A DIFFERENT KIND OF MEGA DRIVE MAG

MEGA ACTION

WITH MEGA CD TOO!

JANUARY 94
ISSUE 9 £1.75

100% MEGADRIVE

GREATEST HEAVYWEIGHTS

Knockout review inside

Complete guide to Aladdin

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In depth football games

GAMES FEATURED: Microcosm, Dune 2, Aero the Acrobat, Charles Barkley, Wonderdog, Toejam & Earl 2 and many more! Plus interview with games champ Danny Curley

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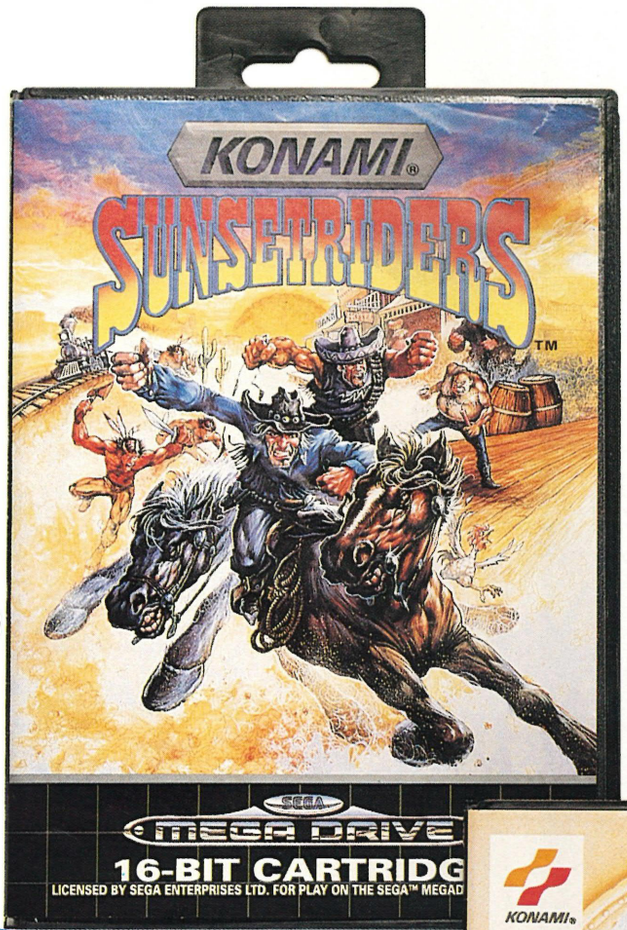
KONA

SUNSETRIDERS

It has obviously had a lot of attention paid to every aspect of its production... it's superb.
MEGATECH 87%
Very impressive SEGA PRO 87%



ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

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Good clean amphibious fun. SEGA PRO 87%

Turtles really is a visually stunning game

MEGA TECH 87%

TINY TOON Adventures Buster's Hidden Treasure™

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a fast paced platform game that is similar to Sonic, but....better fun.

Mega Drive Advanced Gaming 93%

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MEGA

Welcome

To the New Year. Only time will tell what exciting things 1994 will have in store for us but what better way to start it off than this latest issue of Mega Action. Inside we have all the very latest from both the cartridge and CD formats including a no holds barred review of our cover story – Greatest Heavyweights. Is it a knockout or is it Frank Bruno? Also check out the football feature if you're mad about soccer. The future couldn't be brighter.

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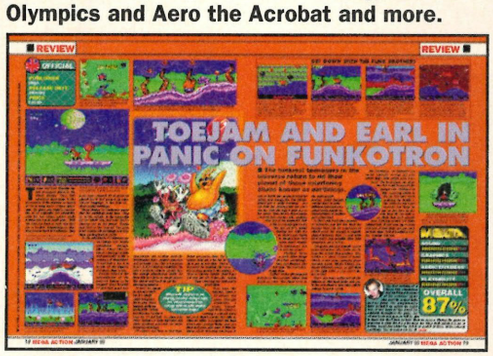
WORLD NEWS

6 If it's news it's bound to be here. Read all about the latest Video Game Ratings that may affect what you can play in the future. The full story is exposed for all to see. Also learn the first things about Mortal Kombat 2. Has a sequel ever been more eagerly awaited? There's also news on Sonic the Hedgehog videos which will save you getting up on Sunday morning plus lots more.

REVIEWS

12 There are plenty of games about this month to spend all that Christmas cash on. Read all about The Greatest Heavyweights, Toe Jam and Earl 2, Boxing Legends Of The Ring, Winter Olympics and Aero the Acrobat and more.



ON THE OTHER HAND

17 Interactive movies are the focus point of this month's opinion section. Are Night-Trap and the like really the way forward for video games today or is it just an excuse to stray away from the norm with substandard products.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE

30 If you're new to the world of Sega it may be that you aren't aware of all the goodies you can attach to your piece of black magic. Everything imaginable is placed under the Mega Action microscope.

CD REVIEWS

37 We've got so many new CD games in this month we've now devoted an entire section to the Mega CD and all the quality products that are constantly being released for the system. Featured this month are full reviews of Puggsy from Psygnosis, Bram Stoker's Dracula from Sony, Joe Montana NFL Football from Sega, Son of Chuck from Core Design and finally the eagerly awaited Microcosm from Psygnosis. They're all in there and given the full Mega Action review treatment. Are they worth the money or should you generally plump for the cartridge version? Read what our reviewers think about the improvements.

CHARLES BARKLEY

50 National Basketball Association superstar Charles Barkley is about to appear in his very own game with a little help from Accolade.

Mega Action takes a first glance at what's going to happen and what the guys there want to include in this whole new ball game for the Mega Drive. We sent Jason out and about to dig the dirt on one of America's favourite ball players.

OVER THE EDGE

53 This month sees the introduction of a new regular section. Over the Edge examines all things funky and shows that there is more to life than your console. Fashion, gossip, hi-tech toys are all featured so try it out. Brad Burton is the guy in charge of things so drop him a line and let him know what you think of OTE at the Mega Action address.

CONTENTS

CASHING IN ON THE CUP 60

Also on the feature front we let good old Jason Spiller have a ponder over the current football game market on the Mega Drive. With the rush on for everybody to buy FIFA Soccer, is it worth examining your options before you plump for the obvious choice? Jason takes a good long look at the other titles to think about before making a choice.

PREVIEWS 64

This month we take an early look at Tin Head, the new cartridge offering from the kings of the sim, MicroProse. Will it be the best new thing to hot the Mega Drive market. You can only find out by turning straight to this preview. Remember, Mega Action is the first place to look for all the hottest products.

MANGA MANIA 68

There's no disputing the popularity of the Japanese animation movie phenomenom currently sweeping the nation. Violent, controversial sometimes completely over the top Manga is here and is definitely here to stay for the foreseable future. We take a look at the latest and greatest titles that you can find by popping down to your friendly, local video store. Jason Sharples is our very special guest who gives you all the low-down on what's worth having and what isn't. Turn now to page 68 to find out all about it.

LETTERS 70

If you have something you want to get off your chest. Or if you have a burning question you just need to ask someone then the pages of Mega Jive is the place to do so. All questions answered, no questions asked. Get your mail in the

DR BARRY DIABLO 72

From outer space (or at least the very end of the number 108 bus route) comes the amazing advice of the creature some people call Dr. Barry Diablo.

ALADDIN GUIDE 74

Barry Diablo does the business once again with this absolutely huge player's guide to Disney's Aladdin smash hit title.

MEGA WORKSHOP 80

The Mega Workshop is our unique section where we disect a genre of game and weigh up its pros and cons against others of its ilk. This month Film Licences are the games in question. Are they all just bog-standard platform games that nobody likes or are they just what the doctor ordered? Moneyspinners or worthwhile purchases? Back to the Future III, Predator, Batman, Indiana Jones, Jurassic Park and many, many more can be found in this extensive guide to all things big screen courtesy of our very own David.

THANKS THIS MONTH: Sarah McLachlan for being so chilled out its unbelievable, Dave Longworth for being a friend in deed, Brad Burton for his free swimming lessons, the weather, not, and the Photoshop Wow book.

TYPOGRAPHY AND DESIGN THIS MONTH: Adobe Dimensions, Photoshop, Illustrator, Quark Express. Futura, **Franklin Gothic**, Palatino, Helvetica and Zapf Dingbats, swimmmmingpooltastic.

A-Z of Jan '94

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Dune 2 16
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Joe Montana 40
Legends of the 12
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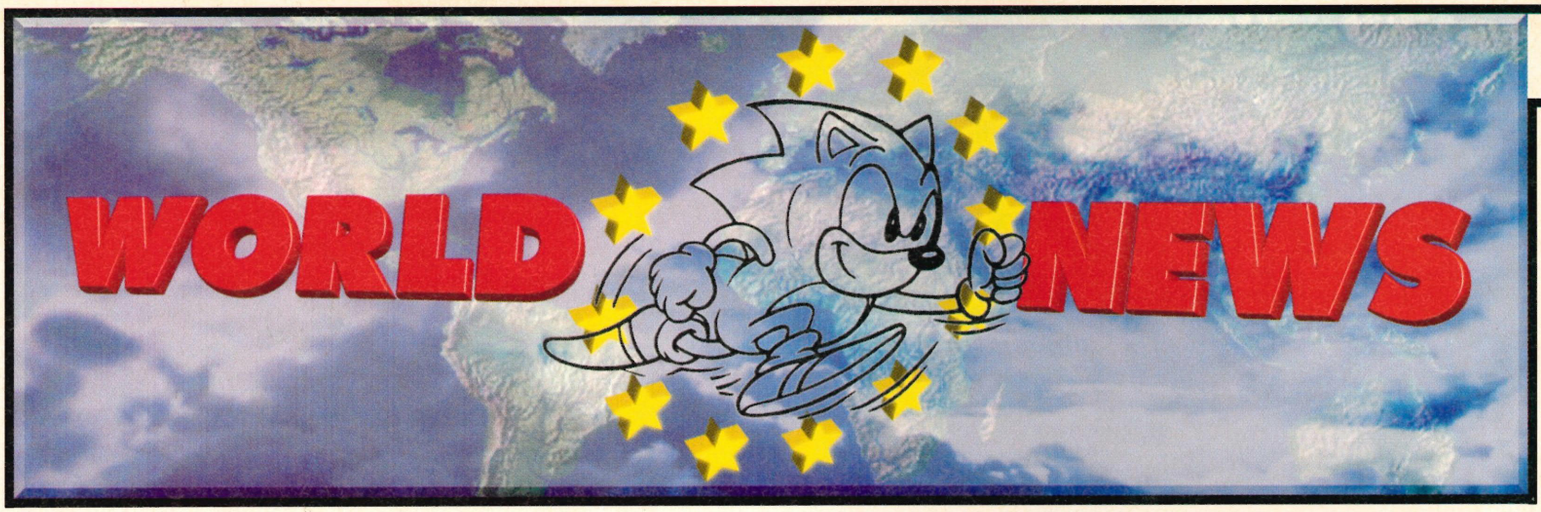
Microcosm 46

▲ *Puggsy is one of the five CD reviews featured in this months Mega CD section. Check out the review on page 46.*

Puggsy 48

▲ *Baby Chuck is back for more this time on a CD version. Is there any noticeable improvements over the cart version.*

Son of Chuck 18
Toe Jam & Earl 2 64
Tin Head 28
Winter Olympics 42
Wonderdog 11



Welcome

Well it's a whole new year and now is probably as good a time as any to introduce myself seeing as I'm new here. I'm Paul and I'm the one who gets to put my feet up while everybody else works seven days a week until nine at night to make sure Mega Action makes it to the shops. Well maybe I don't. Also new to the team is Production guy Ian Lynch. In the meantime David Longworth departs to the wonderful world of PC Action at the end of this issue and we wish him well.

Send your farewells to the usual address (even though he's only moving about eight feet!).

Anyway it's a new start in more ways than one. Time will tell how successful Sega has been over the festive period but chances are they'll have done very well for themselves indeed. There are plenty of massive games to look forward to this year so stay patient and we'll get the reviews before everyone else as soon as we can.

On the Mega Action front we're nine months old this issue. That's longer than a football season that is. Which brings us nicely on to the subject of this month's special feature which is all about Soccer and the Mega Drive. So watch out for that one later on. There are plenty more goodies spread thickly throughout so you're assured of a good read.

In the meantime we want you to tell us what you'd like to see in MA. Get your thoughts down on a bit of paper. It's easier to provide what you want if we know what you want! Rest assured, no letters get binned. We make sure weread 'em all before that happens! Time to be off until next month. See ya.

More Mortal Mayhem

If you've been poking around the arcades of late you may have happened across one of the few versions of Mortal Kombat 2 that are knocking about. Inevitably a conversion will soon be under way but news of the developers is being kept top secret until a later date.

Anyway the game itself follows the same basic gist but there are now 12 characters you can choose from including all the old favourites plus some new nasties and plenty more locations. There's an awful lot of blood flying about and several new death moves but we'll reveal much more in Over the Edge next month.

As for the Mega Drive version, well it'll be a while off yet as it's hardly touched down on the street yet, but remember where you read it first!

▼ *The original Mortal Kombat is still selling amazingly across all formats. No doubt a sequel will do the same.*

CODE CORNER

Good news for all Mega Drive owners as those cartridge kings from Warwickshire have announced a packed 1994 release schedule. Starting off with Tennis All-Stars, due to hit the shelves in April. Another five releases are planned at regular intervals throughout the year.

Having just had an amazingly successful year with releases of Micro Machines and Fantastic Dizzy they look set to storm the charts for the next 12 months as well.

Set for Autumn is Smaartvark! This is a new character developed by the Codeys who hopefully will continue on and become as successful as some of their other big names. Smaartvark is actually a TV repair-aardvark (obviously!) who actually gets inside your TV and sorts the job out from in there even though there are countless gremlins out to spoil your merry fun.

It all sounds a bit mad to us but we'll show you more as soon as we have it in. In the meantime take a good long look at these snapshots to keep you going.

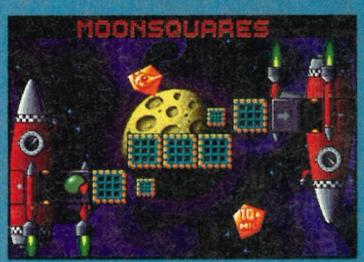
As far away as October Psycho Pinball is set to smash onto the MD in fine style. Created by the same boys responsible for Micro Machines, Psycho Pinball will apparently take video pinball to a new height in cartridge playability.

There will be six tables in the final version and these can be played by one or two people. Wild West, Moon Shot, Under Sea, Safari, Future Fair and Ghost Town are all supplied for your finger flipping fun.

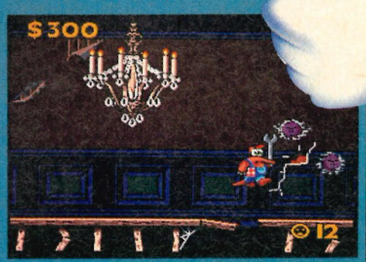
There is a fair bit of competition in the pinball market at the moment so it will be interesting to see how it fairs later on. Once again, wait for more and you'll be rewarded.

Master Sports is a new series CodeMasters are launching. These are sports games that will feature TV-style presentation and commentators (sort of like the EA Sports stuff we've already seen no doubt). The first game to undergo this treatment will be World Soccer '94, which you can read more about in the footy feature on pages 61-4 of this issue.

▲ *The cute old Smaartvark is a whole new breed of television repair man.*

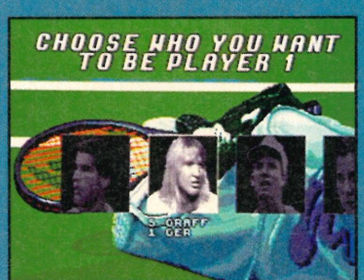


▲ *Yes, they look like platforms to us. Wait for a full reveiw as soon as possible.*



▲ *Plenty of varied scenery make things more interesting to get through.*

▲ *Smaartvark gets zapped by one of the many traps in the new game from CodeMasters.*



▲ *Tennis All-stars sees famous players like Steffi Graf take their place on court.*

▲ *An on court shot shows that the graphics are detailed. What's the game like though?*

Code of Honour

A general Code of Practice is to be introduced by members of the European Leisure Software Publishers. This will involve software houses imposing voluntary software classification and guidelines on game content that should, if all goes well be introduced by May 1st.

Games across every format will recieve a rating based around four separate age brackets – Up to 10, 10-14, 15-17 and 18 and over which will be displayed on each package. Under this new system, publishers in Europe are requested to fill in a questionnaire providing facts about their product and which age category they think it should go into. Once all this formality is out of the way the Video Standards Council will then make the final decision on the rating.

ELSPA chairman Mark Strachan was quoted as saying "It's great that the industry, as a body, decided that self-regulation was the right the thing. We need to show – not only in the UK but in Europe as well – that we are a responsible industry."

Write in and let us know your feelings on software censorship. Has this move just come about because of recent press hysteria or is it a natural step forward.

Let us know what you think and we'll print a selection of your best replies in the Letters section over the next few months.

Crash Course

The Sonic goodie bandwagon rolls on. We've already told you about the videos now, would you believe it, the Sonic bicycle helmet is here. As you can see from the photo it's a bit loud and it would take a special kind of guy to have the bottle to wear one.

There's no denying that this is one snazzy piece of cycling equipment that will get you noticed out there.

Apparently the apparatus is light-weight and well ventilated with fully adjustable straps and interchangeable padding to make things totally safe. Good to know.

Oxford Products, the company behind it are offering a free 12 month crash damage warranty which means if the helmet is damaged in an accident it will be replaced completely free of charge. Good eh?

Anyway if you're interested the Sonic bicycle helmet comes in Junior, Adult and Fury sizes and retails from £24.95. Contact Oxford Products on 0865 841400 for further details.

He's mad and when he's mad he is er.. seven feet tall and will rip your head clean off. Nice chap.

Video Cutie

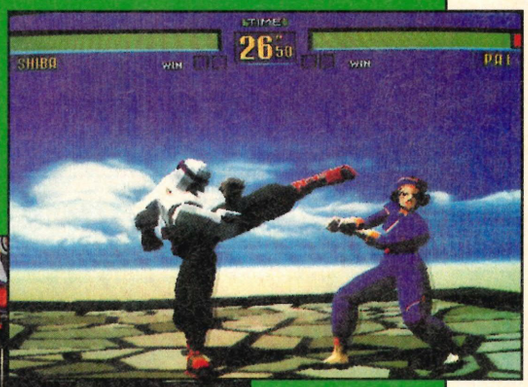
If you've been tuning in to Channel 4 on a Sunday morning at 9am (and we're sure loads of you have been doing) then you'll have been watching the Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog. Already a monster smash all across the USA it may seem a little harsh that he's been relegated to such a low-key spot.

If you really can't get up early on a Sunday then help is at hand as Sonic is all set to appear on video format. The tape will feature over one hour of spiky action that you can enjoy at any hour of the day. If you have every other piece of memorabilia then this is definitey collectable. It would also make the ideal present for younger children. You should be able to get your hands on it at any decent video shop in your area.

If you can't get hold of Sonic the Video then you can send off for it to the wonderful Console Plus for a mere £8.50 plus 75p p&p. They can be found at 218 Bradford Road, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF17 6JF. Or Telephone 0924 456802 for further details if you need some assistance with your order..

Streetfighter Too?

Ok admitidly it is difficult to improve on what appears to be the perfect game but Sega seem to have Streetfighter running for cover. Virtua Fighter lets you take control of an almost life-size sprite to the death.



Already making millions of Yen in Japan Virtua Fighting is set to hit our shores any day now. It will probably be priced around the same mark as the Virtua racing coin-op. Get saving!

Seen in the Japanese arcades and already attracting much interest over here in Europe is the latest fighting game to hit the big screen.

Designed by the same team that brought you Virtua Racing the game named Virtua Fighters is polygon based and will also feature a unique link up system allowing multi player input. How this works is as yet unclear (for more info see Over The Edge) but I would hazard a guess at it using a tournament style of play like the now popular Streetfighter 2 version.

Players are simply drawn up against each other and the winner moves on to another controller and another match.

Graphics, just like the Virtua Racing engine are stunning and the speed is fantastic. The large screen really brings the characters to life with film quality screen updates.

It looks like the game will appear over here in our arcades in a few months and no doubt will see the Mega Drive conversion treatment pretty soon after. Rumours that the game is being developed on Sega's Saturn console are as yet unconfirmed by sources. It would be nice.

Game for Anything

The UK's largest game store has just been opened in Liverpool by Alan Hanson. The Liverpool hero played winners of a Liverpool Echo competition at FIFA Soccer, while Nintendo champion Metro took on all challengers at Street Fighter II. Alan had been practising his FIFA skills all week, and his 12-year-old son could still beat him, he said. But he was more concerned about his PGA Tour Golf record, golf being his latest passion. Super Mario was there too, while over in Nottingham, Mister Blobby was opening another record breaking Game store.

These specialist game stores have been wantonly vandalised by a graffiti artist depicting Sonics and Marios and feature an amazing number of monitors – 62 in Liverpool – many with games for their customers to play. The store was actually too big for the range of games around at the moment said Neil Taylor, Game Managing Director, so a large back room remains available for special launches and six more floors for future expansion.

The second biggest games retailer in the country is opening 11 stores before Christmas, three of which will be (equally) the largest in the UK, with plans for a further 50 stores in the New Year aiming to reach 200 in the next two years. "With the games departments of music stores, the staff are there primarily because they like music," said David Wilson, buyer for Game, "whereas our staff are gamesplayers."

Game pride themselves on their value for money products, with a special budget section including a £19.99 range and a full selection of accessories. "Kids come here to spend their pocket money," said David Wilson, "and if they can't afford a game then they want to go away with a joystick or a magazine." The Liverpool store also have a wide range of board games for Christmas.

THANK YOU

Thanks must go the following for supplying software;

Game Tech
Tel: 061 831 7857

Bits 'n' Pieces
Tel: 0625 501810

HIGH SCORE

It's the beginning of the year and just what have those software developers got in store for us through 1994? Well we phoned around, begged, stole (only kidding Officer) and borrowed all the information we could to bring you some of the best releases that are going to be coming your way over the next couple of months.

Judging by current trends, the commitment to Mega CD certainly seems to have been made by most of the developers out there now so it would seem a good time to start considering purchasing one of these units for yourself. Check your local shops for some High Street specials now!

DEMOLITION MAN

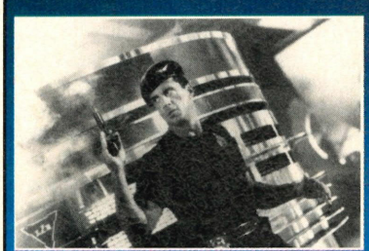
Virgin

Coming from the same team that brought you Aladdin, this film licence has been developed on PC and is currently being converted for the Mega CD. The game begins in good old LA and uses shooting gallery style action with you simply pointing the weapon in the desired direction to eliminate on-screen menaces.

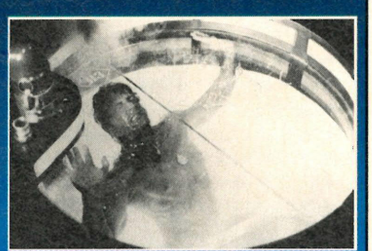
Extra footage was shot on set during the filming of the movie specially for the game. Accuracy to the film plot is second to none. Hand to hand combat has been suggested for the game and it seems to be favouring a side-on *Streetfighter* view of the action.

The player is taken through various scenes of the plot, carefully rendered in 3-D static sections, where conflicts take place. Of course all the while the action is hotting up there's constant background music, again true to the flavour of the film, presented in glorious stereo.

Sound effects have been used from the movie soundtrack. So have certain dialogue sequences, keeping the quick fire flavour of Stallone and Snipes featuring predominately in the film. This game is in its very early stages and it may be some time before you see some definite screen shots so rather than take some other dubious format we've dug out some nice movie shots foryou to drool over. Rest assured though, Mega Action will be there to cover any further developments in this massive film license!



▲ *Demolition Man is currently being developed on all formats, rather the norm now.*



▲ *The game has recieved the same attention that was adorned upon Aladdin.*

SPEED RACER

Accolade

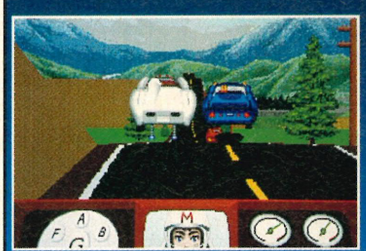
Out on PC and by all accounts selling very well indeed, this game is based upon the American fifties cartoon classic *Speed Racer.* For those of you who are not aware, this classic is currently having a cult revival on MTV and airs twice a day.

The game sees you in the Mach 5, a revolutionary design of racing car pitting your wits 'wacky racer' style against other race contestants. At your disposal are such devices as oil slicks, powerful springs that project the car skyward and the odd chopper blade to cut through the traffic.

You can choose two types of car, the Mach 5 or the Shooting Star, as Ranger X, the deadly opponent. Both have special devices fitted to the race car. Race 16 deadly opponents, all based on the cartoon characters or go head to head split screen.

As you race, the money you win allows for various updates to the car. These can increase grip, making the car more resilient or you can just go for increased speed.

The whole game is presented in cartoon style and you constantly interact with key characters via the communication screen on the dashboard. This gives valuable info on your rivals. The game is currently being transformed into a Mega Drive cartridge so we look forward to seeing a bit more very soon, watch this space!



▲ *Race against a backdrop of twisty, windy roads in an attempt to win some earnings.*

▲ *Other road users can be dealt with rather harshly. The blue car has had it.*

VIRTUA RACING

SEGA

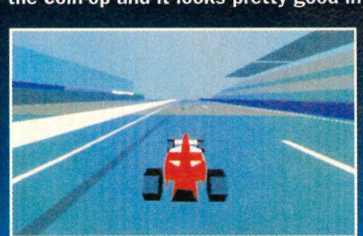
It's been a long time coming and has been the topic of conversation ever since Mega Action was the very first magazine to show it to you outside Japan. We were privvy to a good look at the game thanks mainly to our Japanese contacts and since then the game has undergone some serious marketing changes.

Firstly the cost of the special processor which powers the game has been cause for some concern. Sega are toying with the idea of selling you the DSP or, as it will be known, SVP (Sega Virtua Processor?) as a separate plug through unit allowing cost reductions. Buy once and use with all the planned *Virtua* releases.

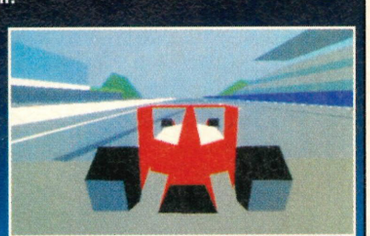
Other areas of contention were the memory size. We first suspected the total Meg to be something around 32 MBits but recent sources have confirmed a capacity of the standard 16meg. This must mean the power of the SVP is something to be reckoned with as game speed is well up to the coin-op standards. There are three courses to race and they get progressively harder as you get better.

It would be nice to say that Sega are planning on releasing a proper steering column for the game but ah well one can dream. No link up facility has been added and this is a real let down for multi racers. The arcade success can be pinned down to the graphics admittedly, but a great selling point has to have been the fact that up to eight could race on a course at one time.

Retained in the game, though, is the cockpit viewing facility which allows the road car to be seen from right inside the cockpit, just behind or way above from a imaginary following helicopter. Of course the pit scenes still remain with care and attention lavished on your car by the albeit simplified (graphic wise) crew. Fairgrounds, bridges and other cars move as swiftly as the coin-op and it looks pretty good in all.



▲ *As fast as the arcade version this humble console offering is wild stuff indeed.*



▲ *Using the SVP chip the game can run complex images at break-neck speed.*

E FOR '94?

JAMMIT
Virgin

Another from Virgin that is causing quite a stir at the moment is their basketball game, *Jammit*. Now there's nothing new in another game of basketball being translated onto the Mega Drive but what makes this so different is the fact that no official rules exist for this console game. It seems street basketball is very different from the glossy image we see on Sky or Cable TV.

The roots of the game provide a rougher edge with spitting, kneeing and even punching all part of prising open a way to the basket. Famous stars of today have all played on the scene and the classic movie 'White Men Can't Jump' just about sums up the whole thang.

Jammit is not quite so ruthless but still lets you see the other side of the coin with some more street-wise characters to play with. When that all important hoop has been committed to, the action zooms in to show the outcome. Trick shots and special hoops are all possible and mastering the techniques makes for a very satisfying experience indeed.

Control methods are a little sketchy at the moment and rumour has it that the game does not take advantage of the Sega or EA four player tap which is a shame as it looks like other games, including Charles Barkley from Accolade, will. We'll keep you informed of course.

▲ *It's two on two with a varied selection of players to choose from, including a girlie.*

▲ *The game swithches to close-up once you have jumped high for the hoop.*

ANOTHER WORLD CD
Virgin

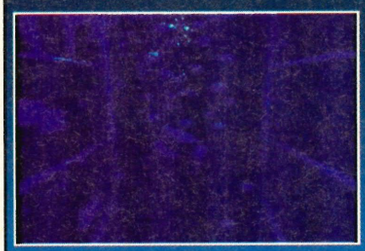
This is without doubt one of the all time classic games. It has since been translated onto every format from Apple Mac to Amiga and still provides a challenge even now.

Programmed by the French team Delphine the game combines strategy, arcade action and simulation to produce a strange and bizarre environment for you to explore. The game has now received the CD treatment and boasts new puzzles and better graphics but that's not all!

There are, in fact, two games on one CD. *Another World 2* provides a new experience with the story carrying on while you take control of Buddy. He appeared in the first adventure as an alien who'd chosen to help you through the ordeal and eventually help you get free.

New creatures are more freakish and threatening than before and each have individual characteristics. The game's been cleverly designed to provide two separate adventures which can be completed either individually or as one long quest.

If you have played *Another World*, and know it inside out, then never fear! The game allows instant access to the second part. New soundtracks create an atmosphere similar to that found in *Flashback* so this should be good!



▲ *The intro sequences make for sme proper cinematic techniques. Still amazing.*

▲ *Trapped in another dimension the nuclear reaction has really left you high and dry.*

TERMINATOR CD
Virgin

The Terminator, on cartridge, was a great success and Virgin, ever keen to keep the ball rolling, are developing a CD version. Kyle Reese, the warrior of the future, has returned to the past to ensure the survival of mankind.

You must face the streets of Los Angeles in a post apocalyptic nightmare, working your way through various cyborg generations (T-500's) before coming face to face with the terrifying might of the Terminator T-800. (Later to be replaced by the T-1000, a more down to earth kinda guy).

The enhancements to the game lie in greater weapon selection, superbly rendered backdrops and many many more levels for you to complete. Improvements don't just stop at the visuals though, as the game boasts a full stereo soundtrack that truly creates an atmosphere of doom.

Sequences from the film have been digitised and implemented into the game with the now famous 'holocaust' playground sequence included in all it's foreboding glory.

The *Terminator* movie was one of the most sucessful science fiction movies in its time and was surprisingly shot on a very low budget. The sequel was of course another matter completely and definitely wasn't as good.

▲ *Nice place eh? These program chappies have a great sense of humour you see.*

▲ *Level upon level of twisty windy cyborg infested danger zones for you to play in.*

DRAGON
Virgin

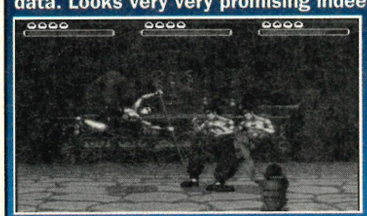
We mentioned this in the news the month before last and since then things have really been moving on the development side at Virgin. Based on the film (which is playing in most cinemas at the moment) the game sees you playing the young Bruce Lee as he battles through level upon level of martial madness.

Up to three players can fight on screen at once with player one taking on two opponents or both player one and player two fighting against each other or even together against the third assailant.

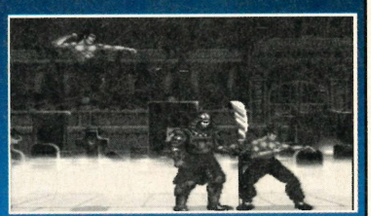
There are 36 different moves to master. Bruce's personal tutor Yip Man is on hand to help you through the co-ordination of them. He will not only show you the basics but also gives an insight into these all important special moves so you have a fighting chance of survival.

Rumour has it that certain members of the Triads were used as extras during some of the filming and the fights were said to have bordered on reality. All this frenzied action has been translated onto the screen for you to enjoy and the three player option should really make this game one to look out for.

The game also boasts twice as many animation frames than any other beat 'em-up and crammed into the humble 16 meg cartridge is some 30 Mbits of data. Looks very very promising indeed.



▲ *The on screen mayhem should apeal to all you streetfighting heroes out there.*



▲ *Ok it should be the Panto season by now so ... "Behind You!" Sigh.*

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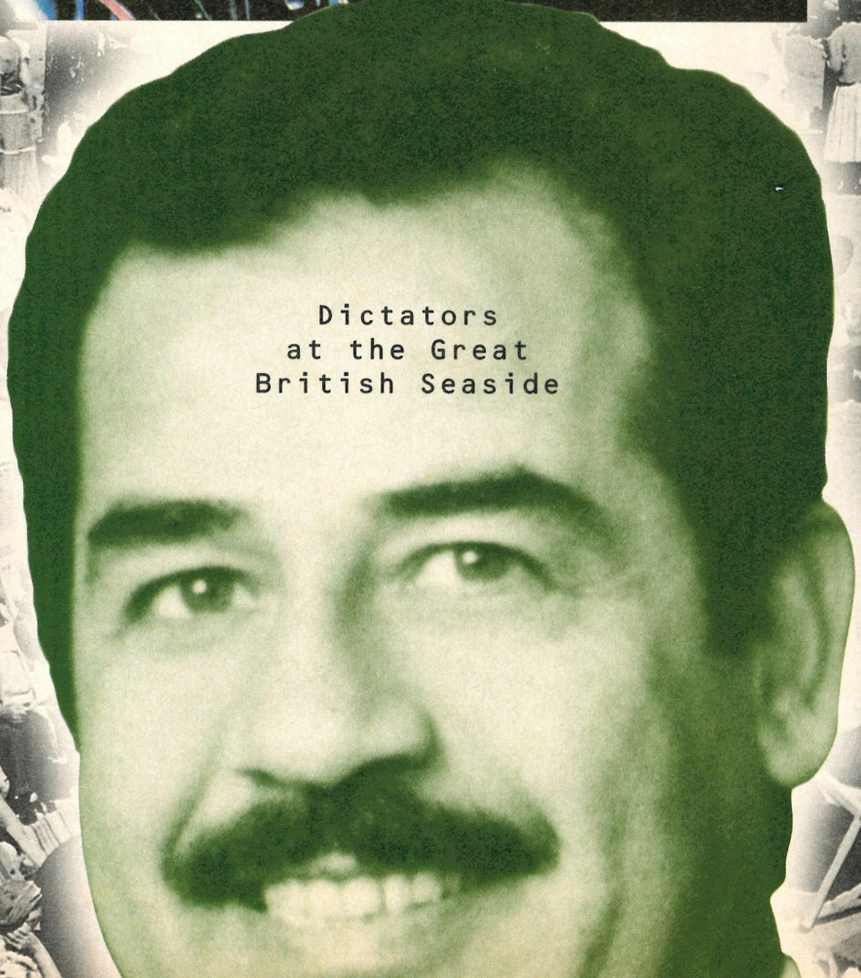
Dictators
at the Great
British Seaside



Virgin

№4 Saddam Hussein at Cromer

ON THE OTHER HAND...

The old quesion, a new answer. What's the future of gaming? And we're not talking about Virtual Reality or 32 bit machines. The future is interactive movies.

So you think you've seen film footage on CD before in games like *Night Trap* and the intro sequences of *Puggsy* and *Microcosm*? You've heard how the programmers of *Jurassic Park* had access to original dinosaur drawings and how Sylvester Stallone spent two days filming special scenes for his *Demolition Man* game tie-in.

Well that was nothing. In the States now the first interactive movie games are being filmed. And on the set of *Ground Zero Texas*, next to the director, Dwight H. Little of *Halloween 4* fame, sits a game designer, there to ensure the movie works on the Mega CD.

The set of *Ground Zero Texas* looks just like a Hollywood set, with more than 100 actors, technicians and cameramen spread around a fake Mexican town in Los Angeles. Links with the film business are strong and the stunt coordinator on 'Texas was responsible for *Rambo 3* and *Star Trek 2*.

"Ultimately I believe the business will be more like traditional Hollywood stuff," says Tom Zito of Digital Pictures, the film's producers. "We'll be doing interactive game shows, talk shows, dramas, sit coms."

But these are games, not films and there cannot be just one plot. Each scene has to be filmed several times and actors often have to talk to the camera, as you, the gamesplayer.

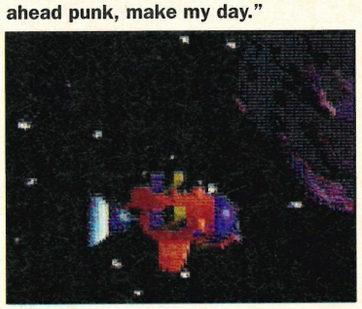
Sony Imagesoft, the publishers of 'Texas, have produced a number of movie tie-ins with digitised sequences from films and had varying degrees of success. *Night Trap* and *Sewer Shark* are best selling titles whilst *Cliffhanger* and *Last Action Hero* were eventually shelved, the latter due to Arnie's insistence that the game should be a non-violent beat'em-up. 'Sher right.

In *Sewer Shark*, the actor playing 'ghost' is a familiar character from American movies. He's the violent nutter, yelling at you even when he's standing right next to you. "Pretend it's a game and maybe it'll even be fun," he says. But the digitised sequences in these games are not fully interactive, they only appear as between level fillers and backgrounds. In Sony's Dracula CD, the movie set background is quite stunning, but is still only a great backdrop to what is, after all, a pretty mediocre game.

There are problems with the new technology. CDs can't store enough data for the movie pictures, so they end up grainy. Programmers are, though, working out new ways of storing the information.

Then there are the psychological effects. This summer Digital Pictures hired Ron Stein, the man who choreographed *Raging Bull* and *Rocky 3*, to direct *Prize Fighter*, a black and white interactive boxing game filmed from the point of view of the boxer. Focus groups found this was traumatizing for kids under the age of puberty, but the older kids loved it. Hence the age restrictions.

With designers constantly trying to find new ways of involving the games players, interactive movies are looking to be the way forward. And oldies are always suspicious of new products. Soon the day will come when Clint Eastwood will be pointing a Magnum 45 at your head, saying "Go ahead punk, make my day."



ELSPA PENGUIN CHARTS

This month's position	Last month's position		Publishing company	Price(£)
1	-	FIFA International Soccer	EA	44-99
2	3	Aladdin	Sega	49-99
3	1	Streetfigher 2 turno	Sega	59-99
4	-	Sonic Spinball	Sega	44-99
5	2	Mortal Kombat	Arena	49-99
6	4	F1	Domark	49-99
7	5	Jungle Strike	EA	44-99
8	6	Sonic the Hedgehog 2	Sega	39-99
9	8	Micro Machines	Code Masters	34-99
10	17	Road Rash 2	EA	39-99
11	-	Mickey and Donald	Sega	39-99
12	9	Jurassic Park	Sega	49-99
13	16	Ecco the Dolphin	Sega	39-99
14	-	WWF Royal Rumble	Flying Edge	49-99
15	7	Ultimate Soccer	Sega	44-99
16	-	Johm Madden 1994	EA	44-99
17	10	PGA Tour Golf 2	EA	39-99
18	13	Mega-lo-mania	Virgin	44-99
19	-	Cool Spot	Virgin	44-99
20	-	Alien 3/Predator 2	Telstar	39-99

ELSPA PENGUIN CHARTS

This month's position	Last month's position			
1	-	Sonic CD	Sega	44-99
2	-	Thunderhawk	Core Design	44-99
3	1	Night Trap	Sega	49-99
4	-	Sewer Shark	Sony Imagesoft	44-99
5	4	Ecco	Sega	44-99

Our choice

Our personal favourites, ones we played all day when we should have been writing the magazine.

Greatest Heavyweights	*Sega*
Tinhead	*MicroProse*
Chuck Rock 2	*Core Design*
Joe Montana	*Import*
FIFA Soccer	*EA*
Aero the Acrobat	*Sunsoft*
Dune 2	*Virgin*

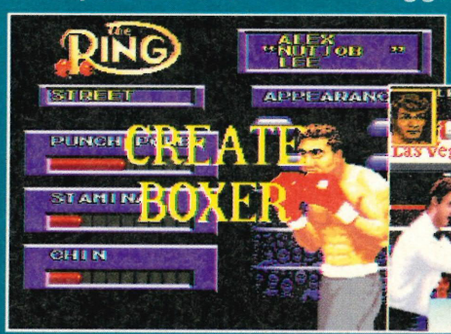
IMPORT

PUBLISHER
Electrobrain
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£44.99

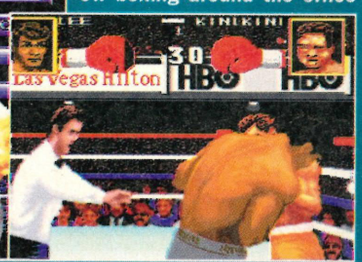
BOXIN OF TH

■ It's time to hop from foot to foot, duck and dive around the ring and punch the stuffing out of all and sundry!

The moment this cart arrived, the air began to fill with a strong whiff of testosterone and sweat. All those comments about how fantastic *Greatest Heavyweights* was (see pages 26-7) suddenly died down a bit.

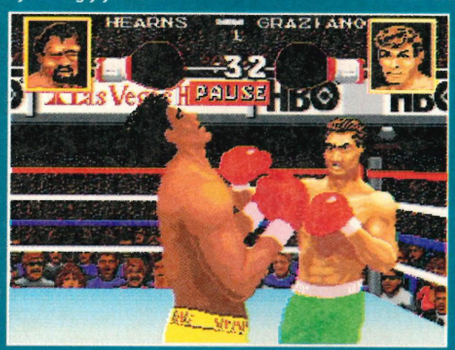


▲ *When you're going to get a beating it's best to name your guy after someone else.*



▲ *The front /back view changes after each round. The ref unfortunately doesn't go away.*

▼ *How badly you're doing is cleverly reflected by how ugly you look.*



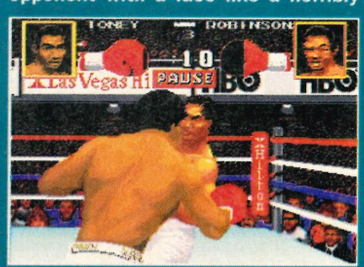
Legends... looks absolutely fantastic, in fact it's one of the best looking games ever. After one fight everyone began limbering up, talking in deep voices, and shadow boxing around the office in a pathetic attempt to demonstrate their manliness and fighting prowess.

Legends Of The Ring really does bring out all those deep seated, base urges to beat the living daylights out of your fellow man, just to show how great and hard and strong you really are.

It brings together eight legends of the noble art in one thrill-packed game. From Sugar Ray Robinson, to more modern day heroes such as James "Lights Out" Toney, each of the characters uses their authentic boxing style.

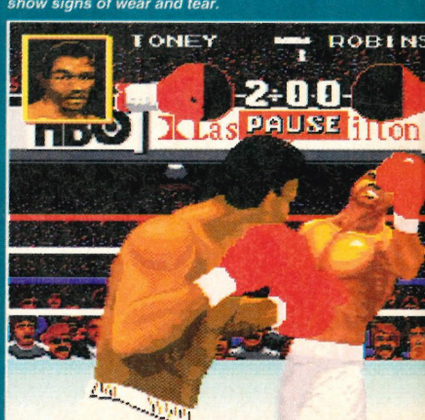
Marvellous Marvin Hagler for example favours right crosses to the head and body so special attention must be taken to block these particularly effective blows.

Each of the rock hard fighters has seven power packed punches and three super smackers. All these punches can be combined in lightning combinations of uppercuts, body blows and crosses to leave your opponent with a face like a horribly



▲ *It's desperation time for Robinson. Most fights tend not to last too long.*

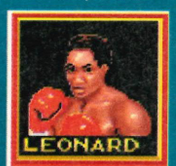
▼ *After only a minute both fighters begin to show signs of wear and tear.*



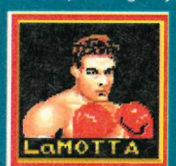
OUT FOR THE COUNT

Each of the eight Boxing Legends of the Ring has their own unique fighting style and favours a particular combination of punches. These will wear out opponents very quickly, so learn how to block them or else you are going to end up looking very ugly indeed.

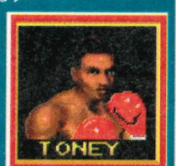
Rocky "The Rock" Garziano tends to favour the right cross to body.



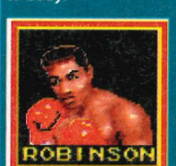
In his 36 wins, Sugar Ray made full use of a powerful right cross to the head.



Lamotta, the Raging Bull, was particluarly strong on his right uppercuts.



This guy is as hard as nails, concentrate on his body blows or you'll go down.



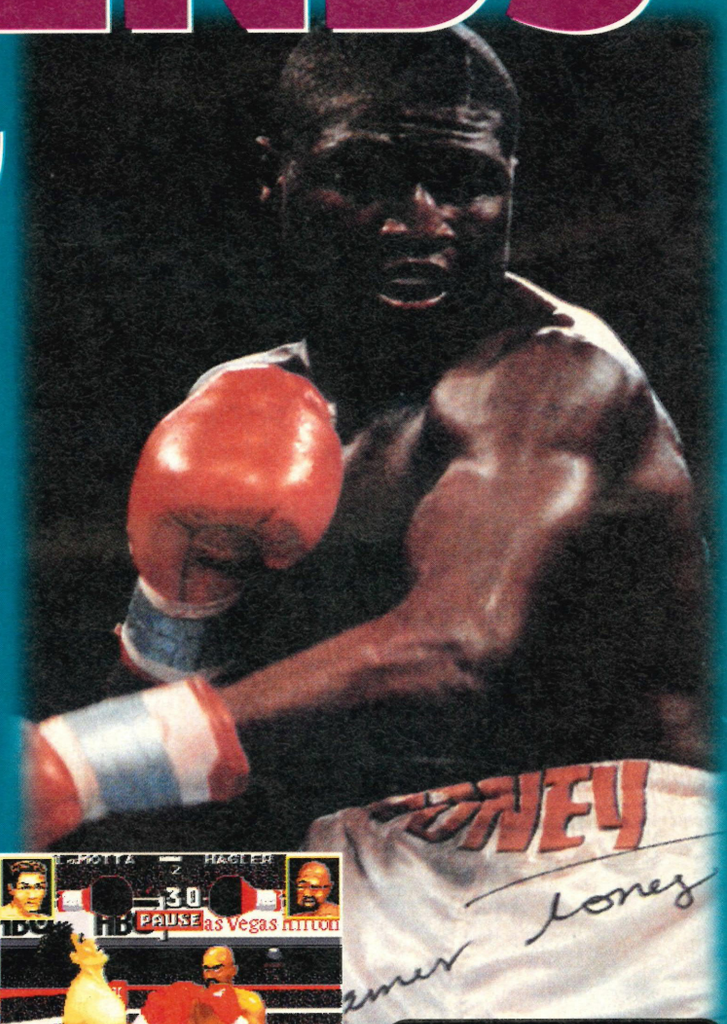
His 174 wins speak for themselves. Keep your guard well up or you're history.

Roberto "Hands of Stone" Duran loves his uppercuts, so beware challenger.

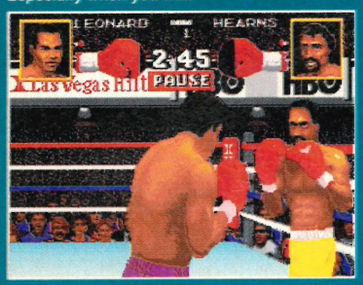
Marvelous Marvin aims high to break those glass jaws. So duck fool.

The Hitman is as mean as he looks, so be on your toes at absolutely all times.

IG LEGENDS E RING



▼ Replaying classic match ups can be fun. Especially when you win.



▼ Super Action's Alex Lee has always been a bit of a right cross head.

ripped sack of King Edwards smeared all over in tomato sauce.

Beware though, your character will also have to do a fair amount of bobbin', duckin' and a weavin' if you are to avoid the jaw shattering left hooks which are flying your way.

I have to say, despite it being politically and medically unsound, *Legends...* is an absolute dream to play. It's got huge, beautifully designed and animated sprites that move smoothly round the ring. The sprite collisions are also good enough to make you cringe with sympathy pain when all the blood, saliva and teeth spray out of your character's mouth. If you've taken a really serious battering then the screen starts to go dark as your one remaining brain cell prepares to call it a day and you collapse.

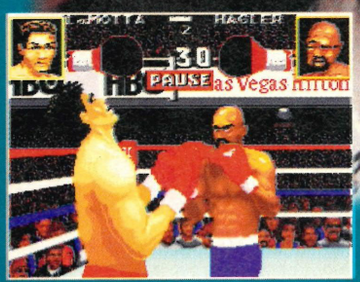
TIP

Spend time to perfect your blocks, ducks and tactical retreats because when your energy is low, you really need your defence.

You're not limited to using the eight pre-set characters however, this cart allows you to create your own boxing legend. Having chosen where the fighter has come from – the military, street or Olympics, you can assign different powers to each of your special punches. By enhancing certain moves you can perform devastating combinations which rapidly KO any foe in your way.

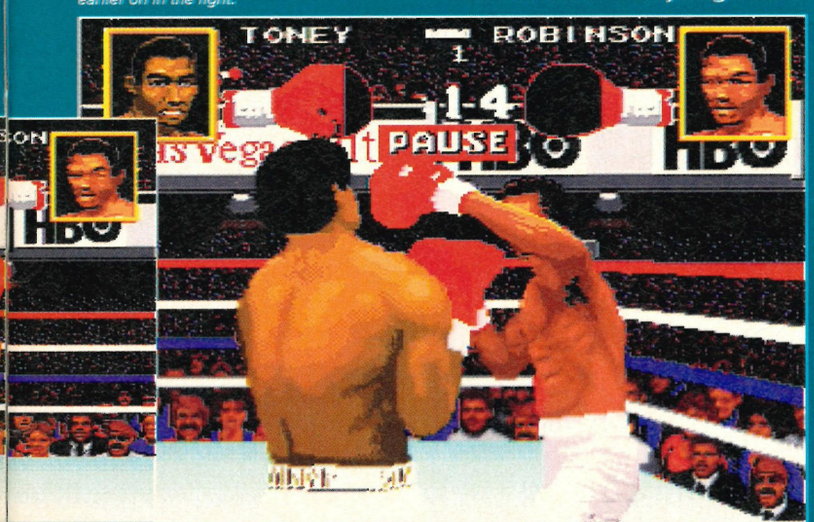
I'm not normally a fan of sports sims, most seem boring, but *Legends...* is fantastic. It's got large doses of all the elements that make a game great, nose-crushing action, strategy and gorgeous graphics.

The only thing is, well compare it with Greatest Heavyweights and you've got another Sensi/FIFA debate on your hands. Brilliant graphics and decent gameplay (Legends) verus decent graphics and brilliant gameplay (Greatest Heavyweights). Which one's for you will depend whether you like your boxers slim and nimble or heavy and hard hitting?



▲ Hagler won many great clashes, but he's getting his ass kicked here.

▼ Things weren't much better for Robinson earlier on in the fight.



Boxing has come under a lot of medical scrutiny recently due to the associated dangers of being repeatedly punched in the head! Maybe the boxing establishment should get hold of a copy of Legends... and let the real boxers fight it out on the Mega Drive. Legends of the Ring takes pride of place at the top of my pile of sports sim carts even if the others don't agree with me. It's much more fun than the real thing and a whole lot less painful! ■ **NEIL**

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL 88%

SILVER

■ The longest fight in history lasted 110 rounds, starting at 9.15pm and finishing at 4.34am. It was declared a no contest (void draw).

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Sunsoft
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£44.99

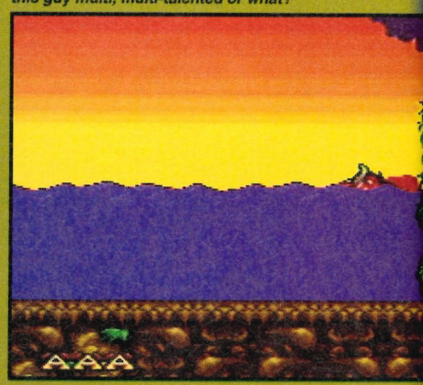
AERO TH ACROBAT

The smell of sawdust and circus animals greets you as you take your ringside seats in the big top.

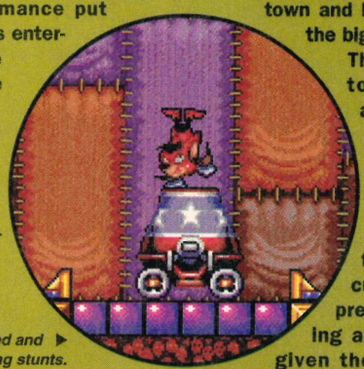
▲ If you land on the spikes it can only mean the extinction of the circus bat species.

▼ Bounce around the arena using the trampolines, but watch out for the odd floating clown.

▼ Aero proves that bats can swim as well. Is this guy multi, multi-talented or what?



There is nothing quite like the live performance put on by circus entertainers. The kids especially love the clowns, each trying to outdo the others in showing off and usually ending up on his butt in the sawdust. Well, care of Sunsoft, there's a new entertainer in town and he's hoping to take the big top by storm.



Watch Aero get bored and perform some amazing stunts. ▶

The latest character to step into the arena is guaranteed to totally thrill and amaze you. Now I'm sure this is the first acrobatic bat you've seen performing crazy circus stunts. Bats are pretty agile when flying about at dusk, and given the correct training (with the aid of a safety net) plus a smart little jump suit, they can enter the world of the big top. Aero's his name, acrobatics his game.

He can jump and spin in mid-air, fire himself from cannons and swing through the air just by using the trapeze.

In the game Sabotage has struck the Amusement World with the circus being first hit. Ex-clown, Edgar Ektor is out for revenge and will stop at nothing until the reputation of the circus has been ruined. It's been left up to Aero to rid the circus arena of all Edgar's henchmen. These horrors lurk about all over the shop, trying to spoil your progress.

TIP
Try to find the Wings icon on each level as these will help you to fly in your search for the hidden rooms and extra bonus points.

One of Edgar's evil characters is Zero the acrobat, a long time rival, who's never been as popular as Aero. All the bad guys use their circus skills to prevent Aero making it through the zones. Corrupt clowns, meddling magicians and fearsome fire eaters all roam about.

▲ Always remember, you must be a trained circus performer before attempting this kids.

Big Bertha the bouncy ballerina of the circus won't be letting you past in a hurry. ▶

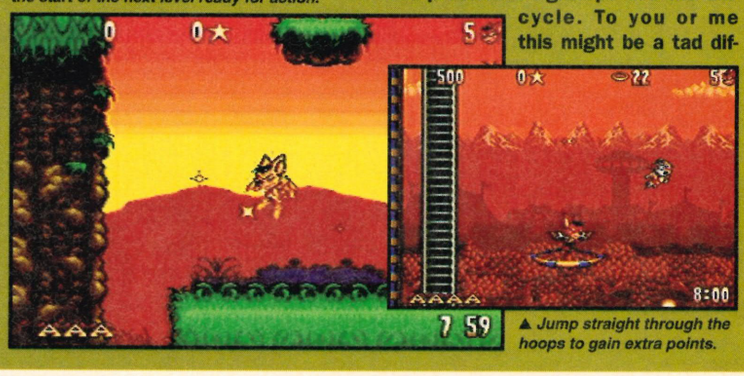
Aero has to wander around underneath the huge canopy, climbing over the various props used in the show and complete several tasks to guarantee the safety of the crowd. 'Circus World' consists of five acts, a final boss and a bonus level if the correct icon is found.

All the attractions found in circuses have been slipped into the game including the human cannon. In this case it's a bat cannon. When Aero lowers himself inside the massive chamber it's time for our acrobatic friend to prepare to be launched high above the central arena and land on a platform above the crowd. Here there are extra platforms and hoops to be jumped through, to complete the level.

Aero can also catch some air by hitching a lift on a passing balloon, or by starting up the bubble machine.

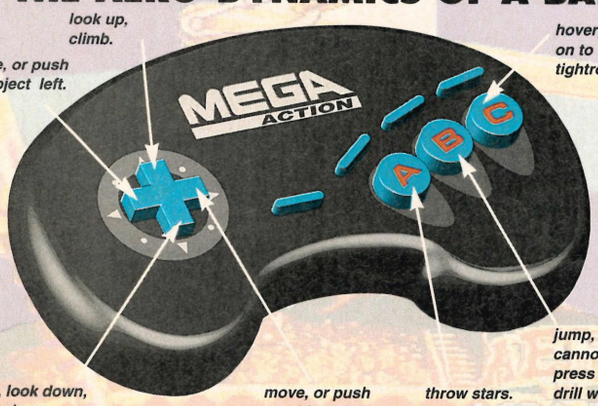
Trampolines, see-saws and trapezes are scattered about so all areas under the tent can be explored. To help Aero cross the precarious tightrope use the unicycle. To you or me this might be a tad dif-

▼ Stars sparkle as Aero suddenly appears at the start of the next level ready for action.

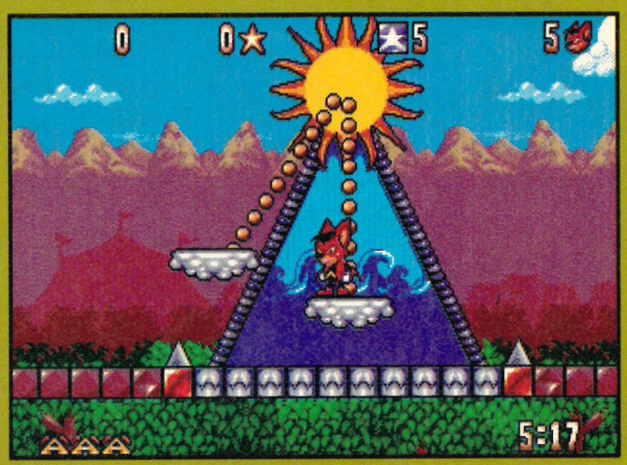


▲ Jump straight through the hoops to gain extra points.

THE AERO-DYNAMICS OF A BAT



■ In 1974, Philippe Petit crossed between the towers of the World Trade Centre in New York on a high wire.



▲ While fighting off Edgar Ektor's henchmen, Aero still finds time to ride the ferris wheel.

▲ The first mission for Aero to complete.

▼ Slide down the ladders, but hold on tight!

ficult, but to our batty hero it's as easy as falling off a bike!

Once the circus has been cleared, the capers continue outside in the Funpark. Aero must act the saviour again and ensure that nobody gets hurt on the rides, because Edgar Ektor has also infiltrated the funpark. As well as jumping on platforms and flying through hoops, Aero has to climb aboard the fun rides and clear each level of all psycho circus performers.

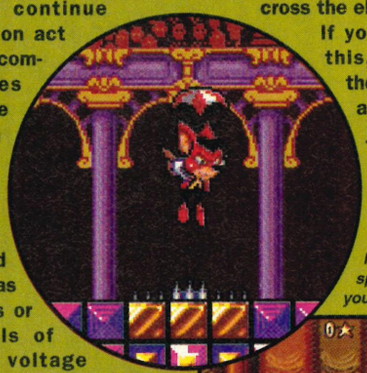
During each level there are the usual bonuses to collect. Hot dogs, sodas and cupcakes all send your score flying upwards. Parachute icons allow Aero to float safely to the ground, wings give him the power to fly and magical stars can be fired at any opponents. Make sure you're a hotshot with the stars, as there are more baddies about than stars.

▼ Use Aero's amazing acrobatic circus skills to drill any floating clowns.

Aero has a neat little move called the drill, which he uses to get rid of any nasties floating about. While in full flight, Aero spins round like crazy in a drill motion and knocks his enemies into the air. Pretty handy when he's out of stars.

After taming the runaway roller coaster in the fun park, Aero moves on to find Edgar's headquarters, hidden in the woods. After using the map to find the exit he has to make his way through the wood. This can be done by riding a log down the fast flowing rapids and then rolling a barrel along the forest paths. While trying to collect the key to continue through the level on act three, Aero must complete three, yes three, bungee jumps! What a brave little bat!

The scenery changes dramatically for the last level. Our winged hero no longer has to walk tightropes or jump over barrels of water. Now high voltage high wires and vats of boiling lava lie ahead. This is where Aero finally takes on Edgar Ektor himself in the Museum of Horrors, after you've defeated all the evil henchmen of course. Search all the secret passages to try and locate the boss. In the museum, Aero uses all his acrobatic skills, mastered in earlier levels, to cross the electric wires safely. If you like the look of this, but can't afford the cart, buy yourself an Aero the Acrobat jumpsuit and go see a real circus. Or maybe just try renting it first.



◄ Guide yourself safely over the dangerous spikes with the aid of your parachute icon.

▲ Aero performs before a crowded tent of spectators while getting past the bad guys.

▼ Jump through 25 magic hoops which all mysteriously disappear afterwards.

The sprites are fairly small but they are nicely detailed and well animated. You may have a feeling of déja vu as it looks like a slower version of Sonic. Still, look at Sonic now. Things get a bit tedious through a level, but because the game looks good and has cutesy graphics you 'll want to try and progress to the next level. The characters are really cute too and have some smart little moves which will bring a smile to your face. As for Aero, this guy has got a lot of potential for any large marketing ideas, and he deserves to become a hero. ■ GLEN

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

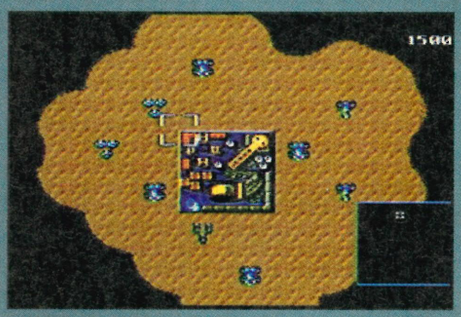
PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

84%

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Virgin
RELEASE DATE
February
PRICE
£44.99



▲ You begin with a construction site and an improvised army of mice-sized vehicles and men.

DUNE

■ Genesis, according to Frank Herbert – In the beginning was the construction site and the construction site was on Dune 2 and the construction site was Dune 2. All else was darkness.

Dune is about creation. Creation and destruction. You land on a strange dusty planet with about $1500 in your back pocket and the words of Mentat Cyril in your head.

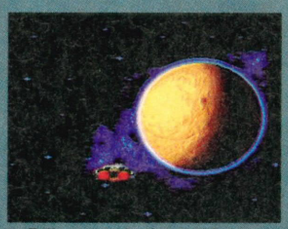
It's a rude awakening for Paul Atreides, forced into the limelight by the death of his father Duke Leto. Suddenly the burden of keeping the family name and honour alive is put onto his young shoulders.

TIP
Build two refineries, so that the money keeps rolling in and if you find yourself short of cash, recall one of the harvesters to base.

All he inherits is a construction site surrounded by his makeshift army. Outside in the darkness lies a vast desert of spice, terrifying worms and rival families. From there he will build a base, with refineries to turn the spice into the mind blowing drug so valuable throughout the Universe. Once established on the planet, he will venture further afield to locate and destroy his enemies. But in the meantime they will be trying to wipe him out...

◀ Choose Atreides – they're the good guys.

In the beginning was *Dune*, the planet exploration game which never actually made it onto the Mega Drive. Then came *Dune CD*, a vast RPG boasting fine panoramic scenery, but hiding stilted gameplay. *Dune 2* is a different fish altogether. Unlike the CD, you might not realize this game was anything to do with the film or even the book. It could be any old fast-moving adventure game in fact.



▲ Follow your destiny to this barren deset land among the stars.

▲ You need to build a windtrap first, and then a refinery, then a factory.

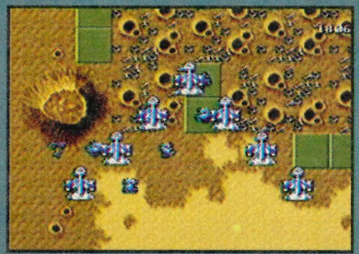
The speed is achieved by moving a cursor around the wide ranging screen to highlight the figure you want to move or site you want to build. Once you set up your little community, people will go about their business without your cursor-y orders. But, like the editor of a top computer games magazine, you have to keep the operation one step ahead of the opposition.

For all the speed and excitement, it's a surprisingly complicated adventure game. You are given missions to complete on different sections of the planet by your mentat or guide. If you decide to be an Atreides, then Mentat Cyril will tell you that you are supposed to be honourable and then go and ask you to wipe your rival family off the face of the planet!

That's what it all boils down to – a race against your rivals to take control of the planet's spice mining potential. If you please the Emperor he will grant you a special palace on the planet, much more comfortable than the old construction site...

In the beginning the land was covered in darkness. To shed a little light on proceedings, you just move into a dark area and hallelujah! the

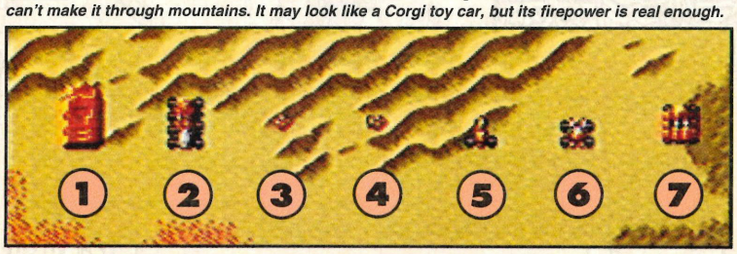
▼ Mounting a full scale assault on the enemy base. For those with a destructive bent.



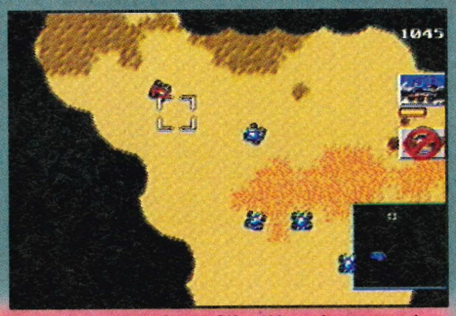
▲ Blow up the enemy base and a fly past by the blue arrows takes place.

GET OUT THE TOY SOLDIERS

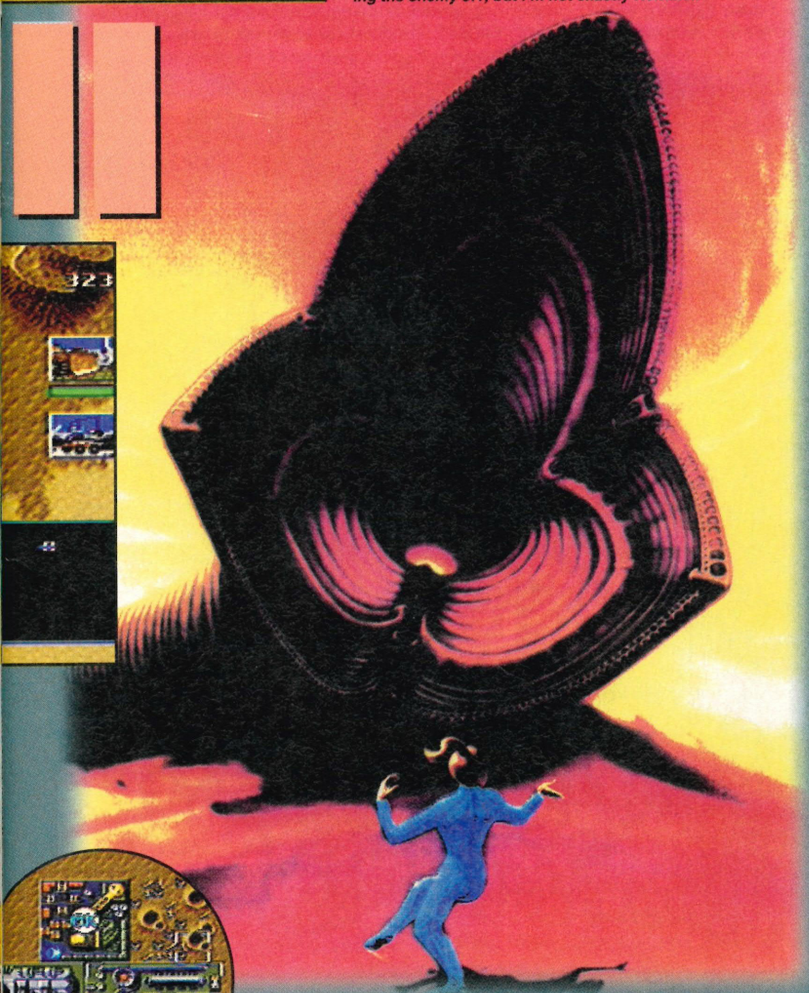
1. Harvester: Like a big combine, it systematically works the fields of spice, returning to base when full. Squashes anything in its way, but can itself be swallowed by worms, which can prove an expensive loss, like the sinking of a million pound oil tanker.
2. MCV: Builds construcion sites, the basic unit of your base.
3. Infantry: Useful to take control of hills overlooking the enemy base or just to storm in where the vehicles can't go, since it is more manoeuvrable than a vehicle.
4. Trooper: The lone Lawrence of Arabia figure marches through the desert at an accustomed speed. Call him up on his mobile, and he says "Yes sir, movin' out," in a phony American accent before you send him to his death. Ah power!
5. Trike: A sort of futuristic police motorcycle, but on three wheels for better desert travel. Manoeuvrable and light, but with weedy firepower and not very heavily armoured.
6. Missile Tank: You won't need one of these until later on in the game. The awesome fire power of this will knock any construction site out of action.
7. Quad: The basic unit of the armoured division travels through the desert with ease, but still can't make it through mountains. It may look like a Corgi toy car, but its firepower is real enough.



■ Nearly 1/8 of the world's surface is desert. The Sahara is the largest and covers 3,579,000 million square miles.



▲ Operation Desert Storm. OK, so I know I am outnumbering the enemy 5:1, but I'm not exactly Rommel.



◀ Watch out for the enemy plonking buildings on top of you.

people that lived in the land of darkness have seen a great light.

By building an outpost, you get a little map of the areas you have explored, but you still don't know in which direction the enemy lie.

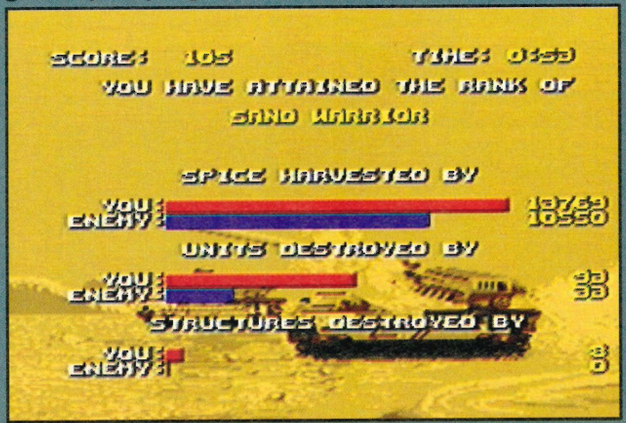
Once you do locate the Harkonnens, or Ordos' for that matter, you send out sorties to attack and blow up their construction site. But while your attention is focused miles away from home, the enemy may sneak in and start attacking your base.

A voice warns you when dangers are approaching, but don't forget what happened to the Nazis on their long march into Russia – it probably lost them the War.

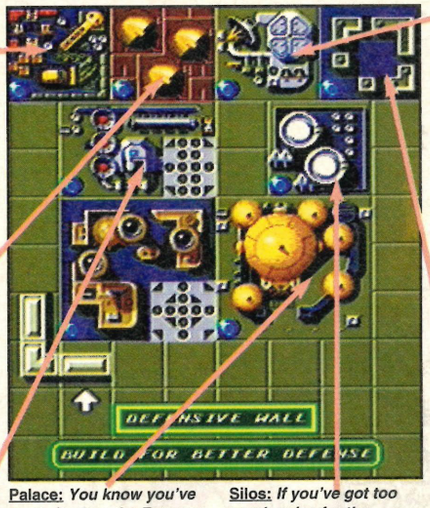
The first three missions are pretty easy, but once tanks and planes have been invented, the style of warfare changes altogether.

The game even brings us up to date, with huge land-based missile launchers popping up outside your construction site's front door. All I can say is Thank God Frank Herbert never discovered the Hydrogen bomb!

▼ On attaining each successive rank, you get a password for completing that mission.



LEGOLAND



Construction site: *You need one of these to build anything else, so make sure it is well protected. Click on the site and a status screen will come up, showing what you can build and how much it will cost you.*

Windtrap: *This is effectively a hydro-electric power plant and converts the wind force into the energy you need to run any of the other buildings. The lightning symbol displays how much energy is needed.*

Refinery: *This is where you make your money. A 'carry all' drops a harvester into the landing bay which automatically locates and mines spicey areas.*

Palace: *You know you've made it when the Emperor of the Universe sees fit to grant you a palace to live in, but this, like getting in the House of Lords, takes a great deal of arse-licking and money.*

Silos: *If you've got too much spice for the refinery to cope with, that means firstly you're a rich beggar, and secondly you need some silos to store the excess.*

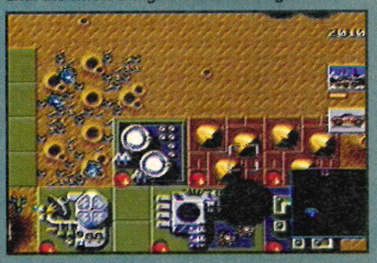
Outpost: *Heavily armoured base for operations. With a built-in radar unit, this place will produce a map of the district, showing where all your forces have got to and where the spicey areas are located.*

Barracks: A man-making factor which *produces soldiers. More useful is the vehicle factory which works on a similar principle. You can upgrade either factory so that it is capable of producing heavier goods. A damage bar goes red at danger point and you can keep repairing.*

If you build on firm foundations of concrete blocks, your factories won't get blown away so easily when the big bad wolf huffs and puffs at you. Your base can be established quite quickly but can be destroyed at a comparable rate. The rocky terrrain is perfect for making your home, ideally next to an impassable mounain range.

▼ Bottom right is the map of the known area which appears when you build an outpost.

▼ You blow up the enemy base block by block until the whole thing is raised to the ground.



A gripping game, an oasis in the sci-fi desert. You'll find yourself addicted to the gameplay, which, though complicated, can be mastered quickly. It makes a mockery of the second Dune book of the same name and my instict is to flinch at the Americanisation of a fine psychologically-involved novel, but but what is sacrificed in plot is made up for in substance and I can't help wanting to play this game some more. In fact I can guarantee you won't tire of counting grains of sand in this vast, unexplored, Virginal desert. ■ **DAVE**

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

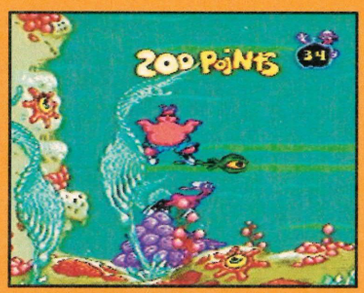
PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

83%

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Sega
RELEASE DATE
January
PRICE
£44.99



▲ Take a quick swimming lesson in the depths of Funkotron's waters to find extra points but look out for the sharks and big fish.

▲ Big boy Earl takes a stroll through the countryside in his shorts and shades. Any of the trees behind him could hold energy replenishing food, dustbins or the elusive earthlings.

▲ Press these large buttons when they appear on the platforms to reveal bonus levels.

TOEJA PANIC O

Toejam and Earl. Probably the two strangest aliens in the whole galaxy. Their first adventure took them to the far corners of the universe in search of the missing parts of their spaceship. The game was hailed a success due to its originality and playability, with the two player option really making this a memorable game. Well the boys are back in town and they are in trouble. Apparently, on their long journey back to Funkotron, they must have stopped off at good old planet Earth and picked up some excess baggage, in the form of... those pesky earthlings.

News flashes on Funkotron report that the earthlings must have clung on to the outside of the spaceship for the whole trip, and now they're running riot on the planet. Toejam and Earl to the rescue! The guys must capture all earthlings and send them packing back to earth.

To the inhabitants of Funkotron the earthlings are, understandably enough, aliens. Aliens that run about causing trouble and generally make a nuisance of themselves. TJ and Earl 's job is to locate all the humans and shove them in jars.

Arrows indicate the whereabouts of the nearest human to be stopped. Once located, TJ and Earl must hurl trap-o-matic jars at them until the troublesome homo sapiens somehow end up inside a jar. This is a mystery to me, but if I lived on Funkotron I'm sure I would be able to explain how this strange phenomenon works. So basically you have to travel across the planet and herd up all the rampaging humans.

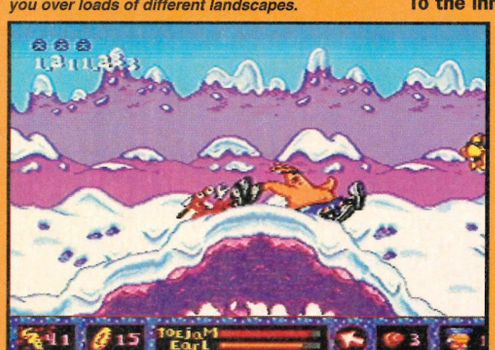
It isn't as simple as you may think but it's totally weird and great fun to play. These humans really are pesky little critters and they don't make it easy for TJ and Earl. So jump into either Toejams or Earls big black and white sneakers and seek out those annoying earthlings.

Of course, you have to find them before you can jar them. The arrows help out a bit but its up to you to find them. This is achieved by shaking the trees and rooting around in the bushes. If they're humans hidden they'll pop out and run off. If they do, pursue them chucking jars until you've jarred them.

Your prey, the humans, come in all shapes and sizes. One guy resembles a proper tourist, even to the extent of carrying a camera round his neck. Watch out for this fella as when he takes a snapshot the flash drains your energy. Make sure you duck and cover your eyes. A little kid jumps about throwing tomatoes at

TIP
When both characters are playing, practice doing a high five which combines the energy bars so both players can survive longer.

▼ The search for the renegade humans takes you over loads of different landscapes.



▲ Follow the earthling arrow indicator and bounce your way through the levels.

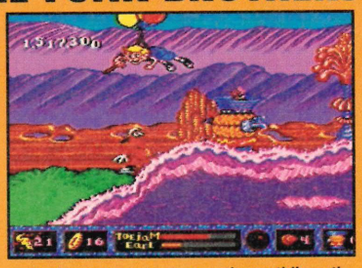
▲ Put one of the coins you have collected in the meter to start jammin' with Peabo.

■ In 1961, Joe Simonton had a close encounter of the food kind. Aliens gave him some salt-free pancakes in exchange for distilled water.

GET DOWN WITH THE FUNK BROTHERS

▲ The funk scan – It may look like a young kid has drawn it, but this is your scanner. As well as indicating your character, it shows the immediate location of any hidden earthlings or parcels. Tyres and dustbins also show up so you know which trees not to shake.

▲ Panic button – If the humans try to corner you and you can't throw those jars fast enough, press the panic button and watch your character go mad, rushing around the level, chucking jars in every direction. Search each level to find more panic power-ups.



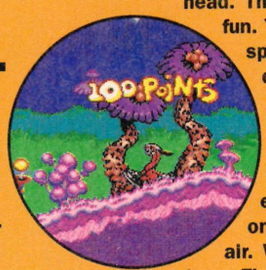
▲ Funk vacuum – to capture the earthlings the easy way, fire up the vacuum. This sucks just about everything into its pressurised chamber and pumps out its contents in tiny little jars, ready for collecting. Only use it when there are loads of earthlings on screen.

▲ The funk run – to get to this quick bonus level just insert a coin into a parking meter and float into another dimension. You have to run the gauntlet collecting parcels along the way and reducing your size when going past the exit. Play the game and you'll understand.

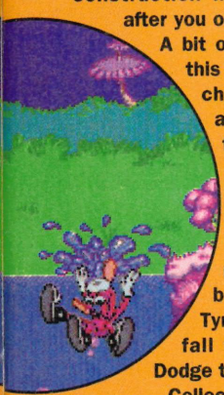
M AND EARL IN
N FUNKOTRON

■ The funkiest teenagers in the universe return to rid their planet of those interfering aliens known as earthlings.

The characters on Funkotron are weird. Eyeballs on legs jog past while dogs with wings soar overhead. The landscapes are great fun. You could bounce on the spongy pink platforms all day, spinning about in the air. It's also worth exploring the depths of the rivers for any extra parcels, but keep an eye on the time as you only have 40 seconds of air. Well, that isn't entirely true. Floating around are some inflated fish. If you swim up to them and kind of kiss them you can suck air from them. End of breathing problem. Strange, but true.



▲ Enter different dimensions by walking through the doorways that are scattered about. Some transport you to another part of the level, others take you on to the funk run.



you, so bottle him up quick before he splats your energy bar. The blonde-haired girl is really annoying – you can hear her shouting but you can't see her until she legs it past you at top speed. Then there's this massive construction worker who wobbles after you on his pneumatic drill. A bit of a tough guy to jar, this one, as he's always chasing you. Still, it's an ideal opportunity to employ your funk move which instantly transports you across the screen.

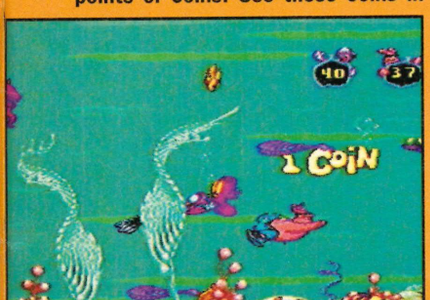
Shaking trees reveals other things besides earthlings. Tyres and dustbins also fall from the branches. Dodge them.

Collect all the gift wrapped parcels as they contain either funk points or coins. Use these coins in the parking-style meters, found throughout the level, to enter different dimensions for either bonus rounds for transportation to another part of the level.

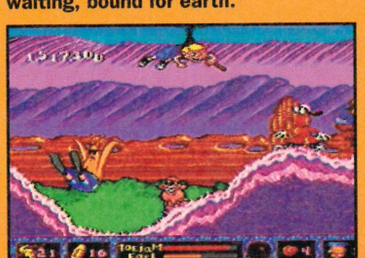
Collect any food that appears to replenish your life bar. Both the energy bars can be combined at which point the energy is equally shared between them, a neat little trick that's only possible when both characters are in action.

Along the way you stumble across some old mates who invite you to copy the sounds they produce. They produce a short series of beats which, if you copy correctly, gains you funk points. All the buttons represent different noises, so get them in the right order or you won't get any points!

Once you have collected all the humans on that level, make your way to the end where a spaceship will be waiting, bound for earth.



▲ Toejam gets fresh with an unsuspecting fish in an effort to restore his air supply.



▲ Throw your jars skywards to bottle the boy and don't forget to collect the dog as well.

▲ Leap across the pits of fire in your heroic quest to locate all the illegal immigrants running about.

The first instalment of these two characters was well liked because of its unusual game play, and the sequel looks just as good. The programmers have included an option for beginners to use loads of tips which are available throughout the game, but all you hardened gamers will be glad to know you don't have to have them on screen. Playing the game on your own is okay but it's a lot more fun when both characters are in action, wandering about the levels in search of those havoc-causing earthlings. One to watch out for. ■ **GLEN**

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL 87%

MEGA

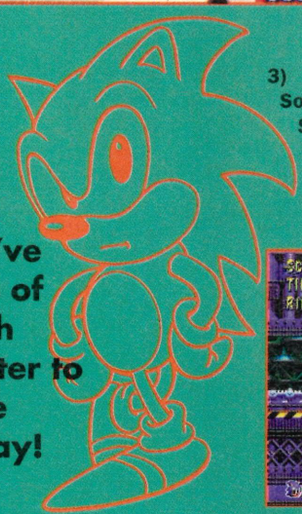
Posters with Attitude! TSB

There has been a lot of talk about our hero over Christmas, what with simultaneous releases throughout the world of Sonic CD, Sonic Spinball and Sonic Chaos on the Game Gear. Sonic has also some invaluable tasks to perform outside of appearing in games and most of them fortunately seem to involve helping others.

One of these tasks is to lend his name and image to worthy causes and none could be better than that of NSPCC and RSPCC who give every help possible to protect children from cruelty. The organisations in association with TSB have some exclusive posters for you to collect.

These are one-off designs and are essential for the Sonic enthusiast who wants to help a great cause. All you have to do is either enter our competition or simply pop into your local branch of TSB and make a donation of more than one pound! Cheap at thrice the price! There are two different designs to collect so why not get both?

▲ Sonic and some money. Interesting choice for a Sega poster I'm sure you will agree.



We've TEN of each poster to give away!

Rules:

The winners shall be the first 20 correct answers that we pull out of the nearest empty vessel that can accommodate so many entries. The winners shall each receive a poster. The Editor's decision is final.

Employees of Europress, Tequila Consultancy and TSB are forbidden to even contemplate entering or opening the magazine at this page. All answers must reach us by no later than March 5th. The winners will be notified by post. Michael Jackson is innocent, despite what his sister says.

The questions

1) What was the first Sonic game from Sega called?

a) Sonic The Barbarian
b) Sonic Land
c) Sonic The Hedgehog

2) What is the name of Sonic's little furry friend, who first appeared in Sonic The Hedgehog 2?

a) Heads
b) Tails
c) Gordon

3) Sonic Spinball, one of the latest Sonic games to be released from Sega is based upon:

a) Tennis
b) Ping Pong
c) Pinball

▲ Hold on tight, with all your might, this is for real, it 'aint no test flight!

▲ He even has a little rap you know, but I won't bore you with it now.

Don't hang around, post it NOW!

Sonic Poster compo

My answers are :

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Post code: .....

Age: ..... **Tel:** .....

Send your entries by 5th March to:

MEGA ACTION

Poster Compo, Mega Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

❑ *I do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies*

No correspondence will be entered into by the Editor.

QJ Controllers

Leaders of the Pack....

Looks to Kill....

NEW PROGRAMMABLE

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MEGA

POST YOUR ENTRY NOW

Win some Mortal Advice

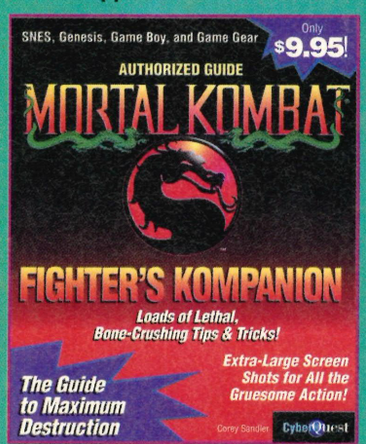
We have TEN copies of the latest Mortal Kombat book for the lucky among you to win!

Mortal Kombat. Without doubt one of the best fighting games this year and still selling like there's no tomorrow. You have it all, special moves, death blows and even hidden monsters that lurk ready to take you on.

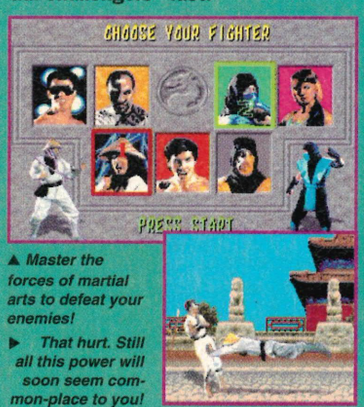
Mega Action has followed the career of this game from it's birth in the arcades to the console cartridge chart topper it was destined to become. Back in issue 7, the December issue we gave you the ultimate magazine guide by games expert Dr. Barry Diablo.

But wait! Now comes the ultimate BOOK on the game from Computer Manuals. This 88 page guide to the digitised masterpiece of close proximity combat has colour pictures explaining the moves and positioning covering most Sega formats.

The tips and advice follow a quick and handy reference system as well as easy step by step instructions on the death and special moves. Now you can become an expert at this martial art and wipe out any potential challengers - fast!



▲ *Where else but Mega Action do you get the opportunity to win the best and most graphic book on the subject?*



▲ *Master the forces of martial arts to defeat your enemies!*

▶ *That hurt. Still all this power will soon seem common-place to you!*

▲ *The book provides step by step accounts of how to avoid and deliver the speciual moves that make this game so playable.*

Rules:

The winners will be the first 10 correct entries pulled from Santa's bulging big sack.

The first 10 winners will receive a Mortal Kombat Guide each. The Editor's decision is final and no amount of hard cash, foreign currency or Xen Mantra dub plates will swing his favour in any way.

Employees of Europress and Computer Manuals are forbidden to enter the competition.

The questions

1) The female champion in Mortal Kombat, famous for her Death Kiss and acrobatic agility is called:

A). Sonya Blade
B). Kylie
C). Ingrid

2) The multi-armed half human, half dragon from the astral plane who is one of the reigning Mortal Kombat champions is called:

A). Zoro
B). Goro
C). Big Daddy

3) Where can Reptile be found in the game, that is, where will your fight with him take place?

A). Up the Road
B). In the Mill
C). Down the Pit

4) How many Mortal Kombat characters are available for a player to fight with?

A). 7
B). 12
C). 93

Mortal book Kompo

My answers are :

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

4 .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

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Age: ..... **Tel:** .....

MEGA ACTION

Send your entries by 5th March to: Mortal Kompo, Mega Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

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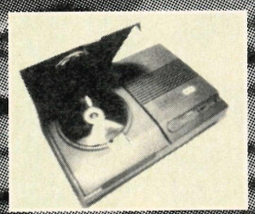

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EuroJan

Within the boxing arena it's the heavyweight contenders who are the real big bad boy bruisers, ready to defend their title no matter who gets hurt on the way.

PUNCH DRUNK!

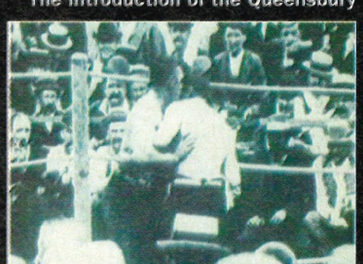
The history of boxing holds many spectacular moments, most of which come from the heavyweight circuit. The heavyweight championship has run for over 100 years, with new challengers attempting to take the title two or three times a year.

It wasn't until the fight between John L. Sullivan and Jake Kilrain back in 1889 that the judges decided that leather gloves should be worn. So before that, boxers fought with bare fists, (very primitive indeed).

The boxing authorities also decided to limit the number of rounds in one fight, because Sullivan and Kilrain boxed for two hours, 16 minutes before the fight was won by Sullivan. The fight lasted an amazing 75 rounds in total!

The introduction of the Queensbury rules helped to bring some kind of order to the fights, so they didn't look like bar room brawls! They also introduced a marking system, where judges would award points to each boxer, depending on how well they both fought. If both players were still standing after the last bell, then the judges would decide on who fought the best during each round.

▲ *Many moons ago there was no set number of rounds that the boxers had to fight.*



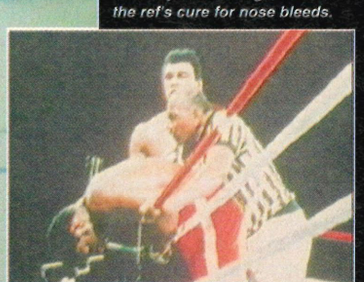
▲ *Before the official Queensbury boxing rules were implimented bare fist fight took place.*

▼ *The ref has to hold this guy back before he completely finishes off his opponent.*

It takes years of training, sparring and competing against lesser fighters before a fighter can even consider taking on the heavyweight champ. Once a challenger steps into the ring, there's no backing out, they either win or lose.

When the fights last for 12, or more, rounds fighters often don't really know what their are doing. They've taken so many punches they start to function on automatic pilot, just wandering round the ring and relying on the instinct hammered into them during training to survive.

▼ *It may look strange, but it's the ref's cure for nose bleeds.*



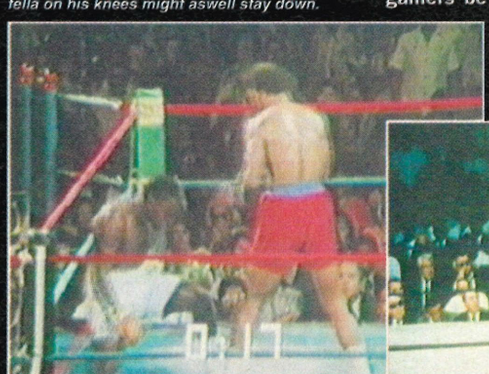
▲ *I think this guy has had enough. A knockout punch has sent him right into another world.*

Everyone's favourite finish to a fight is a good KO. The KO can come after a barrage of punches when the opponent is just totally worn out or through a real power blaster of a hit.

Once a boxer hits the canvas the ref steps in and starts the count. If the fighter gets up the round will probably continue, otherwise he's out for the count, game over.

The only champion who never lost a professional fight in all his boxing career was the one and only Rocky Marciano. He fought 49 contests before retiring in 1956. Joe Louis held the championship title for the longest period, from 1935 to 1949.

▼ *With only 17 seconds left in the round, the fella on his knees might aswell stay down.*



During those fourteen years as Champ he fought opponents of a mixed quality. Many were top class but Joe also travelled the world fighting the local national contender for the title, often winning easily. These wer known as the 'Bum of the month' tours.

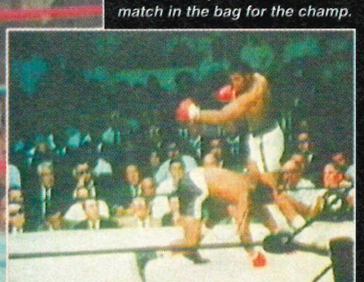
Boxing has never really made much of an impression on the console market, with previous games seeling a few thousand copies then-fading away. The games didn't capture the feel of the sport, they were slow and the graphics were poor.

As technology has progressed, however, game programmers have developed the ability to generate a simulation fight, but still make the game playable for the consoles.

For a game to be realistic the programmers has to include as many features from the sport as possible. *Greatest Heavyweights* and *Boxing Legends Of The Ring* look to have broken through that barrier.

We reckon these games make welcome change from the recent invasion of beat'em-ups. So, is this the new way forward? Will the nation of gamers be asking for boxing gloves next christmas? We'll have to wait and see.

▼ *A left body hook has this match in the bag for the champ.*



A STATE OF MAGICAL SPEEEEEEEEED

When it comes to speed Wiz 'n' Liz take on all-comers — and leave them standing.

They're the greatest magicians on the Planet Pum, their spells are truly amazing, their huge collection of pet wabbits, legendary.

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Need help? Call the Wiz 'n' Liz spell line.

"The two player game is everything that the jerky, fuzzy head-to-head option on Sonic 2 should have been."

MEGA

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a) Gorilla b) Wabbit c) Lemming

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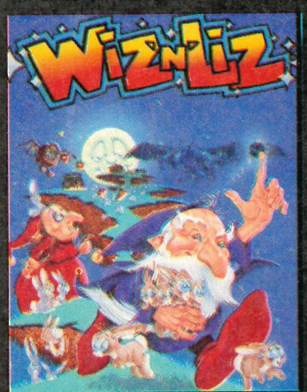

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All calls cost 36p per min. cheap rate, 48p at all other times. Please ask the bill payers permission before using the phone. For a full set of rules send SAE to Psygnosis, South Harrington Building, Sefton Street, Liverpool L3 4BQ. Entries must be received before 31st December 1993.

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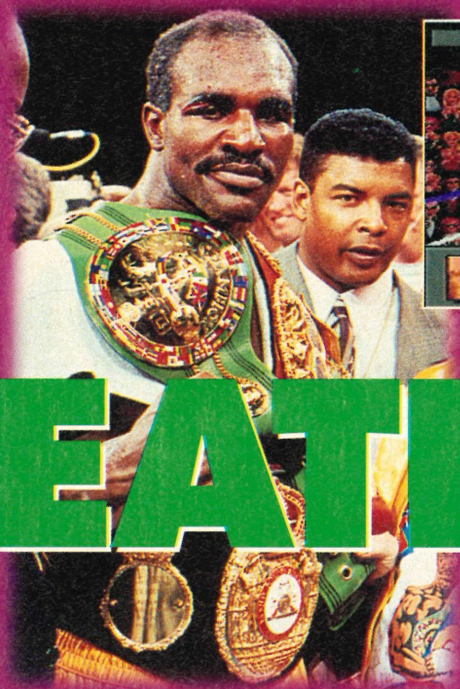
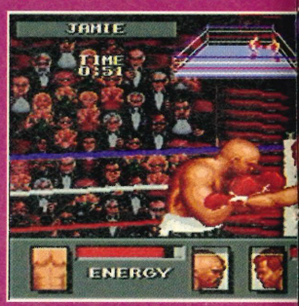


▲ Jamie keeps his gloves in tight, just waiting for Reuben to make a false move..

▼ Oh dear, looks like our man has taken a hit to the stomach



GREATEST HE

■ Now I want a clean fight with no low punches. Seconds out, round one.

The worlds' most famous boxing stars have all come from the heavyweight circuit. The other weights have world champions, but the guys who hit the headlines are the real heavyweights. Some of them manage to hold onto the title for a couple of years consecutively but sooner or later a real muscle head comes along and takes the championship belt.

Muhammad Ali, Larry Holmes and Rocky Marciano are the most famous of the eight champions who compete against each other in this all-star punch up for the title.

TIP

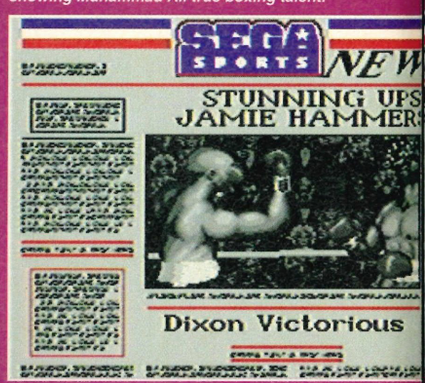
Switch between long head and body jabs to wear your opponent down, then go for a selection of fine uppercuts to produce a spectacular KO.

The tournament option puts you straight into the action, competing against the toughest world champs. Choose your opponent for the first fight and battle your way through the full 12 rounds or win the fight with a KO.

You're probably best trying a tournament after a few goes, otherwise you're liable to get beaten badly. So kick off with the new career option and take on a few fictional journeymen first. With this option, you start ranked thirty and have to beat those ranked above to progress.

After beating these challengers you get to face one of the eight greatest ever. This is where things get really mean.

▼ Our art assistant makes it in the big time by showing Muhammad Ali true boxing talent.



When you start a new career in the boxing ring, your first task is to choose a character. Give him some

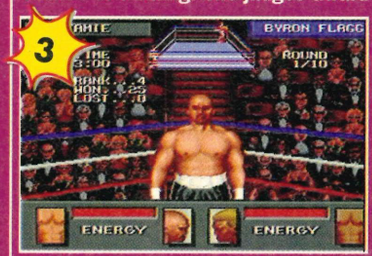
BLOW BY BLOW...

No one can step into the ring and become a world class boxer overnight. Your power, stamina and speed levels all start off low, so after each fight you win you can select three items which will improve your fighting skills within the ring.

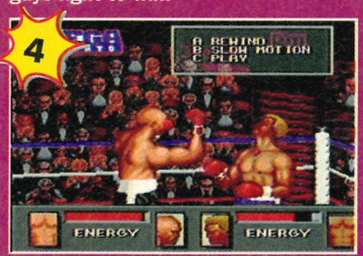
You must really aim to KO your opponent if you want to stand a good chance of winning. The judges award points to both boxers after each round depending on how well they fought. The best tactic is to work out certain combinations to tire your opponent then go for the big KO. If it's a good punch then he won't get up and the match is yours. It's then time to face up to the champs who don't take the sport lightly. These guys fight to win!

▲ A healthy diet, vitamins, and some skipping, all help to make your fighter into a champion.

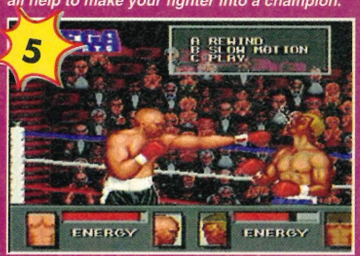
▲ A slight advantage on speed and stamina could prove the key to victory.



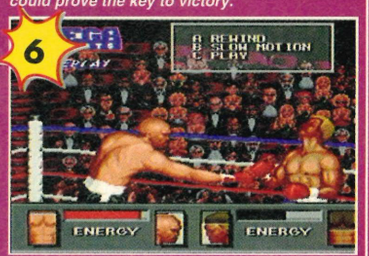
▲ And in the blue corner, ranked No.4 in the world... Jamie!



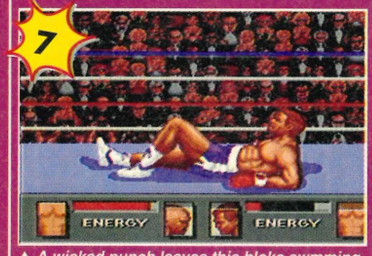
▲ If you can get in close enough, the upper cut has a devastating effect.



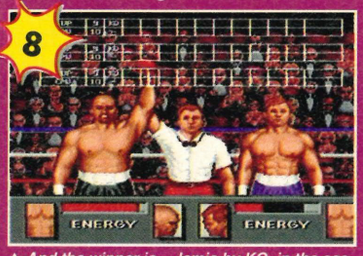
▲ Wear your opponent down with thes long powerful jabs to the head and body.



▲ Pause the game and take another look at that finishing blow in slow motion.

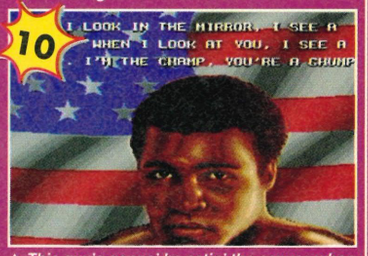


▲ A wicked punch leaves this bloke swmming around the floor, Stay down, for your sake!



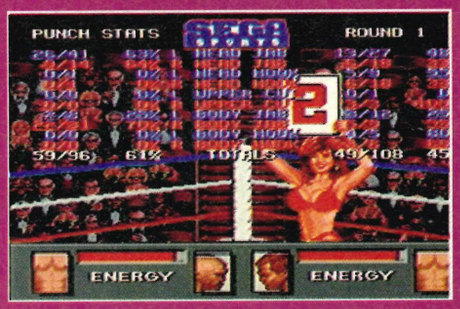
▲ And the winner is... Jamie by KO in the second round, And I didn't even pick up a bruise.

▲ Headline news all over the world, you're starting to make the champions worry.



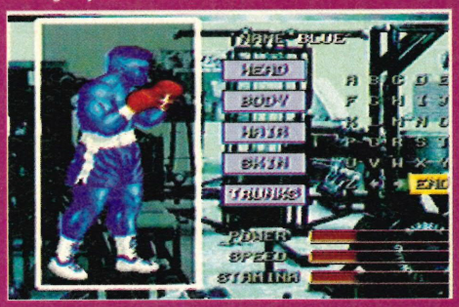
▲ This guy's gonna' be eatin' the canvas when I get to fight him! Know what I mean 'arry.

■ Rocky Marciano was the most statistically successful champion. He won all of his 49 fights, 43 inside the distance.



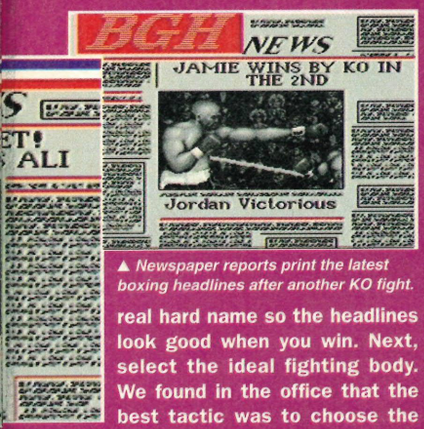
▲ Check out the punch stats for both fighters between each of the three minute rounds.

▼ Make up your own characters like Big Boy Blue featured below.



▲ This will be the real test. Rocky Marciano was never defeated in his 49 fight career.

AVYWEIGHTS



▲ Newspaper reports print the latest boxing headlines after another KO fight.

real hard name so the headlines look good when you win. Next, select the ideal fighting body. We found in the office that the best tactic was to choose the biggest body, as a tall guy has the longest reach. You can also select the skin of your character – black, white or half-cast or even the weird choice of a colour like green or blue.

Select the number of three minute rounds you want to start off competing in, then set the power, speed and stamina levels you think best suit the sport of boxing.

After you have made all the settings it's time to hit the canvas. Before the fight commences you and

▼ The replay allows you to watch yourself being beaten to a pulp and the final knockout.

the challenger are introduced to the crowd, which seem to be made up of busty young blondes and balding old guys in tuxedos. Strange that.

The bell rings, the commentator announces that it's time to get ready to rumble, and the fight begins.

There are five different moves you can use. Jabs to the head are carried out much more easily if your character is quite tall as he will have longer arms. Get several good hooks in, aimed at the head, and cut his eye, split his lip or just give him a good old nose bleed. Jabs and hooks to the body can leave your opponent winded for a second and open him up for an upper cut or a hook to the

▲ A real battle of the giants, my money's on Rocky Marciano.

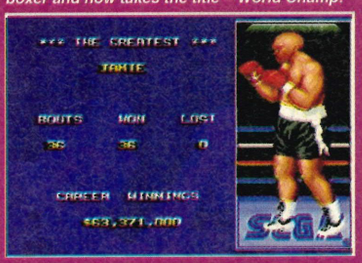
head. The upper cut is quite a slow move and can leave your body open, So it's best to get in close and time it right. Otherwise you might get caught by a flurry of jabs.

The red energy bar represents your stamina level throughout the game. The main objective is to win the rounds either on points or to knock down your opponent. They hit the mat when their energy level is reduced to zero, and depending on the punch, the level of damage they've taken and their stamina, they either get up or they don't!

The head and torso icons at the

▲ The final screens show the winning fight broadcast to the nation via TV.

▼ He's made it! Jamie has beaten every single boxer and now takes the title – World Champ!



bottom of the screen show the amount of shots taken. If the marker line falls considerably, the length of the energy bar is reduced and you have less energy to use overall.

If you back off from your opponent during a round, get ready to receive a verbal battering. Your opponent hurls abuse at you until you start boxing again. If you're quick enough you can move in and smash him one while he's mouthing off!

IT'S A KNOCKOUT!

When A or C are used with back and down on the D-pad, your fighter will jab to the body. Combine back and up with A or C and he'll perform jabbing shots to the head. Forward and down and the punch buttons will hook to the body. Pressing forward and up with A or C produces hooks to the head. The B button will pull the gloves in and act as a guard for the head or body, when pressed with either up or down.

This is the best boxing game for a long time. Because the extensive choice of fighters varies so much, each challenger uses different tactics, so you have to fight using varied combinations. Some wade in Tyson style while others spend so much time running they should be wearing trainers. With great playability and a two player option this is fast becoming one of the most popular games in the office. Our skinny art assistant proved himself Mega Action's top heavy. ■ **GLEN**

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL 89%

SILVER

WINTER

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
US Gold
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£39.99

Winter wouldn't be winter without another Megadrive Olympic game arriving on the scene would it?

There are other games of this type so why choose this one over any of the others on offer? Well there are ten events to participate in and all are presented as well as each other. Up to four people can have a go, so a healthy competitive atmosphere can be generated quite easily. So that's just two of the plus points. Let's take a look at the events and options in a little more detail.

Starting off provides the traditional Opening Ceremony. A skier arrives clutching a lit torch with which he sets the Olympic flame alight.

Once all the fancy stuff is out of the way you can begin to get down to some proper snow sports as you battle it out desperately for that all important gold medal.

The game itself is actually an official Olympic product and it's based around the forthcoming Lillehammer Winter Olympics set to take place in the Norwegian town this year. The most popular events are included but before you can get to them there are a series of options you have to take a close look at.

The most important of these is whether a full Olympics, specifically chosen events or Training mode are played out. If you've already had a bit of practice it might be time to have a pop at the Gold, but be warned, those computer contestants are particularly good in their chosen field (so to speak!).

TIP
In the Biathlon try and time the presses of the D-pad so they correspond with the bar graph above your character.

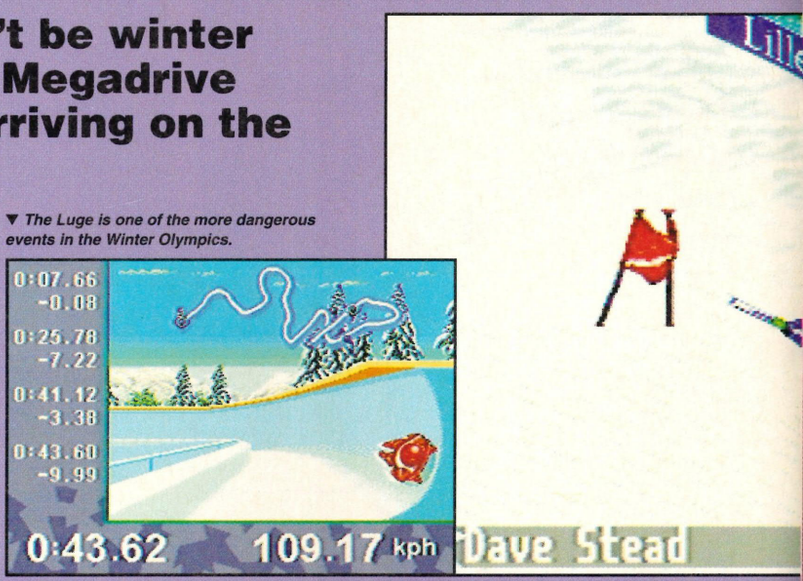
Once the names of all the contestants have been added and their representative countries have been chosen it's time to take to the slopes for a little competitive frolicking.

The ten events are all beautifully presented with the overall snowy white feeling being more than adequately portrayed. It all kicks off with a little downhill skiing (why do they call it downhill? I'd have thought that was slightly obvious) viewed from a diagonal perspective. Downhill racing is all about about speed and getting down in as quick a time as possible. 16 skiers in total provide the opposition and you can be sure they'll all put up a decent performance.

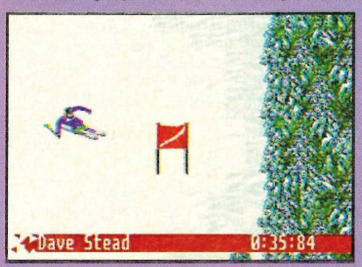
From there the game follows a standard pattern. It's pretty difficult coming up with new events for this type of thing (Olympic events don't tend to change that much) and sure enough all the old favourites are there. Ski Jumping, bobsleigh and biathlon for example. None are particularly easy to get the hang of at first but after a short period practising things get simpler and you'll soon be whizzing about willy-nilly.

I've always been a bit of a Biathlon fan on other games of this nature. Don't ask me why, it's just one of those strange things that happen from time to time. Perhaps it isn't too surprising then that this is also my favourite event on this cartridge too.

The Biathlon involves some long distance, cross-country skiing followed by some shooting, followed by some more long-distance skiing and so on. After a set amount of ground has been covered, and this is done by timing presses on the D-pad, the biathlete will lie down and it's up to you to take pot-shots at the five targets that lie ahead. This is extremely



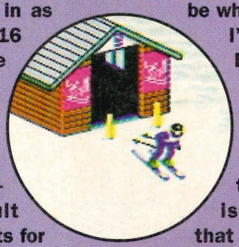
▼ *The Luge is one of the more dangerous events in the Winter Olympics.*



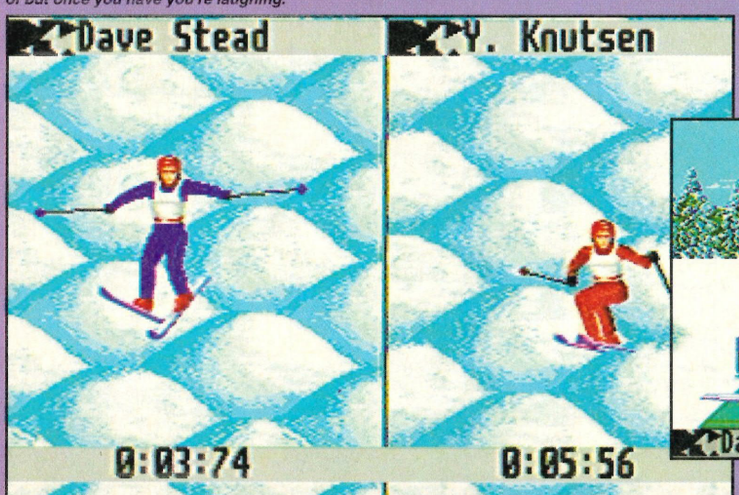
▲ *A sharp turn almost sends our skier flying but he just manages to cling on.*

▼ *Moguling can be quite tricky to get the hang of but once you have you're laughing.*

▲ *The course map at the top of the screen provides some indication of where to go.*



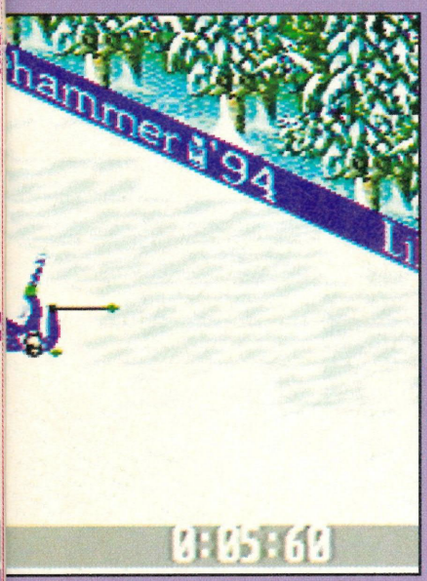
▲ *Lillehammer, Norway is the place to be for the 1994 Winter Olympics.*



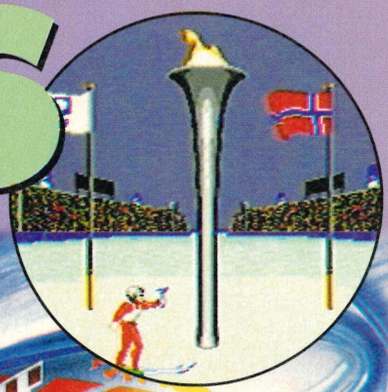
▲ *Take careful aim before firing off your rounds at the far off targets.*

■ In Lillehammer this month Torvill and Dean will try and win the gold in Ice Dancing ten years after their last success

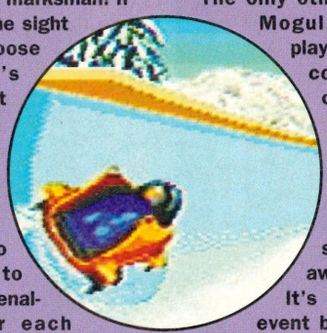
OLYMPICS



▲ *Oops! That's your chances of a gold gone with this little tumble on the slopes.*



tricky as your guy seems to suffer from a severe case of the shakes and his gunsight is all over the show. At least he isn't a police marksman! If you manage to get the sight over a target and loose off a shot a hit's scored and the target closes up so you know which you've blasted (just in case it wasn't the one you aimed for).

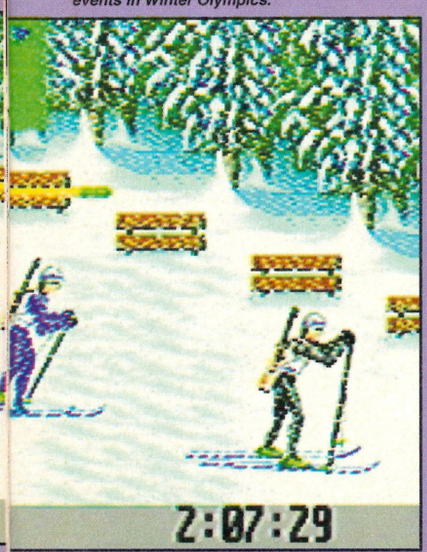


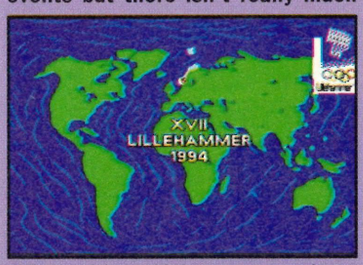
Once your ammo has run out it's off to the next set, but a penalty is awarded for each missed board. This is a time penalty and is added on to your finishing time. If things start going badly it generally gets worse and all too soon the medals are out of reach!

The only other unusual event is Mogul. This involves the player rushing down a hill covered with mounds of snow. The way in which these obstacles are traversed is vitally important. Grace and style are as important as speed as points are awarded for everything. It's not the best looking event but it's certainly one of the most fun.

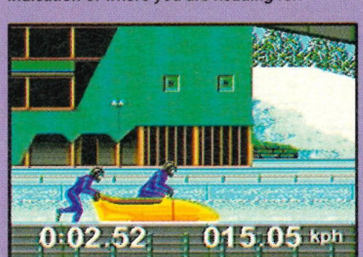
We could go on all day describing events but there isn't really much point as they've all been done before. All you need to know really is that this is a good cartridge worthy of anyone's full attention.

▼ *The Biathlon is one of the more enjoyable events in Winter Olympics.*



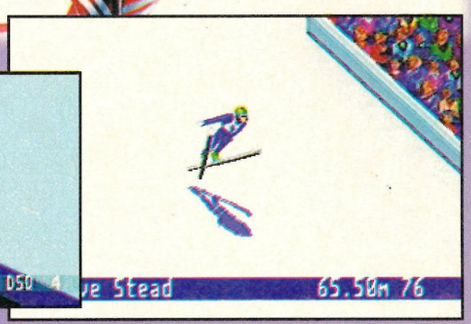


▲ *A map of the world gives a pretty good indication of where you are heading for.*

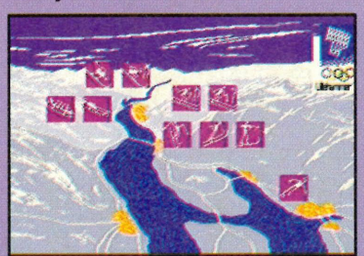


▲ *The start of the bobsleigh involves building up speed quickly to get a good start.*

▲ *Short-distance speed skating is a good event for picking up points.*



▲ *Eddie the Eagle Edwards made ski-jumping famous in this country. Now try your hand.*



▲ *A list of possible events is displayed before each tournament starts.*

I actually liked this quite a bit. There are a lot of nice touches and once you get the hang of the controls and learn the events then Winter Olympics will more than re-pay you. Whether it's to everyone's tastes is open to question. If you haven't liked this sort of thing before, and there are probably quite a few people who haven't, then this won't really convert you. Is this any different? Well, not tremendously, but that doesn't stop it being fun. Definitely worth considering. ■ **PAUL**

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL 85%

SILVER

TO BE THIS GOOD

Even though the Mega Drive can be picked up and instantly played by people aged from four to forty there's still a bewildering range of accessories and peripherals to get to grips with. We get letters here constantly asking about compatibility, developments and the many many technical problems you encounter.

Now I won't claim to cover every single problem or question the Mega Drive has ever turned up but I hope to relieve many of you of the fears and grey areas that surround the beginner to the gaming scene.

A JOY TO CONTROL

The standard joystick that you are given with the Mega Drive fun packs is more than adequate but let's face it, it certainly ain't the most ergonomic, sexy, slinky design you'd like to hold. If it were a car it would be a Fiesta Popular diesel. Small, purposeful, good for learning but lacking that certain sex appeal.

▼ *The Micro Genius infra red remote joystick from MSU 20 foot range for only £29.99.*

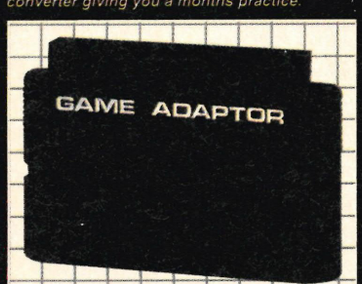
What you need is something that doesn't resemble Joddrel Bank but then again won't remind you of the latest Bang and Olluffsen with no visible buttons or way of manipulation. Streetfighter players amongst you will immediately feel cheated by the standard stick with it having only the three fire buttons. Special moves are not going to be your strong point.

There are many joysticks to choose from, some are touch sensitive, some are wireless, some are arcade lookalikes and some just plain feel nice. Some even have six buttons. Now it would be unfair to do a big product guide as many of you demand different things from these devices. Instead, here are the best selling or the most popular pads that all in the office agreed were well worth recommending.

▼ *Competition Pro joystick is available just about everywhere at around £8.00 - £9.00.*

▲ *Sega's unit although costly at some £24.00 provides the six buttons required for SF II.*

▲ *Streetfighter II is the best reason to obtain a converter giving you a months practice.*



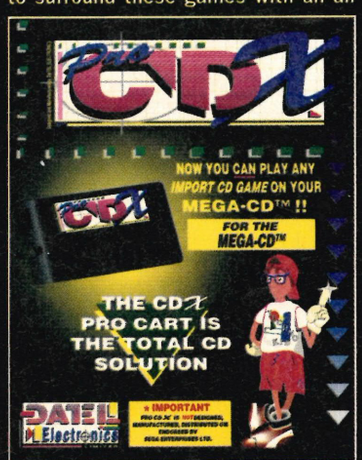
▲ *A code breaking adaptor will let those Japanese and American games finaly play.*

CONVERTING THE NEEDY

Grey imports are simply games that have been released in other countries and have been imported over here. That's it I'm afraid. People tend to surround these games with an air of mystique, a sort of derring do. Pictures of small boats rowed single-handed from Japan to reach the coasts of this fair isle then crates being thrown in the back of a lorry to arrive at the dead of night in Manchester. They might just well be exaggerating a little.

Joking aside though, they do give the avid gamesplayer a headstart on British players tied to official releases. In some cases imports can be obtained some six months in advance, though the Japanese text can prove a slight problem.

Since Sega have a general policy of pick-up-the-joystick-and-get-into-the-game-instantly, this language problem never really matters. There are three types of import games, American, Japanese and of course British or European. The differences, until recently, were physical with the cartridges unable to slot into foreign machines. To combat this you need a simple converter which raises the socket out of the Mega Drive and presto! You can play!



▲ *The CDX converter allows most imported CD games to be played, at long last.*

▲ *The CD operating screen shows a CD - ROM icon when a game can be played.*

As idyllic as all this sounds there's now a down side in the form of a coded lock-out that stops you playing all together. To get around this there are devices called Code Breakers that will allow the PAL and NTSC (American) versions to work in European consoles.

CD owners can use a device called the CDX from Datel, the makers of the Action Replay cheating device, to achieve the same thing.

You've saved up for, you've been given, you gave your right arm for... a Mega Drive. Now where do you go from here? What more can you achieve with this state-of-the-art-machine? Steve takes you through several reasons not to start your own stall at the next bring and buy sale.

TAKES ADD-ON'S

▲ *The ultimate device in our opinion, letting you create your own cheats, fast.*

Ever wondered what it would be like to have infinite lives on your favourite game? Some games admittedly have built-in cheats which can be accessed by pressing certain fire button combinations but finding these out relies on a) luck, and b) magazine cheat sections.

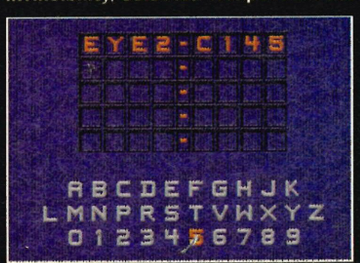
Now, although Mega Action brings you the best cheats and guides about, you may not be able to wait for our release date.

CRACKING THE CODES

There are two types of unit on the market at the moment, the Codemasters Game Genie and the Datel Action Replay. Although they both do the same job their approach to the problem is very different.

The Datel Action Replay is the more popular device. It looks much like a cartridge and simply plugs into the cartridge slot of your Mega Drive. A slot is provided on the top of the device to plug in your game for a piggyback effect.

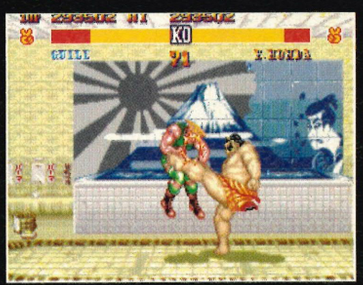
On the side of the Replay is a three position switch. To obtain the cheat you require, let's say infinite lives, you simply throw the switch into the down position. This puts the device into a discovery mode of sorts and allow access to the raw code of the programming. Now all you do is tell the device how many lives the game starts you with and off it goes analysing the raw code for that number of lives, let's say three. Now reset the Mega Drive, lose a life and tell the device to start hunting for the number two. Off it goes again, checking for any number change from three to two. Keep this up, constantly changing the value and eventually you will narrow down the possibilities to two or even one. Now the values you have been given should be entered into the parameter screen and the cheat activitated by putting the switch to up. Enter the game and you have infinite lives! There are several methods of discovery to use and they all provide varying results allowing anything from total power up, invincibility, selected weapons all the time or anything you might require. The unit acts as a converter too, though not for codebreaking.



▲ *Enter the codes on this parameter screen to allow infinite lives or whatever you want!*

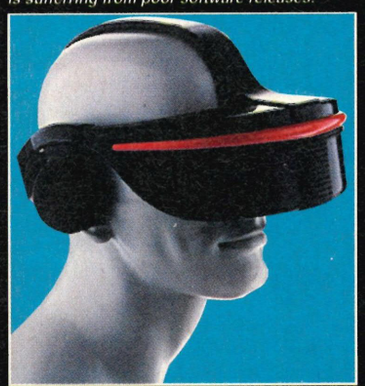
The Codemasters Game Genie looks quite similar to the Action Replay unit and also has a switch on the side. It uses the same system of hacking into the game but not by you. Put simply, you join the user club by buying the device and receive constant updates of codes.

To get going you enter the code on the parameter screen then engage the switch.The Game Genie gives more startling results, like Sonic in a dress, but being tied to a given list may prove a bit of of a problem.



▲ *Win every time at whatever game takes your fancy with these now famous devices.*

▼ *Lightweight and well designed the Sega unit is suffering from poor software releases.*



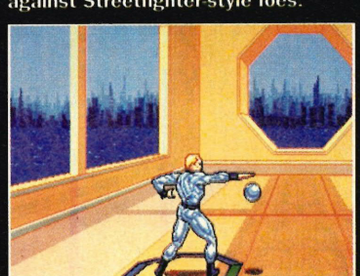
The MegaDrive has a few other peripherals and surprises up its sleeve. First off is the Menacer, a space age weapon resembling a gun that can be used for the ultimate shoot 'em-up. And though the thing looks good, feels good and is quite easy to use, there's little or no software to compliment it.

JOIN IN ON THE FUTURE

Pity, as the Nintendo unit has good back-up and some quite interesting games. Early days yet though and maybe this device will see some commitment in future. Till then I would resist the urge to buy.

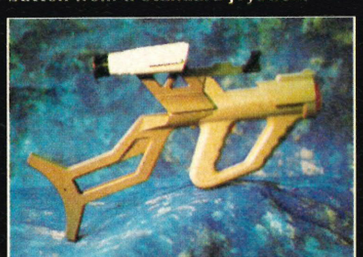
Just out is the Activator, a space-age interactive joystick that allows fighting games to break through new barriers. You have two contacts which you attach to your arms and legs. When you move around or mimic fighting actions, these are picked up by a flat sensor plate on the floor and translated to your on-screen character.

Eternal Champions, reviewed in this issue, is the first game to use it and sees you fighting for your life against Streetfighter-style foes.



▲ *The activator raises a few eyebrows in the morality front but is still great fun.*

There's more. Under much scrutiny at the moment is the Virtual Reality headset that Sega have been developing. Initially slated, The unit has been redesigned. It's now lightweight and features the Game Gear display shown in each eye. Control is by head motion sensors and a fire button from a standard joystick.



▲ *Looking great but suffering from poor response the Menacer is still available*

COMPACT DISC DECISIONS

▲ *Enhanced graphics and Stereo sound with a trendy redesign this unit is going places.*

Perhaps a little unfair to throw it in this article as a "peripheral" but you do have to add it on to an existing Mega Drive. First released officially over here early last year, the unit sold reasonably well but was dogged with incompatibility problems. Looks were just a bit bland too, the unit has a very square appearance. Things change and Sega learnt their lessons and so the Mega CD 2 was born.

Now, although the hydraulic eject has been taken out and replaced with a manual system much like the Walkman CDs you see around at the moment, nothing much has changed except for looks. Styling is very much like things should be with a very ergonomic trendy device that can handle both Mega Drive versions slotted into its side.

The games that were first available came in for a hell of a lot of criticism due to great expectations from press and public alike. At first all you got were compilations of older games or maybe a slightly revamped version of it.

But things are looking up now with all the software houses firmly committed to producing some quality stuff. I mean look at Thunderhawk or Silpheed or even Sonic CD. Breathtaking stuff. Psygnosis have even taken things as far as producing original soundtracks by some very famous artists. The two phono jacks situated on the back allow you to plug into the home Hi-Fi and obtain a louder stereo experience. The new Q-Sound system currently being utilised on games such as Ecco The Dolphin means a three dimensional effect to the music can be achieved. Of course the CD units can be used as domestic systems too, playing normal audio CDs.

A few words about the Mega Drive 2. It looks nice. More than that it is styled to complement the CD 2 but having the same price tag does not necessarily mean improvements. Like losing the headphone socket. Nope, it's up to the rest of the family to enjoy the experience too, whether they like it or not. Oh well, that's technological advancement for you.

▲ *Silpheed caused a big stir when first released but has since been outprogrammed.*

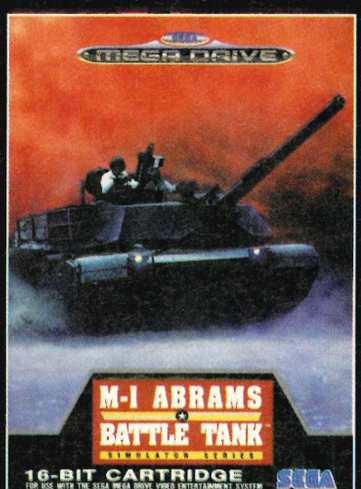
▲ *The best platform game ever? Well some would say so, including a few of us.*

SECONDS AWAY...

Games. Every owner wants the best from his machine and since that means getting hold of the greatest games past and present, the line-up might well be capable of producing the odd sharp intake of breath. There are several options you can take to catch up or leap ahead in the gaming experience. The first is to part exchange an old title for a new game you really want. This is easily done, with most good dedicated shops running an exchange system of some sorts. It turns out to be good economy too, especially if you are fast and furious in your gamesplaying.

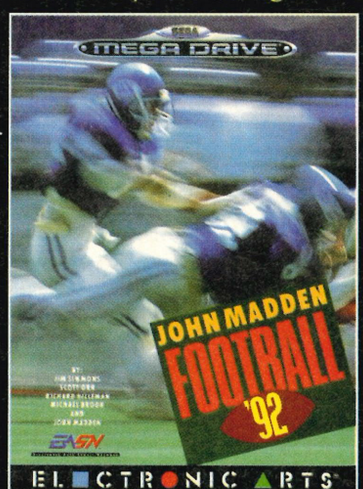
Another option is to join a mail order club like Special Reserve who will give you considerable discounts for a small membership fee. They will discount not only games but also peripherals and there are newsletters informing you of products in the pipeline and the odd special offer.

A recent trend on the market is to bundle games together in twin packs at discount prices. This again is a great way to catch up and from what I have seen the titles have been well chosen, such as Sonic and Robocod, Batman and Terminator. They should be available just about everywhere by the time you read this.



▲ *Definately dated but still surprisingly playable M-1 puts conquest in your hands.*

▲ *Sonic 2, nearly a year old now but still selling well and worth anyone's money even now.*



▲ *We are on Madden CD now and even more versions of this football simulator are planned.*

▲ *Subject of a recent re-release, Winter Challenge proves old games can still be good.*

▲ *Take time out to study past releases and you may find some past masters.*

■ *The Saturn project has been unofficialy confirmed by various sources. Does this put the Mega Drive and Mega CD firmly in the realms of outdated technology or are there still enough reasons to keep your commitment to Sega and their promise of constant releases and developments?*

ACCESS THE NEXT LEVEL

Ever wanted to play the piano? Well now you can with the Miracle Piano Teaching System from Mindscape. You have a half size Midi Compatible keyboard that connects to the Mega Drive via the joystick port. Through an on-screen tutorial you canlearn the basics and more. On-screen games using the keys can be played and the keyboard has built-in sounds and can also play the Mega Drive internal sounds.

Keep fit fanatics amongst you will also enjoy the Heartbeat Personal Trainer from Heartbeat Corp. of America. This device monitors the heartrate during and after exercise, providing graphical information on how things are goings. Great for the heart disease enthusiast.

Also available from America is the Edge 16 Modem Card system which as the name suggests lets you play games with or against opponents over the phone. This device is very expensive and as far as I am aware is only available in the States. It's also perhaps a bit dated now as Sega have announced the acquisition of a Cable channel with the opportunity of downloading games from the station via this cable. What equipment you will need is as yet unclear but I would imagine in keeping with Sega's 'domination of the world' policy it will be reasonably priced.

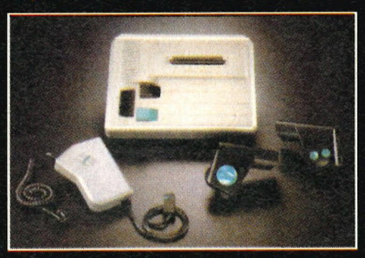
If you are an avid reader of our magazine then you will have noticed back in issue 3 a review of the import game Switch which was, as far as I am aware, one of the first games to use the Sega mouse. This little black device fits firmly into the palm of the hand and allows a little arrow to be moved around the screen. Selections are made by clicking the button after placing the cursor over the desired file or object.

A quick word about monitors, TVs and how to get a clearer picture. Many of you no doubt are more than impressed about the arcade-quality graphics that the Mega Drive can produce. When it comes down to looking at it on the TV, however, things are just a tad fuzzy.

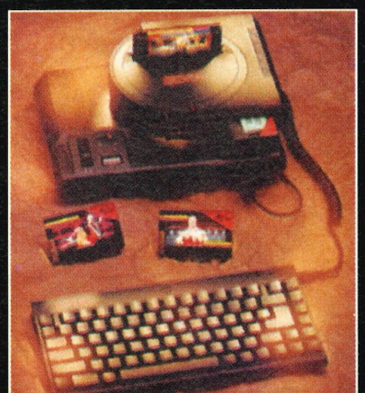
To get around this there are a few options available. First, if your TV has a SCART or RGB connection on the back (these will be clearly marked and are for video or auxiliary sources), then all you need do is pop into your games shop and buy an appropriate cable. Plug this into the AV OUT socket on the back of the Mega Drive and into the RGB or SCART socket in the TV. Make the appropriate channel selection and you will immediately notice the difference in quality.

Of course, another way around the problem is to go out and buy a special monitor that cannot handle TV signals but is used for computers.

PC monitors as far as I'm aware are unsuitable, but monitors like the Philips or Commodore are ideal for the job, with several types of connector at the rear.



▲ *Now you can really put your life in your hands with this heart monitoring device.*



▲ *The longest joystick lead ever? The Edge Modem system lets you play miles apart.*

▲ *The miracle keyboard teaches you to play the piano as graphically as possible.*

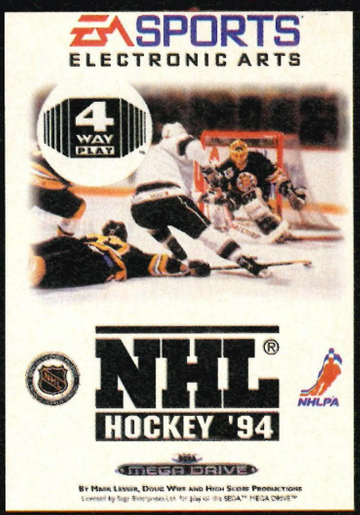
FOUR AT ONCE

Wouldn't it be fun if you could play with not one, or two, but up to FOUR players on screen at once? With the latest spate of four player adaptors out on the market at the moment, anything is possible. FIFA Soccer, the blockbusting game featured last month, uses the EA adaptor which isn't compatible with the Sega four player tap. Not a real problem as Sega aren't pushing their device all that hard.

Other games available at the moment for four players include NHLPA Hockey, General Chaos and Bill Walsh Football to name a few. More games have been announced and will be featured in Mega Action!

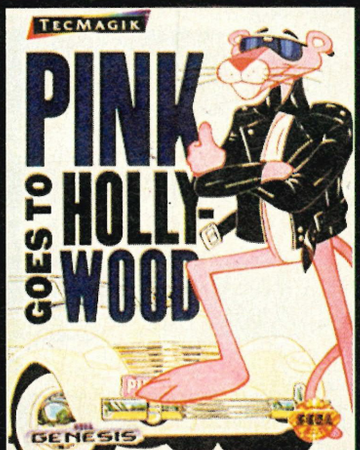
▲ *Less obtrusive but not compatible with Sega games the EA device is cheaper too.*

▲ *Sega's four player tap was the first of its kind for the consoles last year.*



▲ *Four players battling at once on the ice is a sight to see indeed. You need new skills too.*

▲ *Make your own video now, remix your own sounds in the CD's of tomorrow.*



▲ *We just had to slip in a picture of the office mascot Pink Panther, out very soon!*

100% ALIVE

Pick up someone else's litter

Send your mum some flowers

Strip right down to your underwear

Go for a run around the block

Tune your radio to Kiss and pull the knob off

Believe in yourself

Eat a pineapple

Write the alphabet backwards

Meet an old friend you haven't seen for years

Make a record

Dance the dance electric

Plant a tree

Phone someone you love

Learn a second language

Go and see Ryan Giggs

Get your nipple pierced

Ring 071 700 3100 and tell London something it needs to know

Play football in the street

Give £100 to a down and out

Make a statement

Order an empty skip and leave it outside your house for a week

Learn something new every day

Throw away your watch

Laugh

Take a picture of your back

Make a cake

Go for a day without speaking

Write to Mother Teresa

Every day at the same time stop and think about something wonderful

Turn your radio up full blast

Say a prayer every night

Teach a child to read

Have a day without TV

Buy a book on Jeff Koons

Read a page from a book by Charles Dickens

Stare at the clouds for a full ten minutes

Hug someone of the same sex

Buy Marvin Gaye's 'What's going on'

Put your change into a bottle for a year and give it to charity

Tell someone a secret

Visit Great Ormond Street Hospital

Begin something you've always wanted to begin

Go to the market and spend 10p

Talk to a child about the future

Help someone today

Think purple

Wear a wig

Wallpaper the inside of your car

Make everyone at work a cup of tea

Go on holiday and don't take any luggage

Take a friend to the zoo

Run up a downward escalator

TUNE TO 100FM,
CLOSE YOUR EYES,
STICK A PIN IN THIS
PAGE AND DO IT.

Give up your seat on the tube every day

Take a bath in milk

Climb a tree

Watch 'It's a wonderful life'

Get on a bus you never got on before

Drink a glass of water

Clean your ears

Dream for the day

Visit New York

Listen to Jazzie B's next show

Get up an hour earlier tomorrow

Do 100 press-ups

Eat something you've never tried before

Ride a Merry-go-round

Say hello to a policeman

Spend an hour in a place of worship

Send someone a telegram

Put your sofa in the kitchen

Go to a museum

Get on a bus you've never been on before

Dance in the front garden

Shave your head

Feed the birds

Visit an art gallery

Write a poem

Feed someone else's meter

Carry a flower all day

Paint your toe-nails

Take your granny to the movies

Stop saying no for a whole week

Put on a dress

Write to your MP

Make a wish

Go home a different way every night for a week

Learn to listen more

Sing a song at the top of your voice

Help a stranger with their shopping

Write a fairy-tale

Croon to your partner under a full moon

Do a jigsaw puzzle

Get your hair cut

Dance in the rain

Fast for a day

Buy a hat

Use a fountain pen

Walk home today

Feed the dog

Invite your neighbour to tea

Give your favourite possession away

Memorise a Woody Allen joke

Tell the truth for a day

Scream

Put the kettle on

Take up knitting

Listen to Rodigan's next show, in the park

Spend an afternoon speculating on how to make a million

Forgive someone

Say yes for a day

Put your name on a star

Stop someone getting AIDS

Learn to fly

Do a cartwheel

Tell someone your dreams

Walk on the grass

Make a million pounds

Talk about God with a friend

Wink at someone ugly

Buy the next record you hear on Kiss

Buy your boss a present

Tell someone you appreciate what they do

Buy a friend your favourite book

Tune into Caesar tomorrow morning at 4am

Photocopy this ad and get someone else to do it

Only boil as much water as you need

Learn a new word every day

Do one thing to make the world a better place to live

Kiss 100fm

MEGA

Playing to win.

POST YOUR ENTRY NOW

We have 10 copies of Danny Curley's video to give away. You'll receive expert tuition on how to become a true champion. You'll see Danny and Dominik Diamond wax lyrical on the sofa. You won't believe your eyes – you'll think you're seeing double, multiple in fact, with all the screens dotted around this Games Master-style set.

This is no whimp's cheat guide. This is the real thing, the first proper guide to games playing techniques. With the benefit of Danny's 12 years of gaming experience and Domink Diamond's clear presentation, the video takes you through all the different styles of game available and offers four or five tips on each. Classic games like *Bubsy, Speedball 2 and Xenon 2* are used to illustrate each point.

The Curley Challenge, featured on the video and due to travel the country next year, involves beating Danny's record time for the first level of *Bubsy*.

The video is aimed at beginners and veterans alike and is guaranteed to do wonders for your games skills.

Rules:

The winners will be the first 10 lucky beggars to be pulled out of our embarassingly empty Christmas stocking. Danny Curley and Dominik Diamond are barred, and so are all of us, which is a pity, because certain people in the office could do with some games playing tuition.

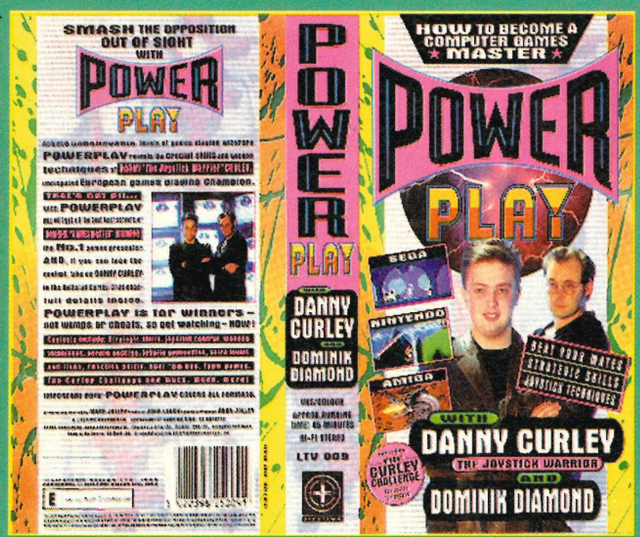
▲ *Here he is, the handsome star himself. He looks a lot better on the video.*

◀ *Fashion tip for the '90s – wear your hat the wrong way round and grow your sideburns long and bushy. And black is definitely big.*

▼ *Danny's CV. Would you give him a job?*

Another great hint from the European games champion. Platfrom heroes watch out. ▶

Beware ▶ *cheap imitations. There have been plenty of cheats videos and guides to specific games, but never before has there been a general tips video designed to help you playing all kinds of games by looking at aspects common to several different games across all formats.*



The questions

1) Dominik Diamond used to be the presenter of Games Master. The new presenter is called:
a. Dexter Fletcher
b. Ronald Bert
c. Ted Dexter

2) Danny Curley was Sega European Champion in 1991. This year's winners were from:
a. Zambia
b. Sweden and Finland
c. the USA

3) Which city in the North West does Danny come from (hint: it should have been hosting the Olympics in the year 2000)?
a. Liverpool
b. Grimsby
c. Manchester

▲ *Danny and Dominik cuddle up on the sofa and exchange tips.*

Pinball table compo

My answers are :

1 .....

2 .....

3 .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Post code:

Age: ..... **Tel:** .....

Send your entries by 5th March to:

MEGA ACTION

Pinball Compo, Mega Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

❑ *I do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies*

CD Section

Sega will have nearly doubled their user base for the Mega CD and Mega CD2 by the time you read this. It stands to reason therefore that a magazine such as Mega Action, in the forefront of the console scene should officially dedicate a section to this growing phenomenon. Here it is, now each and every month!

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Psygnosis
RELEASE DATE
January
PRICE
£39.99

FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS

The introduction combines live actors and scale models with fully digitised backdrops which are beautifuly drawn and animated. Actors were shot in the various poses and positions against a blue background which was then replaced by the carefuly drawn landscapes. Eager to join in, many of the Psygnosis team were dressed up and used as extras or even key figures in the opening sequences.

Other 'live' sequences include a brisk walk through the way station to the next craft you will be piloting and a rather alarming death sequence for your unfortunate pilot by way of a failure in the life-support system. Ah well, there's always the continue I suppose.

MICROCOSM

I imagine you've all seen Fantastic Voyage countless times. Well now here comes another journey inward.

I have no idea about all those weird and wonderful names that describe the organs of my body. For that matter I don't really care, that is unless some surgeon is holding half of them in one hand and trying to stuff the other bloody mass back where it came from. Then I care.

Microcosm takes you well away from the practicalities of surgical precision and drops you firmly in the realms of a shoot 'em-up. Yep you heard me, a shoot 'em-up. What the surgeons of today would have to say about a mini-space ship being let loose with lasers and smart bombs amongst your arteries I don't know. One bad shot and you'd be cut to pieces!

TIP
Save your biggest most serious weapons for the boss craft. You won't need such devastating power on normal craft.

That's not all there is to it though, there are plenty of other activities to keep the trigger-happy player occupied. A certain president has been impregnated with deadly viruses and it's your job to remove them.

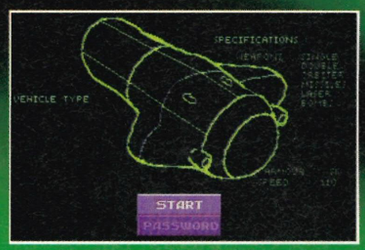
This little task takes you on a journey around five areas of his body and to be honest it gets quite educational at times. It's certainly a lot of fun, quite surprising as anything to do with blood and iodine normally makes me just a tad faint.

The story is very much in the vein of Fantastic Voyage, that rather clever film of the late sixties. Instead of the shapely Raquel Welch as your partner you get a rather poe-faced individual piloting the craft according to your command.

The tale relates a power struggle between two large corporations, who, rather like the film Robocop, have taken over large areas of the population in a governmental sort of way.

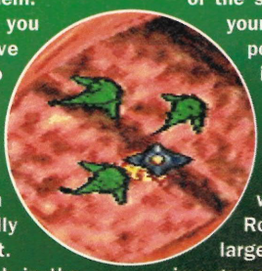
Each corporation has a president who, it would appear, live a rather dangerous life. Threats on their lives being commonplace. To combat this, security measures are just a little over the top with more militia being employed for a presidential visit than anything even the likes of Castro ever saw.

Rumour has it that Cybertech, the largest of the two corporations,



▲ *The blue print for the ship is in green so confusion begins here warriors.*

▲ *Position the ship correctly for a constant stream of deadly fire. Yipee!*

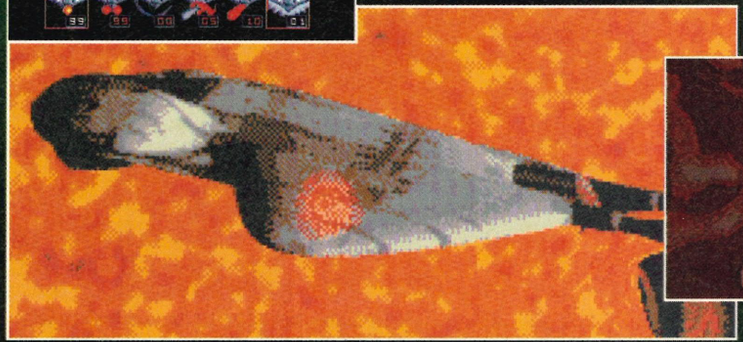


▲ *This is you injected into the bloodstream and eager to kick some blood vessels.*

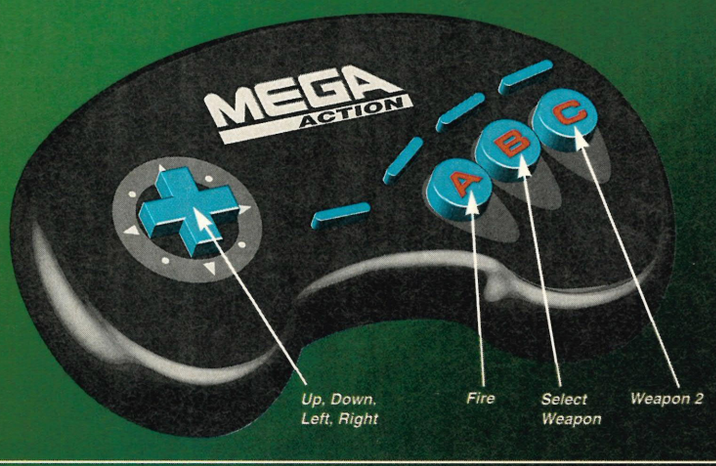
▲ *The Titan boss ship is the first you will encounter. Concentrate on the middle.*

▼ *Titan again, only this time it is primed and ready to blow you away, horribly.*

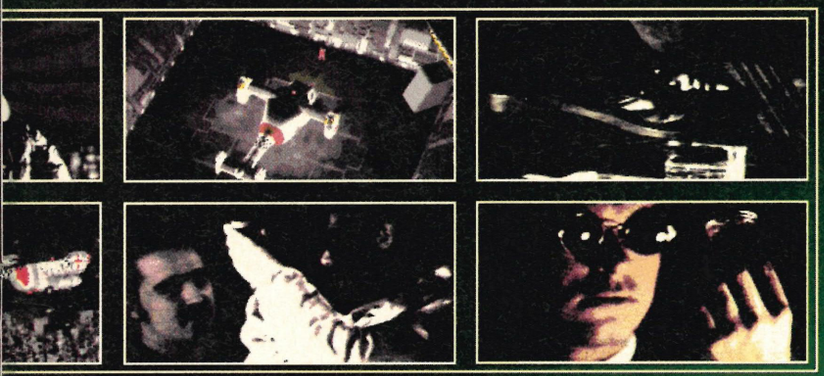
▼ *The craft you assist is state of the art and definetely not advisable for weak hearts.*



MICRO MANOEUVRES



■ White blood cells, or lymphocytes, have very long memories. Successive generations never forget an enemy.



CD

might have killed off the opposing president in some weird and wonderful power struggle. Angry at this, the rival organisation, Axiom, have implanted a miniaturised electronic brain into the president of Cybertech and are hoping to control his every thought without anyone knowing. Err simple. Except the whole plot is discovered and after a brief firefight with the guards the nasty people who injected the brain device are soon killed.

Soon it becomes apparent that all is not right with the President. For someone who's supposed to be recovering from a routine operation he's missing some vital signs.

In order to rectify the situation a special submersible is prepared. This is where you come in and the task you must complete is to enter the body and destroy anything you might find there that looks remotely dangerous. This is some task as infections and enemy devices are rampant. Oh, one thing – you must be deadly accurate with the shooting as you could damage the President's insides and that wouldn't be so good for the corporation.

You must also make the correct directional adjustments or you'll find yourself up a dead end or even in the wrong artery.

The game follows a fairly typical shoot 'em-up approach with some pretty impressive backdrops that are not for the squeamish.

Powering up the craft is very easy – all you do is run over the various icons that appear at intervals. There

▲ *This is the little scene just before the craft is destroyed by your failure. Oops.*

▲ *Shoot carefuly at the centre to destroy the ship. Select the right weapon from below.*

▲ *Screaming around someone's insides is certainly a novel concept I'll grant you.*

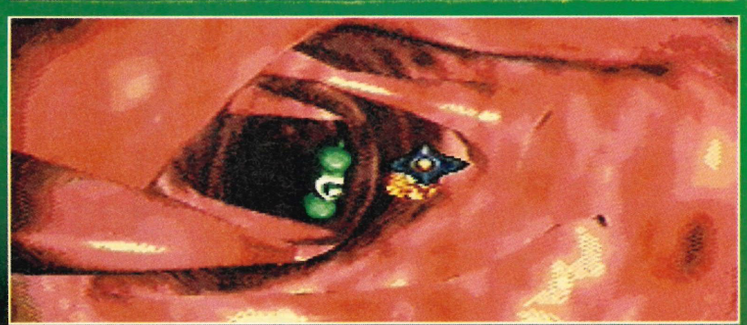
are double shots, powerful missiles and even the odd laser weapon to collect. Be careful though, you only have a few rounds for each attack.

The single shot, the default setting, is unlimited and can be selected at any time but the serious power-ups are strictly limited. Select and use in the right situations is my advice and don't waste missiles on standard enemy devices.

Of course there are end of level guardians and, in keeping with the rest of the game, they are impressive, digitised affairs with but a single weak spot for you to exploit. It's more than a case of just blasting and hoping. Line the craft up accurately. select the best weapon for the job and then er... blast like mad.

The music deserves a special mention here because unlike the bleeps and annoying crackly sampled music there is really something special going on. The game has an original

▲ *The second ship in action, it's a lot faster and shoots a better laser more accurately.*



▲ *Something is just around the corner and it looks a tad dangerous. The enemies you encounter are fast and accurate shooters.*

score. Not only that but someone famous (in the seventies anyway) has written and performed it specially for you lucky people. One Rick Wakeman of Yes fame.

It all adds up to a very atmospheric game that feels both professional and exciting.

▲ *You've gone and killed him. Fortunately resurrection lies in the replay.*

Is there a down side? Well yes I'm afraid. Like most games that surround themselves in glamour and rich intro sequences the game just doesn't live up to expectations. Getting down to the nuts and bolts of playing proved a bit of a let down.

It reminded me of Silpheed somehow with the backgrounds being the centre of attention. I'm confident, though, that a game with great gameplay and this level of presentation will appear somewhere sometime soon. ■ **STEVE**

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

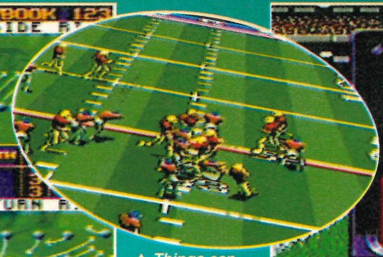
OVERALL

89%

IMPORT

PUBLISHER
Sega
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£55.99

▲ The 49er's have the first kick off playing against the Broncos.



▲ Things can get pretty hectic once the play starts. And just think, you're in the middle of it.

▲ Joe makes an appearance offering advice on plays.

JOE MONTAN NFL FO

Playing a real game of American football could be a thing of the past as CD sports sims get ever better.

Joe Montana has built up his career and gained Superbowl supremacy by quarterbacking for the San Francisco 49ers. So after joining the Kansas City Chiefs, the next logical move was to become the latest American football star to grace a game with his name.

A full selection of plays have been made available for you to employ. You're given 45 seconds to run though all the options and decide on the best manoeuvre. If you exceed the time limit you incur a five yard penalty. So there's no time to sit around twiddling your thumbs!

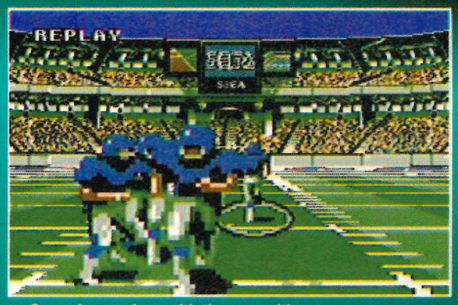
You have the choice of playing any of the 28 teams that make up the NFL, from all six conferences. Note the team statistics shown before play is started and select your team. Then decide who to play against. You can choose any team from any conference, you can even play against the team you have selected!

The 10 greatest teams ever, according to Sega anyway, are also here as the Superbowl Greats. The manual gives you the run down on the years each team won, and how.

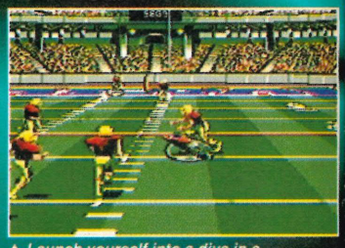
The usual options are available, i.e. deciding length of game and level of difficulty.

The games can run for a full 20, 40 or 60 minutes, split into quarters so a game doesn't seem to drag on. Three difficulty levels are available. Rookie level, for beginners, allows you to view which play the opposition choose, enabling you to counteract it. Normal mode allows you to see the selection of moves your opponents have, but you make the final guess as to what they've chosen. Pro mode is the most challenging and the computer's choice of play isn't shown on screen, so you've got to put your thinking cap on and work out the best play for the current situation.

TIP
If you have possession of the ball and you're about to be tackled, try to dive at an angle, not head-on, to reduce the chance of fumbling.



▲ Come face to face with the opposition as they all line up ready for the next down.



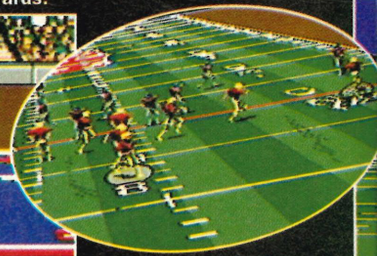
▲ Launch yourself into a dive in a final effort to try and complete the pass made by the quarterback.

There are three sub-teams that make up one football team. The Offensive unit is responsible for gaining the yards up the field and scoring points. When you've possession of the ball you control the offensive side, and take on the role of quarterback. You must decide whether to throw to a receiver further down the field, make a pass off to a runner or just run with the ball yourself. You generally get better yardage throwing than running but it's more risky.

When passing you can control the trajectory of the ball. Increase the angle of the arc for a deep pass, or decrease the arc of the pass for a bullet throw. The bullet pass is generally more effective, as it's a lot quicker and gives you a higher chance of completing shorter passes. When your team either lose possession or score, the Defensive team move in. These guys have to prevent the other team gaining the necessary 10 yards.

▼ The replay will show you the action just before a tackle brings down your man.

▼ Touchdown!!! The Broncos have made it to the end zone for an extra seven points.



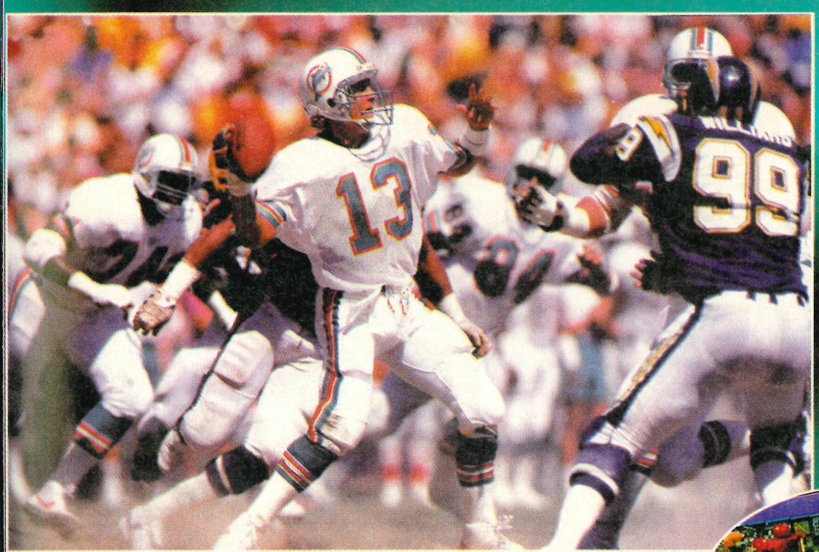
▲ The throw is made down the right wing, so it's up to the receiver to leg it past every one now.

■ Don Shula recently became the winningest coach in NFL history, breaking the legendary George Halas's record of 328 victories.

IA OTBALL

▲ *The Broncos have possession of the ball, so now the 49er's must choose a defensive play.*

◀ *Right from the first kick the action keeps comin' at ya.*



photography John W.McDonough

Choose a play that either focuses in on sacking the quarterback, blocking off any of the wide receivers or diving on a runner and try to cause a fumble. The Special teams are called in usually for a punt or shot at a field goal. After a touchdown is scored, a team is given the chance to convert a goal kick into one extra point.

If you're in need of some professional coaching to help you through a tricky play and you've managed to lose the manual, fear not... ask Joe. Call a time out from the current play and select 'Ask Joe'. On this command a video screen appears showing Joe Montana in person. Via this TruVideo link up, Joe despatches advice on what strategy might be best and suggests plays to improve your game.

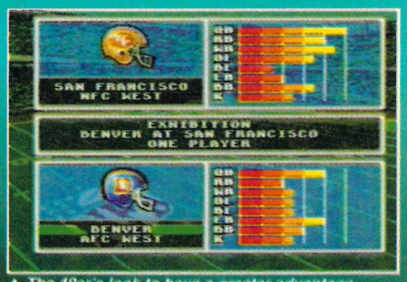
Afterwards, if you think you've just made the greatest pass or touchdown in football history, check out the instant replay facility. The action is re-run straight from the snap to when the ball hits the ground. These play backs can be viewed from several different angles. To watch the replay from Sega's helmet camera is to really enjoy a true feel of what's going on. All the graphics are enlarged so it seems as if you're really facing the huge guy charging full force at poor little you.

The scrolling of the screens as the action moves up field is fairly smooth, but when the screen shots move from side to side everything becomes slightly wobbly and the screens sometimes don't match up.

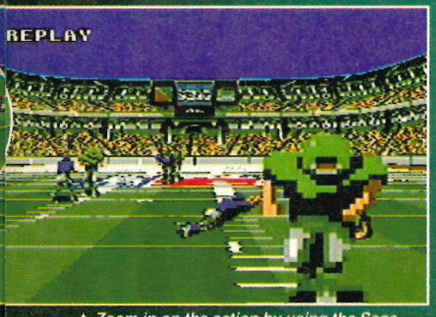
The 3D graphics make up for this error though. The characters respond fast to any move you play but, as with all American football games, the ball can get lost when things get a bit hectic and the ball disappears under about 14 mean football players.

The quality of the CD sound definitely stands out. As well as the cheering crowd, whistles and air horns are all heard in stereo, as though you are actually in the football stadium. To add authenticity to the game, you are given the option to hear a running commentary of the game. After each play has been executed, a voice over explains the previous play in the usual American-style lingo. I didn't understand it, but it fits in well amongst the plays.

With the recent release of quite a few football games, there are plenty to choose from. So if you're a CD owner and fancy a game, then definately consider Joe Montana. It's better than any cart games lurking



▲ *The 49er's look to have a greater advantage in the stats when you compare both teams.*



▲ *Zoom in on the action by using the Sega helmet to watch the replay of the last play.*

▲ *The Broncos decide to go for the long play by sending their men deep down the field.*

Remember, practice makes perfect. You have a lot more control over the players than you might initially think. Characters can dodge oncoming opponents by spinning 360 degrees. The arc of a pass can be decided – every possible aspect of playing the game on pitch has been squashed onto one disk. There's a great challenge factor with this so spend a bit of time sussing everything out and you can't go wrong. If you're the kinda' person who wants to play American Football, but you're just too weedy, then try this for size. ■ GLEN

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

86%

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Sega
RELEASE DATE
January
PRICE
TBA

◀ *Before this boxer dog (get it?) gets too close, spin a couple of stars at him.*

WONDERDOG

We just won't let sleeping dogs lie at Mega Action, so now it's official, we decide to take a second look.

OK I admit it, Sonic is Sega's champion character on all formats, but a certain four-legged rival is snapping at his heels CD-wise. *Wonder Dog* is a new breed of hero, now available as an official UK release for all you lucky CD owners.

This game invites you to take on the role of man's best friend, the dog. But this is no ordinary mutt. Oh no, this domesticated hound has been injected with a special serum which reveals his secret powers.

Sent all the way from his kennel on K-9 our pal is all set to start his training on planet earth. Here the pup has to develop those special skills required to become *Wonder Dog*.

▲ *It's not over until the fat lady swings (at you with her rolling pin). So duck!.*

Once he's transformed into *Wonder Dog* and mastered the moves, he can then begin his journey through the galaxy in his bone-shaped spaceship. This is where he has to confront the enemy, the Pitbully Armada on seven different planets.

Each planet has loads of power-ups to be collected. Different coloured diamonds gain you loads of points, bones are bonuses and smiley faces uncover hidden platforms. The little mutt's natural canine ability to dig holes has been somewhat enhanced as *Wonder Dog* so he can tunnel right down and bypass part of the level.

On the first level, on Earth, *Wonder Dog* has to battle through loads of harmless animals. All the wildlife sprites score 10 out of 10 on the cutesy factor, with whistling foxes and pink, fluffy rabbits. It seems heartless that these poor, defenceless bunnies have to be knocked out of the way with a shooting star.

Onward you go and Daffy duck look-a-likes dive bomb you. Negotiate these and you're faced with hedgehogs rolling down the slopes which you had better jump over, or you're going to meet a prickly end. *Wonder Dog*'s head icon at the bottom of the screen represents his current health rate. He can take a few knocks and scrapes, but his face slowly becomes bumped and bruised until, surprise surprise, you lose a life.

▼ *Search out the extra jewels in the trees.*

▲ *Make way for the fitness freaky fox, who jogs up and down the nature trail all day.*

TIP

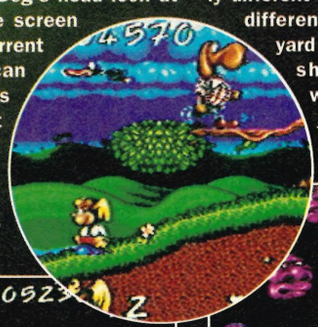
Always climb up the branches to the top of the trees where you will find the bonus levels, just try jumping into the canopy of leaves.

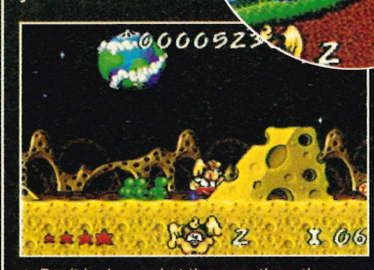
While climbing about in the trees and collecting the vast array of power-ups, try to jump into the leaves above you when you reach the top branches. If you manage this you may well find yourself dragged into a secret platform hidden high in the tree tops.

In these leafy arbors you'll find jewels of amazing value, which increase your score no end, and hopefully gain you that extra life.

Later levels are fought out on totally different planets, with hundreds of different characters. The scrapyard planet is littered with old shells of cars, dustbins where moggies lurk and

◀ *Watch the birdie! The duck will dive bomb out of the skies at you if you get too close.*

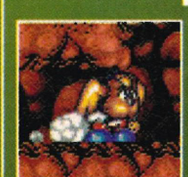




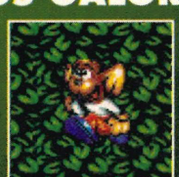
▲ *Don't look now, but there are three tiny, faceless martians hot on your heels.*

▲ *It could only be the Weird zone where green freaky guys try to block you in.*

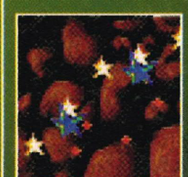
BONEHEADS GALORE



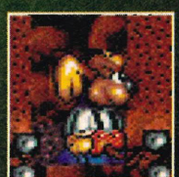
RUNNING SLIDE: The only real way of getting underneath the odd piece of outcrop is to run at it then press Down. This allows you to slide neatly underneath it. Easy!



SUPER RUNNING JUMP: Getting every ounce out of your suit might be the only way of reaching those difficult spots. After jumping, keep the button depressed and see the dog take off.



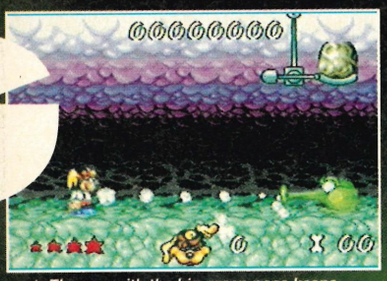
WEAPON: The longer you hold down the button, the greater the range achieved. Useful for those flapping airborne enemies or hitting that distant platform-based enemy.



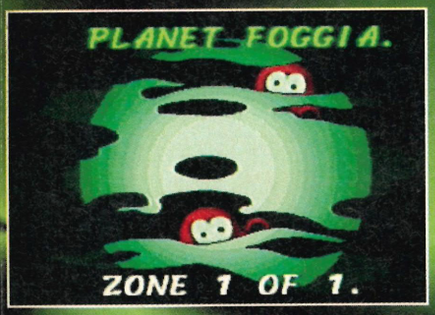
SPIN DIG: Stand over a grey area of space, then press and hold Down on the direction pad. Then watch amazed as your faithful best friend heads downwards towards certain peril.

■ In Texas, two police dogs called Rocky and Barco made 969 drug seizures in 1988 alone. They have a $30,000 price on their heads!

▲ On the surface of the Scrap yard planet moggy cats and stray hounds roam about.



▲ The guy with the big green nose keeps sneezing at me and I'm not impressed.



▲ Strange things lurk within the fog on planet Foggia. Tread carfully here fellow houndsters.

tough, 'streetwise' boxer dogs (complete with boxing gloves) are ready to stop you. The planet that looks like it's made of cheese has alien spaceships flying overhead, which drop posses of little green men who chase after you if you take too long getting across the planet. The final mission for Wonder Dog is to rid his home planet of all the Pitbull baddies who've infiltrated K-9.

Once you have completed all of Wonder Dog's missions, you may find yourself using your CD as a place mat for your brew. There isn't much to separate this from some of the better platform games that are available on cartridge but the enhanced graphics and sound still provide for a great challenge.

If you have the game already, don't forget all those lovely level codes we printed way back in our August issue!

▲ You return to K-9 only to find the Pitbully Armada in full control. Only you can stop them now.

A fun platformer with added cuteness in the graphics department. Wonder Dog looked good when he was first available on American import back in July, but now he may have lost his impact on the gaming world. So if Santa has just dropped a Mega CD round at your place and you're off to the January sales in search of some CD games, check out some of the more recent titles. I'm afraid you'll find this one just too dog gone easy. ■ **GLEN**

DON'T BE NOSEY

WINGS: Restores all that lost energy and cheers up your icon.

SMILEY: Uncovers all the hidden platforms for bonus-mania.

BLUE DIAMOND: 1000 valuable points for the high score.

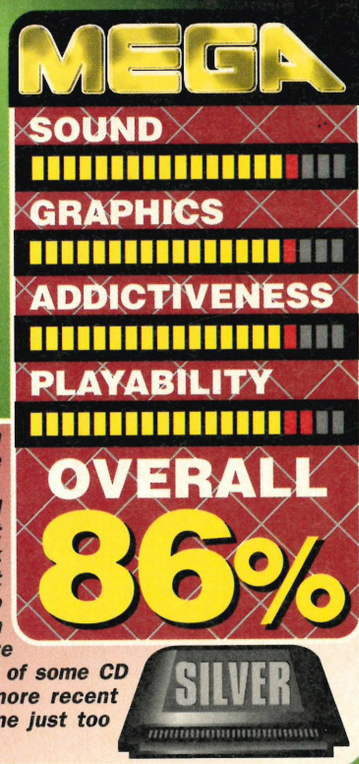
GREEN DIAMOND: 2000 more points for the extra life target.

RED DIAMOND: 5000 points, a MEGA diamond of doom.

BONES: Collect over 100 for an extra doggie.

WHIRLWIND: Whiz around possessed with total invulnerability.

RESTART FLAG: Lose a life and restart from this position.



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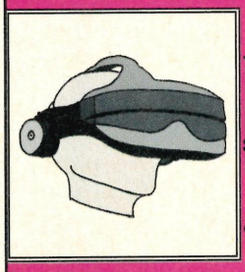

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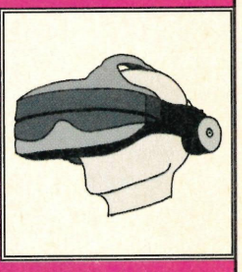

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BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA

■ The year of our Lord, 1897. Jonathon Harker takes his first brave steps on a long and perilous journey, his single purpose to rid the earth of this horrible creature. For while he lives, terror roams the earth.

A friend, appropriately called Jonathon, told me that he was playing this late one night with all the lights out and he felt really scared. This is not difficult to believe. The atmosphere created in *Dracula* is spooky.

The reason for this is partly down to the digitised film sequences, which actually look more moody because you can't quite make out what's going on sometimes when the pixels change from one shape to another.

Music plays its part too. For the huge orchestral chord of the original film score creates a maddening tension, with kettle drums rolling and violins screeching away incessantly.

High quality CD effects are not the only thing which will hammer your house with horror. In Harker's search for Dracula, vampire bats flutter into his face, rats and spiders crawl all over him and huge hatchet-wielding crusaders attack him. In the context of all the Dracula movies these scenes have a frightening reality.

▲ *Rats attack from below, bats from above – at times you can get covered in the critters.*

TIP

Use flying kicks to dislodge the bats from above before they fly in your face and sweeping kicks to clear away the rats.

If Coppola's film rattled your cage at all, you'll be forgiven for being the teeniest weeniest bit scared at Psygnosis' movie. When the extravagantly long intro screens cut into the actual game, however, you could be forgiven for being disappointed.

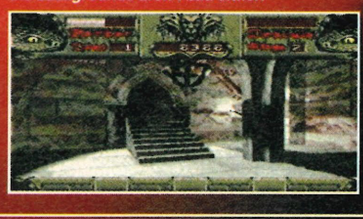
Scrolling from left to right, this might well seem like "the longest walk you'll ever make" as the little booklet claims. It's certainly one of the more tedious and probably one of the slowest.

Harker has a limited range of kicks and punches with which to fend off all those annoying horror-esque creatures. He must wonder if he'll ever get to meet the boss man himself with zombies puking venomous slime ,harpies swooping down and skeletal warriors all attacking him.

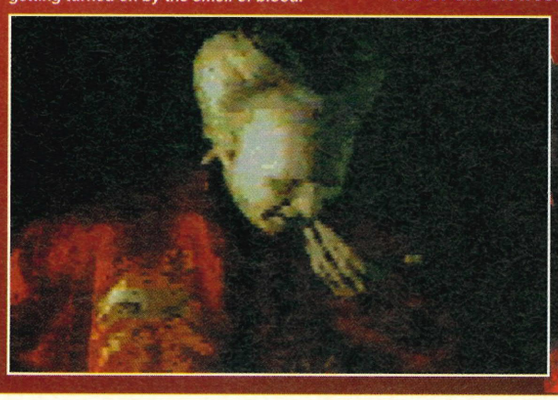
You tend to ignore the shortcomings of the gameplay because the game attempts to stick closely to the film's plot. Harker even gets to meet Dracula's hareem, which was upsetting enough for sex-god Keanu Reeves. You can imagine what it's like for you and me.

▲ *This decaying corpse stands in your way, spitting green stuff in your face.*

▼ *The castle has stunning lighting effects and the backgrounds aren't bad either.*



▼ *Drac resembles a very perverted old lady, getting turned on by the smell of blood.*



DRAC FACTS

Since Bram Stoker penned the tale of a Transylvanian aristocrat in 1897, the story has been put on film countless times, but never quite like this.

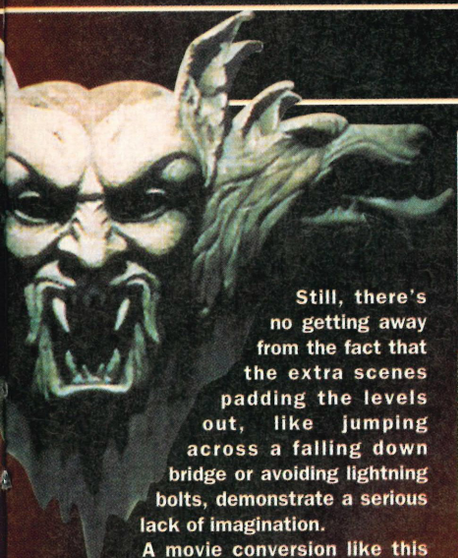
For Coppola's version is true to Stoker's novel, following Gary Oldman from his spooky castle to 19th Century London in search of his long lost love, Winona Ryder. "It's not really a vampire movie," she says. "To me it's more about the man Dracula, the warrior, the prince. He is unlike any other man – he's mysterious and very sexual, attractive in a dangerous way."

Coppola made a conscious effort to assemble a sexy young cast including Keanu Reeves and they all spent a week at his mansion getting into their parts, which included having Romanian lessons.

Accents were crucial for authenticity, said Coppola. Pity Keanu Reeves couldn't manage an English accent.

▲ *The legacy of Vlad the Impaler, the inspiration for the book, on film for the first time.*

■ Turning Gary Oldman into old Dracula took four hours worth of make up and he also wore three different sets of contact lenses.



Still, there's no getting away from the fact that the extra scenes padding the levels out, like jumping across a falling down bridge or avoiding lightning bolts, demonstrate a serious lack of imagination.

A movie conversion like this might not provide enough material for a seven level game, but these sort of scenes stand out like an unsightly beer belly.

The one scene that does catch the imagination is the library, where books fly at you from left, right, front and back. An encyclopaedia to the head is a hefty blow and all this time, Harker's blood is being drained at an alarmingly fast rate. But out of place looking power-ups are few and far between and you'll need several goes to get anywhere. Grabbing the book giving you a continue is, then, most useful. Even so it's still frustrating having to start the level all over again. Especially when each one is sectioned off by scenes from the film anyway.

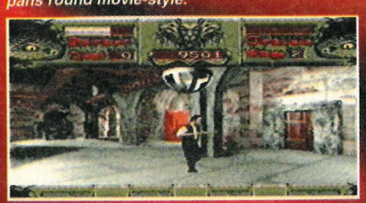
It's probably best to look on this effort from the combination of Sony and Psygnosis as a demonstration of what could be done in the future, because they certainly haven't got it right yet.

You'll get bored with seeing Dracula's hand reaching out to

▲ You reach the Count's coach, but it's just for show, as the scene cuts to film footage.

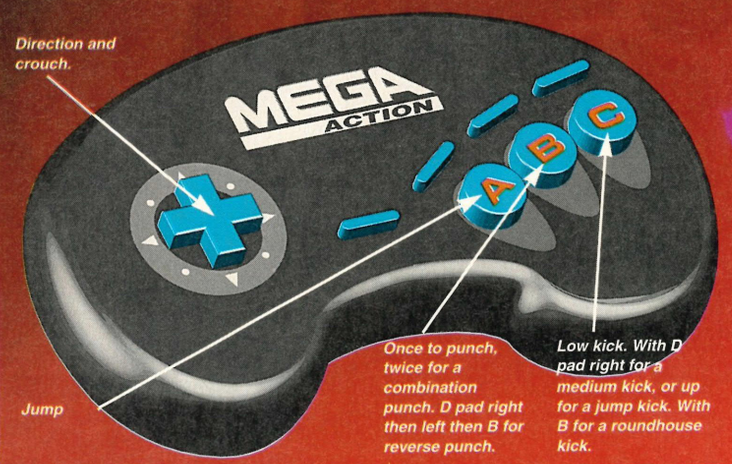
▲ Another sad glitch – Harker stands half on and half off some stepping stones.

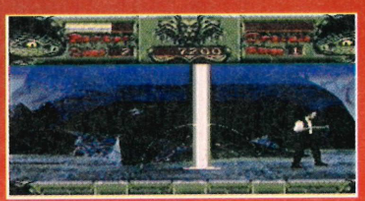
▼ When Harker reaches a corner, the camera pans round movie-style.



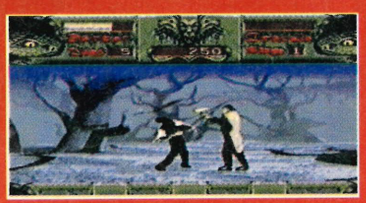
▼ The light streaming in from the windows cast eerie shadows.

HARK AT HARKER'S FLYING PUNCHES





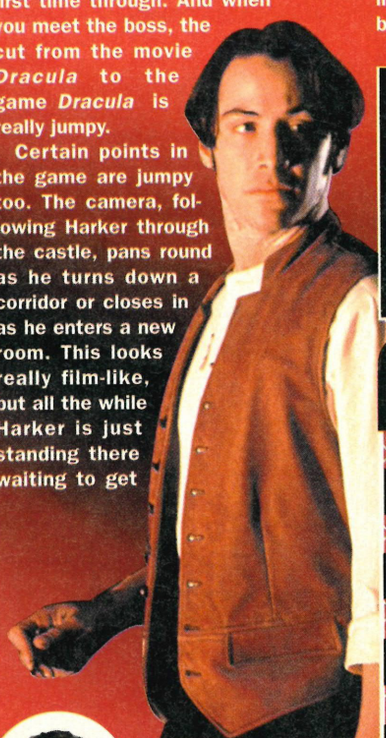
▲ An odd lightning-avoiding scene, one of the disappointing aspects of the gameplay.

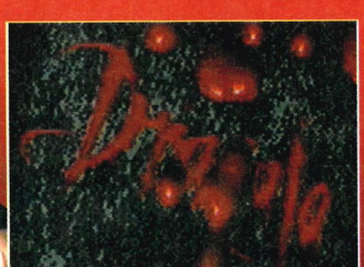


▲ A hatchet-weilding crusader, just one of the many perils on the longest walk ever.

Harker when he cuts himself shaving, even though it looks great the first time through. And when you meet the boss, the cut from the movie *Dracula* to the game *Dracula* is really jumpy.

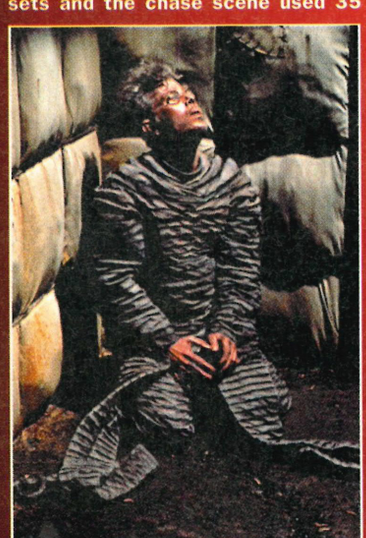
Certain points in the game are jumpy too. The camera, following Harker through the castle, pans round as he turns down a corridor or closes in as he enters a new room. This looks really film-like, but all the while Harker is just standing there waiting to get going, so it creates an embarrasing pause. It all makes for stunning viewing but, it has to be said, undeniably boring playing.



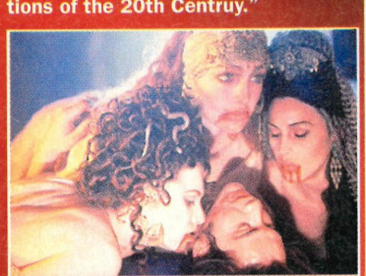


In Drac's magical world, the laws of physics are suspended, which means liquid dripping upwards and rats running upside-down on the rafters, achieved by running film backwards and multiple exposures.

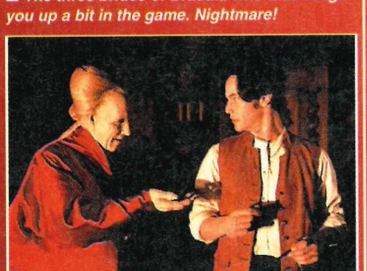
Production took place on over 60 sets and the chase scene used 35 horses and 16 stuntmen. Dracula himself changes shape into a bat and a wolf and is an amazingly cool character. Leonard Wolf said the character has become "an overpowering symbol of the crimes and temptations of the 20th Centruy."



▲ This, believe it of not, is Tom Waits. He of the croaky throat plays Renfield the lunatic.



▲ The three brides of Dracula who also rough you up a bit in the game. Nightmare!



▲ "Spare a penny for a dying old lady?" Keanu Reeves helps the homeless.

One of the best movie tie-ins to date, but still an appallingly bad game. Plenty of points of reference from the film, claim this as truly Bram Stoker's Dracula and not just another horror game. The digitised sequences are well chosen and are matched in mood by the game. Much of the film was filtered through a greeny colour representing the absinthe liquer Dracula offers to Mina on their first date, so this is portrayed in the game. The impressive soundtrack plays along too. But the way it's all put together is jumpy, and peppered with glitches. ■ ***DAVID***

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

OVERALL

70%

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Psygnosis
RELEASE DATE
Out Now
PRICE
£39.99

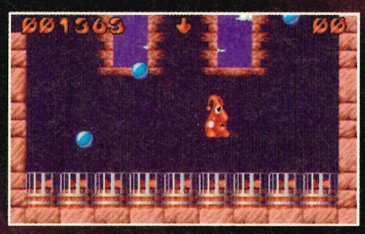
▲ Star Wars-style intro screens seem to be de rigeur these days, but this is the original.

▲ Puggsy launches off into space on a routine interplanetary joy ride.

▲ He's just cruising on a Sunday afternoon, minding his own business...

PUG

■ The plucky lad from Mars has got the key, he's opening the chest. Oh no, he's sliding back down the hill...



▲ How to escape all these fans? The answer my friend is blowing in the wind.

I can't help thinking of It's a Knockout when I'm playing this. Remember that wonderful slapstick competition which had contestants dressed in outrageous costumes ferrying containers of water to and fro across a crazy assault course?

It's not just because you are carrying miscellaneous toy-like objects around all the time, or the fact that you are an orange alien with a sort of quiff which resembles a court jester's cap. What tickles my ribs and cracks me up in Stuart Hall-style full throated laughter is the realism of the whole thing.

Critics in this very magazine have scoffed at the attempts of the designers Tall Tales to incorporate the laws of physics into the gameplay. "Nice to look at, but the gampelay just isn't up to scratch," they say. But these touches do add something to the gameplay. Whether it's a positive achievement or just adds to the annoyment level, no one can deny that it makes this game quite unique.

Physical realism aside, Puggsy looks like a fairly standard platform game, with baddies to shoot, coins to collect, end-of-level bosses, the works. But on closer inspection it's a great deal more than that.

TIP

Explore every inch of the game in search of secret levels, and don't just follow the arrow to the exit, or you'll miss half the fun.

You begin by picking up a gun and shooting the bears and bouncing helmets, but then as you're settling down into autopilot platform mode, a solid wall appears in your path. The game turns out to be one of those flick-the-switch-to-release-the-key-to-open-the-padlock-to-get-to-the rope-to-cut-the-rope-to-reveal-the-secret-passage-type puzzles (deep breath), a cross between an adventure and a platformer. And these intriguing puzzles become more and more of a challenge as the game progresses, making it more of a Krypton Factor or Crystal Maze than a Gladiators or an It's a Knockout.

It might be a process of elimination, deciding which combination of switches will release the barrier. In fact the more reckless problem solver might approach this challenge by turning every switch and picking up every talisman around. But a little basic knowledge of the laws of physics can come in handy. Well, to be honest, it's more like common sense – knowing that if you pick up a 10 ton weight, you won't be blown away by this huge fan that's creating a blizzard in your general direction.

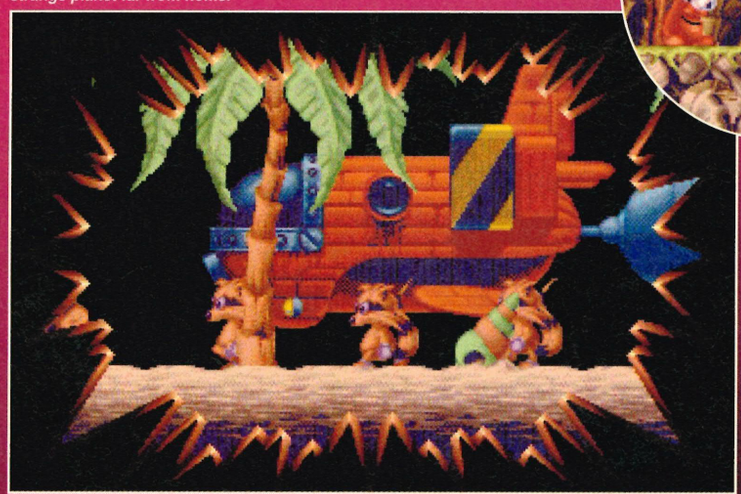
The more intricate moves are done for you and like that Mousetrap game, you just put all the pieces in place and watch the ball bearing roll around the machinery and drop the cage on the unsuspecting mouse. And, despite ingenious puzzles, various sub-games and hidden levels, once you've cracked a level, the challenge dwindles.

I can't really see you coming back to it once you've completed it, mainly because of a failing in Puggsy him-

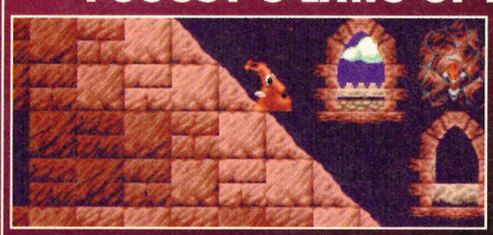
▼ Hmmm. This would be chin scratching time, but little Puggsy doesn't have a chin.

To kill the pirate parrot, you chuck wet fish at him. The strange life of a small orange alien. ▶

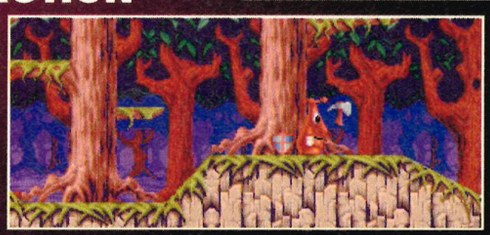
▼ A troop of interfering squirrels cart off Puggsy's spaceship leaving him stranded on a strange planet far from home.



PUGGSY'S LAWS OF MOTION



▲ When Puggsy climbs up a steep hill, the going gets tough. That's because of the gradient of the hill. Distance travelled up divided by distance travelled across = gradient, expressed in a ratio . A really steep road might be 1:7.

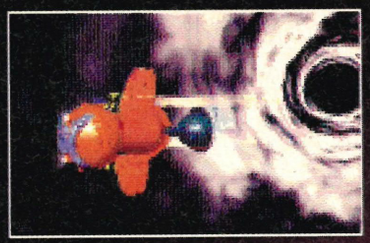


▲ When Puggsy is running with an object in his hand and he lets go of the object, it flies out of his hand in the direction he was running. Momentum is the product of the mass of the object and its velocity.

▲ When Puggsy is loaded down with a huge pile of objects, he travels significantly slower and cannot jump so high. This is because of the weight of the objects and the force of gravity. Sir Isaac Newton discovered gravity over 100 years ago..

■ In 1946, George Adamski met an alien from Venus, who was 5'6", with long blonde hair and "exuded beauty, wisdom and love".

▲ ...when a pirate ship with a huge grin suddenly appears right in his path...



▲ ...and sends Puggsy careering off through space towards a watery planet...

▲ called Earth. Looks lovely from up here...

▲ this green and pleasant land. But to Puggsy it's full of traps and puzzles.

GSY CD

◀ It's a funny version of earth this. Keys hang around in mid-air, waiting for Puggsy to collect them.

▼ A nasty bunch of bosses if ever I saw one, featuring some of the most hated creatures on our planet. Where's Jeremy Beadle then?

self. Unlike some cutesy platform heroes, Puggsy isn't fleshed out in too much detail. OK, so he can pick up a pair of shades for an extra life, and he struggles heroically against the earth's laws of physics, but he actually does a poor ET impersonation. When he jumps, his funny cap sort of blows in the wind and he skids to a halt with roadrunner style animation, but nonetheless he just can't compete with the likes of Bubsy Bobcat and friends.

How long it takes you to crack it will depend on your IQ rating and combined with your finger bashing expertise So MENSA members and dexterous gamesplayers alike unite and take over!

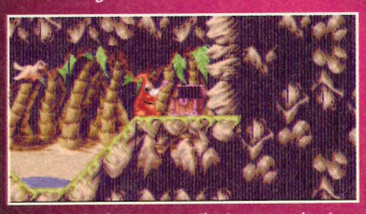
You might be wondering why there's no mention of that CD-licious intro sequence, of how the CD conversion improves on the boring backgrounds, stilted gameplay and slow pace of the cart, or how the CD is well worth the extra dosh. Simple. It ain't. The much-talked-about intro sequence, showing digitised footage of Puggsy's spaceship being shot down is certainly quite stunning.

But the dispossesed alien really comes down to earth with a bump when the game proper begins and the intro seems out of place with the bland game itself. It's like cutting from a Star Wars space station sequence into an episode of Rainbow. There really ought to be more to a CD conversion. Banging a nice intro sequence on the beginning and changing the soundtrack ain't gonna' fool nobody. And, call me traditional, but I actually preferred the original theme tune anyway.

PUGGSY'S LITTLE PUZZLER

▲ 1. Search for the key to the chest. Puggsy's only a little chap, so pile up the barrels to reach the higher areas.

▲ 2. The key is hidden away in the top corner of the level, but it's worth the search, as almost all items have a purpose.



▲ 3. Use the key to open the treasure chest and you'll find a match stick. Now what could this be for? Starting a forest fire, perhaps?

▲ 4. Light the cannon and fire a ball which blows a hole in the roof of the level, and a huge stack of barrels come falling down.

▲ 5. Building a stairway to heaven, you can climb up to a secret level.

▲ This tropical paradise is like nowhere on earth.

Puggsy is an old classic, like one of those 1920's black and white musicals. The programmers made a valiant effort to do something different with this funny alien platformer and the resultant realistic effects and sometimes mind-boggling puzzles are certainly deserving of your attention. But the CD has little to recommend it over the cart, released two months ago. This brings its score down. Save your money for a game designed to CD standards throughout, rather than a stunning intro sequence with bog standard cart game thrown in. ■ **DAVID**

MEGA

SOUND

GRAPHICS

ADDICTIVENESS

PLAYABILITY

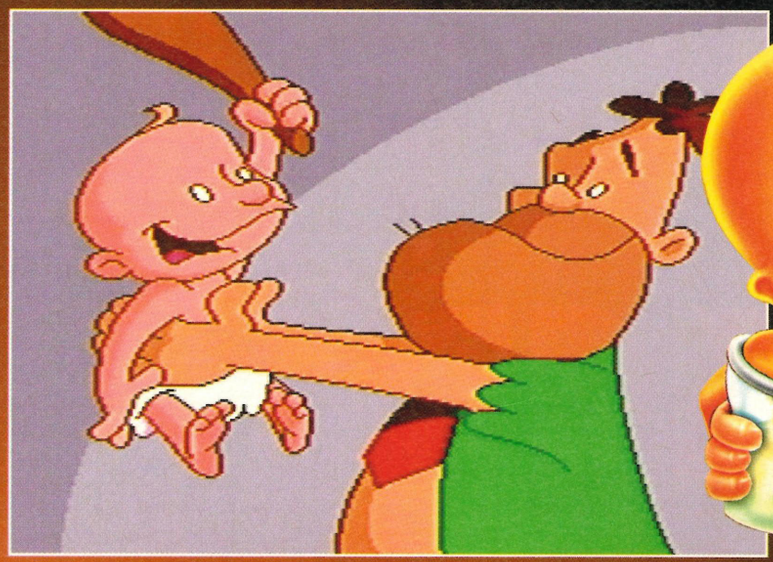
OVERALL

70%

OFFICIAL

PUBLISHER
Core Design
RELEASE DATE
TBA
PRICE
£44.99

▲ The son of Chuck certainly has a very big head. Embark upon your rescue mission now.



▲ Congratulations Chuck, your wife has just given birth to a bouncing baby Rock. This animated introduction is a special bonus for owners of the Compact Disc version of the game

SON OF C

■ If you're a caveman and you're cute you just have to appear in Core's latest Chuck Rock game.

There's not exactly that much you can say about stone, except it had an age named after it. The Stone Age seems like a perfectly good setting for a game about cavemen and Core have wisely chosen to place their popular *Chuck Rock* games in it.

This sequel is based around the adventures of Chuck Junior and it's just possible you've already happened across this game on a cart. Now it's here in all its Compact Disk glory! Anyway, on with plot.

Whereas his dad was a big, ugly neanderthal, Jnr. is slightly more on the cuter side – pot-bellied, big mouthed and carrying a whopping big club. All in all he's your average baby caveboy on a mission.

If you played the original you'll know that Chuck had to rescue his wife from the clutches of Gary Gritter. Since those days things have gone well for Mr. and Mrs. Rock and they've made a lot of cash in the new car trade.

Unfortunately, as in real life, people have gotten jealous of their success and now a certain Brick Jagger has decided to kidnap Chuck and take his gains for himself. He hasn't, however, counted on the little nipper intervening. Enter Chuck Jnr.

Right, in case you haven't seen it before, it's all about platforms as you might expect.

The CD contains a rather nice animated, cartoon intro sequence which shows the fate that befalls Chuck. This goes on for quite a while but in the end you'll end up skipping it unless you want to show your friends.

Once the game starts properly you realise just how cute it can actually be. Controlling Chuck Jnr is a relatively simple affair. All three buttons have a different function. Besides Jump hitting the A button will let you clamber up on to of your club. This enables certain traps to be avoided or helps you to climb on the back of passing dinosaurs.

TIP
Bash all the rocks you can find to create makeshift stepping stones when traversing the spiky sections of the game.

▼ Having bashed this dinosaur with your club he extends his neck to build a bridge.

▼ Swinging on the scenery is also a vital part of achieving success in Son of Chuck.

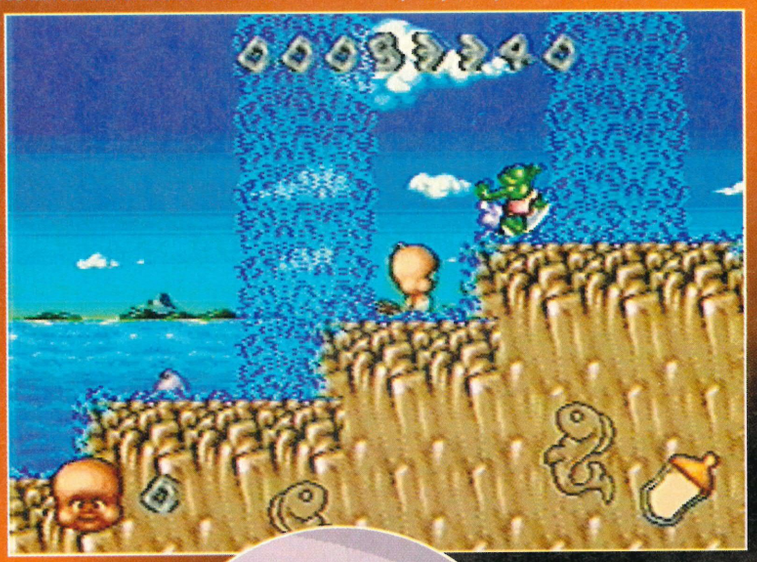
▲ Chuck Jnr. can clamber on the back of some of the local wildlife and go for a ride.

The club, apart from being used for whacking things with, can also be used as a torch. Providing, of course you put it on fire first. This will obviously help to light up darkened passages and rooms so you can easily find your way around.

It has to be said that if there is a problem with this game then it has to be that the difficulty level isn't very high. You tend to get carried away playing and before you know it you're a very long way into the proceedings. There is an option to make

▲ Chuck Jnr happens across a small bottle of babies milk. Drink this to replensih your energy. That's the thing displayed in the lower right corner of the screen.

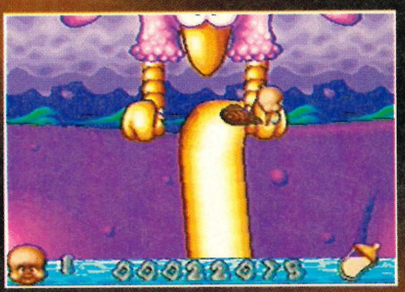
■ Dave Goodyear is off sick at the moment so we're a bit short of Caveman-related tales. Dave makes Chuck Rock look like Oscar Wilde.



◀ There are several sub-games that pop up after a certain number of levels. This is one.

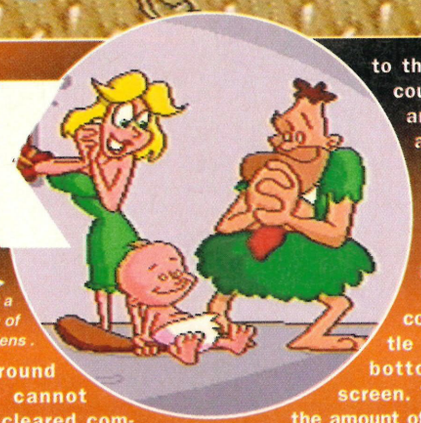
▼ The surfing reptiles have to be bashed as quickly as any other foe in the game.

▲ Ducking this weaving head is a must if Chuck Jnr. is to get past this section.



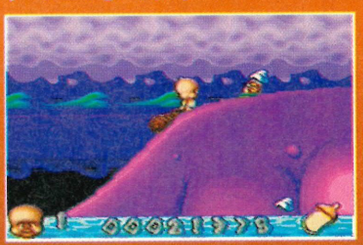
▲ The giant bird comes to collect Chuck Jnr and whisk him away to a new section.

CHUCK



La famille ▶ Chuck. What a cute collection of homo sapiens .

▲ The local wildlife population can cause their fair share of problems to your health.



▲ This level is played out entirely on the back of this huge purple dinosaur.

things more difficult though, so you can't complain too much and at least it's fun.

The characters help make *Son of Chuck* as enjoyable as it is. The action, as a rule, is pretty samey throughout. If you've seen the cartridge version you'll understand. In many respects all the levels are similar, the only thing that really changes is the scenery. You tend to run through doing pretty much the same thing over and over again.

There is a small puzzle element tucked away too. Certain sections of spiky ground or water cannot always be cleared comfortably. When this happens it's time to start looking for a spare rock lying around. These boulders can be bashed around the screen with the club and can be used to form makeshift stepping stones across danger areas.

Besides the local rockery certain dinosaurs can be used to aid you in your quest. These can generally be activated by belting them or leaping on top. After this, Chuck may be propelled in a certain direction or carried off to a new section of the game.

At the end of each little section there's a signpost pointing the way but these are sometimes blocked by a nasty (but cute nonetheless) end of level dino!

Each of these bad guys has a weak spot that has to be exploited in order to progress.

Every time a hit is scored on this particular area it increases damage to the creature. After a couple of hits plasters and some other first aid items begin to appear on your foe. Score enough bashes and it'll all soon be over and you can get on with it.

Energy is portrayed courtesy of a little bottle of baby milk in the bottom right of the screen. Taking hits reduces the amount of milk in there. When it's empty well then that's another life out of the way with. Lose 'em all and it's an awful long way back to the beginning.

There isn't really a substantial improvement over other versions of the game. The cartridge was as good as far as playability goes and to be fair all that can be done is to add a fancy intro. One fancy intro later and you have a CD version!

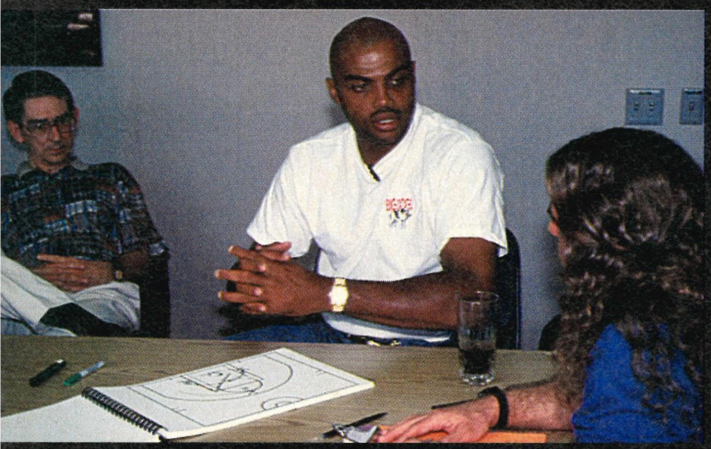
Good graphics, good sound, good playability. If you have Mega-CD then Son of Chuck is worth having for the fun factor alone. It may not take an eternity to complete but it's certainly worth a good play.

▼ Butterfly Grove is a very beautiful place covered with vicious monkeys!

▲ Balancing on your club will allow you to avoid certain traps and animals

▼ Ollie the Octopus is one of the end of level guardians and can be quite tricky.

Son of Chuck is a nice little game. The characters smack of cuteness and the presentation really couldn't be much slicker. Some of the animation is quite funny and it is obvious that an awful lot of work has been put into it. The CD version isn't any better than the cart, which is a bit of a shame but at least it provides choice if you have a CD. It's not the most difficult in the worldgame to complete but it'll certainly get played a fair bit once you have it. ■ **PAUL**



STREETFIGHTING

Accolade achieved a sporting "Double Whammy" by signing up Charles Barkley earlier this year to endorse a basketball game, just as Michael Jordan announced his retirement and Big Bad Barkley became a challenger for the uinofficial 'golden boy' title of basketball.

As Accolade made the announcement of a "worldwide licensing agreement", the entire United States went Barkley bonkers, as Barkley was awarded NBA's most coveted award and Nike signed the man up for the most lucrative licensing deal in sporting history.

In 1994, it is estimated that Barkley will earn $100,000,000. Barkley's meteoric rise to national fame peaked earlier this year as the media hounded Michael Jordan about his alleged gambling habits and grew bored with wonderkid Shaq'O Neal. Barkley jumped to Jordan's defence telling the press to: "Butt out and let us get on with our job!". This won him the respect of the nation.

Accolade's logo "Games with Personality" could not be more aptly applied than to a game featuring this tough, unconventional basketball star. Barkley is big, 6'5" and 250 pounds, this Phoenix Suns forward is the most exciting player the sport has ever seen.

He's also gained a powerful reputation for his 'exuberance' on, and off the court. Media people have become understandably cagey in their dealings with the man. Placing a dinner plate-sized hand over a camera lens he recently growled: "I'm a tough guy, I go out and compete every night. If you want to test my limits, go ahead!" Not surprisingly, nobody has yet taken him up on his kind offer.

"With Michael Jordan his only real peer in the game, Barkley has taken basketball to a new and disorderly level." Said Project Team-leader Danny Pisano. "We're endeavouring to integrate his fast-breaking intimidating whatever-it-takes-to-win playing style into the game." Barkley added: "I love to play, I love to have fun and I love to win. I'm sure my enthusiasm for basketball will reflect in this game."

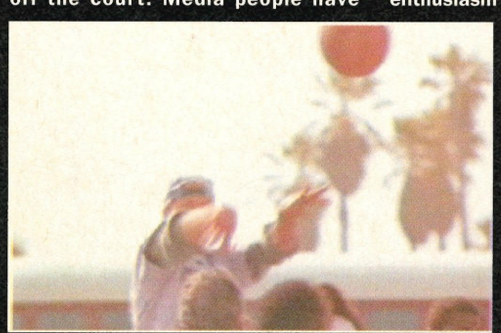
One thing's for certain, the world loves a guy that's good at being bad. Hailed by his fans and critics as "Sir Charles", Barkley has earned this distinction by becoming the all-time NBA leader in fines assessed. Pisano added: "This man takes no prisoners and this game will reflect this awesome power and controlled aggression."

Barkley is working closely with the design team and is keen that the game not only simulates his style of play but also tells a bit about the man himself, his personality and his upbringing. Already a multi-millionaire and likely to become the richest sportsman ever in '94, Barkley has not had an easy ride to the top.

Barkley grew up in the ghettos of Chicago where he discovered gift for basketball. Play was rough and he learnt to be streetwise, tough and singleminded, because for every one Charles Barkley there are thousands of kids that grow up as 'could've beens', jailbirds or corpses. Fortunately for Barkley, his extraordinary skill and power meant that success was a foregone conclusion.

Design team leader Pisano described the design meetings with Barkley as: "A real thrill! Charles was very keen to portray the Street element of basketball, and so we designed the game around street scenes. Makes a welcome change from the court arenas featuring in other games.

The graphic designers are building a background of street scenes,



▼ *Street action such as this will feature heavily in the finished version.*

© Sky Sport

■ *"Play or get out!" Big bad Charles Barkley puts his name to an intense jamfest. Jason Spiller goes out and about to find out a little about one of America's top basketball players who has never before lent his name to sponsor anything! Accolade persuaded him to sign on the dotted line.*

WITH BALLS

depicting downtown street life with graffiti, and run down neighbourhoods, also covered in graffiti.

Charles is very keen that this street element be included as he claims that even today his best and most enjoyable games are those played on the street with his friends. Imagine the crowds now as Barkley goes back to his old neighbourhood to play some ball with his old friends.

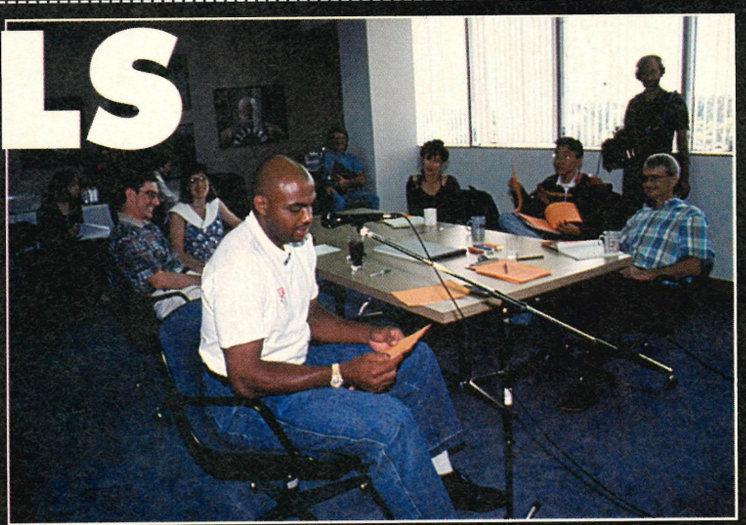
The design team is employing the latest 3D technology and animation techniques to make sure that the player can really relive Barkley's unique, and allegedly unethical, style of play. The graphic artists digitizing Barkley boast they'll get closer to the way the man moves and plays than any sports game before.

"The game will be portrayed in his style!" Says Pisano " Rough and tough on court, completely uncompromising, hitting, knobbling and pushing". This sort of play is done right out in the open in full view of the referee. It's not malicious, just a burning desire to get possession and dunk the ball. The more he does it, the more he scores, the richer he gets and the more the fans love him.

The game is in mid-development at the moment and Barkley regularly liaises with the design team, approving and making useful suggestions, which I'm sure they are only too keen to implement.

Pisano describes the basic structure of the game as an "...intense 2 on 2 jamfest starring Sir Charles and sixteen of his neighbourhood buddies. The intention at the moment is for the game to be fully compatible with Sega's 4-way adaptor, with each of the sixteen players having his own special moves, patented shot, and, above all, completely unique personality."

Barkley's motto is: "Play or get out!' which reflects his attitude of "Get out of the way or get beaten up!" This ethic inspired the great title for the game, '*BARKLEY - Shut up and Jam!*'.



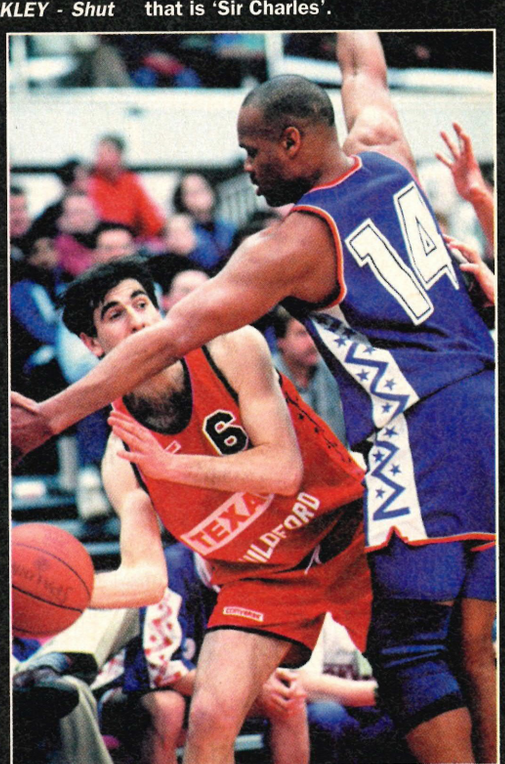
▲ *Charles in a relaxed mood. Discussing game design must be easier than the NBA!*

To really get Barkley's message fully over, the team is digitizing Sir Charles voice to include some of his famous abrasive on and off-court comments. We can't tell you exactly what they are because this is a family mag.

"*Shut up and Jam*" isn't a game of polished wood and shiny paint. It's a game of tough street ball, played on broke-up asphalt courts.

Will *Shut up and Jam* prove part of a renaisance in English basketball? What with this, *Jammit and NBA Jam* being released next year we wouldn't be surprised if basketball took off in this country in a masiive way.

I'm sure that's what the makers of *Shut up and Jam* will be hoping. Is it going to happen? Well, anyway, One thing's for sure, come the release date in May '94 a lot of Mega Drive owners will be introduced to the legendary personality that is 'Sir Charles'.



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Chester Cheetah	Gene	38.00
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3DO coming soon 3DO coming soon 3DO coming soon 3DO coming soon

Consoles

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"Prices changing all the time,
just telephone me down the line!!"

over the edge

EDIT'A: Brad Burton
D'ZINE: "Q"
X'TRA D'ZINE: Keats!

Over The Edge is all set to change the way games mags are looked upon. Only complete anoraks play games all day. Every month I'll be following up loads of wild stories and printing top class features. If the majority enjoy it, it stays and perhaps even grows. Otherwise I join the dole queue... Again. Peace.

First hand look at... + Sega's Virtual Fighting - Played and tested + + StreetFighter 3. You can only imagine the new characters! + + Alien 3 - The Gun. Massively violent super addictive shoot'em up? + + Judge Dredd and Indiana Jones pinball tables photo exclusives. + + Super SF2 versus Fatal Fury special. The fight for the top spot rages + Also: Why not try and win your mum a kettle? Go on she deserves it...

OTE

ARCADE'Z

INNOCENT FUN?

KIDDY KOCAINE?

YOU DECIDE!

So what have I been up to this month? Well, being the industry's top blagger I managed to talk my way into London's premier arcade trade show to play all the latest coin operated machines. Which is a bit ironic when you consider they were all on FREE PLAY. Ah well, such is life. Somebody has to do it! Armed with a dictaphone, a note pad (I've at least got to look as if i'm doing my job properly) and a flask of piping hot Bovril I was away. Farewell Manchester, London Euston here I come. Once there, I jumped a taxi to take me to my hotel. After booking into the super swanky joint I headed for the bar. Half a shandy top and a packet of pork scratchings later I stumbled back to my swanky (i'll say it again) room. I hit the sack. As usual my early morning alarm call was late, but what did I care. Shower time, after that I was outta there. Wad of notes in pocket, my mission was to get as many arcade exclusives as I could. Did I succeed? Of course I did. Turn it.

"FORGET ABOUT STREETFIGHTER 2, IT'S HISTORY"

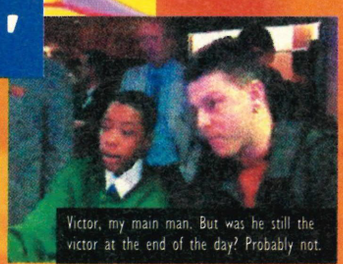
Brad Burton

£1=CRED'

▶ This was the biggy. Man, ain't never seen a crowd so big. I knew from the 10 deep wall of suits that this just had to be Virtua Fighting the new SF2 beater from Sega. Yea, I was right. Using my charming personality and wit (yea right. Q). I managed to squeeze myself into a more conducive viewing position. A quick flash of my press pass, and I was moved ahead of the queue of eager oldies. Half expecting to receive a snide dig, I hurried past the un-orderly line and was next up for a blast on the soon to be classic machine.

Wow, a massive 40" monitor was being used to display the action! Next to grab my attention were the awesome shaded 3D polygon graphics. Playing computer games day in day out, I find it very hard to get excited, yet I was! I took a pew on the bench built in to the cabinet on which there was easily enough bum room for two people. Recognising me from Sky One's Games World, my opponent introduced himself as Victor a games tester for a well known company.

He showed me the basic moves, and what all the buttons did. Surprisingly, you've only three. Punch, kick and defence. This disturbed me at first but being a big SF2 fan, I'd had enough of this embarrassment. Like the closing minutes of a Rocky movie, I suddenly started laying waste to my competitor. As if by magic something just clicked and for the first time I felt as though I knew what I was doing, other than stabbing wildly at the buttons and hoping. A whole plethora of roundhouse kicks and combinaton punches unfolded. The dudes in the suits were now more engrossed in watching the bouts than in anyway lynching me for the heinous crime of queue jumping. Who knows perhaps VF could turn out to be a whole new spectator sport.



Victor, my main man. But was he still the victor at the end of the day? Probably not.

I'm bound to be a bit suspicious when the game being billed as the biggest fighting game this decade is three buttons light of the current champ. For the first ten minutes I was getting my butt kicked, left, right and centre with Vic being relentless in his attack. I suppose he thought the quick briefing he gave me was enough. After what must have been 10 defeats in a row, the balance shifted.

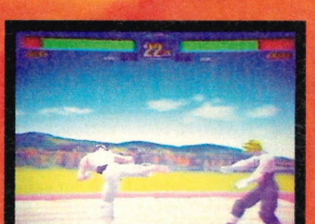
VOTE

VIRTUA FIGHTING is reported to be taking in excess of 60,000 Yen (about £340) a day over in the electronic capital of the world, Tokyo. Basically this means each machine pays for itself in just over two weeks! Amazing I'm sure you'll agree.

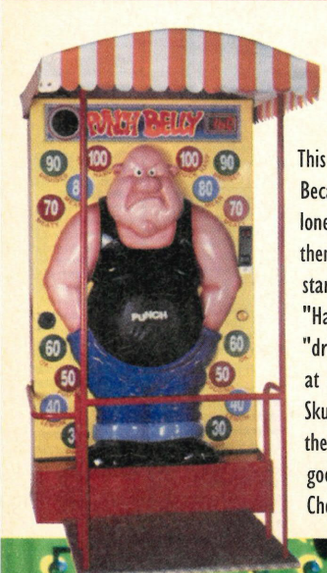
Down to the vital statistics of the game. It features eight playable characters, six males, two females, each of which are skilled in a different type of fighting technique and it is made up of over 300 individual polygons.

There are an assorted number of fight locations, my favourite being high on the roof of a skyscraper. In one player mode you get to fight computer controlled enemies with the winner being the first to win a couple of rounds, while the two player game keeps the same rules, the loser paying to stay in (the way forward).

An invisible camera flies around, picking the best angle to view the action. That's what the four 16bit processors are used for. Panning out and moving around the pugilists making sure all the violence can be fully appreciated. I'm assured that only the most powerful of processors technology could handle those sort of maths. That's why VF utilises a total of 64bits to process all the polygons. I played a prototype and one of only four in the country (or so I'm told). Coo.



GAME OVER



THERE'S A FAT BLOKE!

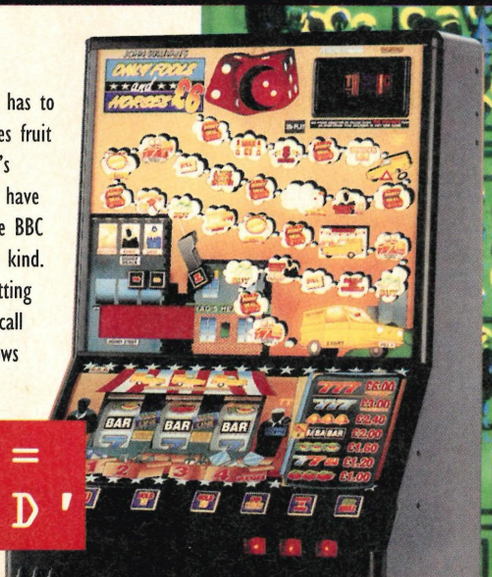
One of the more novel machines that caught my eye was the seven foot monster that went by the name of Punch Belly. This was one of those machines where you test your punch power. Because of the environment poor ol' belly was looking everso lonely. None of the formal businessmen wanted to commit themselves. Not me, I got straight on over there and pressed the start button. I gave the moulded plastic ruffneck a swift right. "Haha, wimp", the machine scoffed. As the bottom light lit up – "drip". Hmmm, had I not have blagged my way out of PE while at school perhaps I could have avoided this embarrassment. Skulking off, I later returned to hear that the bloke who owned the machine had put it on the hardest mode. Grrr. Although, It's good to see a variation on a theme that actually is a variation. Check it now.

£1=CRED'

UP YA' STREET

One of the strangest licences of late has to be that of the Only Fool's and Horses fruit machine. Bell Fruit, arguably the UK's premier fruit machine manufacturers have struck a rather 'dodgy deal' with the BBC in creating the first TV licence of its kind. With loads of innovative features getting their first airing, including a phone call feature which when it comes up allows you to deal with one of Del Boy's suspect business associates! This may well be up your Hooky street.

20p=CRED'

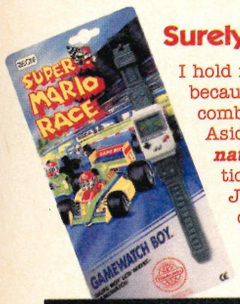


* When the TV programme first hit our screens in 1981, it flopped major league in the ratings. *

Batman knows what time it is.

Not to be confused with the Batman of the groovy movies, Zeon have created this wonderful Bat-clock based upon Batman - The Cartoon, you know the one thats on Saturday mornings. Yea ok, so it's a clock what's so special about that, I hear you whinge. Ah ha that's just where you're wrong. Not only will this fine block of moulded plastic tell you when to get up in the mornings but you too can create your very own Gotham city.

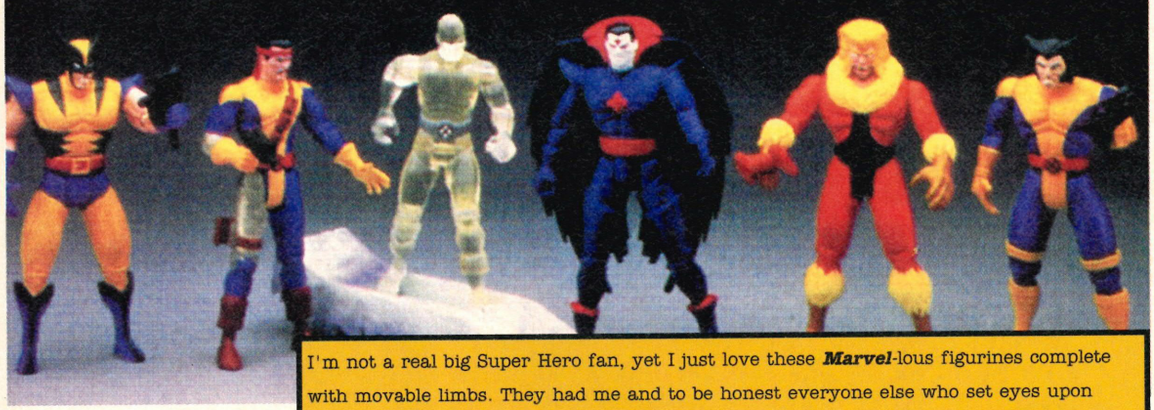
Confused? Good then I've succeeded. Seriously though the best feature on this item has to be the Bat logo projector that's built in. At the press of a button the callsign is projected onto your ceiling. The same applies everytime the alarm goes off. Useless really. But good fun nonetheless. It's gonna cost ya around £25 quid depending on where you shop of course.



Surely not a Mario Karts ripoff?

I hold my hands up. Its not really a ripoff because this smashing little watch/game combination is an officially licenced product. Aside from the normal features theres this ***natty*** little **Mario Kart**-esqu game. Just the ticket for those long train/car journeys. Just make sure your not the driver! Check out your usual watch retail outlets for this one. Expect to pay about **Twenty quid**! Which just ain't bad if you ask me.

Later Malcom, it's the real X-men



I'm not a real big Super Hero fan, yet I just love these ***Marvel***-lous figurines complete with movable limbs. They had me and to be honest everyone else who set eyes upon them amused for hours. All your favourites are available. **Ice-man** even comes complete with a free sled! Bonus. Whoa, did I say they're available? Well, technically speaking I suppose they are. If you live in the states that is. Ah well, such is life. Downa'. Price point: about **$4** dollars a piece.

Mario - A real fungi to know. (weak mushroom gag)

Man, what a guy. A game, a film, a paint by numbers book. Next up is this rather stylish and somewhat ***groovy*** Mario time piece. The worlds favourite and most ***respekted*** plumber can be yours for less than your average call out charge - about **25 dabs**. So what's so special about this? What d'ya want blood? The alarm cracks me right up. See, when it goes off instead of having one of those damn awful siren type sounds, you'll actually hear Mario say "It's time to leave Dream land" I'm not entirely sure what he's getting at but it sure is a ***mint*** thing to show your mum and it'd really impress your mates. It's also an invaluable addition to any real *Nintendo* freak's bedroom! Something else that you might be interested in. It seems *Sega* (scowl... Alex Lee) are at it as well. Yip, they've also got a clock of their own planned. It'll feature something a little more down to earth. Roadside to be exact, **Sonic the Hedgehog** (gasp!) remeber where you heard it first. **OTE**.

MAN AT *THE* PARTY

I've not been on the street this month. However I have been at some pretty wild parties. Mingling with the stars, **Rik Mayall**, **Craig Charles** and the like at some top VIP Nintendo bash. The following day it was our turn to entertain.

Europress (thats us) threw a massive one for all the games industry bods. I managed to scoop some pictures of some of the faceless people who bring those scrummy games to you. Above that's Nick Clarkson. He's *Ocean's* PR man. Asked for a quote he said *"Yeer mi bestest mate in the world, gizza kiss"*. The more you drink the smarter you are eh Nick?

Indy-babes included the lovely Pam, *Konami*'s PR and the sizzling Sam from *Sierra*. Ah Well now you know. Rest assured if it's hot, I'll be there!

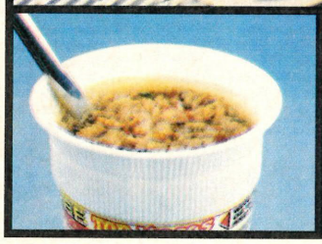
OTE

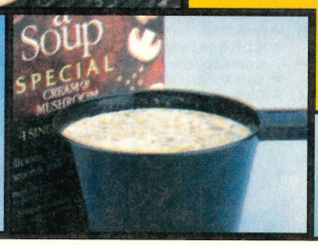
Win a Cup-a-la kettles!

Those nice people at Ross electronics have supplied me with loadsa top kitchen-type goodies. Now you know all about 'em its time to win your mum one of each of these goodies. Simply ask her to answer this question, if he or she knows her stuff. They could be laughing all the way to the kettle. Because I've got a kettle, hairdrier and iron. All of which are taken from their traveller range. Prices vary on where you shop. But my mum says the prices are well reasonable, so it must be true. Available from Harrods, Argos and some other places like that. If you'd like to win a set of these just answer this tricky poser, and send answer to the usual address.

How do you get sticky bubble gum off my black copping off trousers?

TIP: Ask ya' mam. Mark your entry "Ross Respekt, man"





OTE

SMALLEST PHONE EVER?

Sony is a name synonymous with quality electrical goods for the house or car. Now they have something lined up for people on the move. But have they conqurered all in the battle for portable phone superiority? Size almost certainly is an important factor when choosing one, hence, the reason the electronic giants have put lots of time into research and development of their new model. As you can see from this actual size photo, we're talking small. Credit card size to be exact. If you're not the kind of person who gets their mates to phone them so they look good, there is a tiny earpiece so you can leave it in your pocket and not miss a call. The RRP on a classy unit such as this is £399.99. Damn, it's a bit out of my price range. Contact your telecom dealer he may just be able to sort you out with one of these little beauties.

actual size

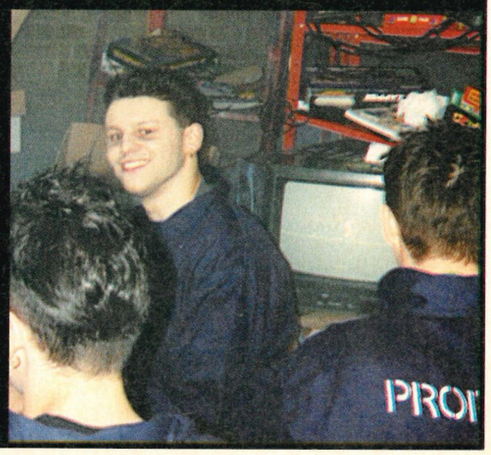
TV OR NOT TV

(The lazy writer's dream)

Dexter Fletcher. Move over dude there's a new kid on the block. Yip, if your into your dose of OTE, then your just gonna love my witty somewhat cutting and definitely top lad reviews on SKY ONE's Games World every Tuesday at 6:00pm. Why not put a voice to my face and tune in for what is at least gonna be a good laugh for you and your mates as you watch me flounder around in glorious technicolour.

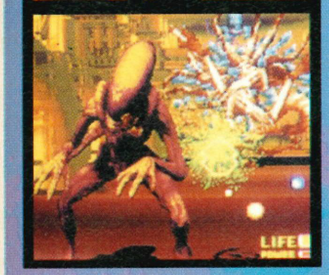
Anyway now you know you've no excuse. Geez, life as a minor celebrity. Its tough being mediocre.

Enough of my self indulgence I'm sure your tired of it. Well if you are turn the page. If not have a look at these snaps that an opportunist TV researcher has taken. *Look in awe* as a rather attractive make-up artist powders my face. *See* how I pull a muscle in my neck trying to get into view of a camera. *Gasp* in horror at one of those awful photos I don't really want in print actually slips through my careful vetting process (Err, hang about... Who's done this, come on I want some answers right now).



ALIEN 3 THE GUN

Sega have certainly kept their cards close to their chest with this one. In true Alien style, it's come out of nowhere and I guarantee 'cade fans are gonna freak. Sporting gameplay similar to the likes of Taito's Operation Wolf, and more recently that of T2. You're placed in the boots of the bald one in a mission that'll follow closely to the plot of the third movie. You've to make your way through six levels of alien infested tunnels and buildings, killing as many of the blood thirsty predators as possible. The screen scrolls from left to right (generally) sometimes interspersed by a series of levels where 3D scrolling methods are used as you run through the landscape picking the nasties off. Don't get too scared because help is at hand. If you've a buddy with a few quid to spare, he or she can get involved in the fire fight.



You've only got to check out the screen shots to realise the quality game you've got here. There's this really neat feature, which for some bizarre reason gave me a real big kick. If you shoot one of 'them' in the arm, it'll lose that limb, meaning a crack shot is needed for those tricky head or chest hits.

Sometimes even with half its body destroyed it'll still have a go, crawling towards you at a slothful pace. Bang, good night Vienna.

My initial fears were that enemy sprites would be too samey, however the graphic artist must have worked some serious overtime in producing a variety of new adversaries, without contravening the standard set by the ace movies. The upright unit has a pair of authentic pulse rifles built into the cabinet, but it's only when you actually pay your mo' that you get the full effect of the weapons. Each press of the trigger causes your marine-type weapon to recoil. Stunning. Being on free play I took advantage, by doing the lamest impression of Chuck Norris you've ever seen holding a gun in each hand. (the photo was over exposed, hehe).

As you can see I'm getting well stuck in. Showing those Aliens just who's boss!

Airgit Ash!

£1=CRED'

* In the film Alien 3, Sigourney Weaver wore a pair of Reebok boots through the whole filming. Huh! *

HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES?

Billed as the most authentic arcade flight simulator available, Namco's Air Combat is a real time (don't ask me what that means) game which uses the latest in 3-D polygon imaging and explosive sound to totally immerse the player.

From the minute your coin drops into the box you get to choose the level of difficulty you want to play at, of which there are three. Cadet (easy), Captain (moderate) and for people like me, Ace (rock hard) are available. Play is pretty much like an After Burner machine with brains the general mission type being the interception of enemy planes that enter into your airspace – no points for originality here.

Still, if you've always wanted to shoot down the Ruskies then I suppose this is what you've been waiting for. If you prove to be a bit of an ace you'll get a Top Gun-esque bonus stage where you've to land your fighter on a moving aircraft carrier. Fail and be humiliated, succeed and the excitement continues... To be honest I didn't rate AC but in the arcade infested environment I was in. Only the best are gonna survive!

THE LATEST, POSSIBLY THE GREATEST?

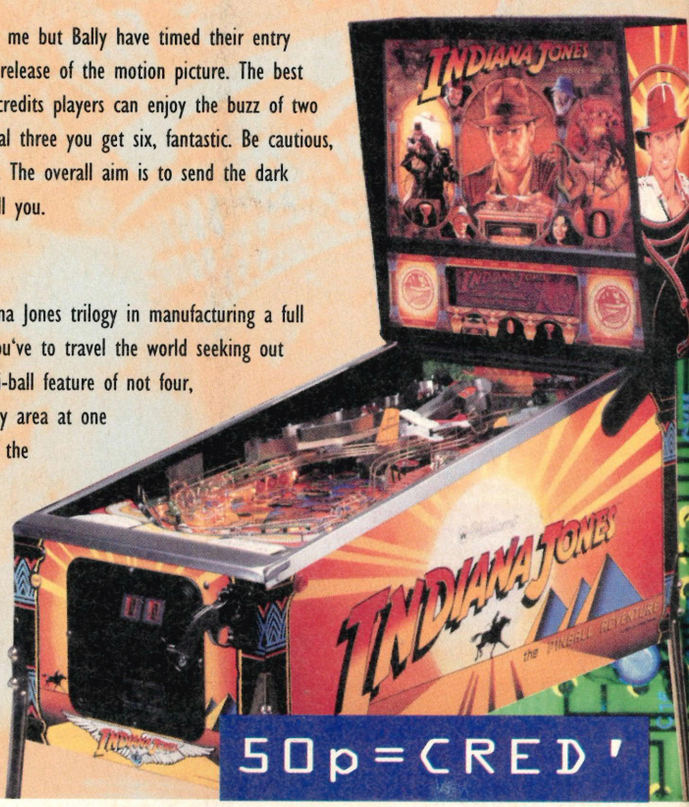
◀ METAL CITY 1

Judge Dredd, the table. Well overdue if you ask me but Bally have timed their entry into the market just right. With the impending release of the motion picture. The best aspect has to be the Supergame (TM). For two credits players can enjoy the buzz of two balls in play at one time. So instead of the usual three you get six, fantastic. Be cautious, this does increase the cost of a game by 100%. The overall aim is to send the dark judges packing. Easier said than done let me tell you.

50p= CRED'

TABLE OF DOOM ▶

Williams have captured the essence of the Indiana Jones trilogy in manufacturing a full size pintable. Themed loosely on the hit films you've to travel the world seeking out rare artifacts. Ball fans are gonna love the multi-ball feature of not four, not five but six of the metal spheres on the play area at one time. Gulp, nightmarish at best. Also to split up the action are three unique video modes that pop up at relevant times during your quest. Looking towards the in-built dot matrix screen at the end of the table, you'll be thrown into shoot outs against Nazi agents in the Raven bar. As you can fully appreciate Indy Jones is something a bit more than just pinball. It's an epic adventure.



50p=CRED'

OTE

STREET FIGHTER 3?

Everybody knows about Super Street Fighter 2, and we all love it. But what about the third in the series? How many rehashes can you milk the virtual violence freaks for? I've an idea on how we may be able to hurry its release on, or at the very least get a bit of momentum going for it.

All you have to do is design an SF3 character. Where would he/she be from? What would they look like, what sort of special moves would they have? The choice is yours, the only limit being your imagination. Get your stuff together and get drawing. The best get their art printed within these pages. Who knows perhaps Capcom may even offer you a job on the SF3 project. (Like I say p'raps).

Moral Kombat

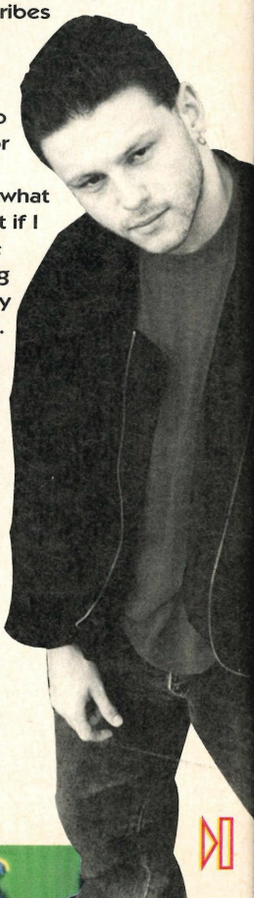
Being a massive Street Fighter 2 fan, I find myself having to come to terms with a game that may well be superior to the aforementioned upright. 'Fatal Fury special' takes off where the previous Fury's left off taking the best bits out of the first couple of games, and even resurrecting some of the fave characters. If you thought the Street Fighter dudes had some seriously unearthly moves, then prepare for them to be out done.

Virtual Competitor

News just in is that Sega are on the verge of producing their own virtuality unit. With the headline "Sega game could cause eye damage" you would have expected it to appear in one of the techno-fear mongering tabloids. This story actually surfaced in the Independant on Sunday. But the paper had never clapped eyes on the new device let alone used it. Needless to say as soon as Sega's legal bods got on the case a full retraction and apology were subsequently printed (snigger, nice one Sega, that'll teach 'em).

LAST WORDZ

Hope you enjoyed that little lifestyle overload. More of the same next month. In order to make OTE happen, I need your input so please send your letters, gifts and cash bribes to the address below. Unlike other mags I'm not just going to bin ya letter. Nor am I going to pretend I know what I'm talking about if I don't. That's the way OTE is going to work. Nobody likes a smart ass. Anyway, allow me to introduce the wonderful "Q" aka Sue Ashton. She's the one who sets the pages and runs the whole crayon show!



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CASHING IN ON T

The greatest participant sport, the most popular spectator sport, soccer transcends race, creed and class. With the World Cup in Los Angeles just a few months away an epidemic of footy fever is about to course through the planet. It's no surprise that soccer is arguably the premier videogame theme, boasting some of the top-selling titles of all time: a good footy game can be a hit, a great one can make history!

Above all games, the dimension and speed of soccer is a perfect medium for videogame simulation. In the arcade soccer coin-op machines set a fashion which is still considered by many to be the most fun and playable style.

These overhead view coin-op machines featured squat little players charging around the pitch at a frenetic pace. The introduction of a control ball on arcade favourite Hotball turned the whole thing into a brow-moistening experience.

These games were, by design, unpredictable to control which only served to add to the frenzied pace. Game designers became determined, eventually, to present a more accurate simulation of the game. The result of this is a whole new style of game. A whole new ball game even!

The new squad of games feature a lower angle of perspective and a rotoscoping scroll technique inspired by American Football favourite *John Madden*. This new stage of soccer sim evolution saw designers looking at television coverage of soccer. The idea was to ceate a perspective which vigeogames players could identify as 'real' footy.

If you hadn't already guessed the imminent World Cup has inspired a new batch of soccer releases. Here we look at the soccer games already available on Mega Drive and put the latest and forthcoming releases through their paces.

CODEMASTERS

By avoiding the words 'Cup' and 'L.A. 'clever-clogs games publisher Codemasters can safely release a soccer game in time for L.A. 94, without having to raid the piggy bank to buy the licence. They've spent a year in development, and a further six months fine tuning. This is a serious bid for a piece of the action.

Look deeper and this isn't just a straight soccer sim. The game combines a kind of in-game TV show, with a soccer simulation.

▲ *How close do the footy simulations come in comparison when compared to the real thing?*

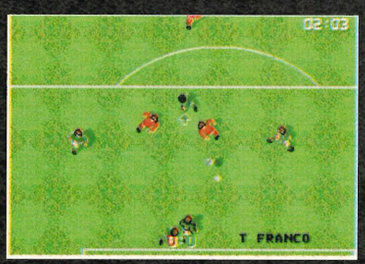
The game is billed as the first so-called "Master Sports" title, which builds a game around a fictional TV show complete with presenters and commentators.

This concept was inspired by ex-Mirrorsoft's TV Sports series. Only time will tell whether this will detract from the game of football. World Cup 94 will be released in May this year.

SUPER KICK-OFF

Converted from Dino Dini's original design for conventional 16-bit machines, *Super Kick-Off* exploits the frantic and frenzied style of video game soccer. Employing the traditional overhead perspective, *Super Kick-Off* fails to convey a realistic interpretation of dimension and speed, but the overall design seems to work somehow.

Control is unpredictable, although the Mega drive control pad is an



▲ *If the attackers get past your defence then your only hope lies with your keeper.*

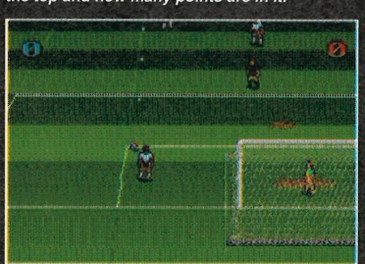
▲ *Select the scenario for the match. Decide whether to play the cpu or go two player.*

▲ *Refer to the results table to find out who's at the top and how many points are in it.*

▲ *Super Kick-Off allows you to follow the action up and down the pitch from high above.*

▲ *Wait until one of your team mates comes closer before making the throw-in.*

▲ *Clear the ball for your goal area before your opponents find a chance to put one away.*



▲ *Really give the ball a good boot up to the midfielders when taking a goal kick.*

Well, with England out of the World Cup for sure all we can do is sit back with our Mega Drive and a selection of football games and while away those long hours of pointless matches.

What's worth looking at in the field of soccer simulations for your machine?

Jason Spiller takes a look at what's on offer.

HE CUP!

© Sky Sports

▲ *The sliding tackle may win possession of the ball but you do risk getting your kit muddy.*

improvement on the original joystick version. A concerted effort has to be made to remember, and master, the numerous button/directional pad configurations. Failure to do so results in an uncontrolled kick about where goals are a rare comodity.

The control button configurations are not obvious and so initial matches are a case of frantic reference to the manual. Enrolling in one of those 'Super Memory' courses found in Exchange and Mart might help!

Verdict: A tricky little inside left that always gives a hundred and ten percent, although control of the game is a test of dexterity and memory

ULTIMATE SOCCER

Like Oldham Athletic, Sega's own *Ultimate Soccer* is a contradiction in terms. The boast of 'ultimate' in a title sets the game up for even closer scrutiny than normal. It has to be good.

This comes very much in the *Striker* style of game, which with its lowered perspective and scrolling method was a revelation.

A bonus feature here is the indoor six-a-side option which steps up what is already a pacey game and requires razor-sharp passing and shooting control. Player control is surprisingly accurate and comprehensive. One criticism though is close control, the shortest pass achievable is too powerful, which makes dribbling the ball impossible.

Ultimate Soccer does run Sega's four-player adaptors, which presents an hilarious: "Hey who's ball is it... which player am I controlling?" Scenario. You can quite easily score and launmch into lavish, extravagant celebations before realising you've just put the ball in your own net.

Verdict: A John Barnes of a game... an expensive way to learn that in soccer you can pay for the 'ultimate' but it doesn't mean you'll necessarily get the best!

PRO-STRIKER:

Emphasis placed here on the 'pro', as Sega pitched this game at the hardened soccer video-game hardmen. The one player is a bit like putting you as the Kings Arms' second eleven against the computer-controlled equivalent of the 1970 World Cup winning Brazil team.

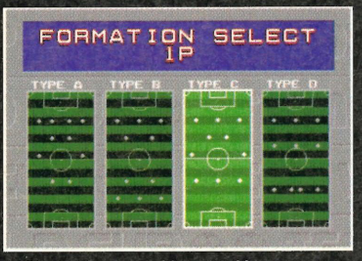
The lack of an option to adjust the ferocity and skill of the computer-controlled team makes this a tough test of humility as the opposition clocks up a phone number score while the player resorts to hopeless and indiscriminate button pushing.

Thanks to a confusing array of controls, the two-player option is a far more balanced affair which could

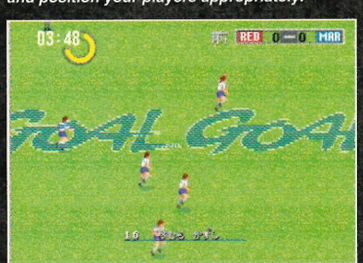
▲ *Decide on your tactics for the next match and position your players appropriately.*

▲ *The sweeper system has more players out on the wings ready for the forward passes.*

▲ *The original arcade version of this game seemed to be more popular than the cart.*



▲ *Choose between either attacking or defensive formations for your players on pitch.*



▲ *Pro-Striker has some wonderful lettering written on the pitch. Or does it?*

▲ *The opposition have no chance of a come back now, you're safe with a four nil lead.*

▲ *What a game. Between the two teams 63 goals have been scored. How realistic?*

▲ *Just as the whistle blows for half time another goal is chalked up on the scoreboard.*

be likened to the King's Arms second team against the Royal Oak women's darts squad. Nevertheless, perseverance in mastering controls of this *Kick-off* inspired game reveals some subtle kicks and moves not achievable in the majority of footy games. *Pro-Striker* is one for those willing to put in the training.

Verdict: A real tenacity tester! Second raters are unlikely to see the match through to extra time.

TECMO WORLD CUP

A Tecmo coin-op conversion which shows how much the Japanese know about arcade entertainment and how little they know about soccer simulation. This is a pure arcade kickabout with no options or simulation features added to the conversion to lend some credibility.

The action is decidedly dated, simply nudging the ball in the direction of the goal is not a fullfilling experience, and kick strength is very unpredictable. Sprite animation is unrefined which results in woolly player-control. This was a popular arcade game in its time, but there are many superior soccer games available for the Mega Drive.

Verdict: About as vacuous as John Motson's tireless pursuit of trivia.

WORLD CUP ITALIA 90

A true celebration of the game. Italia 90 World Cup was inspirational, even if England walked away with little more than the fair play award. This World Cup 90 licence game was a big disappointment four years ago and is comparable to the most mediocre soccer game. Its credibility unravels quicker than that two-foot long piece of hair soccer supremo Bobby Charlton used to wrap around his head.

Graphically, the game is a mess and the players scurrying around makes getting a grasp of play very unlikely. A wasted opportunity. By rights it should have been the biggest soccer simulation ever.

The only consolation is that it now resides in the bargain bucket price range and as Pele used to practice with lead weights on his ankles this game could be good training for playing a decent football game.

Verdict: Deflating! If England not making it to LA 94 is your idea of fun, then this is the game for you.

EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

With our national hopes crushed, we can always rely on the European scene for some excitement. Another *Kick-Off* inspired game, this is still fun to play and the management aspect should appeal to fans.

▲ *Sheffield Wednesday, home of erm... Sheffield and cutlery manufacturers. Once.*

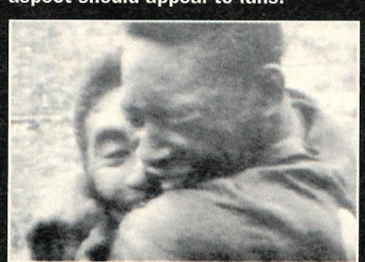
Graphics are inferior to *Super Kick-Off*, and the designers have unsuccessfully experimented with a change of controls reflected by the variation of kick. Compared to *Super Kick-Off* and *Ultimate Soccer*, this game really shows its age. Nevertheless, if you find it for a bargain price it would be a pretty good introduction to the wonderful world of videogame soccer.

Verdict: He's a good old lad but I'm afraid his legs have gone!

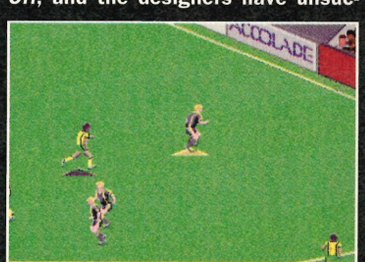
PELE

A major coup for Accolade, getting the greatest and most revered player of all time to put his name to a game. *Pele*, the game, adopts the state-of-the-art TV camera perspective of the pitch, which presents a realistic game.

Aware of the hot competition, the design team has attempted to be



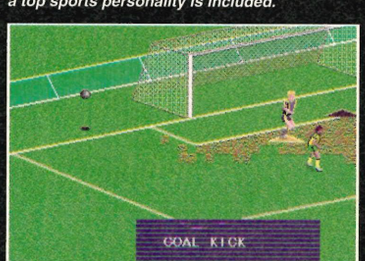
▲ *Like many of Accolades' games input from a top sports personality is included.*



▲ *The striker breaks through and waits for the long ball to be knocked over his head.*

▲ *A goal-bound shot causes problems for an already very shaky defence.*

▲ *If there is one thing that Britain is good at it's playing in Europe. At championship darts.*



▲ *Pele has and will undergomany tweaks and enhancements before the final version.*

▲ *This bone-crunching tackle causes the ball to fly free to the opposition.*

▲ *He's offside and another brilliant attack breaks down before it gets started*

From the slums of Rio to the deserts of Sudan, from London's East End to the suburbs of Rome, no sport unites the world like soccer. Jason Spiller takes a look at the options on your Mega Drive. Which is the greatest representation of the greatest game in the world?

innovative, introducing features such as defenders scrambling backwards in the face of attack.

A slicker switch of player control and more distinct control would have improved the game, but overall, it holds its own to coin a much-used soccer adage.

Pele once said "Don't expect me to win the game for you!". Accolade, however, will be relying on the appeal of the game's patron in what is a hotly-contested arena.

Verdict: Exotic and full of flair, but definitely not an orginal master.

FIFA

EA Sports has made US sports simulations its own. But what do Americans know about our national game? Well rather more than Mr Taylor and his squad it seems. Sure enough, EA Sports shows it means business by producing not only the best soccer game, but arguably the best Mega Drive game ever. The team has employed many of the techniques perfected in its superb US sports games. Control is smooth and precise, kick power is easily controllable and the worry of which player is in control never presents itself.

FIFA adopts the TV camera perspective and the scrolling is super-lube slick. The option to play a one-off friendly or compete in the World Cup from any stage is just one of a hatful of options. *FIFA* boasts a comprehensive, and enjoyable, team managment and training feature to go with the red hot action.

FIFA Works in conjunction with Electronic Arts 4-Way Play adaptor. The fact that this game has won the approval of soccer's governing body says it all.

Verdict: Winner of the golden boot and man of the match. I hate to rain on everybody else's parade, but at the end of the day it's goals what count Brian, and *FIFA*'s already got it's hands on the cup.

SENSIBLE SOCCER

Sensible Soccer took the *Kick-Off* style of game, analysed what made it good, identified its weak areas and came up with a game which is immeasurably more controllable and, as a result, more fun than *Kick-Off*.

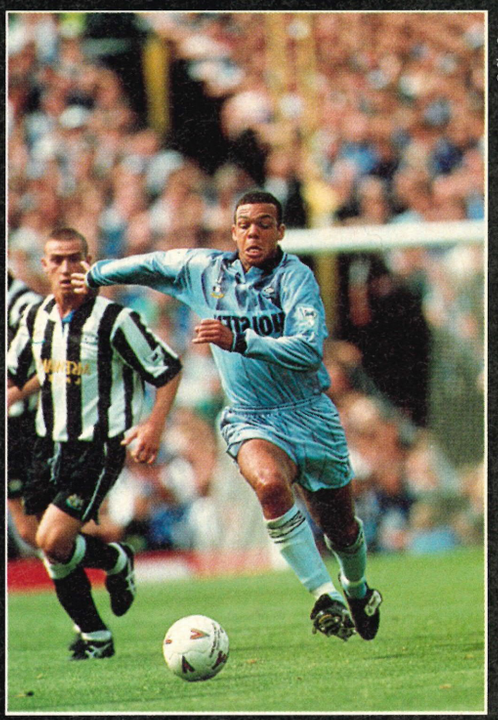
At first, the small-scale player sprites are uninspiring. But the level of player and kick control makes this a soccer dream.

The game is very pacey and the size of the sprites mean that a player can see that bit more of the playing surface. Undoubtedly, the best overhead view soccer game available for the Mega Drive.

A fulfilling player manager aspect is a worthwhile pre-occupation and the league tables are an extra treat for all you budding statisticians.

Verdict: The sensible choice for fans of the overhead perspective. Fast and fun!

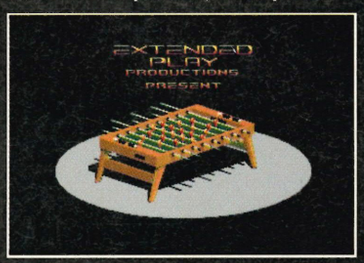
MARKO'S MAGIC FOOTBALL



▲ *You have to be fit, keen and have shins of plate metal to compete with the big boys.*

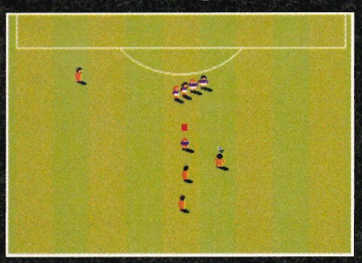
An original blend of soccer skills and platform action, *Marko's Magic Football* qualifies for this feature by a whisker. Excellent graphics, superb characterisation and smooth animation should make this sell loads.

Verdict: The boys done good.



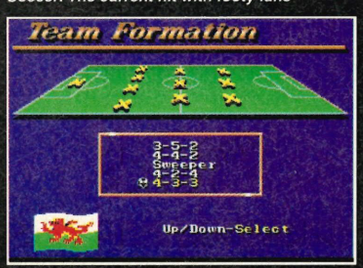
▲ *Extended Play are the team behind FIFA Soccer. The current hit with footy fans*

▲ *Featuring different characteristics for both teams and individual players it's great fun.*



▲ *Sensible Soccer takes a more humourous angle with smaller funloving players.*

▲ *Fouls are as ever subject to the ref being sighted for the offence. Well so we are told.*



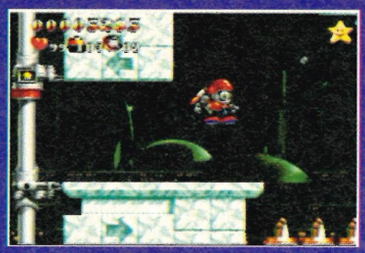
▲ *Altering a team formation may just be the way to beat the tough opposition.*

▲ *The goalie claims the ball before the on rushing attack can get to it.*

▲ *Just about every type of condition can be set including a water-logged pitch!*

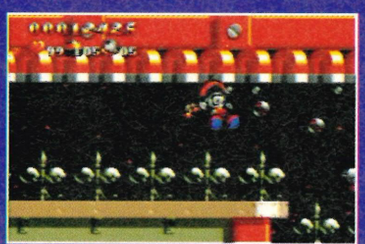
▲ *Pick traditional teams or design your own then compete in the cups of the world.*

▲ Tinhead can slide under any obstructions that are in his path.

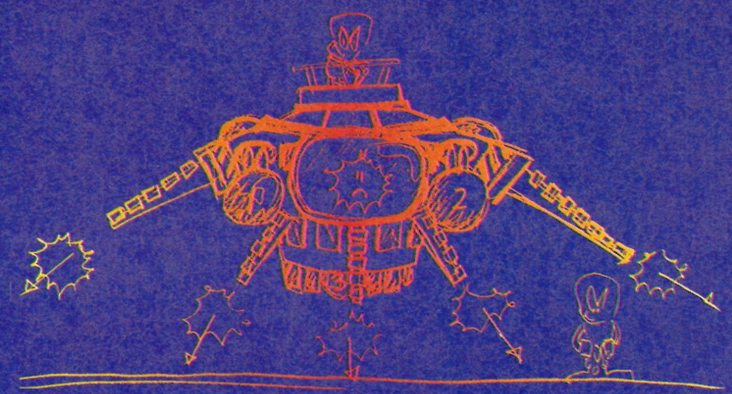


▲ The jet pack is just one of the power-ups hidden around the many levels.

▲ You must press the buttons in the right combinations to exit this screen.



▲ Giant magnets suspend Tinhead above the spikes while progressing across platforms.



TINHE

Will this year bring a whole host of new challengers that are out of this world, all looking to be the No. 1 platformer?

Tinhead is a new style of robotic hero for the Mega Drive, care of MicroProse. But it's been over a year now since this Sonic challenger was first conceived and little did he then know that he would end up on a mission to save all the stars in the entire Universe.

Nick Thompson and Jim Gardner are the programming brains behind this little metallic marvel. They wanted to give the game something extra, to separate it from any other platformer, so Tinhead will be able to use special robotic powers in his quest against one villian by the name of Grim Squidge.

This grim guy is an evil goblin who has flown around the Universe, sucking all the stars into his spaceship. So to return the night sky to it's usual twinkly scene, it's Tinhead's task to rescue all the stars. He can do this by freeing them from the bubbles that Grim has encased them in.

Tinhead doesn't have to worry about carrying any weapons around with him on his search as he uses a multi-shot, head mounted bounce blaster. Sounds pretty cool. There are several simple tasks for Tinhead to perform before a level is completed, like locating buttons that open doors elsewhere on that level before you can proceed.

The play can scroll in any direction and several routes from the start to finally locating stars have been programmed in on the large maps.

The purpose behind all this was the programmers desire to include "non-linear gameplay for enhanced re-playability". That's all right then.

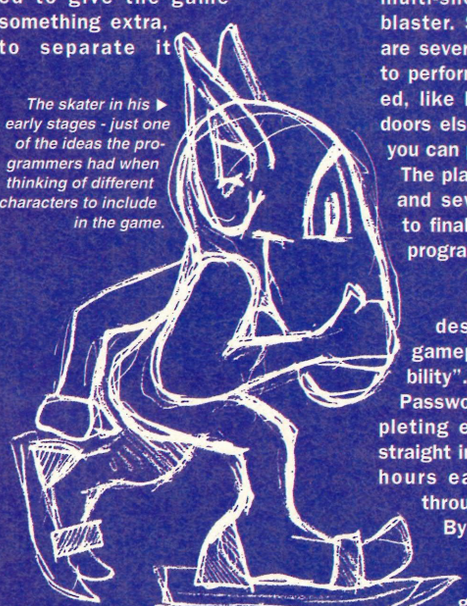
Passwords are available after completing each level, so you can go straight into the game and not spend hours each time you play going through the first levels.

By using a droid with a cool, yet dynamic, image for the star character in the game, the programmers are planning that Tinhead will appeal to a wide range of game players.

The arty guys at MicroProse who've been working on Tinhead have made the graphics really bright. There are some great effects used on the explosions. All the sprites and all the action here has been created with cartoon-style animation, which they hope will make the gameplay look a lot faster. Tinhead's character has been well thought out and has loads of cute little features. On collecting certain power-ups, of which there are loads, Tinhead will transform or 'morph' himself so he has use of some form of transport, other than running about. He can also use a rocket pack or space hopper as well as a few other objects.

There are four main levels which have four sub-zones in each of them, the majority of which are completed,

▲ The version we had a look at was nearly completed and looked great. So all we can do now is to wait patiently for the finished cart.



The skater in his early stages - just one of the ideas the programmers had when thinking of different characters to include in the game. ▶

THE ON SCREEN ACTION

Your current score is shown here.

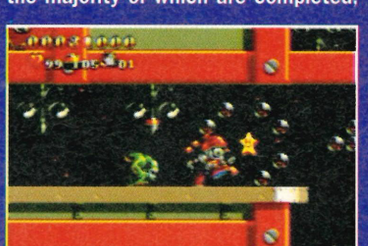
The heart represents the number of lives you have left. You'll be starting off with three lives. Extra lives can be found later on.

The number represents how many shots Tinhead can fire at once.

Collect the batteries to maintain your energy level, otherwise it's off to the old scrapyard for our metallic crusader.

This arrow denotes the direction of the bullets which fire from his head. There are three ways to fire - low, level or high.

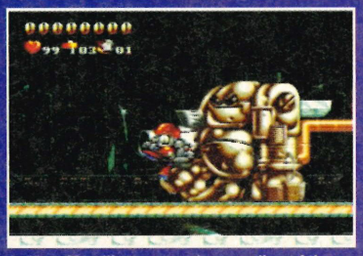
▲ Could this guy be the next platform star to explode on to our Mega Drives?



▲ The little green man here can be seen above when he began life as a line drawing.

GREAT GARGANTUAN GRUESOME GUARDIANS

▲ The first end of level guardian stomps about after you. There are several screens to each boss. In some you can jump out of their way courtesy of higher platforms.



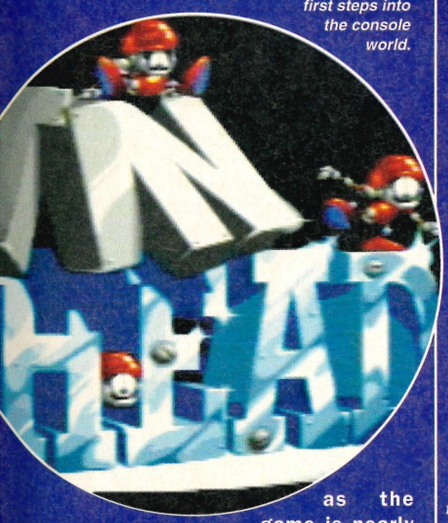
▲ Meet Metallicaterrrus, the guardian of the Space Port Zone - the second boss will take plenty of hits before you start to damage him. So keep your finger on the fire button!

▲ Watch out for this mechanised monster, the programmers are planning to have his claw arms grow back after it they' ve been blown off. This is going to be a real challenge.

▲ This birdie boss swoops down at you from the heavens, trying to capture you in his claws. The finished game should also include baby chicks that fancy a peck at you.

AD

▼ The intro screen shows the new character taking his first steps into the console world.



as the game is nearly finished. Each level contains different gadgets to help Tinhead get about, including extra large catapults, trampolines and huge mega magnets that can pick him up.

I'm assured there are going to be stacks of bonus points up for grabs at the end of each level, depending on the accuracy of your shots and how many hits you have taken. There will also be several hidden bonus rooms scattered about to help you bump up your score. Collecting the question mark icons might be a good way to find these bonus rooms.

MicroProse hope Tinhead will follow in the footsteps of their last release, F15 Strike Eagle II. This puts you in the cockpit of a fast paced journey into the world of fighter control, explored in amazing 3D graphic vision.

MicroProse have proved themselves to be the champs when it comes to flight simulations – F15 offered a very realistic and playable game that received an 89% rating Silver award from Mega Action. At the moment there are no plans for a SNES version of Tinhead, so that's one up for Sega in the great console battlefor sales.

With a few final touches still to be made to Tinhead, MicroProse are hoping for a release date of possibly March or April. So until then feast your eyes on these screen shots. No definite price for the cart has been confirmed yet, so it's a case of - watch this space.

The designers have to be as original as possible when creating a game as the market is constantly being flooded with new characters. It doesn't look too bad at all at this stage so keep an eye out for further updates on what could just be the next console hero.

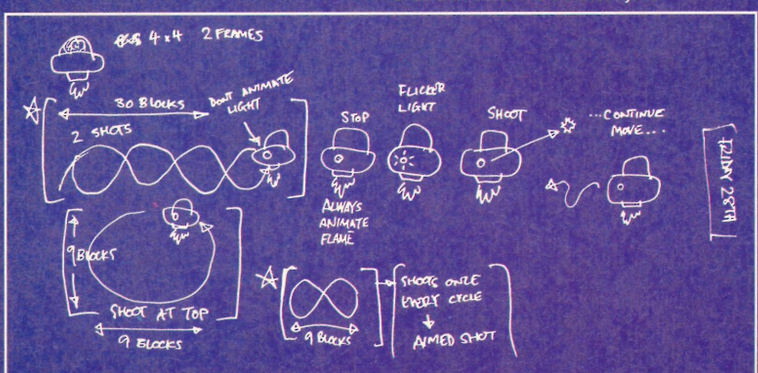
Little green men in funny masks can be found running about certain levels in the game. The space hopper, based on those inflatable bouncy toys we all had, will be one of the power-ups to help Tinhead get about.

▲ You can only use the teleporter when you have freed the stars in that zone.

▲ This is Grim, the evil goblin who has captured the stars in glass globes.

▲ Certain foes will take a few more hits until even their skeletons are destroyed.

▼ Prehistoric birdies pester the roaming robot in his search for the captured stars.



The sketches shown above were taken from the original drawings. Others show how some of the suggested characters will move about the screen, fire any weapons and expode when hit.

DANNY, CHAMPIO

Do you consider yourself to be the best games player in the UK?
No. In the world. There are probably a few Japanese lads who can beat me, but I'm the best in Europe, definitely.

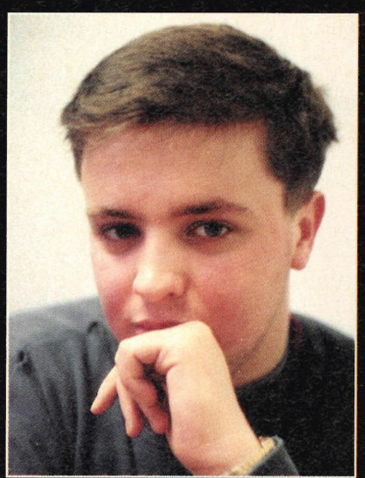
Even though you are no longer the European champion?
The only reason I am not the European champion is that Sega cocked it up. When they found out I was working within the industry, they made sure that I wasn't allowed to enter again. I saw the 1992 Sega European finals and I could have whipped any of them.

Were you nervous in the championships?
In each of the competitions there were very different reasons to win. The 1991 UK Championship was to get some form of recognition for myself. Back then I was just a kid playing games. In the European championships there were loads of magazine journalists and TV crews from the UK there, all piling loads of pressure on me to win. I felt I had to win or I was letting the country down. But the two lads I was playing against were absolutely useless, so I walked that one. I had to win the 1992 UK championship for my job, because the reason I got the job in the first place was for being champion. So the UK one was for me and Manchester, but the European one was definitely for the country.

▼ *Danny gives our man a lesson on how to hold his joypad.*

Did people start coming up to you in the street and recognising you?
Two years ago the games industry wasn't as massive as it is now. But People from around my neighbourhood were coming up to me and saying well done and some asking me for tips. I was a very local hero, I mean not Greater Manchester or anything.

Are you arrogant?
I have been known to be big-headed, but it's not something to be specifically proud of, playing games. I mean It's not exactly that big or that clever to be able to be the best at Sonic the Hedgehog or something.



▲ *Hmm. Danny mulls over plans for games playing world domination.*

Are you the best at all games?
No. There are a lot of people that are better than me at certain games. I can get whipped on Streetfighter II or on Tennis. But you judge someone's gameplaying skill on several games, then you get a better idea. I have played hundreds of console games.

What type are you best at then?
I'm very good at racing games and shoot 'em-ups. RPGs are my favourite kind of game, but I wouldn't say I was particularly good at them because they don't require games-playing skills, it's just a matter of intelligence really, working out puzzles and stuff.

Plug your video.
Power Play doesn't tell you how to skip levels on Bubsy Bobcat or Mickey Mouse but it will teach you how to figure out for yourself what to do next. For example all end of level guardians have difficulty curves. You play the first time and probably get killed. You learn something about it, you learn attack patterns or stuff like that. This will help you get through the difficulty curve faster. All the other games videos just give you tips on how to play specific games.

POWER PLAY - THE VIDEO

Domink Diamond says watching this video will make you a better games-player and a better person. But then he would. It certainly looks at all aspects of your games playing life, from sports games to shoot 'em-ups, beat 'em-ups and platformers.

Looking at specific titles from each genre, Danny Curley gives us the benefit of his genius with tips which are supposed to apply across the board. Most are worthwhile, but some are too obvious and others just plain silly. His four joypad grips fall into the latter category. It's by no means comprehensive – the only beat 'em-up tip is to try flying kicks.

Still, it's nicely presented, set in a London Docklands lock-up, complete with gold fish bowl and screens a plenty and there's some witty repartie between Dominik and Danny. "You're not going to get near my goal again," says the Games Master sarcastically, as Danny makes him a better person again. Games include *Bubsy, Cool Spot, Flashback, Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles, Speedball 2, NHL PA, Sensi, Olympic Gold, Xenon 2, Project X and Gauntlet 2*, with a Bubsy challenge.

▲ *Danny and Dominik at the dreary Docklands video shoot, surrounded by screens.*

■ *Former Sega champion Danny Curley is about to release a games technique video with Dominik Diamond. We take the Curley challenge and check out his credentials.*

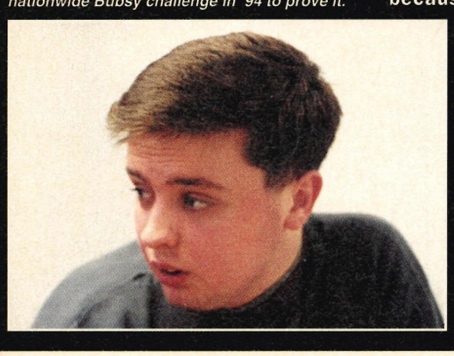
ON OF THE WORLD

Wouldn't people pick up these skills anyway?
If they had 12 years to spare. What I've learnt and what I've used in the championships I have put in that video. It's for new gamesplayers and veterans alike.

Does it take a certain sort of intelligence to play?
You have to adopt a different sort of common sense to know what's going to happen next, so after playing it for so long you get an idea what's going to happen with a game. It's a different sort of reality to the outside world. I have average common sense in the outside world, but when it comes to gamesplaying I know what's going on. I've heard these reports about three year old geniuses who have completed level one of Mario, and they have been playing it for six months. But they are only geniuses for their own age.

How did you get started doing the video?
A movie production company got in touch with me and said they were interested in doing a games playing video, so I started coming up with ideas. I decided it should be about games skills and techniques rather than tips and cheats and then I started writing the script. They got Dominik Diamond in to present and we started filming. I wrote the original script, dead scruffy and all, but absolutely loads of it. Then they hired someone to tart it up, cut it down, and structure it more cleanly in the order it should be on the video. So we used that to work off, but me and Dominik actually did the video off the cuff. We looked at the first question and then played it by ear, without the actual words to work on. That's why there's a lot of "errrs" in the video.

▼ *Prepared to take on anyone, he's doing a nationwide Bubsy challenge in '94 to prove it.*



What is Dominik Diamond like?
He's a top bloke. He's not a Prima donna – he's down to earth.

How did you start games testing?
It was actually because I support Man United. Sega sponsored Man United versus Leeds in August 1991, and as I'm 20 minutes from the ground on a bus, I got invited along. In the executive lounge, I sat next to one of the bosses from US Gold and he told me about Teartex and I thought that sounds alright. So he got in touch with them and told them all about me and really it just went on from there.

Did you find the job boring, playing games all day?
It was good at the start obviously, because I wanted to play video games but after about six months it started getting boring. But I only quit because of certain circumstances that came up.

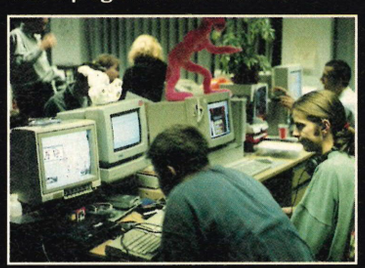
How much can you earn as a tester?
How much do you earn? It's comfortable but you couldn't set yourself up for life. You've got to work your way up and become a programmer.

When you were a kid did you dream of doing that particular sort of job?
I always wanted to be a spaceman, to go to space. I didn't ever think I'd play games for a living when I was sitting there playing my Spectrum and that. I've never thought of playing games as a carreer move, but it just happened, so I took it. I've been playing now for 12 years, since I was six when my dad got me an Atari for my birthday.

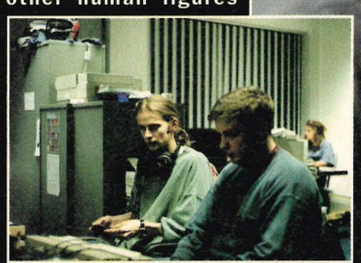
Do you prefer Nintendo to Sega?
The SNES has a lot of fancy chips, so it has loads more colours and colour overlay, but it has a really crap main processor, with no beef to it, whereas the Mega Drive has a dead powerful processor. So it depends what kind of games you're talking about. Games like Mario Kart and Pirate Wings are going to look a lot better on the SNES because of the hardware, but with football games and platform games, that don't necessarily require Mode Seven or loads of fancy touches but just need a decent processor to get a bit of speed going, you're best off with the Mega Drive.

What's it like being interviewed by national papers?
The thing with the Video Games industry, apart from characters like Sonic and Mario, any other human figures within the industry don't get household name status. Dominik Diamond was the first to change this and, with the video and all, I should be the next.

What's your favourite game?
MD - Fantasy Star 3. But I am absolutely brilliant at Super Mario Kart. I once won £20 gambling on it with a programmer at Teartex.



▲ *Danny Vs Jamie, our art assistant – a draw, Danny, erm.. champion of most of the world.*



▲ *The concentration on Jamie's face! Danny's bored.*

MANGA VIDEO Z

The comic books known as Manga are such an integral part of Japanese culture that Japan uses more paper for them than for loo rolls.

Manga artists are demi gods in Japan, the equivalent of Take That, the people who appear on talk shows and sign autographs, kick start new fashions and invent novel catchphrases that spread throughout the entire nation.

The great exaggeration of action and emotion is brought about by a basic love of fantasy, while the extensive use of purely visual effects allow a picture alone to carry a story.

Manga experiments with cinematic techniques, making use of close-ups and different angles. Lavish sound FX help the longish films run.

The Japanese regard Manga comics as another medium in which to present a story with just as much to say about life as a novel or a film. Real life is woven into fantasy and heroes DO die, making the whole concept so much more sophisticated and realistic.

The brutality is tied up with Japan's experiences in the Second World War. One Manga artist, Keiji Nakazawa, was six years old and living in Hiroshima when the atom bomb was dropped.

In Akira, hailed as the most unique and original animation film ever, a whole city explodes. Akira is a stark, visual treat for anyone who has yet to view the superb Manga Video collection. Soon to be converted into a console game, and already a graphic novel by Dark Horse Comics, Akira is definitely big business.

Set in Neo-Tokyo, the film starts with the ongoing rivalry between various biker gangs. Kaneda is the young rebel leader of one such gang. He and his biker friends are idle and low on social consciousness, but they retain a very strong loyalty to each other. Tetsuo, Kaneda's old friend from his orphanage days and the small fry of the gang, is involved in a horrific bike crash.

As his friends all stand round waiting for paramedic help, a large number of military guys turn up and whisk their injured friend away. These men are obviously not from the local hospital.

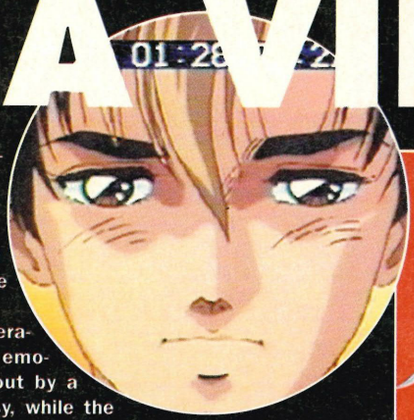
While Tetsuo is recovering from his accident in some army hospital, he experiences many strange and vivid nightmares, depicting teddy bears and frolicking motor cars dancing on his duvet cover. Losing his unsteady grip on reality, Tetsuo escapes to try and bring his life back to normal again. But these bizarre goings on have awakened something dark and destructive in him.

Kaneda, meanwhile, is constantly chasing a young girl he met whilst in the police station, unaware that she is involved in political intrigue and numerous terrorist actions. The main army guys are playing with life, death and other people's minds all with the help of something dark and powerful stored in an underground laboratory. The power is Akira. It lies waiting to be called into someone's life.

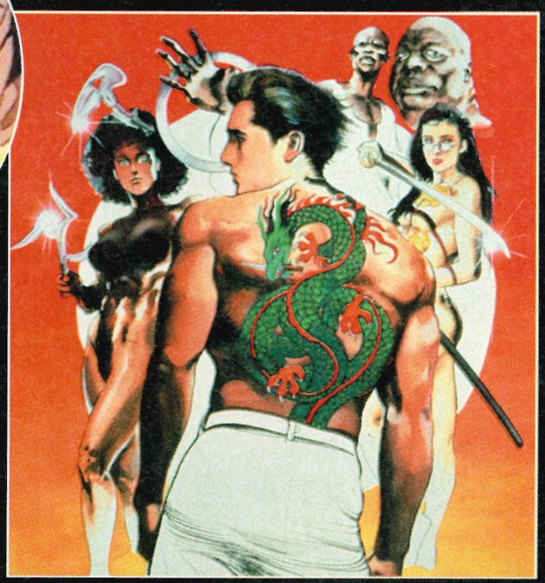
The story is full of minor stand offs and mini climaxes, all leading up to the final confrontation between the

▼ *Never trust old men with white beards. They might send a deadly arrow in your direction.*

▼ *A small wide-eyed girl running away in terror is a common sight in Manga videos.*



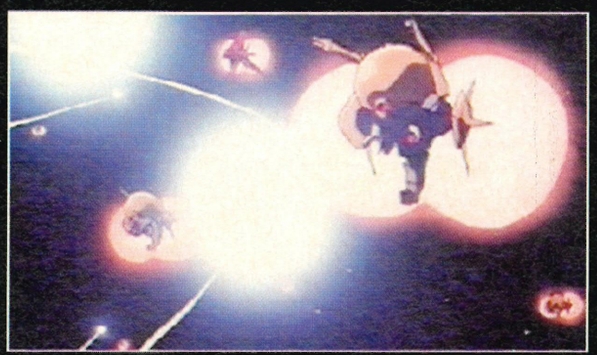
Ancient oriental magic is mixed together with modern themes and presentation and a violent cutting edge. ▶



▼ *The latest import to hit our shores has travelled all the way from Japan. It shouldn't take long for these cult cartoons to catch on.*

■ The games world is always talking about Manga these days. The Fist of the North Star beat'em-up, the soon-to-be-released Akira. We delve behind the mystery of Manga and give you the low-down on four top Manga videos.

ONE



▲ *It's 100% action throughout the films. Some of the fight scenes are pretty impressive.*

▲ *With neo-cinematic techniques, Manga pushes back the boundaries of animation.*

new improved Tetsuo, his old chum Kaneda, and the mysterious, violent force of Akira. The city is to be reborn, but its birth will be just as violent and destructive as its death.

Akira is about to unleash its full powers on a city begging for a change in its lifestyle, but will they be prepared for the aftermath of the final confrontation? Neo-Tokyo is about to explode!

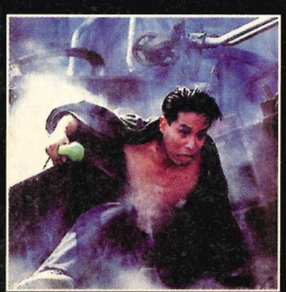
The pace is faster than Linford Christie and twice as entertaining to watch! There's non-stop action all the way through, with enough bike chases and ultra violence to satisfy any convicted mass murderer who owns a Harley. The animation is highly original. Tom and Jerry this most certainly is not! If you've never experienced an evening of Manga mayhem, this is the perfect introduction.

Rent it or even buy it, and I'll guarantee you won't be disappointed. A classic animated extravaganza guaranteed to blow your mind well into the 21st century.

Fist of the North Star is a long running TV series in Japan, and has sparked off numerous tie-ins from comics to computer games.

Here's the deal. Ken is Fist of the North Star, the chosen heir to an ancient martial arts technique which involves punching psychic pressure points. Such techniques can kill a

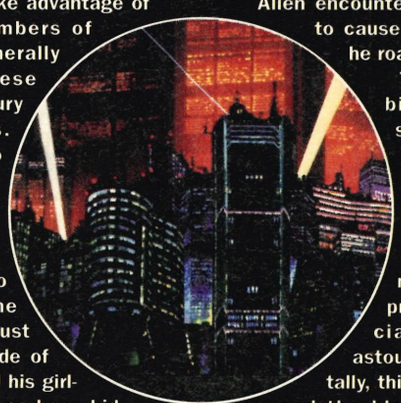
After the disappointment of the first Manga game conversion, the gaming world has high hopes for Akira, reckoned to be one of the classic animations of all time. We take the opportunity to have a look at some other classic Manga videos.



◀ *Take a blend of Videodrome and Altered States and you have Tetsuo II.*

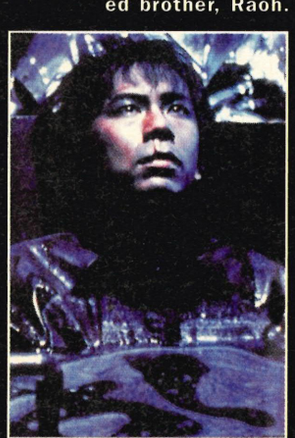
man in two seconds flat, or five days later in a sudden head exploding incident.

His world has been destroyed and devastated by a global nuclear war. Survivors get by the best that they can, and are trying to rebuild a peaceful society out of the aftermath of the war. Well, mostly they do. Some of the survivors quite enjoy the desolation and take advantage of the weaker members of society. Ken generally disposes of these undesirables in fury filled fisticuffs. Useful chap to have around.



Ken has two brothers who would much prefer themselves to be the Fist of the North Star. He must defeat the evil side of his family and find his girlfriend Julia, who has been kidnapped by the powers that be. A little friend called Lyn hangs around looking sweet and helping out.

The film ends with one hell of a punch up between Ken and his twisted brother, Raoh. This final fight explains that strength in the service of evil is a nasty, wicked thing and must be defeated wherever and whenever it rears its ugly head.



◀ *It's Tetsuo II again and our hero is contemplating his actions.*

This movie is amazing. Jaw dropping animation lies waiting to knock your eyes out if you get your hands on this little beauty.

If you've ever seen the oriental nutter out of Deee-lite then you'll empathise with my stifled chuckles while I watched, open mouthed, Tetsuo II. A mild mannered Tokyo businessman, Taniguchi Tomoo, with a pair of thick black plastic rimmed specs wreaks revenge upon a gang of mutant skinheads.

Why? Because the shiny headed scum bags have abducted the previously balanced bloke's son. He has a series of video's best ever 'mares (his body mutates into a gun in a scene reminiscent of John Hurt's Alien encounter) and proceeds to cause havoc wherever he roams.

To add to the bizarreness, the skins capture the businessman to experiment on him and inadvertently quicken the body/gun mutation process. The special effects are astounding – incidentally, this is no cartoon – and the bleak, oppressive industrial ambience provides the perfect feel for a crazy, mixed up vid.

It's hard for a vid (or anything for that matter) to be simultaneously suicidally depressing and intensely exciting. Tetsuo is both throughout.

Bit part actors with half their bodies blown away keep coming back for more ultra violent fun whilst Body Hammer (Tomoo) goes through the agonies of arsenals breaking through his flesh without warning.

It's a beauty. The special effects are so frighteningly convincing, it would be hard not to award Tetsuo an adult rating, so it's an 18 I'm afraid. In the shops now from Manga video for £12.99.

Macross II (Episodes 1 & 2) is an Anime video that isn't on the Manga label. By Kiseki films, it's a typical wide-eyed future shock with distinct Max Headroom overtones.

▲ *These cartoons have been the basis of many a Sega CD adventure you know.*

Lieutenant Silvie Gena, the top Valkyrie ace pilot, is a blonde bombshell babe. Hibiki Kanzaki, a 17-year-old camera-wielding roving reporter is decked by her on his first meeting. From here on, he's determined to get his own back and he's one of those disreputable journalists who will do anything to get a story – even swear at the management.

The trouble is, the military are in control of everything, especially the censorship of news. And what the straight laced would see as scandal mongering, Hibiki perceives as necessary news. He would.

The second meeting between the first filly and the main man leads to a tentative kiss. Yep, there's a romantic element to this fast moving sci fi flick as well as some tongue in cheek humour.

War breaks out and Hibiki wants to report on it. Believing he's the best man for the job, he offers his services as war correspondent.

With fluid animation, strong characterisation and a more than useful plot, Macross I and II fulfil all the criteria required to make a brilliant Anime video. But don't blink, as it only lasts for 56 minutes. Out now for just £10.99. Cert 15.

▼ *Old man with a staff and a white beard? You guessed it, another Japanese killing machine.*

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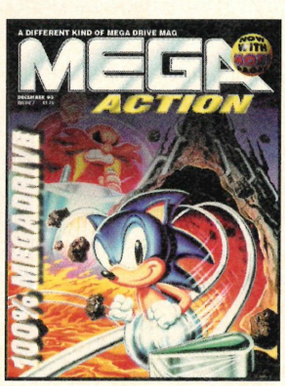

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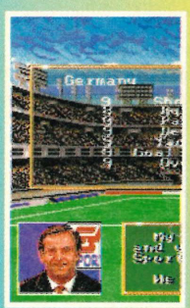

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MEGA JIVE

Another month and another sackful of intersting gossip for us to sort out. Keep them coming in, if you want a free game!

Dear Steve,
A friend of mine (who shall remain nameless) bought himself a SNES last month and it came with a light gun called the Super Scope. This got me thinking and I made a few enquiries as to whether Sega had a unit themselves. Well they do! It's called the Menacer and it looks a lot more stylish than the SNES attempt.

I was on the verge of buying one when I thought to ask the assistant about the range of games available. He didn't know of any compatible games at present and seemed doubtful as to the existence of any in the future. Should I buy one now or should I wait for the games to appear? Help!
David Corrinder, Brooklands

It seems this is a problem faced by many of you at the moment. The Menacer gun has been available now for about a year and the games on it have been either a) rubbish or b) unavailable in this country.

I would definitely advise people not to buy one of these things. The gun is stylish enough, breaking down into rifle or pistol configurations but it isn't as accurate as the SNES device and the thing also costs far too much at about £40-£50.

So far the list of games have been far from impressive with Terminator 2 being the only one worth shouting about. Should Sega or any other software house make a sudden commitment we'll let you know.

Dear Steve,
I read in last month's issue of Mega Action (Xmas Issue 08) that Eternal Champions could be used with the standard joypad or a thing you called the Activator. From what I gather about the unit this must surely be a mistake on Sega's part or at the very least it must be in very poor taste.

A unit that you attach to your feet and hands which mimic your movements in the game? With all the bad press that violent games are getting at the moment regarding children trying to copy what they see on screen, are Sega mad encouraging players to physically copy the punches and kicks that can obviously hurt so much? Karate and other martial arts people are instructed under strict conditions with serious consequences for improper use.

These games coupled with the Activator seem to me a free-for-all as regards learning such arts. in my opinion it could be potentially lethal.
Rachel Lewis, Bournemouth

It looks like you have misunderstood the role of the Activator in the game Eternal Champions. The unit does not mimic your movements exactly, like doing a somersault, but makes your character do one on screen.

The Activator is exactly as the name suggests, a way of switching on and off pre-set moves by making your hands or feet cross a sensor plate at certain points. So it will be more a case of the player hooked up to the unit moving like a Morris dancer than a direct descendant of Bruce Lee.

As for your fears and concerns, well I must agree with you partly. Although this particular unit does not realise a nightmare, further developments might well do. I think that then public outcry would be merited.

Dear Steve,
I have been reading your magazine every month since the third issue and it has gone from strength to strength culminating in a fantastic Xmas issue. You seem to review or preview games well in advance of the other magazines and you also go into much greater detail than the other console offerings.

How far in advance do you get these games and why do you sometimes say that you will be reviewing it next month and then you don't, sometimes not coming back to it for a few issues?

Keep up the good work and I hope Mega Action stays around for many more years to come!
Dave Consett, St. Ives.

Well Dave, let me introduce you to a little word called slippage. Slippage is a term often bandied about by software companies and can leave magazines very red faced.

You see a software company can schedule the release of a game some six months to a year ahead of time. If all goes well, the first EPROMs arrive and they start to show it off to the respective trade and our humble little mags. We duly include it in a news section or, if things are looking very promising, we might stick it in a Work In Progress. Here we look at not only the game but the programmers and also uncover what the software house expect from the game.

When further developments and tweaks and such like have been made, the finished game is put onto development EPROMs (chips) for us to play properly – we have a development board which allows us to stick the chips in and play the game.

It's at this stage that we will preview the game, give you an outline of what it is all about and comment on how WE think the game will go.

It's now that the word slippage comes into effect. Should magazines, focus groups or other such game testing bodies bring up any relevant points then the game can be sent back for a touch of re-development. This can take weeks or in some extremes months. So you see the problem. We expect the game to be released on such a date, we get excited and tell you all, it slips, we can't review it and end up looking very silly. Such is the life of an up-front games magazine. Although we do try to get everything right, sometimes it is just beyond our control.

Dear Steve,
I read in another magazine some time ago that the Sega Mega Drive and CD 2 would be quite a bit cheaper than their predecessors when they finally came out in this country. This doesn't seem to be true. If anything the price has gone up! Why is this the case and why are some high-street shops still selling the older Mega Drive and CD at the same price even when it is out of date?
Richard Jones, Newcastle-Under-Lyme.

Put quite simply the unit has maintained or increased its price because this country is in an awful state and the pound has not been faring well against other foriegn currencies. The original intention, from what we gather, was to perform certain cost cutting exercises on the machines as well as a major re-design and sell the unit to seriously undercut the competition. The headphone socket has been removed, there has been some internal tidying up and also the CD 2 has had the hydraulic eject removed.

All very nice and no doubt a positive step, except the dire exchange rate has swallowed up the benefits.

As for the older machines appearing on the high street, well you are perfectly within your right to ask for the newer unit if it's advertised as such. It probably isn't open policy but you may get a discount for the older units and to be honest there isn't much difference between them. Apart from the newer unit looking just a tad nicer.

❄ Star Letter ❄

Dear Steve,
I don't understand the censorship placed on games. I presume Lethal Enforcers has a 16 certificate placed on it because you point a gun at a screen and fire it. Does this mean that eventually all shoot 'em-ups or violent games will carry a certificate? Also you mentioned in last months On The Other Hand that Robocop 3 had obtained a 91% vote of approval and was one of the first games to receive the 16 certificate in line with new guidelines just introduced. Is this right? I asked my friend he thinks that Robocop isn't violent at all so why is this the case? Is it because it is a shoot 'em-up?
Jon Da Silva, Manchester

Right, this seems to reflect a lot of letters that we have had regarding the whole censorship problem and who can, or cannot, buy and play games. If you turn to the news section a more in-depth explanation is given but, in a nutshell, it appears the whole classification system has not entirely been confirmed as yet.

Software houses themselves have been the main force behind the move towards regulation. The governing body ELSPA have drawn up some guidelines creating four different age brackets. These will be: up to 10 years old, 10-14 years old, 15-17 years and 18 plus.

These classifications will apply both for console and floppy formats. It is all expected to be put into effect by May 1994.

As for Robocop 3 recieving a 16 certificate, well erm... we made a small mistake it was actually Robocop v. Terminator from Virgin that has been given this rating. Sorry about that, these things happen when you are under-payed. Ho ho.

Send your letters, jolly thoughts and fond memories to: Mega Jive, MEGA ACTION, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

MEGA TIPS

MIXED AND CRACKED

Welcome to the most highly prized page of the mag. Here you will find all the latest tips, codes and cheats for your Mega Drive and its fine accessories. Stuck on that dead 'ard level? Can't get past that invincible boss? Going crazy through lack of power-ups? We're here to help with the top secret tips for cracking the most popular games around.

BATMAN REVENGE OF THE JOKER

More caped-related laughs as we crack the code system behind Sunsoft's Batman title. To get things working you'll need to enter the primary code: 5257. Now, to start on any level you desire you'll need to enter the level number in the first position and the stage number in the second position. So for instance, for level 4 stage 2 you'll need to enter 4200 on the password screen. Now is this easy or what?

FLINTSTONES

"Flintstones, meet the Flintstones, they're a family right out of history. From the, town of Bedrock...etc" (I can't remember the rest of the words). Yes they're on the Mega Drive and they're more stoneaged then ever. With the power of joypad combinations, I can reveal many secrets allowing the meagre gamesplayer to become a crack Fred or Barney. To get infinite lives, select five lives for player one. Then press A, B, C and Start together. If this isn't enough then try this: Choose five lives again and press A, B, C and Start together and then move the D-Pad clockwise. And just to top the bill press and hold C whilst on the options screen and enter Left, Right, Down, Left, Right, Up, Up, Down, Left, Right and Down. Now release button C and press Start to gain a level skip cheat.

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Okay it's old I know. But what about the people who have yet to complete this fantastic arcade conversion? It's quite simple, just do what I say. Wait until you have the main title screen and enter the following pad combo: Up, B, Down, Left, C, A, A, B and C. If all of this was entered correctly and quick enough then you will surely be blessed with a thousand power ups. Wonderful!

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Become a real hero in a half shell by utilising the level select cheat. Insert the cart and wait until the Konami logo appears (providing the machine is turned on). Then enter C, B, B, A, A, A, B and C. Wait a little more until the main title screen is up and enter A, B, B, C, C, C, B and A. If this task has been performed correctly you should gain access to the secret level select screen.

TIME GAL

More seedy fun and games with the young Japanese maiden. This time she gets what she's after, the level select cheat! Wait until the main title screen is visible then enter Up, Left, Right, Right and Up. If all is well you'll have the very fine level select cheat active, allowing hours of endless fun.

WE NEED YOUR TIPS AND CHEATS!

MEGA ACTION is on the lookout for decent tips and cheats! We're always looking out for more letters for this section shortly, so if you need help with a game or have advice for your fellow readers, put pen to paper!
Who knows, there may even be a a freebie of some sort in it for you if the tip is good enough!
Send your cheats, hints and tips to:

Mega Action Tips and Cheats,
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JURASSIC PARK

Grant and his family (and friends) have to escape the nightmares of Jurassic Park. If you're finding the going a bit too tough then use some of these handy game codes to give you a shove in the right direction.

EASY	GRANT	MAX. AMMO	RAPTOR
JUNGLE	0VVUP8DA	0VVVVVT0	G21G0014
POWER STATION	2VVUP8DA	2VVVVVTQ	I21G0016
RIVER	4VVUP8DE	4VVVVVTS	_____
PUMPING STATION	6VVUP8DG	6VVVVVTU	K21G0018
CANYON	8VVUP8DI	8VVVVVT0	M21G001A
VOLCANO	AVVUP8DK	AVVVVVT2	_____
VISITOR'S CENTRE	CVVUP8DM	CVVVVVT4	O21G001C

NORMAL	GRANT	MAX. AMMO	RAPTOR
JUNGLE	0VVUP8EB	0VVVVVUP	G21G0025
POWER STATION	2VVUP8ED	2VVVVVUR	I21G0025
RIVER	4VVUP8EF	4VVVVVUT	_____
PUMPING STATION	6VVUP8EH	6VVVVVUV	K21G0029
CANYON	8VVUP8EJ	8VVVVVU1	M21G002B
VOLCANO	AVVUP8EL	AVVVVVU3	_____
VISITOR'S CENTRE	CVVUP8EN	CVVVVVU5	O21G002D

HARD	GRANT	MAX. AMMO	RAPTOR
JUNGLE	0VVUP8FC	0VVVVVVQ	G21G0036
POWER STATION	2VVUP8FE	2VVVVVVS	I21G0038
RIVER	4VVUP8FG	4VVVVVVU	_____
PUMPING STATION	6VVUP8FI	6VVVVVV0	K21G003A
CANYON	8VVUP8FK	8VVVVVV2	M21G003C
VOLCANO	AVVUP8FM	AVVVVVV4	_____
VISITOR'S CENTRE	CVVUP8FO	CVVVVVV6	O21G003E

▲ *Jurassic Park. What a top game! Dinos, 3D sections, things to blow up, a movie-licence that's actually pretty good...words fail me.*

WOLFCHILD CD

Despite its big success on the Amiga, Wolfchild has made little impact on the Mega Drive, mainly due to its CD format, which limits its potential. But anyway, there's bound to be a plethora of people who would like to hear the following cheat. Go to the options screen and press A, B, A, C, A and B. If an explosion noise is heard then the cheat has worked and is now currently active. Try pressing the following to start on different levels;
Press Start to begin on level two.
Hold B and Start to begin on level three.
Hold C and Start to begin on level four.
Hold B, C and Start to begin on level five.
Hold A and Start to begin on level six.
Hold A, B and Start to begin on level seven.
Hold A, C and Start to begin on level eight.
Hold A, B, C and Start to begin on level nine.
Marvellous!

RANGER X

More joypad cheat accessing tricks to be used with this top shoot'em-up. By accessing the options screen and entering A, B and C three times you should enable the difficulty settings to allow an easy level game. If you wish to skip the level you are currently playing then pause the game and press Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down, C, B, A, Right and then Left. When the background music starts up, press B to be taken to the end of the level boss. Or if you're already there, it will send you to the next level.

DR. BARRY DIABLO

■ Hold on to your paper hats, it's the immortal Barry and his fine compendium of letters from distraught readers. Only through pen-to-paper tactics will a bemused reader find salvation. Come, send all your burning desires to me and I will assist in any depraved way I can. I look forward to hearing from you – I could good use a good laugh at lesser mortals like yourselves. Barry.

Dear Barry,

I'm presently under your command. I influence everybody I meet, spreading your wealth of knowledge as it is passed on to me through every issue of Mega Action. But now I seek personal guidance with Technoclash. I very desperately require all of the game codes. Is this at all possible? I wait with hot anticipation.

Yours Faithfully,

Falex Flea, Geordieland

How could I possibly turn away such a devoted man. One who has obviously decided that my way is by far the best. I will answer your call Falex by listing all, yes all of the codes for EA's wondefrul game Technoclash.

LEVEL 1: No password required
LEVEL 2: ZP80BFAR
LEVEL 3: FPKRBFA9
LEVEL 4: DAAW3FAX
LEVEL 5: TZSIUFAU
LEVEL 6: 6ZSITFA6
LEVEL 7: H9M9SFA0

There, that should help you do something right. And also take my advice, get a face lift and a haircut. You sure do need it you ugly tick!

Dear Barry,

Before I beg for your help I'd like to say a few things. Why do you have to perform some sort of character assassination before giving them advice? I think it's terrible that you can get away with such actions. But anyway, enough of this griping and here's my problem. I'm not making much progress with Bari Arm. So I would like to know if there's any cheats that don't require an Action Replay cartridge or a Game Genie. Gripes aside, I think the Mag's great. Keep it up!

Yours Faithfully,

Michael Thomas (John to his friends), Clanfield, Hampshire

What? Assassinations? What could you mean? I'll have you know that I'm a respectable individual with only one purpose in my mighty existence. I help anyone with a gaming problem and I deliver this service with a smile not a grimace. So here we go. Enter Up, B, A, C, A, Down, B, A, C and A on the main title screen. Then, if a recognisable pingy sound is heard, go to the game configuration options. Move the cursor over the stock option and push left. This will reveal a new and secret options screen, so you may increase your lives and so forth.

Dear Barry,

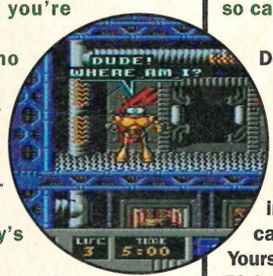
I own the following items in my proud console collection: Mega Drive, pads of various descriptions, games of much variety - two of them are SF II and Mortal Kombat (ones that I need help with) and an Action Replay cart. Do you think that you could print a selection of codes for the two games previously mentioned? It would be greatly appreciated if you could do me this small favour. If you do I Promise to buy ten copies of 'comfortably numb'.

Yours Faithfully,

Samantha Harris, Purbrook, Hampshire

Rest your weary head Sam, I will gladly assist you with any of your problems. Even the ones concerning games. So take this page to your Mega Drive and Replay cart and enter the following codes for the games in question for instantaneous relief.

Mortal Kombat (Wombat if you're Australian)



FFAC7 E0099: Time is of no concern to the trained.

FFCAB 90078: Let the damage take its toll, for your body is invincible.

FFFF5 40006: you can continue your quest forever!

FFFF5 70000: Let the enemy's blood run red over the lands.

FA4AF 9DB99: Take your time when tackling bonus stages.

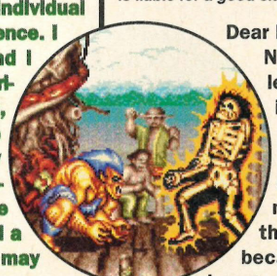
And now for SF II.

FF80C 10000: All special moves may now be performed in mid flight.

FF972 A0099: Time is of no consequence.

FF804 300B0: Laugh as the blows from enemies bounce off without damage.

▲ *Kano demonstrates that anyone caught wearing silly clothes is liable for a good slapping or branding as a social outcast.*



Dear Barry,

No matter what I've written in this letter you are bound to cut a lot of it out. So you think you are funny? Well, I'm really funny. No, no it's true. All of my friends say so, especially my retarded comments about you. And I'm better than you at games and such like because I listen to naff music and hang around with people who wear ridiculous hats. And another thing, I was a student too, so I know all about life and I'm even more witty and adventurous than anybody else. I can also drink like a trooper. Why, last night I managed to get three down before collapsing. I bet you wish you were like me. Oh, one last thing, can you help me with King of the Monsters?

Yours Faithfully,

Neil Bones, Stockport

Hmm. It seems that my work has already been done fr me. Normally I would make some sort of comment about the letter or person writing to me, but you've done it all for yourself. Anyway, by pressing A, B, C and Start on the main title screen you'll begin to activate the secret options screen. Press button A once more to enter the said options screen to reconfigure all of the game's parameters. Easy eh? Oh and one last thing. Is there anybody out there that can tell me why all so called ravers and students talk rubbish?

Dear Barry,

I can't think of much to say right now apart from, the mag is brill and it's even better since you've arrived. Now with the creeping over and done with I can ask for your help. It's a game called BOB and I need immediate asistancelf there's anything you can tell me, please do.

Yours Faithfully

Richard Harris, Sussex

Yes I can help and yes I will help. By pressing all the buttons on both pads and waiting until the screen displays 'Foley Presents' you should be able to play the game with maximum ammo, weapons and have infinite lives. Now is that a cheat or what?

Dear Barry,

I'm going to be dead forward and brave and ask you to help with a multitude of games. I know normally people only write in with one request but I really need help with the following titles: Chuck Rock 2, Golden Axe 3 (it was a present, honest) and James 'Buster' Douglas Boxing. Please do your most to help me.

Yours Faithfully,

Nic Moron, Ireland

A multiple request from Ireland eh? I suppose I can help you and your leprechaun friends, so long as you buy me a decent stout. Starting with Chuck Rock 2, play and pause the game and enter this joypad combination: B, A, Right, A, C, Up, Down and then Start to unpause the game. Now pause it again and enter A and right to skip a level, or enter A and up to skip the whole zone. Moving swiftly to the next title, Golden Axe 3 which I hope was a present, go to the title screen. From here highlight the character you wish to play as and then press A four times, Start and C six times. If done correctly there'll be a number in the middle of the screen. Change this value to begin on that chosen level. Lastly we look at James 'Buster' Douglas. To end any fight in a matter of seconds observe the following rules.

At the beginning of the round press A, B and C together. This should command your boxer to throw a stupidly hard punch straight into the opponent's face, knocking him clean out. Well that should help you out in your battle royale. Do write in again soon.

Barry Diablo will be back next month we're afraid.

ALADDIN

VIRGIN / SEGA US/UK/JAP

COMPLETE SOLUTION Aladdin

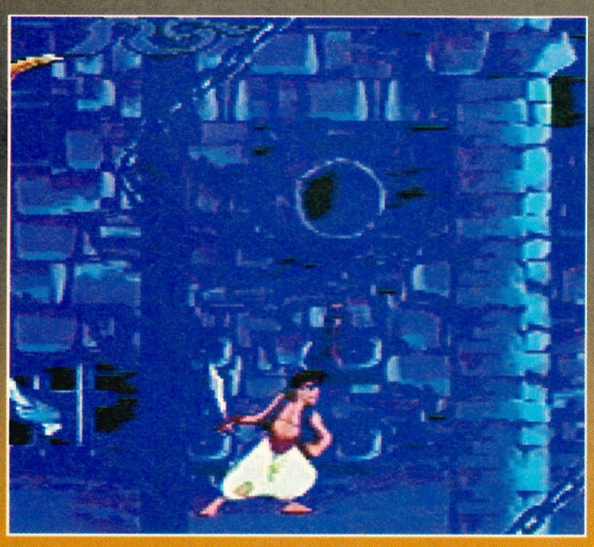
Cartoon capers abound as we step into the wonderful world of Disney yet again.

Things turn pretty sour when Aladdin has to traverse the mysterious insides of the genie lamp. Many things aren't what they seem and the law of physics doesn't actually seem to apply to the new strange world Aladdin has somehow himself in. I think the programmers may have forgotten Newton's laws, but at least you've got this map to show you the way!

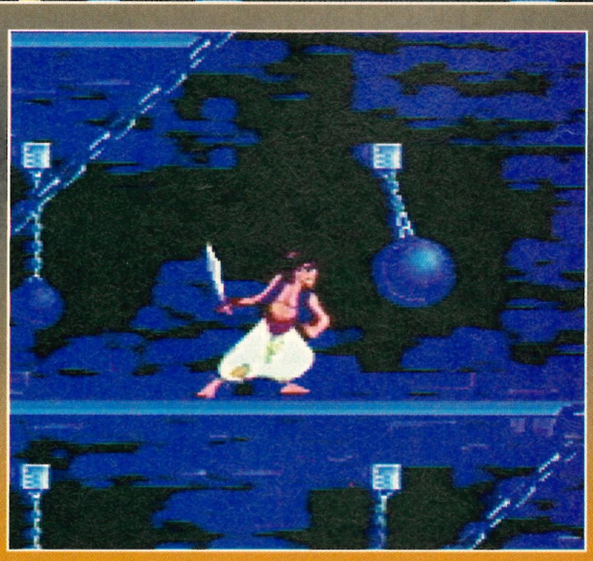
Delicate joypad control is needed here. The blue hand circles the yellow disk continuously, so careful timing is required if you are to survive this manoeuvre.

These golden mist bands are ideal for taking short breathers from the hassles of aerial acrobatics. But don't delay for too long, the genie is an impatient spirit.

Another yellow circle and blue hand that needs to be successfully tackled. If cope with this little problem then don't worry, it's not far to the end of this section.



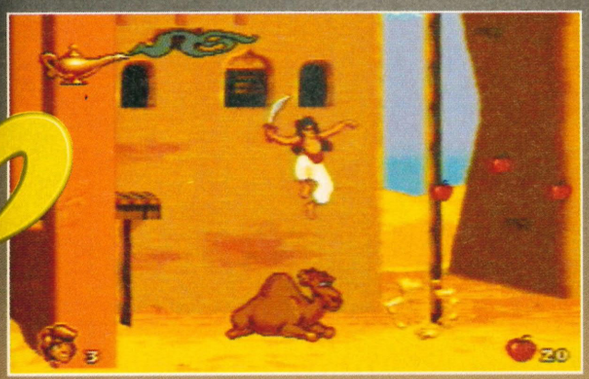
When exploring the musty dungeons of the Sultan's palace be sure to keep an eye out for bats. Normally situated around the sewer pipes, scores of bats fly out with speed often injuring our hero in a minor, but damaging way. Deal with them by swinging your sword around your head.



To add to your troubles in the dungeons there's multiple traps disguised as a set of swinging steel balls suspended on long chains. Although they cannot be physically harmed, they're quite easy to dodge once their pattern has been worked out. So take your time as there's no time limit to your adventure.

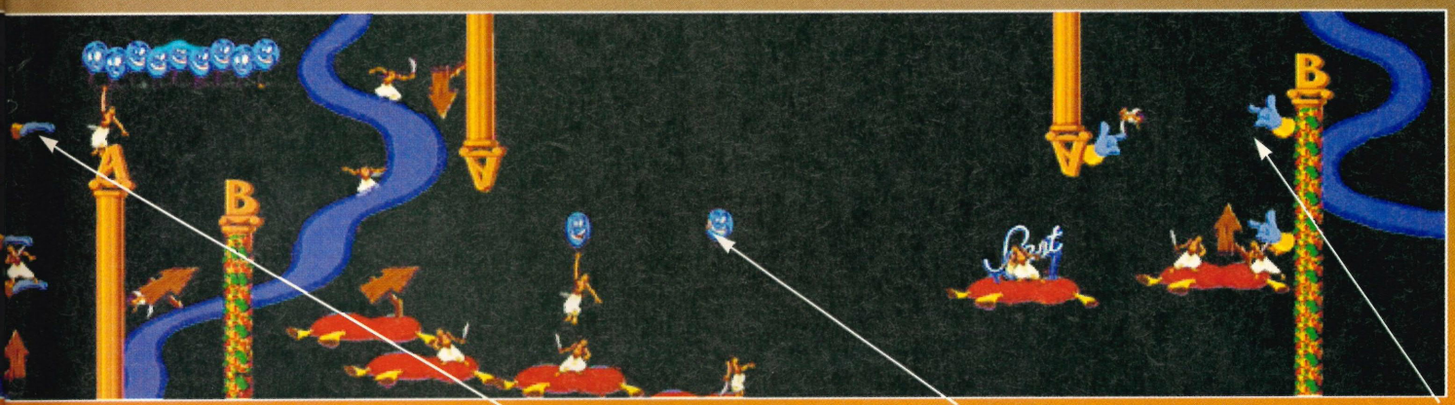
© The Walt Disney Company

COMPLETE SOLUTION ALADDIN



You'll most certainly encounter the Arabian ships of the deserts - camels to you. Playing their docile role in the dusty streets, Aladdin has an opportunity to use their spitting abilities to fend of Jafar's henchmen.

Every level hides this shady character, this merchant is ready to sell invaluable items for a price. You have two options here, you may either purchase extra lives or simply an extra continue. The later is more expensive so I guess it's a case of you pays your money and makes your choice.



Moving violently as they descend these series of platform/hands are no easy obstacle to overcome. Careful planning is what you'll be needing here.

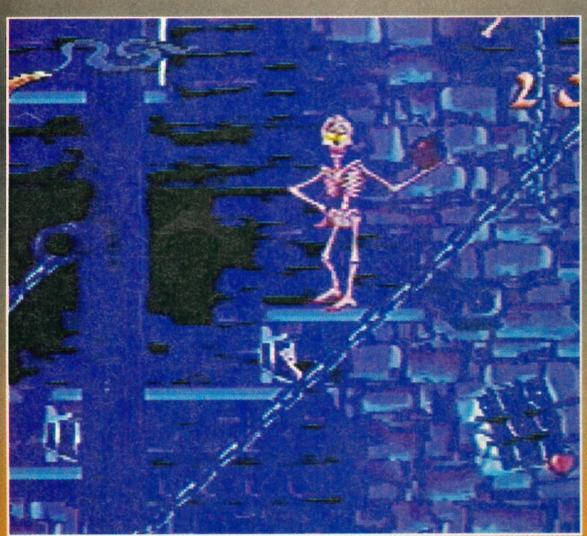
Slide down the blue mist to gain access to the lower regions, but be extra careful that you don't over do it and fall to your death into the black depths below.

When leaping about you have to fantastically quick and dexterous. When you leap onto a balloon be sure to push up to successfully grasp the string dangling beneath.

Some expertly timed jumps are required here as well. The distance between each jump is quite far, making your final sprint very difficult indeed.

Although it seems easy to navigate your way around rest assured it's not. If you make one mistake on one of the lower springboard, you'll affect the rest of your voyage.

There's the genie himself, or just a graphical representation. But either way, just step through his gaping mouth to depart from this nightmare.



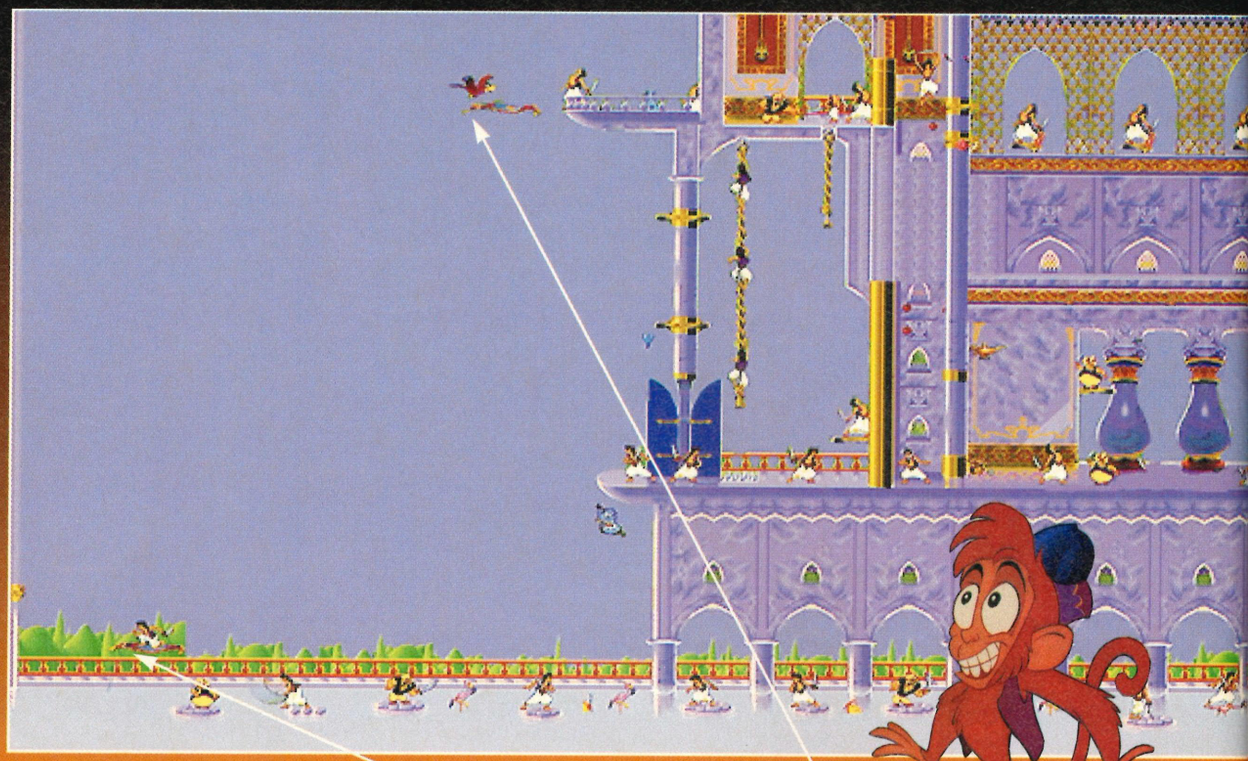
Provoking the spirits of the undead, Jafar has summoned up a few more surprises. Appearing before him in a flash, the skeleton will patiently wait until the explosive device it holds erupts. When it does the skeleton is smashed to the four winds with bits flying into Aladdin from all angles.

As you reach the centre of the cave of wonders, you'll inevitably meet this chappie. Teleporting between the two golden plinths, Aladdin must strike his opponent as he materializes on either pad. Just keep hitting the jump and strike buttons rapidly when next to the relevant pad.

ALADDIN

VIRGIN / SEGA US/UK/JAP

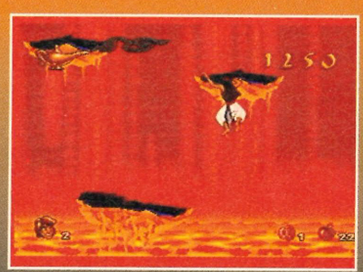
This is perhaps one of the most difficult levels to complete in the entire game. So with generous forethought we compiled this lovely, detailed map to assist you through the enemy infested palace. Despite the knife throwing jugglers and sword wielding guards, your hardest or most irritating foe have to be the vultures. Swooping through the skies without a care in the world they quite often strike Aladdin. The damage they cause isn't the kind easily shrugged off. So beware!



This is what you have to reach to continue the exploration of the palace. Just jump onto the magic carpet to be taken instantly up to the next platform.

This magical carpet will take you all over the shop for a quick fly around. This happily enables you to quickly retrieve many goodies and suchlike.

When making your escape bid down the twisty caverns you'll be pursued by numerous boulders such as this. As this happens Aladdin should go at full speed to avoid the oncoming catastrophe. My only hint here is don't be dazzled and fooled into stopping for the bonuses above.



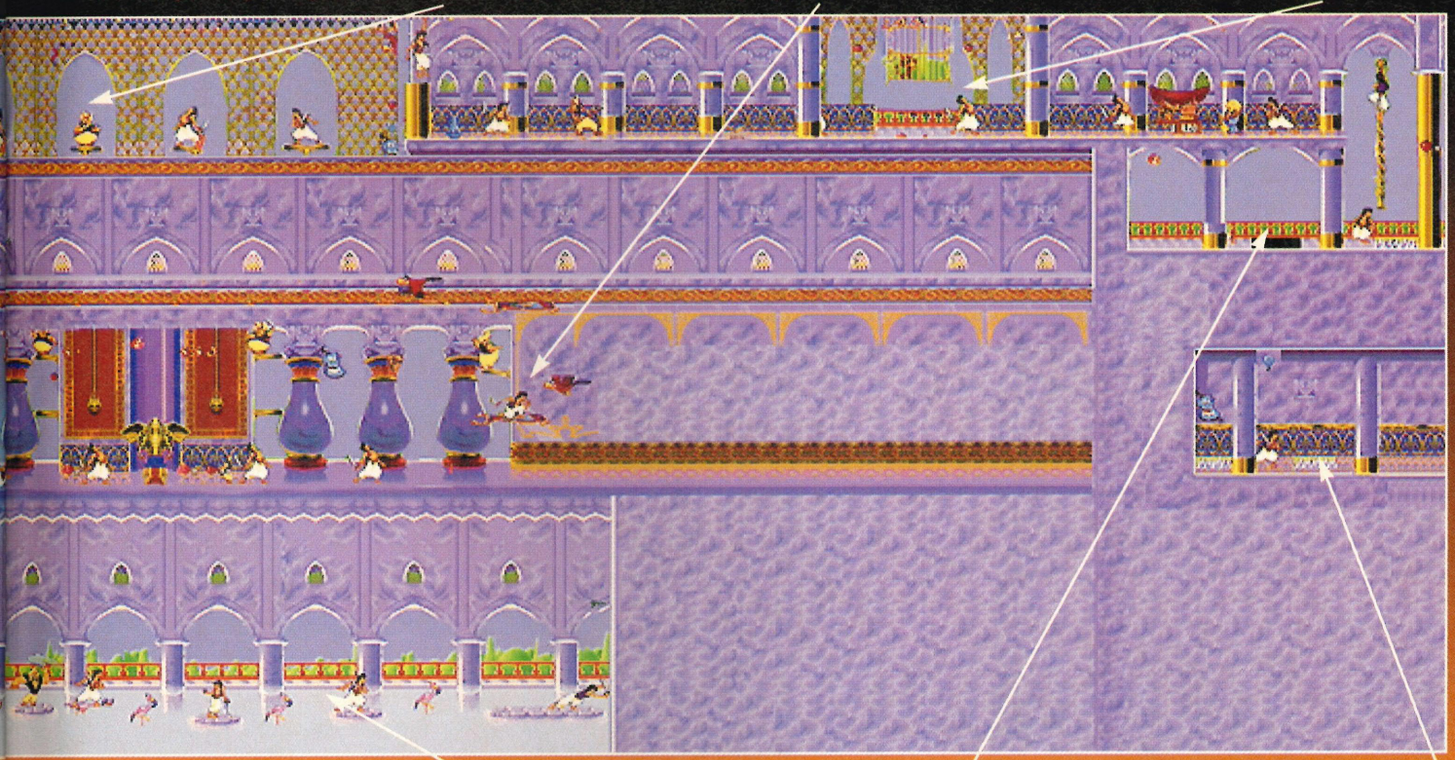
Wonder how you reach those higher rocks? The answer is simple, but easily overlooked. When jumping past one of the higher rocks, push up on the pad to command Aladdin to catch hold of a protruding ledge. From this position he can scale the rockface .

One of the hardest jumps in the whole game occurs here. The idea is to allow Aladdin to take a few extra steps towards the bubbling lava below. Instead of dying, Aladdin travels along the near invisible ledge underfoot before leaping to the rock on the edge of the screen.

In the rug ride bonuses can be earnt or damage taken. A genie hand should point the right direction out. So when quick decisions need to be made just take the rug to the bottom of the screen and let the genie help.

When playing this bonus level wait until you see Jafar's face. By the time you press the button a new bonus should be on the screen. Even with a lot of practice I doubt if it could ever be totally mastered.

COMPLETE SOLUTION ALADDIN



Use this hand rail to swing your way across the obstacle to the right. Keep that sword at the ready, a few birds may well be patrolling this stretch of sky.

This room is full of vultures and palace guards so I hope for your sake that you're at maximum health. It could be quite painful!

It is essential that you rescue the monkey from this cage. To free your animal amigo you have to cut the bottom of the cage open with your trusty weapon.

Use the storks as extra platforms to jump on. Keep your distance from the palace guards that await. You can use your apples to keep them away.

If you haven't rescued your I chum upstairs then you can' t leave via this hole. So go back upstairs and get him then remove the rug that bars the way.

Right, I think this is just about it. The exit is just beyond this doorway. I wonder what Jafar is up to at this very moment? Lets find out shall we?

Rather than actually destroy the whole machine, you've only to take out the parrot that operates it. But be warned, you'd better have your lucky rabbit's foot present, there's a lot of ghosts and electrical bolts to protect it.

Now then not only is this one of the few places to stand upon when attacking the parrot with apples, it's also where you'll find more of these fruits if you so happen to run out. Can't say fairer than that can you.

Just as you leave the Sultan's domain you encounter a strange room where a parrot is residing. It seems to be some sort of primitive power generator. It has to be disabled before commencing the final assault against Jafar and his troops. Follow the map to see how this can be achieved.

You have to alternate between the two platforms here if you are to have absolutely any chance of succeeding in stopping the parrot.

The floor is also littered with traps. Barrels of various descriptions roll across the room in an attempt to knock Aladdin over. So get ready to jump them.

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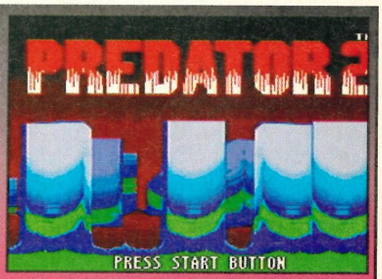
Mega Workshop

Movie Licences

■ If you want a game to be successful, grab a big licence. That seems to be the received wisdom these days, as movies tie-ins are being snapped up as part of the development package. Take the Bruce Lee story *Dragon*. The movie is just out in the cinema and there's a game tie-in already on the way. Sylvester Stallone's *Demolition Man*, just out, is another that has a game as part of the licensing package. Of the countless tie-ins about though many are just leeching off the success of their title, whilst others are fine games in their own right. We sort out the big name imposters from the heroes.

Predator 2

Acclaim £44.99 **61%**



The film was an excuse for excessive violence, and the game reproduces that perfectly. Patrol streets and rooftops shooting all manner of gun-toting loonies, coming out of doors, cars and helicopters. Oh, and don't forget to rescue the hostages.

No danger whatsoever of the kids going out and copying the violence in this game. It's poorly drawn, animated and presented. Not worth picking up your shotgun for.

Back to the Future III

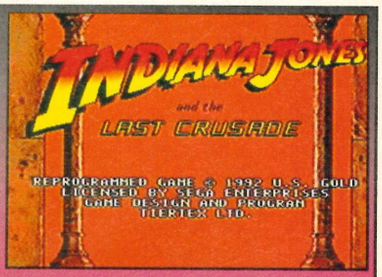
Acclaim £44.99 **62%**

Probably the weakest of the three movies, the time travel idea was really getting stretched to the limit here. This one sees Doc and Marty back in the wild west, an ideal scenario for various shooting and throwing scenes featured in the game.

Dating back to 1990, this seems very primitive by today's standards. The four shooting and jumping scenes have little to do with the film either.

Indiana Jones

US Gold £44.99 **75%**

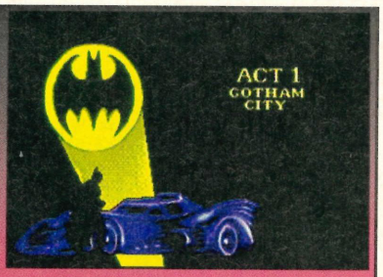


Sticks closely to the plot of *The Last Crusade*, taking five platformy scenes to find the Holy Grail and rescue your father. Works well in reference to the film. You may have wandered through simplistic mine shafts before, but never as Harrison Ford.

The sprites and definition are rather small and delicate, and the solution to each level takes a bit of working out. Includes the inspiring trumpet fanfare.

Batman Returns

Sega £44.99 **78%**



Fairly standard superhero-hits-the-platforms type approach, tailored to fit Batman's particular skills and foes. That means an arsenal of weapons tucked under your belt and Penguin and Catwoman out there somewhere. Kepow!

Sufficiently dark and moody to invoke the style of the Tim Burton/Michael Keaton film, though the gameplay's too run-of-the-mill to impress.

Jurassic Park

Sega £44.99 **83%**

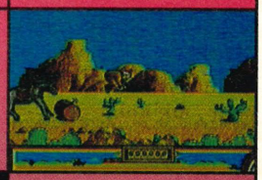
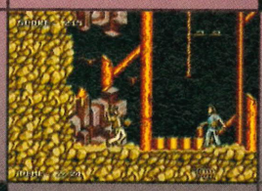
Once upon a time the country was taken over by a strange fever called dino-mania. This game tie-in was just one symptom of the terrible disease. Play Grant making his way to the safety of the visitor's centre, or be a dino yourself and eat people.

With loads of scenes from the movie, superb dinosaur animation and great dino-novelty value, this is one game that will never become prehistoric.

MINI LEAGUE MINI LEAGUE MINI LEAGUE

	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RRP
1	Jurassic Park	Sega	£44.99
2	Batman Returns	Sega	£39.99
3	Indiana Jones	US Gold	£39.99
4	Back to the Future III	Acclaim	£39.99
5	Predator 2	Acclaim	£39.99
6	The Addams Family	Acclaim	£39.99
7	Ghostbusters	Sega	£19.99
8	Home Alone	Sega	£34.99

Mega shootout

Versus:	Batman	Jurassic	Indy	Predator	Back
Back to the Future III	Two different approaches to the movie tie-in. The tried and tested Batman approach with a platform style common to superhero licences is the more successful, with better sprite, nicer effects and bolder moves, leaving Marty and Doc back in the past.	Maybe when we get to Jurassic Park 3, the Battle for Earth, it will be just as sad as the third 'Future. But that's the films. Dr. Grant's sprite may be small and delicate like Marty and Doc, but the Sam Neil lookalike contrasts with the dinosaurs.	Comparable graphic presentation, but the adventure game evokes its film original so much better. The sci-fi angle of *Back to the Future* is just not there in the game, whereas Indy's amazing archaeological digs are ripe fodder for action adventures.	Poor, primitive games with nothing to recommend either. But then both movies were rather poor sequels, clinging to the success of the original. When the movie theme is getting tired, perhaps they can pick up the licence for a bargain price.	
Predator 2	There's just no competition here. Predator's ant-like sprites, poor control and unimaginative gameplay just can't hold the attention like the caped crusader can. One's a sad, street-bound, alien blast 'em-up, the other an imaginative airborne adventure.	Predator is an eyesore to look at before you even try to get to grips with the awkward angled control pad. The dinosaurs are bold sprites, with big claws on which bound around the screen causing the ground to tremble wherever they land.	Well we suppose the shoot 'em-up forces the pace along more, with baddies charging at you at a furious pace. There's no link with the film though, unlike Indy which sticks closely to scenes from the film, producing more of a challenge in the process.		Oh dear!
Indiana Jones	Both these heroes actually look like their movie counterparts. Indy shins up ropes and cracks his whip like a game Harrison Ford, whereas Batman glides from level to level in suitably bat-like style. Indy provides the challenge, Batman the mood.	We'd like to see Indiana Jones v. Jurassic Park the movie, but for the time being we'll have to make do with the workshop comparison. Indy has a more varied set of challenges to it, but the atmosphere of the Park simply transports you to another world.		Indy wins	Indy wins
Jurassic Park	Two moody efforts, though the prehistoric soundtrack has the edge. Neither game bothers with plot too much, sacrificing that for quality gameplay. But Jurassic positively reeks of quality, while Batman's faint odour is rather familiar.		Jurassic wins	Jurassic wins	Jurassic wins
Batman Returns		Jurassic wins	A draw	Batman wins	Batman wins

Under the table

	Batman	Jurassic	Indy	Predator	Back
Licence	A fine licence, but despite stills of the actors on the box of the cart, the game actually bears little resemblance to the film, concentrating instead on the hero's special weapons. Liberal doses of Prince would have helped.	The most valuable licence to hit the entertainment business to date, though why all this dinosaur mania took hold I don't know. Probably something to do with the name Spielberg and millions spent on special effects.	Always good for a juicy sequel, the third Indiana was possibly the best, with Sean Connery and a fine plot to boot. The story has some ripe scenes for conversion and indy himself has well-defined fine character traits and a hat.	The first Predator with Arnie in the lead role was a fine film. But the second, boasting only Danny Glover, was better conversion material, set on the streets of the big city and with a whole host of aliens, rather than one.	The film was built on a worn out sci-fi gimmick and the teen idol appeal of one Michael J. Fox. Neither of these translate very easily onto the games console so this particular licence does nothing for the game.
Plot	Little to do with the film, though in both Batman is framed for a crime he didn't commit. Here too he is taking on Penguin and Catwoman (featured in the second instalment of the Batman movie). A circus and a train.	Playing Dr. Grant or a dinosaur called the Raptor, your object is to escape from the island. Very short sequences from the film and vague references to the original in the electricity showrooms and rain forests.	Sticking closely to the original, even down to the wonderful theme music, the five scenes take you from the mine shafts to the catacombs, culminating in your father being shot and you having to find the Holy Grail.	The situation on the streets is such that the mayor has drawn up a five part plan for reclaiming the city from the gangs. Look out for alien predators in the slaughterhouse – conventional weapons have no effect.	Four Wild West scenes from the movie, namely the buckboard chase, the shooting gallery, the pie throwing and the train. In between are snapshots of Marty and Doc looking gaumless filling in the details for you.
Presentation	Dark, dreamy feel to the backgrounds as Batman leaps around the rooftops of Gotham city. All the greens and blues can get a bit much at times, but then that is Tim Burton. Perfect set for superhero platformer.	Another one from the dark moody game school. This works well with lush rain forest backgrounds and primitive musical vibes going down. Cooing animals and shreiking birds add to the atmosphere.	Not so hot on the presentation score, the rice crispy platforms and falling stalactites are nothing new. Bosses and jumping and crawling exercises add to the sense of déjà vu, but it all happens in the movie.	Poor animation, poorly drawn. The definition is really quite appalling and the diagonally angled or straight on approach lacks imagination. And what are these huge staircases doing in the middle of the city?	Simple left-right scrolling approach, alternating with shooting gallery scenes. Looking like some old Spectrum game, with little box-outs showing how you are doing, the presentation is totally uninspiring.
Gameplay	Batman's speciality is all the weapons he has tucked under his belt. These are accessed clumsily by pausing the game and highlighting the one you want. He can also glide and fly from level to level.	A bit jumpy, with a number of glitches noticed by our reviewer, such as the game slowing down when there is a lot going on. Still fun to play, even if only for the gimmick of eating other dinos and humans.	The old routine here, but with the added delight of whips! Not so very different from guns or fists actually, if you think the fight unfair when you are confronted by guns and huge muscley men weilding logs.	Awkward this, as the direction pad has been angled at 45 degrees. The object of the game, blasting the bad and saving the good is helped by the lethal firepower you have. Fortunately you cannot harm the hostages.	Ride your horse to the cliff edge to save Clara, dodging various obstacles along the way Shoot as many items as your can in the allotted time. Climb along the top of a moving train. Gameplay is fast with slow reaction time.
Characters	Batman, Penguin and Catwoman are all cleverly drawn and moved around the screen. We should really be looking at the CD, which is closer to the film, but we have to compare like with like. Just another superhero this.	The dinosaurs are wonderfully animated, the biggest selling point of this game. There are a number of different kinds, all based on the artwork for the original film. The little Compys are a bit odd though.	Harrison Ford's Indy is wonderful, with the hat, whip and even Khaki trousers. The bosses are actually recognisable from the film too, and the standard baddies have guns. Indy takes the prize here for best character.	Neither Arnie nor Danny Glover, nor indeed the predators themselves are recognisable. Punks with knives, and the infamous Jamaican Rasta Voodoo Possé are defined, but don't react any differently from the next man.	The Doc has a white shock of hair and Marty has brown hair, but that's about as far as character definition goes. In between screens provide a bit more definition, but any traits the duo might have are not here.

Next Month ...

The February issue of Mega Action will be a special Valentine edition full of happiness for young lovers...well maybe not but there will be plenty of top reviews, previews and features. Tune in on January 8th when the fun really begins!

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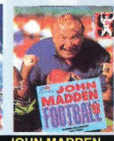
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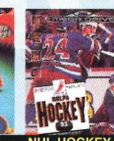
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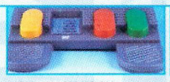
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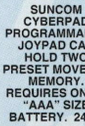
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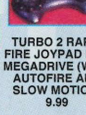
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