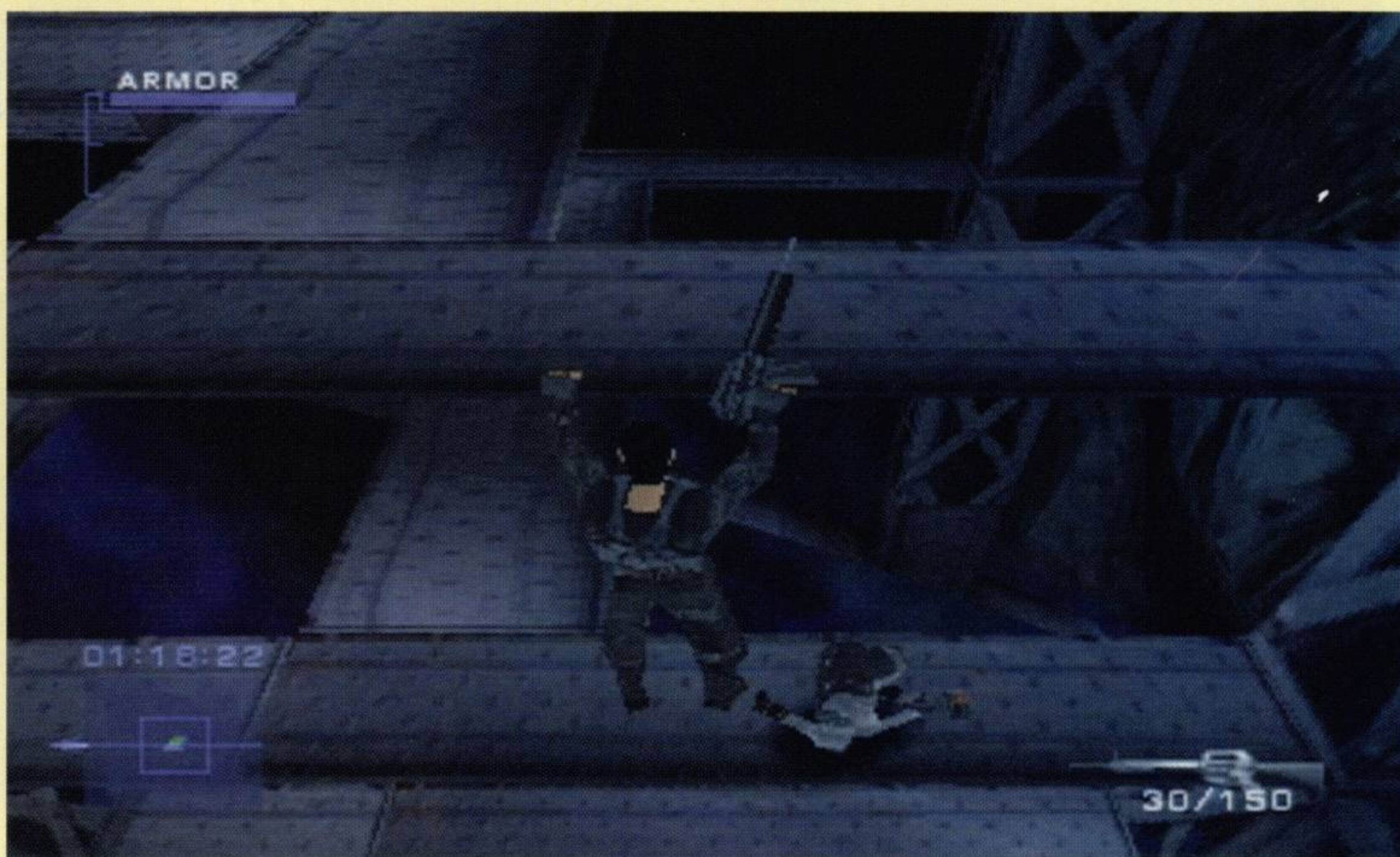
HOW TO MAKE LIKE SPECIAL FORCES IN...

SYPHON FILTER 2

Format: **Playstation** | Publisher: **Sony** | Price: **£30** | Players: **1-2** | ★★★★★

Gabe Logan and Lian Xing have their work cut out. Fingered as terrorists by the secret government agency they work for, they have to recover computer discs holding information on the Syphon Filter – a deadly, genetically-programmable virus. They'll have to shoot, creep and think to make it through, and even then it'll be tough... so let *Arcade* give you some help.

GENERAL TACTICS



■ (Clockwise from top left) Under fire? Roll; Guards aren't that aware; Head shot; Task master.

■ Know what you're doing

Every time you're given a new objective, go to the inventory screen and double check what you have to do. This, along with using the map regularly and checking the weapons you have and what they can do,

makes a world of difference. The last thing you want is to get to the end of a level only to find you have missed out a key objective. Boo.

■ **Don't trust the game**
Just because 101 men have been dropped in your path,

don't think you have to deal with them all before you can progress. Sometimes you can just run past a tricky situation – the snipers at the end of the crash site level, for example – and on to the next challenge. If something is proving impossible, it probably is –

Syphon Filter 2 is more than willing to stitch you up.

■ Keep on rolling

If you're pinned down by sniper fire, run and roll (using \odot). You can still get your skull split with a head shot doing this, but it's less likely than if

you run normally (not that Gabe's hippy gait is exactly normal, but never mind).

■ Over sensitive

On the stealth levels, don't overestimate the awareness of the sentries. As soon as their backs are turned you can run

right past them, and you can creep right up to them before tasing them unconscious.

■ Be ruthless

Get your head shots down. Show no mercy. Kill everyone on your hit list. This is personal, goddammit.

**30
GAMES
TIPPED
THIS
MONTH**

PLAYSTATION

- P116 Medal Of Honor
- P116 South Park Rally
- P116 FIFA 2000
- P117 GTA 2
- P117 Crash Team Racing
- P117 Lego Racers
- P118 Action Man
- P118 Tiny Tank
- P118 Overboard
- P118 Parappa The Rapper
- P118 ISS Pro '98
- P118 Fighting Force
- P118 S.C.A.R.S.
- P118 Sim City 2000
- P119 Fear Effect

GAME BOY/N64

- P116 Card Fighters' Clash
- P117 Dragon Warrior

NINTENDO 64

- P117 Wrestlemania 2000
- P117 Ridge Racer 64
- P117 Battle Tanx: Global Assault
- P118 Sim City 2000
- P118 Robotron 64

PC

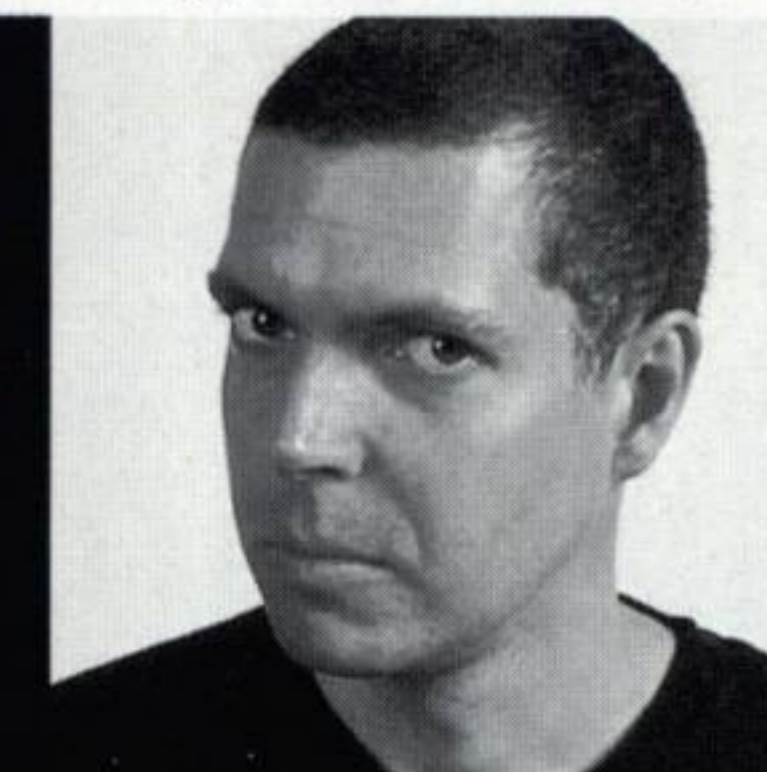
- P118 Caesar 2
- P119 Driver
- P119 Star Trek: Hidden Evil
- P119 Delta Force 2

DREAMCAST

- P116 Slave Zero
- P118 Virtua Fighter 3TB
- P119 Zombie Revenge

WELCOME

■ Phew! *Arcade* offers up an amazing 30 tips and cheats in this month's Kick Ass. There's a reader's tip – keep 'em coming – for *ISS Pro '98*; a superb guide to the trickiest bits of the excellent but infuriating *Syphon Filter 2*; codes for *Medal of Honor*; and a smart little collection of cheeky challenges. With that



lot to get through, your cheatin' hearts should be swelled with joy for a month or so, when *Arcade* will be only too happy to repeat the service. All you need to do is get involved.

LEVEL 1

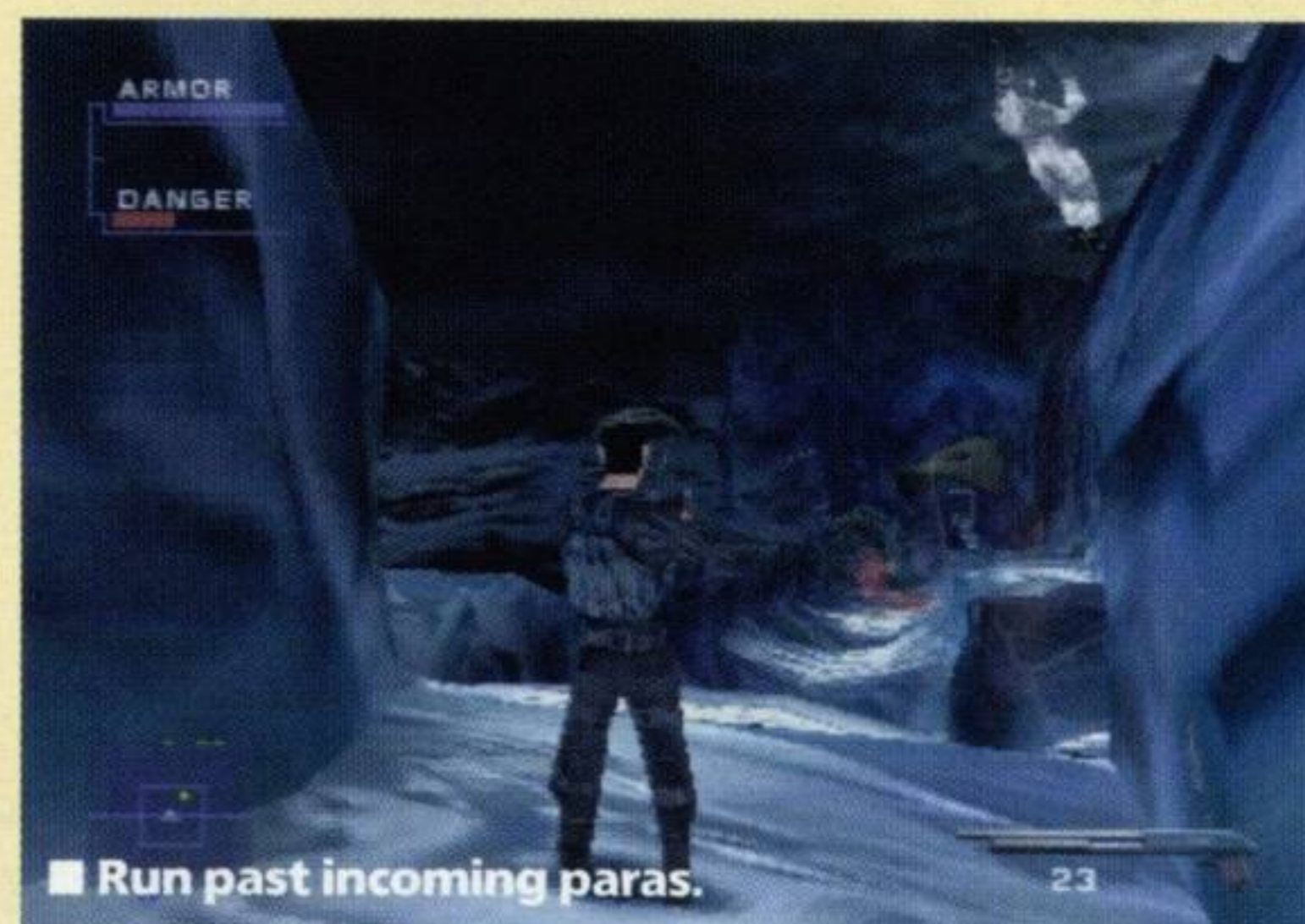
Get a good start – Colorado Mountains

■ Psychologically, playing a blinder on the opening level is important – so here's how. As you parachute down from the plane, aim to land on the boulder in front of you, next to the red flare. Allow Gabe to swoop down towards the ground, pull up, and swoop again. On the rock is a supply case containing the rapid-firing H-11. Winner.

Talk to the three men at the foot of the rock, and run toward the next flare you can see. Run through the tunnel, across the next open area and through the next tunnel. You'll find Chance at the end of this. Once you've spoken to him, run back the way you came. The tunnel will cave in, but keep running. You need to run back to where you started to get the C4 explosives. Once you have it, retrace your steps

through the first tunnel and veer to the left. The high point is through a gap in the rock. Once you have placed the transponder, return to the caved-in tunnel to lay the explosives. When it is open, run through and, without pausing, run straight over the open ground, past the Agency troopers and into the tunnel facing you. When you emerge run towards the two members of your team pinned down by snipers near the tree.

As they lay down cover fire, run between them and under the bridge of rock ahead of you. Run to the right, and when you're out of sight of the snipers, look up. You'll see a supply case, so jump up to it. You'll pop up behind a sniper, who will turn and run over the bridge. Take him out with a head shot, equip the grenades



in the case and toss one over to the other sniper. Run round, pick up the H-11 ammo and flak jackets and run toward the

highway. You'll be called back. Take out all the troopers on your level – be careful, as some will drop down behind you –

and wait. Your GIs will run around below, wait for the troops after them to stop then take them out with head shots

when the GIs are as far away as possible. When you've done this, head back towards the highway and you're done.

LEVEL 5

The first real challenge – McKenzie Airbase Exterior

■ As the two airbase guards talk, creep into the centre of the courtyard by the tree. Wait for one to run off, when the other will start his patrol. Taser him as he passes you, and follow the other. At the car park, run to the truck nearest you and crouch down. Wait for the guard to walk behind the truck, and when he stops, taser him. Move to the back of the truck and get hold of the silenced sniper rifle – this is vital. Now, creep around the truck and wait for the sentry to pass the gap between the

buildings. When he does, run for it and climb onto the roof.

Drop down the other side, when the sentries will hear you. Hide at the front of the truck, and when the first sentry moves down one side creep along the other and go left, hugging the wall. Pass the next guard by climbing over the boxes and move to the left, where you'll come across Morgan. Hide round the corner and let the guard pass you. Follow Morgan out into the courtyard, but veer to the hangar on the right – where



the virus-laden fighter plane is. Open the door with the switch, and once inside use the other switch to close it. Creep into the hangar and move along the right wall. When you're past the nose of the plane, head shot the pilot over the cockpit with the

sniper rifle. Move under the plane to sabotage it.

A sentry will appear. Hide behind the red crate, wait for him to pass and taser him. Leave the hangar, veer right past the sentries. Pass the truck and you come to an open area. Run past the spotlight, avoiding

the light, and wait at the T-junction. A truck will come from your left, run alongside it until there's an opening on your left. Dive in and run to the hangar. Follow Morgan.

After the cutscene, follow Morgan through the hangar and when the guard peels off approach him in the corridor. He'll tell you all you need to know. After the cutscene, turn 180° and creep into the hangar. Creep up behind the truck and taser the guard. Exit the hangar and run into the next building. Hide behind the crates to your right. Taser the guard who walks through the crates, and move through the building. You come to a wide open area, so hide behind the crates. Wait for the guard to approach and turn the corner. Follow him,

taser him and run to the truck in front of the control tower.

Turn the truck ignition to create a diversion. Dive behind the wall on your left straight away, and when the sentries run out, enter the building. Run to the elevator on your right and go to the control centre. Exit right and creep around the centre. Wait for the controller to move into a corner and taser him. Retrace your steps. When his boss goes to find out where he is, taser him. Set off the switch on the wall by the map.

Take the elevator down, go straight ahead and crouch down when you see a sentry and Agency operative. When the operative goes for the chopper, taser the guard and then the operative. Walk up the steps to the whirlybird, and you're all set for the next level. You can even save, if you like.

HOW TO SHOOT MORE NAZIS IN... MEDAL OF HONOR

Second World War cheats galore

■ To activate the cheats, beat each level with all three star ratings and get all the medals. Enter these at the cheat menu.

■ Multi-player passwords

BEACHBALL	Unlocks Noah
BIGFATMAN	Unlocks Manon's arch-enemy
WOOFWOOF	Unlocks Bismarck the dog
HERRZOMBIE	Unlocks Otto
NUTCRACKER	Unlocks giant nutcracker
GUNTHER	Unlocks Gunther
SSPIELBERG	Unlocks dinosaur
ROCKETMAN	Unlocks Werner von Braun
PAYBACK	Unlocks Shakespeare
FINESTHOUR	Unlocks Churchill
HOODDOWN	Unlocks Felix
HOODUP	Unlocks Wolfgang
MACOOCOO	Unlocks Gamewerks map

■ More cheats

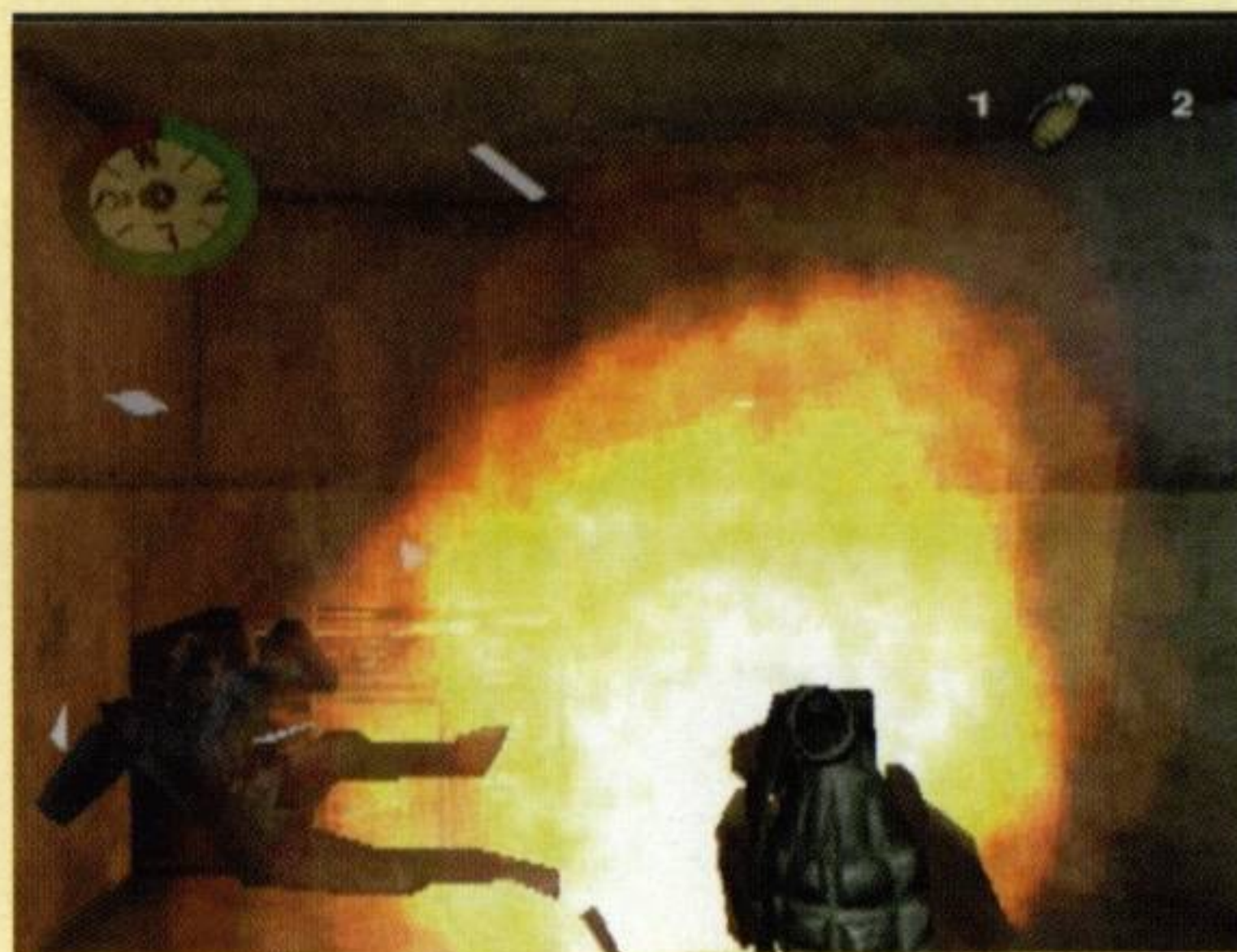
GOBLUE	Reflecting shots
TRACERON	Wire Frame mode
ICOSIDODEC	Rapid fire
SPRECHEN	American Movie mode

■ These two cheats only work when you complete a mission and replay it.

BADCOPSHOW	Infinite ammo
MOSTMEDALS	Invincibility

■ Level passwords

Mission	Password
1	RETTUNG
2	ZERSIOREN

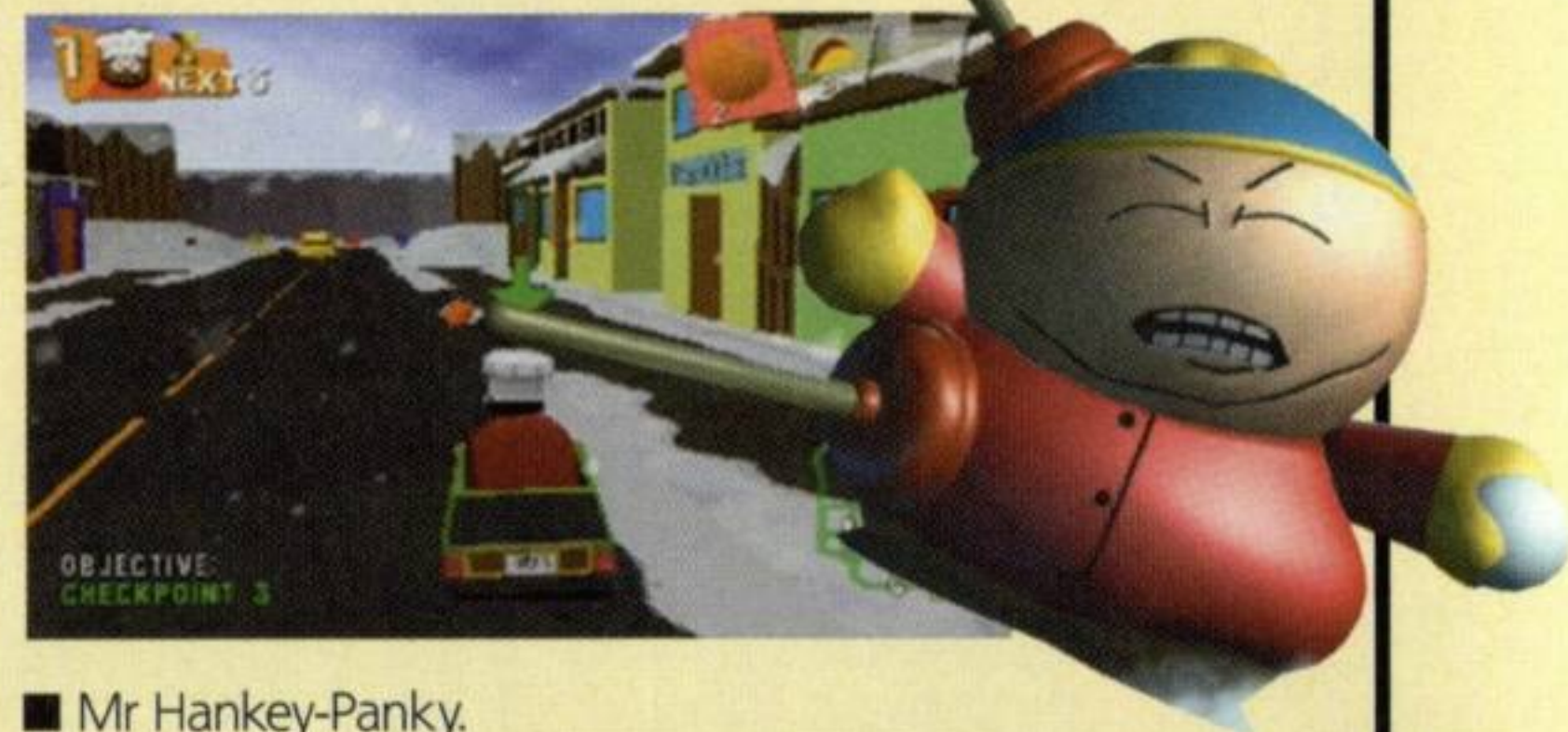


3	BOOTSINKT
4	SENFAS
5	SCHWERES
6	SICHERUNG
7	EINSICKERN
8	GESAMTHEIT

■ Finally, if you can't take it any more, press the following button combinations very quickly to kill yourself.

R1, R2, L2, R1, R1, R1, R2, L2, L1, L1, @
Your player will blow up and say: "What did you do that for?"

SOUTH PARK RALLY



■ Mr Hankey-Panky.

To access the Cheat mode, complete the Championship mode without using any tokens. All cars, tracks and other options will be unlocked. To get access to all the different characters from *South Park* do the following.

Play as Death:

Win the Halloween race after only dropping off four sweets at a time.

Play as Grandpa:

Win the Halloween race.

Play as Ike:

Collect the hidden power-up on top of the aeroplane in the Memorial Day race.

Play as Jesus:

Win the Christmas race. Obviously.

Play as Bebe:

Lose the Cowdays race without getting any health power-ups.

Play as Big Gay Al:

Win the Pink Lemonade race.

Play as Cartman Cop:

Hit Chicken Lover five times with your salty balls in the Read A Book Day race.

Play as Damian:

Win the New Year's race and be the only racer to touch the Millennium Key.

Play as Marvin:

Win the Thanksgiving race without collecting any turkeys.

Play as Mephisto:

Win the Independence Day race.

Play as Mr. Garrison:

Activate all four checkpoints on the Rally Days 2 race.

Play as Pip:

Activate only checkpoints one and four on the Rally Days 2 race.

Play as Satan:

Win the New Year's race.

Play as Shelly:

Win the Valentine's Day race.

Play as Mr. Mackey:

Win the Spring Cleaning race.

Play as Ned:

Collect more than 12 turbo pick-ups in the Independence Day race

Play as Tweak:

Collect five caffeine pick-ups in the Spring Cleaning race.

Play as Visitor:

Collect the hidden power-up above checkpoint one and the power-up between checkpoint four and the bridge in the Memorial Day race.

Play as Terrance and Phillip:

Collect the four power-ups in the Christmas race.

DREAMCAST

SLAVE ZERO

■ Cheat mode: Press L + R + X on controller two during a single-player game to enable invincibility and unlimited ammunition.



PLAYSTATION

FIFA 2000

■ Cheats 'n' Tips.

Fat players: Pause the game and press @, @ (x3), Down, Up (x2), Left, R1

Invisible walls: Pause the game, then hold R2 and press @, @ (x3), Up, @

Find Romario: He's no. 11 for the Brazilian club side, Flamengo.

Find Pele: He's no 10 for the classic Brazilian club side Santos '62-'63 and two classic Brazilian national teams (Brazil '58 and Brazil '70).



NEO GEO

CARD FIGHTERS' CLASH

■ For the Mech Zangief card (Capcom), collect five coins and return to Joy Joy where you'll find Yosiki. Defeat him in a game and he'll give you this rather special card.



N64

WWF WRESTLEMANIA 2000

■ Get access to more large, sweaty men.

Cactus Jack: Begin Road to Wrestlemania with any character and win the hardcore title. Defend it a few times and Mr Cactus will, ahem, reveal himself.

Dude Love: Begin Road to Wrestlemania with any character and make it to Summerslam undefeated. If you then win the WWF title, Dude Love will become available.

Paul Bearer: Begin Road to Wrestlemania with The Undertaker. After several matches, Paul will eventually accompany you to the ring and become a playable character.

Jim Ross and Jerry Lawler: Begin Road to Wrestlemania with any character and make it to Wrestlemania.



Before the action begins, the two characters will announce themselves.

Shawn Michaels: Begin Road to Wrestlemania and make it to Wrestlemania. Either defend or win the WWF title and Shawn will challenge you. Win and he'll become selectable.

Stephanie McMahon: Begin Road to Wrestlemania with Test. After several matches, Stephanie will eventually accompany you to the ring and become a playable character.

N64

RIDGE RACER 64

■ Tippage...

Caddy Car: Start a game without loading a saved game and play the first Grand Prix race. At the start, turn around and drive into the brick wall until you pass through it. Win this reverse race to get the super-fast Caddy Car.

Motion Blur in Replay: Toggle motion blur by pressing C-Left.



PLAYSTATION

GTA2



■ Enter the following cheats as player names.

BIGSCORE

10 million points

NAVARONE

All weapons

WUGGLES

Display co-ordinates

ITSALLUP

Level select

DESIRES

Wanted level to 4

LOSEFEDS

No police

IGNITION

Turbo cars

LIVELONG

Unlimited energy

IAMPLAYA

Unlimited money

N64

BATTLE TANX: GLOBAL ASSAULT

■ Tank Tips.

Enter these cheats as passwords.

RCKTSRDGLR

All weapons

HPPYHPPY

Invincibility

WRDRB

Campaign bonus level

NNKNHCKS

Unlocks Brandon's gang in multi-player mode

TRDDYBRRKS

Unlocks Custom 1 Gang in multi-player mode

To self-destruct press all four C buttons at once. Kapow!



PLAYSTATION

CRASH TEAM RACING

■ For all these cheats, at the main menu hold L1 + R1 and enter the corresponding codes.

Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, Right
Invisibility power-up

⊙, Down (x2), ⊙, Up

Turbo counter

⊙, Right (x2), ⊙, Left

Turbo pads

Down, ⊙, Left (x2), ⊙, Right

Komodo Joe

Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, Right (x2)

N. Trophy

Left, ⊙, Right, Down, Right, ⊙, Left (x2)

Papu Papu

Down, Right, ⊙, Down, Left, ⊙, Up

Penta Penguin

Left, Right, ⊙, Down, Right, Down

Pinstripe

Right, ⊙ (x2), Down, Up, Down, Right

Ripper Roo

Down, ⊙, ⊙, Right

Spyro 2 demo



GAME BOY

DRAGON WARRIOR MONSTERS

■ You lucky breeders. To get the Dragon Lord from the original *Dragon Warrior* you must use a Servant as a pedigree and breed it with a Great... Drak. Have fun.



PLAYSTATION

LEGO RACERS

■ Plastic cheats.

Fly mode: Enter Build mode and create or edit a driver. Select Make A Licence from the menu and enter the driver name as FLYSKYHIGH. This also unlocks the rocket car.

No chassis and Fast mode: In the Licence screen type NCHSSS and FSTFRWRD

These games may be picking up their pensions now, but they still have the power to frustrate and annoy the hell out of you – just like old people.

PLAYSTATION

PARAPPA THE RAPPER

■ For an ending where you can watch Sunny Funny and Katy Kat dancing on a table, get a COOL rating on every level. You can change the view with the D-pad, zoom in and out with L1 and R1 as well as changing their clothes with ⊕ and ⊗.

N64 **IMPORT**

SIM CITY 2000

■ Bonus Map: On the title screen, press C-Up, C-Up, C-Down, C-Left, C-Left, C-Right, C-Right, C-Up, C-Right, C-Left, C-Down, Start to begin a special map with \$5 million.

PLAYSTATION

ISS PRO '98

■ Sent in by Huw Bucknell of London. Classic All Stars Team: Highlight the Exhibition option, then quickly press Up (x2), Down (x2), Left, Right, Left, Right, ⊙, ⊗. The sound of applause will confirm correct code entry. Now hold L1 + R1 on the Team Selection screen to make the Classic All Stars appear and press ⊗ to select it.

PLAYSTATION

FIGHTING FORCE

■ Cheat Menu: Hold Left + ⊕ + L1 + R2 at the Main Menu. "Cheat Mode" will appear at the bottom of the screen, so you can now go to the Options Screen and select invincibility or any stage you want to play.

PLAYSTATION

OVERBOARD

■ Enter these passwords for access to later levels:

Level	Password
1-2	Ship, Skull, Fish, Anchor, Ship, Anchor
1-3	Ship, Anchor, Skull, Ship, Anchor, Fish
1-4	Skull, Ship, Fish, Anchor, Anchor, Ship
2-1	Fish, Fish, Anchor, Ship, Skull, Anchor
2-2	Skull, Anchor, Anchor, Fish, Anchor, Ship
2-3	Fish, Anchor, Ship, Ship, Ship, Skull
2-4	Anchor, Fish, Ship, Skull, Skull, Fish
3-1	Ship, Skull, Skull, Fish, Anchor, Skull
3-2	Fish, Skull, Anchor, Fish, Skull, Fish
3-3	Fish, Fish, Ship, Skull, Fish, Ship
3-4	Ship, Anchor, Ship, Fish, Anchor, Fish
4-1	Skull, Skull, Anchor, Ship, Fish, Fish
4-2	Ship, Anchor, Skull, Fish, Fish, Anchor
4-3	Skull, Ship, Skull, Skull, Fish, Ship
4-4	Ship, Fish, Ship, Fish, Ship, Anchor
5-1	Anchor, Ship, Fish, Skull, Fish Ship
5-2	Fish, Ship, Anchor, Skull, Ship, Fish
5-3	Ship, Fish, Skull, Anchor, Anchor, Skull
5-4	Skull, Ship, Anchor, Fish, Ship, Skull

PC

CAESAR 2

■ Empire-building stuff:

Cause disease: Click on the Build Prefecture button, then click on a house to infect it with a nasty disease.

Increase Land Value: At the beginning of the game, construct gardens and parks to add land value.

Time elapses quickly: Hold A while in City or Providence mode.

PLAYSTATION

S.C.A.R.S.

■ Go to Options, then Settings to enter the following passwords.

ALLVID	All cars
DESERT	Scorpion car
MYSTER	Panther car
RATTLE	Cobra car
RUNNER	Cheetah car
XPERTS	Master mode
GLASSX	Crystal cup
ROCKYY	Diamond cup
ZDPEAK	Zenith cup

PLAYSTATION

SIM CITY 2000

■ For free credit, on the budget screen hold ⊕, then press L1, L2, L1, L2, R2, R1, R2, R1. Bonds will now be available at 0% interest. Great eh?

N64

ROBOTRON 64

■ Robocheats.

■ Enter all these codes while on the Robotron game setup Menu Screen.

Down, Up, C-Left, Down, C-Left, C-Right, Down, C-Right

Level select

Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, C-Left, C-Right, C-Left, C-Right

50 lives

Up, Down, Right, C-Left, Down, Up, Left, C-Right, Up, Down

Game Boy mode

■ Enter these codes while playing the game.

Down, Left, C-Left, C-Right

Shield

Up, Down, C-Right, C-Left

Gas gun

Left, Left, Right, Right, C-Up

Speed up

Down, Right, Down, Right, C-Right

Flame thrower

Down, Down, Up, C-Right

Four-way fire

Right, Right, C-Left, C-Down

Three-way fire

Up, C-Up, Up, C-Up

Two-way fire

■ Passwords:

BSBBBBTJBB
Easy difficulty (110 lives)

BCBBLBTJBB
Normal difficulty (110 lives)

BFBBBCTJBB
Very hard difficulty (110 lives)

BJTCNGLFCR
Access final level

PLAYSTATION

ACTION MAN MISSION XTREME

■ To activate all the options, levels and Power Points, go to the apartment Power Point menu and press L1 (x3), R1, L1 (x3), R1 (x2), L1 (x4), R1, L1 (x9), R1, L1, R1, ⊙.

■ To access the game credits, go to the apartment video player and hold L1 + R2 + Down, then select any clip with the ⊕ button.

■ Find these costumes in the wardrobe:

Desert	Always available
Stealth Commander	Only after Docks intro
Arctic	Only after Iceberg intro
Commander	40 Power Points
Stealth Pilot	70 Power Points
Ninja	100 Power Points
Street	125 Power Points
Urban	150 Power Points
Paratrooper	170 Power Points
Fire Fighter	180 Power Points

PLAYSTATION

TINY TANK

■ To wear Big Bart's stupid hat, kill him on the first level and pick it up. If you get killed, you'll lose the fashion accessory.

DREAMCAST

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB

■ **Alternate Costumes:** Hold the Start button when selecting a character, then press A.

■ **Alternative Backgrounds:** When selecting a stage, hold Start and press A.

■ **Arcade Backgrounds:** In Training, Normal or Team Battle mode you can change the backgrounds to the original arcade versions by letting the time run out in the Stage Select screen.

■ **Play Against The Alphabet Character:** At the Character Select screen highlight Akira and press Start. Next, highlight Lau and press Start, then finally highlight Pai and hold Start and press X. All your opponents will be replaced by the Alphabet character.

■ **Play As Dural In Any Mode:** On the Character Select screen press Down, Up, Right, Left, Start. Dural will now appear. Press A for Silver Dural and press Start + A to play as Gold Dural.

■ **Clean Pause:** When the game is paused you see "Player 1 Pause" on the screen. To make it vanish for screenshots or just for your own pleasure, hold down X + Y.

■ **Pai's Secret Win Pose:** Using Pai, you must defeat Akira with a perfect on Akira's stage. If you succeed, Pai will blow a kiss and mock one of Akira's victory taunts.



Welcome to a world where all your greatest struggles are ahead of you. Will you take on these challenges and vanquish the evil gaming demons, or accept defeat like a dog?



NEO GEO

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG POCKET ADVENTURE

■ Challenge: **Sonic dash**

■ Sega's handheld *Sonic* game reaches the pinnacle of platforming and *Arcade* believes it's time to check out how fast the hedgehog hurricane actually is. Choose the first level, Neo South Island and Act 1. The object of this challenge is to belt through this level as fast as you can, using any means necessary. *Arcade*'s record is a staggering 43 seconds – can you beat it? You haven't a chance, not a chance.



PLAYSTATION

F1 2000

■ Challenge: **Worst of British**

■ This is a challenge for all you Sunday drivers. Choose a quick race with Eddie Irvine on the Silverstone circuit. Set off from the start the wrong way round the track and see how far you can get before you smash into the lead car. You must hit the driver in first position or you have failed the challenge. *Arcade* managed to get as far as the tight corner with the "Mobil" signs, before ruining Schumacher's chances of winning (hurrah!). To attempt the challenge again, just press Start, then choose Restart. Get crashing.



NG4

DONKEY KONG 64

■ Challenge: **Bash the beavers**

■ Enjoy some more magnificent monkeying-about with Rare's classic game. Choose Donkey Kong and enter the Jungle Japes level. Head for Cranky's lab, where you can change into Rambi the Rhino. The object of this challenge is to bash five blue beavers as quick as you can, using a stopwatch to time the action. It's tricky, 'cos you have to wait for the cute-but-deadly animals to materialise once you've hit them. *Arcade* managed the mini-massacre in a world-beating 38.53 seconds. Completely unbeatable. Or is it?



PC

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

■ Challenge: **Blow up**

■ *Unreal Tournament* has some wonderful dark humour within its blood-soaked walls. On the Pressure map, there's a pressure chamber where you can wait for unsuspecting souls to go inside, before shutting the doors and watching them explode in a shower of entrails. With this challenge, set the frag limit to 0 and the time limit to five minutes, then try to kill as many bots as you can within the deadly chamber. *Arcade*'s record is a messy eight disintegrated. Can you take the pressure?

PC

DELTA FORCE 2

■ To access the cheats, press the ` key (below Escape), then type a code and press Enter.

thetrooper God mode
sunandsteel
Reload ammunition
diewithyourbootson
Ammunition
stillife Invisibility
revelation
Eight artillery rounds



PLAYSTATION

FEAR EFFECT

■ For all these cheats, select "Credits" at the option screen, then press the following key combinations for the relevant cheats.

Down (x3), @, Down (x3),
@, Left, Right Expert mode
L1, @, Up, Down, @ (x2),
@, @, Up, @ All weapons
L1, @, Up, Down, @ (x2),
Left (x2), L1, L2 Extra ammunition
L1, @, Up, Down, @ (x2), @,
@, Left, @ Full ammunition
L1, @, Up, Down, @ (x2),
Down (x3), Up Instant puzzle solution
L1, @, Up, Down, @ (x2), @,
@, Down, R1 One hit kill with firearms
L1, @, Up, Down, @ (x2), Up (x3),
Down Rapid fire



PC

DRIVER

■ A couple of wheel-y good cheats. Ha ha! Geddit? *Wheel-y?* Oh forget it.

For all these cheats, go to Driving Games, get a high score and enter the codes as a name.

RUS3L Invincibility
NJW280172 Fast cars
WAC271074 No police
TMR300866 View credits

DREAMCAST

ZOMBIE REVENGE

■ Undead cheats.

Cheat mode: Get points in the VMU mini-game to unlock Free Continue, Area Select and Eternal Life cheat options in original mode.

Level select: Choose Fighting mode, then hold Start when selecting a character.

Alternate costumes: Highlight a character, hold Start and press X, B or Y.

PC

STAR TREK: HIDDEN EVIL

■ Enter these cheats at any time during the game.

bones Hydrospray
kirk Unlimited health
scotty All keys and passcards
spock Level skip



CLOCKING OFF

A hearty *Arcade* cheer to Huw Bucknell for the ISS '98 tip. Hugh wins an exclusive baseball cap and T-shirt. You too could be sporting the latest in gaming fashion if you suggest a tip or take up a challenge. Send your gubbins to "Don Periphale" at the address below. Bye.

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Flashback

Starring Conrad Hart, yet another videogame character who has lost his mind.

Whether it's the plot of a film, a book or a videogame, the French never go in for half-measures. And so it was with *Flashback*, a Mega Drive title released in May 1993. There were no kidnapped princesses or treasure quests for Gallic developer Delphine – *Flashback* hero Conrad Hart was searching for his lost identity.

For Frederic Savoie, lead developer of *Flashback*, that gripping storyline was essential. "It was important to keep the team on the right track during the nine months of development," he explains. "The plot helped us to keep the game logical – it was crucial for the game's mini-quests to drive the plot forward." Such ambitious aims came naturally to Delphine: *Flashback* was the follow-up to Eric Chahl's *Another World*, a game that managed to create a strong, emotionally-led storyline without a single word of text or speech.

In *Flashback*, Conrad was dumped on an alien planet after having his memory erased by creatures intent on dominating Earth. His quest to regain his identity and defeat the alien forces was a platform-based journey, with puzzles usually

Flashback

- Publisher: US Gold
- Developer: Delphine Software
- Genre: Platformer
- System: Mega Drive, Amiga, ST, PC
- Players: 1
- Score: 87%
- CU Amiga
- "Fabulous graphics and bags of playability. Very, very playable."

revolving around foot-activated switches, perilous gaps and devious robot drones and sentry guards. Nothing ground-breaking there – in fact, playing gave you flashbacks of your own, to Broderbund's earlier *Prince Of Persia* – but *Flashback* ably seduced you with some truly remarkable visuals, most evident in the animation of Conrad himself.

Delphine used a traditional technique called "rotoscoping" – filming movement, then creating frames of animation by tracing over the film cell. "It's a system Disney often employed to create realistic character movement in films like *Sleeping Beauty*," explains Frederic. "It led to many hours spent filming, and lots of work drawing every frame, thanks to our decision to create 25 frames for every second of movement!" The work paid off – Conrad ran, crept, strolled, jumped, crouched and even fell to the floor in a convincing way.

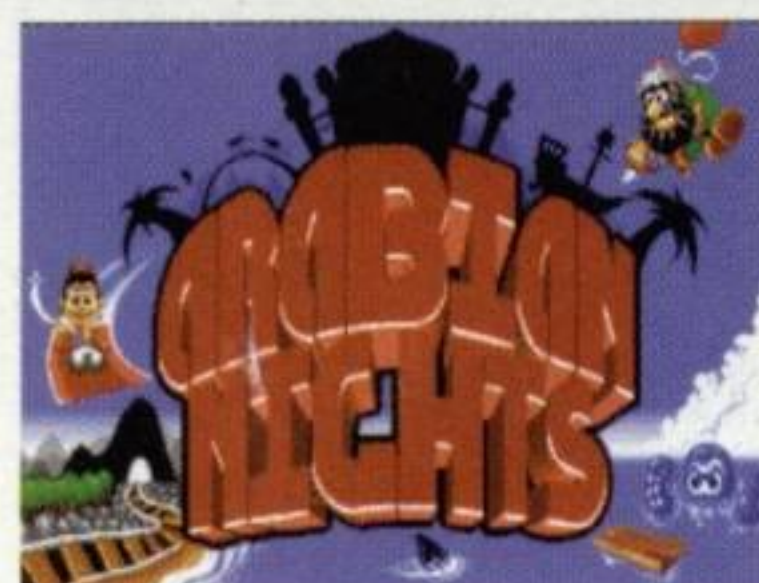
Flashback presented levels to match the quality of Conrad's movement. After the lush, tropical jungle of the first level, the amnesiac researcher found himself exploring hi-tech *Blade Runner*-esque cityscapes (complete with functioning metro train), battling shape-shifting aliens on a hideously-coloured foreign planet, and fighting for his life on the imposing set of

a bloodthirsty future game show. It was glorious to look at, and it's a saddening revelation from Frederic that some sections were removed near the end of development to meet the deadline.

Squeezing the super-detailed visuals onto the Mega Drive cartridge wasn't easy. "We ended up with a total of 1,500 frames of animation," explains Frederic, "So, using a technique which I'd originated on a cancelled Amiga project, we decided to compress all the scenery and characters, then decompress them while the player was moving around. It was a very exciting challenge!" In terms of difficulty, that challenge was second only to perfecting the sublime level design and head-scratching puzzles that helped make *Flashback*, not only compulsive, but also horrifyingly tricky. "Games of this period were made by hardcore gamers, after all," chuckles Frederic.

Tricky though it was, enough people completed *Flashback* to demand a sequel – the 3D PlayStation adventure *Fade To Black* in 1996. Since then, Delphine (now known as Amazing Studios) has moved into developing music packages and the odd game such as *Heart Of Darkness*, but the brilliance of *Flashback* means the company will never be forgotten. **A**

Games of the month Games from when the home computer was king.



Arabian Nights

System: Amiga/ST
 Publisher: Krisalis
 ■ Another semi-successful attempt to bring the magic of Mario to home computers. *Arabian Nights* starred a saucer-eyed Turkish child and included a bizarre combination of screen flipping and scrolling as well those typical 1993 platforming staples – climbable beanstalks and slippery ice worlds.
 ■ CU Amiga: 86%



Goal!

System: Amiga/ST
 Publisher: Virgin
 ■ Unofficially, this was the third in the acclaimed *Kick Off* series of fuel-injected footie games, but creator Dino Dini's split with publisher Anco left the *Kick Off* name in its hands. *Goal!* fixed most of *Kick Off 2's* (few) shortcomings, and featured a skycam view to attract *Sensible Soccer* fans.
 ■ CU Amiga: 93%



Scrabble

System: Amiga
 Publisher: US Gold
 ■ A near-flawless interpretation of the world's second-most famous board game, US Gold's *Scrabble* featured a vocabulary of – get this – 130,000 words. There was also an infuriating "advice" option, where the computer would take pleasure in telling you about the hundreds of higher-scoring words you could have put down on your last go.
 ■ CU Amiga: 83%



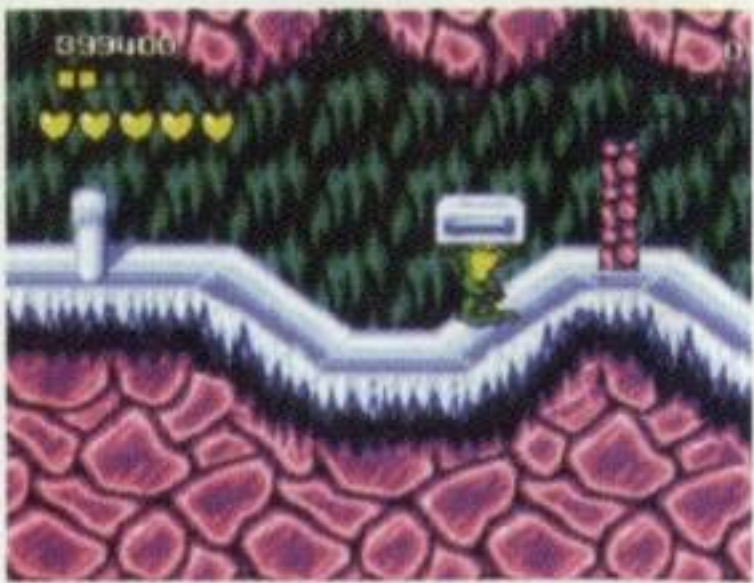
Sim Life

System: PC/Amiga
 Publisher: Maxis
 ■ Maxis followed up the success of *Sim City* with a whole series of increasingly bizarre *Sim* projects, including *Sim Earth*, *Sim Ant* (don't ask) and *Sim Life*, where your job was to evolve and maintain new lifeforms. A set of scenarios gave you the chance to intervene in the extinction of dinosaurs and suchlike.
 ■ CU Amiga: 93%



Desert Strike

System: Amiga
 Publisher: EA
 ■ The first in the long-running *Strike* series set the tone for the rest: an American helicopter blasting the bejesus out of an isometric foreign land. It was in outrageously bad taste, with its talk of Iraqi dictators and a soundtrack that combined upbeat dance with the ominous chatter of military radio.
 ■ Gamesmaster: 93%



Battletoads

System: Mega Drive
 Publisher: Tradewest
 ■ A tongue-in-cheek variation on the popular *Golden Axe* formula, with a bicep-laden amphibian "laying the smack down". Developer Rare is also behind *Banjo-Kazooie*, *Diddy Kong Racing* and *Perfect Dark* – and, coincidentally, there are frogs in all three of those games. Er, except *Perfect Dark*.
 ■ Gamesmaster: 78%

Superfrog

A lean, green, platforming machine for the Amiga.

You need two breasts, pert buttocks and a delicious pair of legs to make it as a videogame star these days, but it wasn't always that way. The amphibian hero of Team 17's Amiga platformer *Superfrog* managed short-term success with none of those qualities – bar the delicious legs.

"Don't ask why he was a frog," laughs Team 17 developer Martyn Brown. "The lead artist had this idea for a frog called Chuck, and eventually he evolved into Superfrog." With a flapping cape and mildly disturbing smile, he was an unlikely hero – but at the time, with other Amiga platformers turning to fish, bionic ants and splotches of green mucus for inspiration, Superfrog seemed the most natural game character in the world. Team 17's plans to have Jimmy Nail supply the voice for Superfrog might have fallen through, but the croaking celeb was bursting with personality.

The levels were themed around sun-drenched grasslands, spooky castles and underwater wonderlands as per *Mario*, and bulged with bemused-looking enemies and food to grab – including, thanks to a late sponsorship deal, bottles of Lucozade. But Team 17's game also regularly ramped up the speedometer in a *Sonic The Hedgehog* style, which made it all the more astonishing that the relatively low-powered Amiga could keep up with the pretty visuals without falling to bits. "This was our third or fourth game, so



■ With Daley Thompson out the door, Lucozade turned to this amphibian athlete.



■ Trees with roving eyes? Superfrog should probably lay off those mushrooms...

we were fairly experienced," recalls Martyn. "We'd worked on some core technology that allowed us to make the scenery whip by very smoothly and very quickly. There was no real 'secret' to how our games looked – it was simply our enthusiasm being reflected in the game."

But while Team 17 was confident it could make *Superfrog* look great and appear slick, the issue was ensuring it played well.

Somehow – despite the corpses of other publishers' failed *Mario*-style platformers laying rotting behind them – they succeeded. The puzzles made sense, the frog's running and leaping felt right, and the secrets – the number of which had been increased late in the project to give more player reward – worked a treat. *Superfrog* also came loaded with a wicked sense of humour that made it a joy to play – exemplified by the Castle level's music, which began with a solemn death march before kicking in with a twee upbeat mix.

The quality of the game reflected Team 17's hard work. "There was a lot of stress in the last months, getting the final disks to the duplicators," remembers Martyn. "We hardly slept. It wasn't fun." And, although some reviewers wrote off *Superfrog* as just another *Sonic* clone, in retrospect Martyn (who's now Development Director at Team 17) is proud of his work. Track down a copy of *Superfrog* and, in Mr Brown's own words, "You too will believe a frog can fly."

Gaming round-up

Also going on this month



■ Lemmings 2: falling from the charts.

Film '93

■ In a "surprise move", CU Amiga revealed that Liverpool codeshop Psygnosis had managed to bag two of the "hottest movies licences of the year". The films in question? Sylvester Stallone's *Cliffhanger* and Arnold Schwarzenegger flop *The Last Action Hero*. Remember the games these top licences spawned?

Summer's gone

■ Also in Amiga land, Kelly Sumner decided to waved goodbye to the good ship Commodore UK after just ten months as boss, leaving the amiable Dave Pleasance to take his place. Dave inherited the company at a time when it was under threat from console and PC sales, and masterminded Commodore until it kicked the bucket, the death of the Amiga, angry letters from deeply upset Amiga owners, etc. etc. Lucky man.

Rodent rap

■ More from Psygnosis: after the success of brain-scrambling puzzler *Lemmings*, the publisher employed the talents of band-of-the-moment KLF's producers to create a *Lemmings* single, featuring the infamous "Oh no!" and "Let's go!" samples of the game. "The record should do well in the singles chart," offered Psygnosis' superbly-named Mark Blewitt. In the event, it failed to chart.

Off Spec

■ The Spectrum market hobbled the last few steps towards its grave. *Sinclair User* closed, leaving *Your Sinclair* as the only Spectrum magazine on the market. Maintaining sales largely on the strength of its games-filled cover cassette, *Your Sinclair* could manage only 42 pages and two new game reviews per month, and folded after five more issues.

YOUR SINCLAIR TOP 10 SPECTRUM GAMES

- 1 **Desert Strike**, Electronic Arts
- 2 **Body Blows**, Team 17
- 3 **Chaos Engine**, Renegade
- 4 **Superfrog**, Team 17
- 5 **Lemmings 2**, Psygnosis
- 6 **Indiana Jones IV**, US Gold
- 7 **Wing Commander**, Mindscape
- 8 **B17 Flying Fortress**, Microprose
- 9 **Nigel Mansell's World Championship**, Gremlin
- 10 **Sleepwalker**, Ocean

NUMBER CRUNCH

■ Average price of Amiga game: £30... Average price of a videogame magazine: £2.95... Number of full-size consoles available: 4... Number of different Amigas available: 7... Number of games in CU Amiga's preview section: 62... Number of games in Your Sinclair's preview section: 0... Number of sentences in magazine joystick review: 6... Number of sentences devoted to double entendres: 5... Number of ads for videogame mags in CU Amiga: 1... Number of ads for wrestling mags: 2...

WORLD NEWS HEADLINES

Baby deaths

■ Horror in Britain's maternity wards, as nurse Beverly Allitt is found guilty of murdering four newborn babies. This came soon after the country had been shaken by the death of another youngster, James Bulger in Liverpool.

Hair apparent

■ President Clinton's involvement in "Hairgate" fills the tabloids, after it's revealed that the runways at LA airport had been shut down for nearly an hour while Bill got his hair cut on presidential plane Air Force One. The do cost \$200.

UNeffective

■ The UN's ineffectiveness in Bosnia-Herzegovina became increasingly

apparent. On 6 May, the Security Council declared six areas in Bosnia as "safe". On 30 May, Bosnian Serbs invaded two of them.

Hell on Earth

■ Bubbly Sonia only managed to reach number

22 with her cover of the Stock, Aiken and Waterman-penned ditty "Better The Devil You Know", previously a Kylie Minogue track but now better known as one of the songs that have taken Steps to the tippety-top of the pop tree.



■ No, Sonia, no-one else can believe you've achieved pop celebrity either.

MUSIC CHARTS

May 1993

- 1 **Five Live EP**, George Michael and Queen
- 2 **Young At Heart**, Bluebells
- 3 **I Have Nothing**, Whitney Houston
- 4 **Ain't No Love (Ain't No Use)**, Sub Sub feat. Mel Williams
- 5 **Informer**, Snow

FILM CHARTS

- 1 **Groundhog Day**
- 2 **Sommersby**
- 3 **Alive**
- 4 **Un Coeur en Hiver**
- 5 **Accidental Hero**

The videogame magazine

Arcade

Amiga/ST/SNES/Megadrive/Gameboy

Flashback
Memories are made of this.
Goal!
Dino Dini makes it a hat trick.

SONIA SPEAKS!

Ribbeting!
Superfrog and Battletoads go head to head. Who'll croak first?

PLUS! IS THE GAME UP FOR THE SPECCY?

■ And with that, the person responsible for Arcade's coverlines was promptly shown the door.

The Road To Hell...

Remembered by | Rich Pelley

Dicing with death at 150 mph in the Dreamcast's fastest moment to date.



Learning to drive is an odd affair: half stroll in the park, half complete nightmare. Playing *Crazy Taxi* on Dreamcast is a similar experience, and as soon as you get behind the wheel of your yellow cab the old L-plate memories start to come flooding back.

The premise of driving, after all, is simple. The steering wheel makes you go around corners, the pedal on the floor makes you go forward, the other pedal makes the car stop. And there are some gears to worry about, too. In *Crazy Taxi* these functions are provided by the analogue stick, triggers and the A and B buttons respectively.

So off you go. The gears may sound a bit cranky, but once you get the hang of easing

the clutch (in *Crazy Taxi* you do this by rolling your finger onto the B button) things sound a good deal smoother.

Soon, your confidence grows. Give Way signs and roundabouts, Crazy Drifts and Limit Cuts begin to fall into place. Mirror, signal, manoeuvre, release accelerator, push B, jam accelerator. Heck, it's second nature. The odd flashy move, like a perfect parallel park, or a Crazy Stop, just adds to the fun. Before long you're cruising round town like a pro. And so you keep at it, practising those emergency stops and Crazy Back dashes until you pass your test and get your licence.

But there's one bit about driving that no one ever mentions. You have to discover it for yourself, usually by accident, or peer pressure: your first time on a motorway. The feeling of being trapped in the middle lane of the motorway by two juggernauts is one you don't forget, and, despite gut-stripping panic, when this happens in *Crazy Taxi* it rates as a Great Gaming Moment.

Any sense of invulnerability you may have gained from your previous in-game antics

Wanna play?

Arcade reviewed the ★★★★★-worthy *Crazy Taxi* back in issue 16, where – with eyes somewhat on stalks and jaws dropped to the floor – it noted this was one of the most must-have games on Dreamcast. Graphically, it even supersedes the original Sega coin-op version with a brand new city and training level. The game looks outstanding and the speed it chugs along at outshines anything ever seen before, while the learning curve ensures you won't rest until you are the best *Crazy Taxi* player in the world.

immediately evaporates when you reach the freeway. Before, you'll have felt pretty much indestructible and all too willing to ram other cars out of the way. If they turn over, then hey – it's no skin off your nose. Crash into one of the huge juggernauts on the freeway, however, and it'll topple over, block your path and lose you valuable chunks of time. Over-steer and you might finish up on the wrong side of the toppled truck, whereas if you have a head-on crash you may as well give up because there's no way you'll make it to your drop-off point on time.

Videogames can be exhilarating, but you're unlikely to find one to top cruising the freeway in *Crazy Taxi*. It's an ears pinned back, heart-in-mouth Great Gaming Moment, and no mistake.



Any sense of invulnerability immediately evaporates when you reach the freeway.

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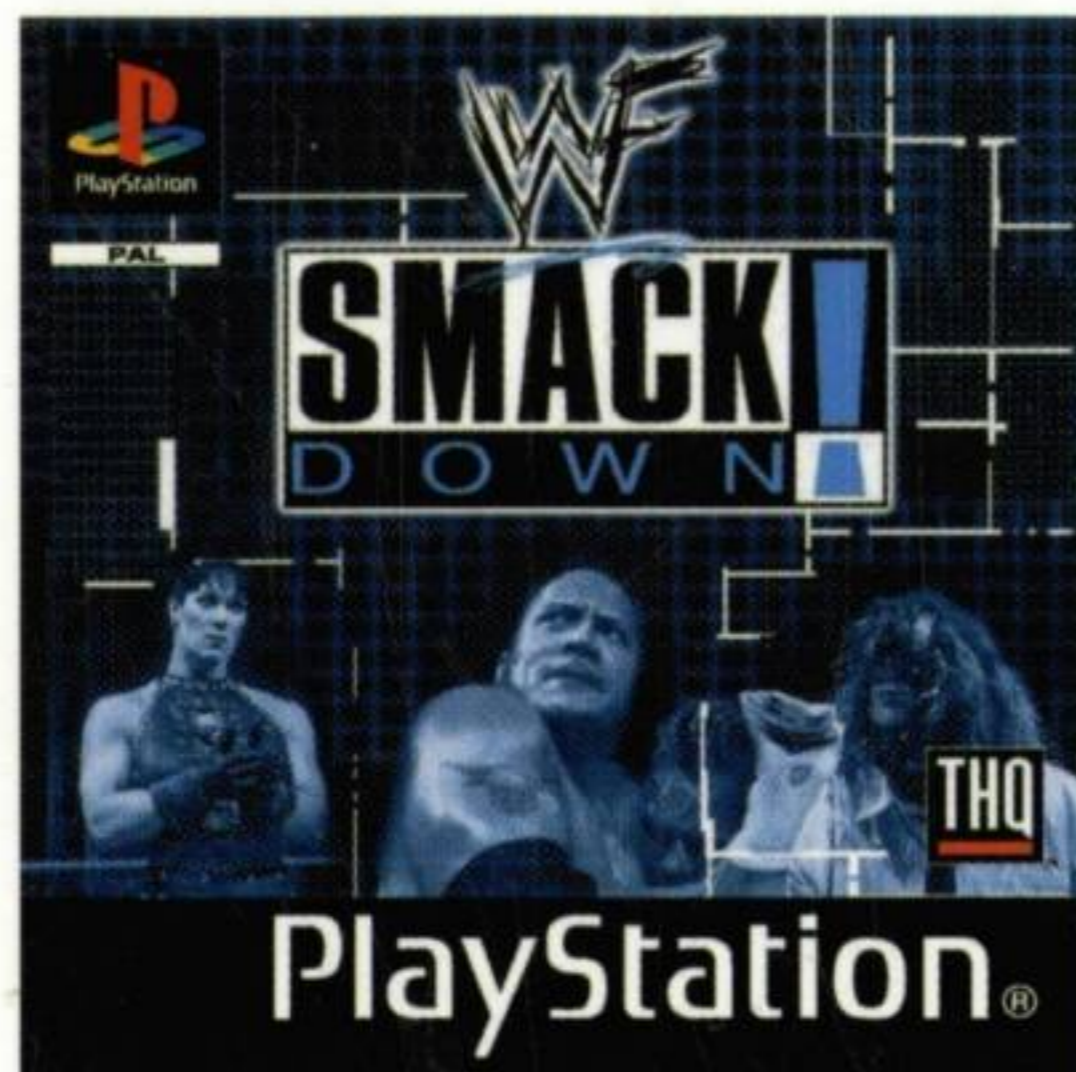
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games of the month

PlayStation



WWF Smackdown

- WWF Smackdown! is the finest, smoothest and most detailed wrestling game ever to grace the PlayStation.

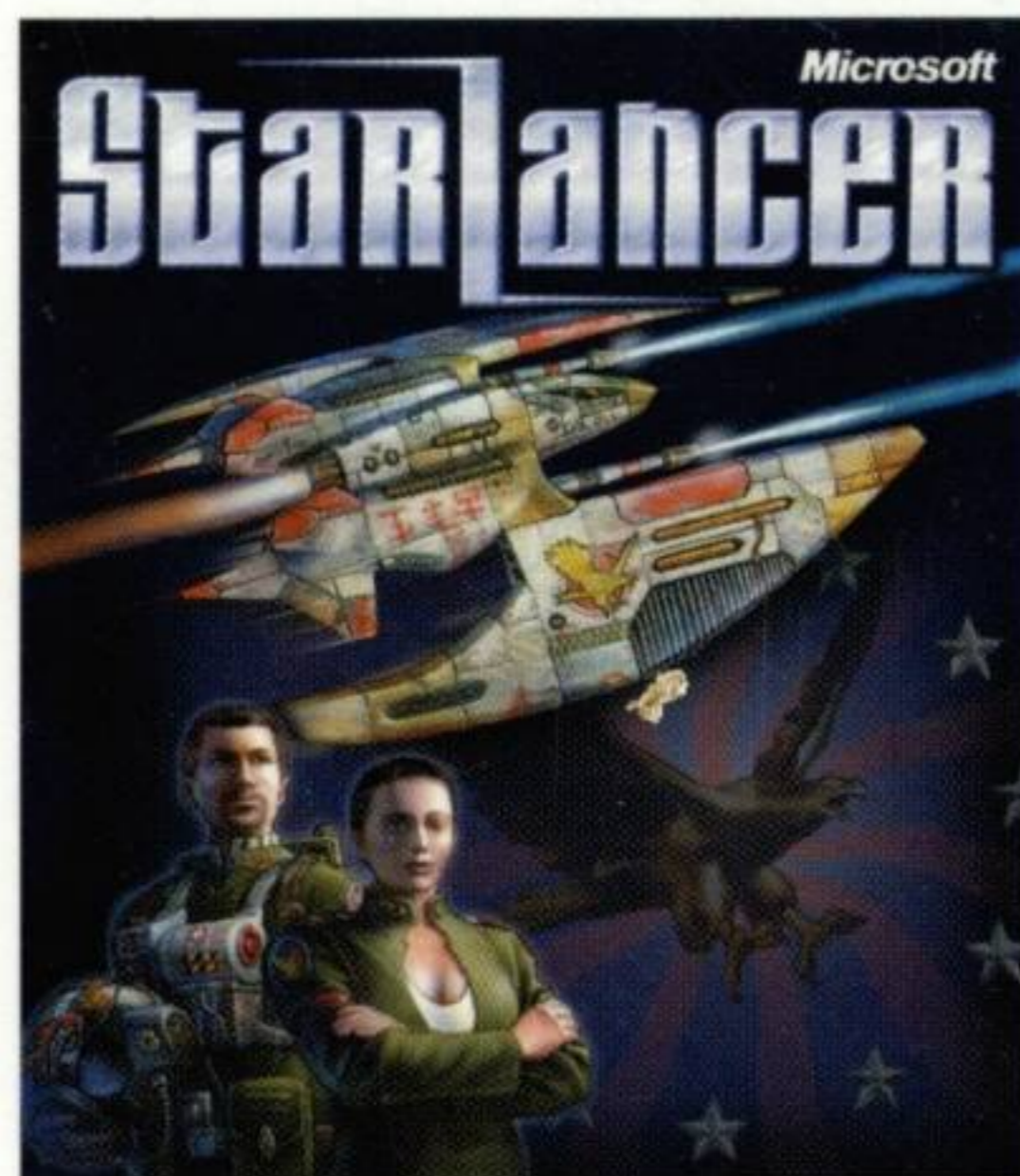
Dreamcast



Get Bass Fishing

- Played with the virtual fishing rod accessory, this is the most innovative video game ever created!

PC



Starlancer

- A gripping space combat game that blends a dramatic story with intense action.

Game Boy Color



Warioland 3

- Within the mysterious music box world that Wario has been dragged into, explore 25 huge levels to collect the hidden treasures.



excessive choice of games

Virgin

megastores

DANGEROUSLY ENTERTAINING